

## **Parents' access rights after divorce enshrined in law**

Law will confer right to see children after splitting up, but lawyers warn changes 'will clog up the courts'

The Guardian, Wednesday 13 June 2012



Fathers 4 Justice have staged several protests seeking access rights to their children after divorce or separation. Photograph Michael Stephens/Empics

The right of both divorced fathers and mothers to see their children is to be enshrined in law for the first time as part of changes to family justice, despite warnings from the government's independent review and lawyers that it would "clog the courts".

In a consultation paper the government will propose amending the law to explicitly recognise the importance of children having a relationship with both parents after separation.

According to the government, studies show that following a divorce, 90% of children reside "mainly" with one of their parents – with just 12% of these children living with their father. This "bias", say Whitehall sources, needs to be corrected.

Under the four options proposed by the government, family courts will have a legal duty to ensure that parents have a continuing relationship with their children if a marriage breaks down – because a "child's welfare is likely to be furthered".

Ministers point to a 2008 study which claimed children with "highly-involved dads develop better friendships, more empathy and higher levels of educational achievement and self-esteem. They are also less likely to become involved with crime or substance abuse".

Earlier this year ministers had rejected the advice from the economist David Norgrove, who chaired an independent official review into family justice, and warned of the situation in Australia after the country introduced "shared parenting" rights. A series of legal claims and counter-claims led to severe delays in child custody cases.

But ministers say its draft clauses will not lead to the courts having to apportion "equal time" or "defining the nature" of parental relationship – both cited as reasons why the law failed in Australia.

NOM :

PRENOM :

SIGNATURE

Leading lawyers said that "once in legislation you could end up with more cases clogging up the courts".

Matt Bryant of Resolution, which represents 6,000 family lawyers said: "Amending the law will allow people to appeal. It's really not needed as judges already take into account these factors.

"The key will be to ensure that child's welfare comes first, and that by enshrining something in legislation – as has happened in other countries – the government run the risk of placing the demands of parents over those of the children."

Children's charities backed this view. The NSPCC said it did not support the need for fresh legislation.

"The importance of children having a meaningful relationship with both parents is already fully recognised by the judiciary and all those working within the family justice system," it said.

"If the government does take this legislation forwards the primary focus must remain on the paramountcy principle (putting the child's best interests first) as stated in the Children Act 1989.

"They must be sure that it will not create unintended consequences such as more parents fighting battles in the courts or the focus being on the rights of the parents and not the child."

Deputy prime minister Nick Clegg said: "Both parents have a responsibility and a role to play in their children's upbringing and we want to make sure that, when parents separate, the law recognises that. Children should have the benefit of contact with both of their parents through an ongoing relationship with them.

"This is why we are publishing proposals today setting out that, where it is safe and in the child's best interest, the law is clear that both parents share responsibility in their upbringing."

Labour said that the government's approach will sow "confusion in the courts".

Lisa Nandy, the shadow children's minister, said: "In reality one of the biggest problems for children is delay in the courts. Instead of producing greater clarity, there is a serious risk the government's proposals will cause greater confusion, more litigation and delay which isn't in anyone's interests, least of all children's."

"It is surprising the government has pressed ahead, against the advice of its own advisor, when similar approaches have worked against children's interests when tried abroad.

"Children's best interests should be the paramount consideration in decisions affecting them. That principle has been clear in law for over two decades. Ministers should think very carefully before they decide to weaken it."

SERIE LETTRES ET ARTS ANGLAIS AN  
NOM : PRENOM :

**SERIE LETTRES ET ARTS  
ANGLAIS  
ANALYSE LV1 TEXTE HORS  
PROGRAMME**

**Government confirms U-turn on charity tax**

George Osborne's reversal on removing tax breaks for donations is fifth policy climbdown in less than a week

Randeep Ramesh and Juliette Jowit, *The Guardian* (May, 31<sup>st</sup> 2012)

George Osborne has announced his third U-turn over his budget this week by scrapping "charity tax" proposals that sought to remove tax breaks from wealthy donors to good causes.

The announcement by the Treasury at lunchtime on Thursday drew immediate criticism that the chancellor was attempting to draw attention away from damning evidence against senior ministers at the Leveson inquiry into press standards.

The Treasury said it would go ahead with a proposed cap on tax relief – which is to be set at 25% of income or £50,000, whichever is greater – but that it would no longer include donations to charity. The main component of the cap will now be the amount of previous business losses that can be offset against future taxable profits.

Officials said the decision was not a U-turn, but the conclusion of a consultation the government promised as soon as it announced the measure in the March budget.

Just two days ago, the Treasury insisted critics would have a chance to make their case in a formal consultation this summer, but it is believed that Osborne backed down after a vigorous campaign by charities. They warned that the moves would deter philanthropic giving and drive charities to the wall, undermining David Cameron's repeated exhortations to create a "big society".

The former prime minister Tony Blair made a rare foray into domestic politics to criticise the plans.

Osborne said: "It is clear from our conversations with charities that any kind of cap could damage donations and, as I said at the budget, that's not what we want at all. So we've listened.

"Frankly, at a time like this, the government is going to focus on the big issues like the worsening eurozone crisis and Britain's deficit, and not get distracted with unnecessary arguments."

Sir Stephen Bubb, the chief executive of the Association of Chief Executives of Voluntary Organisations, said: "This is good news for charities up and down the land. The chancellor has listened and done the right thing, and I applaud him for doing so."

Labour called the coalition's budget a shambles, noting that the charity tax climbdown follows U-turns over plans to impose VAT on pasties and static caravans.

Away from the budget, proposals to capture and remove buzzards – a protected bird of prey – to help pheasant shoots have been dropped, and controversial plans to expand secret courts have been scaled back.

Ed Balls, the shadow chancellor, said: "Another day, another budget tax U-turn – three successive U-turns in four days – all when parliament is not sitting and just a few weeks after ministers were defending these measures, show just what an embarrassing shambles George Osborne's budget has become."

Gareth Thomas, the shadow charities minister, said: "This decision has already done considerable damage and, taken alongside huge cuts in government funding and contracts like the Work Programme not delivering the money for charities that ministers once promised, has

been responsible for the toughest year in a generation for Britain's charities and community groups."

Higher-rate taxpayers giving to a charity can reclaim more than half the income tax they have paid on the donation, irrespective of the sums involved. This means that wealthy businesspeople, especially those who have sold businesses and lived off the interest from investments, can reduce their tax bills by donating to their favourite charities.

The coalition argued that this was unfair and wanted to limit the ability to reclaim tax on donations of £50,000 a year, or a quarter of the individual's income, whichever is higher.

Sir Stuart Etherington, the chief executive of the National Council for Voluntary Organisations, said: "We are delighted that the chancellor has listened to reason and pledged to drop the charity tax. This is a victory for common sense and validates the strength of feeling from the thousands of organisations who lent their weight to the Give it Back George campaign. This is a great day for philanthropy." [...]

**Alan Milburn: 'Threat to new era of social mobility'**

Major report warns that fewer people outside the middle class have a chance to join professions  
*The Guardian*, Saturday, May 25th 2012

The government's adviser on social mobility will warn in a major report that the country risks squandering the chance to recreate the golden era of the 1950s, when workers from all parts of society had the chance to join the professional classes.

Alan Milburn, the former Labour health secretary, will tell ministers that despite a huge growth in white-collar work, there is evidence that people from poorer backgrounds and those living outside the south-east of England are being left behind.

The report, due to be published on Wednesday, claims that 83% of all the jobs created over the next decade will be in the professions. Today, 42% of the working population (13 million people) work in a profession and by 2020 this will increase to 46%.

Yet, in an example of the increased social exclusivity of the top echelons in Britain, Milburn found that while 30% of members of parliament were privately educated in 1997, that proportion increased to 35% in 2010. In the Labour government's last cabinet, 32% were privately educated but this increased to 59% in the coalition cabinet that entered Downing Street in May 2010.

Speaking to the *Observer*, Milburn said the country had the opportunity to encourage a level of movement between the classes last seen in the 1950s but that he had found no evidence of this happening. He said: "The chances of social mobility are greater if there are more professional jobs being created. So it is no coincidence that the 1950s saw an unparalleled social mobility in Britain and that coincided with an upsurge in professional employment.

"In the 1950s, the academics say there was the creation of more room at the top. The economy was becoming more professional, more white-collar jobs created, demands [increased] for higher quality, higher skill level and the sucking up of labour into the white-collar, better-paid jobs.

"The primary reason that social mobility has stagnated in the last 30 years is that there has been another big change in the labour market: the advent of a more knowledge-based economy where there is a high premium on qualification and skill and if you have those you get into the inner circle, if not there is constant insecurity, low pay and endemic poverty."

Milburn added: "It seems that what is happening, as part of this growth of the middle class in our country, is that the jobs that are going to be created are overwhelmingly in professional careers. The question is: who gets the jobs? There is a real opportunity.

"And so the question at the heart of the report is whether the growth in professional employment is going to create a new social mobility dividend for Britain just as there was in the 1950s. And the short answer is: not yet."

Milburn's report – the first of three on social mobility commissioned by deputy prime minister Nick Clegg – will tell ministers that the recruiting policies of big employers are largely responsible for the lack of social progress.

He found that of the 115 universities in the country, on average only 19 are targeted by the UK's leading professional employers as part of their graduate recruitment drives. Milburn, who also examines the role of universities and government in causing and or, possibly, solving the problem, said: "Those universities are the more socially exclusive in the country so those recruitment practices merely enforce the social exclusivity of the professions. It is an interesting argument that of the 115 universities only 19 are capable of producing excellent graduates. I think there are 30-odd universities in the Russell Group alone. So they don't even get to all of them." Evidence suggests that the "socially exclusive" recruitment policies of the major employers exacerbate the north-south divide.

Milburn will call for employers to follow the example of the last two governments in moving civil service jobs to the regions. [...]

NOM :

PRENOM :

## Rock music under threat as small venues go bust across Britain

Venues where top bands started out are shutting down as rent rises and falling audiences spell crisis for gig promoters.

Tracy McVeigh and James Bloodworth, *The Guardian*, Saturday 26 May 2012

It has been a weekend of Polish hip-hop and drum and bass at the Bongo Club. But even when you throw in the rock'n'roll ping pong, it won't be enough to save it.

One of Edinburgh's most popular small music venues, it has been the launch pad for bands from the Scissor Sisters to Kasabian who played here before they became stadium-sized acts playing to stadium-sized crowds. Yet this will be its last summer as the Bongo faces closure at the end of August, one of an increasing number of live venues across the UK shutting down.

"The frequency with which smaller venues are closing is scary," said Krissi Murison, editor of the music magazine *NME*. "There's the Charlotte in Leicester, TJ's in Newport, I could go on and on. It feels like not a week goes past without more closing."

Cardiff, Bristol, Belfast, Leeds, Sheffield and Manchester as well as London have all seen small venues go under in the past year. "Big venue live music is thriving, but, due to smaller venues closing, in a few years' time we will no longer be producing the bands who have cut their teeth in the smaller venues," said Murison. Towards the other end of the country, a campaign is also under way to save the Horn. The Horn, in St Albans, Hertfordshire, has been a live music venue since 1974 and a favourite of the late John Peel. For the band Friendly Fires, it was their leg-up. "It's a common saying that for a band to get good they have to play gig after gig after gig, and there is no substitute for playing to an audience," said Jack Savidge, the band's drummer. "With more and more small venues facing closure – the Horn is launching a 'save the Horn' campaign – it's becoming harder for new artists to do this."

The Horn's promoter, Hansi Koppe, said: "Things are extremely difficult at the moment and we're trying hard to put on the right acts. In good times people will go and see a new band just to hear what they're like. Now if it's a band nobody has heard of then people aren't so keen to pay the money to see them. They'd rather go and see a cover band down the pub where it's free. But that's not what we are about. We're a little rock'n'roll sweatbox: the vibe is second to none. We're trying to stay positive."

They are less positive at the Bongo. "We're really only the latest: there's been a spike in closures in Edinburgh, quite a substantial list of venues which is terrible for a capital city," said Ally Hill, the manager, despondently. "Playing places like this is the groundwork bands need, the stepping stone. And even when they've made it big, live music needs every rung in the ladder it can get."

"We employ between 30 and 50 staff. This is a small venue but it's a mini-music industry. It's not just bands who cut their teeth here but sound and lighting engineers, promoters, even bar staff. And the irony is that we're well-loved and successful, financially and culturally." The Bongo is closing because Edinburgh University, which owns the site, wants it back to build offices. A search for a new site for the club has failed. "The bottom line is that those that could help just don't value venues like ours," said Hill.

Comedian Mark Thomas called the imminent closure "an act of cultural self-harming" on the city's part. The crisis in live music, which employed 44,000 people before the financial crisis struck in 2008, was given official recognition in the government's coalition agreement, which promised to "cut red tape to encourage the performance of more live music".

NOM :

PRENOM :

SIGNATURE

The Live Music Act comes into force in October and will ease restrictions on pubs and small clubs with a crowd capacity below 200. Murison listed a number of reasons why clubs are closing: "First there's rising rents; the recession has been an issue – people had a bit more disposable income a few years ago. I imagine there's a huge amount of bureaucracy involved in getting a live music licence; and there are other factors such as complaints about noise pollution. It's possible that people are less willing to put up with noise near where they live nowadays.

"Live music is increasingly important to bands now. A band used to go on tour to promote their album; now they put an album out to promote their tour. The tour is where they make their living." City centres becoming increasingly re-populated has been an issue in Cardiff, which has just seen the Barfly close, the third venue in the past few months. "It's a major problem – venues are closing all the time," said Cardiff-based promoter John Rostrum. Promoters often won't promote in the smaller venues because we can't lose money every night. The increase in VAT has been a big thing for small venues. It's really hit the smaller shows that we do. There are also particular local issues that have affected live music in Cardiff such as complaints about noise in areas where new flats have been built near music venues."

### **Unpaid jubilee jobseekers: Downing Street dismisses criticisms**

Prime minister's spokeswoman says treatment of unemployed people who worked as stewards was a 'one-off'.

Nicholas Watt, Hélène Mulholland and Shiv Malik, *The Guardian*, Wednesday 6 June 2012

In a rebuff to Lord Prescott, who has accused the government of "exploiting cheap labour", the prime minister's spokeswoman dismissed the treatment of the jobseekers as a "one-off" and an "isolated incident". The spokeswoman said: "This is a one-off ... This is an isolated incident. The company has apologised."

Downing Street responded to the criticism at its weekly lobby briefing shortly after Prescott accused the government of presiding over the development of labour camps following revelations that unpaid jobseekers on the government's work programme were asked by the Close Protection UK (CPUK) security firm to sleep under London bridge before stewarding the Queen's diamond jubilee celebrations over the weekend.

The former deputy prime minister has written to the home secretary after becoming "deeply concerned" by revelations in the *Guardian* about the treatment of up to 30 jobseekers and another 50 people on apprentice wages who were taken to London by coach from Bristol, Bath and Plymouth on Saturday before the pageant on Sunday as part of the government's work programme.

Downing Street dismissed the criticisms as it made clear that the government would not be making any changes to its work programme, which arranges for companies and charities to provide unpaid work experience for those on jobseeker's allowance.

The prime minister's spokeswoman said: "We understand that the company involved has apologised. But more broadly the work programme is about giving people who have often been out of the workplace for quite some time the chance to develop skills that they need to get a job that is sustainable ... The work programme itself offers experience and the chance to develop those skills that people really need to get into sustainable jobs."

Two jobseekers, who did not want to be identified in case they lost their benefits, told the *Guardian* that they had to camp under London bridge overnight, to change into security gear in public, had no access to toilets for 24 hours, and were taken to a swampy campsite outside London after working a 14-hour shift in the pouring rain on the banks of the Thames on Sunday.

The TUC warned that the "appalling treatment of staff" that had been reported had shone a spotlight on "the damage that unpaid work experience risks causing people who are desperate to get back into proper employment, as well as the exploitative treatment that they can face".

Brendan Barber, the TUC general secretary, said the revelations suggested that government programmes involving unpaid jobseekers might be displacing proper jobs "that pay at least the minimum wage". Barber also drew attention to government plans to water down workers' rights.

He said: "The main experience gained by staff appears to have been poor working conditions and exploitation. Worse still, the government is encouraging more employers to treat staff poorly at work by stepping up its attacks on basic employment rights. "This case has attracted attention because of its link to the diamond jubilee. Sadly low-paid vulnerable employment such as this occurs on a daily basis throughout the country. The number of involuntary temporary workers is at a record high. These are not the jobs that will take Britain out of recession and improve people's living standards."



NOM :

PRENOM :

SIGNATURE

Molly Prince, the managing director of CPUK, told BBC Radio 4's Today programme: "The whole situation has been exaggerated and we're talking about two or three people complaining out of 220 staff that were supplied to the event. "It was badly handled and for that we've extensively apologised. We're not in the business of exploiting free labour." A member of the Labour group on the London assembly has called on the London mayor, Boris Johnson, to give assurances that there will be no repeat of the "scandal" during the Olympic Games. John Biggs has written to the Conservative mayor and the London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games (Locog) seeking assurances that all workers at the Olympics will be paid. Biggs also asked whether, in light of the revelations, the company was "suitable" to be given a contract for the Olympics.[...]

## **Ed Miliband uses diamond jubilee buzz to speak up for Englishness**

Labour leader to make London speech rejecting stance of Scottish National party and Jeremy Clarkson

Nicholas Watt, chief political correspondent, *The Guardian*, Thursday 7 June 2012

Political leaders must do more to talk about Englishness, Ed Miliband will say on Thursday as he criticises the last Labour government for neglecting the largest nation in the United Kingdom.

In a speech marking Britain's "incredible" summer, encompassing the Queen's diamond jubilee and the Olympics, the Labour leader will say that English identity has been a "closed book" as he calls for the future of the UK to be debated across the country and not just in Scotland.

But Miliband's speech is in danger of being overshadowed after Tom Watson, the Labour party's deputy chair, described the diamond jubilee celebrations as a "show of opulence by state elites".

Priti Patel, the Conservative MP for Witham, said: "It's shameful for the deputy chairman of the Labour party to attack the Queen and the jubilee celebrations in this way. Tom Watson should apologise for these comments and Ed Miliband should condemn them immediately."

Miliband, who will be speaking at the site of the 1951 Festival of Britain at the Royal Festival Hall on London's South Bank, hopes to shrug off the Watson row by using the aftermath of the jubilee celebrations to speak up in favour of Englishness.

"We in the Labour party have been too reluctant to talk about England in recent years," Miliband will say. "We've concentrated on shaping a new politics for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. But some people in England felt Labour's attention had turned away. That something was holding us back from celebrating England, too. That we were too nervous to talk of English pride and English character. Connecting it to the kind of nationalism that left us ill at ease.

"Somehow, while there is romanticism in parts of the left about Welsh identity [and] Scottish identity, English identity has tended to be a closed book of late. For too long, people have believed that to express English identity is to undermine the union. At the same time, we have rightly helped express Scottish identity within the union. This does not make sense. You can be proudly Scottish and British. And you can be proudly English and British, as I am."

Miliband's speech has been carefully timed to take place between the jubilee bank holiday, which he marked with his wife Justine at the St Paul's Cathedral service, and the start of the Euro 2012 football tournament and the Olympic Games.

He will highlight the contrasting approach to football, when many Scottish fans will follow the traditional route of supporting any team but England in Euro 2012, and the Olympics when many Scots will cheer on English stars wearing the GB vest. Miliband will reject "narrow nationalism" wherever it occurs across Britain: "In Scotland, the narrow nationalists of the SNP pose a false choice. They ask: are you Scottish or British? I say you can be both.

"And here in England there are people like Jeremy Clarkson who shrug their shoulders at the prospect of the breakup of the union." Clarkson has likened Scotland's departure from the UK to "waving goodbye to a much loved, if slightly violent, family pet".

Miliband will cite his own background, as the son of Holocaust survivors who grew up in London supporting Leeds United, to illustrate his belief that there should be no "false choice" between multiple identities.

"You could say my family have not sat under the same oak tree for the last 500 years," he will say. "I am the son of a Jewish refugee. A Leeds United supporter from north London ... I am proud to be English. And I am proud to be British, too. "To me, Britain is a country where it is

NOM :

PRENOM :

SIGNATURE

always possible to have more than one identity, more than one place in mind when you talk of home."

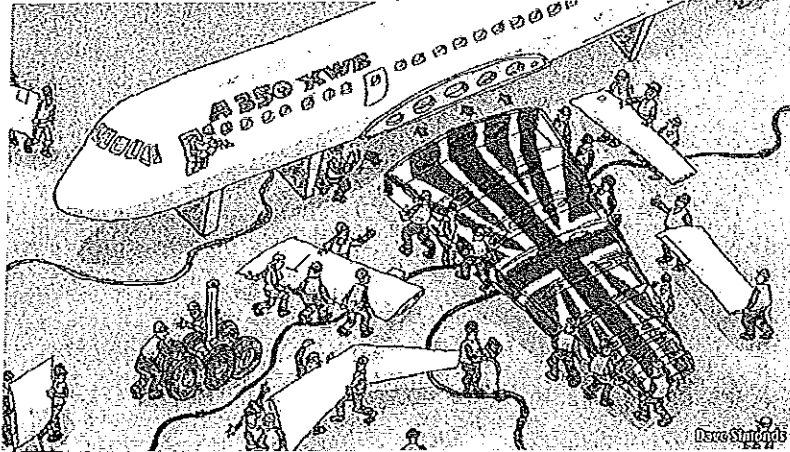
Aides are describing Miliband's speech as a sign of his confidence after Labour's success in the local elections in Scotland where it saw off a challenge from the SNP in Glasgow.

Sources said that rather than following the obvious route of addressing national identity in Scotland, amid the debate on a referendum on its future in the UK, he had decided to speak about Englishness at the site of the postwar Festival of Britain.

*GKN and aerospace*  
**Word on a wing**

A long-established global innovator shows how British firms can make it in modern manufacturing

*The Economist* June 9th 2012 | BRISTOL AND LONDON |



THE wing spars designed for passenger jets at GKN's new aerospace works at Western Approach, near Bristol, are 27m long but must be accurate to within 0.3mm. Such tight tolerances are needed because many of the important bits of an aeroplane (the fuselage, landing gear, flaps and so on) bolt on to them. But what makes these wing structures special is that they are made solely of carbon-fibre composites, as strong as steel but far lighter, and so easier on fuel consumption.

Few of the 300-odd staff at the facility—opened in April by George Osborne, the chancellor of the exchequer—work on the two factory floors. In the first shed a robotic head layers carbon-fibre tape at prescribed angles, which determine the shape, strength and flexibility of the wing spars. The machine is sealed and air removed after each round of layering to increase the material's density. The structure is then cooked in a high-temperature oven for 10-12 hours. Once galvanised and tested, each piece is ready for fully automated assembly in the second shed. The finished spar is dismantled and sent by road to Airbus's facility in Broughton, en route to Toulouse in France.

"Only three or four firms in the world can do what we do," says Marcus Bryson, head of GKN's aerospace division. Its expertise in new materials has made GKN a cornerstone of Britain's aerospace industry, said by the government to be the largest outside America and one of the shining hopes for future growth in manufacturing. Why, when so many widget-makers have gone to the wall or been bought up by foreigners, is GKN alive and kicking and British-owned after 253 years?

A firm might survive this long if age had given it authority with customers, as sometimes happens with newspapers; if its edge stems from an important natural resource, such as an oilfield; or if it is in an industry like banking where big incumbents are rarely allowed to fail. Manufacturers, by contrast, are often weighed down by their past—by pension debts and over-commitment to dud technology—or caught out by a more volatile business cycle. Such traps make GKN's longevity all the more remarkable.

The trick it has mastered is finding new businesses and markets to move into before its established ones run out of steam. "We have been very good at recognising that things don't last forever," says Nigel Stein, GKN's chief executive since January.

The company owes its name to an early marriage between Welsh heavy industry and Midlands metal-bashing, brokered by Arthur Keen, a Victorian entrepreneur. In 1900 Keen's nuts-and-bolts company merged with the Dowlais iron company, founded in 1759 and managed from its

early years by the Guest family. Shortly afterwards Keen bought Nettlefolds, which made screws and fasteners. In 1986 "Guest, Keen and Nettlefolds" became GKN.

The firm repeatedly leapt off one horse and on to another but the crucial jump came from the mid-1960s, when it was building up a business making the driveshafts that connect car engines to wheels. It bought Birfield, a British rival with better technology, and later extended its control over Uni-Cardan, a German-based maker of transmission gear for carmakers in continental Europe.

Such acquisitions kept GKN going when steelmaking and the low-tech bits of its business declined. It has thrived on the outsourcing by car firms of complex components and on the burgeoning demand for four-wheel-drive transmissions. GKN set up in China in the 1980s to serve Volkswagen, still one of its biggest clients. It now has 12 factories there, as well as ventures in Brazil and India. Globalisation has served GKN well. Its "driveline" division remains its leading business and produces parts used in two-fifths of the world's cars. [...]

The stockmarket, though, seems far from carried away by GKN's prospects. At £1.76 a share, the firm trades at eight times its 2011 earnings, scarcely a rich rating. GKN is still mainly thought to be a car-parts outfit with hard-bargaining customers that keep its profit margins a lean 7% (though aerospace margins are more generous at 11%). Investors have seen what a credit shock can do to the car industry and its suppliers. GKN's stock price fell below 50p in 2009, when the shortage of credit on reasonable terms led the firm to turn to the stockmarket for money to finance its growth. And the mess in the euro area poses a fresh threat to cyclical businesses such as GKN that fall hardest in a downturn.

But Mr Stein remains sanguine. GKN's global diversity will help mitigate any further trouble in Europe, he says. A firm that on the eve of the 1980s employed 69,000 people in its domestic market alone now has a worldwide staff of around 44,000, of whom about 5,800 are in Britain, mostly in aerospace. In this respect, GKN is a microcosm of modern British manufacturing: lighter and more efficient than its Victorian forebears; global, but with the promise of long-term growth at home.

SERIE LETTRES ET ARTS ANGLAIS AN  
NOM :

PRENOM :

SERIE LETTRES ET ARTS  
ANGLAIS  
ANALYSE LV1 TEXTE HORS  
PROGRAMME

***Speed limits***

**Fast and furious**

**Drivers are slowing down to save money**

*The Economist* June 9th 2012

Beep beep'm beep beep yeah

WHEN the motor car was introduced to Britain in the 19th century, a top speed of 4mph was imposed so a man waving a red flag could run ahead as it entered a town. The laws of the road have changed as cars have become zippier. But, though vehicles are now faster, safer and more efficient, they are travelling more slowly, particularly on motorways. Why?

Compared with other European countries, Britain's top legal limit of 70mph on motorways and some dual carriageways is comparatively low. That may be one reason why 49% of drivers broke it in 2010, a higher proportion than almost anywhere else. Yet that figure is falling—in 2003 it was 57%. And in that time the share of drivers exceeding the limit by more than 10mph dropped from 20% to 14%.

Since motorway traffic has fallen, congestion does not explain increasing compliance. Nor does greater policing: stringent enforcement campaigns in France and Spain have successfully cut speeds, but Britain has seen a 20% drop in the number of traffic cops in the past decade, reckons Edmund King of the AA, a motoring lobby. Speed cameras have helped to maintain limits and cut accidents at roadwork sites, but are still rare on motorways.

Drivers seem to be slowing of their own accord. The main explanation is fuel prices, which have risen by 34% in real terms since 2003. This may affect behaviour because as cars go faster they use more fuel to travel the same distance—25% more at 70mph than at 50mph, according to the Department for Transport. In-car technology has also helped make drivers aware of such costs: new cars often have dashboard dials showing how many miles to a gallon the vehicle is achieving at its current speed. People are more likely to respond to such nudges when money is tight and jobs are scarce.

Just as drivers are choosing to slow down, though, the government is considering letting them speed up: this summer it will launch a consultation to raise top motorway speeds to 80mph in England and Wales. In 1965, when the 70mph limit was set, few vehicles were able to maintain a faster speed. Cars can easily exceed that speed now and ministers claim raising the limit will provide "hundreds of millions of pounds of benefit for the economy".

But higher speed limits are unlikely to drag the economy out of the slow lane. Drivers are already choosing cost savings over time. Raising the limit may not increase the number of cars that a motorway can carry, since stopping distances lengthen at high speed and cars are supposed to travel farther apart. And the change would not apply to lorries, a key part of the business network.

The environmental lobby is gearing up to oppose the idea. The Committee on Climate Change, which advises the government, says the current limit should be enforced instead to cut emissions—domestic transport, mostly by road, accounted for 22% of all planet-heating gases in 2009.

More influential are safety campaigners. Speed limits always trade time against safety, notes Stephen Glaister of the RAC Foundation, a motoring lobby. Cutting the top speed to 60mph—and enforcing that—would also save lives. Road deaths have already fallen by 75% since 1965, mainly because cars are safer. But many now assume that the "accepted" current speed in Britain is 80mph—changing the law would risk pushing that higher. Even increasing the limit on just a few straighter, safer motorways, as officials hope to try, may be cavalier: after Denmark increased limits on a some key routes in 2004, average speeds rose on all highways.

## Changing Whitehall

Sir Humphrey, your time is up

Long-promised civil-service reform is about to be delivered. Deeper changes may take longer  
*The Economist* June 9th 2012 |

BEFORE the prime minister's friend and guru Steve Hilton departed in May for a sabbatical in California, civil servants enjoyed gossiping about the adviser's latest bit of unorthodox conduct. One story had him turning up to a policy session in baggy shorts and messily peeling a ripe orange, to the consternation of the besuited officials.

Whitehall's Sir Humphreys (so-called after the Machiavellian civil-service boss in a long-running TV comedy, "Yes, Minister") were even more appalled by Mr Hilton's disruptive ideas for their future. These included slashing parts of the civil service by up to 90% and encouraging outside agencies such as university departments and think-tanks to compete with it, tendering policy ideas to ministers and bidding for the job of carrying them out. At present, enacting policy is solely the domain of officials.

The problem many modern politicians say they have with the senior civil service is that it is hierarchical in nature, backward-looking in practice and accustomed to shielding its members behind a long-standing tradition that officials' dealings with ministers must remain confidential. The result, they say, is clever generalists with jobs for life, reluctant to change and with little experience of turning big ideas into practicalities.

Now that the fruit-eating Mr Hilton has gone, the task of reform falls back on to two more circumspect figures. They are Sir Jeremy Heywood, who is cabinet secretary (the official who most closely advises the prime minister), and Sir Bob Kerslake, an import from local government who has been made head of the domestic civil service. Within the next few weeks, the two are expected to set out a blueprint for alterations. Some of Mr Hilton's ideas look set for the cutting-room floor. Early signals are that the "outsourcing" of policy will be less dramatic than he intended. Sir Jeremy has made clear that he does not relish presiding over a clearing-house for external policy pitches. One cabinet-office figure suggests that the impact of any innovation here will be "at the margins of policy", which sounds less than revolutionary.

### How to sack a civil servant

Frustration inside David Cameron's team over the slow delivery of reform has been mounting. Michael Gove, the radically inclined education secretary, was quick to ease out a number of civil servants in his department as he sought to free schools from local authorities. But Sir Jeremy, a veteran of Tony Blair's government, knows how to please impatient bosses. For his part, he wants to make it easier for the best civil servants to leap up the promotion scale, and for the truly enthusiastic to stick with important projects and become specialists. Sir Bob, his co-reformer, believes central government needs to learn from the best local authorities, encouraging people and agencies to cross established boundaries and work more effectively.

Some of the new thinking is imported from New Zealand which, under successive Labour and National Party governments in the late 1980s and early 1990s, transformed its officialdom. This included removing guaranteed tenure and issuing the heads and deputy heads of departments with performance agreements, on pain of being removed if they failed to make the grade. But British ministers are keen to avoid outright clashes at the moment, not least because Ian

Watmore, a senior Whitehall figure Mr Cameron initially favoured, recently resigned amid rumours of disagreements over the reforms.

If one goal of the rethink is to ginger up officials another is to make the system more transparent and civil servants themselves less shadowy figures. Henceforth, it will be proposed, important policies will have the names of key officials attached to them, so civil servants will more easily be held responsible for their success. The reforms are also likely to give new powers to parliamentary select committees to hold senior officials to account.

There is an element in all this of wanting to shift the blame for ministerial mis-hits, such as a proposed holiday from national-insurance payments for small firms, which has had low take-up. Too many such ideas, ministers say, are poorly followed through. But others point out that bad policy calls—such as the “pasty tax” on warm food (now revoked), or the unpopular move to limit tax relief on charitable donations (under review)—are matters of political judgment. They will remain so, even if civil servants undergo a Promethean transition to optimum efficacy. [...]

The result of these combined endeavours, says Peter Riddell of the Institute for Government, a think-tank, “won’t be ambitious pyrotechnics, but will make a real impact on how government is delivered”. Mr Cameron has lost his most spirited ally in his attempt to remake Whitehall. His record on remaking the state will now rest on reforms being driven through by two figures at the top of the service he set out to change. Sir Humphrey would have been most amused by that.



## **Owen Jones: It's time to demolish the myth about Tony Blair**

**His defenders argue Labour couldn't have won without him but Black Wednesday in 1992 finished off the Tories**

*The Independent* Friday 01 June 2012

You will struggle to find more devout supporters of Tony Blair than those at the top of the Conservative leadership. "I can't hold it back any more; I love Tony!" Michael Gove once exclaimed. David Cameron famously described himself as "the heir to Blair", and senior Tories refer to him as "The Master". "His influence is very firmly felt," a senior Tory told *The Times*. "He's like the footballer Cristiano Ronaldo – gone but still greatly admired." Screaming teenagers at Take That concerts in the mid-1990s come to mind.

As Blair took to the Leveson Inquiry this week, his admirers went a bit weak at the knees. Blair is certainly an exceptional public performer: indeed, he is something of a natural. When he was at the public school Fettes, teachers described him as "a complete pain in the backside", but he excelled at acting. Along with Cameron, he is rare among British Prime Ministers for his polished charisma; although, unlike the current Tory occupant of No 10, he never looks like an artery risks bursting when he is under fire.

But the Tories really love Blair not because of his undoubted political skills, but because they think he was "one of us", albeit trapped by the Labour Party. In his first joust with Blair after taking over as Conservative leader, Cameron offered to support him against his own party over his policy of marketising comprehensive education. "With our support, the Prime Minister knows there is no danger of losing these education reforms in a Parliamentary vote," Cameron crooned, mocking Labour backbenchers. "So he can afford to be as bold as he wants to be." And, in reality, Labour's current opposition to what the Coalition is doing is hobbled by the fact that Blair laid the foundation for so much of it.

Take the privatisation of the NHS. Under Blair, private sector involvement began to flourish and a commercial directorate was set up in the Department of Health. Gove is now expanding Blair's Academy schools programme, and free schools are a logical extension of them. The Coalition trebled the tuition fees that Blair introduced. Across public services, Blair expanded the role of the private sector – though not as fast as he would have liked, thanks to internal party opposition. But Cameron is taking this "reform" (the Blairite and Tory code word for "privatisation") ever further. "Public sector reform" has come up in the many conversations Blair has apparently had with Cameron, and I'm sure the ex-PM has had much advice to offer.

In his memoirs, Blair effectively backed Cameron's cuts programme, and argued that Conservatives would "be at their best when they are allowed to get on with it – as with reforms in education". "They will be at their worst" not when their cuts would be hammering communities Labour exists to represent – but rather when they were first to compromise with "the Old Labour instincts of the Lib Dems". If we were to define "Cameronism", it would surely be Blairism liberated from the shackles of the Labour Party.

Unlike Clement Attlee and Margaret Thatcher, Blair failed to establish a new political consensus. He accepted the fundamentals of the Thatcher settlement: low taxes on the wealthy, weak trade unions, the dominance of the market over all. His great departure from Thatcherism was a desperately needed boost to spending on public services. Nothing remains of this as a principle in British politics. It is left to arch-critics of Blair like myself to defend a big chunk of his government's economic record from his own supporters. And contrast how the poorest fared with previous Labour governments. Four years before the crash, the income of the bottom third began declining. Under the Labour governments of the 1960s – which Blair delighted in defining

NOM :

PRENOM :

SIGNATURE

himself against – the poorest 10 per cent saw their real incomes surge by 26 per cent, compared with a 16 per cent rise in median incomes.

It was the murderous invasion of Iraq – described by former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan as "illegal" – that, for many, makes Blair unforgivable rather than a mere disappointment. [...] His defenders argue that Labour could not have won without him. It is a myth. Black Wednesday in 1992 finished off the Tories, and Labour enjoyed subsequent massive poll leads under John Smith. Of the five million votes that Labour lost in its 13 years in power, four million went awol under Blair's leadership. It wasn't so-called "Middle England" that deserted the party. According to Ipsos MORI, while middle-class professional support for Labour declined by five percentage points between 1997 and 2010, support among skilled workers plummeted by 21 per cent. His influence is certainly "very firmly felt" among his adoring Tory fans, as they build on the foundations he laid. But Labour's leaders would be best advised to leave the swooning to Cameron's acolytes. Blair was fortunate to lead Labour just as Tory Britain imploded; but the old Blairite formula offers nothing to those who want a real alternative to the Conservative crusade.

## **Greens warn of a return to era of 'dirty coal'**

Coal-fired power stations trialling 'carbon capture' technology could be exempt from regulations

Matt Chorley, *The Independent*, Sunday 27 May 2012

A new generation of coal-fired power stations will be built without permanent curbs on emissions, say green groups, who warn that a "whopping loophole" risks a new age of pollution. Ed Davey, the Energy Secretary, claimed last week that his reforms "will ensure we can keep the lights on, bills down and the air clean". His department boasted that the Draft Energy Bill will "provide a regulatory backstop to prevent construction of new coal plants which emit more than 450g/kWh".

But buried in the fine print was confirmation that new coal-fired power stations will in fact not be subject to the coalition's carbon cap, known as the Emissions Performance Standard (EPS), provided they trial a carbon capture and storage (CCS) system. The Department of Energy and Climate Change this weekend admitted that if the largely untested and expensive CCS technology fails, the power station will go on polluting. "We will consider the circumstances at the time," a spokesman said. Environmentalists seized on the revelation, claiming ministers had caved into the coal industry and allowed it to avoid limits on emissions that contribute to climate change. There are 14 coal-fired power stations currently in the UK. In November, North Ayrshire Council rejected plans for a new plant at Hunterston.

Joss Garman, a senior campaigner for Greenpeace, said ending the era of dirty coal had been a flagship pledge from both parties in the coalition. "But now the Lib Dem Energy Secretary, Ed Davey, seems to have slipped the coal industry a whopping loophole that could mean some of the most polluting power stations known to man could be built in the UK and exempted from pollution controls.

"David Cameron and Nick Clegg must step in and put right this mess of a policy to make sure we don't see the spectre of highly polluting coal plants like Kingsnorth return."

Under the EPS, no new power station can release more than 450g of CO<sub>2</sub> per kWh until 2045, after which it is hoped the figure will come down. But official DECC documents show how some coal-fired plants will be able to avoid the cap. They state: "Provision is made... to except from the requirements of the EPS plants which form part of the UK's CCS commercialisation programme."

However, the idea of capturing the carbon in emissions from power plants is in its infancy and has yet to be proven on a commercial scale. In October Chris Huhne, the then Energy Secretary, cancelled a £1bn CCS project at Longannet in Scotland in a row over funding. It was the last scheme of its kind in the running for public money. The UK's first CCS pilot, a small £20m project in Yorkshire, opened just last November.

Carbon capture and storage works by burying the carbon in the ground. According to the International Energy Agency, it could provide a fifth of the carbon cuts needed by 2050.

But it is expensive, and while the US, Canada and Australia have significant plants, there is none of significance in Europe. Unless or until there is a breakthrough, which brings the cost of CCS at least down to the value placed on carbon, it is unlikely to play a significant part in Britain. The DECC said it remained "confident CCS will work" and "in the long run could remove a significant amount of the UK's CO<sub>2</sub> emissions created by energy generation". The spokesman denied there was a loophole, adding: "It is possible a very limited number of projects could be built as part of the CCS commercialisation programme that will not be subject to the EPS. This exemption will allow us the flexibility to select the best projects to take us to a new CCS industry as quickly as possible and at best value. The sooner we get CCS proven at the large scale, the sooner we can use it to reduce emissions across the power sector."

## Song of the suicide bomber: How 'Babur in London' negotiated a cultural minefield

The daring new opera featuring British terrorists planning an attack is being staged next month. Arifa Akbar, *The Independent*, Thursday 31 May 2012

"My name is Mo, short for Mohammed,/ I'm a second-generation immigrant cliché: Twenty-eight, disenfranchised, well educated./ My mother is white, but I'm all Paki./ My father owns a corner shop where I work,/ And I owe my allegiance to global Umma./ My nation's the Republic of Islam."

So sings Mo, one of four aspiring suicide bombers in the cast of *Babur in London*, a daring new opera that tackles modern-day terrorism as well as the legacy of ancient Indian history in its libretto. The production is named after Babur, a warrior who founded the Mughal Empire in India in the 16th century, and who was a famously brutal warlord as well as a brilliant poet.

The chamber piece, which begins its UK tour on 12 June after opening in Zurich earlier this year, follows the lives of four radicalised British-Asian characters from a London suburb – Mo, Faiz, Nafisa and Saira – as they meet the ghostly spectre of Babur, debate with him such concepts as Jihad, war, the afterlife and the Islamic ban on alcohol, and finally carry out their deadly attack. Some characters wear Western dress while others are in traditional Islamic attire including the hijab, and the stage set is a symbolic, debris-strewn landscape of disused water bottles.

Jeet Thayil, the Indian poet and musician, had long wanted to bring the legendary figure of Babur back to life for modern audiences, but it was when he discussed the project with the composer Edward Rushton and director John Fulljames – soon after the Mumbai terror attacks – that they decided to incorporate the theme of suicide bombings into the libretto.

The production team was aware of political sensitivities and the danger of sensationalism so they entered into lengthy discussions with scholars of Islam as well as the counter-terrorism think tank Quilliam Foundation, before they drafted singers and embarked on rehearsals. There will also be a series of accompanying workshops in some cities including London and Bradford which will explore some of the questions that the opera raises, as well as pre- and post-show debates.

The opera signals a growing readiness for artists to handle the incendiary theme of contemporary terrorism in their work. It follows a recent, critically feted debut novel *Ours Are the Streets*, by the British Asian author Sunjeev Sahota, about a would-be suicide bomber who is writing a diary as a final love letter to his wife – a white British convert to Islam – and his child, as he prepares to die in the name of Islamic Jihad. Meanwhile, Chris Morris's film satire *Four Lions*, featuring a group of bungling suicide bombers, won praise from Moazzam Begg, a former detainee at Guantanamo Bay.

Fulljames, director of *Babur in London*, felt this was a legitimate subject for opera to handle, and dismissed the idea that the production might offend sensibilities in Britain, in spite of the London terror attacks which claimed 52 lives in 2005. "The headline on the tin inevitably has something sensational about it... and in dealing with a subject like this, we were anxious [about audience response] but in the end, we talked in detail about what the piece was, and what became clear when we premiered it in Switzerland was that it was seen as a beautiful, thoughtful, delicate piece of work, with nothing sensational about it."

The production is a collaboration between Opera North and The Opera Group (TOG); the latter has been responsible for previous controversial operas featuring dementia and climate change as their main themes – they staged *The Lion's Face* in 2010 which explored the emotional and

NOM :

PRENOM :

SIGNATURE

physical impact of Alzheimer's disease, and a year later, *Seven Angels*, which drew inspiration from Milton's *Paradise Lost* to reflect on environmental dangers.

Fulljames, who is also the former artistic director of TOG, says he passionately believes that opera should be part of the contemporary world, and so should not avoid grappling with current-day themes. "I think opera needs to be part of the cultural landscape. The conversation around it should be the same conversation we are having in our cities. If we only make opera about martians who live on the moon, then it's deeply unsatisfactory."

## Osborne threatens referendum over place in the EU

Warning comes after Germany rejects demands for immediate action to save euro  
Nigel Morris, Tony Patterson, *The Independent*, Friday 08 June 2012

George Osborne delighted Tory MPs yesterday – and fired a shot across the bow of European leaders – as he signalled that ministers were prepared to call a referendum over Britain's place in the European Union.

The Chancellor also warned that the Government was ready to wield its veto in Brussels if there was an attempt to impose fresh controls on British banks as a result of moves to tackle the deepening eurozone crisis. He spoke out after David Cameron returned from talks in Berlin with the German Chancellor, Angela Merkel, at which she rejected Britain's demands that Germany come up with an immediate plan of action to prevent the implosion of the euro. He is pressing for Germany to take decisive action within weeks to rescue such beleaguered economies as Greece and Spain and shore up the currency. But she told him that it would "take years" to fix the single currency's problems.

Britain strengthened its rhetoric over Europe yesterday after months of demands from Tory MPs to use the chaos to stage a referendum on British membership of the EU. The Coalition's policy is to stage a nationwide vote only if there is any attempt to transfer power from Britain to Brussels.

But in remarks that were aimed as much at EU leaders as the Tory right-wingers, Mr Osborne suggested that could happen if negotiations over the eurozone resulted in a "reshaped relationship with Europe". He said: "A reshaped relationship with Europe would imply, would involve, a transfer of sovereignty or powers to Brussels. I think we have a very clear safeguard in the system now, thanks to this Government.

"If there is any transfer of power from this country, transfer of competence or transfer of sovereignty from this country to the European Union, then there will be a referendum."

Although Mr Osborne said there was a "remorseless logic" to creating "something more akin to a banking union or a financial union" among eurozone members, he made clear Britain would not be part of it.

In a warning that the country would use its veto to prevent fresh curbs on the City of London, he said: "Let me be absolutely clear: there is no way that Britain is going to be part of that banking union. We are not part of the eurozone. We chose not to join the euro, precisely because of the loss of national sovereignty that would be involved, the loss of flexibility to manage our banks in the way we wanted to, to manage our public finances in the way we wanted to."

Mr Cameron went to the Berlin talks with Barack Obama's backing to urge Ms Merkel to come up with an "immediate plan" to put the brake on the crisis sparked by spiralling Greek debt and Spain's continuing inability to recapitalise its banks to the tune of €80bn (£65bn).

The need for action was brought into sharper focus last night as Fitch, the ratings agency, downgraded Spain's sovereign debt rating three notches, from A to BBB. The agency said the likelihood of external financial support is rising. Fitch also said Spain's financing difficulties will make it hard for it to intervene decisively in a banking-sector restructuring and raise the likelihood of outside external help.

Mr Cameron urged Ms Merkel to accept the introduction of eurobonds to provide an immediate remedy, but Ms Merkel gave no sign that Germany was prepared to alter its opposition to eurobonds. She told Mr Cameron: "It is human to think that the euro crisis could be solved in

NOM :

PRENOM :

SIGNATURE

one fell swoop, but I don't think this would work. The euro crisis developed over 10 years and it is going to take several years before we can repair the system and make it viable again."

Mr Cameron told reporters after the meeting: "I am pressing the case for action to solve the financial crisis, recapitalise the banks and build the big firewall to get growth going. All these things need to happen." In a television interview given earlier, Ms Merkel stressed the need for far greater convergence in Europe at all levels.

"We need not just a currency union, we also need a so-called fiscal union with more common budget policies," she said. "We need above all a political union. That means we must give up powers to Europe."

SERIE LETTRES ET ARTS ANGLAIS A  
NOM : PRENOM

SERIE LETTRES ET ARTS  
ANGLAIS  
ANALYSE LV1 TEXTE HORS  
PROGRAMME

**Government asked: Why are you allowing 'tainted' G4S to handle Olympic security?**

Donald Macintyre reveals the growing row about a company which also works in the West Bank's 'illegal' Jewish settlements

Donald Macintyre *The Independent*, Friday 08 June 2012-06-08

The government will be challenged in parliament next week over the services provided in Israeli settlements within occupied Palestinian territory by the company chosen to run security for London 2012.

G4S, designated as "official provider of security and cash services for the Olympics," also operates in Jewish settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem, seen by the UK – and nearly all other countries represented at the Games – as illegal in international law.

The prominent businessman and Labour peer Lord Hollick will table a written question on Monday asking ministers what steps they have taken to ensure that the UK-based company does not provide security services in illegal settlements in the West Bank. G4S, which bills itself the "world's leading international security solutions group" has already taken on 10,400 new employees for the Olympics.

The move follows fresh international condemnation of Israel's settlement expansion, which the Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, is determined to continue. This week he announced plans – swiftly denounced by the US – to build another 850 Jewish homes in the West Bank to compensate for the evacuation ordered by the Supreme Court of an outpost housing 30 families. William Hague has repeatedly condemned the settlements, saying in April that "systematic, illegal Israeli settlement activity poses the most significant and live threat to the viability of the two-state solution... the Israeli government's policy is illegal under international law, counter-productive, destabilising and provocative."

G4S has already been criticised for providing and maintaining screening equipment for several West Bank military checkpoints. It also provides security systems at the Ofer complex near Ramallah – which houses a jail and military court at which Palestinian detainees, including children, are held and tried – and at the West Bank police headquarters in the E1 corridor linking the large settlement of Maale Adumim with Jerusalem. The construction of the latter was strongly opposed by the international community, including the Bush administration in the US. In response to pressure the company has decided to "exit" the contracts covering Ofer, the checkpoints and the West Bank police HQ, though it says it will not be able to complete that process before 2015. However, it says that contracts with Israeli retailers and with banks operating in the settlements will remain intact, as will some for home security systems. G4S installs and maintains alarm systems in retail and other commercial outlets in the West Bank and provides a "small number" of security officers to "prevent theft of items in transit or within retail stores".

In the ultra-orthodox settlement of Modiin Illit this week, a uniformed security guard, wearing the company's insignia, was working in the local branch of the Zol Veshefa, a nationwide Israeli supermarket chain; its logo was also displayed at the Yesh Hakol Vebezol store. The two stores serve the settlement's 46,000 Jewish residents. The company, which could not say what proportion of its Israeli subsidiary's £120m revenue last year was taken in the West Bank, also took part last year in a career day at Ariel College, in the settlement of Ariel.

