

The **Free Radical**

POLITICS, ECONOMICS & LIFE AS IF FREEDOM MATTERED

NZ \$8.50 May - June 2007

The Naked Truth About Self-Defence: Criminals Prefer Unarmed Victims.



Are you one of the '300'?

**HOUSING
INFLATION:**

Why Bollard should
shoot the planners!

FIJI:

We come to
praise Bainimarama!

NEW TORY = NEW LABOUR

**\$20 BILLION OF
GOVERNMENT SPENDING**

- and how little there is to show for it!

SMACKING:

Perigo outs the REAL child abusers!



Subscribe NOW To

The Free Radical

POLITICS, ECONOMICS & LIFE AS IF FREEDOM MATTERED

Dear Reader,
The Free Radical is fearless,
freedom-loving and brim-full of
great writing and good reading
– writing that challenges *all* the
sacred cows, and gets you
behind today's news.
Don't miss out on your copy:
Subscribe now!

Said former editor Lindsay Perigo:
*"How do we get government as
it might be & ought to be? It will
take a revolution inside people's
heads."* The Free Radical is fully
committed to that revolution
of ideas. Don't miss out on
your intellectual ammunition.
Subscribe Now!

Said Samuel Adams, *"It does not
require a majority to prevail, but
rather an irate, tireless minority
keen to set brush fires in people's
minds."* The Free Radical is where
that irate, tireless minority speaks
out.

Subscribe now!

An army of principle will penetrate
where an army of soldiers cannot;
it will succeed where diplomatic
management would fail; it is
neither the Rhine, the Channel,
nor the ocean that can arrest
its progress; it will march on the
horizon of the world ... and it will
conquer! – Thomas Paine

Join the army of principle.
Subscribe now!

**Know somebody who would like or benefit
from a dose of Free Radical? Just add their
details to the order form below**

The Free Radical stands four-square for the future
of freedom in New Zealand.
Give the gift of freedom.
Give a Free Radical subscription

WHAT SOME OF OUR READERS HAVE TO SAY!

*"'The Free Radical' is the freshest,
most daring, most honest,
clearest-thinking libertarian
magazine I have ever seen. It
positively trounces 'Reason',
'Liberty', 'The Freeman', etc. ... I
am proud to have written for it."*
—Dr Larry Sechrest

*"Overall, 'The Free Radical' is the
best libertarian publication in the
world."*
—Michael Vardoulis, California
libertarian activist

*"'The Free Radical' ... It will make
you think!"*
- Leighton Smith

*We can only admire the tenacity of
'The Free Radical' as a journal of
free thinking in a country with such
a tiny market*
—Don Brash

*"A magazine of rare courage and
intellect."*
- George Reisman

*"The hottest magazine in the
country... Why would anyone
want to read 'Metro' when 'The
Free Radical' is available?"*
—Paul Holmes

Subscribe To The Free Radical

MAIL TO: The Free Radical, P.O. Box 96-103, Balmoral, Auckland, NZ
or VIA INTERNET: www.freeradical.co.nz and click on the subscribe bar!

Name: _____ Name on Card: _____

Address: _____

Email Address: _____

Credit Card Number: _____ Expiry Date: _____

Please find enclosed a cheque for \$NZ 49.50 +\$5 p&p Charge my Visa / Mastercard / Am Ex
OR direct Credit our Bank Account: Account No. 12 3016 0561084 00

Gift Subscription

Please deliver to:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Message: _____

4. The Kiwi Herald

National Unification

5. INTERVIEW – Johan Norberg Globalisation is Freedom!

From the luscious locks of Johan Norberg comes part 3 of our series on globalisation

COVER STORY & SPECIAL FEATURE

9. David B. Kopel

Gun-Free Zones

David B. Kopel reveals what a shopping mall in Salt Lake City and Virginia Tech's campus have in common: a ban on guns.

10. Lech Beltowski

Gun Control – It's Mental Health, Stupid!

"He that hath no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one." Luke 22:36

12. Peter Cresswell

32 Dead

The moral disarmament of the individual results in the literal disarmament of the individual.

14. Tim Wikipirwhi

The Right Of Revolution – In Praise of Commodore Frank Bainimarama

Has Bainimarama simply exercised his right of revolution?

16. Spartacus

New Tory = New Labour: UK's Tories go pink

Not all is hunky dory in the world of Tory Glory

18. Dr Vincent Gray

The Peer Review Mafia

Scientific censorship: How the peer review mafia protect the orthodoxy.

20. Greg Balle

Reserve Bank of New Zealand encouraging cartel banking: Where's the outrage?

Isn't price fixing a bad thing?

21. Peter Cresswell

Bollard's meddling exacerbates the boom he's trying to bust

A cowboy with a noose around the necks of exporters.

