

RSA

21st century enlightenment

Journal Winter 2012



America's changing face

Taeku Lee explores the effect long-term demographic trends will have on the politics and society of the US

Benjamin Barber on why cities, not countries, are best placed to solve the world's problems

Sir Harold Evans assesses the outcome of the Leveson inquiry

Case study: Plan Zheroes

Plan Zheroes is a Catalyst-funded project started by RSA Fellows Maria Ana Neves and Chris Wilkie. It is a citizen-led initiative to inspire food businesses to give their surplus food to those who need it, so it will never go to waste.

Rather than businesses throwing away and paying councils (sometimes by the tonne) to take good food to waste, their online map makes it simple to find a charity nearby and organise to drop off surplus food to a local soup-kitchen, community group or food redistribution programme. Over 300 businesses have signed up so far at www.planzheroes.org

Maria Ana was chosen by the RSA Social Entrepreneurs Network to be one of 9 spotlighted social enterprises for 2012.



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“AMERICA APPEARS DESTINED TO BECOME A ‘MAJORITY-MINORITY’ NATION”

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“THERE IS A DRIVE TO DEVOLVE POWER TO CITIES”

**MATTHEW TAYLOR**

Localism is a political force full of potential. As cities start to handle a variety of issues more effectively than national governments, this may have implications for the RSA's structure

Whether our knowledge of the US is gleaned from visiting in person or looking through the window of its ever more brilliant television output (*Breaking Bad* is my current favourite), it is impossible not to see it as country of many and varied parts. This reflects not just its size and huge discrepancies in income, but also its combinations of historical, economic, cultural and political factors that make the typical Texan a lot more different to a typical New Yorker than, say, a resident of Berlin is to a Parisian or a Londoner. Even if there were an average American, this person would – as Taeku Lee points out in this *Journal* – be very different 20 years hence to who they were 20 years ago.

What most Americans share – and what may make its national politics seem more right wing, Obama's re-election notwithstanding, than most of Western Europe's – is an instinctive hostility to federal government. Indeed, I have heard it argued that American antipathy to signing various multinational agreements (for example, on climate change) is as much about a lack of trust of Washington as it is of internationalism.

Perhaps, then, it is not surprising that it was an American, the pioneering sociologist Daniel Bell, who said many decades ago that the nation state had become too small for the big problems in life and too big for the small problems. In the years since, the nation state has just about held on to its authority. After all, international government is still a game played – albeit falteringly – by nation states. Indeed, in some nations, including England, the centre has drawn further power up from institutions and localities.

Now, however, even in England there is real momentum behind the drive to devolve power to cities and city regions. Although the coalition government has not fully endorsed the vision of urbanism laid out by former deputy prime minister Michael Heseltine, across the political spectrum the current question about devolving power is not 'whether', but 'how' or 'when'.

Some may portray this as an act of desperation by a government that is fast running out of credible ideas, either to get the economy moving

or to achieve a more geographically balanced model of development in an ever more divided nation. But as Dr Benjamin Barber is to argue in a forthcoming book – the contents of which are prefigured in his fascinating interview in these pages – there is also recognition that local leadership is able to achieve things that are virtually impossible for national leaders.

Two points stand out. For all the talk of joined-up government, the scale of national administration makes working in departmental silos inevitable. At a city level, the connections between the policies of different agencies are more visible and the possibility of reconfiguration and collaboration more conceivable. Indeed, the greatest current impediment to more strategic thinking is that the policies of many services are still centrally mandated. Local leaders, by being closer to the ground and identified with places we live, are also more able to connect with voters. This provides the basis for what might be called 'normative leadership', the kind that involves changing public attitudes and behaviours in pursuit of shared goals. My favourite example takes us back to the USA, where Oklahoma City mayor Mick Cornett turned his own diagnosis of obesity into a crusade for weight loss and fitness that, as well as making his city slimmer and more active, transformed it into one of the most attractive and economically dynamic in the country.

While seeing this local leadership potential, Benjamin Barber goes further and shows that city leaders seem much more capable than their national counterparts of collaborating internationally on various issues, including climate change. Is this perhaps because, in a world of diverse and moving populations, we find it easier to reconcile tribal allegiance with the local with than the national? The hyphenated identity of Sikh-Brummie or West London-Somali avoids difficult and politically freighted questions about Britishness.

There are implications of this analysis for the RSA's own strategy as it seeks to become a more international organisation. Currently, we work on the basis of national chapters, for example in Australia, Finland and the US itself. Perhaps in the longer term, our aspiration should be to build a network of city chapters. It is, after all, cities, towns and neighbourhoods that seem to provide the most fertile territorial locus for the social enterprise and innovation that the RSA seeks to foster in society and among its Fellowship. ■



VIKKI HEYWOOD CBE

NEW RSA CHAIR

We are delighted to announce that Vikki Heywood, executive director of the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC), became the new chair of the RSA in October, taking over from entrepreneur Luke Johnson.

The RSC, which Vikki took over in 2003, now has a turnover of approximately £50m a year, employs more than 900 staff and produces about 20 productions every year from its home in Stratford-upon-Avon. It performs regularly in London, on tour in the UK, and abroad, particularly in the US.

"Following the many achievements of Luke Johnson during his period as chair, I am delighted to have been invited to become chair of the RSA," Vikki said. "I am looking forward enormously to taking up my post and working with Matthew Taylor, the staff and the board to fulfill the ambitions of this influential organisation. I am committed to exploring every opportunity to work with the Fellowship to achieve our stated ambition of creating links between the arts, manufacturing and commerce to create a more principled and prosperous society."

Prior to her appointment at the RSC, Vikki was joint chief executive of the Royal Court Theatre, the country's foremost theatre for the development of new writing. Until recently, she was a board member of the Society of London Theatre, the London 2012 Cultural Olympiad and the Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership.

She continues to serve as a member of Warwick University Council and is a long-standing Fellow of the RSA. She was awarded an honorary doctorate from the

University of Birmingham and became a doctor of letters in December 2009.

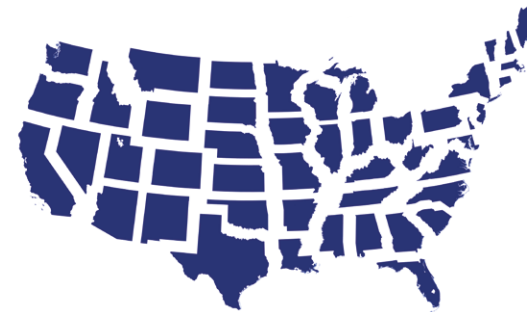
She has advised the Arts Council and other stakeholders and arts boards and has been vice chairman of both the Lyric Theatre Hammersmith and the Young Vic theatre. She was awarded a CBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours in 2012 for services to theatre.

"The RSA is going from strength to strength and, in Vikki Heywood, the board has chosen a leader with the enthusiasm, skills and reputation to achieve even more," said RSA chief executive Matthew Taylor. "Following the fantastic contribution made by Luke Johnson, I look forward to working with Vikki to take the society to even greater heights."

Luke Johnson, the outgoing chair, wished his successor well. "Vikki's experience in running large and complex organisations such as the RSC and her work with local enterprise partnerships will put her in good stead to chair the RSA," he said. "I wish Vikki all the best of luck in building on the RSA's excellent work in education as well as the society's renewed focus on the field of enterprise, a topic that is both true to the society's roots and vital for these complex and challenging times."

Vikki has hit the ground running with a visit the RSA's [Arrow Vale Academy](#) in Worcestershire, presiding over the ceremony for this year's Royal Designers for Industry and chairing her first board meeting.

There will be an interview with Vikki in the March edition of the *Journal*.



US FELLOWSHIP

THREE-POINT STRATEGY

Does the RSA's mission statement travel well or does it lose something in translation as it crosses the Atlantic? How do networks deal with the geographical challenges in a country where many states are bigger than the UK? These are fascinating challenges facing Fellows based in the US.

The RSA United States Board of Trustees has designed an impact strategy that takes full advantage of the America's climate for innovation. Developed by Jenny Whitener, the strategy provides a platform to launch ideas for social good by weaving together programs to serve and engage the strengths and needs of three major types of Fellow: future shapers, change agents and thought leaders.

Future shapers: The US Student Design Awards promote sustainable innovation and bring together more than 60 Fellows, sponsors, leading design schools and the design students who will shape our future. Two former winners of the UK prize, Seren Page Bailey and David Turner, founded the US programme, believing that dialogue between education and industry is critical to the development of designers who will work outside traditional boundaries. The first awards ceremony will take place at the Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art in New York City in April 2013.

Change agents: Per capita, the US receives one of the highest amounts of Catalyst funding across the global Fellowship. The US Challenge Fund goes beyond Catalyst in supporting Fellows' projects. It funds network development and special events, while the Diebold Scholarships make Fellowship accessible to young social innovators. Led by Trustee Howard Learner, the fund is built on the donations and skills of Trustees and Fellows.

Thought leadership: The Benjamin Franklin Medal rewards innovation and thought leadership in the spirit of its namesake. In a country of innovators, the challenge is to identify the person or group who has made lasting change through a life spent thinking about the world's biggest issues, rather than by being in the right place at the right time.

■ For more information on Fellowship and activities in the US, visit [the American Coffee House](#) at [blog.rsa-us.org](#), or contact the US Fellowship director, Lynn Broadbent, on [LBroadbent@rsa-us.org](#)



EDUCATION

NEW POST FOR ACADEMY HEAD

It is with considerable sadness that we will say farewell to Mick Gernon, principal of the RSA Academy, at the end of this term. Mick will leave the [Academy in Tipton](#) at Christmas to take up a post in Dubai, where he will be responsible for more than 4,000 students.

Since the Academy opened in September 2008, Mick has ensured that the school remained true to the RSA's vision of innovation in education. The school's curriculum is based on the RSA's [Opening Minds](#), a set of competencies and skills that challenge students to think, learn and manage people, information and situations, which will help them become good citizens and equip them for life and work in the 21st century.

This approach now extends to the school's sixth form, which has been at the forefront of developing the International Baccalaureate Career-Related Certificate (IBCC). The IBCC combines the breadth of the International Baccalaureate with strong vocational elements. Last year, Ofsted graded the Academy as good with many outstanding features, including its leadership and capacity for further improvement.

Having secured a significant jump in GCSE results in 2012, Mick leaves the school well placed to continue its mission of educational transformation. Sally Weale, the school's vice principal, will take over as interim principal. The permanent role will be advertised nationally in the new year.

COMMUNITIES

ENLIGHTENED ENTERPRISE

In his 2011 annual lecture, Matthew Taylor set out the case for Enlightened Enterprise. He called on business to make greater use of the skills, techniques and resources it deploys daily in shaping our market behaviour to support wider public policy goals. In difficult times, one might have expected his message to be a tough sell. But it seems to have struck a chord.

Throughout 2012, the RSA's [Connected Communities](#) team and its [2020 Public Service Hub](#) looked in detail at how business was helping improve policymaking and using its community footprint to connect citizens not only to sales opportunities, but also with each other. Underpinning these developments was a recognition that boundaries between public and private sector roles in meeting social needs are changing, as is accountability to citizens. Unless we can agree better ways of blending different social actors and resources to create social value, business legitimacy will be at risk in the longer term and traditional fiscal resources for public services simply won't be able to meet demand.

With the support of Asda, whose Community Life programme has forged strong links between stores and their local areas, the RSA took the Enlightenment Enterprise challenge to this year's party conferences. Vince Cable, Hilary Benn, Nick Hurd and senior business leaders explored how to push good practice from the margins to the mainstream. For large enterprises, devolution that enables the local front line to adapt to communities' needs seemed crucial, but so too did being strategically intelligent. At the moment, that intelligence is limited by a thin evidence. Looking across at the public sector, where the Social Value Act is due to be implemented next year, there may be lessons to learn about rigour in procurement, employment and community engagement.

NEWS IN BRIEF

MICHAEL FRYE CBE

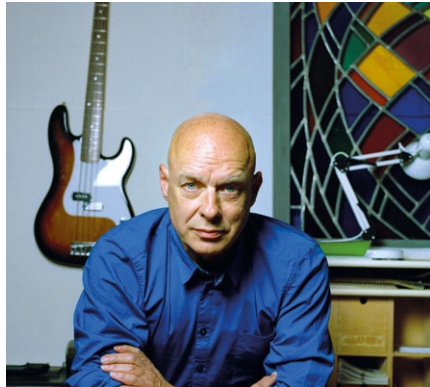
We are very sorry to report the death of Michael Frye CBE, RSA chair from 1991 to 1993 and a Fellow since 1978. He was 67. Michael was a big man in every way: big in body, big in spirit and energy, big in his concern for a more ethically motivated business world and big in his ambitions for the RSA. He was a strong supporter of the Tomorrow's Company Inquiry, initiated by the RSA at the start of his chairmanship, which examined the role of business in a changing world (Tomorrow's Company is now an independent thinktank with a global agenda). Michael took over the chair just as the RSA moved back into surplus after five financially nerve-racking years, following separation from RSA Examinations Board and the major task of recovering the vaults to create a new source of income as a unique conference centre. He grasped this opportunity with typical energy and determination. Michael also presided

over the the Queen's visit to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Duke of Edinburgh's Presidency.

AEON DEBATE

On 7 November, the RSA held a panel discussion in partnership with *Aeon*, a new online culture and ideas magazine. Like the RSA, *Aeon* is committed to social change and encourages open-minded debate. In that spirit, the two parties gathered a panel of speakers for a discussion on 'Does Africa need our outrage?' Human rights activist Peter Tatchell, investigative journalist Graeme Wood and the director of the Poppy Project, Dorcas Erskine, joined Brigid Hains, founder editor of *Aeon*, to examine human rights abuses in certain African countries and to consider whether international outrage is always helpful to those campaigning for equality and justice on the ground. www.aeonmagazine.com

PHOTOGRAPH: WORKERS' PHOTOS/REX FEATURES



AWARDS

RDI WINNERS ANNOUNCED

Eight of the UK's best designers were recognised for their outstanding contribution to design and society by becoming [Royal Designers for Industry \(RDI\)](#) at an award ceremony held at the RSA on 14 November. Winners included record producer Brian Eno (pictured), for his groundbreaking use of sound in technology and media, and architect Mark Fisher for his influential contribution to production design and popular culture.

Other winners included landscape architect Andrew Grant, light designer Mark Major, inventor Charlie Paton, garden and landscape designer Dan Pearson, and architect Sarah Wigglesworth. The late Jonathan Speirs of the partnership Speirs and Major received the RDI posthumously.

Four Honorary RDI awards were also awarded to advertiser Bob Greenberg, Toshio Iwai for his work creating progressive and non-violent video games, Tomas Roope for his work taking computer interactions beyond the desktop, and Swiss architect Peter Zumthor.

The RSA established the RDI in 1936 to enhance the status of designers in industry and to encourage a high standard of industrial design. The RDI is given to practicing designers who have shown sustained design excellence, work of aesthetic value and significant benefit to society.



DO RACISTS HAVE A RIGHT TO BE HEARD?

Do racist slurs silence open, free debate, or does everyone have a right to a voice, no matter how unpalatable their views? In the annual Runnymede Race Debate, a panel of expert commentators, including the director of the identity and integration thinktank British Future, Sunder Katwala, debate the limits of free speech.

Where: RSA
When: Wednesday 30 January, 6.30pm



THE UNIVERSE WITHIN

Distinguished palaeontologist, evolutionary biologist and popular science writer Neil Shubin reveals the deep connections between the cosmos and the human body. The talk will travel through history, from the present day back to the Big Bang.