The detention of prisoners, along with the checkpoints, was highlighted in a 2010 report by the Co-operative's asset management arm, which said G4S had fallen foul of the "proximity to human rights abuses" criterion of those of its funds that are ethically screened. G4S said: "Our policy is always to comply with national law in any jurisdiction in which we operate. We take our ethical responsibilities very seriously and operate to high standards around the world." In



SERIE LETTRES ET ARTS ANGLAIS ANALYSE LV1 TEXTE HORS PROGRAMMES  
NOM : PRENOM : SIGNATURE

March 2011 it had engaged a Danish international law professor, Hjalte Rasmussen, who examined its West Bank operations and concluded that G4S "did not violate any national or international law". A subsequent management review found that "a number of our contracts with private enterprises for traditional security and alarm monitoring services were not discriminatory or controversial and... helped to provide safety and security for the general public no matter what their background".

In fact Palestinians are barred by the military from entering Israeli settlements without permits. Emily Schaeffer, an Israeli human rights attorney, said yesterday that the company's non-discrimination claim was a "red herring", adding: "Even if it were true that businesses in settlements were equally accessible to Palestinians... the mere presence of Israeli civilian settlement, residential and commercial, in occupied territory is unequivocally a violation of international law." [...]

NOM :

PRENOM :

**Plan B's Ill Manors: Mean streets at the movies**

**The rapper-come-director's new film explores the urban tensions that led to last summer's riots – and he's not the only one finding cinematic inspiration in social unrest**

Geoffrey Macnab, *The Independent*, Thursday 31 May 2012

Plan B's debut feature *Ill Manors* (which premiered in London last night) was conceived long before last summer's London riots. Nonetheless, it is one of a number of recent films that have looked at social deprivation and urban unrest on screen. Given the upheaval around the world, with protesters taking to the streets everywhere from Greece to Egypt, it is understandable that filmmakers are trying to capture the anger of the disenfranchised. For the first time since the aftermath of the riots in Paris in 1968, there is evidence that cinema – and music, if the new riots-inspired video for Jay-Z and Kanye West's song "No Church In The Wild" is anything to go by – is taking to the barricades.

The films that are being made are often as inchoate as the events that inspire them. The anger that runs through them is apparent. More questionable is what they hope to achieve. Some are polemical, some are high-testosterone action films, some are grimly realist dramas... and there are even one or two comedies.

Egyptian actor-filmmaker Amr Waked (recently in *Salmon Fishing In The Yemen*) has just completed a movie about the events leading up to the Egyptian revolution. When he embarked on the project, it was called *R For Revolution* and was shot through with a sense of optimism and idealism. A year on, he has retitled the film to *Winter Of Discontent* to reflect, he says, the "dark turn" the revolution has taken.

On a lighter (albeit still macabre note) note, British writer-director Stuart Urban, best known for *Our Friends in the North*, recently finished *May I Kill U?*, a very dark comedy set against the backdrop of the London riots. Baz (Barry Vartis), a well-meaning cycle cop, suffers head injuries as the unrest breaks out in London. These injuries change his personality, turning him from a genial PC Dixon type into a psychopathic vigilante who administers his own brand of murderous justice to looters and criminals. He records the killings on helmet cam and then posts them online, inevitably building up a huge following.

*Ill Manors* is far darker in tone. Its characters are dealers, crack addicts and street thugs in Forest Gate, east London. There are some horrendously grim moments – the prostitute led from kebab shop to kebab shop to sell her body and pay off a drug debt, the doe-eyed teenager mistakenly killed, the kids in the playground encouraged to beat up their mates. In interviews, Ben Drew has insisted the film is simply showing the reality of a Britain in which the underclass has been demonised. From the *Dead End Kids* to Robert De Niro in *Mean Streets*, filmmakers have long been drawn to telling the stories of socially deprived delinquents. French filmmaker Mathieu Kassovitz tackled similar themes in *La Haine* (1995), about three friends in the banlieue of Paris, dealing with racism and police brutality. The decision to screen it earlier this month in Tottenham, the area of London where last year's riots kicked off after the death of Mark Duggan, reveals that the film has lost none of its relevance in the last 17 years. Some of these films have been excellent. However, it is not at all easy for filmmakers to portray urban unrest. If they're too polemical, they're accused of preaching. If their protagonists are charismatic, they risk being accused of glamorising violence. If they're too downbeat, their movies will be shunned. What is clear, though, is that if the street unrest continues, so will the movies that draw on it.

Série LV  
Anglais LV1

## Britain's imperial echoes have led it to a ruinous decade of wars

*The UK has been belligerent to the Muslim world – while not being threatened by any state*

Simon Jenkins / *The Guardian* / 27 December 2011



British and Afghan forces on patrol in Afghanistan's Helmand province. Photograph: Sean Smith for the Guardian

What do Britons "want" in the coming year? An ambassador to Washington was once asked the question on radio and replied, "That's very kind of you, a box of candied fruits would do." Such humble responses are now out of date. As the season of goodwill slithers into that of New Year's resolution, the urge to tell the world how to behave seems uncontrollable. We can suppress a yawn at David Cameron's sermon on Christian values and Ed Miliband claiming the Helmand army is making Britain "secure, peaceful and happy". More troubling is the foreign secretary, William Hague's, declaration on Facebook of a Christmas ambition to increase "international pressure on Syria ... push Burma in the right direction ... improve the situation in Somalia ... and protect women's rights in the Middle East" among other uplifting goals. [...]

5 Britain's assumption of an ancestral role in passing judgment on Kipling's "lesser tribes without the law" seems genetically embedded. Hague might as well have been quoting from *The White Man's Burden*, how he must "fill full the mouth of famine / And bid the sickness cease", even if it meant watching "sloth and heathen Folly / Bring all your hopes to nought". His tour of the horizon boasted of "saving lives" in Libya, but he was more detached over Syria. He glided past Iraq, Iran and Afghanistan, preferring the clearer ethical waters of Sudan, Somalia, Burma and Muslim women's rights. None of the areas of Hague's concern had anything to do with Britain, let alone being within Britain's

10 sovereign domain, nor have they been for over half a century. The power has gone. The legitimacy has departed. Only the language of implied command echoes through the Foreign Office's post-imperial dusk. That echo is far from an irrelevance. It has conditioned surely the most catastrophic decade in British foreign policy since the 1930s. Another soldier died in Helmand over Christmas, where soldiers will go on dying, to no clear purpose, until 2014. Another hundred Iraqis died in Baghdad bombings, the outcome of Britain's shared incompetence in

15 restructuring Iraq. Meanwhile, around 5,000 have died in Syria, screaming against the double standard that toppled regimes in oil-rich Iraq and Libya but leaves Syria to empty sanctions and emptier rhetoric. Over this last decade Britain's national sovereignty has not been remotely threatened by any other state, yet its government has adopted a stance of hectoring and often open belligerence towards much of the Muslim world. British forces have been sent to ill-judged and ineptly fought wars that have left British cities in a state of perpetual terrorist

20 alert. It is hard to think of any gain to Britain's foreign interests that has come from these wars – apart from a possible anticipated oil deal in Libya. The reason goes back in part to Lady Thatcher's commitment to "hug close" to Washington in the later years of the cold war. The hug came to be a suicide embrace, since most of the subsequent mistakes have derived from America's over-reaction to 9/11, leading to mendacious excuses and wars of regime change and destabilisation. Whatever the evils of

25 the Ba'athist and Taliban regimes, they cannot have justified such colossal loss of life, dislocation and destruction. Today we hear the same warlike language towards Iran. Do we really think the security of the region or the lot of the Iranian people can possibly be improved by future British or US military action? The Libyan intervention removed a dictator at relatively small cost, but how is that Nato's business, any more than it is to dispose of dictators in Africa and Asia? [...]

30 I begin to wonder. The west's readiness to resort to violence in the aftermath of the cold war suggests something more sinister. The publicity now accorded to political oppression anywhere in the world is a standing *casus belli* for the military elites of Nato, the UN, the US and Britain. Not a day passes without some global horror being presented to the west's interventionists with a demand that "something must be done". Pity is a noble urge, but its effect is not always wise. Contemplating the outcome of the second world war, Hannah Arendt warned pity could "possess a greater capacity for cruelty than cruelty itself". It becomes the ubiquitous pretext, the excuse. How often is the cruelty of Saddam or the Taliban used to justify western atrocities in Iraq and Afghanistan? How many more Syrians must die, a BBC reporter asks, "before we do something?" The something is, of course, the ever desirable war. Most citizens regard war as a car crash, a random, irrational event that just happens. They do not see it as the outcome of a political process to which as democrats they are party. War may still be occasioned by pity, clothed in the language of humanitarianism,

35 but it has become a casual, media-guided and exploited pity. A lot of people have a lot of money at stake in pity, and it goes far beyond the UN's emergency relief fund. Hence the suspicion that the obsession of so many Britons with past violence and present cruelty is no longer deterring them from risking its repetition, but the opposite. It makes them ready, almost eager, for more. The path from the cosy interventionism of a Christmas-tide foreign secretary to the sabre rattling, drone-killing, suicide bombing and

40 destruction of the last decade is not as wide as might seem. Such intervention is not so much the white man's burden as his morbid thrill.

45

50

## Is The Iron Lady's heart of gold quite right?

Phyllida Lloyd's Margaret Thatcher biopic has proved so infuriating to so many by insisting on the humanity of the Tories

David Cox / The Guardian / 9 January 2012



Warming the bench ... Meryl Streep as Margaret Thatcher in *The Iron Lady*

### SERIE LANGUES VIVANTES ANGLAIS ANALYSE LV1 TEXTE HORS PROGRAMME

Those of a leftist persuasion sometimes like to demonise their opponents. Famously, Aneurin Bevan considered all Tories "lower than vermin". Margaret Thatcher seems to rank even lower than that. On the Guardian site alone, discussion of the current biopic has seen her termed a "vile hateful witch", a "nasty spoilt bitch" and "an evil, evil woman". In less elevated forums, even blunter assessments have been offered.

5 So it's understandable that Meryl Streep's interpretation has displeased the Baroness's critics as much as her admirers. Like many earlier screen treatments of the Thatcher saga, *The Iron Lady* is disobligingly reluctant to monster its subject. This time, she's presented not just as fully human but as really quite appealing.

10 Naturally, the depiction of her current affliction inspires sympathy, yet it's the film's handling of her previous character that's impossible to square with the fiend envisioned by her detractors. We see a dotting daughter, a besotted wife, a mother who loves her son too much and a prime minister who weeps for fallen servicemen. We're shown a woman who can be stubborn, rude and wrong-headed but who's nonetheless prepared to sacrifice much for (what she believes to be) the betterment of others.

15 This isn't a picture you'll welcome if you think Thatcher must be branded an ogre, but it seems accurate enough. Those who knew her in office have testified to her common decency. She was, reportedly, "always incredibly kind to her friends and the girls who worked for her", making sure everyone at Downing Street and Chequers had a Christmas present. She was "empathetic and compassionate", offering comfort to visitors in need of it. She was "funny" and "playful", but distraught when Mark, her son, went missing in the Sahara, and (as in the film) devastated by the assassination of Airey Neave.

20 Yet Thatcher isn't alone on the right in displaying a bit of humanity. Indeed it sometimes seems as if this quality is in shorter supply on the left. With whom would you rather go on holiday? Verminous Churchill or dear old Nye [Bevan]? Boris or Ken? Cameron might even have it over Ed Miliband, let alone Brown, Balls or Mandelson. Inconceivable as this may seem to some, those who are ideologically incorrect can actually be quite nice. Why shouldn't they be?

25 Progressives like to equate their own cause with righteousness, but all rightwingers aren't out simply to protect privilege. Some are as eager as their rivals to benefit the disadvantaged, but have a different view of what this will entail. Thatcher wanted the downtrodden to be liberated; she had little time for the undeserving rich. It's quite hard to convince yourself that Iain Duncan Smith is out to grind the faces of the poor just for the fun of it. The relative modesty of the right's political project leaves scope for human feeling. If you're out to conserve rather than transform, you can take a more relaxed view of things. If you're already doing nicely, you'll be less prone to envy and resentment and may be softened by guilt or noblesse oblige.

30 On the left, things are different. The justice of the cause brooks no sentimental aberration. Love of the human race may preclude love for actual human beings, as Dickens noted 150 years ago when he invented Mrs Jellyby. Even lefties need to beware lefties. The critic Philip Hope-Wallace was sagely advised by his dad: "Never work for a liberal employer, dear boy: they'll sack you on Christmas Eve."

35 In 2010, two Canadian psychologists studying the behaviour of consumers found that those insisting on planet-friendly products were more likely to steal and lie and less likely to be kind to others. They put this down to "compensatory ethics". Apparently, "virtuous acts can license subsequent asocial and unethical behaviours".

40 Whatever you may think of the milk snatcher herself, you couldn't accuse her of compensatory ethics. Ere long, those eager to dance on her grave will doubtless get their chance. More, however, will probably mourn. Not just those who think she saved the nation, but others who, like the makers of *The Iron Lady*, have noticed she can be quite a likable old stick.

## We Tories must conserve our compassion

*The Conservative approach to poverty is the only game in town, with Labour leaving nothing to spend on the state*  
Tim Montgomerie / The Guardian / 7 December 2011



*'Every pound spent early in a child's life goes much further than a pound spent when a child is going wrong.' Photograph: britstock images ltd/Alamy/Alamy*

5 The conventional wisdom is that austerity is killing David Cameron's compassionate conservatism. The consensus is that his kinder, gentler message cannot survive six years of cuts, cuts and more cuts. In reality the Conservative approach to poverty is the only game in town. With the Treasury empty there's no money for Labour's spend, spend, spend approach. It has to be the Tory belief in family, education and work.

10 This is a massive moment for Labour. It is no wonder Ed Miliband is so reluctant to embrace fiscal conservatism. He knows that social conservatism has to follow. The public finances don't just challenge his economic policies. They raise profound questions about his party's whole approach to social justice. In recent decades the left became the materialists of British politics. Whatever the problem, the answer was always the same. More spending. More benefits. More public sector workers. More subsidies of alternative energy. But big government has reached the ceiling of its ambition. The state is consuming 50% of national income. In parts of the UK, government accounts for two-thirds of spending. This oxygen-eating monster leaves little room for private enterprise or independently functioning family life – both better and more sustainable providers of income and care. The Brown years added up to the biggest attempted gerrymander in

15 British political history. Labour threw billions at public sector workers in an attempt to buy their allegiance. They also manufactured a complex and extensive benefits system to build support among the whole population. More and more people were dragged into the government's net. British taxpayers could finance this during the good years. Now it's financed by Chinese banks. Some leftwingers cling to the idea that higher taxes for the rich can fund even more Sovietisation of the economy and society. They are wrong. There is modest room to increase tax on property but not

20 much. Money can flee to jurisdictions that do not have the deficits and demographic challenges of indebted, aged Europe. The great truth is that government has to get smaller.

25 Compassionate conservatism has always aimed to produce a more compassionate Conservative party; but a second and less discussed objective has been to produce a more conservative compassion. It is this half of the project that is by far the most important. Ask British people how to beat poverty and they are on the Conservative side. According to a YouGov survey for Policy Exchange, only 3% believe that higher benefits are the best way of beating poverty. Reducing unemployment, cutting tax on low earners and improving education are seen as 10 times more important. Downing Street's internal polling confirms that the coalition's welfare reforms are by far its most popular policies: introducing the benefit cap; reducing the cost of housing benefit; reducing the gap between public and private sector remuneration.

30 There is no room for a war on the state in this analysis. Compassionate conservatism is about a more focused state, not wild libertarianism. Voters object to welfare going to the undeserving but want the old, sick and disabled properly cared for. Cameron and Osborne understand this. Pensions have just risen by a record amount. The NHS has escaped the cuts. New independent medical tests have been introduced so that false claimants do not bring disability benefits into disrepute.

35 There are other roles for the state. Government must be focused on helping people build habits of independence. That means more parenting education and vocational training; and jobs must always pay more than welfare. If the coalition has started well it hasn't been radical enough. Preventative policies that encourage strong families are lucky to get a few thousand pounds while billions are spent on expensive remedies for broken families. Every pound spent early in a child's life goes much further than a pound spent when a child is going wrong, but the government has

40 dedicated trivial sums to early intervention. The unemployment crisis is the gravest crisis the country faces but the response has consisted of half-measures. Radical changes to employment law, national insurance and regulation are still needed.

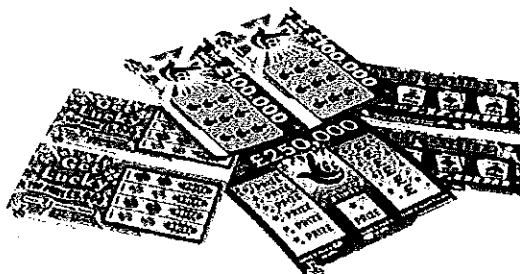
45 This period in politics is a profoundly conservative moment and right-of-centre parties are flourishing across the globe. In good times people can afford ambitious leftwing governments who are often careless with money. Not now. Yesterday's British Social Attitudes Survey found that most voters think unemployment benefits are too high. There is little support for higher taxes. When there's no more money there has to be more family. More voluntarism. More charity. More social enterprise. More literacy. More numeracy. More traditional skills. More private sector jobs. More compassionate conservatism.

Comment is free

## Instead of being disgusted by poverty, we are disgusted by poor people themselves

*Empathy has crashed. No more cruel to be kind. We must simply be cruel.*

Suzanne Moore, The Guardian, 16 February 2012



She is there whenever I go the shops. Every time I think she can't get any more skeletal, she manages it. Wild eyes staring in different directions, she must have been pretty once. I try not to look, for she is often aggressive. Sometimes, though, she is in my face and asking me to go into the shop, from which she has been banned, to buy her something. A scratchcard. She feels lucky. "Maybe some food?" I suggest pointlessly, but food is not what she craves. Food is not

crack. Or luck. She has already lost every lottery going.

10 An addict is the author of their own misfortune. Her poverty is self-inflicted. All these hopeless people: where do they all come from? It is, of course, possible never to really see them, as their distress is so distressing. Who needs it? Poverty, we are often told, is not "actual", because people have TVs. This gradual erosion of empathy is the triumph of an economic climate in which everyone, addicted or not, is personally responsible for their own lack of achievement. Poor people are not simply people like us, but with less

15 money: they are an entirely different species. Their poverty is a personal failing. They have let themselves go. This now applies not just to individuals but to entire countries. Look at the Greeks! What were they thinking with their pensions and minimum wage? That they were like us? Out of the flames, they are now told to rise, phoenix-like, by a rich political elite. Perhaps they can grow money on trees? Meanwhile, in the US, as this week's shocking *Panorama* showed, people are living in tents or underground

20 in drains. These ugly people, with ulcers, hernias and bad teeth, are the flipside of the American dream. Trees twist through abandoned civic buildings and factories, while the Republican candidates, an ID parade of Grecian 2000 suspects, bang on about tax cuts for the 1% who own a fifth of America's wealth. To see the *Grapes of Wrath* recast among post-apocalyptic cityscapes is scary. Huge cognitive dissonance is required to cheerlead for the rich while 47 million citizens live in conditions close to those in the developing world.

25 This contradiction is also one of the few things we in the UK are good at producing. I heard a radio interview recently with a depressed young man with three A-levels (yes, in properly Govian subjects) who had been unemployed for three years. The response of listeners was that he was lazy and should try harder. Samuel Beckett's "fail better" comes to mind. Understanding what three years of unemployment does to a young person does not produce a job, any more than the scratchcard will change a crackhead's life. But pure condemnation is divisive. This fear and loathing of those at the bottom is deeply disturbing. [...]

30 Our disgust at the poor is tempered only by our sentimentality about children. They are innocent. We feel charitable. Not enough, perhaps, as a *Save the Children* report tells us that one in four children in developing countries are too malnourished to grow properly. Still, malnourishment isn't starvation, just as anyone who has a mobile phone isn't properly hard-up. Difficult to stomach maybe, but isn't all this the fault of the countries they live in?

35 At what point, though, can we no longer avoid the poor, our own and the global poor? Or, indeed, avoid the concept that frightens the left as much as the right: redistribution, of wealth, resources, labour, working hours. Whither the left? Busy pretending that there is a way round this, a lot of the time. The idea that ultimately the poor must help themselves as social mobility grinds to a halt is illogical; it is

40 based on a faith for which there is scant evidence. Yet it is the one thing that has genuinely "trickled down" from the wealthy, so that many people without much themselves continue to despise those who are on a lower rung. The answer to poverty, you see, lies with the poor themselves, be they drain-dwellers, Greeks, disabled people, or unemployed youth. We will give them bailouts, maybe charity, and lectures on becoming more entrepreneurial. The economy of empathy has crashed, and this putsch is insidious and individualised.

45 No more cruel to be kind. We must be simply cruel. The argument that there is enough to go round is now a fairytale, like winning the lottery. Poverty is not a sign of collective failure but individual immorality. The psychic coup of neo-liberal thinking is just this: instead of being disgusted by poverty, we are disgusted by poor people themselves. This disgust is a growth industry. We lay this moral bankruptcy at the feet of the poor as we tell ourselves we are better than that.

## Olympics 2012 security: welcome to lockdown London

London 2012 will see the UK's biggest mobilisation of military and security forces since the second world war and the effects will linger long after the athletes have left

Stephen Graham, *The Guardian*, 12 March 2012



Photograph: Locog/EPA

### SERIE LANGUES VIVANTES ANGLAIS ANALYSE LV1 TEXTE HORS PROGRAMME

As a metaphor for the London Olympics, it could hardly be more stark. The much-derided "Wenlock" Olympic mascot is now available in London Olympic stores dressed as a Metropolitan police officer. For £10.25 you, too, can own the ultimate symbol of the Games: a member of by far the biggest and most expensive security operation in recent British history packaged as tourist commodity. Eerily, his single panoptic-style eye, peering out from beneath the police helmet, is reminiscent of the all-seeing eye of God so commonly depicted at the top of Enlightenment paintings. In these, God's eye maintained a custodial and omniscient surveillance on His unruly subjects far below on terra firma.

The imminent Olympics will take place in a city still recovering from riots that the Guardian-LSE *Reading the Riots* project showed were partly fuelled by resentment at their lavish cost. Last week, the UK spending watchdog warned that the overall costs of the Games were set to be at least £11bn – £2 bn over even recently inflated budgets. When major infrastructure projects such as Crossrail, speeded up for the Games, are factored in, the figure may be as high as £24bn, according to Sky News. The estimated cost put forward only seven years ago when the Games were won was £2.37 bn. With the required numbers of security staff more than doubling in the last year, estimates of the Games' immediate security costs have doubled from £282m to £553m. Even these figures are likely to end up as dramatic underestimates: the final security budget of the 2004 Athens Olympics were around £1bn.

All this in a city convulsed by massive welfare, housing benefit and legal aid cuts, spiralling unemployment and rising social protests. It is darkly ironic, indeed, that large swaths of London and the UK are being thrown into ever deeper insecurity while being asked to pay for a massive security operation, of unprecedented scale, largely to protect wealthy and powerful people and corporations. [...]

In addition to the concentration of sporting talent and global media, the London Olympics will host the biggest mobilisation of military and security forces seen in the UK since the second world war. More troops – around 13,500 – will be deployed than are currently at war in Afghanistan. The growing security force is being estimated at anything between 24,000 and 49,000 in total. Such is the secrecy that no one seems to know for sure. During the Games an aircraft carrier will dock on the Thames. Surface-to-air missile systems will scan the skies. Unmanned drones, thankfully without lethal missiles, will loiter above the gleaming stadiums and opening and closing ceremonies. RAF Typhoon Eurofighters will fly from RAF Northolt. A thousand armed US diplomatic and FBI agents and 55 dog teams will patrol an Olympic zone partitioned off from the wider city by an 11-mile, £80m, 5,000-volt electric fence.

Beyond these security spectacles, more stealthy changes are underway. New, punitive and potentially invasive laws such as the London Olympic Games Act 2006 are in force. These legitimise the use of force, potentially by private security companies, to proscribe Occupy-style protests. They also allow Olympic security personnel to deal forcibly with the display of any commercial material that is deemed to challenge the complete management of London as a "clean city" to be branded for the global TV audience wholly by prime corporate sponsors (including McDonald's, Visa and Dow Chemical).

London is also being wired up with a new range of scanners, biometric ID cards, number-plate and facial-recognition CCTV systems, disease tracking systems, new police control centres and checkpoints. These will intensify the sense of lockdown in a city which is already a byword across the world for remarkably intensive surveillance. Many such systems, deliberately installed to exploit unparalleled security budgets and relatively little scrutiny or protest, have been designed to linger long after the athletes and VIPs have left. Already, the Dorset police are proudly boasting that their new number-plate recognition cameras, built for sailing events, are allowing them to catch criminals more effectively. In Athens, the \$300m "super-panopticon" CCTV and information system built for the Games following intense US pressure remained after the event, along with the disused sports facilities. In fact, the system has been used by Greek police trying in vain to control the mass uprisings responding to the crash and savage austerity measures in the country.

It is important to remember that all this is ostensibly designed to secure the spectacle of 17,000 athletes competing for 17 days.

## The BBC's Queen's jubilee propaganda failed in Scotland

*Broadcasting a summer bonanza of Britishness may reinforce rather than break down cultural difference in Scotland*

Mike Small / The Guardian / 5 June 2012



*A jubilee street party in Edinburgh - one of only 60 organised in Scotland.*

### SERIE LANGUES VIVANTES ANGLAIS ANALYSE LV1 TEXTE HORS PROGRAMME

5 The jubilee feels very different depending where you are in Britain. Ian Bell, Scotland's most articulate republican, wrote last week: "The monarch we are supposed to celebrate this odd weekend has no claim to the throne of Scotland. She is not, and has never been, my queen." Many feel the same. There's a problem with the story we are being told about Britain. The jubilee is meant more as a unifier than a pacifier, and the national broadcaster is entrusted with gushing appropriately, often when nothing is happening but a bout of rain-washed punting. But the project of British propagandising looks like falling apart under examination.

10 Who was celebrating? Officially, there were 9,500 street parties in England and Wales. But there were just 60 street parties in Scotland, and 20 of these were organised by the Orange Order, with funding from the Labour-controlled Glasgow city council. Given that these are people not wholly unfamiliar with the union flag, this leaves you with 40 in Scotland. This presents a real problem for the narrative of national unity. Setting aside the question of using public funds for such events, or the good judgment of the Labour party in supporting such a group, it does look as if mass disinterest has swept Scotland.

15 The problem for the BBC is there's less and less of a unifying British culture to broadcast. In place of mass deference they are increasingly asked to make it up, and it comes across as a Ceausescu-like state broadcasting. Reevel Alderson's radio report from Balmoral on Monday morning, replete with Corgi-nostalgia-stories was an execrable voice of make-believe. Here we were sent back to the 1950s, complete with a brain-wipe of any intervening embarrassments. In this world the Queen loves Scotland and Scotland loves the Queen. In this world Princess Margaret was still a glamour icon and Prince Philip, a young naval cadet. The whole raft of marital disasters and infidelities was quietly swept aside for Charles's home-movies.

20 But this story of Britain and Britishness is unravelling and will continue to do so over the summer, when the Olympics, Wimbledon and Euro 2012 present further problems for Broadcasting Britain. Three-quarters of tickets for Team GB's "Olympic football" at Hampden remain unsold. [...]

25 As the blog *Lenin's Tomb* put it: "The monarchy still functions as the guarantor of a caste within the ruling class, which any good bourgeois wants admittance to – give an old chief executive an OBE, and he will consider himself to have truly lived. Its systems of ranking still structure hierarchies within the state, notably the police, the navy, the air force, and the army. It is still the major patron of 'Britishness', the myth of a temporally continuous and organically whole national culture."

30 But it's important to realise how much that "whole national culture" is dependent on the myths of Balmoral, the Castle of Mey, the "Prince of Wales" and all of the associated trappings to present the Queen of England as an icon of Britishness. Without a UK, there won't be anarchy, but democracy, and many feel there's no place for a monarch in a new Scottish democracy.

In this, its core task of fostering a sense of nationhood, the jubilee is failing and the BBC struggling.

35 A YouGov poll in May suggested 44% of Scots interviewed associated the union flag with "racism and extremism". So the cumulative impact of unnuanced broadcasting of a summer bonanza of Britishness may be to reinforce rather than break down cultural difference.

40 This crisis of the core concept for the BBC is reaching a head. This Thursday the BBC's flagship current affairs programme Question Time is from Inverness. No representative from the SNP will be on the panel, but Melanie Philips will be lecturing us from her podium at the *Daily Mail* that us Scots suffer from "unlimited public subsidy (which) invariably produces a dependency culture of irresponsibility and infantilism – the assumption of entitlement without obligation ...". To many it will sound like a perfect description of the House of Windsor.

What is behind this dismal celebration? Glen Newy at the *London Review of Books* suggests it's a reaction against political failure: "As politicians sink ever deeper in public esteem, so the queen rises. Over the weekend the country's usually scabrous public sphere will turn, as it did when Diana croaked, as deferential as Zimbabwe's."

45 But turning to the epitome of anti-democracy as a response to the failure or a failed political elite isn't worthy of celebration. And broadcasting it with unbridled fealty is becoming untenable.



## Ben Riley-Smith: Can hacking ever be justified?

*Lord Justice Leveson has to define public interest and find a way to hold journalists to account*

THE INDEPENDENT ON SUNDAY / 31 JULY 2011

5 Another week, another alleged target named and another new low in the phone-hacking scandal. On Thursday it was revealed that Sara Payne, the mother of murdered schoolgirl Sarah Payne, who became a "dear friend" of Rebekah Brooks, may have been hacked by the News of the World. She joins Milly Dowler, the parents of Holly Wells and Jessica Chapman, fathers of 7/7 victims and relatives of Britain's war dead on a list of phone-hacking targets that increasingly resembles a chronology of the most tragic episodes in the UK's recent past. The country's media are rarely as unified as they have been in the past four weeks. Condemnation of the shocking revelations has been universal. Sifting through the voice messages of grieving families marks the very worst of journalism. There is no public interest here.

10 Thursday was also the day that Lord Justice Leveson launched his inquiry into the "culture, practices and ethics of the press", which seems likely to usher in a renewed period of sober introspection among the press which will require the asking of some fairly basic questions, such as: can phone-hacking by journalists ever be justified? [...] The reason the scandal took off in the public mind was the evidence relating to Milly Dowler, which was abhorrent and wholly unjustifiable. But the fact that it took a case of such seriousness for the issue to take off is evidence that the morality of phone-hacking in journalism is not always so black and white. How would the public react, say, if it was revealed that as well as deception and secret filming, accessing voicemails helped the News of the World expose the match-fixing by Pakistani cricketers which won the paper Scoop of the Year at the 2011 Press Awards? Surely, in that case, there was a public interest? What would we think if it became apparent that recorded messages had also been crucial in busting the criminals Mazher Mahmood (the "Fake Sheikh") boasted of putting behind bars in the paper's final edition? In these cases, does the corruption and illegality eventually exposed justify the means?

20 Even though there is no "public interest defence" in the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000, which outlaws phone-hacking by private individuals, prosecutors would still have to decide whether it is in the public interest to proceed. There is always the possibility of a jury returning what lawyers call a perverse verdict if they consider the ends justify the means.

25 And here we reach the real crux of this debate: how should public interest be defined, and how can journalists be held accountable to it? The Press Complaints Commission has a written definition of public interest in its Editors' Code of Practice, but clearly it has completely failed to deter journalists. So often what interests the public – celebrity sleaze stories, the latest football transfer dealings – has masqueraded as public interest. Baroness Buscombe's announcement on Friday of her intended departure as the PCC's chairwoman just acts to confirm this failure.

30 We are fooling ourselves if we think journalists – even the cleanest investigative journalists – don't often find themselves pushing the boundaries of legality in the pursuit of a story. Following a lead is inherently unpredictable and journalists have a whole range of tools in the box that they can reach for if they believe the situation warrants it. The need for hacks to make those on-the-spot value judgements about method isn't going to go away in the future.

35 What we need, as Lord Justice Leveson has acknowledged, is a tight and workable definition of public interest to which journalists can subsequently be held accountable. Let us be clear – the practice of phone-hacking is no more inherently evil than the blagging of personal data, illegal since 1994, or the theft of revealing documents (an irony that Rupert Murdoch alluded to when he mentioned the Telegraph's MPs expenses files at the recent select committee hearing). It is the scenario in which these methods are used, and not any ingrained rightness or wrongness, which must determine their legitimacy. To do that, transparency is needed. To my knowledge no public interest claim has seriously been made to defend any of the hacking stories that have emerged. The fact that phone-hacking was pushed into the shadows and outsourced to private investigators simply shows that people knew it was unjustifiable. There it lay, undetected and – when eventually dragged under the spotlight – apparently actively covered up. This must never happen again.

40 But if an editor or journalist believes that accessing a voicemail is warranted by public interest, and is willing to openly stand by the methods adopted in getting a story subsequently in the writing of the story, then surely simply removing that weapon from his arsenal would be debilitating. Ruthlessly fishing for stories, as the News of the World did, is not justifiable, but seeking to corroborate a strong suspicion of malpractice may well be. Phone-hacking, as with all of journalism's dodgier methods of investigation, may on occasion be legally and morally justified in the public interest. The key challenge for Lord Justice Leveson is to work out how to implement the transparency desperately needed in the industry, creating a definition of public interest that every story and editor can be challenged against. As the inquiry analyses this issue in the coming year, Lord Justice Leveson would be wise to avoid the vilification of any one method and focus on the wider problem: how future journalists can be best held to account.

55

## Revive the Nation, the ghost of England past; He's rebuffed Europe, shaken up the Church, now Mr Cameron must restore our identity. Henry VIII would approve.

David Starkey

The Times / 21 December 2011

5 As this miserable Christmas approaches, a strange sound is heard in the corridors of power. It is the mighty, muffled tread of the ghost of Henry VIII. Called from his grave by recent developments in our relations with Europe, he — the original Eurosceptic — has come to revisit the site of his old Palace of Whitehall and offer unexpected seasonal comfort to its present denizens. He lingers longest in Downing Street. The Prime Minister is asleep — only a few yards, as it happens, from the location of Henry's own bedchamber. And he stirs in his slumber as he hears the royal voice intone: "This realm of England is an empire, governed by one supreme head and king, furnished with plenary power to render and yield justice to all manner of folk within this realm in all causes without restraint or provocation [appeal] to any foreign princes or potentates." The Prime Minister jolts awake. "Well, blow me down," he says in his best Biggles fashion. "Here's the new big idea. Not the Big Society but the Nation State."

10 Fantasy, of course. But there are straws in the wind. Rather a lot of them actually. First there was the Prime Minister's own wielding of the national veto at the "save the euro" EU summit. His actions there were neither principled nor well thought through. No matter. Henry VIII's motives in repudiating the Pope and the Universal Catholic Church — that earlier European union — were a mixed bag also. But it is the deed that counts. England contra mundum — against the world — is bad diplomacy. But it is excellent domestic box office. And when the French cast themselves as the enemy, whether in the 16th century or the 21st, so much the better. As the Tories' subsequent bounce in the opinions polls shows.

15 Just as striking in its way is the spat over the powers of that other supra-national institution, the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg. Recent doctrine among British judges has been that it served as a final court of appeal: "Strasbourg has spoken, the case is closed," one judge has declared, obsequiously. [...] The ghost of Henry VIII listens a little impatiently because he has heard it all before. Indeed, on this very spot. For when Sir Thomas More, Henry VIII's former friend and Lord Irvine's predecessor as Lord Chancellor, was on trial for his life in Westminster Hall for refusing to accept Henry's headship of the Church, he had pleaded, like a modern Europhile judge, that English law was subordinate to European law, "the general law of Christ's universal Catholic Church". And he had been answered, almost in Lord Irvine's words, that a law passed by Parliament was good enough for England.

20 But Henry VIII's warmest approval was kept for the Prime Minister's speech on the King James Bible. In particular, he applauded when Mr Cameron proclaimed that the task of the Church was to "speak to the whole country". For that was why he had established the Church of England in the first place: to be a national church alongside the nation state.

25 All these, as I said, are mere straws in the wind. But there is a common theme. It is the nation — as Henry understood so well 500 years ago. And the nation is a theme that a Tory Prime Minister should be supremely comfortable with. Ever since Disraeli's refounding of the Tory Party in the mid-19th century, the idea of the Nation has been central to the Conservatives' appeal. Too often, no doubt, in the Victorian period it took the form of aggression and colonial conquest. But recent events have given it a new respectability. For only the nation state — as the debacle of the euro makes clear — can offer any sort of guarantee of democracy or prosperity. It is not a perfect instrument, of course, but at least it is better than the bureaucratic imperialism of European institutions.

30 The idea of the nation also speaks to our present domestic discontents. For the gap between super-rich and poor is nothing new. It was, once again, Disraeli who characterised it most vividly and offered the solution in One Nation Toryism. He widened the franchise to incorporate the respectable working man into the political nation; Stanley Baldwin and King George V went further and used decorations and ermine to make the trade unions and the Labour Party a part of the political establishment. For Mr Cameron to follow in their footsteps he must look to both ends of the social spectrum. He must use education and social policy to reintegrate disaffected black and poor white people into society, and he must Anglicise the international rich who have turned the pseudo city-state of London into another Monaco. Teaching them the traditional British values of good manners and restraint would be a good place to start and next year's Jubilee an excellent learning opportunity. Above all, he must confront the issue of national identity. For how can we all be "in it together" if we do not know who we are?

35 40 45 50 It is also a question of low political cunning. For Labour's vote is ripe for the picking. Its core supporters, the blue-collar workers, are the most straightforwardly patriotic group in the country. But modern Labour is the anti-patriotic party, denying the very idea of national identity itself. Disraeli "dished the Whigs". Mr Cameron's renewed One Nation Toryism would dish Labour and make the Tories, once again, the natural party of government. The challenge is indeed enormous. But then Mr Cameron, like Henry VIII, is at his best in a crisis. Go for it: England expects!

*David Starkey is author of Crown & Country: The Kings & Queens of England (HarperPress)*

**SERIE LANGUES VIVANTES  
ANGLAIS  
ANALYSE LV1 TEXTE HORS  
PROGRAMME**

Wednesday, Apr. 25, 2012

## Will New Funding Rules Improve Dismal University Graduation Rates?

By Jon Marcus / The Hechinger Report/ *Time Magazine*

5 So many students will graduate from Slippery Rock University this spring that administrators have had to limit the number of guests each one can invite.

There isn't enough room in the basketball arena for everybody.

At a time when American higher education is under fire for dismal graduation rates that have eroded the nation's leadership in college degree-holders, this public university in western Pennsylvania will graduate a record number of students, and do so more quickly than in years past.

10 That's because Slippery Rock has built in aggressive new measures to help students succeed — and eliminated many obstacles that make success so elusive almost everywhere else.

It lowered the number of credits required to graduate, which, as at many other schools, had been creeping up and keeping students in school longer. It trained residence-hall staff to watch for signs of academic or personal problems such as absences or poor grades. It clustered students with the same majors in dorms so they can help one another with class work, and hired 90 peer tutors to run a tutoring center in the library.

15 Altruism alone didn't compel the university to take these steps. It was money — \$1.5 million a year, to be exact. Slippery Rock may be the poster child for a resurgent idea called "performance funding," which pays public universities to meet goals set by increasingly results-conscious state legislatures.

20 Under Pennsylvania's performance-funding formula, Slippery Rock has earned as much as \$1.5 million a year more from the state for improving its outcomes than it would have otherwise, said provost William Williams.

"Whether you like this method or not, the purpose was to drive up the quality of this institution," Williams said. "It's what we should have been about anyway."

Yet, until now, public universities and colleges were largely given money based on how many students they enrolled, not how many actually graduated.

25 The schools didn't focus on success, said Williams, "because they didn't have to."

Now their budgets are beginning to depend on it.

"This is coming, whether people like it or not," said Thomas Harnisch, a policy analyst at the American Association of State Colleges and Universities who monitors the trend.

30 When performance funding was first tested in the 1990s, many universities resisted it, "gamed" the numbers or even cheated, research by the Community College Research Center (CCRC) at Teachers College, Columbia University, and others has found.

But tight budgets have prompted dozens of states to try the idea again. And universities are coming around to it.

35 That's because performance funding no longer just involves vying for cash bonuses above and beyond universities' annual budgets. Now universities are competing for their share of dwindling state allocations. "It's not the cherry on top anymore," says Travis Reindl, a higher-education researcher for the National Governors Association. "It's the base."

The Obama administration also wants to use money as a motivator. It has proposed a \$1 billion competition, modeled after the Race to the Top program, to reward universities for becoming more affordable and raising graduation rates, and to withhold federal financial aid from universities that raise tuition too quickly.

40 "Through performance funding we will show that each dollar we spend on higher education provides a greater return than if the dollar were spent on one of the numerous other competing worthy causes," the Illinois Board of Higher Education pronounced. "We know we must be able to demonstrate that we can deliver a return on investment."

45 Academic strategies shifted. Tennessee universities increased tutoring and advising. Community colleges in Washington eliminated fees for degrees or certificates, which had prevented some students from graduating. In Florida, community colleges monitored withdrawal rates to weed out and retrain faculty whose courses students most commonly dropped.

50 There are plenty of critics of performance funding. If universities get money based on their success rates, critics say, they're unlikely to admit marginal students who have potential but may have trouble graduating. To keep the money coming in, these critics say, universities might lower standards to make it easier to earn degrees.

Education analysts also say that universities with different missions and resources shouldn't all be forced to meet the same goals.

"What you're doing is you're taking a university, which is a very complex enterprise, and you're attempting to boil it down into a few quantifiable metrics," Harnisch said.

55

**SERIE LANGUES VIVANTES  
ANGLAIS  
ANALYSE LV1 TEXTE HORS  
PROGRAMME**

## A new Argy-bargy

John Simpson 31 March 2012 THE SPECTATOR

*Will there be trouble in the Falklands on the thirtieth anniversary of the invasion?*

Buenos Aires is as exhilarating, as unpredictable, as stylish as ever. But the economic boom is over. Times are hard once again, more shops in Calle Florida are boarded up, the sales are pretty frantic. And so, as Jorge Luis Borges, the blind sage of Calle Maipu, just off the superb Plaza San Martin, once remarked: 'When Argentina's economy goes bad, you can be sure that nationalism will soon be beating its wings.'

5 Argentina's President, Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner, beautiful, combative and ruthless, was already pretty nationalistic when the economy was doing well. In 2007, when her late husband was still president, she and he unilaterally cancelled the agreement with Britain that the two countries should co-operate on oil exploration around the Falkland Islands. That decision, taken precisely in order to provoke a nationalistic row over the islands, led directly to today's deadlock. And of course it's in good time for Monday: the 30th anniversary of the invasion.

10 If Argentina wants a row, there's not much that anyone can do to stop it. No one is seriously suggesting that President Fernandez will launch another military invasion of the Falklands. For a start, her air force still largely consists of the same planes that it had back in 1982. Anyway, one of her genuine successes has been to keep the armed forces out of Argentine politics. Nowadays, you scarcely ever see a military uniform on the streets.

15 Instead, la divina Cristina's success has been diplomatic, not military. Countries in Latin America which were supportive of Britain in 1982 now make public statements backing Argentina. They don't necessarily mean them. Argentina is a difficult country to get on with, and President Fernandez is much too friendly with Hugo Chavez of Venezuela, and edging disturbingly close to him politically, for most Latin American countries to be happy about it.

20 But Latin America is changing. It's starting to get a better sense of itself, and countries like China and India are becoming more important to them. China, indeed, is hoovering up the raw materials of many South American countries at an enormous rate, and their governments, grateful for the cash, regard this as a good thing. 'Why should we be interested in old, declining countries like Britain?' a radio journalist in Buenos Aires asked recently. 'We are the future.'

25 It used to be that, in dealing with Argentina, Britain could always rely on the support of three South American nations — Chile, Peru and Colombia — and the benign neutrality of two others, Brazil and Uruguay. In 1982, during the Falklands conflict, Chile even did some serious sabre-rattling in Britain's support, so that Argentina had to station its best troops along the Andes to make sure that the Chileans didn't invade. Colombia used its influence at the UN. Brazil and Uruguay allowed all sorts of dodgy British flights to land in their territory until Argentine intelligence found out and made a fuss.

30 And now? A majority of the entire continent supports Argentina's claim to the islands. A week ago, Peru refused to allow a Royal Navy ship to use its ports. Chile is considering an Argentine request to cut the Falklands' civilian lifeline, the weekly flight from Santiago. In private, Brazil, Chile, Peru and other countries shuffle their feet when the British ambassador comes round. 'You know how it is — Argentina is a nuisance, but we're expected to show a bit of solidarity. Anyway, it doesn't mean anything: the Argies will never invade again.'

35 They're right — but the big danger for British policy now isn't military, it's diplomatic. Although we're supposed to be so good at diplomacy, we've let this one slip badly. Our attention has been on all sorts of other things over the past few years: Iraq, Afghanistan, Europe. Anything except Latin America. And if we aren't careful, the islands will become a serious embarrassment in our relations with countries in the region that are starting to count for a good deal. Being forced to choose between better links with an entire continent and the entirely legitimate rights of the 3,140 islanders could prove difficult.

40 There's another threat, which worries some people at the Foreign Office. With the anniversary of the invasion imminent, there is at least the possibility that Argentine nationalists will carry out a major stunt. There are no signs that it is about to happen, and it never may. But it could; and it would cause Britain a good deal of awkwardness if it did. [...]

45 Now it [Britain] really has to start hard diplomatic work again. The drink-sodden military junta which invaded the Falklands in 1982 for want of anything better to do believed that Britain didn't really care about the islands. It took a thousand deaths to demonstrate that this wasn't true. Letting things slip again could have dangerous consequences.

50

## Column: Our forefathers got it right -- no religious test

By Michael Medved, *USA Today*, 4/22/2012

5 The ugliest byproduct of this year's protracted struggle for the Republican presidential nomination involves the unwelcome return of the discredited, dangerous old idea of imposing religious tests on candidates for public office.

10 Before Rick Santorum suspended his presidential campaign, exit polls from his landslide victory in the Louisiana primary showed that a stunning 73% of Republican voters insisted that it "matters that a candidate shares my religious beliefs" — expressing the conviction that it's appropriate to judge a prospective president based on his theological orientation. Only 12% took the position that it matters "not at all" if a candidate's religious outlook differed from their own.

15 There's an obvious irony to this situation: Many of those same social conservatives who claim to revere the plain text of the Constitution seem determined to ignore its prohibition on religious tests for federal office. Article VI, Clause 3 unambiguously states that "no religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office or public trust under the United States." This sweeping language, adopted at the original Constitutional Convention two years before the First Amendment's famous prohibition on "establishment of religion," left so little doubt as to its meaning that not even the most imaginative jurists or politicians have attempted to interpret it away. Faith. Religion. Spirituality. Meaning. In our ever-shrinking world, the tentacles of religion touch everything from governmental policy to individual morality to our basic social constructs. It affects the lives of people of great faith — or no faith at all. This series of weekly columns — launched in 2005 — seeks to illuminate the national conversation. Professor Gerald Bradley of Notre Dame Law School flatly declares that "no federal official has ever been subjected to a formal religious test for holding office."

20 Of course, some fervent social conservatives will protest that the evaluation of legally qualified candidates based on their theological perspectives hardly amounts to a "religious test" officially banning aspirants from the ballot or public positions. But most of the Founders objected even to informal religious tests and demonstrated a consistent willingness to confer positions of responsibility on those who did not share their religious beliefs.

25 Protestants of the Revolutionary generation felt strong antipathy to "Papists" and "the Roman Church," but devout Catholic Charles Carroll signed the Declaration of Independence and represented Maryland in the first U.S. Senate. A fellow Catholic, Commodore John Barry, was hailed as "the founder of the United States Navy," and his statue holds a place of honor adjacent to Independence Hall in Philadelphia. Thomas Jefferson campaigned successfully for president in 1800 and 1804, surviving Federalist attacks on his highly unorthodox approach to Christianity and warnings against the election of a "howling atheist" and "infidel" who would place "the seal of death ... on our holy religion." A generation later, Abraham Lincoln faced similar charges in his 1846 congressional campaign with suggestions that his failure to join a church made him "an open scoffer at Christianity." Shortly before he won the election, Lincoln responded with a statement that he belonged to no church but affirming that "I have never spoken with intentional disrespect of religion in general, or of any denomination of Christians in particular. ... Leaving the higher matter of eternal consequences, between him and his Maker, I still do not think any man has the right thus to insult the feelings, and injure the morals, of the community in which he may live." In other words, Honest Abe shifted the discussion from an examination of his faith and practice to his unequivocal approval of the beneficial public role of religion in general — without endorsing or condemning any specific denomination or theology. The very process of analyzing denominational doctrine rather than reviewing values, personal biography and policy proposals betrays the core principles of pluralism, Lincoln and the Constitution.

**Study: Asian Americans value hard work, family.**  
By Haya El Nasser, 19 June, 2012, USA TODAY

5 Positive stereotypes about Asian Americans are rooted in reality: They are more educated, wealthier and value work, marriage and family more than Americans as a whole, according to a Pew Research report out today. The study, which includes a survey of 3,511 Asians, shows that more than 60% of recent Asian immigrants have at least a college degree. Many work in high-paying fields such as science, engineering, medicine and finance. "These are not the tired, poor huddled masses of that inscription on the Statue of Liberty," says Paul Taylor, executive vice president of the Pew Research Center. "Recent Asian arrivals are the most highly educated ...

10 immigrants in U.S. history."  
The USA's 18.2 million Asians are the fastest-growing racial group and have surpassed Hispanics as the largest group of new immigrants. They represent 6% of the population. The survey says Asian Americans are more satisfied with their lives, personal finances and the general direction of the country than Americans as a whole.

15 Indians have the highest share of college-educated and the highest median household income (\$88,000) among the largest Asian-American groups. Asians as a whole have a median household income of \$66,000 (half make more, half less) compared with the U.S. median of \$49,800.

The telephone survey includes large enough samples of the six largest U.S. Asian groups (Chinese, Filipino, Indian, Vietnamese, Korean, Japanese) to pinpoint differences among them.