24. Owen McShane

"Put That BBQ Down, and Move Away From the Coast!"

Knee-jerk regulation from bored bureaucrats destroying a Kiwi tradition.

26. Peter Cresswell

Decentralisation, And Those Who Oppose It

The planners' war on the human spirit.

28. Lindsay Perigo

"The Real Child Abusers Are In There, The Beehive!"

Lindsay speaks to an anti-anti-anti-anti smacking rally at Parliament.

30. Phil Rennie

New Zealand's Spending Binge

Government spending has put NZ on a highway to hell.

36. Sean Kimpton

Parable of The Broken Window

Sean stabs a sharp shard in the heart of insolent fools. "But wait there's more!" applies to more than just infomercials.

37. Peter Cresswell

Clapton on Robert Johnson: Going With Flow

Finding your mojo really is groovy baby!

39. David Kahn

Montessori and Optimal Experience

Research: Toward Building A Comprehensive Education Reform

How maximising challenge enhances 'flow' in the Montessori classroom.

43. FILM REVIEWS:

'300' – reviewed by Jason Maurone & Aaron Bilger

'Rocky Balboa' – an unseen movie review by Jason Roth

'The Great Global Warming Swindle'

– reviewed by Marcus Bachler

48. COLUMN – Susan Ryder

It's Like, Sooooo Coal, Y'know?

49. COLUMN - Tibor Machan

Racism v Bigotry

** Kicking my News Addiction * Non-Partisan Teaching*

51. COLUMN – Rex Benson

Take A Letter

52. MUSIC – Daniel Walden

Callas! The Greatest of Them All

53. BEER – Neil Miller

The Mussel Inn –

A Whale of a Time

54. COLUMN - Jason Roth

Tehran International Book Fair

56. COLUMN – Lindsay Perigo

Sins That Are Tritest

Lying to others is lying to yourself.

WHO SAID THAT?

Civility in the face of evil is no virtue; rage in the face of nihilism is no vice.

- Lindsay Perigo

The trouble is that once you see it, you can't unsee it. And once you've seen it, keeping quiet, saying nothing, becomes as political an act as speaking out. There's no innocence. Either way, you're accountable.

- Arundhati Roy

It is error alone which needs the support of government. Truth can stand by itself.

- Thomas Jefferson

The threat posed by humans to the natural environment is nothing compared to the threat to humans posed by global environmental policy

- Fred L. Smith

How do you tell a Communist? Well, it's someone who reads Marx and Lenin. And how do you tell an anti-Communist? It's someone who understands Marx and Lenin.

- Ronald Reagan

Democracy is two wolves and a lamb voting on what to have for lunch. Liberty is a well-armed lamb contesting the vote.

- Benjamin Franklin

"Gun control" is a job-safety program for criminals.

- John R. Lott

An armed society is a polite society. Manners are good when one may have to back up his acts with his life.

- Robert A. Heinlein

The world is filled with violence. Because criminals carry guns, we decent law-abiding citizens should also have guns. Otherwise they will win and the decent people will lose.

- James Earl Jones

The biggest hypocrites on gun control are those who live in upscale developments with armed security guards -- and who want to keep other people from having guns to defend themselves. But what about lower-income people living in high-crime, inner city neighborhoods? Should such people be kept unarmed and helpless, so that limousine liberals can 'make a statement' by adding to the thousands of gun laws already on the books?

- Thomas Sowell

Gun Control: The theory that a woman found dead in an alley, raped and strangled with her panty hose, is somehow morally superior to a woman explaining to police how her attacker got that fatal bullet wound.

- L. Neil Smith

A man with a gun is a citizen. A man without a gun is a subject.

- John R. Lott

The urge to save humanity is always a false front for the urge to rule it.

- H. L. Mencken

Contributors



JOHAN NORBERG



SUSAN RYDER



VINCENT GRAY



PHIL RENNIE



OWEN MCSHANE



TIM WIKIRIWHI



DAVID KOPEL



TIBOR MACHAN



LECH BELTOWSKI



SPARTACUS



NEIL MILLER



MARCUS BACHLER



PETER CRESSWELL



LINDSAY PERIGO



CAROL POTTS



DAVID KAHN



REX BENSON



RICHARD MCGRAIL

Appeasement & Abdication

Peter Cresswell



When you sup with the devil, it's said, you'd better use a long spoon. That's a lesson that's lost on appeasers, whose own moral disarmament leaves a vacuum inviting those with a more immoral agenda to fill it.

Ignore aggressors and declare a "gun-free" zone? You might as well tell every mass-murder he's safe to go about his business.