Where: RSA
When: Thursday 31 January, 1pm



THE SURPRISING TRUTH ABOUT MOVING OTHERS

One of the RSA's most popular past speakers, Dan Pink, offers a fresh insight into the art and science of selling. He will reveal how, whether we like it or not, we are all in sales these days. His most recent book, *Drive: The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us*, argued that human motivation is largely intrinsic and that old carrot-and-stick methods of motivation do not work in the modern world.

Where: RSA
When: Tuesday 26 February, 6pm



KITH: THE RIDDLE OF THE CHILDSCAPE

Acclaimed nature writer Jay Griffiths offers a passionate defence of childhood and mourns the fact that many children in Euro-American countries are less happy than their counterparts in traditional cultures. Griffiths' previous books include *Wild: An Elemental Journey* and *Pip Pip: A Sideways Look at Time*. Her next work, *Kith: The Riddle of the Childscape* will be published in 2013.

Where: RSA
When: Thursday 7 March, 1pm

RSA Events development officer Abi Stephenson selected the highlights above from a large number of public events in the RSA's programme. For full event listings and free audio and video downloads, please visit www.thersa.org/events

JAY GRIFFITHS PHOTO: TIMUNJUN DAN PINK: BAUER

FOR HIGHLIGHTS OF RECENT EVENTS, SEE PAGE 49

AMERICA'S RACE

What effect will demographic shifts, made unavoidably clear in the 2012 presidential election, have on US politics in the long term?

By Taeku Lee

While the roar and rancor from the US presidential election has subsided, scholars and pundits have set upon a new joust over what to make of it all. In 2008, there was a clear and jubilant narrative in the immediate aftermath of the election. In a public spectacle perhaps not unlike a royal wedding, Americans collectively basked in the warm afterglow of having elected the country's first African American president. Some even dared to hope for the dawn of a post-racial nation in which racial animus would be the vestige of a regrettable past and not an everyday fact of life for minorities. Notwithstanding the invidious ugliness that has surrounded Barack Obama's presidency since 2008, the legitimating story of that election was largely a tale of the triumph of a singularly prepossessing politician and the sweeping grassroots movement his candidacy animated.

Yet set against the backdrop of these hopes and huzzahs about Obama and history in the making was the steady hand of the fundamentals of election forecasting. The 2008 election appeared to conform to the diktat of forecasting models developed by political scientists like Robert Erikson, Douglas Hibbs, Michael Lewis-Beck and

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Helmut Norpoth. According to various felicitous mixes of mainly economic indicia (such as GDP, unemployment, federal spending and subjective assessments of the economy), Obama was expected to win, and so he did.

The 2012 contest saw discernibly less alchemy and agreement in the performance of these forecasting models. Some predicted victory for Mitt Romney; others saw a win for Obama. Most expected a very close election. Importantly, Obama's decisive victory materialised in spite of economic recovery from the Great Recession that, by any reasonable measure, was slow to sputtering. Without this foundation stone of economic fundamentals, the first news leads after the election results attributed Obama's victory to situational factors such as former President Bill Clinton's tireless campaigning, New Jersey Governor Chris Christie's endorsement of Obama's leadership during Hurricane Sandy's challenges and even to Romney's mystifying descent on Pennsylvania (a state that was comfortably in Obama's grasp) just days before election Tuesday.

The storyline has now turned away from the fortune and folly of individual politicians and natural disasters to speculation about whether the tectonic plates of American politics have shifted for the long term. Much on everyone's minds >>

PHOTOGRAPHY: RICHARD FOSTER





“ONE IN FOUR AMERICANS TODAY IS EITHER AN IMMIGRANT OR THE CHILD OF AN IMMIGRANT”

is whether 2012 marks a new alignment in the electorate, one that foreshadows dim prospects for the future of the Republican party in national elections. Of course, electoral realignments, of the critical sort that American political scientist VO Key first pinpointed in 1955, are rare. If we believe Walter Dean Burnham’s periodicity, they occur only every 30 to 36 years.

Yet speculation about a partisan realignment is rife because of the deepening of a racial divide that was first noticed in 2008 and was repeated in 2012. According to national exit polls, in the presidential election Obama received 93% of the African American vote, 73% of the Asian American vote, and 71% of the Latino vote, with only 39% of white Americans voting for the Democrat. These figures stand out in boldface when compared to past elections. Even in 2008, the exit-poll figures for Latinos and Asian Americans were at the lower levels of 67% and 62% respectively. By comparison, a somewhat higher figure of 43% of whites reported voting for Obama in 2008. Moreover, white voters are shrinking as a share of the US electorate. As recently as 1992, whites made up 87% of election-day voters; by 2012, the figure plummeted to 72%. Taken together, 2008 and 2012 represent the only two elections in US political history in which a candidate won the White House without securing a majority (or, in elections with a notable third party candidate, a plurality) of the white vote.

RACE PERMEATES

The reach of this growing diversity extends even to other decompositions of the electorate that, at least in media representations, initially appear without a racial cast. Popular accounts of the 2008 election, for instance, lavished a great deal of attention on the putatively decisive role of independents and

young voters. In 2012, media reports and campaign strategists were transfixed by the women’s vote and enticed to see a pivotal influence of Catholics and, again, young voters. If these other demographic sub-groups held sway over the outcome of recent elections, one might be tempted to carry through the implication that a new alignment, such as it is, is not solely defined by race. A closer look at the numbers, however, suggests otherwise. Independent voters were vaunted in 2008, for instance, but only 47% of white independents voted for Obama, while roughly 70% of non-white independents voted Democratic. In 2012, while Obama carried female voters by an 11-point margin, most of that support came from women of color. Only 42% of white women voted for Obama while supermajorities of black, Latino, and Asian women voted Democrat. The story of Catholics and young adults is much the same.

To be sure, there has always been a racial divide between blacks and whites in the American *demoi* at least since the New Deal coalition of the 1930s. What is new is the seeming crystallisation of Latinos and Asian Americans as solid partners in a new pan-racial coalition of Democrats. Further fueling pronouncements of a realigned electorate is the possibility that the visible breach between white voters and non-white voters in the last two elections is just the tip of the iceberg on nearly half a century of steady and sweeping transformation of America’s demographic landscape. Changes in US immigration law and global migration patterns since the mid-1960s have spurred an influx of immigrants to the US on a scale unseen since the early 20th century. One in four Americans today is either an immigrant or a child of an immigrant. These contemporary immigrants come from Asian, African, Caribbean, and Latin American shores, rather than from across the North Atlantic. Up until the first decade of the 20th century, about 90% of

new migrants to the US set sail from European shores. Today, roughly 80% of new migrants are Latino and Asian.

What’s more, the prospects of a ruling pan-racial Democratic majority are further cemented by several additional demographic factors. Perhaps most importantly, demographers expect this swell of immigration to continue. With seemingly inexorable force, America appears destined to become a ‘majority-minority’ nation, in which whites will cease to be a numeric majority, sometime around mid-century. It is already the case that the majority of newborns in America are non-white. In addition, the ledger of demographic diversity is further expanding with the rising prevalence of racial admixture. Exogamy rates continue to rise, with 15% of all new marriages in the US occurring between spouses who cross racial or ethnic lines. Political polls, to boot, show that multi-racial Americans exhibit Democratic loyalties at rates comparable to Latinos and Asians. Finally, patterns of naturalisation and vote registration have yet to catch up to demographic changes. Latinos and Asian Americans, who were respectively 10% and 3% of voters in 2012 according to exit polls, are 16% and 6% of the total US population in the 2010 census. Thus, the political voice of these emerging groups will only grow as immigrant Latinos and Asians naturalise as citizens and register to vote at rates comparable to their US-born peers.

REASONS FOR CAUTION

So these figures give us some reasons for believing that the earth beneath the American political landscape shook, and forcefully so, with the 2012 elections. But is politics really so determined by demographics? I believe there are at least three firm grounds from which we might view bold pronouncements of an electoral realignment with a dose of caution.

The first of these grounds for caution is that if indeed there has been a new alignment, it has happened without political parties. At least since the publication of the classic work, *The American Voter*, by Angus Campbell and his colleagues at the University of Michigan in 1960, it is a received wisdom approximating a self-evident truth that the political behavior of an individual begins with his or her identification with a political party. Party identification starts the funnel of causality that ends with a vote for Barack Obama or a vote for Mitt Romney. Yet for Latinos and Asian Americans, the emerging segments of the electorate who seem to be driving this realignment, there is a profound reluctance to explicitly affiliate with a party, even as that reluctance is set in paradoxical relief against a visible willingness to vote for one party’s candidate. Data from the 2006 Latino National Survey and the 2008 National Asian American Survey reveals that when asked whether they identify as Democrats, Republicans or independents, more than one out of three Latinos and Asian Americans fail to identify with any of these categories, opting to express responses like ‘I don’t know’, ‘none of the above’, ‘no preference’, ‘I just don’t think in terms of parties’ or refuse to answer the question altogether. If self-identified independents (just shy of one in five for both Latinos and Asians) are put in the same company with non-identifiers, non-partisans comprise a healthy majority of both Latinos and Asian Americans.

These high rates of non-partisanship evoke a second ground for caution. While demographic shifts can and do inscribe the structural foundations for long-term change, the actual etching is done by institutions and individuals within them. An enduring realignment will not result without a more active, assertive effort to win the hearts and minds and secure the durable membership of Latinos and Asian Americans. Surveys >>



“15% OF ALL NEW MARRIAGES IN THE US OCCUR BETWEEN SPOUSES WHO CROSS RACIAL OR ETHNIC LINES”

show that levels of mobilisation from campaigns, parties and candidates for these groups fall far shy of levels for the general (non-Latino and non-Asian) electorate. This is a particular element of mundane, everyday politics in between election years that neither the Democratic nor Republican parties have undertaken in full with respect to Latinos and Asian Americans.

PARTY VALUES

Here, the Democratic party is clearly better positioned to succeed in wooing Latinos and Asian Americans on a more permanent basis. To a significant extent, at least some of President Obama's success in deepening his support among these electoral segments in 2012 can probably be credited to explicit, visible decisions such as high-profile appointments (such as Sonia Sotomayor, Hilda Solis, Ken Salazar, Jim Yong Kim, Gary Locke, Eric Shinseki and Steven Chu), public positions against voter identification laws and Arizona's controversial anti-immigration law, and unilateral action through an executive order that enabled undocumented children of immigrants to remain in the country without fear of deportation. Of course, countering these moves are many other signs of poor performance, such as the failure to push through comprehensive immigration reform, stewarding an economic crisis that has taken a disproportionate toll on African Americans, Asians, and Latinos, and an average of roughly 400,000 deportations each year. For their part, the Republican Party – or at least some of its outré, off-centre candidates – did itself no favours by taking positions and making statements that appeared hostile to visible minorities, immigrants, non-Christians and women.

This seemingly begs the question of why the Democratic party has been circumspect about embarking on a full-throttle

campaign to consolidate a pan-racial base of African Americans, Asians, Latinos, Jews, LGBTs and the white working class. The simple answer is that the road is not paved with gold so much as it is strewn with nails. As Paul Frymer argues in *Uneasy Alliances*, the Democratic party and its candidates run the risk of alienating its white and more ideologically moderate supporters by running far to the left, where the preferences of most African Americans lie. It is important here to keep in mind that, while Obama received only 39% of the white vote in 2012, whites still constituted a majority (56%) of all Americans who voted for him. Ronald Reagan masterfully deployed the trope of a Democratic party that espoused dated 'liberalism' and catered to 'special interests', and efforts to more fully welcome Latinos and Asian Americans could leave the Democrats vulnerable to similar attacks in 2014 and 2016. In fact, it is partly in response to this trope that Bill Clinton and those affiliated with the Democratic Leadership Council began to espouse a revamped pro-business agenda and embraced the rhetoric of personal responsibility.

A third and, for now at least, final ground for caution about electoral realignment is that race may not continue to prevail as the controlling divide in American politics. In specifics, it is at least plausible that ruptures in future elections will divide along the lines of regionalism, religion, nationalism, generation, gender, sexual orientation, or some other dynamic. The Birther movement, for instance, did not challenge the legitimacy of Obama's rule on racial grounds, but rather by invoking doubts about the president's citizenship and religious authenticity. Or to take another example, one of the least publicised findings from the 2012 exit polls is that LGBT voters turned out to support Obama in commanding numbers (76%), suggesting a more diverse Democratic coalition than is usually assumed.

And as a third example, one of the first organised responses to the Republican party's losses in 2012 was a short-lived secessionist movement in various states around the country. There is an alarming fixity to the coastal and Midwest states that are consistently Democrat blue and the rest that are equally consistently Republican red; a geography that not only adumbrates the possibility of regional rifts in future years, but also eerily resembles the partition of the United States into free and slave states in our regrettable past.

A COMPLEX LANDSCAPE

To further complicate matters, all of these considerations set aside the particulars of the historical moment that America is currently in. The American political landscape today – irrespective of demographic change and whether an electoral realignment necessarily ensues from it – is riven by policy disputes and ideological clashes. Dancing around the margins of our ascriptive differences are the constraints of party polarisation and legislative gridlock; a hopelessly fragile, interdependent global economy; debates over whether people, states, or campaign dollars are the proper units of voice and influence in an election; disagreements on whether America's common prosperity is better secured with less or more government; and even the most timeless of bones of contention, the battle of reason over faith.

No single election or singular president will definitively eradicate these constraints. Politics is, as Max Weber dubbed it, about “the slow boring of hard boards”. And as I see it, or would like to see it, the ascendancy of either political party will ultimately depend on its sustained efforts to lead and to secure the public trust on these sorts of hard boards. ■

FELLOWSHIP IN ACTION VOTE FOR POLICIES

Before the 2010 UK general election, Matt Chocqueel-Mangan FRSA identified a concern. Despite voting in several general elections, he still struggled to identify what each party offered and what policies they supported. To help solve this problem, Matt – a web producer – created Vote for Policies, a website to help voters compare policies from the main parties. “We didn't do any marketing in 2010,” Matt said. “We just let people share their results on Facebook and Twitter, which worked really well. By the end of the campaign, more than 275,000 people had taken the survey.”

Matt was awarded non-financial expertise through Catalyst and produced a version of the site for the 2012 US presidential election. “Unfortunately, we didn't get much traction in the US,” Matt said. “We released the site very late and, even though we did far more work in terms of promotion, we didn't quite get the results to show for it.”

He thinks this is partly to do with the relationship between candidates and their parties. “Presidential candidates aren't leaders of their party, so a tool comparing party policies needs to address that clearly,” he said. “There isn't much of an alternative as there are no candidate manifestos to draw on either, but it was a valuable lesson. Overall, we learned a lot about accommodating different political systems and cultures.”

Matt is now working on a number of opportunities where the model could be adapted for elections in developing countries.

Find out more at <http://voteforpolicies.org.uk>

PLAYING FAIR WITH PRISONERS

Punishment should be retributive, but it must also aim to rehabilitate criminals who will return to society ready to comply with the law

By Richard Dagger

In recent years, there has been much talk of a ‘rehabilitation revolution’ in the United Kingdom, underlined in a speech by the prime minister, David Cameron, at the Centre for Social Justice in October. Such talk is welcome, yet it strikes this American as odd in two ways. The first is that the idea of rehabilitating criminals is hardly revolutionary. Forty or 50 years ago, rehabilitation was widely accepted as the proper response to criminal wrongdoing, with especial emphasis on this point from Karl Menninger, Barbara Wootton and others, who argued that criminal conduct calls for therapeutic treatment rather than punishment.

In the intervening years, the emphasis has shifted dramatically, in large part because legal philosophers and the broader public alike have concluded that we fail to respect criminals or their victims if we regard offenders as no more responsible for their misdeeds than invalids are for their ailments. To renew the call for rehabilitation thus seems not so much revolutionary as reactionary.