20 "This is the first time anyone has been able to develop this level of detail about the Asian-American community and about the differences between different sets of populations," says Neera Tanden, an Indian American who is president of the Center for American Progress, a liberal think-tank. Not all Asian groups are prosperous. Koreans, Chinese and Vietnamese, many who came to the USA as refugees, have a higher poverty rate than Americans in general.

25 All groups value marriage, family and hard work more than the U.S. population as a whole. "If that's a stereotype that people have assigned to this group, believe me, that's a stereotype this group has embraced," Taylor says. "It stands out." More than half say a successful marriage is one of the most important things in life vs. 34% of all Americans; two-thirds say being a good parent is right up there, too, vs. 50% for the country.

30 "One aspect that some people in the community may be concerned about is that the survey will in some sense reinforce the stereotype of 'They work hard, they're highly educated,' " says Benjamin Wu, vice chairman of the U.S.-Asia Institute, a group that works with Congress to help strengthen relationships with Asia. "We know in some (Asian) communities, that's not the case," he says. Many Asian immigrants do not come on a student visa and need housing assistance, Wu says.

35 Tanden is struck by the fact that even though Indian Americans are overwhelmingly Democrats, two Indians in high U.S. political offices are both Republican — Louisiana Gov. Bobby Jindal and South Carolina Gov. Nikki Hailey. "Asians have a much more positive attitude toward government" than the country as a whole, Tanden says.

40 "That may be in part because many Asians come from countries where government does not work nearly as properly or on behalf of the people."  
Other findings:

- Asians are more likely to be married and to live in a multigenerational household. They are less likely to be born to an unwed mother.
- 45 •Among Asians, Japanese and Filipino are most accepting of interracial and intergroup marriages. From 2008-10, 55% of Japanese newlyweds married non-Asians.
- Koreans are most likely to say that discrimination against them is a major problem and half say they don't get along very well with blacks. There has been a history of tension between blacks and Korean store owners who come in to their neighborhoods.
- 50 •Almost 40% says parents of Asian origin put too much pressure on their kids to do well in school. "The best and the brightest in the world are coming to the United States," Tanden says. "The report is a testament to the promise of America and the promise of the American dream."

**SERIE LANGUES VIVANTES  
ANGLAIS  
ANALYSE LV1 TEXTE HORS  
PROGRAMME**

**Hurray for Health Reform**

By Paul Krugman, *The New York Times*, 18 March, 2012

It's said that you can judge a man by the quality of his enemies. If the same principle applies to legislation, the Affordable Care Act — which was signed into law two years ago, but for the most part has yet to take effect — sits in a place of high honor.

Now, the act — known to its foes as Obamacare, and to the cognoscenti as ObamaRomneycare — isn't easy to love, since it's very much a compromise, dictated by the perceived political need to change existing coverage and challenge entrenched interests as little as possible. But the perfect is the enemy of the good; for all its imperfections, this reform would do an enormous amount of good. And one indicator of just how good it is comes from the apparent inability of its opponents to make an honest case against it.

To understand the lies, you first have to understand the truth. How would ObamaRomneycare change American health care?

For most people the answer is, not at all. In particular, those receiving good health benefits from employers would keep them. The act is aimed, instead, at Americans who fall through the cracks, either going without coverage or relying on the miserably malfunctioning individual, "non-group" insurance market.

The fact is that individual health insurance, as currently constituted, just doesn't work. If insurers are left free to deny coverage at will — as they are in, say, California — they offer cheap policies to the young and healthy (and try to yank coverage if you get sick) but refuse to cover anyone likely to need expensive care. Yet simply requiring that insurers cover people with pre-existing conditions, as in New York, doesn't work either: premiums are sky-high because only the sick buy insurance.

The solution — originally proposed, believe it or not, by analysts at the ultra-right-wing Heritage Foundation — is a three-legged stool of regulation and subsidies. As in New York, insurers are required to cover everyone; in return, everyone is required to buy insurance, so that healthy as well as sick people are in the risk pool. Finally, subsidies make those mandated insurance purchases affordable for lower-income families.

Can such a system work? It's already working! Massachusetts enacted a very similar reform six years ago — yes, while Mitt Romney was governor. Jonathan Gruber of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, who played a key role in developing both the local and the national reforms (and has published an illustrated guide to reform) has surveyed the results — and finds that Romneycare is working pretty much as advertised. The number of people without insurance has dropped sharply, the quality of care hasn't suffered, and the program's cost has been very close to initial projections.

Oh, and the budgetary cost per newly insured resident of Massachusetts was actually lower than the projected cost per American insured by the Affordable Care Act.

Given this evidence, what's a virulent opponent of reform to do? The answer is, make stuff up. We all know how the act's proposal that Medicare evaluate medical procedures for effectiveness became, in the fevered imagination of the right, an evil plan to create death panels. And rest assured, this lie will be back in force once the general election campaign is in full swing.

For now, however, most of the disinformation involves claims about costs. Each new report from the Congressional Budget Office is touted as proof that the true cost of Obamacare is exploding, even when — as was the case with the latest report — the document says on its very first page that projected costs have actually fallen slightly. Nor are we talking about random pundits making these false claims. We are, instead, talking about people like the chairman of the House Republican Policy Committee, who issued a completely fraudulent press release after the latest budget office report.

Because the truth does not, sad to say, always prevail, there is a real chance that these lies will succeed in killing health reform before it really gets started. And that would be an immense tragedy for America, because this health reform is coming just in time.

As I said, the reform is mainly aimed at Americans who fall through the cracks in our current system — an important goal in its own right. But what makes reform truly urgent is the fact that the cracks are rapidly getting wider, because fewer and fewer jobs come with health benefits; employment-based coverage actually declined even during the "Bush boom" of 2003 to 2007, and has plunged since.

What this means is that the Affordable Care Act is the only thing protecting us from an imminent surge in the number of Americans who can't afford essential care. So this reform had better survive — because if it doesn't, many Americans who need health care won't.

Hate Speech and Free Speech, Part Two

By JEREMY WALDRON

Stanley Fish on education, law and society.

5 *Readers of my column about Jeremy Waldron's new book, "The Harm in Hate Speech," wondered how the hate speech regulations Waldron calls for could be implemented, and wondered, too, whether key terms like "dignity" and "harm" could be defined in ways that would avoid the dangers of imprecision and the slippery slope. The editors and I have invited Professor Waldron to respond to these and other questions. One poster asked if I was reporting on Waldron's arguments or endorsing them. I was endorsing them, as I have already*  
10 *(implicitly) done in "There's No Such Thing as Free Speech ... And It's a Good Thing, Too" and other publications. — S.F.*

I am grateful to Stanley Fish for his review and for the sympathetic attention he paid to the detailed arguments in "The Harm in Hate Speech." I also appreciate the responses to Fish's review. The issue of hate speech legislation is, in my view, a difficult one. There are good arguments on both sides and, among the respondents,  
15 the critics have flagged a number of important issues. Even those who love the First Amendment should be interested in at least understanding the things that can be said on the other side, if only to reinforce their sense of what's distinctive about this country's commitments. A large proportion of the other advanced democracies in the world combine a commitment to free speech with rules prohibiting hate speech. Isn't it worth considering how they do this? And why? No one is burning the constitution here. We're just trying to think about it.  
20 Democracies like Britain, France, Germany, Denmark, Canada and New Zealand all prohibit hate speech of various kinds. They do so for what they think are good reasons. It is worth thinking about those reasons. Are they good reasons that (from an American First Amendment perspective) are just not strong enough to stand up against our overwhelmingly powerful commitment to free speech? Or are they simply bad reasons? I think some of the things people cite in favor of hate speech regulation are bad reasons — like trying to protect people from being offended and annoyed. I agree with Stanley Fish about that. But some of the reasons are about dignity, not offense — I spend a lot of time in the book thinking aloud about that distinction — and these reasons are worth taking seriously, even if ultimately we think they are trumped by the value of free speech. What I have in mind when I talk about dignity is this — a person's basic social status, his or her being treated as an ordinary member of society in good standing, his or her being included in the ordinary business of society. A person's dignity is  
30 damaged, then, when he or she is publicly defamed or dehumanized, or when he or she is perceived as belonging to a group all of whose members are defamed or dehumanized. In parts of Miami some restaurant signs used to say, "Jews and dogs not welcome here." A legal prohibition on such signs would be aimed at securing the inclusiveness of the social environment against such attempts to undermine it. I wonder. I said in the book that one of the aims of hate speech is not just to undermine the public good of inclusiveness and dignity, but also to establish a rival public good so that the racists and haters in the community can assure themselves and one another that they are not alone. I don't think the medical analogy — "lancing a boil" — necessarily applies. It presupposes that there is a limited amount of hatred festering beneath the surface and that once it is released, it will dissipate harmlessly. But what is our evidence for that? Is it not possible that publishing racist abuse encourages others to do the same, emboldening those who are tempted by hate-filled  
40 sentiments with the awareness that they are not alone? To mix some other metaphors, perhaps it is a good thing to drive race hatred underground, depriving it of the oxygen that it needs in order to flourish. The second substantial point I want to make is about other ways of combating hate speech. Ricodechef from Portland, Ore., says that "the remedy for hate speech is defiance and argument, not restriction." His view is echoed by LayneDiehl, from Martinsburg, W. Va., who says: "I have often seen the uprising voice in response to hate speech serve more to bolster that dignity and perhaps balance out to an extent any injury or insult otherwise intended toward the victims." I respect these points of view. But it is not an either/or. One can ban hate speech and speak out against it. Indeed, the legal ban is itself a way of speaking out against it. The other democracies that have hate speech legislation have not given up on other responses. They just think they ought to have this in their repertoire of possible responses as well. They think that the usefulness and the design of laws against hate  
50 speech ought to be a matter of legislative judgment for each community, not something that is precluded peremptorily by judicial interpretations of free speech.



**SERIE LANGUES VIVANTES  
ANGLAIS  
ANALYSE LV1 TEXTE HORS  
PROGRAMME**

**A Protest's Ink-Stained Fingers**

By David Carr, *The New York Times*, October 9, 2011

At the Occupy Wall Street demonstration in Zuccotti Park, you'll find all of the essentials of a state-of-the-art protest: drum circles, cheeky and plaintive handwritten signs, and, next to a thrumming generator, a hub of social media activity, including live streaming of the proceedings. But amid the accouterments of modern political action, you will also find, of all things, a broadsheet newspaper, The Occupied Wall Street Journal. It is not some tatty, hand-drawn piece of protest samizdat, but a professionally produced, four-color, four-page document of the demonstration, which began on Sept. 17.

"Get your newspaper, get your free Occupied Wall Street Journal!" shouted one barker. Getting something in the hands of your average New Yorker is a pretty tough sell, but The Occupied Wall Street Journal was eagerly received, even by the people who just came to gawk, in part because it answered the question of what all the hubbub was about.

Forgive an old newspaper hack a moment of sentimentality, but it is somehow reassuring that a newspaper still has traction in an environment preoccupied by social media. It makes sense when you think about it: newspapers convey a sense of place, of actually being there, that digital media can't. When is the last time somebody handed you a Web site? The Occupied Wall Street Journal is not the "official" newspaper of the protest because nothing is official in the world of Occupy Wall Street. Mr. Gupta said that consensus was the core principle governing the protest, but something more entrepreneurial was required to get an actual newspaper out. Although the sentiment and some of the informational anarchy of the event is reflected in the newspaper, it is produced by experienced, if far from objective, journalists. "We didn't think there would be much in the way of coverage of the event, so we thought it was important that there be a media outlet that reflected what was under way," Mr. Gupta said. "A newspaper is tactile, engages all of the senses, and leads to more immersive reading than what people might do online."

While some of the recipients of the paper clearly saw it as little more than a souvenir, an artifact that demonstrates that they were present, many others opened up the paper and were reading it when I visited on Thursday. "A Web site will come and go, but this could be here 100 years from now if the mold doesn't get to it," he said, holding a copy. "People say that newspapers are dying, but there is something about its physical properties, the fact that when you hold it in your hands, you end up with ink on them, that serves as a reminder that this all is all real.

Print and protest are frequent fellow travelers. It's worth pointing out that at the beginning of the Arab Spring, the protesters in Tahrir Square in Cairo also produced a newspaper called Liberation Square. Jeremi Suri, a professor of history and public policy at the University of Texas at Austin, said that newspapers would continue to play a durable role in social movements. "In a newspaper is an element of analysis that you don't get in a sign or a pamphlet," he said. "In both the '20s and '30s, and during the protests of the '60s, underground newspapers played an important role in bringing people together to create something in common." The rest of us in the media have had trouble catching up with Occupy Wall Street, in part because it refuses to live in a pigeon hole. Like all nascent social movements involving myriad interest groups, there are inchoate, atavistic impulses at work. So, are they the anti-Tea Party, the old guard lefties in new clothing, or just disenfranchised Americans engaging in some new form of pushback?

Rather than a neat list of demands, the group tends to ask questions. Then again, who among us has not wondered if the capitalistic fundamentals of choices and consequences were suspended in order to bail out Wall Street banking firms? The country is just coming to grips with an episode in which some financial institutions, through fecklessness and greed, all but tipped over the American economy, and the arrival of the occupiers in the financial district presents a complicated subject. Media coverage has tended to focus on civil disobedience because that is where the action is. Much was made of the thrust and parry between the protesters and police, most recently on Wednesday night, in which an attempt by some protesters to march down Wall Street was met with pepper spray and 23 arrests. That melee was at distant remove by Thursday in Zuccotti Park. There were people taking naps, and occasional chants sprung up, while some of the police officers and protesters talked along the periphery. One of the cops took a proffered copy of The Occupied Wall Street Journal. "What's the harm?" he said. He opened the broadsheet to its full dimensions, and added: "I'll give them one thing. It's a pretty good-looking paper."

## To Enroll More Minority Students, Colleges Work Around the Courts

by Richard Pérez-Peña, *The New York Times*, 1 April 2012

With its decision to take up racial preferences in admissions at public colleges, the Supreme Court has touched off a national guessing game about how far it might move against affirmative action and how profoundly colleges might change as a result.

But no matter how the court acts, recent history shows that when courts or new laws restrict affirmative action, colleges try to find other ways to increase minority admissions.

The aggressiveness of those efforts, and the results, vary widely by state, but generally they increase minority enrollment — though not as much as overt affirmative action once did. And they have tended to help Hispanic applicants far more than blacks, at least partly because of the demographics of the states where they have been tried.

Texas and a few others, for instance, compare students with their high school classmates, rather than with all applicants, resulting in more enrollment from poor communities. Washington is among the states that give added credit in the admissions process to students who come from poor families or excel at troubled schools.

Other colleges have spent more time recruiting in underrepresented communities. And the University of California system tries to weigh a student's life beyond grades and test scores — which, critics say, sometimes amounts to giving racial preferences without acknowledging them.

Even if the Supreme Court limits the options, college and universities will “be seeking diversity by any legal means possible,” said Ada Meloy, general counsel of the American Council on Education.

But a decision overturning affirmative action could produce a national pattern of more liberal states going further to mimic the current system than more conservative states. Defenders of affirmative action are most likely to see any new system as unfair to black and Hispanic students, while critics will still see it as unfair to whites and Asian-Americans.

The current nationwide standard is based on two decisions involving the University of Michigan in 2003, when the Supreme Court ruled that public universities could not give an applicant an automatic advantage based on race or ethnicity. But in a decision written by Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, the court also ruled, 5 to 4, that colleges could consider race and ethnicity as part of a case-by-case assessment of individuals.

Since 2003, the court has shifted rightward, with Justice Samuel A. Alito Jr., a critic of preferences, replacing Justice O'Connor.

In February, the court agreed to hear *Fisher v. University of Texas*, a challenge to the university's admissions policy, fueling speculation that it could revisit the standards it set nine years ago. The Texas system admits the top students at every high school in the state, but also admits additional students with a system that takes race into account.

The court has many options, including leaving things as they stand, finding that universities are interpreting the Michigan case too loosely, altering it, or overturning it completely. And it remains unclear how any ruling would affect private colleges, which rely heavily on federal financing.

Perhaps the best glimpse of a future without the current version of affirmative action comes from the handful of states that have already outlawed the use of race in public college admissions.

After California voters approved such a law, black and Hispanic freshman enrollment at the University of California system dropped by about one-quarter in 1998, the first year the ban was in effect. At the system's most competitive campuses, in Berkeley and Los Angeles, enrollment for those groups fell by almost half.

In the years since, the system has tried several approaches to increase diversity without directly taking race into account, and the numbers eventually rose.

Black students accounted for just over 4 percent of University of California freshmen in the mid-1990s. That fell to 3 percent after the law took effect, and remained there for several years, before climbing close to 4 percent in recent years.

Hispanic enrollment stood at 14 to 15 percent of the total before the ban, and fell to 12 percent in 1998, but quickly began to climb, driven by California's fast-rising Latino population. By 2010, that group accounted for more than 22 percent of the system's freshmen.

A central part of California's effort has been to compare applicants with other students in their communities, rather than with students statewide, much as Texas does. At each high school, the top 9 percent of students are guaranteed admission to the University of California — though not necessarily to the campuses of their choice — as long as they meet some other criteria.

Officials acknowledge that the aim is race-conscious but that the mechanism is race-neutral.

SERIE LANGUES VIVANTES  
ANGLAIS  
ANALYSE LV1 TEXTE HORS  
PROGRAMME

The End Is Nigh. Seriously.

Marty Kaplan, *The Huffington Post*, 06/18/2012

5 In countless cartoons, there's a guy in a robe and long beard who's walking around carrying a sign saying The  
End Is Nigh. The joke is that he's ridiculous -- some loony who takes the Book of Revelation literally. But what  
if the joke's on us? The June 6 issue of the leading scientific journal *Nature* contains a paper co-authored by 22  
researchers from all over the world. Their disciplines range from zoology, paleontology and geology to fields  
that are not your father's Oldsmobile, like ecoinformatics and computational ecology. Getting published in  
10 *Nature* means that independent peer reviewers have vouched for the quality of the authors' evidence and the  
rigor of their thinking. We're talking gold-standard science here.

15 What the paper says is that the earth is approaching a global tipping point, "a state shift in Earth's biosphere." It  
may happen in as few as 10 to 15 years; it may even have already happened. It will be irreversible, "a planetary-  
scale critical transition" whose consequences may include mass extinctions and "drastic changes in species  
distributions, abundances and diversity." Its consequences could be as catastrophic as an asteroid hitting the  
Earth. But unlike asteroids, volcanoes, plate tectonics and other suspected culprits in the prior Great Extinctions,  
the cause of this tipping point is people.

20 There are 7 billion of us now; there will be over 9 billion when today's toddlers start having kids. To support  
that population, we've cleared more than 40 percent of the planet's surface for agriculture and urban  
development, and that will hit 50 percent by 2050. Add to that the fossil fuels we're burning, and the resulting  
carbon dioxide that we're pumping into the atmosphere is acidifying the oceans, melting the ice caps, messing  
with the climate and heading us toward "widespread social unrest, economic instability and the loss of human  
life." So what do we do with news that bad?

25 The right's response has been denial - a war on truth. Rush Limbaugh calls science, academia, government and  
the media the "four pillars of deceit," a Red Queen maneuver that beheads anything incompatible with the  
Gospel of Rushbo. Sense is nonsense: if that's your epistemology, there's no arguing with it. Or, shifting from  
Lewis Carroll to the Doobie Brothers, "What a fool believes he sees, no wise man has the power to reason  
away." But if you don't think that Nature is Pravda, if you can't wear a Science = Stalin button, if you don't  
believe that those 22 researchers have an ideological axe to grind, how do you process the news that the end  
may in fact be nigh?

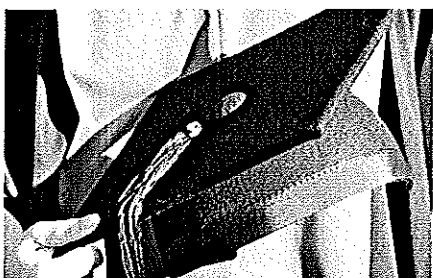
30 There's another kind of denial, one that's different from Rush's de-definition of reason. Some facts are so  
disturbing that the only way we can handle them is magical thinking. If we don't dwell on them, they won't hurt  
us. If we ignore them, they'll go away. The proliferation of nuclear weapons is a familiar example. The obesity  
epidemic is another. We know how scary and intractable these problems are, but we quarantine those thoughts.  
35 Defense, Inc. and Food, Inc. spend whatever it takes to market images of security and pleasure to us, and we  
find them so appealing that we willingly inhabit a cloud cuckoo land that poses no threat to their profits. But  
suppose we put away childish things. Suppose we faced the ecological bad news head on. What if the specter of  
a global tipping point, an irreversible environmental catastrophe, grabbed our attention as powerfully as the  
prospect of extinction grips the people of Earth in space invasion movies? We'd do everything we could to stop  
40 it, right? In the U.S., the scale of action required to prevent such a state shift in our planet's biosphere can only  
be attempted by our political system. Uh-oh. Special interests own Congress. The Supreme Court's Citizens  
United decision holding corporations to be people, together with the demise of campaign finance laws, puts  
plutocrats first. Big media, while raking in billions from political ads, is holding audiences riveted to spectacles  
instead of holding candidates accountable for lying. If you think a re-elected Barack Obama could get a decent  
energy policy passed by the next Congress, you haven't been counting the Koch brothers' money or listening to  
45 Mitch McConnell.

50 The consequence of being a citizen who cares about issues like carbon footprints, peak oil and rising  
temperatures is a feeling of powerlessness. The oligarchs have us by the short hairs. If you aren't feeling  
impotent, you haven't been paying attention. Powerlessness hurts -- literally. It's a clinical diagnosis. The  
Occupy movement was, briefly, a kind of therapy for it. Tracking every online detail about the latest outrage is a  
recent form of self-medication for it. But as long as informed majorities are rendered helpless by a rigged  
system, the only thing more demoralizing than knowing how nigh the end may really be is being trapped,  
powerless, alongside that nutcase in the cartoon.

## University applications drop amid fears over student debt

*University applications are down by almost 44,000 in just 12 months, figures show, with demand among teenagers from middle-class backgrounds dropping the quickest.*

*By Graeme Paton, Education Editor / THE DAILY TELEGRAPH / 30 Jan 2012*



Fewer students are applying to university after a decision to increase tuition fees, according to Ucas figures. Photo: ALAMY

### SERIE LANGUES VIVANTES ANGLAIS ANALYSE LV1 TEXTE HORS PROGRAMME

The number of British students applying to start university courses this autumn has fallen by around nine per cent following a sharp hike in tuition fees. The data – relating to the mid-January applications deadline for most courses – represents the first real evidence that students have been put off by the threat of huge debts.

5 According to figures, demand has dropped sharpest among students from England who will pay up to £9,000 a year in fees – more than other UK students.

It was also revealed that applications from students living in the wealthiest 20 per cent of areas – who are not eligible for a generous system of grants and fee-waivers established to insulate poorer candidates from the fee hike – have also fallen more dramatically than those from poor postcodes.

10 In a further disclosure, figures revealed that three-quarters of elite Russell Group universities saw a drop in applications, while demand for many cheaper colleges and private universities increased.

Universities UK, which represents vice-chancellors, insisted that the overall dip in applications was “far less dramatic than many were initially predicting”. David Willetts, the Universities Minister, said the overall number of English school leavers vying for university was still higher than in 2010.

15 But Labour said it was clear that the drastic increase in fees coupled with rising debts was “putting people of all ages off going to university and investing their future”. Sally Hunt, general secretary of the University and College Union, said: “We cannot afford a system that puts people off university if we are to compete in the modern world. Other countries are encouraging their best and brightest to get on, not putting up punitive barriers.”

20 Figures from the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (Ucas) show that total applications to start courses are down by 7.4 per cent – to 540,073 – compared with the same point in 2011.

But the figures were largely propped up by a rise in demand from students from outside Europe.

Among British students alone, applications were down by 8.7 per cent – from 506,388 to 462,507 – a fall of 43,881.

25 The figures also mask significant differences across the UK. In England, where fees are the highest, the number of applicants has dropped by 9.9 per cent. Among Scottish students – who are given free tuition – applications are down by just 1.5 per cent. Numbers dropped by 1.9 per cent in Wales and four per cent in Northern Ireland, where courses are also cheaper for home students.

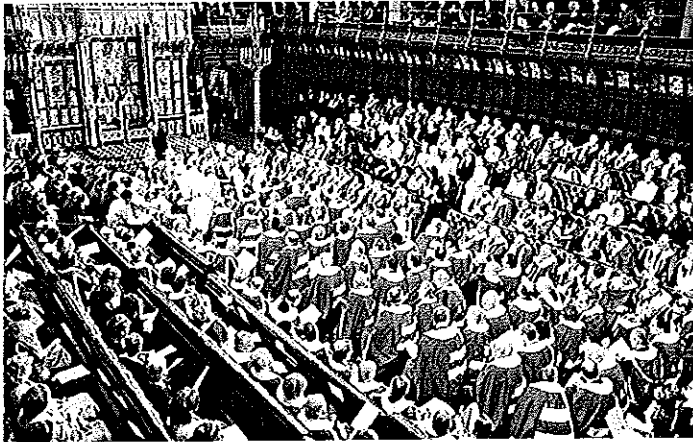
Martin Lewis, of Money Saving Expert and head of the Independent Taskforce on Student Finance Information, said: “There is no doubt that the new higher fees in England will have put some students off.”

30 Applications also dropped quicker among school leavers from wealthier areas who are unable to claim generous grants and fee-waivers offered as part of the new funding regime. According to Ucas, 18-year-olds from the poorest fifth of postcodes in England saw a 0.2 per cent drop in applications, but numbers dropped by 2.5 per cent among the wealthiest fifth. Mary Curnock Cook, Ucas chief executive, said: “Our analysis shows that decreases in demand are slightly larger in more advantaged groups than in the disadvantaged groups. Widely expressed concerns about recent changes in higher education funding arrangements having a disproportionate effect on more disadvantaged groups are not borne out by these data.”

35 Data also exposes a significant variation between institutions. Three-quarters of universities belonging to the elite Russell Group saw applications fall, it was revealed. Applications to Liverpool dropped by 11 per cent, while demand was down by 10.7 per cent at King’s College London, 10.1 per cent at Warwick and 10 per cent at Manchester. But many private universities – which often charge less and have been heavily backed by the Government as a viable alternative to mainstream institutions – saw a rise in applications. BPP University College, which has its own degree awarding powers, saw demand jump by 139 per cent. The University of Buckingham, the biggest private university in Britain, saw applications double.

## Britain tyrannical as Syria with unelected Lords, says Lib Dem

The unelected House of Lords was yesterday likened to the tyrannical government of Syria as leading Liberal Democrats warned that the chamber full of "dinosaurs" must be reformed.



Mr Farron warned: "Dinosaurs in the House of Lords and some dinosaurs in the House of Commons should accept the need for democratic reform" Photo: PA

### SERIE LANGUES VIVANTES ANGLAIS ANALYSE LV1 TEXTE HORS PROGRAMME

By Tim Ross / The Daily Telegraph / 10:00PM GMT 05 Feb 2012

Tim Farron, the Liberal Democrat president, admitted that changing the composition of the Lords was not a priority for voters, but insisted the "national disgrace" of unelected legislators would be tackled. The Coalition is expected to include a Bill in the next Queen's Speech later this year, which would see 20 per cent of the seats in Parliament's upper house become elected from 2015. The issue of Lords reform was one of Nick Clegg's central Coalition policies and he is understood to be determined for a change to take place as soon as possible.

Mr Farron warned: "Dinosaurs in the House of Lords and some dinosaurs in the House of Commons should accept the need for democratic reform."

Speaking on Sky News, he suggested it was "ludicrous" for William Hague, the Foreign Secretary, to have been discussing "many undemocratic countries overseas" in an earlier interview on the Syrian crisis, while "here we are, with half of our legislature being appointed and not democratically elected". "How can we have a government that is even remotely legitimate under whoever's banner it might be, if you have got half of our Parliament appointed, some of whom basically inherited their places there?" Mr Farron told Sky's *Murnaghan* programme.

Pressed on his comparison of the Lords to Middle Eastern dictatorships, Mr Farron said: "Well if you've got a government that is not elected, that is a national embarrassment I would say, so it is something we should all be concerned about."

Reforming the Lords will not be listed on his election leaflets "because it's not really a top campaigning issue", he said.

"But it doesn't mean that it's not utterly crucial to the future of our democracy and the Liberal Democrats are committed to making sure our democracy is at least dragged into the 20th century."

Under the plans expected in the Queen's Speech, an initial 20 per cent of peers would be elected, with the proportion increasing over time. Mr Clegg has published plans for 80 per cent to 100 per cent of the Lords to be democratically elected. However, Tory ministers are said to be angry that Mr Clegg's Lords reform plan will use 20 days of parliamentary debating time during the next session, potentially squeezing out other planned reforms to pensions and universities.

The Conservative leadership has reportedly agreed to the Bill in exchange for securing Lib Dem support for a review of constituency boundaries, which will reduce Labour's advantage in the electoral system.

Senior Lib Dem sources attacked the "bitching" by Tories about how long the Bill would take to get through Parliament, warning that the Health Bill, which faces a possible Lib Dem rebellion in the Lords this week, is likely to take as long.

"We want Lords reform," a senior Lib Dem source told *The Telegraph*.

"We have been making the case for the basic democratic principle that you should elect the people that represent you for 100 years," the source said. "We have always said that there will be a Bill in the second session. That is what we are going to go ahead with."

## Lord Carey backs Christian psychotherapist in 'gay conversion' row

*Leading church figures including the former Archbishop of Canterbury have sparked controversy by championing a psychotherapist who believes gay men can be 'cured' of their homosexuality.*



Lord Carey Photo: AFP

### SERIE LANGUES VIVANTES ANGLAIS ANALYSE LV1 TEXTE HORS PROGRAMME

**By Robert Mendick, Chief Reporter / THE DAILY TELEGRAPH / 9:00PM GMT 28 Jan 2012**

Lesley Pilkington was effectively barred from her professional register after attempting to convert a homosexual man in a therapy session at her home.

Her patient turned out to be a gay rights journalist, who had secretly recorded the sessions and then reported her to her professional body. Mrs Pilkington, a committed Christian, was subsequently found guilty of professional misconduct.

The therapy practised by Mrs Pilkington had been described as "absurd" by the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) and roundly condemned by the Royal College of Psychiatrists.

But ahead of her appeal against the BACP ruling, Mrs Pilkington has received backing from the Rt Rev Lord Carey, the former Archbishop of Canterbury.

In a letter to her professional body, Lord Carey – along with a number of senior figures – suggests Mrs Pilkington is herself a victim of entrapment whose therapy should be supported.

His comments – in a letter co-signed by, among others, the Rt Rev Michael Nazir-Ali, the former Bishop of Rochester and the Rt Rev Wallace Benn, the Bishop of Lewes – will cause controversy in the gay community and beyond.

The joint letter states: "Psychological care for those who are distressed by unwanted homosexual attractions has been shown to yield a range of beneficial client outcomes, especially in motivated clients ... Such therapy does not produce harm despite the Royal College of Psychiatrists and others maintaining the contrary."

It concludes: "Competent practitioners, including those working with biblical Judeo-Christian values, should be free to assist those seeking help."

Lawyers acting for Mrs Pilkington will argue at the appeal hearing on Wednesday that the counsellor did not get a fair hearing.

The case against Mrs Pilkington – first reported in The Sunday Telegraph a year ago – was brought by Patrick Strudwick, a journalist, who approached her at a largely Christian conference and asked her to treat him.

In May 2009, Mr Strudwick attended a therapy session at Mrs Pilkington's private practice, based at her home in Chorleywood, Herts, and recorded the session on a tape machine strapped to his stomach.

On the tape, Mr Strudwick asks Mrs Pilkington if she views homosexuality as "a mental illness, an addiction or an anti religious phenomenon". She replies: "It is all of that."

Last year, Mr Strudwick said: "Entering into therapy with somebody who thinks I am sick ... is the singularly most chilling experience of my life."

"If a black person goes to a GP and says I want skin bleaching treatment, that does not put the onus on the practitioner to deliver the demands of the patient. It puts the onus on the health care practitioner to behave responsibly."

Mrs Pilkington said her method of therapy – Sexual Orientation Change Efforts – is legitimate and effective.

The therapy is practised by a handful of psychotherapists in Britain. The method involves behavioural, psychoanalytical and religious techniques.

Homosexual men are sent on weekends away with heterosexual men to "encourage their masculinity" and "in time to develop healthy relationships with women", said Mrs Pilkington.

Her legal defence is being funded by the Christian Legal Centre (CLC), which has instructed Paul Diamond, a leading human rights barrister, to fight the case.

## David Cameron: It's time for a zero tolerance approach to street crime

*David Cameron today tells the police to take a "zero tolerance" approach to street crime in the wake of the worst rioting to hit mainland Britain in 30 years.*

By Patrick Hennessy, and Matthew d'Ancona / 13 Aug 2011 / THE DAILY TELEGRAPH

The Prime Minister uses an interview with The Sunday Telegraph to promise a series of tough measures, to be unveiled in the coming months, to fight crime and reclaim the streets from rioters, looters and gangs. He pledges to support "zero tolerance" — a tough system of policing first popularised in the US which sees even minor offences prosecuted vigorously to send out the message that no form of law-breaking will be tolerated.

5 "I will be saying much more about that because I think it is true," Mr Cameron says. "We haven't talked the language of zero tolerance enough but the message is getting through."

Mr Cameron has recruited Bill Bratton, the former US "supercop", to advise him as he plans his autumn enforcement drive.

10 The Prime Minister is expected to give details of the new strategy in a major speech in the next few weeks. He has already approved the use of water cannon if needed to quell violence, signalled that police will be allowed to order rioters to remove face coverings and threatened the possible disruption of social messaging networks if used to instigate trouble. In other developments yesterday:

- The number of arrests connected to last week's disturbances soared, with the Metropolitan Police saying it had held 1,276 people. Of those, 748 have been charged.

15 West Midlands Police said they had made 509 arrests, while 208 people have been arrested by Greater Manchester Police. All three forces released more pictures of suspects.

- The Acting Metropolitan Police Commissioner said he expected to see a total of 3,000 arrests in London. His force said it had arrested a 33-year-old man suspected of arson with intent to endanger life over the fire which destroyed a Croydon furniture store.

20 - The courts were flooded with more cases of alleged rioters, including Reece Donovan, 20, accused at City of Westminster magistrates' of robbing Ashraf Rossli, an injured Malaysian student.

- The uncle of two brothers killed by a car while guarding shops from looters in Birmingham said: "This was not about race, this was not about religion — this was about a pure criminal act."

25 An analysis by this newspaper showed that one in five of the cases of alleged rioters to appear in front of the courts involves children. In his first newspaper interview since the disturbances, Mr Cameron pledges more action to help "strengthen families". He claims there are around 100,000 "deeply broken and troubled" families in Britain and bemoans the lack of male role models for many boys and young men.

However, he rules out any climbdown over plans to cut police budgets, despite coming under fire over the issue both from Labour and his own party, including Boris Johnson, the mayor of London.

30 The Prime Minister says: "I think there is a danger sometimes of people seeking very, very complicated answers when there are quite simple [explanations] ... these people who were nicking televisions were not complaining about the reform of the education maintenance allowance or tuition fees. They were nicking televisions because they wanted a television and they weren't prepared to save up and get it like normal people."

35 He pledges no retreat over plans to introduce directly elected police commissioners or to cut police budgets by six per cent over four years, which force chiefs say will lead to thousands fewer officers.

The aftermath of four consecutive nights of rioting around England has embroiled the Prime Minister in a major row with police after he criticised their tactics in failing to deal adequately with the most serious disturbances in London on Monday.

40 Mr Cameron has been attacked for being too late to return from his holiday in Italy to take charge of the fightback against the rioters.

He has said a full public inquiry into the rioting, called for by Ed Miliband, the Labour leader, is not needed. But yesterday Nick Clegg, the Deputy Prime Minister, disclosed that the Government would commission "independent research" into the collapse of public order. The study is likely to cost millions of pounds and will effectively be "owned" by the Government. The research was necessary to provide "evidence", Mr Clegg told

45 Liberal Democrat activists in speeches in Liverpool and Manchester. He said: "Why did some areas and people explode and others not? What can we learn from those neighbourhoods and young people who remained peaceful? We need to know what kind of people the rioters were, and why they did it. That is also why we are looking into gang culture, so that we can combat it more effectively. In policy-making, as in war, it is important to know your enemy."

50 Mr Miliband, on a visit to Hackney, in east London, yesterday said if the Government did not conduct a full public inquiry into the riots then Labour would. It was imperative for Britain to hold a "national discussion", he added. "After all other major disturbances in Britain there has been a proper public commission of inquiry — that is why the Government needs to get on with it," he said.

## Lansley's bill has killed debate about the future of the NHS

*There is a whole lot of politics and very little policy in the war over the government's health reform*

Rafael Behr / 27 February 2012 / New Statesman

Does any of the three main parties actually have a policy for the NHS? It may sound like a peculiar question given that huge stores of energy are currently being spent debating the future of the health service in parliament, but having a big argument in Westminster is not the same as having a coherent agenda.

5 The Health and Social Care Bill returns to the House of Lords this week and Liberal Democrat peers have some amendments covering the controversial section of the reforms dealing with increased competition between different providers. Crudely, speaking the vital question is how widely market forces will be allowed to operate when, under the new structures created by Andrew Lansley's reforms, GPs are given control over budgets and instructed to purchase the best value care for patients.

10 Lib Dems in the Lords want to rewrite parts of the Bill that would give the Competition Commission regulatory authority over healthcare. That, it is feared, would amount to a legal mandate for breaking up NHS "monopolies" and, if enough private providers complained about being shut out of contracts, forcing GPs to curtail their use of state services. In terms of the underlying principles of the Lansley project, this argument is pivotal; it is the big one. It is clear from the way the original bill was designed

15 that the Health Secretary wants a radical acceleration of competition to be the main driver of change in the service. The logical extension of the reforms - as initially conceived - is for the NHS label to be, effectively, a kite mark, signalling that care has been paid for by the state and is being carried out by a licensed provider. It should, in theory, be irrelevant whether the people actually doing the caring are public or private sector employees.

20 It is also clear that the government is too scared to tell the public that this is what Lansley had in mind when he drafted the bill. It sounds and looks a little bit too much like privatisation, which is not a word the Tories want attached to their ambitions for the NHS. That makes it very hard for the government to fight the forthcoming battle in the Lords.

Number 10 is saying it is relaxed about amendments that might "clarify" this crucial section of the bill, but would be unhappy with substantial changes. Does that mean the Prime Minister insists on a level of competition from private providers that forcefully dismantles state monopolies? Or would he be satisfied with a watered down competition clause that amounts, in essence, to an extension of the "internal market" that existed under Labour? Another way of phrasing the question: does Cameron actually want to implement Lansley's vision or is he only pressing ahead with the bill to avoid the humiliation of abandoning a high-profile project in which he has already invested a lot of political capital?

30

The Lib Dem amendments have been sanctioned by Nick Clegg, largely, it seems, because he is aware of deep dissatisfaction in his party and fearful of being presented, come the next election, as an accomplice in Tory sabotage of a cherished national institution. But does he think a dramatic increase in competition from the private sector - policed by an anti-monopolies regulator - would be a driver of greater efficiency and quality of care in the health service? If the answer is "yes", why is he allowing his peers to sabotage the bill? If the answer is "no", why is he voting for any of this legislation?

35

As for Ed Miliband, his position is clear enough for an opposition leader. He has written in the Times today calling (again) for the bill to be scrapped. The issue of competition is addressed in passing:

40 *"Nor is the cause of integration helped by the Bill's aim to turn the whole NHS into a commercial market explicitly modelled on the privatisation of the utilities in the 1980s. Introducing a free-market model throughout the healthcare system -- quite different from the limited competition currently in place -- will have a chilling effect on the behaviour of those trying to co-ordinate and co-operate."*

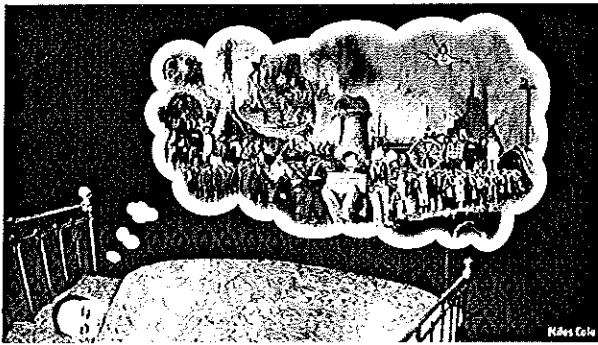
45 Another way of putting this might be that market forces are tolerable when Labour allows them to operate in a carefully controlled environment, but destructive and corrosive when unleashed by Tories and Lib Dems. Fair enough, I suppose, but it is a very queasy way of making peace with the Blairite legacy of public service reform. Nowhere else has Miliband dealt explicitly with the question of whether or not he thinks competition is a healthy or a pernicious mechanism for getting value for money in the public sector. [...]



Bagehot

## The nightmare scenario

*Britain's problems are not a bad dream from which voters can wake*  
May 19th 2012 | THE ECONOMIST



IN “The Night Face Up”—a 1956 short story by Julio Cortázar, an Argentine master of magical realism—a young man lies in a hospital at night, one injured arm held aloft by weights and pulleys. He is tormented by a recurring nightmare in which he is being hunted by Aztec warriors. The dreams are vivid, from the cling and reek of the jungle swamp in which he is captured to the chill of a dungeon floor and the hands dragging him up stone steps to an altar slick with human blood. The gore is mostly hinted at. The story’s menace turns on the man’s repeated struggles to wake and return to his darkened ward.

15 Across the rich world and above all in western Europe, lots of voters know just how that young patient feels. They yearn to hear that today’s unhappy realities—of austerity and spending cuts, debt, intermittent growth and relative decline—are a nightmare from which they can wake. They long to return to the “normality” of the boom years ended by the credit crunch of 2007. As incumbents wobble or fall across the continent, opposition politicians fall over themselves to agree with voters that today’s miseries are a bad dream which their policies would end. Dismaying numbers have turned to extremists, peddling fantasies that would do this trick: vows to “reject austerity” and confiscate elite wealth; plans to slam the door on foreigners or enact rules to keep global competition at bay.

20 To their credit, the British, a sceptical, stolid bunch, are pretty wary of extremists and obvious charlatans. True, recent local elections were tough on the Conservative and Liberal Democrat parties that make up the coalition government at Westminster. But this was mostly to the benefit of the mainstream opposition Labour Party, rather than to extremists on the far-right or far-left. Perhaps the loudest message was sent by the two-thirds of people who did not vote for anybody. Britain “is not Greece or France,” says Rick Nye of the polling firm Populus. 25 Though the coalition’s talk of austerity is not popular, a “significant enough minority” are willing to give the government the benefit of the doubt that Mr Cameron has something his continental peers lack: time to try to fix the economy.

30 But if Britain’s politicians have largely avoided the politics of outright fantasy, too many hint that—with the right policies—the British, too, could wake up and find that the country’s problems have vanished, like bogeymen vanquished by the rising sun.

Start with Labour. [...] Labour “can’t reverse every Tory cut,” concedes his boss, Mr Miliband. Yet for all that supposed realism, lots of voters are meant to hear a simpler promise—that they can wake from the nightmare of austerity, because Labour has “pro-growth” plans that pay for themselves. As Mr Balls puts it, Britain’s recent return to recession was “entirely avoidable”.

35 Labour is not the only party playing “if only” politics. North of the border, the core message of the Scottish National Party (SNP) is that independence from Britain would spell a new dawn, dispelling the bad dream of English misrule. On the right, for the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP), the nightmare from which to wake is European Union membership.

40 Such battle-cries can attract voters: the SNP took control of the Scottish government in 2011. UKIP (which won 13 seats at the 2009 European elections, beating Labour into third place) hovers around 10% in current national polling, and took enough disgruntled Tory votes in this month’s local elections to deny the Conservatives council seats in some southern strongholds. Not all of its supporters believe in magic and bad dreams. [...] Yet if UKIP’s vote continues to rise, its angry promises of quitting the EU will have real world consequences. Should UKIP 45 come first in the 2014 European election, senior Labour and Conservative sources predict their parties will feel under intense pressure to promise a referendum on Britain’s EU membership in their next general election manifestos. [...]

### The twist in the tale: the bad stuff is real

50 Cortázar’s story ends with a twist: the man realises that he is, in reality, an Aztec prisoner. Modern life, the hospital, his motorcycle like “an enormous metal insect, whirring away between his legs”, was the absurd dream, falling away as he awaits death. Britons and other Europeans need to go through a similarly vertiginous moment. For decades workers, faced with exploding global competition, were compensated by governments with cheap goods, early retirement and welfare on credit: a dream of affluence for life to replace jobs for life. Now the competition is as intense as ever, societies are ageing and their nations are poorer than they thought only a few 55 years ago. The boom years were the dream. Hard work and tighter belts are the new reality.

Uncontrolled borders

## Waving them in

A row over lax border guards conceals a bigger problem with immigration

Nov 12th 2011 | THE ECONOMIST

THE Home Office is a politicians' graveyard. Three of the current home secretary's five immediate predecessors left under a cloud; a fourth thought it so awful that he broke up the department. For 18 months Theresa May has looked unassailable in her kitten heels, two-stepping deftly past the landmines of policing reform and immigration caps. But thanks to a brouhaha over Britain's border agency, UKBA, she was pondering the implications of a near-death experience as *The Economist* went to press.

The row began on November 3rd when it emerged that passport-control officials had been relaxing entry procedures at Heathrow airport and elsewhere to manage queues. They did not always open biometric passport chips or check details against a list of undesirables. The man in charge, Brodie Clark, and two others were suspended. Whether any dangerous folk were waved through is unknown, but it makes for a rousing political dogfight, studded with calls for Mrs May to resign.

The home secretary says she authorised a trial of light-touch inspection for Europeans, including children travelling with their parents, to allow agents to focus on more suspicious people. She did not authorise treating other arrivals that way, she insists. UKBA's chief executive confirmed her account, saying Mr Clark had admitted to exceeding ministerial instructions.

But immigration gaffes in Britain are never quietly forgotten. By the time Mrs May had blamed Mr Clark in the House of Commons and the Home Affairs Committee, Mr Clark had had enough. He resigned, saying that she had made his position untenable, and intends to sue for "constructive dismissal".

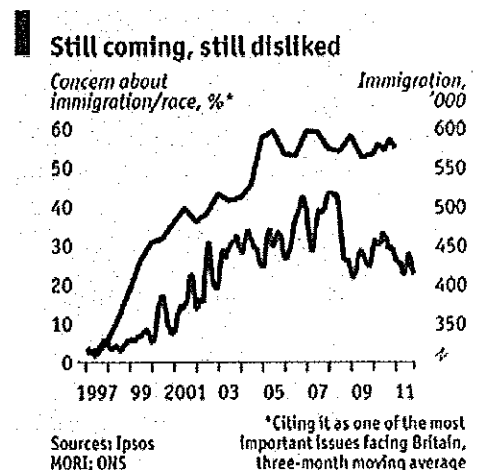
Formed in 2008, when the Home Office was dismembered, UKBA has always been a mess. A big project to digitise information recedes expensively into the future. The Home Affairs Committee recently charged the agency with all kinds of slackness, including losing touch with over 100,000 immigration cases.

However bad UKBA and the row over it may be, a more serious fight awaits. The Tories came to power promising to reduce annual net migration from around 200,000 to the "tens of thousands". A steep rise in immigration spooked Britons a decade ago, and they have not calmed down much since (see chart). An online petition urging the government not to let Britain's population hit 70m by 2027, as it is currently expected to, attracted over 100,000 signatures in seven days, according to its sponsor, a lobbying think-tank called Migration Watch. The government has tightened work and study visas for non-Europeans. It is whittling away at family reunification rights, and plans to make it harder to settle permanently in Britain. But the numbers are not yet budging.

Provisional figures show long-term immigration in the year to December 2010 at 575,000, about the same as before. Outflow was 336,000, less than the 427,000 it reached in 2008. Net migration was thus 239,000, 20% higher than the year before.

It is likely that net migration will fall a bit as government measures are fully implemented. But the target of tens of thousands looks remote. Students, mostly from outside Europe, account for two-fifths of all immigrants. Most are the genuine article, now that many bogus colleges have been closed. Migration from EU countries cannot be cut and may even grow.

One reason is that, as it becomes harder to bring in workers from other parts of the world, EU migrants may fill those jobs, keeping numbers up. This may be happening already. Net migration from eastern European countries, which reversed when Britain's economy collapsed, is rising sharply again, points out Carlos Vargas-Silva of Oxford's Migration Observatory. Single men are bringing their families: Polish women accounted for the biggest share of foreign-born mothers in 2010. Established communities will attract others. But that is a fight for the end of this parliament, when accounts are settled. For now, Mrs May is likely to stay, barring eye-catching exposés or economies with the truth. Until recently, she was a safe pair of hands. She is also a woman, and David Cameron is short of them. He lost one colleague a month ago; were Mrs May to follow the former defence secretary, Liam Fox, so quickly, it might raise questions about the prime minister's ability to run a cabinet, still less a country. And it is possible that Mrs May will turn out to have been in the right.



## Obama's "war on religion": The president picks an unnecessary fight with the mighty Catholic church

Feb 11th 2012, *The Economist*

If ever there was an election campaign both main candidates had an interest in keeping religion out of, you might suppose that this was it. In politics, however, some opportunities are just too tempting to pass up. Whatever chance there once was for a religious non-aggression pact evaporated after one of Mr Obama's recent decisions gave powerful new ammunition to those who accuse him of waging a "war on religion". The decision in question is a gift to Republicans not only because it is controversial in itself, but also because it springs from the unloved Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, or "Obamacare", as it is nicknamed. The Republicans say they will repeal Obamacare because its main idea—making everyone buy health insurance on pain of a fine—violates personal freedom. Now the Department of Health and Human Services has planted in the weeds of the legislation something its critics call even more objectionable: nothing less than a violation of religious freedom.