Ignore the nationalisation of children and deliver Bradford and Clark an across-the-board anti-smacking victory? You deliver a victory to the red ones that sells out all those whom you claim to represent.

Crawling appeasement is an expression of blind faith and an open invitation to evil. The truly evil men and women are a minority -- "it is the appeaser," said Ayn Rand, "who unleashes them on mankind: it is the appeaser's intellectual abdication that invites them to take over."

This magazine stands opposed to that abdication and to that takeover. The real enemy is not

the statist themselves -- it's the spineless appeasers who give the statist sustenance. Appeasement doesn't work. If you want to hand the world on a plate to the statist, to the aggressors, to the killers, then 'the benefit of the doubt' is all they need to flourish.

Appeasement is not a winning strategy and it never has been. A compromise that delivers to the statist all they ever wanted is not a victory. A deal that rewards subtle aggression invites more naked and more virulent aggression later.

The appeasement of conservatives has done more for statism than the red ones could ever have hoped to achieve on their own.

Peter Cresswell, Editor
Send Peter mail at
organon@ihug.co.nz.

9..1..1..BUSY...REDIAL...HELP, THERE'S A RAPE IN PROGRESS...HALF AN HOUR? HEY, STOP!



YOU COULD BE A GOOD WITNESS. BUT WOULDN'T YOU RATHER SAVE A LIFE?

NEW FREELAND

A LIBERTARIAN FANTASY

something to be going on with • steps towards the freeing of New Zealand

Declaration of Independence, establishing a Constitutional Republic.

Constitution enshrining each citizen's right to life, liberty,
and the pursuit of property and happiness, limiting government's
function to upholding that right.

Cultivation of ethos where envy, welfarism and conformity-worship are replaced
by admiration for individual achievement and excellence, self-reliance, respect
for individual autonomy and man's distinctive faculty—reason.

Phasing out of all statutory bodies and legislation superfluous to or inconsistent
with non-initiation of force principle (see Editorial Policy).

Progressive disengagement of government from health, education,
welfare, broadcasting, art and culture, etc.

Earliest possible removal of shackles from the creative and productive—
GST, Company tax, Provisional Tax regime, Entertainment Tax,
Fringe Benefit Tax, etc.

Acknowledgement that compulsory taxation is theft—a violation of individual
sovereignty—but an unavoidable evil for the foreseeable future. Establishment
of flat rate of income tax at appropriate level, subject to progressive reduction as
government shrinks to its rightful size. Abolition of PAYE system—taxpayers
to be billed, as with rates.

Repeal of all other laws violating individual sovereignty, including those against
victimless “crimes,” i.e. laws regulating adult drug use, gambling,
pornography, prostitution, etc. This is not to bestow moral blessing on these
activities, simply an acknowledgement that they're not the law's business.

Editor: Peter Cresswell
Editor at Large: Lindsay Perigo
Assistant Editors: Sean Kimpton, Helen Simpson, Willie Seabrook
Design: Graham Clark (The Tomahawk Kid)
Business Administration Manager: Shirley Riddle.
P.O. Box 96-103. Balmoral, Auckland
Advertising: Contact Shirley Riddle on shirleyriddle@clear.net.nz
Subscriptions: Visit or email Shirley on shirleyriddle@clear.net.nz

Articles, Comments and Letters to the Editor, email the Editor at
organon@ihug.co.nz

Thanks to the resources, help, advice, encouragement and
contributions from around the blogosphere.

The opinions expressed by the writers herein are not necessarily
those of the editor, or of each other.

THE KIWI HERALD

News too good to be true from Moenui (Pop. 421) current holder of The Northern Region Best Kept Grass Verge Award

CLARK, KEY FORM GOVT OF NATIONAL UNITY



The Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition today announced the formation of a Government of National Unity after earlier coming to an agreement over the controversial Child Discipline Bill

In a move that has stunned political analysts Helen Clarke announced that National and Labour will continue to work together to "advance the interests of good parents and good children everywhere -and all the other good people too." A beaming Mr Key told reporters: "It seems so right that we should continue our new found common-cause this way." Describing the moment when the leaders agreed to form the new Government Mr Key said that "after we had agreed on the smacking bill we went to shake hands and for a wonderful moment our eyes met. It was as though we both knew at that instant that our differences didn't matter anymore. In a sudden outpouring of emotion I began to say to Helen that we should unite as one, but she interrupted me and said "John, I know. For the people's sake let us now walk side-by-side."