The second way in which talk of a rehabilitation revolution seems odd is that it is not what one hears from those who call themselves ‘conservative’ in the United States. On this side of the Atlantic, the typical conservative reaction to crime is to demand incarceration and retribution. Were someone to advocate a rehabilitation revolution in this country, I would expect the conservative response to be, ‘We tried this before and it didn’t work. Give criminals their just deserts!’

Oddness aside, however, I think there is much to recommend the attempt to restore rehabilitation to a central place in the practice of punishment. Nor do I think that rehabilitation must displace

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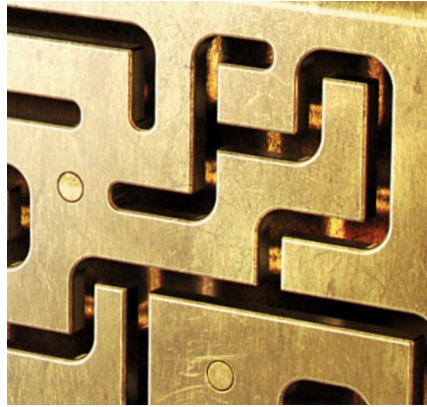
retribution in that practice. Properly understood, the two aims are not only compatible but also complementary. If we are to understand them properly, though, we shall need to see them as components of a theory of punishment that is grounded in considerations of fair play. Such a theory also has the advantage of offering guidance with regard to other controversial matters of penal policy, such as the question of whether prisoners should have the right to vote, or whether recidivists should receive harsher sentences than first-time offenders, or whether prisons should be operated privately or publicly.

PUNISHMENT AS FAIR PLAY

As children are quick to learn, any activity that requires cooperation is likely to give rise to complaints of unfairness. Sometimes the complaint will be about the unfairness of those who do not do their part; at other times it will be the unfair distribution of the benefits that cooperation produces. In either case, the core idea is that cooperative activities provide benefits to the participants, with the benefits ranging from the pleasure of playing a game to sharing in the profits of a commercial enterprise, or enjoying the protection afforded by a system of mutual defence. These benefits are not free of cost, however, and those who participate in the activity or enterprise are expected to bear a fair share of its burdens and to play fair with the others. Punishment enters the picture because cooperative endeavours will usually produce the desired benefits, even if a few of the participants shirk their responsibilities. To prevent these potential free riders from taking advantage of the cooperative efforts of others, the participants invoke the threat of punishment. When the threat is not successful, then the actual punishment of offenders is justified because they have violated the principle of fair play. >>

ILLUSTRATION: PETER CROWTHER
CONCEPT: ART LEBEDEV





For this simple account of fair play to provide a plausible theory of legal punishment, we must be able to conceive of a polity as itself a cooperative enterprise; to regard it, in the philosopher John Rawls's words, as "a fair system of cooperation over time, from one generation to the next" (*Political Liberalism*, Lecture 1, §3.1). To some extent this is to conceive of the polity as an ideal, and some countries will fall so far short of the ideal that we cannot reasonably judge their oppressed and exploited peoples to be participants in cooperative practices that entail duties of fair play. To the extent that the rule of law is in force, however, we can hold that a country's people are receiving the benefits of a cooperative enterprise and owe it to their fellow citizens to bear a fair share of the burdens of the enterprise: that is, to obey the law. Failure to do so warrants punishment. Everyone will find that obeying the law is occasionally burdensome, but good citizens will not leave it to others to shoulder this burden while they ride free. To assure them that their cooperative efforts will not be in vain, those who break the law should be punished.

Much more needs to be said to fill out and defend this quick sketch of the fair-play theory of punishment, but space limitations allow me to touch on only two points here. One is that violations of the law are not all of equal weight or character. There is a difference between civil and criminal disobedience, for example, that any theory of punishment must recognise. There is also a significant difference between offences that are fairly straightforward failures to play fair, such as tax cheating, and crimes such as murder, rape and robbery. Fair-play theory can acknowledge these differences, however, while insisting that every crime is, in a sense, a crime of unfairness; a failure to restrain one's conduct in ways necessary for the success of "a fair system of cooperation over time, from one generation to the next". Although the severity of the punishment should fit the seriousness of the crime, it is the offence against fair play that justifies the legal authorities in administering the punishment.

The second point to note, by way of elaboration, is that the fair-play theory is essentially retributive. Punishment is justified because those who break the law take unfair advantage of those whose law-abiding cooperation makes the rule of law possible. Punishment is thus a way of paying back those who do not play fair. Fair play does not begin and end with simple retribution, though. It also aims at maintaining society as a fair system of cooperation under law; indeed, it aims to move polities closer to that ideal. That is why the fair-play theory will support penal policies, such as rehabilitation, that are not ordinarily associated with straightforward retribution.

THREE PROBLEMS OF PENAL POLICY

To see how considerations of fair play can generate this support for rehabilitation, let us begin by addressing the three controversies I mentioned earlier: those involving recidivism, voting rights and the public or private management of prisons. The first of these may appear to be something less than controversial, for the practice of punishing recidivists more severely than first-time offenders seems to be widely accepted. From the standpoint of retributive theory, though, this 'recidivist premium' is hard to justify. If the point of punishment is to give criminals their just desert, then why should we care whether the offender has stolen a car for the first, second, third or fourth time? The offence is the same in every case, so shouldn't the punishment also be the same?

The fair-play theorist can answer these questions by saying that the offence is not really the same in these cases, not even when the recidivist steals a car of exactly the same value every time he steals. If we can reasonably assume that the offender has had a fair chance to live as a law-abiding member of the polity, then the aim of punishment in the first instance is to give him his due as a criminal who has not played fair with others and to restore him to his place in the polity as a citizen who respects the person and property of other citizens. If the punishment

"FAIR PLAY AIMS AT MAINTAINING SOCIETY AS A FAIR SYSTEM OF COOPERATION UNDER LAW"

proceeds in accordance with this aim, then we have a reason to think that recidivists deserve harsher punishment when they offend again. Despite our efforts to impress upon recidivists the injustice of their actions to those who make it possible for them to enjoy the benefits of the rule of law, they continue to hold themselves above the law. Each new offence is thus a worse offence, for each is in a way less fair than the one before it.

To be sure, this argument assumes that the punishment the offender receives is in keeping with the aims of retribution and restoration, which is quite a lot to assume. The high rate of recidivism in Britain and the US suggests that prison is at least as likely to prepare prisoners for a life of crime as to convince them of the virtues of the law-abiding citizen. But here is where the theory of fair play holds legislators, prison administrators and the polity in general accountable. If punishment is to be justified on the grounds of fair play, then we must see to it that people have a reasonable chance to play fair. In particular, we must see to it that the men and women who pass through the gates of prison are treated in ways that help them to grasp that society is a fair system of cooperation under law and that they have a responsibility to do their part to support it.

Exactly what we should do for and to prisoners if we are to help them in this way is a difficult and complicated problem. We confront it, for example, when we consider the question of whether prisoners should be allowed to vote. Without entering into the details of the current controversy between the British government and the European Court of Human Rights on this point, it seems to me that those convicted of crimes serious enough to warrant a prison sentence should lose their voting rights while they are imprisoned. This is currently the case in the UK and in all but two states in the US. In a society that approaches the ideal of a fair system of cooperation under law, crime is, among other things, a failure to do one's civic duty. It is appropriate, then, to suspend some of the criminal's civil rights as part of his or her punishment. When the punishment is complete, however, and the offender's debt to society has been discharged, his or her voting rights should be restored. This is what fair play requires. In the US, where several states either bar ex-felons outright from voting or make it extremely difficult for them to regain the franchise, this basic requirement of fair play is violated. If we are to expect offenders to play fair with the law-abiding members of the polity, we must also play fair with them.

What, finally, of the trend toward private management and even ownership of prisons, a trend especially marked in the US? Fair-play theory can countenance such arrangements as long as it remains clear that punishing criminals is a matter of the public interest for which the public is ultimately responsible. When the treatment of prisoners becomes a matter of corporate profit or loss, we have reason to worry that this treatment will not foster the sense of fair play we should want offenders to take with them when they have completed their sentences. More promising to my mind than the private-for-profit prison is the social-enterprise model that the RSA is now championing. This model has many virtues from the perspective of fair-play theory. One is the way it regards prisoners' work as a form of rehabilitation rather than a means of generating profits; another is the careful transition it envisions between prison leaving and full re-entry into the polity.

FAIR PLAY AND THE REHABILITATION REVOLUTION

Fair-play theory does not by itself answer every question of penal policy and practice. It does, however, provide a framework for approaching these questions and guidance as to how to answer many of them. More broadly, it provides a way of connecting the retributive nature of punishment with the desire to rehabilitate criminals. If the polity is to be a fair system of cooperation under law, then punishment of those who break the law is warranted. But such punishment should also aim at returning to society ex-offenders who are ready and willing to do their part in the cooperative effort by respecting the law. Whether a policy that embraces rehabilitation in this way is really revolutionary is doubtful. Nevertheless, rehabilitation need not be revolutionary to be right. What matters is that it is fair. ■

FELLOWSHIP IN ACTION SOS GANGS

New Fellow Junior Smart runs the SOS Gangs project for St Giles Trust, working with young offenders to help them break free from crime, particularly gang-related crime. The project works with young people, both in prison and the community, offering a tailored package of support for each individual to help them identify and realise alternative aspirations and goals.

Junior is also a fellow of Ashoka, an organisation that identifies and invests in leading social entrepreneurs. He joined the RSA Fellowship through the RSA's partnership with Ashoka UK and wants to tap into the network of RSA Fellows. "In a marginalised society," he says, "change can only happen if we adopt an all-inclusive attitude with genuine altruistic motives."

■ Find out more at www.sosproject.org.uk

CAN CITIES SAVE US?

At a time when we face problems that require global solutions, Dr Benjamin Barber asks if we should be looking to cities and their leaders – and not national governments – for the answers

In many ways, nation states have never seemed as incapable of getting things done as they do now. Effective climate change agreements seem a distant dream and many countries are afflicted with political gridlock, so should we be looking to cities, those institutions where practical problem solving is matter of everyday governance? Henry Kippin of the RSA's [2020 Public Services Hub](#) spoke to Dr Benjamin Barber, the American political theorist whose forthcoming book will argue that mayors are the people to get things done on an international scale.

Henry Kippin: How has your research agenda evolved to focus on cities and the role they can have in solving global problems?

Benjamin Barber: My focus has always been on the challenge of making democracy work in a variety of institutions and on a variety of scales. We all know that democracy was born in the polis and developed through the ancient and medieval worlds to the New England settlement. But the growth of nation states created a scale where cities were no longer capable of acting as primary institutions. That forced us to upgrade democracy from a direct-participation model to one that is based on representation, because you're dealing with thousands and millions of people.

DR BENJAMIN BARBER'S BOOK, *IF MAYORS RULED THE WORLD*, WILL BE PUBLISHED IN 2013

Just as the polis was too small to deal with the scale of new national institutions, today we are confronting what I call interdependent challenges – whether that's disease, global warming or weapons of mass destruction – with these Enlightenment-era nation states, which stand in the way of addressing these cross-border challenges. In the mid-2000s, I worked on a project that asked what sort of global governance can we have that is appropriate for the scale of the interdependent challenges of this century, and can it be democratic?

My book started on that question and it had a chapter on cities. But the more I looked at what cities were actually doing, the more it became clear that, of all the institutions I had been looking at, cities were far ahead in actually dealing in informal networks and cross-border solutions. There was a good deal of collaboration and informal governance. And, because of their local character and size, they are much more democratic than the corporate institutions that are their competitors in international networking.

It makes a wonderful rhetorical circle. You start with the polis; it becomes too small. In post-feudal Europe and the New World, it is replaced by nation states, which are then insufficiently capable of dealing with global problems. Wouldn't it be wonderful if we went back, in a certain sense, to where democracy was born: the cities. While trying to >>

ILLUSTRATION: CONEYL JAY
MAP: SQUIDHAMMER





“ABOUT 80% OF ALL ENERGY IS USED IN CITIES. THEREFORE, IF CITIES TAKE STRONG MEASURES, THEY WILL HAVE A PROFOUND EFFECT ON GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE”

solve the global governance problem, one of the institutions I was exploring turned out to be an extraordinary candidate.

One more thing became apparent. The title of the book is *If Mayors Ruled the World*, but the subtitle is *Why They Should and, importantly, Why They Already Do*. I found that what I was calling for was already underway, but not under the name of global governance. It was under the name of networking, or cross-city collaboration, such as the C40 and Mayors For Peace. So the book makes an argument for why cities do what states cannot, but says that this is already happening. The move to global city governance is a much shorter step than I first thought.

There's one further point that goes with that. Since 9/11, I've run the Interdependence Movement, an NGO. Every year we meet in a different global city to explore the realities of interdependence and see how civic, religious and academic leaders might help us. It became apparent that the sources of support were mayors, not prime ministers or heads of state. I realised that so much of what we had been doing was city-based. The Interdependence Movement was a crucial piece of evidence in the argument that cities are becoming more important.

Kippin: That thesis makes sense if you look at things like the smart city movement. Amsterdam, for example, has set ambitious targets to reduce carbon emissions by 40% by 2025, which is twice the European objective. At city level, it seems possible to generate alignment between the social, private and public sectors.

Barber: Indeed. If you look at the attempts to follow up Kyoto at Copenhagen and Rio, the bad news was that about 180 nations showed up to explain why their sovereignty did not permit them to do anything. The good news, however, was that

mayors were convening as well as heads of state. They stayed on, signed protocols and took action.

You can take it a step further. It turns out that about 80% of all energy is used in cities and 80% of global carbon emissions come from cities with more than 50,000 people. Therefore, if cities take strong measures – as well as Amsterdam, Los Angeles cleaned up its port and reduced carbon emissions by 30% to 40% – they will have a profound effect. Even if the US and China do nothing, cities can have a big role to play in fixing the problem. It's not just a theoretical thing.

I tell a story in the book about how Rudy Giuliani, then mayor of New York, sent his best intelligence operatives to Homeland Security for 18 months to learn from the FBI, the CIA and Interpol after 9/11. When they came back, they told Michael Bloomberg – who had replaced Giuliani – that they had been wasting their time. So he assigned them overseas: one went to Hong Kong, another to Singapore, one to Frankfurt and so on, in effect creating a city-to-city intelligence network. New York has been relatively immune to attacks because they conduct their intelligence in this way. That suggested to me that intelligence conducted in a network of cities could be more effective than a national network or networks of nations. Between nations, you have quarrels about ideology and whose side of the Cold War you're on. Cities don't do that.

Kippin: That's a huge advantage of thinking and working at city level, which gets me to the question of leadership. Earlier you said “why cities can do what states can't”. What is it about leadership in cities that can do that?

Barber: That's a great question, but before I answer it let me mention an aspect you didn't ask about, which is very important. I argue that the very sovereignty that defines the

jurisdictional and legal claims of nation states becomes a very large problem when it comes to international cooperation. Cities don't have this sovereignty, but that liberates them from the ideologies and jurisdictional claims that make an effective level of cooperation between nation states impossible. Cities are naturally interdependent.

Now, let's come to your question. Leadership in cities revolves around capacities and realities that are quite different from what we've come to expect from national leaders. Pragmatism is essential. People don't care whether you're a communist or a Tory; you still have to pick up the garbage. Citizens aren't too concerned about ideology as long as everything runs as it should. There's a great quote from Teddy Kollek, the long-term mayor of Jerusalem, who said: “If you spare me your sermons, I'll fix your sewers.” To use a vernacular term, mayors can be homeboys; they're working with their neighbours. The very scale of cities changes the character of governance.