The Affordable Care Act says that employers must provide health insurance to their workers (or pay a fine), and allows the government to lay down minimum standards of cover when they do so. Last summer the health department decreed that all new health-insurance policies should cover birth-control services for women, including the morning-after pill (which most pro-lifers consider a form of abortion) and sterilisation. Churches are exempt; but church-affiliated hospitals, schools and universities, most of which employ and serve people of many faiths, are not. Once the new rule comes into effect, in 2013, they will have to include such services in their insurance packages, at no extra cost to the employee.

This decision has upset many denominations, but the Catholic church is especially furious. "Never before", says Timothy Dolan, president of the Conference of Catholic Bishops, "has the federal government forced individuals and organisations to go out into the marketplace and buy a product that violates their conscience." Angry letters from the bishops have been read out from pulpits across the land. Having won their vote by 54% to 45% in 2008, Mr Obama may now be in deep trouble with America's 70m Catholics. Peggy Noonan, a columnist for the *Wall Street Journal*, thinks this decision might even cost him the election.

Does the new rule really prevent the free exercise of religion? One governor, Maryland's Martin O'Malley, a Democrat and a Catholic, accuses the Catholic leadership of "hyperventilating". Nothing in the new rule interferes with the freedom to worship. Nor will it require anybody to practise contraception against their will (and most Catholics use contraceptives anyway). But the rule will require institutions to pay for contraceptive drugs and services they find objectionable on grounds of conscience. The administration points out that 28 states already impose such requirements, but its critics say the new rules are tougher.

Ms Noonan complains that there was no reason "except ideology" for the administration to make its decision. But ideology is just a pejorative word for principles in which you happen not to believe. This is a case of two principles colliding. Catholic institutions are making a principled stand for what they see as the sanctity of life. The administration argues with no less conviction that the well-being of women depends on affordable access to contraception no matter where they work. It did not pluck this idea out of thin air: this was advice from the august Institute of Medicine. At some point, the courts will probably decide. The Becket Fund for Religious Liberty, a non-profit legal foundation, has filed lawsuits on behalf of two Christian colleges. But as to which principle has the higher moral claim, no simple rule provides an answer. Plenty of laws in America trump religious belief. For example, Muslims may take only one wife.

A better question than which principle takes precedence is whether Mr Obama could have avoided the collision altogether by taking evasive action. He could and should have. Much as the absolutists on each side relish such clashes between church and state, forcing the issue risks damaging something worthwhile. Michael McConnell, a professor of law at Stanford University, calls this a self-inflicted wound, "a typical culture-war issue" in which one tribe uses governmental power to damage the other. Newt Gingrich has been denouncing the president's "secular-socialist machine" for more than a year. Yet Mr Gingrich's own views on church and state are astonishing. He says he wants a government that "respects our religion". Yes, you read that right: not religion (the former House speaker is "tired" of respecting "every religion on the planet") but "our" religion. It is baffling that a serious candidate for president can have misunderstood the letter and spirit of the first amendment quite so thoroughly.

SERIE LANGUES VIVANTES  
ANGLAIS  
ANALYSE LV1 TEXTE HORS  
PROGRAMME

Government transparency

The best disinfectant

Hopes of “open government” under Barack Obama have been only partly fulfilled

*The Economist*, May 26th 2012

5 BARACK OBAMA accepted an award honouring his administration’s commitment to transparency on March  
28th 2011. It was given by a coalition of open-government advocates. But the meeting was closed to reporters  
and photographers, and was not announced on the president’s public schedule. Occasionally life provides  
perfect metaphors. On his first full day in office Mr Obama declared that “government should be transparent,”  
10 and said that his administration “is committed to creating an unprecedented level of openness in government”.  
And so, in December 2009, he issued his Open Government Directive, which ordered federal departments to  
formulate and publish plans to become more transparent. Those plans were all duly published within five  
months. Also that December he created a new National Declassification Centre (NDC), designed to streamline  
the declassification of government documents. The federal government now publishes a vast array of data at  
Data.gov. At Recovery.gov meanwhile, citizens can track how their stimulus funds were spent. Foia.gov,  
15 launched in March 2011, lets people see whether agencies are fulfilling their obligations to disclose information  
under the 1966 Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). That act governs what information must be released to the  
public. It is federal, but all 50 states have their own versions governing what records and meetings are public.  
These regulations are commonly known as sunshine laws.

20 And yet in this arena, as in others, Mr Obama has been better at rhetoric than reality. Mr Obama’s  
administration is proving as fond of wartime secrecy as the administration he replaced. The American Civil  
Liberties Union is suing under FOIA to get it to reveal records of the use of drones by the CIA and the armed  
forces to kill particular people. The CIA’s response has been to “neither confirm nor deny the existence or non-  
existence of records responsive to this request”. Yet perhaps none of Mr Obama’s transparency promises has  
25 rung hollower than his vow to protect whistleblowers. Thomas Drake, who worked at the National Security  
Agency, was threatened with life imprisonment for leaking to the *Baltimore Sun* unclassified details of a  
wasteful programme that also impinged on privacy. The case against him failed—ultimately he pleaded guilty to  
a misdemeanour charge of “exceeding authorised use of a computer”—but not before he was hounded out of his  
job. Mr Obama’s administration tried to prosecute him under the Espionage Act, a law passed in 1917 that  
30 prohibits people from giving information “with intent or reason to believe that it is to be used to the injury of the  
United States or to the advantage of a foreign nation”. Mr Obama has indicted six whistleblowers, including Mr  
Drake, under the Espionage Act, twice as many as all prior administrations combined, for leaking information  
not to a “foreign nation” but to the press.

35 All of this comes despite the fact that whistleblowers often do a great deal of good: in 2010, for instance, 77%  
of the \$3.1 billion that America won in fraud-related judgments and settlements came from suits brought by  
them. Of course any government is entitled to keep some secrets, and of course people who leak genuinely  
damaging information ought to be prosecuted. But the prosecution of Mr Drake and others like him smacks  
more of vindictiveness and message-sending than justice. If the federal government is dragging its feet,  
however, several states are powering ahead. Sam Olens, Georgia’s attorney-general, led an effort to update  
40 Georgia’s open-records and open-meetings laws. Mr Olens said that the laws, which had not been overhauled in  
many years, had grown convoluted and ambiguous. He also cited complaints that local governments were  
ignoring open-records requests. The changes Mr Olens championed—and which Nathan Deal, Georgia’s  
Republican governor, signed into law on April 17th—lower the cost of records obtained by the public from 25  
cents a page to 10 cents, and require agencies to alert requesters if the records will cost more than \$25 to provide  
45 (sunshine laws require agencies to provide information; they do not require it to be free). They increase the  
penalties for officials who violate the law, and let prosecutors bring civil charges, not just criminal ones, against  
violators.

The data show that in states with strong FOIA laws politicians are less likely to be corrupt, and those that are  
corrupt are more likely to be caught. “Sunlight”, wrote Louis Brandeis, a Supreme Court justice, nearly a  
century ago, “is said to be the best of disinfectants.”

Our endless culture war

By Michael Gerson, Tuesday, *Washington Post*, June 19, 2012

- 5 President Obama's decision to lead with social issues in his reelection campaign — immigration, gay marriage and contraception — makes some political sense. His ideologically divisive performance in office has left him with no serious option but a base strategy. Cultural battles inspire the liberality of liberal donors. They may pump up turnout among target groups — Latinos, college-educated whites and single women. They can goad opponents into angry overreaction. And social debates, coincidentally, are an alternative to discussing the state of the economy.
- 10 Obama's appeal to Hispanic Americans has little downside, exploiting a vulnerability Republicans have taken great pains to create. His evolution on gay rights corresponds to a swift evolution of public sentiments. It is his assault on the liberty of religious institutions — forcing their complicity in the distribution of contraceptives and abortion-inducing drugs — that remains the most dangerous overreach of Obama's culture war. This issue concerns not just the outcome of an election but the nature of liberalism itself. In a free society, which should have priority: pluralism or the advance of liberal values?
- 15 The advocates of pluralism believe that a political community should consist of many communities pursuing different ways of life. Some will be consistent with liberal, democratic conceptions of equality and choice. Others will be exclusive and traditional — defined by sectarian beliefs and hierarchal authority. They may oppose contraception or forbid women from serving in some leadership positions. A pluralist view of freedom requires tolerance for some ways of life that other citizens find oppressive or unreasonable.
- 20 This tolerance, of course, is not unlimited. It covers the Old Order Amish. It would not cover the Old Order Aztecs engaged in ritual human sacrifice. Without imposing an ideal way of life, the state can rule out the clearest abuses of human rights. But in the pluralist view, the government should grant broad latitude to institutions, even illiberal institutions, in determining and transmitting their own views and practices. But pluralism has critics. Some political philosophers assert that liberal values of equality and choice are
- 25 foundational in a free society and should be promoted by government at every level — all the way down to voluntary associations and families. In this view, the state has a responsibility to defend individual rights against every form of social oppression, public and private. Illiberal institutions should be encouraged, if not compelled, to grant their members greater choice and freedom. The task becomes easier as the role of government expands. The passage of Obamacare allowed the writing of regulations that impose a liberal value (sexual autonomy
- 30 through cost-free contraception) on illiberal (Catholic) institutions. The Department of Health and Human Services prioritized the expansion of progressive rights over the claims of pluralism.
- The establishment of the liberal view of autonomy as the single, publicly favored way of life is inherently aggressive. Why not use government power to undermine the resistance of private institutions to reproductive rights by giving funding only to charitable organizations that refer for abortions? The Obama administration
- 35 already imposed this requirement on a recent grant dealing with human trafficking. So why not take a similar approach on gay rights or gender equality, denying public benefits to organizations with illiberal views? It is an apparently endless public mission. It is also a recipe for endless culture war. Institutions targeted by government as backward will naturally resent it, and the members of those groups will feel alienated from a common public enterprise.
- 40 Still, there are a number of arguments for genuine pluralism beyond social peace. The habits of good citizens — attributes such as self-control, cooperation and respect for the law — don't emerge spontaneously. They are cultivated in families and religious congregations. The health of liberal political institutions is strengthened by the success of traditional institutions, which often teach values that prepare individuals for the responsible exercise of freedom.
- 45 At the same time, strong civic institutions act as a check on government. This is the most basic of American beliefs: that freedom is best preserved by the broad distribution of power, resources and authority. Pluralism is a brake on oppressive majorities and on public officials over-impressed by their own virtue. So a strong civil society prepares people for participation in liberal, democratic institutions while limiting the pretensions and ambitions of those institutions. This is the genius of pluralism, and the best hope for lasting peace in the culture
- 50 wars: a single nation with room for deep disagreements.

Obama's 'kill list' is unchecked presidential power

By Katrina vanden Heuvel, *Washington Post*, June 12, 2012

5 A stunning report in the New York Times depicted President Obama poring over the equivalent of terrorist  
baseball cards, deciding who on a "kill list" would be targeted for elimination by drone attack. The revelations  
— as well as those in Daniel Klaidman's recent book — sparked public outrage and calls for congressional  
inquiry. Yet bizarrely, the fury is targeted at the messengers, not the message. Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.)  
expressed dismay that presidential aides were leaking national security information to bolster the president's  
foreign policy credentials. (Shocking? Think gambling, Casablanca). Republican and Democratic senators  
joined in condemning the leaks. Attorney General Eric H. Holder Jr. — AWOL in the prosecution of rampant  
10 bank fraud — roused himself to name two prosecutors to track down the leakers.

15 Please. Al-Qaeda knows that U.S. drones are hunting them. The Pakistanis, Yemenis, Somalis, Afghanis and  
others know the U.S. is behind the drones that strike suddenly from above. The only people aided by these  
revelations are the American people who have an overriding right and need to know. The problem isn't the  
leaks, it's the policy. It's the assertion of a presidential prerogative that the administration can target for death  
people it decides are terrorists — even American citizens — anywhere in the world, at any time, on secret  
evidence with no review. It is a policy driven largely by the new technological capacity of pilotless aircraft.  
Drone strikes have rapidly expanded, becoming a centerpiece of the Obama strategy. Over the last three years,  
the Obama administration has carried out at least 239 covert drone strikes, more than five times the 44 approved  
under George W. Bush.

20 Drones are enormously seductive and widely popular. Video games made real, they are relatively cheap, risk no  
U.S. casualties, claim to be exactly targeted and, according to the administration, have been lethal in eliminating  
al-Qaeda's operatives. As Adm. Dennis Blair, former director of national intelligence for the Obama  
administration before being pushed out, notes, "It plays well domestically and it is unpopular only in other  
countries. Any damage it does to the national interest only shows up over the long term." Drones are also  
25 alarming. As a recent congressional letter of inquiry notes, "They are faceless ambassadors that cause civilian  
deaths . . . They can generate powerful and enduring anti-American sentiment." The drone attacks may generate  
as many terrorists as they dispatch. They seduce the U.S. into literally policing the world, an intrusive presence  
that surely will generate hostility and retribution.

30 Moreover, the president's claim offends the spirit and letter of the Constitution and shreds the global laws of  
war. Our founders were eager to curb the prerogative of kings to wage war and foreign adventures. That is why  
the Constitution gave Congress the power to declare war. Yet the president now claims the right to attack  
anywhere in the world in an apparently endless war against terrorism.

35 The argument, of course, is that we are at war with al-Qaeda's terrorists — one that Congress authorized — and  
thus the president is free to track them down and attack them anywhere in the world, even if they are American  
citizens. To enforce this, the U.S. has Special Operations forces in some 60 to 75 countries and has unleashed  
drones in at least five. The administration is at pains to suggest that no one is targeted for death until after  
extensive review, internal checks and balances and administrative "due process" of a sort. But this rationale is  
refuted by what we know from the administration's own limited releases of information. Officials distinguish  
between "personality strikes" — which are targeted at named operatives — and "signature strikes" — which are  
40 triggered by evidence of allegedly threatening activity by unidentified persons. Not surprisingly, the latter have  
been notorious for the "collateral damage" — innocent civilians — who have been casualties.

45 Most Americans support the drones — after all they're going after terrorists. But the administration is claiming  
the right to charge, try and execute an American citizen without a hearing or a trial and conviction. The  
Constitution, Attorney General Holder argues, "guarantees due process, not judicial process." But once more,  
this tramples the entire framework of the Bill of Rights, which was devised to limit the power of the state to  
lock up political dissenters without an independent tribunal. It is vital that Congress reassert its constitutional  
authority. In the 1952 Steel Seizure case, Justice Felix Frankfurter argued that "a systematic, unbroken,  
executive practice, long pursued to the knowledge of Congress and never before questioned . . . may be treated  
as a gloss on the executive power" vested in the president by the Constitution. The practice doesn't just become  
50 legal, it becomes part of the Constitution, and Congress cannot thereafter challenge the authority that has been  
ceded.

**SERIE LANGUES VIVANTES  
ANGLAIS  
ANALYSE LV1 TEXTE HORS  
PROGRAMME**

**Legal challenge tests already-accepted changes in health care**

By Jordan Rau, Monday, June 18, *The Washington Post*

- 5 Often overlooked in the Supreme Court challenge to the health-care law are changes that hospitals, doctors and insurers had been moving toward even before the law was passed in 2010. Some of these could be halted if the court throws out the Affordable Care Act, or hobbled if the justices excise parts of it, experts say.
- 10 The changes include increasing the role of primary care, especially for low-income patients; forcing hospitals and doctors to work together closely; and reducing pay to hospitals if they don't meet patients' expectations or outcome benchmarks set by the government.
- 15 "We have to change and we know that," said Ken Raske, president and chief executive of the Greater New York Hospital Association, which represents 250 hospitals and medical care facilities. "But it's easier if you're going to build the building to have the shovels and picks and the hammer and nails than trying to dig it out with your hands. That's what the [Affordable Care Act] is."
- 20 One of the concerns raised during the debate over the law was that expanding coverage would lead to a shortage of primary care doctors. The law allocates more money to provide primary care to people, especially the poor. The theory is that seeking early care or preventive measures will help more people stay well enough to avoid expensive hospitalizations or develop chronic conditions.
- 25 The government has spent \$1.9 billion to build and expand community health centers and \$512 million to train more health-care workers, including primary care doctors, physician assistants and nurse practitioners, according to the Kaiser Family Foundation.
- Also at stake are some new methods to pay doctors and hospitals to reward good and efficient medical care, and ongoing efforts to come up with different reimbursement models. Many of these changes are being implemented by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. These include 65 collaborations among hospitals and doctors, which are working as "accountable care organizations." Freed from antitrust laws, they can earn bonuses from Medicare if they provide care more cheaply without sacrificing quality.
- 30 While only those organizations that volunteered are in ACOs, another change starting in October would automatically affect most hospitals in the country. Medicare has announced that hospitals will face financial penalties or earn bonuses depending on their rates of readmissions, reviews by patients and thoroughness in following basic guidelines for clinical care. Physicians, too, will see their Medicare pay rise or fall based on the quality of their care and the degree to which their patients don't overuse Medicare services.
- The health law's authors want to supplant the current, widely used piecemeal payment system in which providers earn more for a great number of tests and treatments without any concern about quality.
- 35 The federal Center for Medicare & Medicaid Innovation is experimenting with dozens of other targeted trials, giving money to groups that seek to reduce the prevalence and costs of asthma in New England, strokes in Louisiana, chronic pain in North Carolina and dental problems and diabetes among Native Americans on South Dakota reservations.
- If the government's efforts are curtailed, it is not clear whether the private health-care market will move forward with changes to coordinate care and operate more efficiently.
- 40 "I don't think we'd be where we are today in accountable care but for the Affordable Care Act," said Douglas Hastings, a health-care lawyer in Washington. He noted that nearly half of all people in the country with coverage get it through the government. "When I sit in on meetings with private payers, they say, 'We model a lot on what Medicare does.' Accountable care may still move forward in the private market, but if this law is deemed unconstitutional, it slows down or stops the momentum."
- 45 But J. Peter Rich, a health-care lawyer in Los Angeles, said the movement to transform the way care is provided will continue even without the law, with providers joining together into larger systems, forming new affiliations and being held to new standards for keeping down expenses and delivering results to patients.
- "There's tremendous cost pressure nationwide on health plans as well as hospitals, primary care physicians and other providers," he said. "With an aging population and the increasing financial burden of chronic diseases like type 2 diabetes, these cost pressures are not going to go away."
- 50 Even if the law is struck down, some supporters say Medicare might be able to resurrect some of these ventures as demonstration projects. But it would need congressional authority to expand them nationwide, said Gail Wilensky, a former Medicare administrator.
- 55 "If (the court) literally invalidated everything, they'd need new legislative authority," she said.

SERIE LANGUES VIVANTES  
ANGLAIS  
ANALYSE LV1 TEXTE HORS  
PROGRAMME

What's the Point of College?

Clare Malone, *The American Prospect*, April 3, 2012

A critical look at the state of the American university

*College: What It Was, Is, and Should Be*, By Andrew Delbanco, Princeton University Press, 240 pages, \$24.95

5 Visit any campus bookstore, and in addition to lighthearted tracts on applied calculus and hoodies made in China, you will see a baby jumper emblazoned with the school's logo—a sign of how anxiously and superstitiously Americans hope that their kids, still capable of only gurgling and monkey reflex reactions, will one day go to college. It is this glossily promoted hope that Columbia University professor and social critic Andrew Delbanco explores in a book that, despite its title, is no work of prescriptive policy. Wonks may be  
10 disappointed at the lack of charts and tables, but Delbanco explores American higher education in a manner befitting a scholar of Melville and the Puritans, with a humanist's belief in lessons from history and in asking what the right thing is to do.

The first American colleges were built on the British model, he reminds us, from which ancient features—dorm living, put-upon teaching assistants, study-day benders—survive today. Almost from the outset, though, deans  
15 of what would become the Ivy League universities held the building of civic pride and moral soundness in America's ruling citizenry to be their highest goal, even higher than the training of ministers, as had been the norm in Mother England. "The American college was conceived from the start as more than narrowly ecclesiastical," Delbanco writes, "with the larger aim, as the historian Samuel Eliot Morison put it, to 'develop the whole man—his body and soul as well as his intellect' toward the formation of a person inclined to 'unity, gentility and public service.'" Not everyone could join these well-rounded ranks, of course. For a long time,  
20 American schools were not too academically choosy, instead picking out the sons of gentlemen farmers, the new republic's base of power. Top schools stayed blue-blooded well into the 20th century. The gates finally flew open almost 70 years ago, with the GI bill sending to college millions of men who otherwise wouldn't have dreamed of it, and millions of women and minorities eventually following suit by the mid-1970s. Since then, the  
25 pressures and rewards surrounding college have only grown.

Reading this book made me recall the question I used to ask myself as an English major only a few years ago. What was the utility in spending entire class hours discussing the assonance of a line of poetry or the dualities of a character's thought? I believed I was studying how to bring precise words to feelings and thoughts about life and death and what sometimes seemed a gaping chasm between myself and others. Yet if I am honest, when I  
30 defended the humanities to a chemistry major, it was in my generation's lingua franca: a touch of cynicism, a rat-a-tat elevator pitch. Talking about staring up into the silvery cascade of leaves on a tree and knowing the joy of Wordsworth's "spot of time" is not something you mention in polite company these days. Delbanco also makes a fair case that young people today are less interested than they used to be in both public service and a certain understanding of inner life that used to be called introspection. Yes, the millennial generation famously  
35 uses the tools of social networking to found all manner of idealistic enterprises. But our feeling of connection to an overarching greater good is a bit wanting; if democracy is a garden that needs tending, a lot of us seem to hope it's a Chia Pet—give it a bit of water and leave it alone.

Only a few years ago, students my age believed, not so secretly, in the meritocratic fantasy that success would come our way by virtue of our having done time in the collegiate womb. After the crash, we wondered if we had  
40 made a great mistake in throwing ourselves full-force into debt. We're still not sure how things will turn out. Yet there's another reality, and it's unlikely to change. Those who end up running things in this country will continue, without exception, to be people who went to college; everyone else will end up living by their rules. For this reason, it seems only right that these training grounds of tomorrow's powerful keep a place for students who know the life-preserving difference that a social safety net can make. Maybe it's even good for those in  
45 power to have had their minds stretched by the briefest bout with thinkers who have asked, "Why do we wage war?" And "Is this all happenstance, or is there a plan?"

In his poem "Digging," Seamus Heaney ruminates on the lives of his peat-digging father and grandfather. Heaney, a college man, recognizes that his life will not be like theirs. But it will be ever informed by their experience:



50 But I've no spade to follow men like them.  
Between my finger and my thumb  
The squat pen rests.  
I'll dig with it.

55 If the daughters of soybean farmers and mortgage brokers were to gather with the sons of factory workers and lawyers to discuss this poem, the result might not train a 21st-century workforce. But there are worse visions of a country, and far worse uses of a college afternoon.

Where to Draw the Line on Hate Speech?

Daniel Townsend , *The American Prospect*, June 15, 2012

Jeremy Waldron's new book tries to uncover the best way to tackle hate speech on the legal and policy front.

5 Discussions of free speech in the United States often call upon the adage—misattributed to Voltaire—that  
“while I disagree with what you have to say, I will defend to the death your right to say it.” (The quote in fact  
comes from Evelyn Hall, who wrote a biography of the French philosopher.) It’s a succinct summary of a the  
cherished American idea that speech should not be abridged because we find its content objectionable. But  
10 according to New York University Law Professor Jeremy Waldron, it’s severely flawed. In *The Harm in Hate  
Speech*, published this month by Harvard University Press, Waldron argues that freedom of speech in the United  
States is so absolute, both in law and in public opinion, that we lack meaningful regulation against speech  
intended to demean or vilify minority groups—what we casually refer to as “hate speech.” Hate-speech laws,  
Waldron notes, are “common and widely accepted” in every other advanced democracy. But in the United  
15 States, Waldron says, those who support such a principled, absolutist stance do so at the expense of the  
communities that hate speech targets. While it delves into legal theory and history, Waldron’s treatise is  
primarily a philosophical defense of hate-speech regulation. He argues that hate speech is an “environmental”  
problem that pollutes the atmosphere of security and dignity that society should provide to all its members:

20 In a well-ordered society ... everyone can enjoy a certain assurance as they go about their business. They know  
that when they leave home in the morning, they can count on not being discriminated against or humiliated or  
terrorized...they can face social interactions without the elemental risks that such interaction would involve if  
one could not count on others to act justly.

Speech intended to intimidate or malign destroys this assurance. What’s more, it allows racists and radicals to  
send an important message to each other: You’re not alone. The law, says Waldron, has an interest in protecting  
the social environment by prohibiting such statements.

25 There are many responses to this argument, and Waldron is scrupulously honest as he mulls opposing views. He  
acknowledges that “dignity” is a broad term—too broad, according to some. He details Dworkin’s argument that  
hate speech is a necessary evil to maintain the legitimacy of anti-discrimination laws, as a democratic  
government should not ban any kind of speech that helps form our collective opinion on legislation.  
Unsurprisingly, Waldron concludes that none of the major arguments against regulating speech are compelling.  
30 There are cases of hate speech—a burning cross, or a sign that says “Fuck Muslims”—that either do not  
advance a political stance at all, or only advance one which could also be expressed in a less hateful way. “One  
can challenge a law against discrimination without engaging in hate speech,” he writes, “and, indeed, one can  
challenge a hate speech law without engaging in hate speech.” Rather than treat freedom of speech as absolute,  
Waldron advocates an approach that weighs free-speech rights against their effects: One’s right to free speech  
ends where “significant” harm to society begins. While there are some existing restrictions to free speech in the  
35 U.S., they usually focus on the “time, place, or manner” of the speech in question—shouting “fire!” in a  
crowded theater being Oliver Wendell Holmes’s famous analogy for speech that is dangerous primarily because  
of its immediate effects. Waldron, though, consciously argues that under his view of the social harms of hate  
speech, it’s not enough to regulate speech that is likely to cause imminent harm in the form of a fight or a riot.  
Under his view, the content of hate speech is itself harmful, and bans on hate speech should therefore be  
40 content-based.

The question, of course, is where to draw the line. The balancing approach is most persuasive when Waldron’s  
examples of hate speech are extreme. But Waldron is disconcertingly ambiguous about where the law should  
fall in less-extreme cases. When discussing the 2005 controversy in which a Danish newspaper published  
cartoons depicting Muhammad as a bomb-throwing terrorist, Waldron says “where there are fine lines to be  
45 drawn the law should generally stay on the liberal side of them.” Yet Waldron describes how it would be  
defamatory to publish a statement saying “Tea Party politicians cannot be trusted with public funds,” or “Tea  
Party politicians are dishonest,” ignoring arguments mentioned elsewhere in the book that speech about elected  
officials should be given the widest freedoms. And in an interesting but underdeveloped chapter, Waldron draws  
an analogy between defamatory speech and pornography, arguing that sexualized images—including television,  
50 billboard, and subway advertising—undermine society’s assurance of equality to women. What he seems to  
suggest is that it would be more legitimate to outlaw lingerie ads or broad statements about political leaders than  
to prohibit the Danish cartoons—a strange vision of “balance,” and not one that errs on the side of liberalism.

SERIE LANGUES VIVANTES  
ANGLAIS  
ANALYSE LV1 TEXTE HORS  
PROGRAMME

The Sixties at 50

Paul Starr, *The American Prospect*, June 7, 2012

5 *Half a century later, the battles of the 1960s--and the effects of one great wrong turn by liberals of that time--are still with us. The following column accompanies a special report in the July-August issue, taking stock of America's progress in fighting poverty on the 50th anniversary of Michael Harrington's *The Other America*. "Ever since the 1960s, many of us have measured progress by how far America has gone in fulfilling the ideals of that era: guaranteeing equal rights, preventing unjust wars, safeguarding the earth, ending poverty.*

10 In today's harsh political climate, the hopes of the '60s may seem unrealistic, even grandiose, but they remain central to liberal politics. For better or worse, we're still embroiled in the struggles that exploded in that decade. What is the campaign for same-sex marriage or the recent controversy over women's reproductive rights if not a continuation of both the civil-rights movement and the sexual revolution of the '60s? And what is today's social conservatism if not a backlash against the changes unleashed in that era?

15 The 1960s are a reference point for another reason. The span of human life makes the half-century mark a natural point of historical reflection. People who were young in the '60s now glimpse the closing phases of their own time and their generation's. Many of them once dreamed of leaving the world a better place and 50 years later face the question of whether they will. I am not sure anyone cares that this year is also the 100th anniversary of Woodrow Wilson's election as president and the high-water mark of early 20th-century Progressivism. No one is alive who remembers that bright dawn and asks whether we are better off for it. The  
20 1960s, however, are still a living memory, and the verdict on that decade continues to divide Americans as sharply as the next presidential election and along much the same lines. Yet despite the continuities, the '60s seem strikingly different from the present because of what that era took for granted—sustained economic growth and shared prosperity. To be sure, prosperity wasn't shared widely enough; the poor, especially the minority poor, were left out. But by 1962, the distribution of income and wealth had improved modestly for two  
25 decades, the middle class was growing, unions were a powerful force, and even Republicans accepted the New Deal. The movements of the 1960s proceeded as if those issues were settled.

30 The '60s movements were not just intellectually unprepared for the slowdown in growth and rise in inequality that began in the mid-1970s; they were institutionally unprepared, too. The civil-rights, feminist, anti-war, and environmental movements—and others that came later—operated more or less on their own. They had particularly tense relations with the labor movement, which many of the new organizations saw as a bulwark of the status quo. On the left, solidarity was not forever. When Democrats had congressional majorities, they made no effort to repeal Taft-Hartley, the 1947 law that severely limited union organizing, or to adopt other measures that could have strengthened unions. They failed to appreciate how much their own concerns depended on the unions' role in mobilizing working-class support for progressive goals. The social reforms of the Kennedy and  
35 Johnson years helped to ameliorate poverty and to buffer Americans against the economic downturns of later decades. But the idea of a war on poverty without strengthening the hand of labor was a great mistake. Not all progressives were hostile or indifferent to the unions. Certainly Harrington wasn't. When Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated, he was in Memphis to support a strike by sanitation workers. But too many liberals thought of poverty only as a policy problem, not as a reflection of the underlying distribution of power that politics  
40 could alter.

45 Today, with union membership reduced to 7 percent of the private-sector workforce, most working people have no organized voice at all. Meanwhile, the power of wealth has been fully unleashed by the Supreme Court. "In democracies, the rich protect their freedom with wealth, and the people protect theirs with laws." So goes an adage that dates to Demosthenes in ancient Athens, according to the political theorist John McCormick. But where the laws obey wealth, there is no just equilibrium.

50 Someday the 1960s will belong entirely to the historians, but we are not there yet. Same-sex marriage may well be the last of the old battles and the old victories. It is the kind of reform that law can deliver, the wealthy will not obstruct, and public opinion will ultimately not deny. Poverty is different because power is at the root of it, and if we are ever to deal with it effectively, we will have to harness the passions of the 1960s to a deeper realism. Let's hope we don't have to wait another 50 years.

*Note: This column was written before the failed vote to recall Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker.*

## Ending the Practical Argument About the Death Penalty

Paul Waldman, *The American Prospect*, June 12, 2012

We're left to argue only the moral question.

5 When he was running for president in 2000, George W. Bush was often asked about the fact that as governor of Texas, he executed 152 people, more than any other governor in modern history at the time (though his successor Rick Perry has since surpassed him). Bush always responded that he believed the death penalty saves lives. In other words, his primary justification was a practical argument, not a moral argument. But the empirical evidence on the question of whether the death penalty was always fuzzy at best.

10 Like most death penalty opponents, I was always very skeptical of claims like Bush's (isn't that odd, how our beliefs about what *is* always seem to line up so neatly with our beliefs about what *ought to be*). Despite what you might believe from watching *Law & Order*, most murders aren't carefully planned so that the perpetrator can get his hands on his grandmother's fortune, giving him plenty of time to contemplate the potential consequences if he gets caught. People who kill other people tend to do it out of anger or desperation, and the idea that some significant number of them would stop themselves if they knew they might be executed if they  
15 got caught, but go ahead with the murder if they knew they'd spend the rest of their lives in jail, just doesn't make much sense.

20 So why haven't social scientists been able to answer this question definitively? The main problem is that there just aren't enough executions to give you the kind of healthy sample size you need. As Betsey Stevenson and Justin Wolfers tell us, the National Academy of Sciences has concluded that the existing research on the topic just can't tell us one way or the other whether the death penalty has any deterrent effect. Stevenson and Wolfers explain what this means:

25 Even if one accepts the possibility that the threat of death deters some would-be murderers, that doesn't mean it's the best way to do so. Capital punishment diverts hundreds of millions of dollars from other criminal-justice interventions that may have done more to reduce homicide rates. This important point -- there's an opportunity cost to spending on capital punishment -- often gets overlooked.

30 Amid all the uncertainty, the data do allow one conclusion that the National Academy should have emphasized more strongly: The death penalty isn't the dominant factor driving the fluctuations in the U.S. homicide rate. If it were, the homicide rate in the U.S. wouldn't have moved in lockstep with that of Canada, even as the two countries experimented with different death-penalty regimes. Likewise, homicide rates tend to rise and fall roughly in unison across states, even as some - - such as Texas -- ramp up executions, and others have chosen not to adopt the practice.

35 Overall, the panel's conclusions are a welcome corrective to a debate in which politically expedient, yet imperfect, findings have attracted greater attention than those rare moments of humility when we social scientists admit what we don't know. Now that a widely respected authority has established the uncertainty about the deterrent effects of the death penalty, it's time for advocates on both sides to recognize that their beliefs are the product of faith, not data.

40 Deterrence isn't the only practical question—as we've seen, our criminal justice system convicts lots and lots of innocent people, and that continuing problem offers a strong reason for eliminating the death penalty. But in the end, we're left with a fundamental moral divide, one we should explore. Should the state be killing people who are convicted of crimes? Does the fact that justice *can* be served in one way by an execution mean that it *should* be served in that way, as opposed to other ways (like life in prison, a punishment which is arguably far more harsh). What kind of values are expressed by executions, and are those the values we as a society want to promote? In every other advanced democracy, they've answered "no".

45 In a way, the practical claims are too easy to make. It certainly made it easy for Bush—he could just say the death penalty saves lives, and he didn't need to provide a moral justification for the execution assembly line they have in the Lone Star State. The moral claims require you to be clearer about your values. That's a debate we ought to have.

How the Obama campaign is selling women short

5 Lily Ledbetter—complete with sensible blond bob and an Alabama drawl—is the kind of lady who would tell you to stop wearing peek-a-boo blouses to work and making cookies for the office because both make you look  
10 unserious. The poster girl for the 77 cents to a dollar that American women make in the workplace compared to their male counterparts, Ledbetter's not one to be trifled with. The personification of the Obama campaign's somber economic appeal to female voters, she's also the kind of lady who calls Mitt Romney out for not taking a stand on equal pay issues. She also appeared in a video released by the Obama campaign talking about what the Congress  
15 can do to alleviate barriers to unequal compensation. But Ledbetter's substantive, real-world message of feminism in action is being undercut by some old-fashioned sexism.

20 Sarah Jessica Parker's promotional video for the Obama campaign stands in stark contrast to Ledbetter's. Parker, of *Sex and the City* fame, is throwing a campaign dinner party at her home for two lucky plebs who win an online raffle. On-camera she is the picture of a woman used to pressed linen napkins and pre-dinner French 75s; she tosses  
25 her beach-hair-takes-the-city locks from side to side, and with coquettish inflection, talks about President Obama as "that guy," an obvious mimicry of the *Sex and the City* dating confessional style. She's the cool girl trying to help the campaign regain some of its 2008 pop culture relevance, appealing to women in much the same way as she did in her stint as a shampoo spokeswoman.

30 On the surface, all of this is fine—nothing wrong with using a little glitz and glam to spice up the dreary business of politics (God knows, that's still why we're talking about Jackie O.) Nothing wrong with appealing to a much  
35 sought after demographic like the women of America. Indeed, a lot of us have seen *Sex and the City* and have participated in unfortunate conversations labeling ourselves as "Carrie's" or "Samantha's." The messaging wizards down at the Obama campaign have also figured out that a decent portion of the female populace reads fashion  
40 magazines and blogs every once in a while, which are, contrary to popular male opinion, more than just pictures of people standing around smoking on the streets of New York. So they got Anna Wintour, the much-parodied editor of *Vogue*, to stump for the president on tape. But dig a little deeper, past the glossy camera work, and you'll realize that Parker and Wintour don't actually saying a damn thing in their pitches for the President. Rather, each shoots  
45 out warm-as-spit platitudes about a really neat guy they know. Of course, no one's expecting the starlets to be policy wonks, but there's something alarmingly retro about the way the Obamanians have framed these purely political appeals to women. Parker and Wintour are faces of a world that is wildly old-school—the last bastion where women are outwardly and unabashedly judged for their looks. Couldn't the campaign have gone for a theme  
50 less stereotypically feminine than fashion? Wouldn't a charming, altruistic chanteuse have done the same trick? Or at least a pair that isn't quite so closely associated with conspicuous consumption (did you read the last jobs report???)

55 When you realize Parker grew up poor and on welfare, you can't help but mourn the campaign's missed opportunity to talk about real issues that matter to women around the country. There's no shame in using a famous  
60 face to talk about the struggles the nation's poor could face if basic societal safety nets are destroyed by over-zealous budget hawks in the White House and Congress. The base fact of it is that the Parker/Wintour shtick is a reductive technique that doesn't quite sync up with the sophisticated, modern messaging that we've come to expect from the Obama campaign. It's just plain irritating to see one more banal instance of sexism from an organization  
65 that's staked its reputation on harnessing progressive ideas and marketing them to the masses.

70 The Sarah Jessica Parkers and Anna Wintours of the world sparkle and draw attention to the cause, but I wonder if they also don't undercut the Lily Ledbetter stories just a bit by hogging all the attention. At least George Clooney has some do-gooder chops on him—there's nothing like getting arrested for protesting genocide the same weekend  
75 you go to a State Dinner—weeks before throwing a star-studded, well-publicized fundraiser for the president. But Parker appears to be mostly about what clothes she's wearing; she's all about what you thought your life was going to be when you were a teenage girl. Lily Ledbetter is all about what your life is going to be like when reality strikes—and sometimes it's depressing. You can't blame people for wanting to dream of what it would be like to perch on raw silk ottoman and tipple champagne with a celebrity. You can't argue with the fact that the Obama  
80 campaign is a targeted messaging machine, able to tailor the content of emails to supporters more snugly than an Italian-made suit, but with great power comes great responsibility. That age-old question—what do women want?—may well be an unanswerable one, but I can say for damn sure that that Obama team needs to find a better way to ask a lady out to dinner.

Yochai Benkler *Foreign Affairs*, April 4, 2012  
SNAPSHOT

### Hacks of Valor: Why Anonymous Is Not a Threat to National Security

5 Over the past year, the U.S. government has begun to think of Anonymous, the online network phenomenon, as  
a threat to national security. According to *The Wall Street Journal*, Keith Alexander, the general in charge of the  
U.S. Cyber Command and the director of the National Security Agency, warned earlier this year that "the  
10 hacking group Anonymous could have the ability within the next year or two to bring about a limited power  
outage through a cyberattack." His disclosure followed the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's release of  
several bulletins over the course of 2011 warning about Anonymous. Media coverage has often similarly framed  
Anonymous as a threat, likening it to a terrorist organization. Articles regularly refer to the Anonymous offshoot  
LulzSec as a "splinter group," and a recent Fox News report uncritically quoted an FBI source lauding a series  
of arrests that would "[chop] off the head of LulzSec."

15 This is the wrong approach. Seeing Anonymous primarily as a cybersecurity threat is like analyzing the breadth  
of the antiwar movement and 1960s counterculture by focusing only on the Weathermen. Anonymous is not an  
organization. It is an idea, a zeitgeist, coupled with a set of social and technical practices. Diffuse and leaderless,  
its driving force is "lulz" -- irreverence, playfulness, and spectacle. It is also a protest movement, inspiring  
action both on and off the Internet, that seeks to contest the abuse of power by governments and corporations  
20 and promote transparency in politics and business. Just as the antiwar movement had its bomb-throwing  
radicals, online hacktivists organizing under the banner of Anonymous sometimes cross the boundaries of  
legitimate protest. But a fearful overreaction to Anonymous poses a greater threat to freedom of expression,  
creativity, and innovation than any threat posed by the disruptions themselves.

No single image better captured the way that Anonymous has come to signify the Internet's irreverent  
democratic culture than when, in the middle of a Polish parliamentary session in February 2012, well-dressed  
25 legislators donned Guy Fawkes masks -- Anonymous' symbol -- to protest their government's plan to sign the  
Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement (ACTA). The treaty, designed to expand intellectual-property protection,  
involved years of negotiation among the United States, Japan, and the European Union, which are all like-  
minded on copyright law. It had the support of well-organized and well-funded companies, particularly in  
Hollywood and the recording industry. Although originally negotiated in secret, its contents were exposed by  
30 WikiLeaks in 2008. As a result, public pressure caused the treaty's negotiators to water down many of its  
controversial provisions. But the final version still mimicked the least balanced aspects of U.S. copyright law,  
including its aggressive approach to asset seizure and damages. And so a last-minute protest campaign across  
Europe, using the symbolism of Anonymous, set out to stop the agreement from coming into force. So far, it has  
succeeded; no signatory has ratified it.

35 That is power -- a species of soft power that allows millions of people, often in different countries, each of  
whom is individually weak, to surge in opposition to a given program or project enough to shape the outcome.  
In this sense, Anonymous has become a potent symbol of popular dissatisfaction with the concentration of  
political and corporate power in fewer and fewer hands. We are left, then, with the task of assessing threats in a  
state of moral ambiguity. In more naïve times, one might naturally prefer a law-bound state deciding which  
40 power abuses should be reined in and which information exposed. But these are no longer naïve times. A decade  
that saw the normalization in U.S. policy of lawless detentions, torture, and targeted assassinations; a persistent  
refusal to bring those now or formerly in power, in both the public and private sectors, to account for their  
failures; and a political system that increasingly favors the rich have eroded that certitude. Perhaps that is the  
greatest challenge that Anonymous poses: It both embodies and expresses a growing doubt that actors with  
45 formal authority will make decisions of greater legitimacy than individuals acting collectively in newly  
powerful networks and guided by their own consciences.

Anonymous demonstrates one of the new core aspects of power in a networked, democratic society: Individuals  
are vastly more effective and less susceptible to manipulation, control, and suppression by traditional sources of  
power than they were even a decade ago. At their worst, Anonymous' practices range from unpleasant  
50 pranksterism to nasty hooliganism; they are not part of a vast criminal or cyberterrorist conspiracy. Instead,  
Anonymous plays the role of the audacious provocateur, straddling the boundaries between destructive,  
disruptive, and instructive. Any government or company that fails to recognize this will inevitably find itself at  
odds with some of the most energetic and wired segments of society. Any society that commits itself to  
eliminating what makes Anonymous possible and powerful risks losing the openness and uncertainty that have  
55 made the Internet home to so much innovation, expression, and creativity.

## British Prime Minister David Cameron is out of the loop on Europe's growth-versus-austerity debate

*Having opted out of Merkel's EU fiscal austerity plan, Cameron is sidelined as the euro zone grapples for a future.*

www.globalpost.com / [Michael Goldfarb](#) / May 18, 2012 06:00

LONDON, UK — When the leaders of the G8 get together around the dinner table at Camp David this weekend, I hope the protocol chiefs will be seating British Prime Minister David Cameron well away from German Chancellor Angela Merkel. War is brewing between the two nations over the euro-zone crisis, if the British press is to be believed.

"George Osborne: Angela Merkel damaging UK economic interests," read one headline in The Daily Telegraph this week. "Germans must abolish themselves," said a photo caption accompanying Ambrose Evans-Pritchard's Daily Telegraph blog post detailing the trillions it will cost Germany and France to pay for a Greek euro-zone exit and how that event will ruin the British economy. This week at Prime Minister's Question Time, Sir Peter Tapsell, the Tory of Tories, asked Cameron, "Does my right hon. Friend suppose that Chancellor Merkel now regrets that she did not take the advice he gave her last October about the big bazooka? If she had fired it then, that would have spared the European Union from its present crisis." Cameron replied, "I cannot give a direct answer to that, [no, he couldn't, there is this little thing called diplomacy] but I can say that the euro zone has to make a choice. If it wants to continue as it is then it has to build a proper firewall and take steps to secure the weakest members of the euro zone, or it will have to work out that it has to go in a different direction. It either has to make up or it is looking at a potential break-up. That is the choice that has to be made, and it cannot long be put off."

Much of this heat comes from frustration. The truth is, Britain has no say in what happens over on the other side of the Channel. Not just because it is not part of the euro zone, but because last December at a crisis summit to create a fiscal compact among euro-zone nations that was hoped would calm the markets, Cameron decided to re-open negotiations on a couple of trade issues relating to protecting the City of London's dominance in global finance. These issues were not particularly relevant at a moment when the crisis threatened to destroy not just the euro, but the EU and the entire global economy. Inappropriate would be a polite word to describe Cameron's actions.

In the end 26 of the 27 EU nations signed up to the compact which commits them to reducing their budget deficits to 3.5 percent of GDP. Britain refused to sign. Since then Britain's overwhelmingly Conservative supporting press has trained its guns on Berlin and Merkel's austerity mantra.

What would be funny, if it weren't sad, is the hypocrisy of it all. Cameron and his Chancellor of the Exchequer, George Osborne, are the English-speaking world's poster boys for austerity policy. They have already set Britain the same 3.5 percent target for deficit reduction as the EU agreed last December. So what's the problem?

Well, as commentators of a Keynesian stripe have been saying for some time now: We can't all be doing austerity at the same time, otherwise who's going to buy from whom? In Britain's case, its largest trading partner is the EU, and if the EU is doing austerity then what happens to British prospects for growth?

No prize for knowing the answer: British growth prospects go in the toilet. Trade with the EU is off by 5 percent. Britain is now experiencing a double-dip recession.

And whose fault is it? Since a government always needs to blame someone else, it is stupid politics to say, "My bad, we're going to change policy here." So, it's got to be the Germans who are at fault.

Here we get to the matter of culture. Blaming the Germans is an easy sell in Britain. In this country World War II is a never-ending story. The war is always present on TV and in popular books and in the columns of newspapers. When it comes to Germans, old jokes about "Whatever you do, don't mention the war" — which were funny when they were first made on Fawlty Towers 40 years ago — still get made, only now they're not so funny.

Germany, led by the conservative Merkel, should be a natural ally of Cameron in the fight for making austerity the orthodoxy for the 21st Century. But the prejudices against the Germans, particularly of the chattering classes, means that cannot and will not happen. Instead, Britain's chattering classes have spent the week hectoring from the sideline as newly-elected French President Francois Hollande flew through thunder and lightning to meet Merkel. [...]

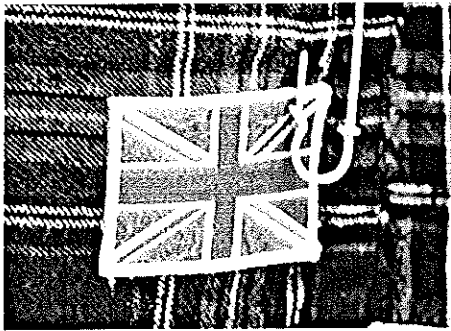
But there you have it: When you are merely a bystander at an impending car crash and not at the steering wheel basically all you can do is jump up and down and wave your arms.

By contrast, the German and French press ignore Britain altogether when it comes to the euro-zone crisis. A search for "Cameron" in the major German and French papers this week turns up articles about the phone-hacking scandal and the arrest of Cameron's friend, the former editor the News of the World, Rebekah Brooks, but nothing about the British view of the euro-zone crisis. [...]

**SERIE LANGUES VIVANTES  
ANGLAIS  
ANALYSE LV1 TEXTE HORS  
PROGRAMME**

## Mike Elrick: Independent and British? SNP just can't have it both ways

*The Scotsman / Sunday 10 June 2012*



*Can you have it both ways? Picture: Neil Hanna*

I HAVE no idea whether our First Minister [Alex Salmond] has any desire to zoom round a track in the latest fuel-injected sports car, chauffeur-driven government cars presumably being more his thing. But if he does, he at least could share driving duties with *Top Gear* TV presenter and petrol-head Jeremy Clarkson. They have a lot in common. Clarkson, cheerleader of the Little Englander mentality, said

not so long ago he would stand on Hadrian's Wall with a "teary handkerchief", saying "good riddance" to the Scots if the nation opted for independence, believing that "secretly deep down, every English taxpayer would be rather glad if they did". No doubt Salmond would wave back o'er the Border and dance a wee jig in delight, keen as he is to talk up the benefits to England if Scotland were to go its own way. But it would be dangerous to view Messrs Salmond and Clarkson's shared antipathy and ambivalence to Scotland's continued place in the United Kingdom as representative of wider public opinion.

While both may be very vocal and no-one could doubt the strength of their opinions, it would be a stretch to argue that they speak for the majority when it comes to Scotland's future in the Union – as nearly every substantive poll of public opinion over the last 20 years makes clear. Uncomfortable as it may be to Little Englanders and their Scottish counterparts, most Scots at this juncture still want to remain part of UK PLC and most English people still want Scotland to stay in the UK.

In a speech on national identity and what it means to be British last week, Labour leader Ed Miliband made the case for the continuance of the United Kingdom in this context, following the countrywide celebrations for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, arguing that Scotland and England were "intertwined" economically, culturally and socially and that the beauty of the United Kingdom is that citizens can enjoy plural identities that would be denied them if Scotland was to leave the UK. No doubt it came as music to the ears of some also to hear Miliband warn that Scots would not be British if the nation votes for independence. Others no doubt objected to an English Labour leader raising this uncomfortable truth. But the reality is, no matter how much the SNP asserts that independence would not alter the fundamental relationship between England and Scotland, it will. And Ed Miliband was right to say so.

Some nationalists, like actor Alan Cumming, may genuinely believe that after ditching the Act of Union Scots will still wave the Union flag proudly here and overseas. And Scottish Government minister Alex Neil may, after independence, still consider himself at least in part British, as he claims. But if you follow through the logic of their position, it doesn't stand up to close scrutiny. You cannot argue for self-determination and an independent Scotland that stands on its own two feet in the world only to fall back on British symbolism and a shared British identity when it suits. This amounts to pick'n'mix nationalism. It is a world view that fails to take into account what would be an irrevocable change in the relationship between Scotland and the rest of Britain. As Labour's Scottish leader, Johann Lamont, has made clear, you cannot propose the most momentous constitutional change in these isles in more than 300 years and claim simultaneously that everything will stay the same.

The SNP makes soothing noises about our two nations taking forward a "social union" based on shared economic interests, cultural ties, family and friendship and geographical proximity. But the fact remains Scotland overnight would become a foreign country to the rest of the UK if independence becomes a reality. Friends and family living on one side of a border or another would be citizens of another state. That would be a seismic and polarising change. That's not scaremongering. That would be the reality of creating an independent state.

It's undoubtedly the case that practical ties would remain in place after a Yes vote for Scotland to leave the United Kingdom, but there will be a change in how people on either side of a border that suddenly matters will view the inhabitants of the other country, even if we continue to share a monarchy and a currency.

Interests will diverge. Far from a relationship of equals, it's difficult to see how "equal" that relationship would be given the size, population and economic advantages England would have over its northern neighbour. And would the much-trumpeted Salmond vision of a "social union" based on shared history and culture count for anything if governments north and south diverge on issues such as immigration policy or taxation? It's hard to envisage how an independent Scotland and the remaining constituent parts of the UK could remain good neighbours if they become rivals when it comes to attracting and retaining jobs and maintaining economic prosperity. Neighbours yes, good and equal friends, perhaps not. [...]

*Mike Elrick is a former adviser to John Reid and the late Labour leader John Smith*



ANALYSIS

# A disuniting kingdom

**UK Six decades after coming to the throne in a nation united by recent war, the Queen reigns over a more divided one struggling with austerity, writes Brian Groom**

## SERIE LANGUES VIVANTES ANGLAIS ANALYSE LV2 TEXTE HORS PROGRAMME

**B**ritons will be celebrating Queen Elizabeth's diamond jubilee this weekend with a record number of street parties and support for the monarchy at its highest for at least 20 years – a remarkable recovery from her “*zinnus horrors*” of 1992, when Windsor Castle caught fire and several of her children's marriages fell apart.

But how united is the United Kingdom? The past 60 years have brought a blistering pace of change including globalisation, mass immigration, European integration, devolution and a dramatic increase in incomes that has allowed people to live freer, more individual lives but opened new social divisions. It is a nation still grappling with what these changes mean.

Pride in being British was palpable in the optimistic but poorer days when Elizabeth acceded. Britain had been on the winning side in the second world war, one of the most unifying events in its history, and showed signs of emerging from postwar austerity. Rationing of tea, the nation's favourite drink, was lifted.

“There was some sense of a new

world being created,” says David Kynaston, author of *Family Britain: 1951-1957*. “The National Health Service was very powerful, new buildings were going up, things like new schools, and there was a great move ... from inner cities to new towns and estates with new mod cons.”

There was also a common bond, despite divisions among classes, regions and nations. This was a deferential, conservative society in which 85 per cent of people thought the Queen had been directly chosen by God, according to an opinion poll in 1956.

People had no inhibitions in talking about British “naïve genius” and took their idea of history from books such as H.E. Marshall's *Our Island Story*. India had left the empire, but Elizabeth could travel the world without leaving lands she ruled.

Today, the empire has crumbled – to be replaced by the Commonwealth – and even Scotland is discussing a breakaway. The devolved nationalist government proposes to hold a referendum on independence in 2014. Poles suggest the Scots will not vote Yes, and no other part of the UK is threat-

ening to pull out – but Scotland may back a second option of deeper devolution. The union is loosening.

Meanwhile, the divide between the UK's wealthiest corner, London and south-east England, and poorer parts such as northern England and Wales has widened faster since the 1970s than in any other big country.

London's rise has been a global success – a magnet for foreign wealth and ambitious people of all nationalities – but it is now widely felt that Britain grew too dependent on illusory financial growth engineered in the City.

In 1952, it was Scotland that brought the only blemish on the Queen's dazzling debut. Prime minister Winston Churchill decided her title would be Elizabeth II – causing offence north of the border, where she was the first monarch of that name, the crowns having been united only after England's first Elizabeth died 350 years earlier. Scots were so angry that, when post boxes bearing the royal cipher “E II R” appeared, some people removed the “II” and a few put explosives through the slot.

In 1953, when the Queen came to Edinburgh to receive the honours of Scotland after her coronation, she wore a coat rather than sovereign robes, which was criticised as an insult to the dignity of the occasion. Then, though, there were only hints of the later nationalist surge. The Unionists, as Conservatives were known there, reached a peak of more than half the popular vote at the 1955 general election. In 2010, they won 16.7 per cent and one seat out of 59.

Mr Kynaston says Britain has “moved from class-based politics to a more identity-based politics, which has to do with nationalism or nationhood, or gender or ethnicity”. The monocultural society of the 1950s has become “dispersed” as the era of the mass political party has ended. That fits today's “much more privatised, individualistic society – and technology has played a big part in that”.

We should not exaggerate these centrifugal forces. While many now identify more with their core country, 81 per cent of people still felt “very” or “somewhat” proud to be British in 2007, according to the British Social Attitudes Survey. National identity is adapting to changing circumstances.

## Gay marriage could be a defining issue for Cameron

BY RAFAEL BEHR PUBLISHED 10 MAY 2012, *THE NEW STATESMAN*

Barack Obama's decision to support gay marriage has no doubt been timed with careful attention paid to the US electoral cycle. The American Commander-in-Chief definitely did not factor in the political travails of David Cameron on a small rain-lashed island several thousand miles east of Washington. Had he done so, he might have postponed the announcement by a day or two.

It isn't the biggest story to come out of yesterday's Queen's Speech, but people who were watching carefully for prime ministerial capitulations to the Conservative right found one in the absence of proposals to give gay couples equal rights in marriage.

As I write in my column this week, this is an issue that has acquired emblematic status in the battle over what kind of a Conservative party Cameron leads. In his speech at last year's Tory party conference, the Prime Minister made the case for gay marriage robustly:

"Yes, it's about equality, but it's also about something else: commitment. Conservatives believe in the ties that bind us; that society is stronger when we make vows to each other and support each other. So I don't support gay marriage despite being a Conservative. I support gay marriage because I'm a Conservative."

The fact that the hall applauded at this point was subsequently held up as evidence of the great strides in "modernisation" that the party had taken under Cameron's leadership.

But it turns out that the party grass roots are less signed up to this view than Downing Street likes to think. I have heard a number of MPs complain that gay marriage was a "hot button" issue in their constituencies and that it provoked Tory voters to abstain or back UKIP in last week's local elections. It cost the party council seats, say back benchers. Nonsense, comes the riposte from Downing Street. It's the economy and weeks of headlines about incompetence that hit the party's poll ratings. The very last thing we should do, say Downing Street aides, is veer off into illiberal reaction.

Both are right up to a point. At a national level it is crazy to think that Cameron's support for gay marriage makes the difference between a majority in 2015 and another hung parliament. At the same time, at local level, it is plainly a problem when activists are outraged by their leader's opinions.

The gay marriage issue is currently out for formal consultation, so Downing Street could clearly act on it if it was felt to be important enough. The Lib Dems are ardently in favour and would quite happily probe and provoke Tory prejudice on the subject to remind voters that (as they see it) Nick Clegg leads the modern, caring, tolerant wing of the coalition. For precisely that reason, senior Lib Dems very much doubt that Cameron can change the policy. He wouldn't want to give the Lib Dems such a handy stick with which to beat the Tories. He might, however, want to postpone dealing with it to avoid looking as if he is deliberately antagonising his back bench enemies.

Obama's move makes that approach that little bit harder. Suddenly, everyone of a socially liberal disposition in Westminster - in all three parties - is fired up and praising the US President's brave moral stand, pointing out how it casts gay equality as a contemporary civil rights issue and puts Mitt Romney on the wrong side of history, held back by Republican tea party fanaticism etc. That is not necessarily company Cameron wants to be keeping.

Liberal Tories, meanwhile, have been watching the party's right wing mobilise in recent weeks and are feeling the need for a counter-attack. As I have written before, joining the coalition postponed a difficult debate about what kind of movement the Tories want to be - what is their model of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Conservatism? The leadership is not seriously in question. Cameron is personally secure for now. But the party's soul is still up for grabs. There is a feeling that Tory internal culture wars are brewing. Gay marriage could end up being much more of an issue for Cameron than he expected when he made that speech last year.

## Bagehot | How not to soak the rich

The coalition government is in a muddle about taxing wealth



THE Royal Mail is not what it was, so perhaps that joint letter from British billionaires, volunteering to pay more tax, is stuck in the post. The absence of such a letter has certainly been noted. British politicians and commentators have pointed to America, where the investor Warren Buffett has fretted about being "coddled" with low tax rates; and to France, where plutocrats last month wrote an open letter offering to pay more to the state. In a challenge to Anglo-Saxon sniffiness about tax-shy southerners, the British press even carried news of civic sacrifice from Italy, where the chairman of Ferrari, a carmaker, said those earning several million euros a year should pay a supertax. It was almost a relief when British newspapers reported that Italy's star footballers were threatening to strike rather than pay a wealth tax.

In contrast, a deep, velvet-and-mahogany silence envelops the British plutocracy. There is a debate about taxing the rich, but it involves political leaders from the Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition, not corporate chieftains, and turns on whether some taxes should be lower, not just higher. Coalition ministers have sparred about whether the country's 50% top rate of income tax is a brake on economic dynamism and—if so—whether it should be scrapped outright (the goal of many Tories), or replaced with taxes on land, mansions or other "unproductive" forms of wealth (as Lib Dems demand).

### Greed without God?

Why are the British such outliers? For those who already dislike modern Britain, the tycoons' silence offers fresh evidence that—three decades after Margaret Thatcher's free-market revolution—her homeland is morally adrift somewhere in the mid-Atlantic: shunning the faith-driven philanthropy that accompanies great American wealth, but also the notions of social solidarity that keep Europe's richest in check. That is overdoing it. There are better, less highfalutin explanations.

For starters, many Britons already feel pretty highly taxed. Under the previous, Labour government, the proportion of wealth taken in taxes rose steadily, at a time when the general trend in the euro zone was downwards. Even France made its wealth tax less swingeing; its top income-tax rate is 41%. The 50% rate of income tax, introduced in Labour's last days as a "temporary" measure, is

paid only by the 300,000 people earning more than £150,000 (\$245,000) a year. But a much larger number of affluent Britons feel hard hit by tweaks to tax allowances, as well as higher taxes on pension contributions, capital gains and house sales.

In public George Osborne, the Conservative chancellor of the exchequer, keen to buttress his austerity-era promise that "we are all in this together", has made much of efforts to plug tax loopholes. He recently described tax evaders as "leeches". In private, ministers are desperate to promote growth, and fret about complaints that Britain is unwelcoming to business. A Tory recounts how a director of a "very large bank" complained that not only did Britain have a 50% top rate, but—after ending Labour-era loopholes—"you actually expect people to pay it."

For another thing, many of Britain's richest residents are either foreign nationals or members of a restless, rootless global elite. In Paris or Milan, boardrooms are filled by the same few, politically connected grandees: the sort of people now writing letters offering to pay more tax. The glass towers of the City of London have more in common with the multinational benches of a top-flight football club, with all the footloose selfishness that implies (albeit with fewer tattoos).

Finally, though the British tell pollsters that they long to soak the undeserving rich, choosing how—even defining who is rich—is "hazardous territory", says a government source.

Officially, the 50% rate is being reviewed, as ministers wait for a tax inspectors' report in early 2012 on whether it raises much money (while expecting the answer, no). But a recent YouGov poll showed strong support for the rate, with even a narrow majority of Conservative voters opposed to its scrapping. Though Mr Osborne has called the tax rate "very uncompetitive", he is the last man to ignore the political risks of ditching it, at least before a public-sector pay freeze ends in 2013.

Ask Lib Dems about property and land taxes, and they talk up a storm about "fiscal liberalism". Citing John Stuart Mill, they advocate rebalancing taxation away from earned income towards unproductive assets, notably the wealth generated by the long property boom. And, indeed, the same YouGov poll showed nearly two-thirds support for a tax on homes worth over £1m.

Yet Lib Dems should beware. British voters loved it when Mr Osborne proposed raising the inheritance-tax threshold in 2007, explicitly in order to spare family homes (a move so successful that a spooked Gordon Brown cancelled the snap election he had been contemplating). This suggests that many voters believe they have a right to any windfall earned by their parents' bricks and mortar, whatever Mill said. They just think a "mansion tax" set at £1m would not catch them.

Deep down, Lib Dem advocates of property taxes, led by the business secretary, Vince Cable, know that it is soak-the-very-rich populism, not economic efficiency, that makes the cause popular: hence Mr Cable's battle-cry of "Mansions can't run away to Switzerland". Yet not every mansion-dweller feels rich (or has a Swiss bank account). In the inner circle around Nick Clegg, the deputy prime minister, there is said to be "no appetite" for a debate about whether someone with a house worth £1m is unacceptably rich; some, for instance, are widows living in London family homes bought decades ago. Conservatives are still less keen.

For the moment, then, political muddle reigns. Small wonder that Britain's rich are keeping their heads down. ■

[Economist.com/blogs/bagehot](http://Economist.com/blogs/bagehot)

Nom :  
Prénom :

Signature :

SERIE LANGUES VIVANTES  
ANGLAIS  
ANALYSE LV2 TEXTE HORS  
PROGRAMME

## This way, sir

A brave budget based on an inconvenient truth: Britain needs finance and foreign investment



IT WAS spun as a package for working families, a way of supporting the humblest toilers in the economic vineyard, and it was attacked as a tax raid on impoverished grannies. George Osborne's third budget as chancellor of the exchequer did indeed reduce income taxes for low-earners while freezing the tax-free allowances for some pensioners. But its strongest signals, especially Mr Osborne's decision to cut the top rate of income tax, levied on incomes over £150,000 (\$238,000) a year, from 50% to 45%, were aimed elsewhere. This was a budget for companies—particularly big, international ones—and for their best-paid employees.

The politics of this will be rough, but it was the right thing to do. Because Britain specialises in high-value services such as banking, accountancy and insurance, it needs to attract the world's brightest. Recently the Tories and their Liberal Democrat coalition partners have given the impression that capitalism is a dirty word and that the City of London, Britain's greatest industrial cluster, is an embarrassment. This week's change may be more symbolic than fiscal (the rich will have to pay more in other ways), but symbols matter. At a time when France's most likely next president wants to introduce a 75% tax and Barack Obama is moaning about millionaires and billionaires, Britain is welcoming entrepreneurs and financiers.

### Playing the numbers

Economically, this budget was mainly a piece of micro-fiddling. Mr Osborne made his big fiscal decision in 2010, when he announced a rapid timetable for eliminating Britain's large structural deficit. He has stuck to the course set out then, which this newspaper broadly supported. The budget was mildly expansionary in the near term, without disturbing Britain's bond rating (see page 35).

Not all the microeconomic nudges were to do with business. For instance, Mr Osborne followed through with an earlier pledge to abolish child support for high earners (albeit with some tapering). At a stroke, this demolishes the long tradition of universal benefits, which was intended to secure general support for welfare. But most of the measures seemed to have business in mind. The chancellor accelerated a cut in corporation tax, bringing it down from 26% to 24% this year and to 22% by 2014-15. He also pushed for public-sector workers to be paid the prevailing wage in their region. That would mean lower salaries outside south-east England—a move that should make it easier for private firms to compete for staff.

None of these will be remembered as long as the cut in the top rate of tax. Politically, that is a gamble. It came against the advice of many in the governing coalition. Even a couple of weeks ago many assumed it was unthinkable. Britons kept themselves warm during the winter by raging against highly paid bankers. In the coming year the government's austerity drive will hit welfare. Labour made hay over the tax cut this week, contrasting it with the new "stealth granny tax". With

even the Tory press in a rage over pensioners, Ed Miliband, Labour's leader, asked what planet Mr Osborne was on.

A more globalised one than Mr Miliband, evidently. The useful domestic political signal that the 50% tax sent—that the rich must do their part to repair the deficit—was outweighed by its global cost. Stinging high earners encourages financial firms and their employees to leave Britain. The longer-term danger, which is no less acute for being unmeasurable, is that the young financier from Madrid, Manhattan or Mumbai will decide not to come to London in the first place.

As a means of bringing in revenue, the 50% rate was never very efficient. Introduced by Labour in a panicky piece of politicking before the 2010 election, it raised precious little cash in the first year it was in force. This should surprise nobody: rich people react to high taxes by managing their incomes so they pay less. Mr Osborne claims that he will claw back the money, and more besides, through new anti-avoidance measures. Those buying expensive houses via tax-efficient shell companies, for example, will face punitive rates.

As for the politics, they may change. By the 2015 general election, a 45% or even a 40% top rate of income tax is likely to seem part of the economic furniture. Mr Miliband will have to decide whether to leave the rate unchanged and look like a windbag, or try to woo voters as the party of tax increases.

This budget carries a message not just about Britain's relationship to the world, but also about the nature of its economy. When the government came to power in 2010, the wounds from the financial crisis were still raw. Politicians argued that Britain should try to wean itself off financial services and rediscover honest manufacturing and small- and medium-sized enterprise. Just a year ago, Mr Osborne was talking about a "march of the makers". It was hoped that Britain would become rather like Germany, but with better restaurants. The rhetoric continues: there was lots of talk this week about helping small business. The budget sends a different signal.

### Doing what it does best

Britain is not Germany. Although its manufacturing sector is far from puny, it lacks a *Mittelstand* churning out high-value machine tools. Nor is it likely soon to develop one. What the country is good at is financial services and luring foreign investment: in short, milking globalisation. While insisting he is doing other things, Mr Osborne has quietly acknowledged Britain's strengths and doubled down on them.

It is a shame he could not say this. In his budget speech Mr Osborne mentioned financial services only to say that Britain needed other strings to its bow. And it is a shame, too, that other parts of the government's programme undermine the country's advantages. It is pursuing an immigration policy that makes it harder for bright people to come to Britain, and plans to withhold settlement and citizenship from many of those it does let in: an awful message. Its policy on Europe is a shambles that has strengthened the forces arrayed against free trade.

Mr Osborne's budget is nonetheless a big step in the right direction. He has signalled, about as clearly as a man with no money to spare can, that Britain is open for business. ■

SERIE LANGUES VIVANTES  
ANGLAIS  
ANALYSE LV2 TEXTE HORS  
PROGRAMME

38 Britain

The Economist March 24th 2012

## Bagehot | The Notting Hill budget

George Osborne uses the budget to send a signal about evolving attitudes to wealth



**A**S FANS of period drama can attest, there was a time when the British elite regarded salaried work of any sort, let alone the drudgery of a Monday to Friday commute, as a badge of social shame. Thus a snobbish dowager in "Downton Abbey", acidly inquiring: "What is a weekend?"

Responding on March 21st to the government's annual budget statement, Ed Miliband, the leader of the Labour opposition, tried a similarly class-based put-down. Mr Miliband expressed outrage at an announcement that the Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition would be trimming the highest rate of income tax from 50% to 45%. He scorned a claim by George Osborne, the Conservative chancellor of the exchequer, that this year's budget "rewards work".

This is a budget for millionaires not working families, cried Mr Miliband, urging ministers on the front bench opposite to raise their hands if they would benefit from the tax cut (cue fixed expressions and some squirming). The Labour leader ventured a joke, charging that the "born-to-rule" swells filling David Cameron's cabinet think that "Downton Abbey" is a fly-on-the-wall documentary, rather than a costume drama.

Expect more of this. Mr Osborne, who is the Tories' chief political strategist when he is not running the Treasury—and sometimes even when he is—knows the presentational dangers of giving a tax break to the top 1% of earners at a time of public spending cuts, rising prices and general economic gloom. Nor does he need reminding that his back-story makes him vulnerable to gibes about toffs: he is heir to a baronetcy dating back to 1629, as well as to a hefty family fortune.

Yet in his attempt to caricature the political message underlying the 2012 budget, Labour's Mr Miliband chose the wrong screen hit. This was not a "Downton Abbey" budget. That lavish drama depicts a caste of privileged insiders vainly trying to keep the winds of change at bay. Labour and even some within the coalition called on Mr Osborne to do something rather similar, in the form of a new British industrial policy to subsidise domestic manufacturing. But a few tinkering tax breaks aside (one of them, in a nice irony, for makers of high-end television dramas), Mr Osborne declined to heed those calls. Instead he used the limited funds available to him to lower tax rates on corporate profits: a

pitch for footloose multinational investors to choose Britain.

Nor was it a budget steeped in social conservatism. Risking the wrath of tradition-minded Tory MPs and voters, Mr Osborne ignored colleagues' demands that he should use the tax system to nudge Britons to get married. In a dowager-defying manoeuvre, he hit lots of pensioners with what amounts to a tax hike. In a challenge to the *Daily Mail*, tabloid tribune of Middle England, the chancellor softened but did not cancel plans to remove child benefit payments from households with at least one high earner—a spending cut the *Mail* denounced on the budget's eve as an un-Tory attack on stay-at-home mothers.

**The rich are different, which is why Britain needs them**

Instead Mr Osborne used the budget to signal how Britain can adapt and thrive in an age of globalisation, and "earn its way in the world". Though he spoke of Britain, it is striking how many of his decisions will affect a few concentrated pockets of affluence. Only about 275,000 people pay the 50% rate—though they are estimated to pay more than a quarter of all income taxes between them. More than half live in London or the south-east of England.

Mr Osborne's budget also sent some very un-Downton messages about the relative merits of earned income over unearned wealth. His Lib Dem coalition partners deserve some of the credit for this. Lib Dem leaders only agreed to trim the top income tax rate as part of a broader effort to rebalance the tax burden from low to high earners, and from earned to accumulated riches. The Lib Dems' preferred wheeze, a "mansion tax" on expensive houses, was rejected by Mr Cameron who feared tales of widows on modest pensions being forced to sell family homes bought for a song decades earlier. The Lib Dems were won round with accelerated tax cuts for the lowest paid, and increases in the stamp duty payable when buying homes worth £2m (\$3.2m) or more. Positively punitive rates will apply when such homes are bought via a tax dodge favoured by itinerant rock stars and oligarchs. Here too the effects will be localised: four-fifths of such houses are in London. But stamp duty will not oblige widows to move.

Add it all up, and another screen hit comes to mind. Consider the elements: a British bid to woo hard-working international talent. A picturesque, foreigner-friendly setting of high-priced London houses, in neighbourhoods where incoming plutocrats rub shoulders with 40-year residents. Though Mr Osborne is no Hugh Grant, this was a "Notting Hill" budget.

That still carries political risks. Mr Osborne, as it happens, is a real-life resident of Notting Hill, a neighbourhood beyond the reach of most Britons. Indeed he grew up nearby, in an entrepreneurial London household (his father made his fortune, founding a successful wallpaper business on his kitchen table).

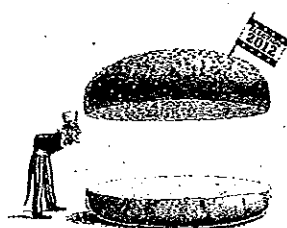
Despite the risks, the chancellor's insistence on the merits of hard work deserves to pay dividends. It was certainly overdue, after months of sweeping anti-business rhetoric from politicians. True, Mr Osborne took a fresh swipe at banks on budget day. But he also reminded the House of Commons that most wealthy people pay their taxes, and that without them Britain "could not begin to afford" the public services on which voters depend.

This was, in short, a budget aimed at persuading entrepreneurial strivers to move to and stay in Britain, many of them doubtless foreigners. Downton's imperious dowager would be appalled. That by itself is a recommendation. ■

The presidential race one year out

## America's missing middle

The coming presidential election badly needs a shot of centrist pragmatism



IT IS a year until Americans go to the polls, on November 6th 2012, to decide whether Barack Obama deserves another term. In January the Republicans start voting in their primaries, with the favourite, Mitt Romney, a former governor of Massachusetts, facing fading competition from Herman Cain, a pizza tycoon, and Rick Perry, the governor of Texas. Already American politics has succumbed to election paralysis, with neither party interested in bipartisan solutions.

This would be a problem at the best of times; and these times are very far from that. Strikingly, by about three to one, Americans feel their country is on the wrong track. America's sovereign debt has been downgraded. Unemployment remains stubbornly above 9%, with the long-term unemployed making up the largest proportion of the jobless since records began in 1948. As the superpower's clout seems to ebb towards Asia, the world's most consistently inventive and optimistic country has lost its mojo.

Some of this distress was inevitable. Whatever the country's leaders did in Washington, the credit crunch was always going to cause a lot of suffering. Rising inequality, unfunded pensions and bad schools are not new problems. But politics, far from offering a remedy, is now adding to the national angst. Eight out of ten Americans mistrust their government. There is a sense that their political system, like their economy, has been skewed to favour the few, not the many.

The European Union may seem the epitome of political dysfunction, but America has been running it close. All this year the deadlock between the Republicans in Congress and Mr Obama has meant that precious little serious legislation has been passed. The president's jobs bill is stuck; the House of Representatives' budget plans have been scuppered by the Democrat-controlled Senate. At the end of this year temporary tax cuts and other measures, worth around 2% of GDP, are set to expire—which could push America back into recession.

### Surrender to extremists

On the face of it, neither side has gained from this stand-off. Only 45% of Americans approve of Mr Obama's performance. The approval rating for Congress dropped to 9% in one recent poll. A plurality of Americans call themselves independents, and on the most divisive economic argument—how to solve the budget mess—two in three of them back a combination of spending cuts and tax rises. But politics is being driven by extremists who reject any such compromise (see pages 33-36).

The right is mostly to blame. Ronald Reagan, a divorcee who did little for the pro-life lobby and raised taxes when he had to, would never be nominated today. Mr Romney, like all the Republican presidential candidates, recently pledged to reject tax rises, even as part of a deal where spending cuts would be ten times bigger. Mr Cain surged briefly to the front of the pack because of a plan that would cut personal taxes to 9% (see Lexington); Mr Perry lost support for wanting to educate the

children of illegal immigrants. Meanwhile, in Congress, the few remaining pragmatic Republican centrists, like Senator Richard Lugar, are being hunted down by tea-party activists.

Mr Obama has tried harder to compromise. But he foolishly failed to embrace a long-term budget solution put forward by the bipartisan Simpson-Bowles commission, which he himself appointed. Ever since the furore over the debt ceiling this summer, he has "pivoted" to the left, dabbling in class war, promising his supporters that the budget can be solved by taxing "millionaires and billionaires". He is also trying to issue more executive orders, to bypass Congress (see page 56).

The divisiveness is hardly new, but it is increasingly structural. As the battle for billions of campaign dollars heats up, neither side dares grant the other any modicum of success, or risk the ire of its donors by appearing to compromise. Gerrymandered districts mean that most congressmen fear their partisans in the primaries more than their opponents in the general election. Ever more divisive media feed the activists' prejudices. So, at worst, a bitter contest could merely reinforce the gridlock, with a re-elected, more leftish Comrade Obama pitted against a still more intransigent Republican Congress.

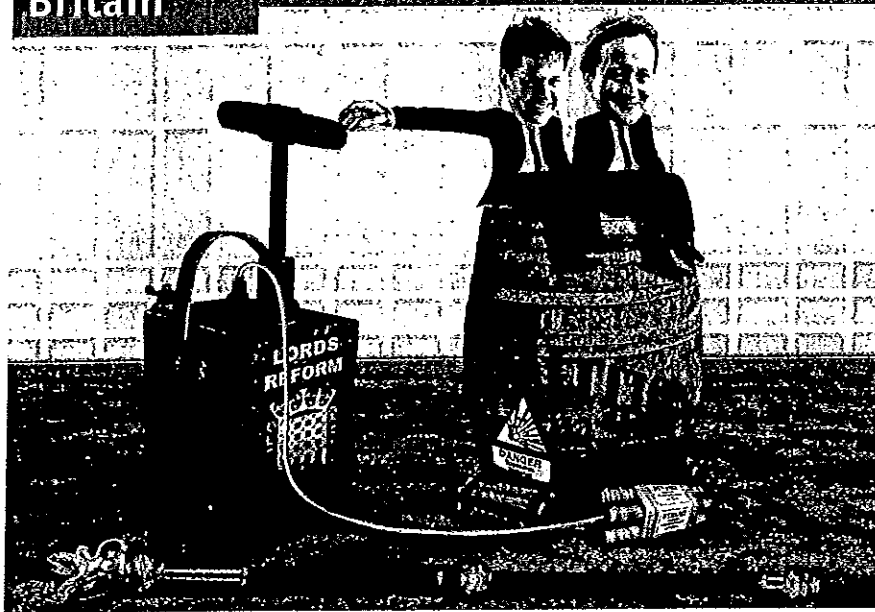
### Wishing on a star

In other countries such a huge gap in the middle would see the creation of a third party to represent the alienated majority. Imagine a presidential candidate next year who spelled out the need for deep future cuts in spending on entitlements and defence, as well as the need to raise some revenue (largely by getting rid of deductions); who explained that the pain would be applied only after the recovery was solidly in place; who avoided class or culture wars; who discussed school reform without fear of the Democrats' paymasters in the teachers' unions. Better still, imagine a new centrist block in Congress, which might give that candidate (or for that matter a President Obama or Romney) something to work with in 2013.

And so the fantasy continues, for that is sadly what it is. Even if the money were forthcoming, there are all sorts of institutional barriers, especially to starting new parties, and the record of even very well-heeled third-party presidential candidates is bleak. Instead, the middle will have to be recreated from what is already there.

The immediate, rather slim, chance is of a grand bargain on the budget emerging out of a congressional "supercommittee" set up after the debt-ceiling fiasco. If it were to embrace a centrist option, politics over the next year would be considerably more civilised. But it too appears deadlocked, with the Republicans once again ruling out tax increases of any kind.

So, back to the campaign. It is not entirely without hope. You can win the White House only by winning that disenfranchised middle. For Mr Romney and his party the danger is clear: the Republicans' intolerant obstructionism could drive independents away. But Mr Obama also has a lot to prove. Why re-elect a man who has failed to unite Americans? Now should surely be the time for the president to seize the centre ground. Otherwise, in a year's time he may well see his own name added to the rolls of those who have lost their job. ■



Electing the Lords

## A house divided

**Reform of the unelected second chamber is the issue most likely to rend the Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition**

**T**HE last time a government featuring Liberals tried to reform the House of Lords, the saga paralysed the nation. The monarch refused to co-operate and voters punished the party in a general election that was called over the issue. Only after these agonies did the Parliament Act of 1911, which subjugated the Lords to the Commons and began the erosion of the hereditary principle, become law.

A century later, the heirs to the old Liberal Party face scarcely less daunting hurdles as they try to finish the job of Lords reform. Nick Clegg, the Liberal Democrat deputy prime minister, assured a parliamentary committee on February 27th that the government was committed to exposing the unelected chamber—a Western anomaly—to democracy. There would be a reduced body of 300 Lords, down from over 800 now. At least 240 would be elected for one-off, 15-year terms under proportional representation, starting in 2015. The remainder would resemble the current chamber: independent-minded experts in various fields, with a smattering of Anglican bishops. The bill could make it into the Queen's Speech (the government's next programme of legislation) in the spring.

All three major parties pledged before the last general election to democratise the House of Lords. David Cameron, the prime minister, and his fellow Tory ministers are going along with Mr Clegg's plan. But the forces massing against the idea are fearsome. Many MPs, especially Tories, worry

that a second chamber with an electoral mandate would challenge the primacy of the Commons and substitute Britain's tradition of strong government for American-style legislative gridlock. Labour officially supports a wholly-elected Lords, but a good number of its MPs disagree.

Many Lords, including some Lib Dems, are opposed for the same reason: turkeys seldom cast ballots for Christmas—though they are decent enough to go through the ritual of arguing that their wisdom and non-partisanship improve the British polity. Then there is public opinion, which is largely indifferent to constitutional tinkering. Lords reform might strike voters as an

unforgivably esoteric pursuit at a time of economic misery.

Of all the fault lines over the issue—between Tories and Lib Dems, MPs and peers, politicians and the public—the first is the most perilous for the government. Some Conservatives point out that the coalition agreement between the two parties only commits the government to establishing “a committee to bring forward proposals” for an elected Lords, not to enacting them. Some Lib Dems hint their party will not support the ongoing review of Commons constituency boundaries, which should give the Conservatives a greater share of seats, if they do not get their way.

Mr Cameron is under intense pressure from his own backbenchers, and many Tory grandees in the Lords, to block his deputy's plan. They question the bargaining power of a party which, while stuck at around 10% in the opinion polls, has nothing to gain by bringing down the government and provoking an election. But the prime minister wants to keep the Lib Dems happy in case he needs them again to form a government at the next election, due in 2015. He calculates that Mr Clegg needs to have a major constitutional achievement to show for five years of coalition.

Indeed, self-interest plays a large part in the Lib Dems' zeal for reform. Many Tory and Labour MPs fear that in Lords elections the Lib Dems will secure a level of support closer to the 20% they were used to before joining the coalition. That would often give them the casting vote in a more powerful second chamber. As is the case now, no party would have an overall majority (see chart).

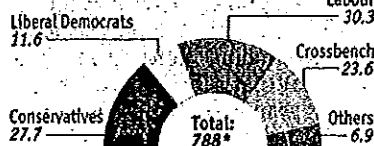
Despite the obstacles, Mr Clegg still has a reasonable chance of prevailing. Younger Tory MPs are less opposed to Lords reform than their more grizzled colleagues. The public may not give much priority to the issue, but polls suggest their views are in line with Mr Clegg's. And the Lords' usual defence against reform—that they are merely a revising, scrutinising chamber—jars with reality. For much of this year, the unelected body persistently blocked a welfare-reform bill that is probably the government's most popular policy.

Yet the journey could prove bloody. The coalition harbours increasingly public differences on tax policy, and there are deep divisions over Mr Cameron's plan to reform health care. But it is Lords reform, a foiling concern to the electorate, that is likeliest to poison relations between Tories and Lib Dems. The issue was a thorn in the side of the previous Labour government, which abolished most of the hereditary peers and flirted with electing the second chamber. It is a genuinely existential matter for this administration. ■

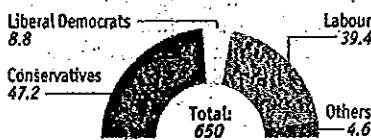
### The middle upstairs

Seats by party, February 2012, %

House of Lords



House of Commons



Sources: House of Commons; \*Excludes 39 absent for various reasons

Nom :

Prénom :

Signature

**Death threats, intimidation and abuse: climate change scientist Michael E. Mann counts the cost of honesty**  
*Research by Michael E. Mann confirmed the reality of global warming. Little did he know that it would also expose him to a vicious hate campaign*

Robin McKie, guardian.co.uk, Saturday 3 March 2012

The scientist who has borne the full brunt of attacks by climate change deniers, including death threats and accusations of misappropriating funds, is set to hit back.

Michael E. Mann, creator of the "hockey stick" graph that illustrates recent rapid rises in global temperatures, is to publish a book next month detailing the "disingenuous and cynical" methods used by those who have tried to disprove his findings. *The Hockey Stick and the Climate Wars* is a startling depiction of a scientist persecuted for trying to tell the truth.

Among the tactics used against Mann were the theft and publication, in 2009, of emails he had exchanged with climate scientist Professor Phil Jones of East Anglia University. Selected, distorted versions of these emails were then published on the internet in order to undermine UN climate talks due to begin in Copenhagen a few weeks later. These negotiations ended in failure. The use of those emails to kill off the climate talks was "a crime against humanity, a crime against the planet," says Mann, a scientist at Penn State University.

In his book, Mann warns that "public discourse has been polluted now for decades by corporate-funded disinformation – not just with climate change but with a host of health, environmental and societal threats." The implications for the planet are grim, he adds.

Mann became a target of climate deniers' hate because his research revealed there has been a recent increase of almost 1°C across the globe, a rise that was unprecedented "during at least the last 1,000 years" and which has been linked to rising emissions of carbon dioxide from cars, factories and power plants. Many other studies have since supported this finding although climate change deniers still reject his conclusions.

Mann's research particularly infuriated deniers after it was used prominently by the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in one of its assessment reports, making him a target of right-wing denial campaigners. But as the 46-year-old scientist told the *Observer*, he only entered this research field by accident. "I was interested in variations in temperatures of the oceans over the past millennium. But there are no records of these changes so I had to find proxy measures: coral growth, ice cores and tree rings."

By studying these he could trace temperature fluctuations over the past 1,000 years, he realised. The result was a graph that showed small oscillations in temperature over that period until, about 150 years ago, there was a sudden jump, a clear indication that human activities were likely to be involved. A colleague suggested the graph looked like a hockey stick and the name stuck. The results of the study were published in *Nature* in 1998. Mann's life changed for ever. "The trouble is that the hockey stick graph become an icon and deniers reckoned if they could smash the icon, the whole concept of global warming would be destroyed with it. Bring down Mike Mann and we can bring down the IPCC, they reckoned. It is a classic technique for the deniers' movement, I have discovered, and I don't mean only those who reject the idea of global warming but those who insist that smoking doesn't cause cancer or that industrial pollution isn't linked to acid rain."

A barrage of intimidation was generated by "a Potemkin village" of policy foundations, as Mann puts it. These groups were set up by privately-funded groups that included Koch Industries and Scaife Foundations and bore names such as the Cato Institute, Americans for Prosperity and the Heartland Institute. These groups bombarded Mann with freedom of information requests while the scientist was served with a subpoena by Republican congressman Joe Barton to provide access to his correspondence. The purported aim was to clarify issues. The real aim was to intimidate Mann.

In addition, Mann has been attacked by Ken Cuccinelli, the Republican attorney general of Virginia who has campaigned to have the scientist stripped of academic credentials. Several committees of inquiry have investigated Mann's work. All have exonerated him. Thousands of emails have been sent to Mann, many deeply unpleasant. [...] Mann insists he will not give up. "I have a six-year-old daughter and she reminds me what we are fighting for." Indeed, Mann is generally optimistic that climate change deniers and their oil and coal industry backers have overstepped the mark and goaded scientists to take action. He points to a recent letter, signed by 250 members of the US National Academy of Science, including 11 Nobel laureates, and published in *Science*. The letter warns about the dangers of the current attacks on climate scientists and calls "for an end to McCarthy-like threats of criminal prosecution against our colleagues based on innuendo and guilt by association, the harassment of scientists by politicians seeking distractions to avoid taking action, and the outright lies being spread about them."

"Words like those give me hope," says Mann.



Anglais  
Série LV

## The Austerity Debacle

By Paul Krugman, January 30, 2012, *New York Times*

Last week the National Institute of Economic and Social Research, a British think tank, released a startling chart comparing the current slump with past recessions and recoveries. It turns out that by one important measure — changes in real G.D.P. since the recession began — Britain is doing worse this time than it did during the Great Depression. Four years into the Depression, British G.D.P. had regained its previous peak; four years after the Great Recession began, Britain is nowhere close to regaining its lost ground. Nor is Britain unique. Italy is also doing worse than it did in the 1930s — and with Spain clearly headed for a double-dip recession, that makes three of Europe's big five economies members of the worse-than club. Yes, there are some caveats and complications. But this nonetheless represents a stunning failure of policy.

And it's a failure, in particular, of the austerity doctrine that has dominated elite policy discussion both in Europe and, to a large extent, in the United States for the past two years.

O.K., about those caveats: On one side, British unemployment was much higher in the 1930s than it is now, because the British economy was depressed — mainly thanks to an ill-advised return to the gold standard — even before the Depression struck. On the other side, Britain had a notably mild Depression compared with the United States.

Even so, surpassing the track record of the 1930s shouldn't be a tough challenge. Haven't we learned a lot about economic management over the last 80 years? Yes, we have — but in Britain and elsewhere, the policy elite decided to throw that hard-won knowledge out the window, and rely on ideologically convenient wishful thinking instead.

Britain, in particular, was supposed to be a showcase for "expansionary austerity," the notion that instead of increasing government spending to fight recessions, you should slash spending instead — and that this would lead to faster economic growth. "Those who argue that dealing with our deficit and promoting growth are somehow alternatives are wrong," declared David Cameron, Britain's prime minister. "You cannot put off the first in order to promote the second."

How could the economy thrive when unemployment was already high, and government policies were directly reducing employment even further? Confidence! "I firmly believe," declared Jean-Claude Trichet — at the time the president of the European Central Bank, and a strong advocate of the doctrine of expansionary austerity — "that in the current circumstances confidence-inspiring policies will foster and not hamper economic recovery, because confidence is the key factor today."

Such invocations of the confidence fairy were never plausible; researchers at the International Monetary Fund and elsewhere quickly debunked the supposed evidence that spending cuts create jobs. Yet influential people on both sides of the Atlantic heaped praise on the prophets of austerity, Mr. Cameron in particular, because the doctrine of expansionary austerity dovetailed with their ideological agendas. Thus in October 2010 David Broder, who virtually embodied conventional wisdom, praised Mr. Cameron for his boldness, and in particular for "brushing aside the warnings of economists that the sudden, severe medicine could cut short Britain's economic recovery and throw the nation back into recession." He then called on President Obama to "do a Cameron" and pursue "a radical rollback of the welfare state now." Strange to say, however, those warnings from economists proved all too accurate. And we're quite fortunate that Mr. Obama did not, in fact, do a Cameron.

Which is not to say that all is well with U.S. policy. True, the federal government has avoided all-out austerity. But state and local governments, which must run more or less balanced budgets, have slashed spending and employment as federal aid runs out — and this has been a major drag on the overall economy. Without those spending cuts, we might already have been on the road to self-sustaining growth; as it is, recovery still hangs in the balance.

And we may get tipped in the wrong direction by Continental Europe, where austerity policies are having the same effect as in Britain, with many signs pointing to recession this year.

The infuriating thing about this tragedy is that it was completely unnecessary. Half a century ago, any economist — or for that matter any undergraduate who had read Paul Samuelson's textbook "Economics" — could have told you that austerity in the face of depression was a very bad idea. But policy makers, pundits and, I'm sorry to say, many economists decided, largely for political reasons, to forget what they used to know. And millions of workers are paying the price for their wilful amnesia.

Nom :  
Prénom :  
Signature :

**SERIE LANGUES VIVANTES  
ANGLAIS  
ANALYSE LV2 TEXTE HORS  
PROGRAMME**

The New York Times -- March 4th 2012

**True Londoners Are Extinct**      By CRAIG TAYLOR

Later this year, thousands of Olympians will march into London under flapping flags, and the global TV audience will be treated to a romanticized version of the city, with helicopter shots of Big Ben competing for time against footage of Buckingham Palace guards staring stone-faced into the distance and double-decker buses bouncing unsteadily through too-narrow streets. By the end of the ceremonies, you'll have seen the city's bridges so many times that you'll wish they had all fallen down years ago. The overall impression these images are meant to give off is that London, for all its recent convulsions, is a city that remains preserved in its past, obsessed with its royals (the queen will celebrate her diamond jubilee in June) and populated by the type of cheeky folks mythologized in those postwar BBC social documentaries and kept alive by the likes of Guy Ritchie's tired gangster clichés. Not Londoners. Lahndannahs.

But London in 2012, like most other global cities, is in significant flux, much less beholden to sepia-tinged notions of what it used to be and much more a product of its new arrivals. Over the last decade, the foreign-born population reached 2.6 million, just about a third of the city. In addition to longstanding Irish, Indian, Jamaican and Bangladeshi communities, there are now many new immigrants from Nigeria, Slovenia, Ghana, Vietnam and Somalia. I've seen Russians fly in on their private jets, and Eastern Europeans breach the city limits in cars filled to the roof with suitcases and potted plants. The changing population has inspired a certain amount of nativism in the city, sometimes good-natured, sometimes less so. There are those who believe that true Londoners are cockneys, and to be one of those you must be born within earshot of Bow Bells. Or: True Londoners are born within the ring of the M25 motorway. Others think that all it takes to be a Londoner is to have lived here for a great deal of time -- at least 70 years, or 52 years, or 8 years, or, in one case, just over a month. "But it was a very good month," this new Londoner told me, fresh from the north of England. "I've totally forgotten Macclesfield."

True Londoners are extinct, another person told me. Foreigners can't be Londoners, a British National Party campaigner said one Saturday afternoon on Hampstead High Street, before recounting a moving story of his own father's journey from Cyprus to London and the way this shell-shocked man was welcomed into the city. A true Londoner would never support Manchester United, I was told. "The only thing I know" -- and this was uttered in a very loud pub in Cricklewood -- "is that a real Londoner would never, ever, ever eat at one of those bloody Angus bloody Steakhouses in the West End. That's how you tell," the man said, steadying himself with a hand on the bar. "That's how you tell."

No one is just a Londoner. (...) The London of the past decade felt stable. Why else had the Russian billionaires come here to buy football clubs and newspapers? Why else did the Saudis descend on Knightsbridge? The equation seemed to be working -- until suddenly it wasn't. The riots last summer didn't so much spread from one neighborhood to the next; they blossomed in disparate parts of the city. Older conservatives blamed the youth; the youth blamed other youth. It was always someone else, but the people in the grainy YouTube videos weren't invaders at all.

"I certainly didn't expect this in London," said Nick Smith, a television executive. During the riots, he stepped off a bus in South London and saw 15 people rattling the metal shutters of a Foot Locker. "The people I saw, they didn't come from another country. They were the people who would, on any other day, be sitting next to me on the bus. They were smashing up shops."

"You can't cut the defiance out of London," a university student said at a pub near the Strand, where protesters had stacked placards near the door during another of the recent protests against higher tuition fees. "There are people in London here who look at Beijing with great envy. To be able to call in the tanks, to be able to push people around. 'Oh, the things we could do if we never had to worry about the streets.' As if that was not the most important thing about this place. As if London was anything other than a place of defiance, a staging ground." (...)

**Down With Everything**By Thomas L. Friedman, April 21, 2012, *The New York Times*

DOES America need an Arab Spring? That was the question on my mind when I called Frank Fukuyama, the Stanford professor and author of "The End of History and the Last Man." Fukuyama has been working on a two-volume opus called "The Origins of Political Order," and I could detect from his recent writings that his research was leading him to ask a very radical question about America's political order today, namely: has America gone from a democracy to a "vetocracy" — from a system designed to prevent anyone in government from amassing too much power to a system in which no one can aggregate enough power to make any important decisions at all?

"There is a crisis of authority, and we're not prepared to think about it in these terms," said Fukuyama. "When Americans think about the problem of government, it is always about constraining the government and limiting its scope." That dates back to our founding political culture. The rule of law, regular democratic rotations in power and human rights protections were all put in place to create obstacles to overbearing, overly centralized government. "But we forget," Fukuyama added, "that government was also created to act and make decisions."

That is being lost at the federal level. A system with as many checks and balances built into it as ours assumes — indeed requires — a certain minimum level of cooperation on major issues between the two parties, despite ideological differences. Unfortunately, since the end of the cold war, which was a hugely powerful force compelling compromise between the parties, several factors are combining to paralyze our whole system. For starters, we've added more checks and balances to make decision-making even more difficult — such as senatorial holds now being used to block any appointments by the executive branch or the Senate filibuster rule, effectively requiring a 60-vote majority to pass any major piece of legislation, rather than 51 votes. Also, our political divisions have become more venomous than ever. As Russ Feingold, the former Democratic senator, once remarked to me: At the rate that polarization is proceeding, partisans will soon be demanding that consumer products reflect their politics: "We're going to have Republican and Democrat toothpaste." In addition, the Internet, the blogosphere and C-Span's coverage of the workings of the House and Senate have made every lawmaker more transparent — making back-room deals by lawmakers less possible and public posturing the 24/7 norm. And, finally, the huge expansion of the federal government, and the increasing importance of money in politics, have hugely expanded the number of special-interest lobbies and their ability to influence and clog decision-making.

Indeed, America today increasingly looks like the society that the political scientist Mancur Olson wrote about in his 1982 classic "The Rise and Decline of Nations." He warned that when a country amasses too many highly focused special-interest lobbies — which have an inherent advantage over the broad majority, which is fixated on the well-being of the country as a whole — they can, like a multilimbed octopus, choke the life out of a political system, unless the majority truly mobilizes against them.

To put it another way, says Fukuyama, America's collection of minority special-interest groups is now bigger, more mobilized and richer than ever, while all the mechanisms to enforce the will of the majority are weaker than ever. The effect of this is either legislative paralysis or suboptimal, Rube Goldberg-esque, patched-together-compromises, often made in response to crises with no due diligence. That is our vetocracy. [...]

"If we are to get out of our present paralysis, we need not only strong leadership, but changes in institutional rules," argues Fukuyama. These would include eliminating senatorial holds and the filibuster for routine legislation and having budgets drawn up by a much smaller supercommittee of legislators — like those that handle military base closings — with "heavy technocratic input from a nonpartisan agency like the Congressional Budget Office," insulated from interest-group pressures and put before Congress in a single, unamendable, up-or-down vote.

I know what you're thinking: "That will never happen." And do you know what I'm thinking? "Then we will never be a great country again, no matter who is elected." We can't be great as long as we remain a vetocracy rather than a democracy. Our deformed political system — with a Congress that's become a forum for legalized bribery — is now truly holding us back.

Nom :                      Prénom :                      Signature :  
The New York Times                      26. January 2012

**Scottish Leader Sets Timeline for Referendum on Independence** By JOHN F. BURNS and ALAN COWELL

EDINBURGH -- Scotland's first minister, Alex Salmond, took the first formal step on Wednesday toward an independence referendum that the government in Edinburgh hopes will secure a mandate from Scotland's five million people for the country's withdrawal from the United Kingdom within as little as five years.

After years of skirmishing on the issue, Mr. Salmond's plan for the independence vote, including a target date for the ballot in the fall of 2014, set the stage for what some in Britain have described as a high-stakes constitutional poker game pitting Mr. Salmond against the British prime minister, David Cameron, with the prize (being) the right to dismantle -- or preserve -- Britain's existence as a united country. Each man, too, might struggle to survive politically if the referendum should go against him.

Mr. Cameron has insisted that only Parliament in London has the legal power to approve a referendum on the potential breakup of the union between England and Scotland, which was forged in the Act of Union of 1707. He has also said London, not Edinburgh, should set the terms and timing of the vote.