In some countries – in particular France and China – the position of mayor is just a step in a career that is predetermined by a party system. Francois Hollande was mayor of Tulle, but he was not from there. In most countries, mayors generally do not go on to higher office. This is both because they don't want to and because they are not established in ideological chains and national party politics. There are successful exceptions, however. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, the Turkish prime minister, was previously mayor of Istanbul, so he was capable of the kind of compromises that needed to be made in that country.

There has never been a mayor of a major US city who has gone on to be president. In fact, only two American presidents ever served in any capacity as mayor. Grover Cleveland was briefly mayor of Buffalo and Calvin Coolidge was mayor of Northampton, Massachusetts, but they don't figure on their résumés.

This goes back to the character of leadership. These aren't charismatic leaders who can move millions of people through ideological statements and great rhetoric. These are very effective problem solvers and they will tell you that they lack the power to do anything without collaboration. Public-private agreements at a national level come with these big ideological questions, but those kinds of deals are second nature to mayors everywhere. This means that most mayors who are extremely successful don't go on. Bloomberg started as a Democrat, then became a Republican and is now an independent.

Kippin: It is interesting to see, and the notion of getting beyond party politics makes sense at a city level. London's Boris Johnson has broad support across both parties in a diverse city, but he is also seen by many in the Conservative party as a potential leader. In some ways, he confirms the idea of someone who sits outside of a party bubble, but those within the bubble are drawn to him.

Barber: When mayors do go on to higher office, they don't adapt to it; the office adapts itself to them. And they work because they are not divisive ideologues. Erdoğan brought a moderate party to power and could negotiate the harsh differences between factions as prime minister because he was a compromiser in Istanbul. I suspect that Boris Johnson's popularity is because, with him, you get a coalition government in one man.

At the same time, it can be hard for that potential to be realised. Bloomberg, for example, had ambitions of running for president. But his practical approach has meant that neither party has been all that anxious to cede power to him.

Kippin: Elsewhere in Britain, we recently had referendums in ten cities on creating directly elected mayors. Only one, >>

“CITIES ARE LIBERATED FROM THE IDEOLOGIES AND JURISDICTIONAL CLAIMS THAT MAKE AN EFFECTIVE LEVEL OF COOPERATION BETWEEN NATION STATES IMPOSSIBLE”



Bristol, voted for a new mayoral system, so we have this odd situation where mayors are popular once in place, but voters don't seem to trust the political system enough to set them up. Does this happen in other countries?

Barber: While we need and want to generalise about cities and mayors, it is also the case that cities are very different from one another and part of different political systems. A good example is Yury Luzhkov in Moscow, who started in the 1970s on the city council and was deputy mayor or mayor for 28 years. Finally, Medvedev got him out because he was seen as a threat and alternative power source in Moscow.

In the American setting, at the turn of the 20th century, we believed that mayors were deeply corrupt and that the personal character of mayors was a problem. The progressive movement put forth the notion of city managers: appointed technocrats who would come in and do the problem solving. That idea was quite successful and went some way towards clearing urban government of its corrupt habits. Then, however, people felt that this technocratic approach was undemocratic, which led to a return for mayors.

I would not be writing a book called *If City Managers Ruled the World*. Part of my argument is that we can talk about mayors because of the intimate relationship they have with the citizenry. One part of my argument is that mayors can collaborate across borders. But the second and equally important part is that they do it in ways that are relatively democratic. That's why I have a long section in the book on participatory budgeting. It's a nice example of trying to engage citizens directly on the allocation of resources in cities.

Kippin: Let me take you global again. You talked about global networks solving problems and mentioned the democratic

underpinnings of that. What would that look like? And how can the process be democratic for people who live outside cities?

Barber: On your first point, I think that the next step – and some people would say that it's an awfully big step, but I found that many of the intermediate steps are being taken by cities already – should be the convening of a global parliament of mayors and a secretariat that would work with them. The parliament would not make mandatory laws, but rather present best practices and experiments for any cities that want to voluntarily comply with them. It would allow systematic and regular exchanges on common practices, such as ecological medals. For example, it could say that any cities that care to could agree to a 40% reduction in carbon emissions, but then explore with other cities how to achieve it in practice.

A number of the mayors I have spoken to have said that they like the idea and that they are already meeting each other informally. I won't name them, but I have the support of a number of important mayors who are convening a meeting ahead of the book's publication.

Your second question is even more important. More than half the world's population lives in cities, but that means a little less than half does not. There is a large section in the final chapter of my book that asks in what sense would a global parliament of mayors be unrepresentative and deeply undemocratic.

The first part of the answer is to say that cities are already deeply engaged with their regions through agriculture, transport systems and so on. In fact, cities being represented through their mayors could easily be seen as representing the regions around cities, too. The number of people being represented would shoot up. Second, the global parliament of mayors would not be an organisation that imposes anything on anyone; it's voluntary. So there's no reason why a regional government or

county couldn't take up some of the parliament's ideas. There's no tax or lawmaking without representation.

Third, there is nothing to stop rural regions having parallel structures. I am not advocating starting an organisation that governs the world. Rather, I am arguing that a cooperative assembly, in which cities can work together in governing themselves, can help address and solve global problems. At some point, regions will have the chance to agree or disagree with the results.

Fourth, if you're talking about each voter having a voice that speaks for their interests, then a global parliament of mayors is never going to be representative. But if you're talking about a Burkian notion, where representatives pursue the interests of the whole, then my assumption is that mayors will have as their mandate not simply to reproduce the local self-interests of cities, but rather to pursue the common and public interest. If they did that, they would be speaking for the world, for agricultural and other regions not directly in their cities. It is a vital question and one I do try to deal with in the book, although I don't pretend that I deal with it fully.

Finally, should we not have a global parliament of mayors just because some people are not fully represented? Or should we have it and then find ways to have better institutions for rural areas?

Kippin: In a way, you already have the answer for that, which is that global governance as it is hardly works for the benefit of all.

Barber: Right, we have multinational corporations and some NGOs pursuing humane interests. But right now there are no representatives. If we can go from nothing to representing half the world, I'd say we're well on the way to a good thing. ■

FELLOWSHIP IN ACTION

PIONEERING THE SOCIAL ENTERPRISE TOWN

Two RSA Fellows have been spreading the word about social enterprise towns in the north-west of England.

Tony Carr FRSA and Clive Hirst FRSA first recognised in 2009 that social enterprise was a term that the wider public had not quite grasped yet. "We aligned our thinking around fair trade towns," Tony said. "People get fair trade towns now, so we contacted the founder and discussed how he got the concept in the public eye."

They decided to develop a model social enterprise town and received a Catalyst grant to help with research costs. Blackpool became a model social enterprise town, where people could come learn what they do and how they work.

It was at this point that Social Enterprise UK got involved. Their idea was to get social enterprise into the public eye through an awards ceremony, and Blackpool was invited to be on the shortlist. The additional finalists were Alston Moor in Cumbria, Grimsby, Tiree, Walsall and the Black Country. Each approached the process in a different way and their insight will be brought together in a forthcoming handbook.

"In Blackpool, I'm pleased with how active our voluntary and community sector is," Tony said. "Our formerly large public sector has shrunk and the people with the skills to do the work we're trying to develop have started to grasp the social enterprise concept. With the help of our organisation, many former public sector staff are considering the option of setting up their own social enterprises."

A TALE OF TWO CITIES

The debates about rebalancing and localism have led some to argue that the UK's capital should go it alone. But would such a move serve London's interests?

By Ian Gordon and Henry Overman FRSA

After a summer celebrating Team GB and the world coming to London, politics returned in the autumn. A timetable for Scotland's possible opt-out was agreed, the coalition was outflanked in the Commons by Eurosceptics, the government redoubled efforts to halve immigration, and Michael Heseltine re-emerged to propose a revolutionary shift of power and funding from Whitehall to business-led coalitions in provincial cities. If this is what a rebalancing of the UK looks like, London's increasingly cosmopolitan and still quite prosperous population might well be asking where the benefit is for them. As former mayor Ken Livingstone said five years ago in response to questions about whether it was politically healthy for London to have such a different population mix to the rest of the country: "If the rest of England doesn't like us that much, we're happy to be independent. We'll be a Singapore of the west."

Attitudes to migration and diversity might well be one of the biggest points of difference between London and other parts of the country. Boris Johnson, too, expresses a fear that current immigration policies will damage London-based businesses. The serious question, however, is not whether London should pursue political independence. Rather,

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it is whether what is good for London plc is good for the UK. Has, as the *Economist* recently put it, "a finance-driven London" actually become "increasingly detached from the rest of Britain" in economic terms? Perhaps, it is suggested, London's still relatively affluent population can afford to be indifferent to the effects of austerity, recession and competitive weakness elsewhere in the country. A summer of celebration, which reinforced the feeling that London is different in positive ways, also appears to have fuelled worries about the effects of the capital's national dominance. For some, it encouraged the idea that the city's role as an elite playground for the super-rich represented an increasing threat to the country at large. And rather more now argue that national government efforts to rebalance the UK economy in the wake of the financial crisis must include taming London's position as an economic city-state.

Rhetoric aside, any rebalancing programme seriously addressing the pathologies of the last boom-and-bust cycle must clearly have significant implications for the way London could develop. But there is a great deal of hyperbole in the talk about London's drift offshore, which itself needs to be rebalanced if the real implications are to be identified and followed up.

A GLOBAL CITY

For a start, we need a realistic appreciation of the role of finance and the globally oriented segment of the London economy. These are not quite the same thing, but >>

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neither segment is nearly as dominant as often suggested. The financial and business services sector has been the growth area of employment during the past 50 years. However, almost all the long-term job growth has occurred in activities other than finance. While part of this growth in other activities is clearly linked to finance – though, oddly, no one seems to have seriously examined how much – a great deal of core business services seem independent of the sector. Furthermore, London has strength in a range of information services beyond finance.

We can consider London's global orientation on two dimensions: as a place of residence, or at least of consumption, and as a place of production for global markets. On the first of these, survey evidence suggests that London is the preferred location for the super-rich and there is no doubt that some very wealthy people live in its more affluent neighbourhoods. But the super-rich are actually a tiny, if much publicised, minority. As with the financial services industry, it is hard to fully capture wealthy foreigners' impact on the London economy, but it is certainly possible to overstate it. To take just one example, the incredible prices paid for high-end London apartments are inflated by capital flight and the location preferences of the super-rich. This does tend to price locals out of that market, but when these properties can be sold at more than £50m, this scarcely affects the average Londoner. There may be some trickle down to the mainstream market, but high prices for the average Londoner are predominantly driven by the decisions of millions of more moderately resourced households, rather than those of a tiny global elite.

In terms of production, London almost certainly has a larger part of its economic base – maybe one-eighth of all its

jobs – serving global markets beyond Europe than any other substantial onshore centre. But, in absolute terms, about two-thirds of these jobs are tied to the UK market beyond south-east England. Unsurprisingly, fluctuations in London's economy follow those of the UK macro-economy. What is more distinctive of the London economy, beyond the absence of real manufacturing, is its competitive strength across a very wide range of services and the skill levels of the workers they develop and deploy.

LONDON'S INTEGRATION

In short, a large part of London's superior economic performance comes from the concentration of Britain's more able and talented workers, who would be paid relatively well wherever they lived. In turn, that concentration is partly driven by the fact that London provides greater opportunities for individuals to use and develop their talents. All of this means that London has higher wages, more expensive housing and a greater general cost of living, with the gap in all of these rising as pay inequality in the UK labour market has grown. But, at least for those who are young, able and willing to economise on housing costs, living in London offers opportunities that are simply not available elsewhere. And since many later move on to work in other areas of the country, London also acts as a source of highly skilled workers to regional economies throughout the UK.

Such life-cycle migration is not the only factor that continues to bind London tightly to other parts of the UK. Indeed, it makes little economic sense to separate 'Boris's fiefdom' from what has become London's extended economic region, which

“LONDON HAS SIMPLY BECOME MORE LIKE ITSELF”

spans almost all of south-east England and includes Oxford, Cambridge and Brighton. The area works as an integrated set of housing and labour markets. Furthermore, during the past 30 years or so, the region has become the heartland of England's knowledge economy. It can be argued that the south-east has moved away from the UK economy, but that the drift is more in terms of dynamism and productivity than integration.

Its full potential is not being achieved, however, because of a functionally irrelevant divide between the old London inside the green belt, presided over by the mayor, and the fragmented region beyond. The pretence that London remains an island independent of this wider territory is sustained partly by artificial administrative boundaries, but also by efforts to play down implications of the city's growth or housing demand on the area that surrounds the capital. Much more than incursions of the super-rich into parts of inner London, it is an unwillingness to face the implications of this interdependence that accounts for the general shortage of affordable housing in the region.

SOME THINGS STAY THE SAME

If London is more detached in rhetoric than reality, current talk about London starting to float free also seriously exaggerates the extent to which the city's position has shifted in the relatively recent past. In many respects, it can be argued that London's character – for better or worse – reflects a great deal of continuity over the centuries. There was an era in the last century when it was a major centre of goods production and transport, but that really ended in the 1980s. Since that point, the most dramatic change has been the upsurge in the foreign-born population. But even allowing for that development, overall, London has simply become more like itself, because both the types of people it always attracted (the educated, unattached and cosmopolitans) and the activities it has always been good at (creative, symbolic and manipulative) have become a much larger part of the national whole, within a globalised economy. It is also important to remind ourselves that, just as in the past, London's ability to attract and reward talent helps disguise the fact that it has always been home to a disproportionately large number of England's poor.

As far as more recent changes are concerned, the big story perhaps should be that of the dog who scarcely barked. When the global financial crisis hit, many, including one of the authors, predicted that London would suffer more than other parts of

the UK. This was both because of its specialisation in financial services, which had been at the heart of boom and bust, and because it had generally proved to be the most cyclically volatile part of the national economy since the 1980s. But this has not turned out to be the case. Indeed, we both said 18 months ago that London appeared to have got away with it. Incomes and employment in the capital both fell, but less severely than elsewhere. More recent figures suggest that London and the south-east are leading the UK's slow economic recovery. Much of the explanation for this is structural: the broader south-east is disproportionately represented in occupations and sectors that have fared relatively well through the recession. For London, the better-than-expected economic trends clearly owe something to public investment in Crossrail and the Olympics, plus luxury purchases by high-rolling overseas visitors, which held up through the depression. But it may also owe much, although no one knows how much, to large-scale state support to the major London-based banks during the crisis years.

BALANCING TO REBALANCE

Rebalancing the UK economy, in order to avoid a repeat of the past decade or two, clearly requires some macroeconomic rebalancing of demand that moves away from consumption and toward exports and investment, as well as of the relation between consumption and personal incomes. If this is achieved, it will very likely have implications for the balance in levels of activity between London – and its extended region – and the rest of the country, which will tend to favour the latter. And, if steps toward rebalancing consumption included some reduction in income inequality, this tendency would be reinforced. As has been extensively discussed, shifts from public to private sector activity may well work in the opposite direction. But note that any resulting rebalancing is structural and not fundamentally spatial, as exaggerated stories about London's increasing drift offshore suggest.

London clearly does occupy a particular and functional role within the UK economy, with inescapably different characteristics to much of it. The sheer scale of the capital's economy, the nature of its industrial structure and the extent to which it attracts the brightest and best mean it sits as a clear outlier in the UK urban hierarchy. But, while London may be different, it is certainly not isolated. Nor need it be quite so unique, since cities that are a little smaller – such as Manchester, say – or that develop a distinct strength may be able to out-compete London for functions that do not need its scale, diversity or intensity quite enough to justify the costs that come with that territory.