Mr. Salmond has rejected those positions, and on Wednesday he threw down the gauntlet. Outlining his own terms for the ballot, he set a May deadline for the conclusion of a public "consultation" on its terms, and suggested that Mr. Cameron would have little choice, in the end, but to bow to whatever format the Salmond government adopted.

"The terms of the referendum are for the Scottish Parliament and the people of Scotland to decide," Mr. Salmond said in a parliamentary statement that was interrupted by applause from lawmakers of the Scottish National Party, which he led last year to a sweeping election victory that opened the way for a renewed push for independence. Likening Scotland in its bond with England to a trapped bird, he added: "The bird has flown, and cannot now be returned to its cage. I believe this journey represents the aspirations and the ambitions of the people of Scotland."

In Parliament, and with reporters later, Mr. Salmond described the referendum plan as a move to retrieve the independence that Scottish kingdoms had defended for 1,000 years before the merger that created the United Kingdom. He held out the prospect of England and Scotland's prospering as "equal partners," instead of maintaining a relationship in which England had exercised effective dominion. He cited opinion polls showing that many in England -- a majority, in one recent survey -- favor Scotland's breaking away, rather than continuing with what has often been, at least politically, a fractious and sometimes embittered partnership. The 2011 election victory brought the nationalists closer than ever to a goal that the Scottish National Party has pursued ever since its founding almost 80 years ago. But realists in the party acknowledge that the referendum will pose formidable political odds.

Some recent polls have suggested that the nationalists' cause may have crested in the wake of the party's election win. Even the polls most favorable to the nationalists show more than 60 percent of Scottish voters against a breakaway. (...)

The Scottish leader played down the practical difficulties of ending the union, matters that have caused independence opponents, including Conservative, Labour and Liberal Democrat opposition blocs in the Scottish Parliament, to warn of havoc for Scotland if the nationalists win the referendum. His plan calls for Queen Elizabeth II to remain the monarch of an independent Scotland, for Scotland to continue using the British pound as its currency and for Scotland to be accepted readily as a member of the European Union, all issues that constitutional and economic experts say could prove problematic.

In his remarks on Wednesday, Mr. Salmond waved off alarms about the loss of billions of pounds in annual transfer payments from Britain, saying Scotland would more than offset the loss by gaining control of 90 percent of Britain's North Sea oil reserves. He also said an independent Scotland would demand that Britain remove bases on the River Clyde for Britain's fleet of nuclear missile submarines, and pay for environmental cleanup costs that experts have said could run into the billions. For decades, the bases, with fast access to strategic areas of the North Atlantic, have also been host to port visits by American nuclear submarines. But before all of that, Mr. Salmond has said, he will try to reach an agreement on the referendum terms with Mr. Cameron. The British prime minister has said that as part of any deal that gave constitutional legality to a Scottish-run vote on the issue, his government would seek a date earlier than 2014. Mr. Cameron wants the earlier date because, he has said, uncertainties over Scotland's future deter investments. He also wants an "up or down" question on the ballot, to give voters the choice of approving or rejecting independence. Mr. Salmond's plan envisions seeking approval in his consultation exercise for a third choice, full autonomy for Scotland within the United Kingdom, which the Cameron government opposes as a way station to independence.

Nom :

Signature :

Prénom :

The Independent on Sunday -- Sunday 08 January 2012.

Sunday Main Book – Comment **LEADING ARTICLE: A nation divided by more than race**

In many respects, Britain in 2012 is a far better country than it was in 1993, when Stephen Lawrence was murdered. At least as far as race is concerned, non-white people get a fairer deal from the education system; it has become less acceptable to express racist views in public – including on the football pitch – and there are more non-white people on television and in Parliament. Apparently contrary statements can both be true: that Britain, always a relatively open-minded country, became more tolerant over the past 19 years; and that racial prejudice is still a serious problem.

In our special report today, we detail the statistics that spell out how different life still is for non-white citizens, whose outcomes at every stage in life tend to be worse than for their white counterparts. There are still too few non-white faces at the top of the City and the professions, including the media, and indeed this newspaper.

That said, the long story of the search for justice for the Lawrence family helped to change the Metropolitan Police, and other police forces. The outcry over the murder, and the shock of the Macpherson report on the Met's failings in investigating it, forced the pace of change in attitudes and recruitment. But we have a long way to go before our criminal justice system treats all citizens equally. As we report today, non-white people are more likely to be stopped and searched by the police, more likely to be given custodial sentences if found guilty, and likely to be given longer sentences than white people convicted of the same offences.

The nature of racism has changed, however. The growth of the Muslim population, and the prejudice against them since 9/11, has clouded the picture, as has the arrival of white immigrants from central Europe to expand the workforce since the enlargement of the European Union in 2004. Recently, however, something else has happened. Hard economic times have exposed the extent to which some problems that were seen through the prism of race are as much questions of class and inequality. As Paul Vallely writes today, the Lawrence case is similar to that of Rhys Jones in 2007 and of Anuj Bidve on Boxing Day, in that they were respectable boys killed by thugs, regardless of colour. It is no excuse, although it is sometimes a partial explanation, to say that racism can be an expression of white working-class alienation.

For a long time, it was easier to make progress against racism – and to push the class issue aside – because the long boom allowed all levels of society to feel that they were getting on, and because it meant that the bill for benefit dependency was affordable. That is why this newspaper has repeatedly criticised the coalition Government for its failure to follow through on its "all in this together" rhetoric. David Cameron, with the insight of a public relations professional, realised that it was important to be seen as wanting the burden of sacrifice at a time of austerity to be shared fairly. But he has failed lamentably to match words with actions.

Last week, the Prime Minister sounded weak and unconvincing in his New Year Radio 4 interview when pressed on what he intended to do about excessive executive pay. He accepted that "people are not satisfied" and hastened to add "I'm not satisfied", but, when asked what he proposed to do, he mentioned the bank levy that has already been imposed, and spoke vaguely about greater transparency. Whatever else Ed Miliband may be failing to do as Leader of the Opposition, he at least managed to outflank the Government yesterday with specific proposals to curb unjustified high pay. By contrasting the difficulties of the "squeezed middle" with the apparent impunity of the richest 1 per cent, Mr Miliband has rightly put Mr Cameron under pressure.

Whether the threat to the social fabric is framed in terms of race, class or culture, inequality is the underlying challenge for 2012. Not just the gap between Mr Miliband's squeezed middle and the very rich: this may also be the year when Iain Duncan Smith's cuts to welfare benefits start to bite. The summer's riots suggested that the alienation of poor urban youth is already serious. The stakes are high. Unless the implied social contract that holds us together can be renewed by this Government, the danger is that what progress has been made in improving the lot of the poorest in society – black or white – over the past 19 years will be reversed.

Anglais  
Série LV**Study: Negative campaign ads much more frequent, vicious than in primaries past**By T.W. Farnam, February 20, 2012, *The Washington Post*

If you thought you were living through a particularly nasty presidential primary season, turns out you were right. Four years ago, just 6 percent of campaign advertising in the GOP primaries amounted to attacks on other Republicans; in this election, that figure has shot up to more than 50 percent, according to an analysis of advertising trends.

And the negative ads are not just more frequent — they also appear to be more vitriolic.

In 2008, one of the harshest ads Mitt Romney ran ahead of the Iowa caucuses criticized the immigration position of Sen. John McCain (Ariz.), but only after calling him “an honorable man.”

In 2012, such a nicety seems quaint. Romney’s campaign began running an ad Friday in Michigan showing a limp body sinking in murky water while a narrator intones: “America is drowning in national debt, yet Rick Santorum supported billions in earmarks.”

All of this invective is flowing in an election season when Republicans had hoped to train their resources on beating President Obama. Candidates typically save their sharpest attacks for the general-election campaign, largely sparing their fellow party members. But a wildly unpredictable GOP nomination battle has upended that plan and dissolved the truce. It is happening largely because of new rules governing campaign money. Also, this race has a different dynamic: a front-runner who lacks a prohibitive lead.

Once the tone of the race turned negative, it stayed that way. One Ron Paul campaign ad calls Newt Gingrich a “serial hypocrite.” Another spot, from a group backing Romney, asks, “Haven’t we had enough mistakes” from Gingrich? A group supporting Gingrich accuses Romney of being a “corporate raider” and shows footage of an elderly woman saying, “I feel that is the man who destroyed us.” Another spot from the group accuses Romney of making “blood money” from a company that was found guilty of bilking the government for Medicare payments.

Romney and the groups backing him have led the trend, spending two-thirds of their money on negative ads. Gingrich and the Winning Our Future PAC backing him have spent half of their funds on spots attacking other Republicans. Santorum and the PACs behind him have devoted one out of four dollars to attack ads. Winning Our Future spokesman Rick Tyler said his group’s message was positive until it was forced to counter Romney’s “scorched earth” strategy.

“When this whole campaign started, the Republicans were very enthusiastic,” Tyler said. Romney’s approach, he said, is also depressing turnout: “By the time he’s done, there will be no one left to vote against Barack Obama.”

The Romney and Gingrich campaigns did not respond to requests for comment, and Restore Our Future, the largest super PAC supporting Romney, declined to comment.

Party strategists point to million-dollar political contributions to super PACs as part of the reason for the negativity.

Data show that super PACs, which have run more advertising than the campaigns themselves, have spent 72 percent of their money on negative ads. The figure for campaigns is 27 percent, according to a Washington Post analysis of data from Kantar Media/Campaign Media Analysis Group, which tracks television advertising across the country. (For this article, ads were considered negative if they mentioned another GOP candidate.) Super PACs can accept corporate money and personal checks above the \$2,500 limit on donations to campaigns, but they are prohibited from coordinating ads with the campaigns they are trying to help. That makes it harder for the PAC spots to feature candidates. And because stock footage and voice-overs can be dull, the result has been more negative ads.

“Super PACs are left with no good choices,” said Brad Todd, a longtime GOP adman who worked for Romney and the party in 2008 but is unaffiliated in this contest. “If they didn’t run comparison or contrast ads, they would have some very boring television.”

Super PACs don’t have to follow the “stand by your ad” provision in campaign law, which requires candidates to state clearly that they approve of an ad’s message. Candidates, in fact, have tried to deflect blame for the contest’s tone, saying they don’t have control over the spots run by the PACs.

But many strategists have noted that the groups, typically run by former aides to the candidates, can easily glean cues from the campaigns. “There are so many forms of communication other than picking up the phone and saying, ‘We like that negative ad — double the buy, □’” said one Republican media consultant who worked for a candidate no longer in the race. “It’s not that hard to have a symbiotic relationship.” [...]

Anglais  
Série LV**Climate and the culture war**By Michael Gerson, Tuesday, January 17, 2012, *Washington Post*

The attempt by Newt Gingrich to cover his tracks on climate change has been one of the shabbier little episodes of the 2012 presidential campaign. His forthcoming sequel to "A Contract with the Earth" was to feature a chapter by Katharine Hayhoe, a young professor of atmospheric sciences at Texas Tech University. Hayhoe is a scientist, an evangelical Christian and a moderate voice warning of climate disruption.

Then conservative media got wind. Rush Limbaugh dismissed Hayhoe as a "climate babe." An Iowa voter pressed Gingrich on the topic. "That's not going to be in the book," he responded. "We told them to kill it." Hayhoe learned this news just as she was passing under the bus.

A theory about the role of carbon dioxide in climate patterns has joined abortion and gay marriage as a culture war controversy. Climate scientists are attacked as greenshirts and watermelons (green on the outside, red on the inside). Skeptics are derided as flat-earthers. Reputations are assaulted and the e-mails of scientists hacked. A few years ago, the intensity of this argument would have been difficult to predict. In 2005, then-Gov. Mitt Romney joined a regional agreement to limit carbon emissions. In 2007, Gingrich publicly endorsed a cap-and-trade system for carbon.

What explains the recent, bench-clearing climate brawl? A scientific debate has been sucked into a broader national argument about the role of government. Many political liberals have seized on climate disruption as an excuse for policies they supported long before climate science became compelling — greater federal regulation and mandated lifestyle changes. Conservatives have also tended to equate climate science with liberal policies and therefore reject both.

The result is a contest of questioned motives. In the conservative view, the real liberal goal is to undermine free markets and national sovereignty (through international environmental agreements). In the liberal view, the real conservative goal is to conduct a war on science and defend fossil fuel interests. On the margin of each movement, the critique is accurate, supplying partisans with plenty of ammunition.

No cause has been more effectively sabotaged by its political advocates. Climate scientists, in my experience, are generally careful, well-intentioned and confused to be at the center of a global controversy. Investigations of hacked e-mails have revealed evidence of frustration — and perhaps of fudging but not of fraud. It is their political defenders who often discredit their work through hyperbole and arrogance. As environmental writer Michael Shellenberger points out, "The rise in the number of Americans telling pollsters that news of global warming was being exaggerated began virtually concurrently with the release of Al Gore's movie, 'An Inconvenient Truth.'"

The resistance of many conservatives to arguments about climate disruption is magnified by class and religion. Tea Party types are predisposed to question self-important elites. Evangelicals have long been suspicious of secular science, which has traditionally been suspicious of religious influence. Among some groups, skepticism about global warming has become a symbol of social identity — the cultural equivalent of a gun rack or an ichthus.

But however interesting this sociology may be, it has nothing to do with the science at issue. Even if all environmentalists were socialists and secularists and insufferable and partisan to the core, it would not alter the reality of the Earth's temperature.

Since the 1950s, global temperatures have increased about nine-tenths of a degree Celsius — the recent conclusion of the Berkeley Earth Surface Temperature Project — which coincides with a large increase in greenhouse gasses produced by humans. This explanation is most consistent with the location of warming in the atmosphere. It best accounts for changing crop zones, declining species, thinning sea ice and rising sea levels. Scientists are not certain about the pace of future warming — estimates range from 2 degrees C to 5 degrees C over the next century. But warming is already proceeding faster than many plants and animals can adapt to. These facts do not dictate a specific political response. With Japan, Canada and Russia withdrawing from the Kyoto process, the construction of a global regulatory regime for carbon emissions seems unlikely and may have never been possible. The broader use of nuclear power, the preservation of carbon-consuming rain forests and the encouragement of new energy technologies are more promising.

But any rational approach requires some distance between science and ideology. The extraction and burning of dead plant matter is not a moral good — or the proper cause for a culture war.

Anglais  
Série LV

## Iowa GOP caucusers are the real elite

By Richard Cohen, Tuesday, November 22, 2011, *The Washington Post*

Until the Reform Act of 1832, more than 100 members of the British Parliament were elected from districts that had very few people. These were called rotten boroughs and, while they no longer exist in England, at least one of them does in the United States. It is called Iowa. Every four years the Rotten Borough of Iowa holds its presidential caucuses. Next year, the only real contest will be in the Republican Party. Last time, 119,000 Iowans participated in the GOP caucus. This amounted, according to Curtis Gans, director of American University's Center for the Study of the American Electorate, to 0.05 percent of the national electorate — or, to put it another way,  $\frac{1}{20}$ th of 1 percent. If the next president is a Republican, there's a pretty good chance several dozen people in Iowa will have been instrumental in choosing him or her.

Iowa Republicans are a pretty conservative lot. In general, they abhor abortion, gay marriage, Obamacare, the Departments of Education, Energy and Commerce, NPR, support for the arts, the East Coast, the West Coast, strictly secular education, illegal immigrants and their children, the mainstream media and — after reading this — me. But because conservatives dominate the Iowa GOP and because the caucus is the first contest of the election year, they enjoy disproportionate influence over the national party. It is possible to skip Iowa and win the nomination (John McCain), and even possible to win Iowa and lose the nomination (Mike Huckabee), but it's easiest to win the nomination by winning Iowa — an impossible task for a moderate.

The caucus-primary system is perverse in the extreme. It starts in January in Iowa and New Hampshire when common sense says it ought to begin in Florida and Arizona. The average January low in Des Moines is about 10 degrees; the average Miami low is about 60. This helps explain why many more people go to Miami than Des Moines for the winter. It does not explain why the election season has to start there.

The other perverse effect of the Iowa caucus is that it stands on its head the notion of elite. If you asked the average Iowa Republican who is in the American elite, he or she would say something about bankers or journalists or all those New York-Washington types who supposedly run the country but recently have forgotten how.

Nonsense. The true elite are the scattering of determined folks who will turn out in the dense cold to choose a presidential candidate. Their vote counts for so much more than yours. In fact, if you want to join the true American elite, move to Iowa and register to vote. This is something the Occupy Wall Street crowd does not understand. If they want real influence, they should Occupy Iowa.

The Iowa and New Hampshire contests are greatly romanticized. Big-city journalists embrace the Norman Rockwell qualities of both states and cherish the nostalgic appeal of retail campaigning. But this year, much of the campaigning has been done wholesale — nationally televised debates, TV ads — and, as Politico's Maggie Haberman has pointed out, "the candidates atop the GOP polls have spent the least amount of time meeting with voters." Herman Cain, for one, has shown that he is indeed a management specialist by managing to shoehorn a presidential campaign into his book tour.

The primary and caucus system is the product of a reform movement, an effort to curtail the power of political bosses by having party members, not the machine, choose the nominee. But disproportionate power has now shifted to the early primary and caucus voters. The narrowness of the Iowa GOP base helps explain why the 2012 field is in virtual agreement about almost everything — hands raised in unison — and taking positions that dismay many Americans. All but one of the candidates — the odd man out is Jon Huntsman — seem to agree that life begins at conception, making all abortions tantamount to murder. Whoever wins Iowa is going to have to start moderating his or her positions for the general election. The GOP race this year is a sad affair. Iowa has helped narrow the gate to the nomination so that one-half of the U.S. political system is represented by people who either question evolution or do not have the courage to say otherwise, who pander to ugly anti-immigration sentiment and who feel that it would have been just swell to have let The U.S. financial system fall on its face. Opposing views are missing. This happens with rotten boroughs. There's no one to debate.



## Dangers Follow From Congress's Coming Cuts to Defense Spending

Niall Ferguson, Nov 21, 2011, *Newsweek*

Congress is poised to slash defense spending. Great idea—as long as China remains our buddy and the Middle East embraces brotherly love.

Fort Leavenworth in Kansas is the perfect place to go to think about the U.S. defense budget. The Combined Arms Center is the brain trust of the Army. All the Army's majors pass through it. Its alums include all the five-star generals of modern times: Arnold, Bradley, Eisenhower, MacArthur, and Marshall. Its former commanders include David Petraeus. To meet its officer-students—nearly all of whom have seen action in Iraq or Afghanistan—is to see what is best about the American military today.

So should we slash the budget that pays these exemplary men and women? Only if you believe the currently fashionable arguments that mankind is getting ever more peaceable, the Middle East is entering a happy new era of democracy and peace, and China does not pose a strategic threat to the U.S.

First, the case for cuts. The U.S. remains a formidable military power. The Department of Defense has total military personnel of 1.4 million, about a fifth of whom are deployed abroad. The U.S. defense budget is larger than those of the next 15 countries combined. The wars the United States has fought in the last 10 years, in Iraq and Afghanistan, have not come cheap. Since September 2001, lawmakers have provided \$1.283 trillion in budget authority for operations in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Meanwhile, a huge financial crisis has blown a hole in the nation's finances that urgently needs to be filled. Even if interest rates stay at their current low levels, the growth of the federal debt means that within less than a decade interest payments are likely to exceed the defense budget.

For all these reasons, many in Congress thirst to slash defense. Already this year it has been cut by approximately \$465 billion. The president, too, is in a hurry to wind down American involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan. Last month he announced that only 150 U.S. troops will remain in Iraq after the end of the year, down from nearly 50,000 today, ostensibly because of the unwillingness of Iraqi lawmakers to grant U.S. troops immunity from prosecution. He also plans to pull 10,000 troops out of Afghanistan this year and another 22,000 by the end of September 2012.

And more drastic cuts are coming. By Nov. 23, the Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction—the so-called super-committee—is supposed to come up with a plan to reduce the federal deficit by at least \$1.2 trillion over 10 years. If it fails to do so, automatic sequestrations will kick in in 2013. The effect would be to reduce the regular defense budget (excluding Iraq and Afghanistan) by at least \$492 billion between 2013 and 2021, or from 3.4 percent of GDP to 2.7 percent or less.

A report by the House Armed Services Committee's majority staff estimates that this would cut the Army and Marine Corps from 771,400 personnel today to 571,000. The Navy would go down from 288 ships to just 238. The Air Force would shrink from 1,739 fighters to 1,512 and from 118 bombers to 101. But perhaps the biggest worry is what these cuts would mean for research and development, currently just 11 percent of the Pentagon budget.

Now, it may be that we are entering a period of unprecedented peace and brotherly love. Maybe the Arabs will live happily ever after with new democratically elected leaders. And maybe the Chinese will always be our buddies. But I would not like to bet \$492 billion on that. The future I fear is the one that comes after most big financial crises: a period of populist anger, political instability, and cross-border conflict. The youth bubble in the Greater Middle East is at its peak. Resource wars are looming as emerging-market demand outstrips supplies of everything from rare earths to fresh water. And China is already a credible threat to our cybersecurity. I worry that our national-security strategy is currently being improvised in response to fiscal and domestic political pressures rather than to rational risk assessment. And I remember the old Latin adage: *Si vis pacem, para bellum*—if you want peace, prepare for war. As they know only too well at Fort Leavenworth, the converse is also true.

# Fairness and the 'Occupy' Movement

By ARTHUR C. BROOKS

The Occupy Wall Street movement has just passed its two-month anniversary. The protesters' calls for greater income redistribution and the denunciations of capitalism have become shriller, and protests are becoming more violent and destructive.

A major topic of debate in conservative circles these days is how to respond. There are two schools of thought. One advocates the firehoses-and-handcuffs approach. The other is to ignore the movement and hope it fades away.

Neither is correct. Conservatives and free-enterprise advocates should seize the moment to

show their own passion for the issues being debated—and, where appropriate, even embrace the protesters' moral critique of America's distorted and depressed system.

The most important area of disagreement concerns what our country needs today. The "We are the 99%" signs at every Occupy rally make it clear the protesters believe greater income equality—not more free enterprise—is what America needs. Unsurprisingly, the White House has found this class-struggle *leitmotif* quite handy to divert attention from its economic record. Last month White House spokesman Josh Earnest assured the public that the "interests of 99% of Americans are well represented" by Mr. Obama. This came after the president's well-worn attacks on "millionaires and billionaires," who, as we have heard many times, are not paying their "fair share."

Free-enterprise advocates should view this as a rare opportunity to expose mistaken and misleading arguments about income inequality. The dreaded top 1% earns about 20% of income today, we hear. Yes, and they also pay 37% of the federal income taxes, according to the Tax Foundation. Further, as my colleague Jim Pethokoukis has shown, wealth inequality is roughly un-

changed from 20 years ago—and from 40, 60 and 80 years ago too, for that matter. According to the Congressional Budget Office, every income quintile has seen a real increase in purchasing power of at least 18% over the past 30 years.

**The protesters are on firm ground when they denounce those who get rich because of their political pull.**

The Occupy protesters are dead wrong on income inequality—but they are not so wrong in indicting our system today for unfairness, and for being wracked with crony capitalism, insider dealings and corruption. What is a fair economic system? Some define it in terms of forced income redistribution. The overwhelming majority of Americans, however, believe fairness means rewarding merit, even if that means some people have a lot more than others.

In 2006, the World Values Survey asked a large sample of Americans to, "Imagine two retirees, of the same age, doing practically the same job. One finds out that the other earns considerably more than she does.

find close proximity to government power. For example, Washington's auto-industry bailouts and its "Cash for Clunkers" program—handing out government grants to buy new cars—are opposite sides of the same coin. Wall Street malfeasance in the housing market is real and was spawned by the government-sponsored enterprises Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. Want less crony capitalism, fewer insider deals and a smaller lobbyist-industrial complex in Washington? Then shrink and reform the government.

Capitalism's advocates should not see today's protests as a threat, but rather as an opportunity to express their own core values. The issues the protesters raise invite the champions of free markets to demonstrate their passion for true fairness and their anger toward crony capitalists and statist operators. In this way they can recommit themselves to the free enterprise system that has created more opportunity for more people than any system in the history of the world.

Mr. Brooks is president of the American Enterprise Institute. His latest book is "The Battle: How the Fight Between Free Enterprise and Big Government Will Shape America's Future" (Basic Books, 2010).

The better paid secretary, however, is quicker, more efficient and more reliable at her job." When asked if it was fair that one secretary be paid more than the other, 88.6% of respondents answered that it was fair indeed.

According to the meritocratic definition of fairness, we have been getting less fair as a nation with every new redistributive policy and regulation that unnecessarily hinders entrepreneurship. Greater fairness means rewarding hard work and innovation—not handing out stimulus cash to politically well-connected corporations and campaign donors. It means lowering disincentives to invest, not trying to squeeze more money out of private entrepreneurs while protecting public-sector unions. Penalizing earned success destroys jobs and lowers growth, which especially hurts the economically vulnerable.

This brings us to a second Occupy goal that free-enterprise advocates can embrace: denouncing crony capitalism. Like statism, crony capitalism is just a way to use government to weaken competition for the sake of those who are powerful yet unwilling or unable to compete.

Indeed, crony capitalism is statism's co-dependent wife: Lurking behind almost every company deemed "too big to fail," you will

## THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

Tracy Corrigan, Editor in Chief, Europe  
Tim Hauraham, Managing Editor, News  
Brian M. Carney, Editorial Page Editor

Paul Little, Circulation

Michele Lally, Marketing

Lauren Berkemeyer, Advertising

Kate Dobbin, Communications

Published since 1889 by

DOW JONES AND COMPANY

© 2011 Dow Jones & Company. All Rights Reserved

DOW JONES

A NEWS CORPORATION COMPANY

SERIE LANGUES VIVANTES  
ANGLAIS  
ANALYSE LV2 TEXTE HORS  
PROGRAMME

Signature :

Série LV-LV2

Anglais  
Série LV

## Halfway Through the Lost Decade

Robert Scheer, *The Huffington Post*, 04/26/2012

Does anyone care that the economy is floundering and that we are not getting out of this crisis anytime soon? Housing values are in the cellar, the Fed foresees unemployment remaining unacceptably high for the next three years, and national economic growth is predicted to be, at best, anemic.

Even the substantial rise of stock averages during recent years has been based in large part on the ability of companies such as Apple to outsource jobs and sales to booming markets led by China -- while America's graduating students face mountainous debt and what is shaping up as a decade without opportunity.

These are the inescapable conclusions to be drawn from a gloomy report released Wednesday by the Federal Reserve. In that document, the Fed revises downward its growth projection for the next two years and predicts, in the words of a *New York Times* article about the report, that "unemployment will remain a massive and persistent problem for years to come." The housing failure that is the root cause of this economic emergency continues unabated because there is no political will in either party to aid beleaguered homeowners.

Beneath all the pundit blather about the election lies the fact that most deeply affects the voters' well-being: Home prices are at a decade low, and in cities like Atlanta and Las Vegas they are as dismal as they have been since the Case-Shiller indices started tracking housing prices in the early 1990s.

Without a resurgence in housing value, consumer confidence will remain moribund and a woefully weak labor market will persist. Every time housing seems to be rebounding, the banks and the feds unload more of their toxic mortgages and prices edge lower.

The only thing preventing a complete collapse, one that would plunge us into deep recession or worse, is the Fed's extremely low interest rate, which Wednesday's report reiterated will remain at near zero until late 2014. If the Fed rate were to rise, driving up all of the adjustable rate mortgages out there, we would be in a full-blown depression.

All of this terrible news should spell disaster for Barack Obama's re-election chances, since it is a direct consequence of his continuing the George W. Bush strategy of bailing out the bankers while ignoring the plight of the homeowners they swindled. But Obama will probably survive because his Republican presidential rival, Mitt Romney, is far worse on this subject.

At least Obama has made a stab at pushing the banks to provide mortgage relief, albeit a halfhearted one. When assessed in light of Romney's splendid indifference to the suffering that he himself and other financial hustlers caused, Obama deserves support; at least the president seems alert to the pain the bankers have inflicted, while Romney blames their victims.

Romney's is the sink-or-swim, tough-love approach that has come to mark the Republican Party. As he put it last fall in an interview with the *Las Vegas Review-Journal*:

... [D]on't try and stop the foreclosure process. Let it run its course and hit bottom. Allow investors to buy up homes, put renters in them, fix the homes up and let it turn around and come back up.

That of course does not address the painful losses of, for example, Nevada homeowners, who have witnessed a 62 percent drop in values since 2006. At fault is a free-market-rules philosophy that denies the essential reality of American housing: The market was not free, it was brutally rigged.

The securitization of mortgages into collateralized debt obligations turned homes -- the castles of so many average Americans -- into gambling chips, and the fallout mainly hurt those who were not even in on the game. As the *Wall Street Journal* reported in February when Romney was campaigning in Nevada, the primary victims of foreclosure are those who had paid down their home loans, or worse yet owned homes outright, only to find that repossessions on their block destroyed the value of their investment.

The appalling thing is that this enormous mess did not have to happen. It is a manmade disaster, the result of capricious Wall Street bankers who have no regard for the national interest. Perhaps that is to be expected, but what is shocking is the inability of leading politicians of either party to mount a challenge to the unfettered greed that has come to dominate our political process.

In the end, the perpetrators of this calamity have been rewarded, and their patsies, the ordinary folks who are supposed to matter in a democracy, have been cast overboard.

Nom :  
Prénom :

Signature :

Série LV-LV2

INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE

MONDAY, OCTOBER 10, 2011

# Protests spreading across U.S. via social media

NEW YORK

## Occupy Wall Street inspires host of Twitter and Facebook accounts

BY JENNIFER PRESTON

What began as a small group of protesters' expressing their grievances about economic inequities last month in a park in New York City has evolved into an online conversation that is spreading across the United States on social media platforms.

Inspired by the populist message of the group known as Occupy Wall Street, more than 200 Facebook pages and Twitter accounts have sprung up in dozens of cities last week, seeking volunteers for local protests and fostering discussion about the group's concerns.

Some 900 events have been set up on Meetup.com, and blog posts and photographs from all over the United States are popping up on a blog on Tumblr called WeArethe99Percent from people who see themselves as victims of not just a sagging economy but also economic injustice.

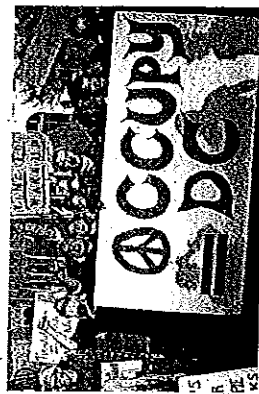
"I don't want to be rich. I don't want to live a lavish lifestyle," wrote a woman on Tumblr, describing herself as a college student worried about her student debt. "I'm worried. I'm scared, thinking about the future shakes me. I hope this works. I really hope this works."

The online conversation was growing at the same time that street protests were taking place in several other cities last week, including Boston, Los Angeles, Chicago and Washington. A Web site, Occupy Together, is trying to aggregate the online conversations and

the off-line activities.

"We are not coordinating anything," said Justin Wedes, 26, a former high school science teacher from Brooklyn, a borough of New York City, who helps manage one of the movement's main Twitter accounts, @OccupyWallStNYC. "It is all grass roots. We are just trying to use it to disseminate information, tell stories, ask for donations and to give people a voice."

To help get the word out about a rally at 3 p.m. Saturday in Washington Square Park, in New York, the group turned to



JOSE LUIS MACANA/AP  
Demonstrators marching in Washington.

its Facebook and Twitter accounts. "If you are one of the 99 percent, this is your meeting," the Facebook invitation said. Nearly 700 people replied on Facebook saying that they would be there.

More than 1,000 demonstrators arrived at Washington Square Park for the rally, many of them after marching from the encampment they had established three weeks earlier in Zuccotti Park, also in New York.

During their march, protesters kept to the sidewalks and out of traffic in a deliberate attempt to prevent arrests. Once at Washington Square Park, they held meetings until the early evening, when the crowd dispersed and protest-

ers made their way back to Zuccotti Park, where they were welcomed with loud cheers.

While people in New York are still dominating the conversation on Twitter, an analysis of Twitter data Friday showed that almost half of the posts had been made in other parts of the United States, primarily in Los Angeles and San Francisco, Chicago and Washington, as well as in Texas, Florida and Oregon, according to Trendrr, a social media analytics firm.

Mark Ghuneim, the founder and chief executive of Trendrr, said the Twitter conversation was producing an average of 10,000 to 15,000 posts an hour Friday about Occupy Wall Street, with most people sharing links from news sites, Tumblr, YouTube and Trendrmap.

The National Air and Space Museum in Washington was closed after demonstrators tried to enter the building with signs.

"This is more of a growing conversation than something massive as we have seen from hurricanes and with people passing away," Mr. Ghuneim said. "The conversation for this has a strong and steady heartbeat that is spreading. We're seeing the national dialogue morph into pockets of local and topic-based conversation."

In Egypt, the Facebook page We Are All Khaled Said was started 10 months before the uprising last January to protest police brutality. The page had more than 400,000 members before it was used to help propel protesters into Tahrir Square. Occupy Wall Street's Facebook page began a few weeks ago and has 138,000 members.

Yet it represents only a sliver of the conversation taking place on Facebook about the group's message. Geographical-ly based Occupy pages on Facebook

have cropped up, reflecting the looseness of the group's organization. These Occupy pages around America are being used not only to echo the issues being discussed in New York about jobs, corporate greed and budget cuts, but also to talk about other problems closer to home.

The center of the movement's media operation is in Zuccotti Park, where several hundred people have been camping since Sept. 17. On Friday morning, the operation consisted of a few tables and chairs clustered around a generator, with a few volunteers editing video, posting updates for the group's social media sites on laptops and staffing the live video feed for a Global Revolution channel on Livestream.com.

On YouTube, at least 10,000 videos tagged "occupy wall street" have been uploaded in the past month. A video showing female protesters being fenced in and sprayed with pepper spray by the police is the most viewed of the protest, according to Matt McLernon, a spokesman for YouTube.

In addition to the videos from New York, Mr. McLernon said, videos have been uploaded from Boston; San Antonio, Texas; St. Louis, Missouri; Seattle; and from Oklahoma and Vermont.

Showing that YouTube can be used by both sides, the New York City Police Department has uploaded its own videos of the protests on YouTube, including some of the demonstration at the Brooklyn Bridge on Oct. 1 that led to 700 arrests.

But the group is not relying exclusively on social media platforms or the Internet to deliver its message. The second edition of The Occupied Wall Street Journal, a four-page broadsheet, was published Saturday.

Al Baker and Anna M. Phillips contributed reporting.

SERIE LANGUES VIVANTES  
ANGLAIS  
ANALYSE LV2 TEXTE HORS  
PROGRAMME

Nom :  
Prénom :

Signature :

Série LV-LV2  
Anglais

8 | WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2011

WORLD NEWS AMERICAS

INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE

# Democrats warily back Wall Street protests

WASHINGTON

BY ERIC LICHTBLAU

Leading Democratic figures, including party fund-raisers and a senior adviser to President Barack Obama, are embracing the spread of the anti-Wall Street protests in a clear sign that members of the Democratic establishment see the movement as a way to align disenchanted Americans with their party.

The senior adviser, David Plouffe, said Tuesday that the president understood the protesters' values while Republicans would undermine them.

"If you're concerned about Wall Street and our financial system," he said in a television interview, "the president is standing on the side of consumers and the middle class, and a lot of these Republicans are basically saying, 'You know what? Let's go back to the same policies that led to the great recession in the first place.'"

But the alignment of Democrats with the eclectic mix of protesters also provides an easy target for critics on the right — especially if protests should turn violent — and the connection makes some Democrats nervous.

The movement continued to grow on Tuesday. Hundreds of students marched in Boston, where more than 100 were arrested just after midnight; a shantytown on the state capitol grounds in Denver doubled in size in a day; and demonstrators in Washington marched from their encampment near the White House to a Senate office building in an attempt, some said, to "shut it down." At least one arrest was reported there.

Protesters in New York, saying they were fighting for the "99 percent" of less wealthy Americans, planned to march past the Manhattan homes of some business figures, including Rupert Murdoch, the head of News Corp.; Jamie Dimon, the chief executive of JPMorgan Chase; and David H. Koch, the oil tycoon and philanthropist, who by some tallies is second in wealth among New Yorkers, after Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg.

The protest movement has the energy and enthusiasm that, if channeled, can give a vital boost in a hard-fought campaign.

But leading Republicans have grown increasingly critical of the protests. Eric Cantor, the House majority leader, called the protesters "a growing mob," and Herman Cain, a Republican presidential candidate, said the protests were



A protester praying in Washington on Tuesday at the Senate Hart Office Building as the Capitol police removed another demonstrator.

the work of "jealous" anti-capitalists. Mitt Romney, who leads in the Republican field, said blaming Wall Street "isn't the right way to go." Some Democrats see the prospect of the protesters' pushing the party dangerously to the left, just as the Tea Party has often pushed Republicans further to the right.

Still, the Center for American Progress, a liberal organization that has been supportive of Mr. Obama, credits the protests with tapping into pent-up anger over a political system that it says rewards the rich over the working class. The center has sought to help coordinate protests in different cities.

Judd Legum, a spokesman for the center, said Democrats are already looking for ways to mobilize protesters in get-out-the-vote drives for 2012. "What attracts an organization like CAP to this movement is the idea that our country's economic policies have been focused on the very top and not on the bulk of America," he said. "That's a message we certainly agree with."

The Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee is circulating a petition seeking 100,000 party supporters to declare that "I stand with the Occupy Wall Street protests."

Mr. Obama has spoken sympathetically of the protests, saying they reflect "the frustration" of many Americans.

"This isn't about any candidate."

Vice President Joseph R. Biden Jr. and Representative Nancy Pelosi, the House Democratic leader, have sounded similar themes.

It is not at all clear whether the leaders of the amorphous movement actually want the support of the Democratic establishment; some of the protesters' complaints are directed at the Obama administration.

"We elected Obama, we had a Democratic Congress, and it did not work," Thom Reges, 26, told Reuters as he sat in McPherson Square, a meeting point in Washington for Occupy DC. "This isn't about any candidate. It's about how things are being run."

Among their grievances, the protesters say they want to see steps taken to ensure that the rich pay a fairer share of their income in taxes, that banks are held accountable for reckless practices and that more attention is paid to finding jobs for the unemployed.

The determinedly non-hierarchical movement offered no official comment on the Democrats' attentions. Regardless, the blessing of senior Democrats holds the potential to give the movement added heft.

The protests also provide yet another bright dividing line between Democrats and Republicans in Washington — one that seems likely to help shape the competing themes of the 2012 presidential election. [C-2]

anglais  
Série LV**The Agony and Ecstasy—and 'Disgrace'—of Steve Jobs**Eric Alterman, *November 9, 2011* | *The Nation*

We live in a media world simultaneously obsessed with technology and personality, and so it was hardly surprising that when Steve Jobs succumbed to cancer, the coverage of his life would focus, alternately, on his incredible accomplishments in the former category together with his apparent shortcomings in the latter. Yes, Jobs was a genius and also an SOB. This is hardly unusual when it comes to geniuses. In Jobs's case, his boorish behavior makes for an interesting biography, courtesy of Walter Isaacson, but it's not really an issue for the rest of us.

Far more significant are the societal roles Jobs played. And here, despite the myriad ways his companies improved our lives, Jobs was a hero only in the Ayn Randian sense. A living, breathing character out of *Atlas Shrugged*, he treated the people who actually manufacture Apple products like serfs and hoarded his \$8.3 billion fortune to no apparent purpose.

Apple is a wonderful company for its customers and investors. So, too, Pixar. (NeXT, not so much...) But Apple is also an engine of misery for its subcontracted Chinese workers. That this story went largely unreported during Jobs's life is a testament to how enthralled our media are by the myth of the man's talismanic qualities, and how easily manipulated most reporters are by wealthy, successful entrepreneurs. But it is also a testament to how little the lives of laborers appear to count anymore. It fell to the monologist Mike Daisey, who created and stars in the brilliant one-man show *The Agony and the Ecstasy of Steve Jobs*, now at the Public Theater in New York City, to force this issue into public consciousness. Daisey traveled to the Foxconn plant in Shenzhen, China, which employs 420,000 people to manufacture products for Apple and other electronics and computer companies, to talk with the workers (unlike the *Wired* magazine reporter who, Daisey scathingly notes, penned a 3,300-word cover story on the plant without speaking to a single worker). Daisey's mission was risky—a photographer was recently beaten up by the company's guards—but he was determined, having heard about abuses at Foxconn. There, thirty-four-hour shifts, beatings, child labor, an epidemic of suicides and a general prison-camp atmosphere prevailed, and even yawning could get your (meager) pay docked. He met one worker whose hand had been "permanently curled into a claw from being smashed in a metal press at Foxconn, where he worked assembling Apple laptops and iPads." When Daisey showed the man his iPad, it was the first time he had ever seen one turned on. He thought it was "magic." [...] Daisey is right when he insists that Steve Jobs was the one man in the world uniquely positioned to change this. Apple's profit margins are immense. The stock could have continued to soar even if the pay and conditions of these workers' lives were built into the cost of an iPhone or an iPad. People would have kept buying the products, and other companies would have been forced to follow suit. But Jobs didn't care. He even instructed Obama that the United States had to behave more like China in the manner in which it encouraged corporations to act free of regulations or concern for their employees and their environment. A second issue raised by Jobs's life and death is all that money he accumulated. When *New York Times* "DealBook" editor Andrew Ross Sorkin wrote a column before Jobs died, wondering why he seemed so stingy with his fortune—noting also that he did away with all the company's charity programs (which were restored after his departure in August)—Sorkin addressed the topic so gingerly, I half thought he feared Jobs would send a thunderbolt from the sky to disable his typing fingers (or possibly curl his arm into a claw). "None of this is meant to judge Mr. Jobs. I have long been a huge admirer of Mr. Jobs and consider him the da Vinci of our time," blah, blah, blah. Even so, right-wing bloggers and pundits evinced outrage that Sorkin even raised the issue. But come now: \$8.3 billion? And add to this that Apple is apparently sitting on an estimated \$76 billion in cash and other investments allegedly residing in a company called Braeburn Capital in Reno, Nevada—a corporation, according to *BusinessWeek*, that Apple created for "the purpose of managing its cash and short-term investments in a tax-advantageous manner" in a state that has no corporate or capital-gains taxes. (Why, after all, should Apple's millionaires and billionaires contribute to the local and statewide public services in Cupertino, California, that make those fortunes possible?) How ironic that the media love to celebrate this alleged icon of '60s idealism at the expense of poor, square Bill Gates, who is devoting the better part of his fortune to improving the lives of millions of the world's poorest people. [...]

NOM :  
SIGNATURE :

LV1 anglais – SH

## Umpire of liberty

### In addition to its polarised Congress, America has a polarised Supreme Court

Mar 31st 2012 | *The Economist*

AT FIRST blush it is magnificent. Behind the neoclassical columns of the Supreme Court this week, the nine supreme justices of a nation of laws—not men, you understand—convened for a solemn hearing of the arguments for and against striking down the most far-reaching social legislation Congress has enacted for decades. A main provision of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, nicknamed “Obamacare”, obliges Americans, on pain of a fine, to buy health insurance. But this, remember, is America. By what right does the federal government impose such a requirement on free people in states with their own administrations? Where does the constitution empower mere legislators to compel citizens to buy something they do not want?

And what better way, when such questions arise, than to entrust the answer to nine upstanding judges, appointed for life and therefore impervious to subornation or political interference? These, moreover, are modest men and women—or so the present chief justice, John Roberts, told the Senate at his appointment hearing in 2005. He had no “agenda” or “platform”, he said. Judges were not politicians, “who can promise to do certain things in exchange for votes”. They were like umpires, applying rules they did not make themselves. It was a vital role, but a limited one: “Nobody ever went to a ball game to see the umpire.”

Such is the conceit that undergirds not only the Supreme Court but also, by extension, the doctrine of the separation of powers upon which the American polity stands. What a pity that it is mostly fiction. These judges are far from being humble umpires applying simple rules. Sometimes they have to work out whether a rule exists at all, and what it means if it does. Nor are they desiccated calculating machines, meting out dispassionate justice uninfluenced by political ideas. Since they are made of flesh and blood, one judge’s “jurisprudence” is another’s “bias”. That is why appointing a sympathetic judge to the Supreme Court for life has long been the surest way for a president to leave a lasting imprint on America.

The judges themselves are often willing accomplices in the politicisation of the court. Consider the retirement in 2010 of Justice John Paul Stevens, at the age of 90. He did not go because he wanted to play more tennis. By all accounts his legal brain remained as sharp as a pin. But by retiring when he did he gave a president he happened to admire a chance to replace him with a like-minded successor. Barack Obama duly did so by appointing Elena Kagan. She joined his previous appointee, Sonia Sotomayor, and two other judges, Stephen Breyer and Ruth Bader Ginsburg, who form the liberal wing of the court. Opposite them on the conservative wing are Antonin Scalia, Clarence Thomas, Samuel Alito and Chief Justice Roberts himself.

Is it fair to apply such crude labels as “liberal” and “conservative” to subtle legal minds whose owners claim to be weighing each case on its merits? Alas, yes. Academic studies confirm that when the court is divided, the liberal or conservative predisposition of the judges is a fair indicator of how their votes will go. Sometimes, admittedly, judges move along the spectrum during their career. Mr Stevens ended up a liberal but was appointed by Gerald Ford, a Republican, at a time when he thought of himself as a Republican too. Although she was appointed by Ronald Reagan, Sandra Day O’Connor, the first woman on the court, turned out to be a more flexible Republican than some conservatives wanted. Her willingness to side with the liberals on social issues made her the court’s swing voter until she retired in 2006.

The swing voter on the present court is Anthony Kennedy, also a Reagan appointee, but one who sometimes votes with the liberal wing, so prompting fans to enthuse about his open mind and critics to grumble about his inconsistency. This flexibility gives him special influence—so much so that Justice Roberts’s court is often called the “Kennedy court”, to reflect the importance of the tie-breaker. How he will vote on Mr Obama’s health-care bill nobody can say, though this has not deterred a flock of pundits from embarking on a feverish dissection of his previous opinions and his questions this week in search of clues. Justice Roberts was wrong to say that nobody ever went to a ball game to see the umpire.

SIGNATURE:

**Those obstructive Brits****A more integrated Europe is heading for a showdown with Britain**Dec 10th 2011 | *The Economist*

THERE was a time, just a few months ago, when David Cameron was the toast of Brussels. Those who fretted about Britain's new Conservative prime minister, a declared Eurosceptic, were surprised by how accommodating he could be. He did not stand in the way of the euro zone's new treaty to create a permanent rescue fund. He even helped to bail out Ireland. But now that yet another treaty change looms, the old resentment of the perfidious Brits is returning. For many European leaders, it is Britain that stands in the way of their attempt to save their currency from catastrophe. It is not the only problem facing them, of course, but as this column went to press Mr Cameron was set for a hard negotiation at a summit on December 8th-9th.

Days earlier in Paris, Nicolas Sarkozy and Angela Merkel, the French president and German chancellor, had all but given Britain an ultimatum: accept their plan to rewrite the laws of the EU, or prompt the 17 members of the euro zone to seek a separate deal and risk British isolation. Mr Cameron said he would veto any treaty that did not contain "safeguards" to protect British interests; if the euro zone wanted a treaty change, so did Britain.

A whiff of Margaret Thatcher and her battles for a budget rebate? The zealots on the Tory backbenches wish it were so. Just as the iron lady wanted her money back, they want Mr Cameron to get some (or all) EU powers back. For them, the prime minister is far too flexible. He has resisted calls for a British referendum. He has said his priority is to find a solution to the euro crisis. And he has given himself lots of room to decide which interests to defend. The EU's lawyers, moreover, have come up with a partial fix so that changes to governance rules will require only a vote by the 27 leaders, rather than a full revision procedure involving a convention, an inter-governmental conference and ratification in all 27 countries (including some referendums).

British officials like this idea (though their parliament would still have to ratify the changes), but the Germans think it does not provide enough powers to impose fiscal discipline. Yet even if a bust-up can be averted, it would only postpone the reckoning. Slowly or quickly, Britain and the euro zone are moving apart.

EU veterans might see this as just another British spat. Initially excluded from the club by Charles de Gaulle, Britain has been equivocal about European integration ever since it joined in 1973. It got its budget rebate, stayed out of the Schengen free-travel area, opted out of the euro, stayed half-out of co-operation on judicial and police affairs and is blocking attempts to create stronger common defence and foreign policies. Its big reason for sticking with the EU is the single market. This is one area where Britain seeks deeper integration, particularly in freeing up services.

But this crisis really is different. Like the churning of milk to make butter, the financial turmoil is separating Britain from the euro zone. As it forces euro-zone countries to bind closer, the crisis convinces Britons of the wisdom of keeping the pound. Some say Britain would grow faster if it could shed more EU rules. Euro-federalists and Eurosceptics alike feel vindicated: monetary union cannot work without economic and political unity. Under pressure from the markets, leaders are having to address what the French call the *finalité politique*, the end point: United Nations, or United States of Europe? Nobody will say. Either way, the euro zone is heading for more federalism, and Britain may try to regain more sovereignty.

Mr Sarkozy, in particular, sees an opportunity to turn the euro zone into an exclusive (and perhaps more protectionist) hard core, dominated by France and Germany. There would be ever more summits of the euro members: during the crisis, he wants them monthly. Germany is more careful about ensuring the involvement of EU bodies and the ten non-euro members. But time and again Mrs Merkel has yielded to Mr Sarkozy on the form of "economic government" to try to win tougher controls on national debt and deficits. Whatever the process, the euro zone will be tempted to tamper with the single market.



December 26, 2011 *The New York Times*

### **How Anger Took Elites by Surprise**

**By CHRYSTIA FREELAND | REUTERS**

**NEW YORK** — 2011 was a good year for protest and a bad year for government. 2012 will be a good year for both if our political leaders can figure out the connection.

Across the globe, this was a year when people took to the streets, often overthrowing their leaders in the process. That was true in the Arab world, in Russia, in India, in Western Europe, in the United States and even in China. And everywhere, this year of mass defiance wrong-footed those who were supposed to be in the know. The experts had thought the Arabs were getting richer and were too scared of their autocrats, that the Russians were apathetic and quite liked their neo-czar, that the Indian middle class was politically disengaged, that West Europeans were too old for outrage, that Americans didn't care about the class divide and that the Chinese comrades were too effective at suppressing dissent. But everywhere, the conventional wisdom was turned upside down by people who turned out to be angrier than their elites had suspected, and better able to channel that dissatisfaction into mass protest and even revolution.

The first surprise was the strength and near universality of the public discontent. Like Tolstoy's unhappy families, the motivations of protesters in each country were unique. But there was a common thread to the uprisings and a common reason why the elites were taken by surprise.

The unifying complaint is crony capitalism. That's a broad term, to be sure, and its bloody Libyan manifestation bears little resemblance to complaints about the Troubled Asset Relief Program in the United States or allegations of corrupt auctions for telecommunications licenses in India. But the notion that the rules of the economic game are rigged to benefit the elites at the expense of the middle class has had remarkable resonance this year around the world and across the political spectrum. Could the failure of the experts to anticipate this anger be connected to the fact that the analysts are usually part of the 1 percent, or at least the 10 percent, at the top?

The second surprise was how easy it has become to transform mass dissatisfaction into mass protest. That was true both in chillingly repressive regimes and in ones where the hurdle to collective action had been thought to be public apathy. The answer to this puzzle is obvious today — the communications revolution, ranging from satellite television to Twitter to camera phones, has made it easier than ever before to organize protests and to keep them going once they start.

What's important to remember in hindsight is that one of the most provocative ideas of late 2010 — published just two months before a Tunisian fruit and vegetable vendor, Mohamed Bouazizi, posted his suicide note on his Facebook Wall, and three months before the Egyptian government blocked Twitter in an effort to muzzle its people — was Malcolm Gladwell's characteristically iconoclastic assertion that, as the subhead to his October New Yorker essay put it, "the revolution will not be tweeted." At least in public, Mr. Gladwell is sticking to his guns, but not too many other people are. In one informed example, consider a recent public interview I conducted with Naguib Sawiris, the Egyptian telecommunications billionaire and liberal politician who backed the Tahrir Square demonstrations.

When I asked him about the Gladwell theory, Mr. Sawiris first wondered, "Is he here in the room? Do I have to be polite?" and then went on to explain his criticism: "He has no clue what this technology has done to my part of the world. Ninety percent of the success of this revolution is attributed to it." The point isn't to mock the brilliant Mr. Gladwell — it is to recall that as late as the autumn of 2010 the impact of the technology revolution on civil society, particularly outside the developed West, was still very much an open question.

SIGNATURE:

DECEMBER 7, 2011 *The New York Times***Intellectuals and Politics***By GARY GUTTING (a professor of philosophy at the University of Notre Dame)*

The rise of Newt Gingrich, Ph.D.— along with the apparent anti-intellectualism of many of the other Republican candidates — has once again raised the question of the role of intellectuals in American politics. In writing about intellectuals, my temptation is to begin by echoing Marianne Moore on poetry: I, too, dislike them. But that would be a lie: all else equal, I really like intellectuals. Besides, I'm an intellectual myself, and their self-deprecation is one thing I really do dislike about many intellectuals.

In his "Republic," Plato put forward the ideal of a state ruled by intellectuals who combined comprehensive theoretical knowledge with the practical capacity for applying it to concrete problems. In reality, no one has theoretical expertise in more than a few specialized subjects, and there is no strong correlation between having such knowledge and being able to use it to resolve complex social and political problems. Even more important, our theoretical knowledge is often highly limited, so that even the best available expert advice may be of little practical value. An experienced and informed non-expert may well have a better sense of these limits than experts strongly invested in their disciplines. This analysis supports the traditional American distrust of intellectuals: they are not in general highly suited for political office.

But it does not support the anti-intellectualism that tolerates or even applauds candidates who disdain or are incapable of serious engagement with intellectuals. Good politicians need not be intellectuals, but they should have intellectual lives. Concretely, they should have an ability and interest in reading the sorts of articles that appear in, for example, *Scientific American*, *The New York Review of Books*, and the science, culture and op-ed sections of major national newspapers — as well as the books discussed in such articles.

It's often said that what our leaders need is common sense, not fancy theories. But common-sense ideas that work in individuals' everyday lives are often useless for dealing with complex problems of society as a whole. For example, it's common sense that government payments to the unemployed will lead to more jobs because those receiving the payments will spend the money, thereby increasing demand, which will lead businesses to hire more workers. But it's also common sense that if people are paid for not working, they will have less incentive to work, which will increase unemployment. The trick is to find the amount of unemployment benefits that will strike the most effective balance between stimulating demand and discouraging employment. This is where our leaders need to talk to economists. Knowing how to talk to economists and other experts is an essential skill of good political leaders. This in turn requires a basic understanding of how experts in various fields think and what they might have to offer for resolving a given problem. Leaders need to be intelligent "consumers" of expert opinions.

Our current electoral campaigns are not very good at determining candidates' understanding of relevant intellectual issues. "Pop quizzes" from interviewers on historical or geographical facts don't tell us much: those who know the answers may still have little grasp of fundamental policy questions, whereas a good grasp can be consistent with a lack of quick factual recall. Nor does reading sophisticated policy speeches that others have written or reciting pre-programmed talking points in interviews or news conferences tell us much about a candidate's knowledge. Even quick-thinking responses in debates may indicate glibness rather than understanding.

The best evidence of how capable candidates are of fruitfully interacting with intellectuals would be to see them doing just this. Concretely, I make the following suggestion for the coming presidential election: Gather small but diverse panels of eminent, politically uncommitted experts on, say, unemployment, the history of the Middle East, and climate science, and have each candidate lead an hour-long televised discussion with each panel. The candidates would not be mere moderators but would be expected to ask questions, probe disagreements, express their own ideas or concerns, and periodically summarize the state of discussion. Such engagements would provide some of the best information possible for judging candidates, while also enormously improving the quality of our political discourse. A utopian fantasy? Very likely — but imagine a race between Barack Obama and Newt Gingrich, two former college professors, and who knows?

May 30, 2012 *The New York Times*

## Markets and Morals

By NICHOLAS D. KRISTOF

Does it bother you that an online casino paid a Utah woman, Kari Smith, who needed money for her son's education, \$10,000 to tattoo its Web site on her forehead? Or that Project Prevention, a charity, pays women with drug or alcohol addictions \$300 cash to get sterilized or undertake long-term contraception? Some 4,100 women have accepted this offer. Michael Sandel, the Harvard political theorist, cites those examples in "What Money Can't Buy," his important and thoughtful new book. He argues that in recent years we have been slipping without much reflection into relying upon markets in ways that undermine the fairness of our society.

That's one of the underlying battles this campaign year. Many Republicans, Mitt Romney included, have a deep faith in the ability of laissez-faire markets to create optimal solutions. There's something to that faith because markets, indeed, tend to be efficient. Pollution taxes are widely accepted as often preferable than rigid regulations on pollutants. It may also make sense to sell advertising on the sides of public buses, perhaps even to sell naming rights to subway stations.

Still, how far do we want to go down this path? Is it right that prisoners in Santa Ana, Calif., can pay \$90 per night for an upgrade to a cleaner, nicer jail cell? Should the United States really sell immigration visas? A \$500,000 investment will buy foreigners the right to immigrate. Should Massachusetts have gone ahead with a proposal to sell naming rights to its state parks? The Boston Globe wondered in 2003 whether Walden Pond might become Wal-Mart Pond. Should strapped towns accept virtually free police cars that come laden with advertising on the sides? Such a deal was negotiated and then ultimately collapsed, but at least one town does sell advertising on its police cars.

"The marketization of everything means that people of affluence and people of modest means lead increasingly separate lives," Sandel writes. "We live and work and shop and play in different places. Our children go to different schools. You might call it the skyboxification of American life. It's not good for democracy, nor is it a satisfying way to live." "Do we want a society where everything is up for sale? Or are there certain moral and civic goods that markets do not honor and money cannot buy?"

This issue goes to the heart of fairness in our country. There has been much discussion recently about economic inequality, but almost no conversation about the way the spread of markets nurtures a broader, systemic inequality. We do, of course, place some boundaries on markets. I can't buy the right to cut off your leg for my amusement. Americans can sell blood, but (perhaps mistakenly) we don't allow markets for kidneys and other organs, even though that would probably save lives.

Wealthy people can, in effect, buy access to the president at a \$40,000-a-plate dinner, but they can't purchase a Medal of Freedom. A major political donor can sometimes buy an ambassadorship, but not to an important country.

Where to draw the lines limiting the role of markets isn't clear to me, but I'm pretty sure that we've already gone too far. I'm offended when governments auction naming rights to public property or sell special access, even if only to fast lanes on a highway or better cells in a jail. It is one thing for Delta Air Lines to have first class and coach. It is quite another for government to offer first class and coach in the essential services that government provides.

Where would this stop? Do we let people pay to get premium police and fire protection? Do we pursue an idea raised by Judge Richard Posner to auction off the right to adopt children?

We already have tremendous inequality in our country: The richest 1 percent of Americans own more wealth than the bottom 90 percent, according to the Economic Policy Institute. But we do still have a measure of equality before the law — equality in our basic dignity — and that should be priceless.

NOM :  
SIGNATURE :

LV1 anglais – SH

August 13, 2011 *The New York Times*

### **A Theory of Everything (Sort of)**

By THOMAS L. FRIEDMAN

LONDON burns. The Arab Spring triggers popular rebellions against autocrats across the Arab world. The Israeli Summer brings 250,000 Israelis into the streets, protesting the lack of affordable housing and the way their country is now dominated by an oligopoly of crony capitalists. From Athens to Barcelona, European town squares are being taken over by young people railing against unemployment and the injustice of yawning income gaps, while the angry Tea Party emerges from nowhere and sets American politics on its head. What's going on here?

There are multiple and different reasons for these explosions, but to the extent they might have a common denominator I think it can be found in one of the slogans of Israel's middle-class uprising: "We are fighting for an accessible future." Across the world, a lot of middle- and lower-middle-class people now feel that the "future" is out of their grasp, and they are letting their leaders know it.

Why now? It starts with the fact that globalization and the information technology revolution have gone to a whole new level. Thanks to cloud computing, robotics, 3G wireless connectivity, Skype, Facebook, Google, LinkedIn, Twitter, the iPad, and cheap Internet-enabled smartphones, the world has gone from connected to hyper-connected. This is the single most important trend in the world today. And it is a critical reason why, to get into the middle class now, you have to study harder, work smarter and adapt quicker than ever before. All this technology and globalization are eliminating more and more "routine" work — the sort of work that once sustained a lot of middle-class lifestyles.

The merger of globalization and I.T. is driving huge productivity gains, especially in recessionary times, where employers are finding it easier, cheaper and more necessary than ever to replace labor with machines, computers, robots and talented foreign workers. It used to be that only cheap foreign manual labor was easily available; now cheap foreign genius is easily available. This explains why corporations are getting richer and middle-skilled workers poorer. Good jobs do exist, but they require more education or technical skills. Unemployment today still remains relatively low for people with college degrees. But to get one of those degrees and to leverage it for a good job requires everyone to raise their game. It's hard.

Think of what *The Times* reported last February: At little Grinnell College in rural Iowa, with 1,600 students, "nearly one of every 10 applicants being considered for the class of 2015 is from China." The article noted that dozens of other American colleges and universities are seeing a similar surge as well. And the article added this fact: Half the "applicants from China this year have perfect scores of 800 on the math portion of the SAT."

Not only does it take more skill to get a good job, but for those who are unable to raise their games, governments no longer can afford generous welfare support or cheap credit to be used to buy a home for nothing down — which created a lot of manual labor in construction and retail. Alas, for the 50 years after World War II, to be a president, mayor, governor or university president meant, more often than not, giving things away to people. Today, it means taking things away from people.

All of this is happening at a time when this same globalization/I.T. revolution enables the globalization of anger, with all of these demonstrations now inspiring each other. Some Israeli protestors carried a sign: "Walk Like an Egyptian." While these social protests — and their flash-mob, criminal mutations like those in London — are not caused by new technologies per se, they are fueled by them.

This globalization/I.T. revolution is also "super-empowering" individuals, enabling them to challenge hierarchies and traditional authority figures — from business to science to government. It is also enabling the creation of powerful minorities and making governing harder and minority rule easier than ever. See dictionary for: "Tea Party."

Surely one of the iconic images of this time is the picture of Egypt's President Hosni Mubarak — for three decades a modern pharaoh — being hauled into court, held in a cage with his two sons and tried for attempting to crush his people's peaceful demonstrations. Every leader and C.E.O. should reflect on that photo. "The power pyramid is being turned upside down," said Yaron Ezrahi, an Israeli political theorist.

December 29, 2011 *The New York Times*

**The Joy of Quiet**  
By PICO IYER

ABOUT a year ago, I flew to Singapore to join the writer Malcolm Gladwell, the fashion designer Marc Ecko and the graphic designer Stefan Sagmeister in addressing a group of advertising people on “Marketing to the Child of Tomorrow.” Soon after I arrived, the chief executive of the agency that had invited us took me aside. What he was most interested in, he began — I braced myself for mention of some next-generation stealth campaign — was stillness. A few months later, I read an interview with the perennially cutting-edge designer Philippe Starck. What allowed him to remain so consistently ahead of the curve? “I never read any magazines or watch TV,” he said, perhaps a little hyperbolically. “Nor do I go to cocktail parties, dinners or anything like that.” He lived outside conventional ideas, he implied, because “I live alone mostly, in the middle of nowhere.”

Around the same time, I noticed that those who part with \$2,285 a night to stay in a cliff-top room at the Post Ranch Inn in Big Sur pay partly for the privilege of *not* having a TV in their rooms; the future of travel, I’m reliably told, lies in “black-hole resorts,” which charge high prices precisely because you can’t get online in their rooms.

Has it really come to this?

In barely one generation we’ve moved from exulting in the time-saving devices that have so expanded our lives to trying to get away from them — often in order to make more time. The more ways we have to connect, the more many of us seem desperate to unplug. Like teenagers, we appear to have gone from knowing nothing about the world to knowing too much all but overnight. Internet rescue camps in South Korea and China try to save kids addicted to the screen. Writer friends of mine pay good money to get the Freedom software that enables them to disable (for up to eight hours) the very Internet connections that seemed so emancipating not long ago. Even Intel (of all companies) experimented in 2007 with conferring four uninterrupted hours of quiet time every Tuesday morning on 300 engineers and managers. (The average office worker today, researchers have found, enjoys no more than three minutes at a time at his or her desk without interruption.) During this period the workers were not allowed to use the phone or send e-mail, but simply had the chance to clear their heads and to hear themselves think. A majority of Intel’s trial group recommended that the policy be extended to others.

The average American spends at least eight and a half hours a day in front of a screen, Nicholas Carr notes in his eye-opening book “The Shallows,” in part because the number of hours American adults spent online doubled between 2005 and 2009 (and the number of hours spent in front of a TV screen, often simultaneously, is also steadily increasing). The average American teenager sends or receives 75 text messages a day, though one girl in Sacramento managed to handle an average of 10,000 every 24 hours for a month. Since luxury, as any economist will tell you, is a function of scarcity, the children of tomorrow, I heard myself tell the marketers in Singapore, will crave nothing more than freedom, if only for a short while, from all the blinking machines, streaming videos and scrolling headlines that leave them feeling empty and too full all at once.

The urgency of slowing down — to find the time and space to think — is nothing new, of course, and wiser souls have always reminded us that the more attention we pay to the moment, the less time and energy we have to place it in some larger context. “Distraction is the only thing that consoles us for our miseries,” the French philosopher Blaise Pascal wrote in the 17th century, “and yet it is itself the greatest of our miseries.” He also famously remarked that all of man’s problems come from his inability to sit quietly in a room alone.

When telegraphs and trains brought in the idea that convenience was more important than content — and speedier means could make up for unimproved ends — Henry David Thoreau reminded us that “the man whose horse trots a mile in a minute does not carry the most important messages.”

SIGNATURE:

### The forgotten workers

Saturday, 3rd December 2011 *The Spectator*

It was a reasonable guess that, once the government had appointed a group of the great and good to investigate the summer riots, somehow we would all have to share the blame. It is a central tenet of liberal Britain that while criminals may share some of the blame for the acts which they perpetrate, they are invariably driven to committing them through the negligence and callousness of the rest of us. Meanwhile, the real problems — those created by an unreformed welfare system — are ignored.

The Riots, Communities and Victims Panel has certainly not let us down on this score. Among the factors it blames for the riots in its interim report published this week is ‘conspicuous consumption’. ‘In our conversations with rioters and young people who did not riot,’ the report asserts, ‘it was clear that brands and appliances are strongly associated with their sense of identity and status.’ In other words: if we want to tackle the causes of the riots we must all stop lusting after that iPad or flashy coat.

Perhaps the panel is aware of a period in British history when people did not want to feather their nests. No matter how rich or poor, humans tend to want to improve their lot. Yes, a group of hardcore thieves targeted specific clothing and electrical shops, from which they emerged carrying armfuls of goods. But to extrapolate from this that the riots were somehow inspired by shopping envy is lazy and wrong.

On the contrary, modern consumer societies can claim to be among the most peaceful ever. For a truly violent society, it is necessary to look for one whose prevailing values are obsessive religious devotion, political ideology or nationalistic identity.

The panel is midway through its report, and one can guess at its final conclusions: we need better sports facilities, youth clubs and drama groups to keep potential rioters off the streets. Certainly the arrival of a ping-pong table never did a community any harm. But rather than fixing on the easy target of consumerism, it should be recognised that it can also be a power for good. As Samuel Johnson wrote: ‘a man is seldom so harmlessly employed as in making money’. But it’s hard to make money if you leave school without basic qualifications — as most of the convicted rioters did.

It is anathema to the panel to focus the blame on our failing education system, or to point out that welfare-dependency in the areas hit by riots was just as high in the boom years. Sadly our government seems equally blind. After losing a battle with the Liberal Democrats, George Osborne has just increased welfare payments by 5.2 per cent for next year. This is twice the rise that the average worker can expect.

Last summer’s riots exposed an urgent problem in Britain’s sink estates, and it’s not a greed for flatscreen TVs — but the broken link between work and reward. The problem is not that people covet new trainers, it’s that so few believe that finding a job and saving money is the best way to further their ambitions. For low-paid workers, watching the unemployed enjoy a rise they can only dream of sends a clear message: they have been forgotten. This is no way to fix a broken society.

Although he did not pay quite as much attention as we had hoped, we are pleased to see that the Chancellor learnt at least some of the important lessons we prepared for him a fortnight ago in our issue entitled: ‘How to Fix Britain’. Mr Osborne fell short of implementing Norman Tebbit’s suggestion that he reduce fuel duty, but he did at least defer the 3.02p increase that was due to take effect in January. He also heeded Allister Heath on the need for an urgent review of planning law and took a line from Dominic Raab (our backbencher of the year) who begged him to defend employers against unfair dismissal claims.

But Osborne has fallen short of our A+ grade. Not because he’s gone too far, as most papers claim, but because he hasn’t been nearly brave enough. As Steve Forbes points out on page 14, radical thinking is needed to save Britain from disaster. His job is not to win a game of political chess against the Labour party, but to redefine politics by changing the terms of debate.

NOM :  
SIGNATURE :

LV1 anglais – SH

Set art free

OWEN MATTHEWS

SATURDAY, 10TH MARCH 2012 *The Spectator*

Let's not waste more millions 'saving' Old Masters

Last week the National Gallery and National Gallery of Scotland proudly announced that they had jointly raised £45 million to buy Titian's 'Diana and Callisto' from the Duke of Sutherland, thereby 'saving it for the nation'. A few days before, Turkey's Ministry of Culture and Tourism announced that it would be blocking export licences for various exhibits due to be displayed at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, the British Museum and the Victoria & Albert Museum. The Turks said they would not release the artifacts until items in UK and US museums excavated in Anatolia during the 19th century were returned to the Turkish state.

What links these two apparently unrelated events is a single, highly questionable principle: cultural nationalism. Nations and institutions will go to enormous lengths to prevent the 'loss' of art and artifacts overseas — and to recover those that have been exported in the past. But why should tens of millions be spent in order that a Titian should hang in a gallery in London or Edinburgh as opposed to, say, the Escorial in Madrid (for which it was originally painted), or a museum in the United States, which would be the most likely buyer on the open market? Or why should the British Museum's exhibition *Hajj: Journey to the Heart of Islam* be derailed in order that a classical stele should stand in Istanbul rather than London?

The usual answer is that the artifacts so dearly bought — or so obstreperously demanded back — represent an inalienable, unique part of the nation's cultural heritage. In the case of the Titian and its pair, 'Diana and Actaeon' (together bought for a total of £95 million, an estimated third of their market value) the argument is that the paintings have inspired generations of British artists ever since they went on public display. Lucian Freud described the pair as 'simply the most beautiful pictures in the world'; William Hazlitt, when he saw the paintings, wrote that 'a new sense came upon me, a new heaven and a new Earth stood before me'.

So British artists and writers liked the Titians. But does that make them a part of British culture — a hundred million pounds' worth of culture? For the sake of comparison, the conversion of Bankside power station into Tate Modern cost £134 million (at 2000 prices). Even in strictly historical terms, the Titians' concrete link to British history is not particularly close — or for that matter, very edifying. The hard-up remains of the French royal family sold the collection that included the two Titians to a dealer in Brussels in 1791. The Third Earl of Bridgewater, of canal fame, bought them on the proceeds of his coalmines (there was much more muck behind the brass of the British aristocracy than they necessarily let on). The time has come to sell again, the fifth time the paintings will have changed hands in as many centuries. [...]

It's important to note that those who have worked to gather the money to buy the Titians meant well, as did the Duke, who has generously forfeited £200 million in profit by keeping the pictures off the open market. So in that sense it's a little unfair to compare the Titian deal to the actions of the Turkish government, which over recent years has made the cause of recovering lost treasures from foreign museums — by blackmail if necessary — a nationalist hobbyhorse.

But both the Turks and the British saviours of the Titians are in the wrong, and for the same reasons. A museum by definition removes artifacts from their original context — a country house, a Hellenistic ruin — and makes them accessible for systematic study and public display. Because art has always followed money, some masterpieces have ended up in odd locations — for instance the great Caravaggio in the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art in Hartford, Connecticut, or Leonardo's 'Lady with an Ermine' in the Princes Czartoryski Museum, Krakow, Poland. But I see no compelling reason that these masterpieces' wanderings should stop in the 21st century — as long as, wherever they are, they remain publicly accessible. And since any sale of the Titians would be by private treaty in any case, the Duke would have been able to pick and choose an art institution over a private buyer, although in practice there are very few private collectors buying Old Masters at that level.

NOM :  
SIGNATURE :

LV1 anglais – SH

## **An acceptable hatred**

Brendan O'Neill, Saturday, 4th February 2012 *The Spectator*

The last politically correct form of prejudice is against football's working-class supporters

There is a brilliant irony to the campaign to 'kick racism out of football': its backers — the commentators and FA suits driving this petit-bourgeois push to clean up footie — think in a similar way and use very similar lingo to the football-terrace racists they claim to hate. Indeed, they have fully appropriated the racial thinking of those dumb blokes who used to hurl bananas at black football players. But they have turned it against white working-class football fans, whom they look upon as childish, inferior, tribal and monkey-like.

Much has been made of recent, allegedly racial clashes on the pitch involving John Terry of Chelsea and Luis Suárez of Liverpool. These incidents are evidence, observers and activists tell us, that the mass sport of football is still riddled with oafish racist attitudes. In truth, as befits a sport in which 30 per cent of professional players are black (putting to shame the diversity targets of every other profession), racism is massively on the wane in Britain's football stadiums. It is incredibly rare today to see a fan making monkey gestures or noises at black players, not least because he'd probably get a slap from one of his fellow fans.

Yet the more racism disappears from British football, the more the PC lobby becomes obsessed with it. That's because it is through accusations of racism against football fans that these people can express, in seemingly nice, liberal terminology, their own loathing of the white mob. Ian Buruma, echoing those bygone fans who viewed black football players as a different breed to 'us', says that football fans are 'primitive and tribal'. Violence is always bubbling under the surface in this popular sport, he says, because it consists largely of 'collective aggression... evoking the days when warriors donned facial paint and jumped up and down in war dances, hollering like apes'. Monkey chants are bad, but comparing ordinary footie fans to apes is OK, apparently.

The view of working-class fans as a peculiar tribe is widespread. A *Telegraph* writer recently slammed the 'tribalism which has blighted English football' and the 'one-eyed outlook of hate-filled fans'. When Liverpool dared to defend its striker Luis Suárez, after he was given an eight-match ban by the Football Association for using racist language, the head of European football's anti-racism body accused it of 'whipping up' 'tribal fervour'. Another key plank of the old racial thinking was that blacks were really overgrown children, less intelligent than us adult whites. This prejudice has also been rehabilitated by the self-styled warriors against racism in modern football. 'The mentality of the football fan is essentially that of a child,' says the *Independent's* Brian Viner. 'Children are unable to tune in to the adult world and the same applies to most football fans.' Others cleave to the view that football fans are worse than childish simpletons — they are animals. A writer for the *Evening Standard* says fans are like 'Pavlov's foaming dogs'. The loathing on display at football matches has become 'part of the fabric of the game', he says. 'The hatred is programmed now.'

The *Guardian's* sometime sports columnist Marina Hyde rails against offensive chanting at football matches with all the censorious vigour that her granddad, the Tory politician Sir Rolf Dudley-Williams, campaigned against smutty TV dramas. She prefers to refer to fans who chant foul things as monkeys rather than dogs, labelling them 'knuckle-dragging cretins'. There it is again — the monkey image, that view of ordinary fans as knuckle-scrappers, hollering like apes or foaming like dogs as they express the tribalistic hatred that has been programmed into them. Behind the liberal veneer, these outbursts against uncouth fans are only a slightly more erudite version of throwing bananas at people you fear and loathe.

The campaigners against racism in football like to fantasise that, to the extent that the old racial hatred has declined in football stadiums, it is thanks to their awareness-raising campaigns. Nonsense. Attitudes changed because the more that working-class people rubbed shoulders with black people, working with them, living with them, cheering the same teams as them, the more they realised that these blokes were actually just like us. Such a breakthrough is impossible between today's snobbish football observers and the white fans they love to hate, because these snobs will never, not in a million years, rub shoulders with those dogs and apes.



# Breaking news: Britain not gripped by crisis

Beyond our shores the sirens of disaster are wailing. But not here. Things could be a lot worse for us at this jubilee



Matthew Parris

**A** jubilee weekend in early June, and it's another classic British summer: cool and overcast, with occasional rain. Ah well, we shall be neither washed away nor roasted alive. The party will proceed and the atmosphere is jolly. The bunting may hang somewhat damply across the streets, royal personages may have to wave and smile a little grimly...

But, Lord, it could be so much worse. No flood, no war, no famine, no pestilence, and the Queen's still on the throne. We do not live in mortal fear of the elements, as they do across much of the planet. The barbarians are not at the gates. In Britain we plough on. We'll survive. We're still here.

How like the state of the economy. How like the state of the nation. How like the political record of this coalition Government itself. Not yet the Apocalypse — or not here, anyway. Things aren't all that brilliant, no; but there is a merciful absence of crisis.

An absence of crisis. Try emboldening that on to a cushion. What kind of war cry is this, you ask? What kind of anthem? "We aim to offer an absence of crisis!" As mission statements go it's a flop.

Yet in the art of public administration the absence of crisis is one of the noblest aims a politician can conceive. It deserves celebrating. The best that can be said of David Cameron's and Nick Clegg's administration so far is at the same time tremendously boring and tremendously important: that the wheels haven't come off and the global emergencies are elsewhere. So far, and

perhaps narrowly, the hurricanes seem to be missing us.

We could be in so much deeper trouble. It's hard for ministers to yell that from the rooftops, but there may be a truth here that ordinary voters grasp at a level that state-of-the-parties snap opinion polls don't plumb.

Fittingly, distantly, subliminally, we do hear the wailing sirens from beyond our shores. But not here.

And isn't that absence some kind of achievement? Greece is tottering, Germany agonising and flunking the test, France shudders, Irish fingers are desperately crossed, the Portuguese hope the witches of the global money market have forgotten about them, and Spain peers horrified into the unknown. All across Europe, governments and peoples face elemental questions about their todays and tomorrows, their currencies, their responsibilities and their destinies.

We do not. Our ministers should take comfort, not sorrow, from the fact that our newspapers strut and our Opposition frets over Cornish pasties.

## Leaders of eurozone nations must dream of pasty tax headlines

and static caravans. News bulletins led by reports from a circus of lawyers and celebrities spitting blood and spitting hairs at an inquiry into — what was it, again? — these are headlines for which the leaders of the eurozone nations would give their eye teeth.

Some of this is luck. Some is hardly achievement. But some of it is, maybe more than you think.

Everything could so easily have tipped the other way if George Osborne and the coalition's leadership had not, from the instant they were asked to form a government, sounded such a firm, clear note on the deficit,

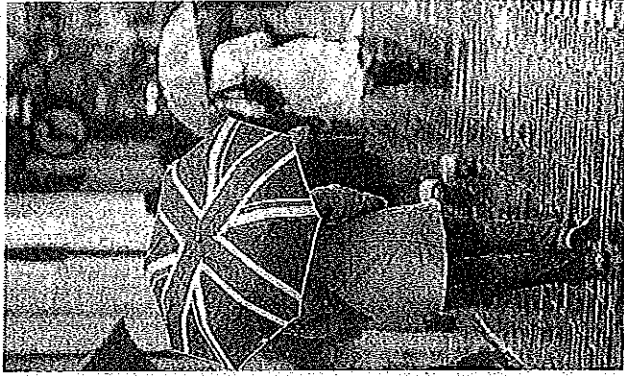
public spending and economic management. The Government's critics like to point out that Britain's underlying economics are not as secure, our debt and deficit position not as healthy, and our public spending not brought as quickly and finally under control as Treasury ministers have persuaded the world to believe. Quite so. In which case, haven't ministers done something remarkable in maintaining international confidence as they have? Isn't that what good politicians are for: to create trust, prevent panic and tide a nation over jittery times?

Imagine that after the last election Gordon Brown had cobbled together a government of dregs, sacking Alistair Darling and making Ed Balls Chancellor. Ruminations about his leadership would have resumed.

Public spending would have drifted — for if the coalition Government, which hates to spend more money, finds it so difficult to keep the lid on, how would Mr Brown and Mr Balls, whose hearts would never have been in the attempt, have done so? A widening rift with the Governor of the Bank of England would have terrified the markets.

One day — not yet — it will become possible to estimate how close Britain came to the edge in 2010. And if we'd tipped, if our Government, which is to say our politics, had lost the confidence of market-makers, if our borrowing costs had grown and a vicious circle of falling confidence and rising bond rates had become entrenched, how would we ever have got out of the spin?

Instead, and somewhat to our surprise, the world now beats a path to our door to lend us money at derisory interest rates: just one of a range of problems we don't have, of emergencies that don't face us, of collapses that don't loom, which adds to a list of negatives that is almost impossible to turn into a stirring speech and yet spells something not far short of rescue for our country.



Today's economic forecast, dull, but remarkably stable by global standards

Our economy is broadly flat and likely to remain so. Disappointing, but remind yourself that there is something worse than a flat economy and in Spain and Greece they know it. Unemployment here remains stubbornly high. Depressing, but look at both the levels and the direction of unemployment in some economies across the Channel. Inflation in Britain remains a bit above target. Irritating, but thank heavens it has proved possible to maintain monetary stimulus without a more alarming price spiral. Put briefly and crudely, Britain's domestic economic weather is dull but remarkably stable; most people have jobs; most jobs seem more or less secure; most people's wages are flat or dipping slightly. And in the world beyond we see economies that are collapsing around people's ears.

We are not living in such interesting times. Others are. Two cheers for that. Meanwhile, outside economics, we have a Government that in two short years has been incredibly productive. They have bitten the bullet on university financing and in schools policy turned an evolution into a revolution. Changes to social welfare, with universal credit, will prove a bigger revolution. A massive Lib Dem-inspired hike in the threshold at which the lower-paid pay tax is an underpraised triumph. An almost untold story is the measured and modest way spending is being curbed, ministers showing steadiness under fire from the proponents both of the axe and the splurge. Almost as a sideline our Armed Forces and diplomats have saved a revolution in Libya and planned an orderly withdrawal from a futile war in Afghanistan.

Oh — and the Prime Minister's cool nerve kept us out of a dodgy Euro-pact, for which brave obstinacy he should take his euro critics' spreading silence as a sort of thank you.

Silences should speak to us more loudly than they do. I suspect David Cameron and Nick Clegg take the satisfaction they should from a very English kind of success: the bad things that haven't happened. From Iceland to Ireland, from Barcelona to Berlin, Britain is in nobody's headlines. As we thrill to the pageantry and patriotism this weekend, and as later this summer we thrill to an Olympics whose organisation never did descend into chaos, a most unthrilling phrase should be traced across the sky: ABSENCE OF CRISIS. It should be traced in plumes of fire.

SIGNATURE:

November 29, 2011 *The New Yorker***The Politics of Dissolution**Posted by *George Packer*

You can't get much further apart on the socio-economic ladder than Peter Thiel and Ray Kachel. The former is a Silicon Valley billionaire entrepreneur, venture capitalist, and hedge-fund manager, with sharply conservative-libertarian views; the latter is, currently, a homeless man in New York City, with left-wing politics and about two dollars to his name. It was coincidence, not the urge to make an obvious point about inequality in America, that landed my Profiles of Thiel and Kachel in successive issues of the magazine. Yet these men have something to do with each other, something beyond the fact that both made a living, in very different capacities, in Web technology. (Thiel, who is something of a technophobe when it comes to digital devices and social media, co-founded PayPal and helped Facebook and other companies get started; Kachel, whose computer hardware and software became his last source of capital before he went broke, and whose main connection to the world is Twitter, was a journeyman video and audio editor in Seattle.) Or that both are pleasant, thoughtful, unafraid interview subjects, easy to converse with over many hours of talk. Or that they both like sci-fi.

Thiel and Kachel embody what could be called the politics of dissolution. In different, almost antithetical ways, they represent a political experience that would have made little sense fifty or sixty years ago. Each in his own way is alienated from the established order. Neither has any faith in traditional American institutions and élites. Thiel isn't part of the corporate establishment, and he's moved away from the Republican party. Kachel has no connections to organized labor; his main political affiliation is his devotion to the Rachel Maddow show. Neither of them puts much store in elections, or conventional politics generally. (For example, the subject of the 2012 Presidential race rarely came up in conversation with either of the two.) Both of them have a fundamental sense that things in America are not working. Both of them entertain fantasies of an alternative polity where things might work better: for Thiel, a floating city-state on the high seas where the long arm of national and international government can't reach (he's the largest supporter of the libertarian Seasteading Institute); for Kachel, a park in lower Manhattan where, for two months, a self-organizing community took root.

Half a century ago, Thiel would have been a Goldwater Republican, a churchgoer, and a paid-up member of a local business group. It wouldn't have occurred to him to launch a fellowship program in order to induce young entrepreneurs to leave college. Education wasn't one more "bubble" back then. Kachel would have been a Kennedy Democrat and perhaps, like his late father, an employee of the city of Seattle, living on a salary that could support a family of four. Neither would likely have felt a strong urge to escape from politics, like Thiel, or to join in the creation of a new community, like Kachel.

But the past few decades have destabilized and eroded the institutional identities that used to bind Americans. The information economy is atomizing; so is the age of cable news and social media. Kachel was so isolated that he turned to Twitter in order to enrich his social life. Last year, I got myself in trouble by questioning the ultimate value of the data flood that pours through our phones. I'm no closer to going on Twitter and Facebook myself, but I have gotten a little soft on social media now that I've followed Kachel around for a few weeks, and seen how sending and downloading tweets keeps him connected to the world. Twitter, Zuccotti Park, Seasteads: some of the improvised communities that have risen up in the rubble of failed institutions. [...]

Something about the turbulence of this age, the deep sense of dissatisfaction with things as they are, prompts people to discard the stale verities and invent new ones. Which, after all, is a very old way to respond to distress in this country. Whatever you think of their ideas and causes, both Thiel and Kachel represent something of the restlessness, the openness to the future, that has gotten America through other troubled times.

## **Inequality in Britain narrowed last year – but only because the rich got poorer**

*The Guardian*, Larry Elliott, 14 June 2012

New data from the Institute for Fiscal Studies showed that everyone became worse off in 2010-11, but that the wealthy lost out more

There was good news and bad news from today's official poverty figures. The good news was that inequality fell sharply so that the gap between rich and poor was at its narrowest since Tony Blair became prime minister in 1997. The bad news is that the reason Britain became more equal in 2010-11 was that the incomes of the top 10% of earners fell more rapidly than the incomes of the lowest 10% of earners. From top to bottom of the income distribution, everybody was worse off as earnings failed to keep pace with inflation.

The analysis of the annual Households Below Average Income data by the Institute for Fiscal Studies is interesting because it shows that rising prices and higher taxes have proved to be a bigger threat to living standards than higher unemployment. In 2010-11, the economy was enjoying the brief and gentle upswing between the deep plunge of 2008-09 and the double-dip recession of late 2011 and early 2012. But the 3.1% drop in median household income was enough to wipe out the entire gains of the previous five years, and was caused by a drop in real earnings as wages failed to keep pace with prices.

That contrasts with the worst years of the recession, when falling inflation meant wages went a bit further and generous increases in state benefits and tax credits boosted household incomes. "The falls in income 2010-11 represent the delayed effect of the recession on living standards," the IFS said. "Therefore while the effects of the recession on average income was not felt immediately, the pain was not avoided for long."

The IFS has two ways of measuring inequality. One is to divide the population up into percentiles and compare the incomes of a better-off person at the 90th percentile with somebody at the 10th percentile (a low income). In 2010-11, the incomes of those at the 10th percentile dropped by 1.1% but those at the 90th percentile fell by 5.1%. The ratio between the 90th and the 10th percentile fell from 4.1% to 3.9%, its lowest level since 1987.

An alternative way to measure inequality is the Gini coefficient, which assesses changes across the entire income distribution. Inequality using this yardstick rose sharply in the UK during the 1980s and continued to increase – albeit more slowly – when Labour came to power in 1997. The Gini coefficient measures inequality on a scale from zero to one, where zero is a society where all incomes are the same and one is where the country's entire income is taken by one person. In 2010-11, the Gini coefficient dropped from 0.36 to 0.34, reversing all the increase in inequality seen since 1997-98, Tony Blair's first year as prime minister.

There are three big conclusions from the HBAI data. The first is that Labour managed to reduce relative child poverty substantially, although by not as much as it planned. The second is that Britain was, on the Gini coefficient measure, as unequal when Labour left power as it had been in 1997 (and a lot more unequal than when the previous Labour government of Jim Callaghan was booted out in 1979). The third is that the squeeze on household incomes, courtesy of a further period of above-target inflation, continued into 2011-12. Historically, real income growth tends to be a key determinant of voting behaviour, and by the IFS's reckoning it will be 2015-16 before median income returns to where it was in 2002-03.

## **Using social media to boost student employability**

***University of Central Lancashire is exploring Twitter and Tumblr use to help students develop job seeking and networking skills***

Gill Swan, *The Guardian*, Monday 18 June 2012 12.18 BST

Universities have a responsibility to equip students to navigate around these channels which are used by employers in the recruitment process. Social media is changing the parameters of how people and organisations interact and operate. Students need to know how to use it not just for jobs, but also to shape their online presence and convey the skills they have with ease. The demand for employees to be digitally literate in business environments is rising. So it is crucial that teaching methodologies evolve and adapt to provide students with digital and social media skills.

In my experience, engaging students in using social media is rare within architectural studies, partly due to the nature and format of the subject. But if utilised appropriately, Twitter can be used to tap into a wealthy resource of professionals online, without demanding too much of their valuable time. This month UCLan developed a social media initiative, 'Twitter critters', in which our BSc architectural technology students could engage with prospective employers by tweeting sketches of their work under the hashtags #twittercritter or #practicereviews.

During the event, a number of industry experts from freelance architects to multi-disciplinary institutions, participated and gave students feedback and advice on their final year degree show. Students reported how the exercise was invaluable in providing them with feedback and ideas on new ways of presenting their work as well as confidence in talking to industry professionals as equals. The event proved so popular that it began on the Friday continued over the weekend into a bank holiday Monday.

We're not the only subject area at UCLan looking to harness the power of social media. For example, human geography undergraduates are using Tumblr to develop an interactive blog, collating impressions of different urban geographies of Preston. They are also linked to Twitter feeds, giving heritage and conservation groups a viable online presence. Higher education professionals interested in such an approach should be clear on how to plan to use the channel. Making students familiar with the channel you intend to use is imperative. It is very easy to assume that students are already digitally literate and familiar, but they are often only familiar with it as a social tool, and not professionally. Developing social media guidelines which outline appropriate language, themes and topics under discussion is important, to set the parameters and groundwork prior to the discussion.

The nature of these events mean they will be streaming live, so there really is little room for any oversights. Raising, establishing and maintaining an engaged professional account is equally important. It simply will not work for students registering an account a week prior to applying for jobs within their chosen profession. I always advise students to treat their account as a dynamic 'plug-in' to their CV. To aid students in this we have developed courses at UCLan, "Brand You" and "On-line Reputation Management" to guide them in to how to navigate around these channels which are used by employers in the recruitment process. Higher education institutions have a responsibility to equip and guide their students with the qualifications and skills to thrive in the digital world. Using social media professionally could boost employability chances in this tough economic climate.

Gill Swan, architect and senior lecturer in Architecture at the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan).

On May 23-24, 1865, the victorious Union armies marched through Washington. The columns of troops stretched back 25 miles. They marched as a single mass, clad in blue, their bayonets pointing skyward.

As Wilfred McClay wrote in his book, "The Masterless," spectators were transfixed and realized that the war had changed them. These troops had gone to war as a coalition of states, with different uniforms in different colors. But they came back as a centralized unit, with a national identity and consciousness.

American history can be seen as a series of centralizing events — the Civil War, World Wars I and II, the Progressive Era, the New Deal and the Great Society.

Many liberals have tended to look at this centralizing process as synonymous with modernization — as inevitable and proper. As problems like inequality get bigger, government has to become more centralized to deal with them. As corporations grow, government has to grow to counterbalance them.

Many conservatives have looked at these inexorable steps toward centralization with growing alarm. Complicated problems, many have argued, are best addressed by local people on the ground. Centralized government inevitably leads to oligarchic government. The virtue of the citizenry depends on local control, personal initiative and intimate connections. These things are being bleached away.

The Obama health care law represents another crucial moment in the move toward centralization. With its state insurance exchanges, Obamacare is not as centralized as a single-payer system. Still, it centralizes authority in at least four ways.

First, while government has always had the power to regulate contracts and business activity, Obamacare compels people to enter into activity so that it can regulate them. This new ability to compel activity opens up vast new powers.

Second, Obamacare centralizes Medicare decisions — and the power of life and death — within an unelected Independent Payment Advisory Board. Fifteen experts are charged with controlling costs from the top down.

Third, Obamacare would continue the centralization of the nation's resources — absorbing an estimated \$1.76 trillion over the next 10 years.

Finally, it would effectively make health care a political responsibility. When you go to a campaign town hall in, say, Britain, you discover that many of the questions are about why somebody's back or dental surgery didn't go well and what the candidate can do to fix it. Once voters assume that national politicians are responsible for their health care, national politicians become more active in running the health system.

So this is a big moment. Obamacare forces us again to have an election about how centralized government should be.

Those of us in the Hamiltonian tradition sit crossways in this debate. Alexander Hamilton was not shy about concentrating power in Washington if he thought centralized authority was necessary to achieve national goals. On the other hand, he did not believe central decision-makers had the ability to direct an infinitely complex and changing world. He centralized goal-setting while decentralizing decision-making.

In that tradition, my own view is that the individual mandate is perfectly acceptable policy. We effectively have a national health care system. We all indirectly pay for ill, uninsured people who show up at emergency rooms. If all Americans are in the same interconnected health care system, I think it's reasonable for government to insist that all Americans participate in the insurance network that is the payment method for that system.

But I think the Obama administration made a disastrous error in centralizing so many of the cost-control elements of the new health care system. I don't care how many comparative effectiveness research studies are commissioned, there is no way centralized dirigistes can keep up with a complex, innovative system. There is no way government can adapt quickly to failure. [...]

*The New York Times*

June 9, 2012

Latino Growth Not Fully Felt at Voting Booth

By ADAM NAGOURNEY

SERIE ECO ET SOCIALES  
ANGLAIS  
ANALYSE ET COMMENTAIRE

Interviews with Latino voters across the country suggested a range of reasons for what has become, over a decade, an entrenched pattern of nonparticipation, ranging from a distrust of government to a fear of what many see as an intimidating effort by law enforcement and political leaders to crack down on immigrants, legal or not.

Here in Denver, Ben Monterosso, the executive director of Mi Familia Vota, or My Family Votes, a national group that helps Latinos become citizens and register to vote, gathered organizers around a table in his office and recited census data demonstrating the lack of Latino participation.

“Our potential at the ballot box is not being maximized,” Mr. Monterosso told them. “The untapped potential is there.”

More than 21 million Latinos will be eligible to vote this November, clustered in pockets from Colorado to Florida, as well as in less obvious states like Illinois, Iowa, North Carolina and Virginia. Yet just over 10 million of them are registered, and even fewer turn out to vote.

In the 2008 presidential election, when a record 10 million Latinos showed up at the polls nationwide, that amounted to just half of the eligible voters. By contrast, 66 percent of eligible whites and 65 percent of eligible blacks voted, according to a study by the Pew Hispanic Center.

That disparity is echoed in swing states across the country. In Nevada, 42 percent of eligible Hispanics are registered, while just 35 percent are registered in Virginia, according to Latino Decisions, which studies Latino voting trends.

Although Latinos do not turn up at the polls in the same numbers, relative to their population, as other ethnic groups, their overall numbers are growing so rapidly that they are nevertheless on the verge of becoming the powerful force in American politics that officials in both parties have long anticipated — an effect that would only be magnified should they somehow begin to match the voting percentages of other ethnic groups.

Mr. Obama's campaign has seized on that as a central part of his re-election strategy, with an early burst of three Spanish-language television advertisements in four swing states, including Colorado, and voter registration drives in Latino neighborhoods.

“Hi, are you registered to vote?” Linda Vargas, 62, called out in English and Spanish to people walking into a public library on the outskirts of Denver as she sat behind a table stacked with voter registration forms.

This segment of the American electorate is by any measure sprawling, with near-explosive population growth in places like California and Texas and growing numbers in swing states like Arizona, Colorado, Florida, Nevada and New Mexico. Their presence in such politically important states has only fed the frustration of Latino organizers over their underrepresentation at the polls.

Matt A. Barreto, an associate professor of political science at the University of Washington and head of Latino Decisions, said the population growth had produced a higher Latino vote in every presidential election over the last decade, a number that had the effect of masking the political apathy of many Latino voters.

“The population growth has driven increases in the Latino vote every year,” he said. “But we still need to confront a registration gap that is quite significant.”

Jim Messina, Mr. Obama's campaign manager, said Latino voters were a critical factor in the president's re-election hopes. “Look, if we do our job right and have a good ground game, I absolutely believe that Latino voters can be one of the big reasons we win this election,” he said.

Officials in Mr. Romney's campaign argued that he would cut into Mr. Obama's Latino support by challenging his record on the economy, and how, they said, it had been particularly harmful to Latinos. Last week, the Romney campaign posted a Spanish-language advertisement on its Web site pointing to rising unemployment among Latinos.

[...]

Posted at 01:39 PM ET, 06/11/2012  
*The Washington Post*  
On Leadership's Post Leadership blog

## Was University of Virginia president Teresa Sullivan paid too much?

By Jena McGregor

The surprising news that University of Virginia president Teresa Sullivan would be stepping down August 15 after just two years in the position has produced a number of responses from faculty, students and even the general public. The Post reports Monday that UVA faculty senate chair George Cohen was "completely surprised" by the departure and that other campus leaders, such as the student body president, were quick to sing her praise.

Readers of the Post's coverage of Sullivan's departure responded with comments ranging from the idea that the university should go private to applause for the Board of Visitors for acting swiftly. But one of the most commonly cited details was her \$680,000 salary. "Why, when students are taking out 3 or 4 lifetimes of debt to attend college, does any college president deserve such lavish pay?" asked one reader. Wrote another: "She was not making that type of money to be buddies with students and faculty. The school wants return on that money."

A particularly high salary, however, does not appear to be a reason for Sullivan's pending departure. In the transcript of remarks Rector Helen Dragas made to the school's VPs and Deans, Dragas seems to indicate that the rift occurred over leadership, strategy and fundraising. Sullivan's leadership was not "bold and proactive" enough, Dagas said, and the school needs "a leader who is able to passionately convey a vision to our community, and effectively obtain gifts and buy-in toward our collective goals." (Presumably, Sullivan was not that leader.) And while Dagas mentions the continued decline of compensation for faculty and staff, this does not appear to be a remark connected to Sullivan's pay.

But was Sullivan paid an exceedingly high amount? In relative terms, no. Certainly, she is paid less than many CEOs who run similarly sized private-sector organizations. And while her pay is above average among her peers — the median total compensation for public university chancellors and presidents was \$421,395 in 2011, according to the Chronicle of Higher Education's recently released pay study — she was not even one of the top 10 compensated chancellors and presidents of public institutions. The president of Ohio State University, E. Gordon Gee, made \$1.99 million in 2011, nearly three times Sullivan's salary. Lee T. Todd Jr., the president of the University of Kentucky, made \$972,106 last year. Even her across-the-state peer, Charles W. Steger, the president of Virginia Tech, made \$738,603.

Meanwhile, the university she has been leading was among the very top. Even if Sullivan had not been the fundraiser or strategic leader the board was looking for (annual giving, the Post reports, is down from \$233 million in fiscal year 2009 to \$216 million in fiscal 2011), the university's academic stature appears to have remained steady. Its annual ranking in US News & World Report still shows it tied for second with UCLA among all public institutions on the "national universities" list, just behind UC-Berkeley. The Post's story reports that the applicant pool has increased substantially, SAT numbers among incoming students are up, and 96 percent of students (also an increased number) hail from the top tenth of their graduating classes.