Within London itself, a more balanced recognition of the range of things it excels at – and of how these can contribute to the welfare of the middle mass of Londoners, rather than the few who place it in an island of its own – would also be appropriate. ■



IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST

Lord Leveson documented wrongdoing by newspapers, but does his solution threaten press freedoms?

By Sir Harold Evans

SIR HAROLD EVANS, EDITOR AT LARGE FOR THOMSON REUTERS, IS A FORMER EDITOR OF THE SUNDAY TIMES AND THE TIMES, AND AUTHOR OF THE AMERICAN CENTURY AND MY PAPER CHASE

The words ‘freedom of the press’ create a lot of commotion. A quick look on the search engine Bing offers me 386 million references, Google 318 million. Let’s keep it in our insular minds that these millions of entries have a wider agenda than the squalid story of the phone hacking and bribery by News International investigated by Lord Leveson, or the 2012 fall from grace of the celestial BBC, both of which have rendered the press more vulnerable to regulation.

ILLUSTRATION: ELISABETH MOCH/YN

The search-engine references circle the globe. I don’t have to plunge a hand into the bran tub to know they represent the full range of the human condition, from the inspiring to the iniquitous. There are enough reports from the professional organisations devoted to monitoring the press to know full well that journalism is under unrelenting assault by physical and legal intimidation, suppression, imprisonment and murder. The Zurich-based International Press Institute (IPI), founded 62 years ago by leading media executives concerned with freedom, issues regular reports, the latest of which contains information that will surprise many. The country with the worst record for imprisoning journalists is not Iran, Cuba or China but Turkey, so recently a candidate for membership of the European Union, with all that this implies in terms of recognising human rights.

Every year upwards of 100 journalists, broadcasters and photographers die in the name of freedom of the press. We remember the horrific kidnapping and beheading of the *Wall Street Journal’s* Daniel Pearl, the death of the brave Marie Colvin in Syria, the sensational murder in Moscow of Anna Politkovskaya investigating abuses by Russian troops in Chechnya, but otherwise the world barely notices. At last count, 2,156 names were etched on the glass panels on a memorial tower at the Freedom Forum at the fabulous Newseum in Washington, DC.

We tend to envisage them as chance victims of the roulette of covering war, and that is grievous enough, but the majority of deaths are not due to bad luck. According to the International News Safety Institute, they are the result of planned assassinations. Seven out of every ten have died in their own countries at the secret instigation of government and military authorities, guerillas, drug traffickers and criminal gangs. The US-based Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) reports that, since 2006, more than 42 journalists have been killed in Mexico, most of whom were murdered. Universally, 90% of the triggermen and their paymasters go unmolested, their crimes never investigated, let alone prosecuted, convicted and punished.

PROTECTING GOOD WORK

The common thread is that the journalists died for the very simple reason that they did their job: seeking truth. They did not commonly confuse the public interest with prurience and public purpose with private profit, as the hackers and their bosses did so egregiously. Not that the sleaze merchants cared to make fine distinctions. The whole culture they inhabited

was mean and cynical, inured to the misery caused by their intrusions, contemptuous of ‘do-gooder’ press codes.

The BBC *Newsnight* misconduct was not part of a similar pattern of ill-intent, more of a freak accident perhaps inevitable occasionally in an organisation of 23,000 people where the editor-in-chief was also responsible for all business operations. News executives, having failed to investigate the paedophilia of one of the corporation’s stars, then deceased, made up for laxity by inexcusable excess in identifying a live, innocent peer. It’s the journalistic equivalent of the Keystone Cops, comic were it not for the pain inflicted on the individual and his family by reckless journalism and the dent in the BBC halo. The evidence to Leveson by Lord Patten, the chairman of the BBC Trust, was a splendidly explicit statement of the BBC’s standards. The object all sublime of Lord Leveson was how to make the punishment fit such variable crimes and misdemeanours without jeopardising the investigative journalism that is genuinely in the public interest.

Long before Nick Davies at the *Guardian* exposed the hacking scandal and the lies of the cover-up, it was obvious that press respect for private lives had all but vanished. The internet and social networking have compounded the difficulties. Newly created electronic news and opinion sites (like the *Huffington Post*, *Slate*, *Salon*, and my wife’s *Daily Beast*) aspire to high standards, but there is so much on the web that doesn’t. And, odiously, too many are replete with malice, hate and invention, and outside the reach of UK law. Lord Leveson ducked this admittedly tricky issue, but equity would suggest that major disseminators with businesses in the UK could be held liable, as newspapers are. The difficulty is deciding where an intrusion is recognised as being in the public interest.

THE PRIVACY ISSUE

An investigation commissioned by the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism interviewed lawyers, academics, journalists, bloggers and victims of intrusion. It concluded that most people still regard the following as essentially private: sex and sexuality, health, family life and personal correspondence, except where public monies are involved. There is a germ of a definition in US tort law on privacy: that protection should be for “highly intimate information, disclosure of which would be offensive to a reasonable person”. The thoughtful Lord Lester’s defamation bill will be clarifying. My experiences in Britain, the US and Asia have made me wary of formal codes; there must be latitude for editorial judgement on the balance of public interest and a proportional penalty when there >>

“IT IS BIZARRE THAT PRIVATE LIVES ARE EXPOSED TO IRRELEVANT TRUTHS WHILE SUBSTANTIVE JOURNALISM IS RESTRICTED”

is error. Precision is neither desirable nor possible, given the unpredictably varied circumstances; harder, per Socrates, to describe justice than to identify justice. We know it when we see it.

The case for action now is overwhelming given what Sir David Calcutt’s inquiry concluded in 1990. The press, he said, should be given “one final chance” to demonstrate that self-regulation could work. He adopted the phrase of a home secretary who did not realise he himself was about to be locked in the public pillory, that the press was drinking at the Last Chance Saloon. Well, it got drunk again and again, but authority was as benevolent as the country bobby helping a familiar tippler find his way home. Calcutt advised that if self-regulation did not work, an effective statutory system should be crafted. It wasn’t so crafted because the government of the day feared that the press barons would seek political revenge.

This is one of the reasons why I urged Lord Leveson to recognise that many of our ills arise directly from an unhealthy concentration of media power, described as against the public interest by every Royal Commission and inquiry on the press since 1977. It is a pity that this was another issue where he sought refuge in generalities. The very origin of his inquiry was demonstration enough that media ownership is a problem. Such a concentration of media power is a concentration of political influence, an invitation to abuse and corruption that is irresistible to all but the saintly.

HOW TO REGULATE

Among a number of editors, I suggested to Lord Leveson that best practices would be promoted by self-regulation, but not the self-regulation of the wild west we’ve had in recent decades where everyone agrees not to bring a gun into town and the violators ride out of town untouched by the law. We argued for a press trust, an ombudsman with a staff funded by the industry, with the power to investigate misconduct and the experience to judge between expediency and necessity.

The Leveson Report amply recognises the claims of privacy, but it went much further and argued that it was “essential” that such a trust should be set up, “underpinned” by statute. The prime minister has rejected this on principle as a danger to the freedom of the press, winning praise from the industry. The leader of the opposition embraced the full report – statute and all – to the applause of the Hacked Off campaigners who were early to support the *Guardian* in its efforts to get at the truth.

I differ from both groups in two respects. I believe that a valuable enabling statute could be devised that would both recognise freedom of the press as vital to democracy and the imperative of raising press standards. But I understand the objections well. Lord Leveson erred badly in suggesting Ofcom as the monitoring authority; its head is appointed by the government of the day. Nor is this all that is wrong with the report. As well as dodging the evidence on media concentration, a number of proposals – on sources and access to data, for instance – exhibit an imperfect awareness of the nature of investigative journalism. While rejecting the statute, the government seems to be asking the press to swallow the rest of the Leveson Report whole, as the opposition already has. This is not acceptable.

The British press is already unduly restricted on matters of real public import. The Society of Editors recently reviewed what had happened since I suggested 38 years ago, in the Granada Guildhall lecture, that the British press is half free in comparison with the free, but imperfect, press of the US, which is protected by the First Amendment of the Constitution. The Society of Editors found that there had been more regression than progress.

This great debate must show as an acute awareness of the nitty gritty of investigative reporting as of the imperative to enhance privacy. Otherwise, those involved will be supporting the freedom of the press only as Lenin argued the communists should support the British Labour party: as a rope supports a hanging man. ■



THE MAN WHO DESIGNED THE PRESENT

Bill Moggridge RDI (1943–2012) made an immeasurable contribution to design, including the first laptop

By Clive Grinyer FRSA

Bill Moggridge, who died in September 2012 in San Francisco, was one of the most important designers the UK has ever produced. As the designer of the first laptop computer, co-founder of the hugely successful design company IDEO, inventor of new design disciplines and a fearless evangelist for design and the humanising of technology, Bill was an exemplary [RSA Royal Designer for Industry \(RDI\)](#).

Compared to household names and fellow RDIs Sir James Dyson and Sir Jonathan Ive, Bill was not well known in the UK. For the past 30 years he lived in California, where he set up his Silicon Valley design company in 1979 and where IDEO, the company he co-founded with Stanford professor of engineering David Kelley and fellow British designer Mike Nuttall, has its headquarters. But across the global design and innovation community and the generations of designers he nurtured and inspired, he was a legend.

Bill studied industrial design at the Central School of Art and Design, where he won an [RSA Student Design Award](#). By 1969, he had set up his own business at home in Tufnell Park, London. It was here that he met John Ellenby, who was developing a new breed of portable computer with his California-based company GRiD. Bill’s design work helped attract venture capital funding to the company and, while working on the project, he developed the ‘clamshell’ concept of a screen that folded over the keyboard.

It was a eureka moment from which the modern laptop was born, but it wasn’t long before Bill realised that it was the software on the screen that had a greater impact on how we use technology. As a result, Bill created the discipline of interaction design, applying the methodology of design to create technology experiences that were attractive and easy to use.

By the 1990s, Bill had design offices in London and San Francisco, with an exceptional team of international designers creating iconic

technology products. The newly named IDEO was the world’s most successful and respected design and innovation company, one based firmly on the core design philosophies and generous, relaxed culture that Bill created.

Bill became an evangelist for the humanising of technology, railing against the complexity of everyday experiences, such as changing the time on a digital watch. “He wanted to build empathy for the consumer into the product,” David Kelley said in the *New York Times*’ obituary of Bill. “At the time he started, it was very innovative, but now it is the dead centre of the profession.”

Bill inspired generations of designers who worked for him, myself included, or were tutored by him at the Royal College of Art, the Ivrea design school in Italy and Stanford in California.

In 2010, he surprised many by moving from San Francisco to lead the Smithsonian Cooper-Hewitt Design Museum in New York. Bill threw himself into this new role with ambitious plans for the museum and beyond. He wanted to ensure that every American child experienced designing something by the age of 12, for example. He organised the US National Design Awards, and Michelle Obama joined Bill for 2011’s awards ceremony.

Bill was a new type of design leader, generous with credit for his design team. Encouraging and liberating the people he employed, he attracted the best and they thrived under his patronage.

In light of his achievements as a designer, he received many awards during his career. These included the RSA’s Royal Designer for Industry in 1988, the Prince Philip Designers Prize in 2010 and the Cooper-Hewitt lifetime achievement award.

“Few people think about it or are aware of it,” Bill once said, “but there is nothing made by human beings that does not involve a design decision somewhere.”

The RSA can be proud of its long association with Bill Moggridge, a man who represented everything the RSA and the Royal Designers for Industry stand for. ■

IMAGE: COOPER-HEWITT NATIONAL DESIGN MUSEUM, SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

CLIVE GRINYER IS AN RSA TRUSTEE

DESIGN FOR LIFE

Cynthia E Smith and Roland Karthaus discuss the present and future of socially responsible design and what the US and UK can learn from the developing world

Cynthia Smith: In 2007, I organised the first exhibition in a series called Design for the Other 90% for the Smithsonian's Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum here in New York. It explored how design can play an important role in providing solutions for critical issues around the world. Traditionally, professional designers have focused on only 10% of the world's population. This has changed in the new millennium as architects, designers, engineers, social entrepreneurs, philanthropic organisations, NGOs and governments collaborate across sectors, creating new and innovative approaches and low-cost local solutions.

Today, close to one billion people live in slums or squatter settlements. That number is projected to double by 2030, stretching many local institutions' ability to cope. This urban expansion is the leading challenge of this century and is the focus of Design with the Other 90%: CITIES, the second exhibition in the series, which opened in 2011 at the United Nations Headquarters.

My field research took me to 16 cities in Asia, Africa and Latin America, where I met people living and working in informal settlement communities.

I concluded that the most innovative solutions were a hybrid of the formal and informal city. There was an exchange of design information taking place between informal communities, designers and architects, and private, public and civic organisations, which is becoming increasingly important as growth outpaces the ability of local and regional governments to respond

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to it. Following the CITIES exhibition, a book, website and social media campaign were conceived to broaden this exchange and share innovative approaches to urban planning and design, affordable housing, entrepreneurship, informal education and public health.

Roland Karthaus: I've worked on a number of large-scale, UK government-funded regeneration programmes, including the New Deal for Communities programme in the 2000s. It was intended to make regeneration a more democratic and accountable process at the neighbourhood level. My experience, though, was that the leading of these projects by local community groups didn't generally result in radically different or more effective ways of doing regeneration.

In the Neighbourhood Profiling project we carried out at the University of East London, we set out to think about this problem in a new way. Drawing on the work of American urbanist Christopher Alexander, we developed a tool that expresses local people's priorities as a set of metrics, underpinned by the idea that the purpose of a city is first and foremost to serve its users. We tested it out in two neighbourhoods that were undergoing redevelopment and there was a big interest in it. Of course, the major obstacle is that it challenges the conventional planning processes and so it will take a leap of faith for it to really take hold.

Smith: This participatory approach relates to the growing area of socially responsible design; design that is socially, environmentally and economically sustainable, which are the three quality-of-life pillars being addressed by the international community. Socially responsible design >>>

PHOTOGRAPHY: COOPER-HEWITT NATIONAL DESIGN MUSEUM



The Bang Bau canal, Bangkok, before a community-upgrading programme improved conditions



Improved conditions, funded by low-cost government loans, along the Bang Bau canal



expands the notion of what design is and who designers are. Whether it is the emergence of the citizen designer, new disruptive technologies or changing demographics, design is playing an increasingly important role in solving some of our most pressing challenges.

Some are systemic in scale, such as M-Pesa, a mobile phone-based money transfer and microfinancing service that has changed the way money is exchanged in Kenya and Tanzania. Others focus on local solutions to create alternative sustainable building materials, such as EcoFaeBrick in Indonesia. Made from cow dung and cured using biogas, the bricks provide local jobs and preserve agricultural land devastated by clay quarrying.

Shack/Slum Dwellers International (SDI), which is based in 34 countries, formed as a response to the challenge of urban poverty. I met several SDI affiliates in various countries during research for the CITIES exhibition, as its work embodies the idea of design exchange. SDI empowers the urban poor to claim their right to development in cities. Members, the majority of whom are women, are residents of informal communities. Groups from different countries visit each other and compare their experiences and achievements. The very first exchange took place between the slum dwellers of Dharavi in Mumbai, India, and shack dwellers from Johannesburg, South Africa. One group I met in the Philippines told me that it was easy to build a house, but very difficult to build a community. During these exchanges, groups share SDI tools such as mapping, settlement planning, housing design and construction, and infrastructure upgrades. But they all realise one thing: that government alone cannot solve poverty and underdevelopment.