Yes, the overall pay scale for university administrators may have gotten out of whack (though they are nothing compared to the same schools' athletic coaches). And yes, as leaders of such complex institutions, they will need to also be strategic operators, effective fund raisers and visionary thinkers. But their No. 1 allegiance should be to improving academic excellence. Not enough is known about why Sullivan's tenure was cut short, or what was really behind her and the board's "philosophical difference of opinion," but she does appear to have kept those standards high. It seems to me that the broader question over Sullivan's pay shouldn't be whether or not she was paid too much, but to what extent the leaders of public universities are really compensated for academic excellence.

You are currently viewing the printable version of this article, to return to the normal page, please [click here](#).

# The Washington Times

The Official Newspaper of 2012

## TYRRELL: Whither the Tea Party?

*No longer rallying, movement is burrowing into politics at all levels*

- [Comments \(10\)](#)
- [Share](#)
- [Tweet](#)
- [Email](#)
- [Print](#)
- [MORE](#)
- Text Size: [+](#) / [-](#)
- [0](#)

### SERIE SCIENCES ECO ET SOCIALES ANGLAIS ANALYSE ET COMMENTAIRE

By [R. Emmett Tyrrell Jr.](#)

The Washington Times

Wednesday, April 11, 2012

All is bleak. All is woe. I speak of the Tea Party movement, the movement of 2009 and 2010 that was the hot news story of those years and led to the Republican rout of the Democrats in 2010. Now the Tea Party movement is, according to media reports, in decline.

Was it extremist? Was it racist? Distinguished Americans such as the Revs. Jesse Jackson and Al Sharpton said it was. Yet their evidence kept falling apart when it came under objective scrutiny, as so many of their hoaxes over the years have fallen apart: Tawana Brawley, the 1979-80 Atlanta killings supposedly committed by local cops who spent their leisure hours in the Ku Klux Klan. I cannot think of another couple of hucksters who have adduced so much evidence of heinous behavior by the American majority only to have the evidence go poof! The Tea Party movement is neither extremist nor racist. In fact, it is what Americans look like when they suddenly become alive to politics: somewhat amateurish, terrifically enthusiastic and eventually quite serious about practicing the political arts at the local level, in Madison, Wis.; Waco, Texas; and Tucson, Ariz. - all locales far, far away from Washington, D.C. But I have reason to suspect that the Tea Partiers may return to the nation's capital after the November elections. Read on.

The Washington Post related an interesting finding in another dolorous story with hints of an obituary about the Tea Partiers. According to a Washington Post/ABC News Poll, 44 percent of the American people supported the Tea Partiers, 43 percent opposed them. I saw polls like that going back to 2009. The intensity of feeling against them augurs ill for the Tea Partiers, but that does not tell us much. The newness and controversial nature of the Tea Party movement has passed. Its members are not in the news much today. There are other stories making headlines. The 44 percent-43 percent divide among Americans remains, though the Tea Partiers get few headlines. Why?



Ned Ryun, founder and president of American Majority, a nuts-and-bolts training operation with its roots deep in the Tea Party movement, says the movement is pretty much beyond the mass-demonstration stage in development and has gone local. Its members are learning the art of politics and running for the school board, city council and state and national office. They are trying to replace people whom they perceive as tired old hands, such as 80-year-old Sen. Richard G. Lugar in Indiana, with younger, more vigorous candidates for office. They are learning to play politics seriously, and their goal is reform: balance budgets, eliminate debt and return to the Constitution.

One of the oddest twists to the Tea Party story is the comparison with the Occupy movement. Some utterly ideologized observers of the political scene view the often deranged, clearly in decline Occupiers as members of a left-wing equivalent of the Tea Party movement, and they see these pathetic waifs as somehow auspicious - the 2012 equivalent of the civil rights movement or the peace movement of yore. Yet the Occupiers make hardly any effort at engaging in politics at the local level. Mr. Ryun says his people are, and he has an active training program around the country to prove it.

He has been crisscrossing the country in recent years, running seminars and other training sessions. They do not attract a lot of attention in the press, as demonstrations and other protest actions do, but they matter more. They can effect real change in politics. The American Majority has trained more than 20,000 recruits as activists and candidates. In the past two to three years, American Majority has held 570 training sessions across America on how to be effective politically both in government operations and in running for office. From those 570 sessions have come approximately 2,000 candidates.

So maybe we ought not write off the Tea Party movement just now. The Tea Partyers are not getting the press the Occupiers are with their Defecate for Peace movements and their public masturbation, but the Tea Partyers are aiming at office in November.

*R. Emmett Tyrrell Jr. is founder and editor-in-chief of the American Spectator and an adjunct scholar at the Hudson Institute. He is author of the forthcoming "The Death of Liberalism" (Thomas Nelson).*

## **Elitism and English universities**

# **University challenged**

The Economist, Apr 16th 2012, 11:14 by A.G. | CAMBRIDGE

"BREAK, break, break," implores Zeynab, "On thy cold gray stones, O Sea!" The dozen or so inner-city teenagers grouped in the classroom scribble notes as she and a second Muslim girl critique Alfred Tennyson's 1835 elegy to his late friend Arthur Hallam. It is the Easter holiday but these 17-year-olds are in a lecture theatre at the University of Cambridge, attending a voluntary four-day programme that aims to boost their chances of entering higher education. Although just 7% of British schoolchildren are privately educated, 41% of British undergraduates at the University of Cambridge come from independent schools. Direct discrimination is not to blame: privately educated pupils do better in exams than their state-educated counterparts. Some 37% of youngsters who gain three "A" grades or higher at A-level, the university-entrance exams sat mostly at the age of 18, attend independent schools, says Geoff Parks of the University of Cambridge. Moreover such pupils are more likely to take the demanding subjects required by the most competitive institutions.

Independently educated pupils are also more likely to apply to selective universities, according to research conducted by the Sutton Trust, a charity that seeks to enhance social mobility through education. And even when state school students do seek entry they tend to be poorly advised. Many go for ultra-competitive subjects such as medicine and law, and neglect to consider Anglo-Saxon poetry as a means to gain entry to an elite institution. Once these factors are accounted for, the University of Cambridge takes almost exactly the expected numbers of state-school students, reckons Mr Parks. Zeynab and her cohort have spent the past three days at Corpus Christi College. Her father was initially reluctant to let her spend nights away from home, she says, but once he understood the opportunity on offer he rescinded. It is a far cry from their usual gritty inner city surroundings: the youngsters dine in the college's new gothic dining hall hung with William Morris plates and portraits of former masters. During the day they learn more about the subjects they are studying at school, as well as top tips on applying for university. Undergraduates who attended the schools in previous years are on hand to offer advice.

Zeynab's enthusiasm for her subject is obvious: she and her partner keep interrupting one another with further thoughts about the poem they have read. Sophie Read, an outreach officer in the university's English department teasingly tells them to stop talking about Tennyson. Afterwards they ask her what they could have done to improve their presentation. Encouraging students like Zeynab to go to university is crucial to the coalition government's credibility. In December 2010 Parliament voted to allow English universities to charge up to £9,000 (\$14,500) a year in tuition fees, in direct violation of promises made by the Liberal Democrats prior to the general election.

From September most English universities will do so. Keen to ensure that such sums do not discourage youngsters from poor families from higher education, the government has coerced colleges into offering scholarships and bursaries. There is precious little evidence to indicate that such schemes are effective. But aspiration-raising Easter and summer schools for disadvantaged children, run in this case in collaboration with Teach First, which aims to improve teaching in poor neighbourhoods, seem to work. Half of those who attend a residential school at Cambridge go on to apply to the university, and a quarter of those who apply get in.

## Sweetened charity

### **The idea that the state should subsidise giving to good causes is resilient, but not easily justified**

*The Economist*, Jun 9th 2012 | LONDON AND NEW YORK | from the print edition

"IT MUST be borne in mind," Britain's chancellor of the exchequer told the House of Commons in his budget speech, "that in every case exemption means a relief to A at the charge of B." This was, indeed, the heart of his case for taking away a tax break that benefited charities. "It is not fair", he went on, to impose the cost of the exemption, in the form of higher taxes, on "the fathers of families, men labouring to support their wives and children." This was all the more important because the gifts encouraged by the exemption were largely designed to bring a wealthy donor "credit and notoriety" which "otherwise he might not have enjoyed."

William Gladstone failed in this attempt to end the exemption of charities from income tax in 1863. He would not have been surprised when his successor, George Osborne, last week backed down on a more modest attempt towards the same ends. In his March budget Mr Osborne proposed a cap on the sum that rich people can deduct from their taxes thanks to their charitable donations, framing it as part of a strategy to crack down on wealthy tax dodgers. Britain's charities took up their cudgels, arguing that reducing the tax break would diminish donations and thus their ability to do good works. Charities are, by and large, more popular than chancellors. On this occasion, they protected their privileges, as they did in the 1860s (when, though the *Times* thundered at Gladstone for his "perverse boldness", *The Economist* approved of his plan)

But the British government is not the only one that charities have to worry about. In America historically generous tax incentives to donation are being questioned in a way not seen before. "I'm expecting a big fight in Congress over charitable deductions and over the definition of charity. I'm very concerned," says Diana Aviv, the head of Independent Sector, an American trade association for charities. President Barack Obama has made a number of attempts to limit the amount of giving that the rich can deduct from their taxable income. And Ms Aviv says state and local governments are going further than that in attacking charitable tax breaks. There has been a sharp rise in demands from charities for so-called PILOTS (payments in lieu of taxes), which involve local governments threatening to withhold certain services from charities unless they "volunteer" to pay something into the government coffers (as they do, increasingly). According to the Lincoln Institute, a think-tank, such schemes have been introduced by municipal or other governments in at least 18 states.

In Europe some countries in which generous state provision of services has been the norm, such as Sweden, have recently begun to experiment with tax incentives to boost the charitable sector. But this change, and established tax incentives elsewhere, may be under threat, according to Luc Tayart de Borms, who runs the King Baudouin Foundation in Belgium. "There is a danger that populist politicians across Europe will look at what is happening in Britain and say, if even the British are going after charitable tax breaks for the rich, why don't we?" In France there has been discussion of confining tax breaks, which can be quite generous, to charities that spend the money they receive inside the country. In hard times, it is not surprising that exchequers take an interest in such things. In Britain the Treasury estimates the total cost to the state of the various tax breaks to donors and charities will be £3.64 billion (\$5.5 billion) this tax year; in America the Treasury estimates that the total cost to the federal government in 2012 of charitable tax breaks will be \$39.6 billion, rising to \$51.6 billion in 2014. But that is not the only reason reform should be up for debate. The basic question posed by Gladstone remains: why should taxpayer B face a bigger tax bill because taxpayer A chooses to give to charity?

**Schools reform**

## **The ties that bind**

*The Economist*, Mar 28th 2012, 15:11 by A.G. | LONDON

ALMOST two years after the Conservatives became the dominant force in the coalition government, schools reform has raced ahead of even the party's own expectations. Some 1,635 schools in England have become academies free from the stranglehold of local authorities, with control over their budgets, the pay and working hours of teachers and what they teach. Two dozen free schools established by parents, teachers and charities have joined them, and 70 more are due to open in the autumn. Alas for England's schoolchildren, such structural reforms have so far failed to promote the innovation needed to boost standards in the classroom.

The reasons are depressingly familiar, according to a study published on March 28th by the Schools Network, which counts 5,500 schools in its membership, and Reform, a think tank that supports public-sector reorganisation. They reckon that the powerful teachers' unions entrench the interests of staff above those of pupils.

Six in ten academy heads said that national agreement on pay and conditions have prevented them from paying effective teachers more or extending the school day to give weaker pupils extra tuition, the survey found. When the education secretary, Michael Gove, drafted plans to devolve power to individual schools, he hoped to chip away at such conventions, and thereby enfeeble the powerful unions. Yet the unions are as uppity as ever: on March 28th the National Union of Teachers staged a strike in London in protest at pension changes that cancelled classes in the capital's schools.

It is not just the unions that stifle innovation: central government is also to blame. In order to discourage schools from entering youngsters for easy-to-pass exams, Mr Gove judges schools by the proportion of pupils who pass school-leaving exams in five traditional subjects. Mindful of their league table rankings, schools were quick to toe the line. A third of pupils are expected to enter such exams this summer, rising to half next year. And schools are loth to deviate too far from the national curriculum, not least because pupils need to pass similar exams.

Many parents seem to prefer a quiet life to an aspirational one. Despite evidence that children forget much of their schooling during the long summer break—and the high cost of holidays outside term-time—there would appear to be little appetite for change. School heads said parents with children at more than one school would be unhappy if they tinkered with timings of the school year. All of which makes for an unhappy prospect for education reform. Pupils do better in wealthy countries in which schools exercise autonomy than in those in which teaching is tightly prescribed, according to studies by McKinsey, a consultancy, and the OECD, a think tank. Yet autonomy would appear to be a necessary but insufficient condition for improvement. As the performance of schoolchildren in other countries outstrips any gains seen in Britain, the nation needs to flex its educational muscles and raise its game.

The British monarchy

## What the Diamond Jubilee says about Britain

*The Economist*, May 24th 2012, 16:24 by Bagehot

QUEEN Elizabeth's Diamond Jubilee celebrations are just over a week away. My print column this week ponders what royal jubilees reveal about Britain. BEFORE Queen Elizabeth's Silver Jubilee in 1977, the villagers of West Hoathly in Sussex were placed under secret observation. A file was drawn up, noting their views on the monarchy, the country and the impending celebrations. The royal family was marvellous but these festivities had better not cost too much, said one villager, recorded as "Nurse, female, 50", explaining: "People are not in the mood." West Hoathly was reliably monarchist, the file records, with anti-republican sentiment boosted by recent American elections ("Fancy having Jimmy Carter," a villager shuddered). But still its Jubilee enthusiasts sounded a bit bleak. We're due a celebration, said "Male, 53"—we've made it to 1977 without a nuclear war. The files were commissioned by Mass Observation, a private social-research project that has studied the British since the 1930s. In all, 107 volunteers were recruited to record the Silver Jubilee. Their diaries and notes, together with complementary files on the 2002 Golden Jubilee, now form part of a vast archive held at Sussex University. On the eve of Queen Elizabeth's Diamond Jubilee—to be marked from June 2nd to 5th—the archives offer a remarkably evocative glimpse of the recent past.

The 1977 files describe a country that was tired and riven by industrial conflict. Its people talked of feeling a bit lost, and yet—from a distance of 35 years—they seem enviably grounded in a shared culture with deep roots. There was striking uniformity to their celebrations. Invited to have fun, people first grumbled then formed committees. It is remembered that at previous royal jubilees children were given commemorative mugs, prompting endless rows about paying for them. "The Vicar! He needs grinding up afresh, that one," fumed a farmer's wife in north Wiltshire, on learning that her Women's Institute branch must buy mugs. "Not that I'm criticising him, of course," she added hastily.

Celebrations in 1977 involved children's food—sausage rolls and jelly, hot dogs and ice cream—and beer for the grown-ups. There were violent sporting contests, from tugs-of-war to free-form football matches. To conquer reserve, fancy dress was worn, often involving men in women's clothing. From the West Midlands came news of an all-transvestite football game, with the laconic annotation: "all ended up in the canal." London displayed both patriotic zeal (flag-draped pubs in Brick Lane, big street parties in Muswell Hill) and hostility (cheerless housing estates, slogans declaring "Stuff the Jubilee"). Scotland was a nation apart. A file reports "total apathy" in Croy. In Glasgow the anniversary was called "an English jubilee". Snobs sneered along with Scots. At Eton College, a wooden Jubilee pyramid was smashed by old boys. At Oxford University, examinations were held on Jubilee Day, in a display of indifference. The Silver Jubilee is not really about the monarchy, asserts a file from south Wiltshire: the day is about "people wanting a bit of fun". A report from Wimbotsham in Norfolk, close to a royal estate at Sandringham, stands out for its focus on the queen's 25 years on the throne. Locals held a service on the village green, praying for the monarch in "happy togetherness" under dripping umbrellas before a tug-of-war, races and tea for 700.

By 2002 and the Golden Jubilee, Britain comes across as a busier, lonelier, more cynical place. The royal family was "just showbiz", sniffed a diarist from Sussex. There is angry talk of Princess Diana and how her 1997 death was mishandled by the queen. There are fewer street parties than in 1977, all agree. This is variously blamed on apathy, the authorities (whose job it is to organise events, apparently) and above all on health-and-safety rules. In 1977, in contrast, one Wiltshire village cheerfully let a "pyromaniac" doctor take Jubilee fireworks home to add extra bangs. The 2012 Jubilee finds Britain changed again. Diamond jubilees being rare (the last was achieved by Queen Victoria in 1897), the queen is firmly at the centre of the celebrations. Local councils have received more than 8,000 applications to close roads for street parties, suggesting that 2002's passivity is fading. The country is not returning to 1977 and its home-made fancy-dress costumes or Coronation bunting dug out of attics. Today's shops heave with Jubilee cakes, disposable decorations and flag-embazoned baubles, letting consumers buy patriotism out of a box.

## **The Conservative Party and ethnic minority voters**

# **David Cameron's race problem**

*The Economist*, Mar 1st 2012, 17:36 by Bagehot

MY PRINT column this week reports on intensive efforts underway within the Conservative Party to understand Britain's black and Asian electors better, and to learn why so few were willing to vote Tory at the last general election. After failing to win the 2010 general election, Conservative leaders came to a sobering conclusion. To win majorities in future, the party needs more MPs like Paul Uppal—a state-educated Sikh entrepreneur who cut across class and ethnic lines to snatch the seat of Wolverhampton South West from Labour.

Mr Uppal only half-agrees. Addressing an away-day for Tory MPs on February 24th, he reported a perception among ethnic minorities that Conservatives are “disengaged” from their concerns. A dapper, clean-shaven figure, Mr Uppal drew their attention to Canada, where a namesake, Tim Uppal, is a Conservative minister, resplendent in a bushy black beard and turban. Our party has a way to go, he declared, looking forward to the day when that style of Uppal speaks for a British Tory government. The line was warmly received, but was, for all that, a rebuke.

The recapture of Wolverhampton South West had historical resonance. A mix of suburbs and increasingly Asian urban districts, the constituency spent decades in Tory hands. Between 1950 and 1974 it was held by Enoch Powell, a cerebral right-winger whose jeremiads against immigration gave comfort to many, less cerebral, opponents of racial mixing. It was one of scores of urban seats that fell to Labour in the 1997 Blair landslide, forcing the Tories back into leafier heartlands. So Mr Uppal's 2010 victory mattered. But it was narrow, by 691 votes. It was also rare.

There are now 11 black or Asian Tories in the House of Commons. Yet many occupy safe, largely white seats. Nationally, perhaps half a dozen Conservative MPs represent seats with sizeable ethnic-minority votes. Mr Uppal stands out as a non-white Tory MP with lots of non-white voters.

In Downing Street, that causes alarm. Aides have lists of urban or semi-urban seats that they think must be won to secure a majority. In many, the ethnic-minority vote is increasing. Yet “the number-one driver of not voting Conservative is not being white,” says a senior figure. It is an “existential” problem.

Last autumn the Runnymede Trust, a research body, published the largest-ever survey of British voting by ethnic background. In 2010, this showed, only 16% of ethnic minorities voted Conservative, compared with 37% of whites. Mr Cameron's party did best among voters with Indian roots, of whom one in four voted Tory. It did best of all among Asians such as Mr Uppal whose families fled persecution in east Africa four decades ago.

But overall, Labour enjoyed a crushing dominance among ethnic-minority voters—even among British blacks and Asians whose affluence, or robust views on crime and public spending, might make them natural Conservative voters. Or even their views on immigration: in Tory-sponsored focus groups, researchers find minority voters frankly ferocious towards asylum seekers on benefits or eastern Europeans “stealing British jobs”.

Family migration

## Sons and lovers

### Bit by bit, Britain is closing its borders to immigrants

*The Economist*, Jun 16th 2012 | from the print edition

THE final skirmish in the Conservative-led coalition's assault on immigration has begun at last. Fulfilling a pre-election pledge to reduce the annual net inflow from over 200,000 to the "tens of thousands" has been a challenge, given that almost a third of incomers are entitled to move freely within Europe. But new measures have already made it harder for non-EU citizens to work or study in Britain. Now "family reunification"—the third main route into Britain, accounting for 18% of the non-EU total in 2010—is under fire.

On June 11th Theresa May, the home secretary, set out changes that will take effect, in the main, on July 9th. Most controversially, a settled resident will have to show annual income of £18,600 (\$28,900) to bring a spouse into the country, more if there are children. Until now a couple has needed just £5,500 plus housing costs. The aim, says Mrs May, is to ensure that newcomers can participate fully in British life, and that they are not a charge on the taxpayer. Another aim must be to win votes: Britons worry more than most about immigration. The changes will take Britain from ranking near the middle of European and Northern American countries in 2007 on friendliness to family unification to perhaps 27th of 31 countries, says Thomas Huddleston of Migration Policy Group, a think-tank in Brussels. The income requirement alone is off the scale. The independent Migration Advisory Committee came up with the earnings threshold when asked by the government to calculate the minimum needed to avoid recourse to public funds. But £18,600 is half again as much as someone would make working 40 hours a week, 52 weeks a year, at the minimum wage. According to the Migration Observatory at Oxford University, 47% of British citizens in employment would not qualify to bring in a family member, nor would 58% of people 20-30 years old, or 61% of women of any age.

For Keith Vaz, MP for ethnically mixed Leicester East, the changes are an attack on British Asians, accustomed to marrying in their country of origin. Chris Mead, who set up a blog on family-migration woes after jumping through hoops to get his New Zealand-born wife into Britain, says they threaten "British citizens' right to have a family, or at least qualify it severely". It is precisely that right to a family life, protected by Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights, that Mrs May wants to pin down. People often claim the right to enter or remain in Britain, even when immigration rules say otherwise, on the ground that they have family ties there—prisoners protesting deportation, for example, or undocumented migrants. She thinks British courts are too apt to let them. The right to family life is not absolute (unlike the right not to be tortured) but may yield in the public interest, including safety and economic well-being. The rewritten family-immigration rules will include a definition of the conditions in which Article 8 will be deemed to apply, in an attempt to guide judicial thinking.

Will these changes stick? Many think not. "Until primary legislation says otherwise, it is for the courts to decide on the interpretation of Article 8," says Adam Wagner, a barrister at One Crown Office Row chambers. It is likely that Mrs May's measures will be tested in court, with unpredictable outcomes. In October 2011 the Supreme Court struck down a new rule that sponsors and spouses must be 21 years old for the foreigner to be allowed in. But in December 2011 the High Court upheld the requirement that a foreign spouse learn basic English before joining his better half. And in April 2012 the European Court of Human Rights said Britain could deport a prisoner with four drugs convictions, despite his claim to have been in the country from the age of three. You never know.

Health and safety

## Health and safety madness: a menace with ancient British roots

*The Economist*, Feb 27th 2012, 12:12 by Bagehot

IN JERSEY last week, interviewing some of the Island's two hundred or so honorary (ie, unpaid) elected police, I asked a senior officer if he thought this ancient system would survive much longer. There are already worrying signs of a shortfall in recruitment, especially in the busiest volunteer force which operates in the capital St Helier.

I tell you what the greatest threat is, he said, as we whizzed down manicured country lanes in his private car: it is health and safety rules, and quibbling insurance companies. For instance, this is a police car if needs be, he explained, showing me a reflective police sign tucked behind the sun visor. There's also a blue light in here somewhere, he added, as we wound between a neat field of daffodils (for the French market, just 14 miles to the east [*corrected in response to comment below*]) and Jersey Royal potatoes (for supermarkets on the British mainland, further to the north). What if one of my officers is using his car for a job and it gets trashed? Now, Jersey insurance companies seem to be understanding for the moment, he said. But bigger firms might not always be. Then there are the problems of training and kit, and trying to avoid liability. We do a lot of training, but what if someone gets blasted in the chest with a shotgun?

Well, surely once you volunteer to be a police officer, you are signing up to a degree of risk, I asked? My host, who moved to the Channel Islands from Britain many years ago, said: well, yes, but there used to be an attitude here of, well it will never happen, this is Jersey. I find myself always being the one asking, have you thought of this, what about that? Sometimes I hate myself for asking these questions, he confided. But they cannot be avoided.

Back in Britain, the *Mail on Sunday* ran an interesting feature this weekend about a different example of what certainly sounded like a health and safety overreaction. It told the tale of a man who drowned in a shallow boating pond in his local park, after suffering an epileptic seizure while feeding swans. A passer-by (a woman who was in charge of a small child so did not dare enter the pond) called the emergency services. But the first firemen to show up announced that they only had Level One training, for ankle-deep water, and needed to wait for a specialist team with Level Two training for chest-deep water. By the time that team arrived, the man had been floating in the pond for 37 minutes. While waiting for that specialist help, the same firemen also strongly urged a policeman not to attempt a rescue in the pond, even refusing to lend the policeman a life-vest. Then the policeman's control room told him not to enter the water, as the victim had been in the pond so long that it was a body retrieval mission, not a rescue. The *MoS*, which sent its reporter out into the same pond equipped with no more than rubber waders, called it a story that "shames Britain". Certainly its photograph of the eventual retrieval of the poor victim's body, featuring 25 separate emergency workers, an inflatable tent, several fire engines and a helicopter, is suggestive of an over-reaction after an under-reaction.

It is tempting to conclude that Britain has fallen into a serious problem with regulation, red tape and crippling risk-aversion. Certainly, the newspapers have recently been filled with all manner of depressing stories about pancake races being cancelled, policemen being urged not to pursue criminals onto roof tops, party bunting being outlawed or council workers refusing to mount shoulder-height step ladders to fix broken signs without logistical back-up once reserved for the cleaning of the Sistine Chapel ceiling.



## Gay marriage

# The trouble with tolerance

## Allowing same-sex marriage is proving harder than David Cameron expected

*The Economist*, Jun 2nd 2012 | from the print edition

"I DON'T support gay marriage despite being a Conservative," David Cameron told the Tory Party conference last year. "I support gay marriage because I'm a Conservative." The prime minister had a point: the right value stable homes and emotional commitment as much as the left prize equality. Allowing same-sex couples to marry also seemed typically British in its incrementalism: they had gained the right to enter civil partnerships in 2005.

There was a political rationale for the Conservatives, too. Since becoming leader, Mr Cameron has sought to broaden the party's appeal by softening its hard-faced image. Liberalising the Tory line on gay rights—the party had previously supported Section 28, a law which made it hard for schools to teach pupils about homosexuality—was part of his strategy. The fact that the Conservative party conference cheered his words on gay marriage suggested that the grassroots had caught up. The most electorally successful Tory in the country is Boris Johnson, London's mayor, who has banned anti-gay advertisements on the city's buses.

Yet the road towards same-sex marriage has become less smooth in recent months. Churches have deplored the idea on moral grounds and public opinion on the issue is muddier than the government had bargained for. A Populus poll in March showed that 65% supported gay marriage, but a ComRes poll the previous month revealed that 70% believed marriage should continue to be defined as a lifelong commitment between a man and a woman. Phrasing clearly matters.

MPs report that constituents who support gay marriage are not demonstrative about it, whereas opponents campaign assiduously. Even some of the most liberal backbench Tories now fear Mr Cameron's stand is losing more votes than it is winning. And causing plenty of trouble internally: Owen Paterson, the right-wing Northern Ireland secretary, has let it be known that he opposes the reform.

On May 24<sup>th</sup>, Downing Street said that gay marriage would be subject to a free vote in the House of Commons, meaning Tories would not be obliged to support it. Although this was not an explicit U-turn—and the support of Labour MPs should ensure the legislation passes—Mr Cameron had been widely expected to whip his MPs to back the legislation. His decision not to do so is being portrayed as yet another retreat from a prime minister who buckles under pressure. Nick Clegg, the Liberal Democrat deputy prime minister, also disparages the idea of a Parliamentary "free-for-all".

The issue of gay marriage has not only crystallised concerns about Mr Cameron's firmness as a leader. It has also revived criticism of his broad strategy. Critics wonder whether he ever really understood why the Tories were so unpopular. Ordinary voters in swing seats such as Bolton West and Birmingham Edgbaston did not object to the party's cultural views—or its indifference to greenery, its authoritarianism, or many of the other things Mr Cameron sought to change. Rather, they doubted the Tories were on the side of working people when it came to bread-and-butter issues such as living standards and public services. In Tory focus groups, members of the public are asked to draw an image they associate with the party. The most common picture is of a rich family posing in front of a big house. Gay marriage will be one of Mr Cameron's nobler reforms. It will not solve his party's image problem.

## Diaspora politics

# Spit and polish

## East European migrants are numerous, but not always popular

*The Economist*, Jun 16th 2012 | from the print edition

A MILLION? Maybe more. The single labour market inside the European Union means that nobody knows how many Poles, Slovaks and others have moved to Britain from the eight ex-communist countries that joined it in 2004. A study by Robin and Kinga Goodwin of Brunel University reckons that Poles are the third-largest minority group. Moreover, more babies are born to Polish women than to any other foreign-born mothers. The immigrants are unusually widely dispersed. Despite the recession, few are leaving.

One reason may be that life in Britain, the research suggests, makes the newcomers happier, richer, and more confident. That is a clear success story—at least for them. But growing good fortune does not necessarily mean popularity, notes Teresa Potocka, an Anglo-Polish futurologist. Poles, she says, are an “easy target”.

Barry Sheerman, a Labour MP, recently bemoaned a substandard bacon sandwich made by a girl from “eastern Europe” (few would decry bad food made “by an African”). He denied being xenophobic, saying he was the member for “Huddersfield, not Gdansk”, and adding: “The people I represent should be first in line for jobs.”

The number of hate and other crimes against Poles is dropping, says Jan Niechwiadowicz, of a lobby group that monitors them. And not all stereotypes are damning. In some contexts “Polish” is a brand signifying hard work, just as with “French chefs” and “German engineers”. One firm in Teddington advertises its building work as “German quality at Polish prices”.

But the combination of media stereotyping and perceived prejudice (sometimes dubbed “polonophobia”) is prompting increasing stropiness. In 2008 the Federation of Poles in Great Britain (unsuccessfully) took the *Daily Mail* to the Press Complaints Commission for its “offensive...anti-Polish language”. Tabloid stories have included allegations that east European migrants hunt and eat swans (a protected species). Greg Pytel of the Sobieski Institute, a think-tank, says that such articles would be “unpublishable” if written so sweepingly about another minority. Daniel Kawczynski, a Polish-born MP, believes a liberal elite at the BBC is scared to cover more sensitive ethnic stories truthfully, so highlights Polish migrants instead.

A bigger beef is media coverage of Poland itself. A campaign backed by the Polish government harries media outlets that carelessly say “Polish death camps” (instead of “Nazi German death camps in occupied Poland”)\*. BBC coverage depicting Poland as wracked by football hooliganism attracts particular ire. Such friction is not wholly new. The 150,000 Poles who moved to Britain after 1945 have bitter memories of prejudice, such as signs in the 1950s reading “No Irish, No Blacks, No Poles”. Until 1976 Britain blocked the erection of a memorial to the Katyn massacre of captured Polish officers (pictured, in the background) fearing it would offend the Soviet Union.

As the migrants integrate, the complaints are changing. Whereas Britons once scorned the east Europeans as feckless, dim-witted and poor, now they fear them as canny, clever, and clannish—closer to anti-Semitism than to traditional anti-immigrant prejudice. “It’s more ‘they are going to do better than us’ rather than ‘they are lazy and uneducated’,” says Daumantas Mockus of the 260-strong Lithuanian City of London Club, one of half a dozen such groups that mix networking, charitable work and lobbying.

A big question is the migrants’ long-term effect on politics. A study before the London mayoral elections by Michal Garapich of the University of Roehampton among the half-million or east European migrants registered to vote in the capital showed a generally conservative mindset, politically somewhat disengaged, but worried about crime, school discipline and family breakdown, with blunt yet tolerant views on other minorities. That chimes with another finding of the Brunel study, that the Poles who come to Britain start with a cast of mind closer to Britons than to their compatriots at home.

\*An editing error in the print edition incorrectly compressed this formulation, leaving out the word “German”. Sorry.

Britain's House of Lords

## House repairs

*The Economist*, May 11th 2012, 8:43 by Bagehot

MY PRINT column this week looks at the politics of House of Lords reform, and suggests that this dry-sounding subject is actually a rather important clash about power and its transmission. SOME years back the BBC enjoyed a surprise hit with a spoof chat-show presented by Mrs Merton, a fictional northern housewife whose trick was skewering guests with mock-naive questions. One noted interview, with a willowy beauty married to a diminutive magician, featured the query: "So, what first attracted you to the millionaire Paul Daniels?" The concept of the "Mrs Merton question" duly entered the national lexicon. Far from the world of sequins and greasepaint, Bagehot recently interviewed a political grandee about constitutional reforms being explored by the Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition. The grandee expressed passionate opposition to a planned change that—it so happened—would disadvantage his own political party. This is a Mrs Merton question, Bagehot ventured—as in: what explains your principled objections to this reform that might cost your party the next election? The grandee pondered this impertinence but did not immediately respond. Yet, a while later, asked to explain his party's dislike of another constitutional reform, he murmured: "Mrs Merton reasons."

Mrs Merton's spirit may need summoning once more, after the queen informed the State Opening of Parliament on May 9th that a bill would be brought forward "to reform the composition of the House of Lords". Those few words signalled the start of a potentially titanic squabble about whether to abolish the upper house and its 800 or so members (a mixture of appointed life peers, 92 hereditary peers and 25 Anglican bishops and archbishops) and replace it with a fully- or mostly-elected Senate. Lords reform sounds an abstruse subject to outsiders, on a par with the gilded and berobed flummery of the State Opening itself. Research by YouGov, a pollster, suggests it is a political priority for precisely no voters (though if prompted, most people prefer the sound of an elected upper house). David Cameron, the prime minister, once called it a "third term" issue. Thanks to pressure from Liberal Democrats, for whom constitutional reform is a defining concern, legislation to reform the Lords should reach Parliament within weeks. Whether it becomes law is another matter, with even Lord Strathclyde, Conservative leader of the House of Lords, putting its chances at "50-50".

To fans like Nick Clegg, the deputy prime minister and Lib Dem leader, the change would bring a "smidgen" more democracy to British life. Mr Cameron, speaking after the Queen's Speech, seemed warier. It would be good to achieve a smaller House of Lords with an "elected element", he told MPs, though—arousing suspicions that his heart is not in the reform—he set the bar for success high, declaring that it could only proceed if the different political parties agreed to work together. Ed Miliband, the Labour opposition leader, endorsed Lords reform if backed by a referendum, while questioning "how on earth" it had ended up in the Queen's Speech at a time of economic crisis. Opponents, including many Tory MPs and peers but also members of Labour and even a few Lib Dems, charge that an upper house with its own electoral mandate would threaten "the destruction of the House of Commons as we know it", to quote one Conservative peer. In April a fiery meeting of Conservative backbenchers heard comparisons drawn between Lords reform and the rebellions over Europe that dogged John Major's government, and threats from junior ministerial aides to resign over the issue. Lib Dems are barmy, grumble Tory right-wingers. Lords reform will chew up weeks of parliamentary time during an economic crisis: voters will not forgive such self-indulgence.

As it happens, there are questions of real principle to consider. If current proposals are followed, the Senate would be only tenuously accountable to voters, with members elected from giant constituencies for 15-year terms by a variant of proportional representation. Yet even such arms-length democracy would test the century-old convention that in tussles with the House of Commons, notably on bills to do with spending or that enact election promises of the ruling party, the House of Lords backs down. Lord Strathclyde told reporters this month that an elected House would be more "aggressive", musing aloud that Margaret Thatcher might not have got some privatisations past an elected upper house, had one existed in the 1980s. In theory Lord Strathclyde supports reform, but his warnings will have the same effect on angry Tory MPs as a stick poked into a wasps' nest.

USA TODAY

Editorial: The fatter the nation is, the more you pay

Updated 5/20/2012 7:15 PM

Ever wonder why health care costs keep rising faster than inflation?

One major contributor is America's struggle with weight. Estimates of the cost of treating obesity-related conditions run from \$150 billion to \$190 billion a year, the majority of which is passed on to others in the form of higher insurance premiums and government expenditures. The fatter the nation is, the more you pay.

Think of it as an annual tax of \$1,300 to \$1,700 per household, a bill that appears to be heading upward. A study in the *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* projects that 42% of Americans will become obese by 2030. That's up from the already unmanageable current rate of 36%.

There's not much mystery about why waistlines are expanding. Food providers are very good at giving people what they want, namely sugar, salt and fat. As anyone who has ever tasted a potato chip knows, eating one makes you want more. Same with sugar and fat. So providers load all three into food, giving consumers what they want and making more money as a result.

Viewed benignly, this is just an efficient market at work, and attempts to interfere with the cycle are decried as an invasion of personal liberty by the "food police." But then there's that pesky tax, not to mention the human cost in heart disease, diabetes and other ailments.

As the battle rages, you can bet on this: The need to cut health care costs — the biggest driver of federal deficits and a major drag on living standards — is going to produce more policing, from both government and the private sector.

In fact, initiatives in both areas are already showing some promise.

One example of the government's impact is evident in school cafeterias. By taking out sugary drinks and providing healthier food, schools can promote healthier habits for later in life while reducing obesity in young people now. A study in the journal *Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine* found that students in California, which pushes healthy school diets, consumed 158 calories less per day than those in states that don't. This includes food eaten outside of school, showing that the California kids aren't chowing down on burgers to make up for the leaner school diets. Informational campaigns, laws requiring calories to be listed in menus and attempts to increase supply of healthier foods are also part of the picture.

But the newer initiatives are coming from companies seeking to cut health care costs and minimize the number of days workers lose to obesity-related sickness. One example comes from Koons Automotive, a chain of 18 car dealerships in the mid-Atlantic that held a 13-week weight-loss contest with prizes for both individuals and dealerships. Some 474 workers lost 5,603 pounds, an average of 6.25% of each participant's body weight.

A more common approach involves giving people a discount on their insurance premiums for staying fit. Programs like these have begun to sprout up in recent years, generally offering discounts merely for taking actions, such as visiting a doctor and compiling test results for such things as cholesterol and blood sugar. But if health costs continue to rise, strapped companies are likely to push their employees to actually achieve results, such as maintaining a proper body weight, before giving discounts.

Food police? No doubt. And about as comfortable as undersized jeans. But a change of habit will be necessary if Americans are going to become fitter, and if that hidden obesity tax is going to come down.

**latimes.com**

**Poll: Most Americans do not identify Obama as Christian**

**SERIE SCIENCES ECO ET SOCIALES  
ANGLAIS  
ANALYSE ET COMMENTAIRE**

By Mitchell Landsberg

5:12 AM PDT, June 23, 2012

Republicans from time to time have accused President Obama of playing identity politics. Here's the problem: The electorate remains confused about his identity.

The problem is most famously manifested in persistent conspiracy theories, driven by conspiracy-loving "birthers," about Obama's birthplace and citizenship. But voters remain muddled about his religion as well, as a new Gallup poll confirms.

The poll released Friday shows that just 34% of Americans can identify Obama as a Christian or, more specifically, as a Protestant. Eleven percent remain convinced that he is Muslim, and 44% say they don't know.

That is striking, because few presidents have spoken and written as much about their faith as Obama. His Christianity, in fact, ignited the biggest controversy of his 2008 campaign when incendiary videos of the Rev. Jeremiah Wright, Obama's longtime pastor at Trinity United Church of Christ in Chicago, went viral on the internet. Obama eventually severed ties with Wright, and since then has attended a variety of Christian churches. He uses Christian language and imagery often in speeches.

For instance, when he announced his support for same-sex marriage recently, here was how he described the deliberations he went through with his wife, Michelle:

"We are both practicing Christians, and obviously this position may be considered to put us at odds with the views of others, but, you know, when we think about our faith, the thing at root that we think about is, not only Christ sacrificing himself on our behalf, but it's also the Golden Rule, you know, treat others the way you would want to be treated."

In contrast to Obama, Republican Mitt Romney rarely speaks about his faith, yet Gallup found that 57% of Americans could correctly identify him as a Mormon.

That may suggest that a certain percentage of the populace knows that Obama professes a Christian faith but doesn't believe him. One hint of that: Republicans are six times as likely as Democrats to identify Obama as a Muslim, and less than half as likely to say he is Christian.

Obama's father was born into a Muslim family in Kenya, but was an atheist by the time Barack Obama was born in Hawaii, according to the president's accounts. Obama has written that he was not raised in a religious household, but converted to Christianity as an adult, in part through Wright's influence.

The Gallup findings were remarkably consistent with those of a Pew Research Center poll in August 2010, in which 34% of those surveyed said Obama was Christian, 18% said Muslim and 43% said they didn't know.

It is also notable that the matter is even an issue. Randall Balmer, a professor of American religious history at Columbia University and the author of "God in the White House: How Faith Shapes the Presidency -- from John F. Kennedy to George W. Bush," has noted that there was a time in American politics when the electorate didn't pay any attention to the president's religion and didn't particularly care.

How many Americans, he has asked, knew the religious denomination of Lyndon Johnson? (He was a member of the Disciples of Christ.)

The Gallup poll was based on telephone interviews conducted June 7-10 with a random sample of 1,004 adults nationwide. It has a margin of error of plus or minus 4 percentage points.

**latimes.com**

## How will voters react to Romney's Mormon faith?

By Mitchell Landsberg

3:40 PM PDT, May 16, 2012

**SERIE SCIENCES ECO ET SOCIALES  
ANGLAIS  
ANALYSE ET COMMENTAIRE**

It is the X factor in Mitt Romney's candidacy, unpredictable because it is unprecedented: How will voters react to his Mormon faith?

Never before has a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints been a major party nominee for president, and surveys have shown that as many as one-fifth of Americans would be reluctant to entrust a Mormon with the highest office in the land. White evangelicals--a key Republican constituency--have been especially skeptical.

Romney's own actions suggest that he may believe it is a political liability. He virtually never mentions his faith by name, and has reacted sharply in the past to suggestions that he talk about it. About as close as he's come lately was on Saturday, at Liberty University in Lynchburg, Va., where he spoke to evangelical Christian students about finding common ground among people "of different faiths, like yours and mine."

But a study done for the Brookings Institution suggests that Romney may have little to fear. In a paper published Wednesday, Matthew Chingos and Michael Henderson say Romney's religious background probably won't hurt him and may even help.

Chingos, a Brookings fellow, and Henderson, an assistant professor of political science at the University of Mississippi, conducted an online survey in which people were questioned about Romney in one of four ways.

In one, they were asked about him without any mention of his religion. In the second, they were told he is a Mormon. In the third, they were given background about the Latter-day Saints in ways that emphasized their similarities to mainstream Christians. A fourth question emphasized differences by briefly discussing the Book of Mormon and its history.

Result: Political conservatives were actually more likely to support Romney when they learned he was a Mormon, and hearing about the differences between his faith and more traditional Christianity made little difference. The boost was surprising: 54% of conservatives supported him when they were told nothing about his faith, but that jumped to 73% when they were told he is Mormon.

The information about his religion made no difference to liberals, who aren't likely to vote for Romney anyway.

"Our results should not be taken as definitive, particularly because they are not based on a nationally representative sample," wrote the authors, who surveyed 2,084 people online. "But they do suggest that concerns over Mitt Romney's 'religion problem' have been overblown and quite possibly miss a compelling counter-narrative. Romney's religion does not seem to reduce his support among white evangelicals. ... At the end of the day, it appears that voters' long-term political preferences matter more for their general election choice than the religious identity of the Republican nominee."

There was just one lingering puzzle. Why, the authors wondered, would Romney's Mormon faith make conservatives more likely to support him? They offered no conclusive theory, but said that "one compelling idea is that Romney's religion gives voters a clue about how the candidates differ ideologically." Since most Mormons are political conservatives, voters "may transfer this conservatism to a particular Mormon candidate"-- i.e., Romney.

Font Size: AAA

# The New York Review of Books

## How Texas Inflicts Bad Textbooks on Us

JUNE 21, 2012

Gail Collins

SERIE SCIENCES ECO ET SOCIALES  
ANGLAIS  
ANALYSE ET COMMENTAIRE



Henry Cabluck/AP Images

*Texas State Board of Education members Cynthia Dunbar, Barbara Cargill, and Gail Love discussing curriculum standards, Austin, May 2008. Cargill, who was appointed chairwoman last year by Governor Rick Perry, has expressed concern that there are now only 'six true conservative Christians on the board.'*

“What happens in Texas doesn’t stay in Texas when it comes to textbooks”

No matter where you live, if your children go to public schools, the textbooks they use were very possibly written under Texas influence. If they graduated with a reflexive suspicion of the concept of separation of church and state and an unexpected interest in the contributions of the National Rifle Association to American history, you know who to blame.

When it comes to meddling with school textbooks, Texas is both similar to other states and totally different. It’s hardly the only one that likes to fiddle around with the material its kids study in class. The difference is due to size—4.8 million textbook-reading schoolchildren as of 2011—and the peculiarities of its system of government, in which the State Board of Education is selected in elections that are practically devoid of voters, and wealthy donors can chip in unlimited amounts of money to help their favorites win.

Those favorites are not shrinking violets. In 2009, the nation watched in awe as the state board worked on approving a new science curriculum under the leadership of a chair who believed that “evolution is hooey.” In 2010, the subject was social studies and the teachers tasked with drawing up course guidelines were supposed to work in consultation with “experts” added on by the board, one of whom believed that the income tax was contrary to the word of God in the scriptures.

Ever since the 1960s, the selection of schoolbooks in Texas has been a target for the religious right, which worried that schoolchildren were being indoctrinated in godless secularism, and political conservatives who felt that their kids were being given way too much propaganda about the positive aspects of the federal government. Mel Gabler, an oil company clerk, and his wife, Norma, who began their textbook crusade at their kitchen table, were the leaders of the first wave. They brought their supporters to State Board of Education meetings, unrolling their “scroll of shame,” which listed objections they had to the content of the current reading material. At times, the scroll was fifty-four feet long. Products of the Texas school system have the Gablers to thank for the fact that at one point the New Deal was axed from the timeline of significant events in American history.

The Texas State Board of Education, which approves textbooks, curriculum standards, and supplemental materials for the public schools, has fifteen members from fifteen districts whose boundaries don’t conform to congressional districts, or really anything whatsoever. They run in staggered elections that are frequently held in off years, when always-low Texas turnout is particularly abysmal. The advantage tends to go to candidates with passionate, if narrow, bands of supporters, particularly if those bands have rich backers. All of which—plus a natural supply of political eccentrics—helps explain how Texas once had a board member who believed that public schools are the tool of the devil.

Texas originally acquired its power over the nation’s textbook supply because it paid 100 percent of the cost of all public school textbooks, as long as the books in question came from a very short list of board-approved options. The selection process “was grueling and tension-filled,” said Julie McGee, who worked at high levels in several publishing houses before her retirement. “If you didn’t get listed by the state, you got nothing.” On the other side of the coin, David Anderson, who once sold textbooks in the state, said that if a book made the list, even a fairly mediocre salesperson could count on doing pretty well. The books on the Texas list were likely to be mass-produced by the publisher in anticipation of those sales, so other states liked to buy them and take advantage of the economies of scale.



June 25, 2012

## Fixing College

By JEFF SELINGO

Washington

## ANGLAIS

### ANALYSE ET COMMENTAIRE

NO matter what the University of Virginia's governing board decides today, when it is scheduled to determine the fate of the university's ousted president, Teresa A. Sullivan, the intense interest in the case shows how much anxiety surrounds the future of higher education — especially the question of whether university leaders are moving too slowly to position their schools for a rapidly changing world (as some of Ms. Sullivan's critics have suggested of her).

There is good reason for the anxiety. Setting aside the specifics of the Virginia drama, university leaders desperately need to transform how colleges do business. Higher education must make up for the mistakes it made in what I call the industry's "lost decade," from 1999 to 2009. Those years saw a surge in students pursuing higher education, driven partly by the colleges, which advertised heavily and created enticing new academic programs, services and fancy facilities.

The almost insatiable demand for a college credential meant that schools could raise their prices and families would go to almost any end, including taking on huge amounts of debt, to pay the bill. In 2003, only two colleges charged more than \$40,000 a year for tuition, fees, and room and board; by 2009, 224 were above that mark. The total amount of outstanding student loan debt is now more than \$1 trillion.

Students were not the only ones to go deeper into debt. So did schools, building lavish residence halls, recreational facilities and other amenities that contributed little to actual learning. The debt taken on by colleges has risen 88 percent since 2001, to \$307 billion.

This heady period of growth occurred precisely when colleges had the financial flexibility to prepare for what was to come: fewer government dollars, a wave of financially needy students, a drop-off in the number of well-prepared high-school graduates who could afford to pay, and, of course, technological advances in teaching and learning. Instead, colleges continued to focus on their unsustainable model, assuming little would change.

Other information industries, from journalism to music to book publishing, enjoyed similar periods of success right before epic change enveloped them, seemingly overnight. We now know how those industries have been transformed by technology, resulting in the decline of the middleman — newspapers, record stores, bookstores and publishers.

Colleges and universities could be next, unless they act to mitigate the poor choices and inaction from the lost decade by looking for ways to lower costs, embrace technology and improve education.

One urgent need is to make better use of technology in the classroom. Despite resistance to the idea from academics, evidence suggests that technology can reduce costs, improve student performance and even tailor learning to individual students. The nonprofit National Center for Academic Transformation has redesigned courses on more than 200 campuses, cutting costs by an average of 37 percent, by using instructional software to reduce burdens on professors, frequent low-stakes online quizzes to gauge student progress, and alternative staffing (like undergraduate peer mentors).

Schools should also offer more online education. In just the past few months, several elite universities, including Stanford and Harvard, have announced multimillion-dollar efforts to provide several of their courses free, online, for everyone. Individual colleges should take advantage of this trend, perhaps ultimately shedding their lowest-quality courses (and their costs) and replacing them with the best courses offered by other institutions through loose federations or formal networks. This is the idea behind the New Paradigm Initiative, a group of 16 liberal-arts colleges in the South that have joined together to offer online and hybrid courses to students on any campus in the group. [...]