In Thailand, for example, the Baan Mankong community-upgrading programme is improving conditions in the 5,000 poor urban settlements in the country. It is a hybrid solution that uses resources from both formal and informal cities. Affiliated with SDI, the Asian Coalition for Housing

Rights partnered with the Thai government, community architects and local residents. The community saved money and organised improvements in housing and infrastructure, as well as redesigning the layout of the entire settlement for increased social cohesion.

The government provided low-cost loans through a fund made available to any community that wanted to improve its slum conditions. Starting on the Bang Bau canal in Bangkok, residents who lived in stilt houses along the polluted waterway met to plan, budget and carry out improvements. Houses that limited access to the canal were demolished and the community constructed new ones, including a collectively owned house for the elderly. Securing land tenure is vital for stability, so residents negotiated a 30-year renewable lease with the government to eliminate the threat of eviction from the publicly owned land.

Karthus: I agree that new technologies are helping generate methods of engagement between and within marginalised communities. The decentralising nature of the internet, combined with the rapidly decreasing cost of hardware, such as laptops and mobile phones, creates opportunities for small groups and individuals to engage in global networks.

An application in Kenya similar to M-Pesa involves farmers being able to agree trade prices through mobile internet before they travel to markets, so they know whether or not to make the journey. In areas that lack infrastructure, information can be more effective than physical investment, at least in the short term. The point you make about land rights is critically important. The quandary that governments in places such as India face is that they fear fuelling further slum creation if they grant land rights, but, without these rights, slum conditions are perpetuated.

In one neighbourhood in Chandigarh, India, a medium-density housing scheme addresses this problem more successfully than anything I have seen in India. It was

developed in consultation with slum dwellers and provides standardised, adaptable terraced houses organised on a tight grid. But it is an isolated example that doesn't seem to have been repeated. I am currently working in Chhattisgarh, where the 'patta' system provides slum dwellers with leaseholds, giving them non-transferable legal land rights and placing obligations on the state to provide for them. Of course, this does not solve the issue on its own, but it is a step forward.

Smith: Other government efforts in India have taken a step backwards and created isolated urban islands. I visited one, the Savola Ghevra slum-resettlement scheme, located 25 miles from the centre of New Delhi. Dismissing the importance of their established socio-economic networks and proximity to their places of work, longstanding poorer communities were moved from the centre of the city and given small plots of land: less than 200 square feet per family. This is creating a new kind of poverty. Responding to this dire situation, the Centre for Urban and Regional Excellence (CURE) works with residents – mostly women and young people – to create income-generating solutions, such as sewing cooperatives and waste-collection enterprises.

Alternatively, Shelter Associates uses critical spatial data about slum areas to aid inclusive planning. Their geographic-information-system (GIS) teams combined socio-economic data and informal maps to enable the city of Sangli, in western India, to provide better housing close to areas of employment for the 15% of the population that live in slums. The plan enabled officials to see critical information, such as house ownership and building use, while the Shelter Associates team worked with Baandhani, an informal federation of the poor, in the planning, re-location and customisation of new flexible housing.

Placing people at the centre of the solution is paramount to gain the required insight to meet the challenge of expanding informal cities. The participation of slum dwellers and the urban poor is changing the dynamics of design at all levels. There is now a two-way exchange of design information.

Gabriela Sorda described a lesson she and other academics from the University of Buenos Aires learned when working with new informal settlements on the outskirts of that city. They compiled a how-to manual that was freely distributed to families that were just arriving and forming new settlements on the leftover open land, abandoned industrial sites or floodplains. According to Sorda, this led to ethical considerations, as many slum dwellers believe that slums that look like legal neighbourhoods will allow them to better integrate into society. The middle-class scholars wanted slum dwellers to be proud of the way they lived and that the ones that stigmatised them should change. But the slum dwellers were not romantic; they did not want to change society, but merely be included in it.

Karthus: Certainly, GIS mapping is bringing together spatial data in a way that wasn't possible before, so deeply held assumptions about informal settlements can be opened up

to scrutiny. The point you make about putting people at the centre of these processes is absolutely right. In the past, mapping has remained the privilege of political or professional elites, but no data is neutral, it represents the way it has been gathered and communicated.

Smith: One such open-source mapping effort in the settlement of Kibera in Nairobi, Kenya, is transforming a city of more than one million people that has always appeared as a blank spot on official maps or censuses. That changed with Map Kibera, a crowd sourced community-mapping project. Using tools from the volunteer project OpenStreetMap, the GroundTruth Initiative partnered with community groups in Kibera to create layers of information – on security, education, sanitation and health – that are uploaded directly onto an online map. The residents identify where services are lacking. Armed with this information, the community has been able to go to local authorities and begin to make improvements. Building on the success of Map Kibera, the organisation plans to expand its citizen mapping and media to other invisible settlements.

Karthus: I think this emerging trend of global networks and tools put to use for local benefit creates a new challenge to the command-and-control instincts of top-down planning. In UK, the problem isn't survival, so as a society we seem content to disengage from democratic planning.

We're not trying to turn ordinary people into designers, but saying that the purpose of design is to respond to social needs. Just because this is obvious in an Indian slum, it doesn't mean it is any less relevant in an isolated London neighbourhood. I'm sure that our Neighbourhood Profiling project could be adapted to operate in the developing world and I hope we get the opportunity to test it out. I think it would show that the relationships between people and their environments in the UK and the developing world are not as different as they first appear.

Smith: We can learn directly from developing and emerging economies how to create innovative solutions from limited resources and challenging environments. This was evident in many of the projects and initiatives included in the CITIES exhibition. Urban Think Tank's vertical gym, designed for the violent slums of Caracas, can easily be translated for the dense borough of Queens in New York City. From the slums of Nairobi, Planning Systems' community cooker, a large-scale oven that uses combustible garbage for fuel, could serve those living in remote locations in Canada or the US. As evidenced by recent climate events here in New York, it is critical that we find ways to share urban success stories from all parts of the world.

This will require a more inclusive urban design, responsible economic and environmental policies, establishing new institutions, transparent governance, improved equity and security, and land reform for a more just and humane urban world. ■

RETHINKING CAPITALISM

When a 19th-century machine metaphor shapes how we think about and explain economics, a new approach is needed, one that views the economy as a living garden that needs careful tending

By Nick Hanauer and Eric Liu

The economy ‘fires on all cylinders’, we say. It ‘gains momentum’ or it ‘stalls’ and ‘sputters’. It may need some ‘regulation’ or ‘pump-priming’. We want it to ‘stay in equilibrium’. It ‘cranks out jobs’ when it’s ‘well oiled’. We do not want it to ‘overheat’. We ‘grease its gears’. It ‘picks up steam’. It ‘crashes’. It ‘generates returns’. And so on.

We have talked in this way about economic life since the advent of the industrial age. And there is indeed something intuitively satisfying about the machine metaphor: it conveys a sense of efficiency, perpetual motion, seamless action and the productive conversion of inputs into outputs.

But we now know with scientific certainty that this mode of thinking, which we call Machinebrain, is profoundly wrong. It has blinded us to the way people and institutions really behave. It has reinforced a ‘trickle-down’ ideology of laissez-faire market fundamentalism and economic orthodoxy that is accepted by both left and right.

In this Machinebrain view of the world, markets are assumed to be perfectly efficient, humans perfectly rational, incentives perfectly clear and outcomes perfectly appropriate. Since the market is always right, a series of other truths obtain mechanistic force. Regulation is inherently regrettable because it impedes the workings of the

NICK HANAUER AND ERIC LIU CO-AUTHORED *THE TRUE PATRIOT* IN 2007. THEY LIVE IN SEATTLE. HANAUER IS A VENTURE CAPITALIST AND ENTREPRENEUR

machine. Government fiscal stimulus is ‘waste’. Both rich and poor deserve to be so. And, because of this, taxing rich people gums up the works of job creation.

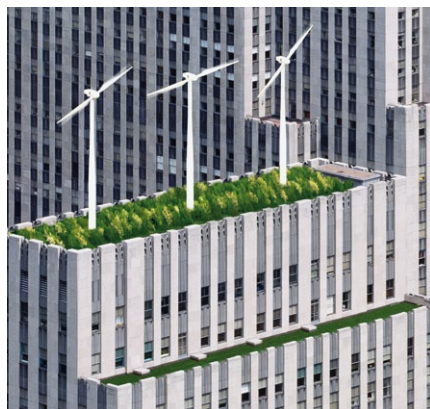
This self-enclosed story of a self-correcting machine is the gospel of free marketeers everywhere. It is compelling as long as you avoid two things: evidence and a modern understanding of systems. There is simply no evidence, from any nation at any time, of a high-functioning, sustainable and prosperous economy that does not also have strong regulation, active government, and progressive taxation. There is certainly no evidence for the theory that markets are perfectly efficient. Indeed, all evidence points the other way. Empirically, trickle-down economics has failed. Tax cuts for the rich have never once yielded more net revenue for the country.

The 2008 crash and the Great Recession should have been irrefutable proof of markets’ inefficiency and irrationality, of how unhinged from reality the elegant precepts of market fundamentalism are. When a befuddled Alan Greenspan confessed after the crisis to a ‘flaw’ in his worldview – namely, that the efficient-market model had assumed bankers and consumers were rational – Machinebrain thinking should have been emphatically and fatally discredited.

Yet it lives on, like a zombie ideology. Indeed, this story still shapes the language and unconscious assumptions of economic policy in legislatures, central banks and corporate boardrooms. Its US adherents, mainly Republicans, >>

IMAGE: CORBIS





keep perpetuating it. But more puzzlingly, so do its erstwhile critics, mainly Democrats. They sell stimulus as a way to ‘restore equilibrium’. They call small businesses ‘the engines of job creation’. They concede the zero-sum premise that more regulation or taxation means less wealth, and debate only the amount of harm to inflict. The result is that progressives have failed utterly to capture the popular imagination even as Machinebrain thinking has been revealed to be bankrupt.

ENTER THE GARDENER

What we require now is a new framework for the economy, grounded in a modern understanding of how things actually work. Fortunately, a quiet scientific revolution that has unfolded over the past 40 years teaches us that economies are not simple, linear and predictable like machines. They are complex, nonlinear and adaptive like ecosystems, and subject to the same feedback loops and evolutionary dynamics. To be clear, the economy isn’t just like an ecosystem, it actually is a type of ecosystem. And, as such, it is best thought of as a garden, not a machine. It can be fruitful if well tended, but will be overrun by noxious weeds if not.

In the Gardenbrain story, markets are not perfectly efficient, but they are effective if managed well. Humans are not perfectly rational, calculating and selfish; they are emotional, approximating and reciprocal. And outcomes are not just as they should be; rather, they reflect the kinds of compounding and feedback loops – virtuous circles or death spirals – that distort all complex systems.

Where Machinebrain justifies the belief that it’s every man for himself, Gardenbrain recognises that we’re all better off when we’re all better off. Where Machinebrain treats inequality as the predictable result of unequally distributed talent and work ethic, Gardenbrain reveals it as the self-reinforcing and compounding result of unequally distributed opportunity.

In thinking about the role of the state in economic life, then,

don’t imagine what a mechanic would do; imagine what a gardener would do. Government is not turning dials or pulling levers, or just getting out of the way; it is seeding, weeding, feeding and watering. Gardenbrain thinking challenges many of today’s most cherished ideas on regulation, taxes and spending.

Consider regulation. The prevailing assumption in economics is that markets are perfectly efficient and thus self-correcting. On this view, regulation – which literally means ‘to limit or impede’ – is an unfortunate interruption of a frictionless process of wealth creation. And if it were true that the economy is mechanistic, regulation would indeed slow it down and Americans could rightly believe that less regulation will automatically lead to more prosperity.

But Gardenbrain allows us to see that an economy cannot self-correct any more than a garden can self-tend. Gardens require gardeners. And regulation – the creation of standards to raise the quality of economic life – is the work of seeding useful activity, weeding harmful activity and helping the economic ecosystem to grow and adapt.

Is it possible to garden clumsily and ineffectively? Of course. Wise regulation, however, is how human societies turn a useless jungle into a prosperous garden. It is how we convert selfishness within a group into pro-social teamwork that strengthens the group. This fact explains why, wherever one finds successful private companies one also finds a highly regulated (tended) economy, and where regulation is absent we find poverty.

Consider, too, the conventional wisdom on taxes. Under the efficient-market hypothesis, taxes are an extraction of resources from the jobs machine. Machinebrain necessitates this way of describing taxation: as not just separate from, but hostile to, economic activity. This is why most Americans believe that lighter taxes will automatically lead to more prosperity. To tax the rich is thus to punish the ‘job creators’ from whom wealth is to trickle down to everyone else.

And yet, if there were a shred of truth to the proposition that jobs come from making the rich richer and lowering their tax rates, we would today be drowning in jobs and general prosperity.

Gardenbrain enables you instead to recognise taxes as basic nutrients that nourish the garden. A well-designed tax system – in which everyone contributes and benefits – ensures that nutrients are circulated widely to fertilise and foster growth. Gardenbrain exposes the folly of driving down taxes for the richest Americans because they are ‘job creators’. Jobs are a consequence of an organic feedback loop between consumers and businesses. It is a thriving middle class that creates jobs, not more wealth for the wealthy. When too much wealth concentrates in a few hands, it is like all the seed clumping in the corner of a flowerbed. The problem with such a concentration of wealth and inequality is not that it is unfair, though it might be; it is that it destroys economic growth by killing the feedback loop between consumers and businesses.

Lastly, consider spending. The word spending means literally ‘to use up or extinguish value’, and most Americans believe that is exactly what government does with their tax dollars. But Gardenbrain forces us to see government spending not as a single-step transaction that burns money as an engine burns fuel, but as part of a continuous feedback loop that circulates money. To spend tax dollars on education, health, roads and R&D is to water the plants, to disperse the nutrients of taxation throughout the garden.

True, not all spending is equally useful. It needs to be strategic and judicious. And not every worthy idea for spending is affordable. But this perspective helps us understand why, among the nearly 200 nations on the planet, the most prosperous economies are those that tax and spend most, while the states that tax and spend least are failures. More importantly, it clarifies why more austerity cannot revive an already weak private economy and why more spending can.

Taxes and spending nourish economies. Regulation is how we turn a useless and inhospitable jungle into an abundant and productive garden. Employment is not created by corporate profits, much less by coddling the wealthy; it is a consequence of a ‘circle of life’ feedback loop that starts with consumer demand. The middle-class customer is the true job creator, not the wealthy capitalist.

Seeing the economy this way does not make you anti-capitalism. In fact, nothing could be more pro-capitalism, pro-business and pro-growth than a Gardenbrain approach. By focusing our attention on the long term over the short, on the difference between economic weeds and economic bounty, on the power of markets to yield evolutionary adaptations, and on the deep interdependence of every part with every other part of the whole, it gives us higher rates of growth and prosperity that are widely shared, sustained and self-reinforcing.

Our economic debates are often framed as a choice between

“GARDENBRAIN ALLOWS US TO SEE THAT AN ECONOMY CANNOT SELF-CORRECT ANY MORE THAN A GARDEN CAN SELF-TEND”

regulating, taxing, spending or not. That’s absurd. The global financial collapse, food-safety calamities in China and the absence of pre-earthquake building codes in Haiti are all instances of what happens when people think letting the system run itself is a real option. The economy is a garden and we have got to tend it. Start with this story and our debates will become far more fruitful.

Seeing the economy as a garden, and using the metaphors that this conception provides, creates new ways of seeing, both consciously and intuitively, that more accurately reflect the underlying realities and will more likely lead to better policy decisions and greater growth. The economy, like a garden, must be tended to flourish. Our democracy is like a gardener, making the decisions about what to plant, what to weed and what to feed. Our economy and the elements in it, like all organisms found in nature, must adapt to survive. The regulating, taxing and spending that we do as a nation are the tools we use to do that. Let’s make the most of them.

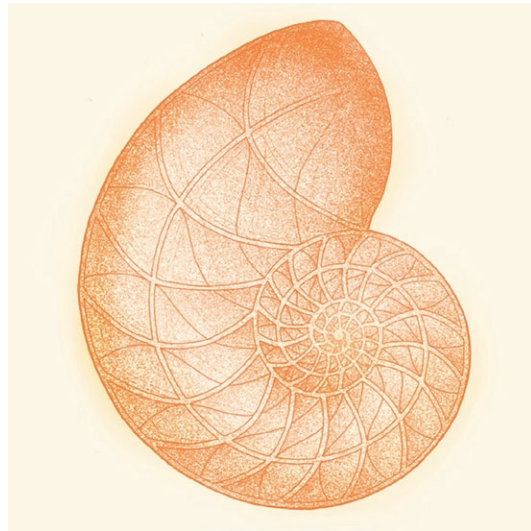
So we don’t regulate, we tend. We don’t spend, we circulate. We don’t tax, we water and fertilise. If the economy is an ecosystem, then we should be mindful of the fact that we humans don’t do well in jungles. Eden was a garden. Working together, we can make our economy more like Eden than it is today. ■

FELLOWSHIP IN ACTION

WIDENING CONNECTIONS

Thomas Neumark FRSA, in partnership with a homeless shelter in Washington DC, has begun to bring the concept of Fellowship to working with the homeless. Thanks to an RSA grant, he developed Dream Housing, which involves working with a homeless person, encouraging them to write out their goals and dreams and making a map of their existing connections. The project helps them consider how they can expand these connections to a range of people who could be useful to them. The grant allowed Thomas to run a series of workshops with homeless people to set up this new approach.

Find out more at <http://housingdreams.wordpress.com>



NOT BUSINESS AS USUAL

In a morally interdependent world, businesses must focus on how they engage with customers and employees if society as a whole is to prosper

By Dov Seidman

Today, due in large part to favourable lending regulations, small businesses account for more than half of America's private sector. At their best, our institutions, regulatory frameworks and organisational cultures have created enormous certainty. This environment of trust has served as a solid floor on which to launch ideas, companies and collaborations. Great American projects have always benefited businesses in the US; after all, DuPont, the Delaware chemicals company, made 24 of the 25 elements in Neil Armstrong's spacesuit.

Yet, at a time when these conditions are needed more than ever, we are not heading in the right direction. November's presidential election only served to deepen our divisions and largely concerned shifting a tiny sliver of swing-state voters from one polarised camp to the other. As I write from New York City in the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy, it seems that even an epic disaster did not change these dynamics. From climate to infrastructure to public education, our conversations remain tactical. No one has truly tried to elevate us by taking the nation on a daring new journey of progress.

DOV SEIDMAN IS THE FOUNDER AND CEO OF LRN AND THE AUTHOR OF HOW: WHY HOW WE DO ANYTHING MEANS EVERYTHING

Instead, American citizens are becoming less involved in civic life and employees less engaged in their work. Many workers feel stuck in unsatisfying, dead-end jobs, when they aspire to be on the kind of meaningful careers their parents wished for them.

America is not alone; similar issues face much of the global private sector as companies, also facing tough times and rapid change, continue to operate as if they can superimpose control and accurate projections on our complex and shifting economic and social conditions. Business remains trapped in a linear mindset that does not map to the volatile way the world now operates. In particular, the world has rapidly and dramatically gone from being connected to interconnected to morally interdependent.

Roughly two centuries ago, Scottish philosopher David Hume observed that moral imagination diminishes with distance. It follows that moral imagination should increase as the world shrinks through globalisation. We are no longer distant and, therefore, need to reawaken our moral imaginations.

Put simply, this means that everyone's values and behaviours are crucial, because they can affect more people in more ways than ever before. One banker in London can lose billions of dollars trading, force the resignation of his CEO and send



ILLUSTRATION: BRADLEY JAY/OCN

shockwaves through the global financial community and the real economy. A vegetable vendor in Tunisia can spark a revolution towards freedom throughout the Middle East.

Yet we continue to operate under the false assumption that we can create and sustain separate spheres for our personal and professional lives. Think of the famous line from *The Godfather*, often used in the corporate world: "It's not personal, it's strictly business." We have invented language to justify amoral behaviour: "Just get it done. I don't care how." There is no room for this in today's morally interdependent global environment. If I sell you a mortgage, I'd better be prepared to stand behind it, because the days when I will never see you again – or the days when any of us can escape the consequences of our actions – are gone. We are in a relationship of dependency.

Meanwhile, we seem to be experiencing higher levels of volatility. Ten-year boom and bust cycles now occur more frequently. Markets are prone to unpredictable human behaviour, violent economic swings, powerful natural disasters, sudden commodity shortages and crippling cyber outages. If we still had ten-year cycles, it might be rational to pull down our sails, wait out the storm and set sail when economic conditions improve. But when bad weather is hitting us regularly, we need to learn – for the first time – to navigate with sails up in a storm. In other words, we need to build the institutional and individual capacity for simultaneous resiliency and growth.

Compounding this challenge are the ways in which interdependence has enabled 'freedom from'. Citizens and employees alike are clamouring for – and achieving – an unprecedented level of freedom from old, outdated structures and conventions. Employees who no longer want to work under command-and-control managers can expose their boss's behaviour online. Consumers who do not agree with price increases can bolt to another provider overnight. As traditional structures break down, a vacuum is naturally created in which anything that can happen – good or bad – will happen. Meeting this challenge urgently involves creating for citizens and employees the possibility for 'freedom to': to pursue happiness, innovate, collaborate, and to live and work in a more fulfilling manner. These factors require us to rethink fundamentals of how we lead, govern and operate our countries and organisations, designed specifically for a morally interdependent world.

To lead and thrive in this world, we must first embrace the notion that competitive advantage has shifted from what we do to how we do it. We are in the era of behaviour. Anyone can easily peer into the innermost workings of companies and governments and evaluate how they really treat suppliers, employees, stakeholders and constituents; and then they can tweet or blog about it. Customers can instantly compare price, features, quality and service, effectively rendering every 'what' a commodity. This requires leaders to devote new energy and focus to how their organisations operate and how their people conduct business.

Second, we need to understand that the days of leading by a one-way conversation are over. When the streaming site Netflix

raised its prices in 2011 with a one-way announcement, 800,000 customers fled. When a Scottish girl decided to blog about the quality of her school lunches, school officials tried to shut down her site. Only after thousands of supporters amplified her cause online did a conversation result in changed policies and more nutritious food. Leaders must embrace two-way discussions and be prepared to listen to constituents, and employees, who hold more power than ever before.

Third, we must build healthy interdependencies, so we rise more and fall less together. It is our responsibility to build new coalitions, even with former competitors, as we eschew zero-sum competition in favour of the true ideal of the word, derived from *competere*: to strive together.

Fourth, we need to elevate and not just shift behaviour. Leaders, mindful of the conditions of interdependence, are asking their employees to go beyond merely serving customers to be collaborative and creative. They must nurture the company's brand whenever they publicly express themselves in tweets, blogs or email. We ask teachers to create a sense of curiosity in the classroom, and doctors to show compassion at a patient's bedside. Carrot-and-stick methods of motivation are outdated. These qualities can only be inspired in people if employees consider the company's mission and values worthy of their dedication.

Fifth, we need to change how we measure progress. The adage that 'you manage what you measure' remains valid, but traditional measures do not add up in today's world. We painstakingly continue to track GDP, revenue, debt, risk, friends, votes, followers and engagement, yet revenues are flat, debt has never been higher, risk has never loomed larger and engagement scores are at an all-time low. While these measures remain necessary, they are no longer sufficient. In an interdependent world, we need a reliable method for measuring how we forge healthy interdependencies, how organisations operate and relate to society, the way in which they treat their people and how their staff behave and treat others.

Finally, leaders must recognise that, as power shifts to individuals, leadership itself must shift with it: from coercive leadership that extracts performance and allegiance out of people to inspirational leadership that fosters commitment and innovation in people. Leadership is no longer about formal authority that commands and controls and exerts power over people, but rather about moral authority that connects and collaborates and generates power through people.

There is an old business cliché that hope is not a strategy. It is an expression usually used to belittle someone and to exhort him or her to deliver a linear plan. But inspirational leaders understand that without hope, there is no strategy.

When we lose hope, we retreat into ourselves. When we are inspired by hope, we lean into the world and can collaborate with others to take on great challenges. Hope is thus fundamental to our ability to forge healthy interdependencies and strive together.

In this interdependent world, we are all leaders. If we are all inspired by hope and inspire it in those around us, America and other societies around the world will elevate to greater things. ■

A CURRICULUM FOR THE TIMES

A grassroots movement, currently being promoted in partnership with RSA Education, is turning political polemic into a vibrant reality

By Joe Hallgarten and Marius Frank

The term ‘baccalaureate’ is in danger of being jaundiced and maligned through a process of political one-upmanship. First there was Michael Gove’s English Baccalaureate (EBacc), designed to nudge schools towards concentrating on so-called academic GCSEs. Ed Miliband countered with a TechBacc. Gove, not to be out-Bacc’d, introduced an Ad-Bacc. Lord Adonis has counter-punched with Academic and Vocational Baccs.

In response to EBacc pressures, many schools have changed options without regard for students’ interests and various groups are campaigning for their subject to be included, rather than challenging the legitimacy of a flawed concept. The EBacc may have a reasonable rationale, but it is misapplied. It is true that some academically able students are given poor advice about course options that hugely reduce their chances of a place at a Russell Group university. But they are not the only ones. The Wolf Report, a recent review of vocational education, argues that many young people choosing vocational routes are being guided towards qualifications that nobody values. The EBacc, therefore, is a partial solution to a much bigger problem.

At its best, assessment is a wonderful part of the creative process we call learning. It enables reflection and critical analysis, offers an external eye and can help students to understand where they are and how to progress. Despite teachers’ best intentions, various political and managerial forces have turned assessment into a reductive shell of what it could be.

The Modern Baccalaureate (ModBac) is a grassroots attempt to address these problems, driven by the new imperatives of a turbulent and rapidly changing

JOE HALLGARTEN IS THE RSA’S DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION. MARIUS FRANK IS THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF ASDAN, AN EDUCATION SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

society and workplace. Teachers, learners and employers – not politicians – are shaping the movement, which joins up young people’s learning experience as they strive for the best qualifications possible.

The ModBac movement began at Archbishop Sentamu Academy in Hull, situated in one of the most deprived wards in the country. Principal Andrew Chubb was concerned that the proposed English Baccalaureate could assign 70% of his students to fail, despite demonstrable and sustained school improvement by any other measure. He decided to create an accreditation framework that went beyond subject grades and addressed the needs of modern learners. ModBac was born.

It is based on the principle that, to thrive in both childhood and adulthood, young people will need to be literate and numerate, highly self-motivated and flexible. They must also be excellent at working in a team, fluent in the creation and use of digital resources, capable of independent study and able to appreciate the importance of being part of a global community and serving others.

The Modern Baccalaureate Award bridges the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical experience by dividing assessment into three broad study programmes: Core, Honours and the Skills Passport. The Core programme assesses students’ academic and vocational abilities in a broad range of subjects and certifies pupils’ GCSE-level qualifications. Work experience and practical activities constitute the Honours programme. Finally, pupils’ additional skills and awards are showcased in the Skills Passport, which demonstrates their readiness to enter the world of work. The three-part profile allows employers and institutions to assess pupils’ capabilities not merely through the acquisition of knowledge, but also the application of it. It also provides an opportunity to record other crucial aspects of pupils’ educational development.

TYPE SUPPLIED BY GLYPHICS



The ModBac empowers learners to take personal ownership of these three areas and empowers schools, colleges, parents, teachers and employers to address all three. Above all, it offers a platform for meaningful conversations about pupil learning, aspirations and future ambitions. Although it has been developed nationally, it is flexible enough to align with local priorities. It is crucial, however, for employers to be on board. The Institute of Directors has already been involved in the ModBac’s pilot phases and further support is being sought from the CBI and the Federation of Small Businesses.

An innovative design feature is a QR code unique to every certificate. When scanned, it will hyperlink to a website that holds all the details of the learner’s qualifications, skills and wider accomplishments. This can be updated throughout the journey to the workplace.

“Our students at Sentamu Academy are working harder than ever to succeed in their exams,” says Chubb. “When putting in

all this effort, they really appreciate the fact that they can work for an award that brings together all of their achievements.”

In 2011 at Sentamu Academy, not only did students achieve the school’s best results for the fourth year in succession (61% 5+ A* to C including English and Maths, compared with 29% in 2009), but, thanks to ModBac, they also were able to demonstrate that they had acquired the sorts of skills and broader experiences valued by employers. “By offering our students the ModBac award, they know that we value their whole development,” Chubb says. “This commitment has really paid off in terms of their exam results.”

This year, the ModBac will be introduced in 20 schools across the country. The aim is to work with 200 schools from 2013, including all the schools in specific local authorities. It offers schools and academies the rocks on which the foundations of 21st-century learning and achievement can be built, foundations that can withstand the buffeting of political winds and whims. ■

A TRANSITION BAC FOR SUFFOLK

As part of the Education Inquiry the RSA is leading in Suffolk, it plans to work with a number of primary and secondary schools to pilot a baccalaureate for children aged nine to 14. Built on the same design principles as the ModBac, it will enable younger pupils to record their academic achievements, wider skills and experiences, building a profile from years five to nine that will help motivate them at an often tricky time in their schooling and development. The skills element of ModBac is likely to incorporate Suffolk’s ‘Employability for Life’ framework, which has been piloted successfully in the west of the county.

GRAND CURRICULUM DESIGNS

In partnership with the Institute of Education and the Curriculum Foundation – and with financial support from the Esmee Fairbairn Foundation, the National Association of Head Teachers and the awarding body OCR – the RSA has devised a professional development programme for teachers. [Grand Curriculum Designs](#) will foster a new generation of skilled and sensitive curriculum designers. The programme will be informed by both [Opening Minds](#) and the RSA’s curriculum projects in Manchester and Peterborough, and will encourage schools to use the ModBac as a framework to accredit their curricula.

NEW FELLOWS



BRYAN GARAVENTA

ACCESS CODES

Web developer Bryan Garaventa set up WhatSock.com in 2010 to help universities and companies around the world learn about accessible programming practices. The website hosts AccDC, the accessibility API (application programming interface) he created, which is the first of its kind to standardise accessible dynamic processes for web technologies.

Bryan, who was blinded by a gunshot wound when he was 14, worked for the filesharing company Napster in the early 2000s before starting his programming career from scratch. "It was conceptually similar to writing poetry," he said. "Eventually I developed the skill to picture coding pathways and constructs in my mind before I began writing the code, which is how I built everything I have today."

In August 2012, the US Department of Labor awarded him the Above and Beyond Accessibility Award in recognition of AccDC. Bryan hopes that Fellowship "will allow me to connect with others interested in the advancement of future technologies and how they can be more accessible for all people around the world".

IN BRIEF

Here are a few more new Fellows who are working to drive social progress:

CJ Adams now works at Google, but for the past four years was a director at the Polaris Project, an organisation that fights human trafficking and modern slavery, based in the US and Japan.

Ian Bickers is the deputy governor of Wandsworth Prison. A former policy advisor at the Home Office, he is interested in the work of RSA Transitions and converting prisons to a social enterprise model.

Lilian Zacharia is a conflict resolution specialist and founder of the People Catalyst. She specialises in alternative dispute resolution, including mediation, facilitation, coaching and training.

Karen Mattison is the founder and director of TimeWise, which helps skilled workers find part-time jobs. In 2005, she co-founded Women Like Us to help women from all backgrounds find work that fit with family life.



LILY LAPENNA

MONEY MATTERS

Lily Lapenna is the founder and CEO of MyBnk, a charity that both makes small loans to budding entrepreneurs and offers young people financial education on everything from personal debt to budgeting for student life.

Two travelling experiences before and after her university days inspired Lily to set up MyBnk. Time in Zimbabwe brought home the benefits of informal education and, during a period working for an NGO in Bangladesh, she was taken aback by how well female entrepreneurs managed their money.

"I thought that I could combine my interest in informal education with the importance of financial planning," she said. "We work with young people aged 11 to 25 and offer various programmes to help them gain financial confidence and skills."

MyBnk also helps young people gain their first entrepreneurial experiences, using real money, which help prepare them for the competitive world of work.

Lily is looking forward to discussing these and other issues with Fellows from a variety of sectors.

YOUR FELLOWSHIP

There are four main ways for Fellows to engage with the RSA:

Attend a network: Network meetings take place across the UK and are an excellent way to meet other Fellows. Check out where our networks take place on the website.

Connect online: You can like the [RSA on Facebook](#), or follow us on Twitter [@thersaorg](#) or using [#thersa](#) hashtag. There is also a Fellows' LinkedIn group, our own network, [www.rsafellowship.com](#), and blogs at [www.rsablogs.org.uk](#).

Join SkillsBank: Fellows can offer expertise and support to projects and social enterprises using a form available online.

Apply for Catalyst: RSA Catalyst gives grants and support for Fellows' new and early-stage projects aimed at tackling social problems.

Explore these and further ways to get involved at [www.thersa.org/fellowship](#)

REPLY

TIME TO SHRINK THE STATE

Matthew Taylor's piece ('Power failure', Autumn 2012) stimulated me. Time and again he set up questions that made me think he had put his finger on it. But then he would drift away.

Surely the starting point for his piece should have been Singapore, where incomes are now 25% higher than ours, public expenditure is 17.5% of GDP (ours is 50%), schools are near the top of the OECD league (we are 60th or worse) and, judging by an average longevity that is higher than ours, their health services are better, too.

So when he tells us that willingness to trust government is failing in 18 countries, I hoped Mr Taylor might ask whether state bureaucracies are suited to supplying goods and services to millions of people of a variety of tastes and values? Perhaps governments are trying to do too much.

When he went on to note the decline of 'solidaristic institutions and impulses', I thought he was going to let out a cheer for the decline of political parties and trade unions, and point to the welcome growth of, for instance, the National Trust. And what about the solidarity of the thousands who volunteered, to globe-spanning praise, at the Olympics? What about those setting up free schools? What about those taking over local libraries?

The British have every reason, after 50 years of increasing statism, to have little trust in government. But we are as good as ever at joining with like-minded people and still terrific volunteers. The state needs to be scaled down to a manageable size and not try to run enterprises that spend half of Britain's wealth.

—Terence Bendixson

WARY OF ACADEMIES

I was dismayed by Alison Critchley's article ('Family values', Autumn 2012). In describing the rapid increase in the number of academies in England in the past year, there was no comment on the fact that both the concept of and the tactics used to create these new academies are contested.

It is undoubtedly the case that the RSA's motives in working with these schools are benign. However, the good practice cited in the article would have been possible had these schools not been academies. Indeed, in other parts of the UK, notably Scotland, families of schools are sharing good practice, raising aspirations, tackling disadvantage and raising achievement without an academy in sight.

Collaboration between schools and collegiality are two important concepts in education that transcend mere designation of schools as academies. But the creeping dismantling of the comprehensive system and the spectre of selection are worrying.

At the very least, the RSA should keep the debate on academies open and not simply accept them as the new status quo. —Brian Boyd

NAPOLEON III

In the valuable 'From the archive: an international history' (Autumn 2012), Napoleon III is mentioned as being a member of the Society. The emperor was an early recipient of the RSA's Albert Medal, but, unlike Tsar Nicholas II of Russia and US president John Quincy Adams, was never a member.

—David Allan



COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP

Christine Gilbert's argument for recognising and encouraging leadership in our schools ('School ties', Summer 2012) goes some way to harnessing the untapped potential that these centres can offer local communities. But there are also ways to remodel the wider governance of schools to better embed a shared, open and collaborative leadership culture.

Legislative changes several years ago saw the introduction of the Co-op Trust Schools model. This sees schools becoming a mutual entity, with engagement with the school's governance encouraged from teachers, parents, pupils, local employers, feeder schools and other community groups. By offering shared ownership, responsibility and accountability, communities are better mobilised, with schools benefiting from richer engagements with all aspects of the community.

—Adrian Ashton

Please send us your thoughts on the *RSA Journal* by emailing editor@rsa.org.uk or writing to: Editor, *RSA Journal*, Wardour, 5th Floor, Drury House, 34–43 Russell Street, London WC2B 5HA. Or comment online at www.thersa.org/journal



A NEW HISTORY OF POWER

20 SEPTEMBER 2012

Historian David Priestland argues for the predominance in any society of one of three prevailing power groups: merchants, sages and warriors

“WHEN ONE CASTE BECOMES TOO POWERFUL, THERE ARE CRISES OF WARS, REVOLUTIONS AND ECONOMIC COLLAPSE”

Many ancient and early medieval societies divided people into broad occupational groups, or castes. Since that time, societies have become more integrated and these castes, or orders, have bifurcated into many different types. This framework can help us to see which forces are really operating in society and in history.

The warrior or ruler caste dominated many agrarian societies with its combined militaristic and landowner values: heroism and hierarchy. Versions of it still have power in, say, the Middle East or Russia, but its influence has declined in Britain (think of the royal family).

In contrast, the merchant caste has become much more powerful. Merchants are found in parts of the business world and in trade and finance (banks), and they value competition, flexibility, networking, often toleration, and want to trade with anybody, whatever their culture.

The sagely caste values expertise and ideas. It began as holy people and bifurcated first into priests and bureaucrats, then into more technocratic managers and creatives (often university-educated professionals, likely to hold 1960s values of cultural liberalism and self-expression – the classic *Guardian* reader and Lib

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Dem voter). Workers have been less powerful than the other three, but in the

modern age they have asserted themselves in politics. They tend to value equality and are often collectivists.

All of these groups struggle for power (not only economic or political but also cultural and ideological) and make alliances with one another. One caste can shift the whole political spectrum in their direction.

In history, we see lots of these major caste power shifts from one set of values to another. When one caste becomes too powerful, there are crises of wars, revolutions and economic collapse.

Until 1914, the world was very aristocratic, and World War I was seen to be a result of the warrior values of heroism, honour and prestige getting out of control. Post-war, the merchants replaced the aristocracy and tried to rule alone, with the rich lending money to the poor to keep consumption going. This could only go on for so long and debt bubbles burst. The crash in 1929 was very similar to 2008, except on a larger scale.

This sort of economic crisis brings social tensions, because different castes argue over who is to blame. The merchant advocates harder work and discipline (austerity), which makes things worse, leading to social conflicts and to the rise of warriors like Hitler.

After World War II, Western elites were determined to constrain the warrior but, remembering the 1920s, didn't want to return to the merchant. A sort of alliance

was formed between the technocratic worker and the merchant.

This order was very successful for a time, seeing the greatest growth ever and quite a lot of equality, but it had its flaws and collapsed in the 1970s. There was then a sharp backlash in the 1980s, with a return to the merchant values of 1920s America. Discontent below the surface emerged with the 2008 crisis and many workers, feeling abandoned by the elite, moved to a more nationalist right.

Somehow, our elites still think that we can return to the unsustainable system of the 1990s and 2000s. The fundamental problem we face is that to be successful, capitalism needs a lot of collaboration among castes, as well as international collaboration to deal with issues like the global financial imbalances. There seems little chance of either at the moment.

So are we likely to go back to the 1930s? It's not inevitable and we're not there yet – and of course things are very different now – but there are serious worries, such as how we can survive a long-term reduction in living standards and whether a continuing global recession will increase trade tensions between China and the US.

Clearly we're not going to go back in the sense of marching down the Mall in torchlight parades, but the warrior can return in rather strange forms. Who knows what will happen after several years of falling living standards and rising inequality? ■

IMAGE: JERRY BAUER



DOUGHNUT ECONOMICS

18 OCTOBER 2012

How can governments, asks Kate Raworth, bring about equality while keeping the planet alive?

If you were in charge of a country's economy, where would you be trying to take it? When I studied economics at university 20 years ago, the answer was a given: it was economic growth.

However, some of the things that we fundamentally care about, such as deprivation, degradation and inequality, aren't coming along with growth. In 2010, for example, the top richest 10% of people in the United States captured 93% of the increase in national income that year. Inequality is at the heart of the way our economies are growing.

Look at the past 100,000 years of the planet's temperature. The past 10,000 to 12,000 years have been remarkably stable and it's no coincidence that humans began to practice agriculture in this era. Johan Rockstrom of the Stockholm Resilience Centre looked at this era to discover the critical earth processes we need to maintain to keep ourselves in this extraordinarily benevolent phase of the planet's history. He came up with a set of nine boundaries to maintain a safe space for humanity. They estimated that, on greenhouse gases, the amount of nitrogen in the atmosphere and fresh water use we are over the boundary. This is not an environmental agenda – these boundaries have not been designed for polar bears, but to keep the planet in a benevolent state for humanity.

KATE RAWORTH IS SENIOR RESEARCHER AT OXFAM

At the centre, there is a space

where people lack the resources they need, which leads to unacceptable human deprivation. The challenge is how to ensure that every human being has the resources they need to meet their human rights, but to do it within the means of the planet. We've defined the social boundary and the outer environmental ceiling or planetary boundary, and the challenge is to move into that safe and just space for humanity between the two, shaped like a donut.

So here's some good news: we could get everybody out of this level of poverty without putting pressure on the planet. It would take about 3% of the current global food supply to end hunger. We could get access to electricity for everybody in the world with just a 1% increase in global carbon emissions.

So where is the pressure on the planet coming from? If we look at climate change, researchers at Princeton University estimate that half of the world's greenhouse gas emissions are produced for just 11% of the world's population. If we want to come back within the planet's boundaries, we need to transform the consumption choices and the production patterns of the world's highest resource-using populations.

We need to bring a far more diverse group of people into decision making – we need to listen to the scientists more and bring in diverse metrics. The situation gives us a chance to rethink what economic development is. We're facing a fundamental question of whether economic growth is compatible with living in the safe and just space. We need to think about investing in the wealth that sustains us, because it's from this that everything we generate in our economy flows.

At this moment, the world's governments have the opportunity to come up with a set of global development goals to ensure human rights and environmental sustainability. If they could, that would really give us something worth aiming our economies at. ■

FOR HIGHLIGHTS OF FORTHCOMING EVENTS, SEE PAGE 9

MORE FROM THE EVENTS PROGRAMME

The autumn events season started with a busy week of activity to celebrate the reopening of the House following its refurbishment. The week began with a visit from the sought-after creative-economy expert **Richard Florida**, who outlined ways to stimulate growth in the face of 21st-century challenges, in the first [President's Lecture](#) chaired by **HRH the Princess Royal**. The centrepiece of the week was **Matthew Taylor's** annual [Chief Executive's Lecture](#), which offered a new power framework for tackling our toughest problems. We also brought together two lively panel debates. One responded to **Adam Lent's** Millennial Entrepreneurship paper and featured entrepreneur and digital champion [Martha Lane Fox](#) and journalist and *Jilted Generation* author **Ed Howker**. The other [looked at the prospects for political progressivism](#) and featured MPs **Jesse Norman** and **Tristram Hunt**. We concluded with an exciting Open House evening, packed with dynamic young Fellows showcasing their social enterprises, the launch of the [new RSA Animate](#), a preview screening of the animated series [RSA Shorts](#), and a stunning performance from the internationally acclaimed techno-illusionist **Marco Tempest**.

The highlights above are just a small selection of recent events from the RSA programme. All of these, and many more, are available as audio downloads at www.thersa.org/audio

Full national and regional events listings are available at www.thersa.org/events

Transatlantic

The bright lights of American politics continue to draw British eyes across the pond

By Ian Leslie

My father – who became a lifelong devotee of Frank Sinatra when, as a teenager in the north of England, he first heard the Voice on an EP brought home by his sister – used to point out to me that, although Sinatra would have been a great singer wherever he was born, things might not have been quite the same if he'd been British. To see instantly what he meant by this, try singing *I've Got You Under My Skin* in a Yorkshire accent.

American culture had and retains a glamour Britain struggles to match. My dad and I used to play a game which involved inserting British towns into the titles of popular American songs, producing timeless classics like *Burnley On My Mind*, *Do You Know the Way to Shrewsbury?*, and that old crowd-pleaser, *York, York*. British place names have a beauty of their own, of course, but the music of an old country is different from that of a young one.

So are its politics. I have always been a political geek. As a 12-year-old boy, I knew more than most of my classmates (well, all of my classmates) about the results of Labour's shadow cabinet elections, or who was likely to take social security in Mrs Thatcher's forthcoming reshuffle. But even then – and even though I knew much less about it – I knew that American politics was where the real action was, even if it somehow enabled a trigger-happy old buffoon to wield destructive power over the planet.

When I was 28 I moved to New York, where I stayed for four years. Instead of reading reports in British newspapers, I was getting the real thing from CBS and ABC, the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*. I realised that the coverage of American politics in Britain made it seem dumber and madder than it is (even though it is frequently both). Just as history had shown that Ronald Reagan was a figure of more subtlety and substance than the British press allowed for, so I discovered that American politics is not as dominated by wild-eyed religious loonies as I'd been led to believe.

I also discovered that, in the United States, politics isn't restricted to politics.

IAN LESLIE IS THE AUTHOR OF *BORN LIARS*. HE BLOGS ON US AND UK POLITICS

More so than in Britain, it's part of the national conversation, on the street, in the bars and diners, on the radio and on late-night TV talk shows. Actually, 'conversation' implies something a little too decorous: it's more like a raucous, rowdy and occasionally ugly family row. For all its flaws, however, politics there is part of everyday life in a way that isn't true here, unless you count *Question Time*.

But if American politics got under my skin, it wasn't because it represented some noble democratic ideal, but because it was a source of the best and the biggest stories (I'm a writer, after all). An American presidential election is the highest narrative form that democracy ever created. It is an epic drama, played out on the grandest of stages, containing all the Greek themes: power, money, war, religion, family, human ambition and human frailty. Its structure is essentially gladiatorial: every four years, the combatants enter the arena knowing that, by the end, only one will be left standing. Their fortunes trace long, criss-crossing arcs that end in disappointment, disaster or – for one man or woman and their legions of supporters – triumph. In dramatic terms, at least, it beats proportional representation.

When I returned to Britain in 2002, British politics seemed cramped and provincial by comparison. Front-page headlines had the flavour of a gossip column in a local newspaper reporting on the machinations of the parish council. Was Gordon upset with Tony this week? It was hard to care. Having said that, mundanity in a democracy isn't necessarily a bad sign. If our politics aren't as exciting as America's, it may simply be a sign of our maturity, of our knack – practiced over centuries – for muddling along with each other.

The wounds of America's formative battles are fresher. The modern US's political map can be overlaid on a map of its civil war alliances without too much being obscured. The fires have been submerged but they burn just beneath the soil, producing fury and bitterness but also heroism and poetry. I can't resist the great American story, or its politics; they are so deep in my heart that they're really a part of me. Every four years I'm surprised to discover I don't get to vote. ■

ILLUSTRATION: KATE COPSEY

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