In the new spirit of co-operation Miss Clark and John Key will chair Cabinet "week and week about" while Michael Cullen and Bill English have already found a "lovely little bachelor pad to share." Meanwhile Katherine Rich has apparently promised to give Sue Bradford some make-up tips before the two celebrate by "hitting the dress stores." Taking their lead from the Child Correction amendment both major parties have agreed to withdraw the whip except in inconsequential cases such as "when Steve Maharey says a rude word or Brian Connell is a little bit naughty." Miss Clark hastily added that they would "just receive a light tap, and quite an inconsequential one at that," while Mr Key said the whip would be applied lovingly.

TV Presenters to "Multi-task"

More details of cutbacks to the news services at TVNZ emerged today with the announcement that news anchors Simon Dallow and Wendy Petrie will be required to "multi-task" as part of a productivity drive.



A news executive who would not be named said the pair would have to do "odd jobs" but denied this would involve "Wendy mowing the CEO's lawns or Simon Dallow appearing in a Superman suit at hen nights." Instead the pair would earn the station extra money and increase the ratings by adding exciting components to the news. Wendy would answer 111 calls on air while Simon, who is qualified as a lawyer, will do live conveyancing. *The Kiwi Herald* is pursuing

rumours that TVNZ's drive to revive its news ratings will also involve live coverage of pay negotiations for presenters. An insider could not confirm that this was planned but agreed that it would make great television. "The tears. The shouting. The threats and insults. It would be bloody marvellous viewing," he said, but added that creating a studio large enough to fit in the inflated egos involved would eat up several years of shareholder dividends.

"Stink" School Opts Out Of NCEA



In a move that has stunned the Ministry of Education, Moenui Area School has announced that it is abandoning the NCEA and will instead enter its students in the Tirau examinations. The move comes hot on the heels of statements by other leading schools, Avondale College and St Cuthbert's School for Girls announcing that they are considering entering students in the Cambridge exams.

TV NEWS CUTS GOOD NEWS AS 'PEAK NEWS' HITS

Moenui TV today announced the lay-off of a third of its news and current affairs staff saying "there is simply not enough news to go round any more."



A spokesperson for the troubled broadcaster said that the long predicted drop-off in news worldwide could be ignored no longer. "We are living in a period of 'peak news.' News is running out. We just have to face up to the fact that there are very few ground-breaking stories anymore. People are bored by endless tales of wars and disasters. They just don't cut it as news anymore. And there are only so many times you can

watch stories about celebrities and politicians making a horse's arse of themselves. "Frankly the average person finds the news irritating. Our recent surveys show that most people only watch TV news so they will recognise the presenters when they appear as competitors on future series of 'Celebrity Treasure Island', 'Dancing With The Stars' or 'The Great NZ Spelling Bee'."

Moenui Principal Hone Morris said that his students were "fed up with the NCEA" and needed to be challenged. The school had investigated the Cambridge exams but decided instead to opt for the Tirau examinations because Tirau is near to Cambridge and used to be called Oxford.

"Need I say more?" said Mr Morris.

Moenui Area School student Melodie-Ann Lewis described the move as "another pathetic attempt to make this stink school seem less stink."

Subscribe to 'The Kiwi Herald' online at KiwiHerald.Blogspot.Com



Globalisation is Freedom!

Part 3 of our interview with Johan Norberg, Globalisation Advocate

Scandinavian free-market radio show 'The Devil's Advocate' discussed globalisation with Swedish author and globalisation advocate Johan Norberg.

In this concluding excerpt, Norberg looks at the role of the state in the economic development of the Asian Tigers, and he offers his own vision of The Good Society: What is the proper role for government, and what should be left to markets and individuals? And is a development towards a classical liberal democracy (based on the rule of law and strictly limited government) realistic in an era where even (we might say especially) right-wing governments are at ease with the notion of a big state.

The Devil's Advocate: *So, we talked a bit earlier about the developments in Latin America and the experiences with capitalism there, and you talked about the success of the Asian economies, which have growth of around ten percent per year right now. You say that it's because of capitalism, but a lot of people make the argument, and you could make the argument, that even though Asia has achieved great financial growth, it has only been possible because the states have also been very strong. They have restricted imports and the rights of industries, supported and protected vital industries, suppressed political opposition and workers' movements to create stability—again keeping the wages low—and clearly most states in Asia are very powerful in a lot of ways. They're not exactly examples of liberal democracy. You could take both Taiwan and South Korea, which started out as one party states and military dictatorships, and of course the biggest example of this is China. What is the liberal democrats' answer to this?*

Norberg: Well I would say that that's a correct description of the government's influence in those countries and in those economies, but the important thing when we're trying to find out what it was that made that development possible is to compare it to other places. Was the difference that the government was more intervening in the East-Asian Tigers than in other places? No. The difference was that their protectionist drive was smaller and was abandoned earlier.

Basically all third world countries have had authoritarian governments. With few

exceptions, all of them have had a lot of government intervention and protectionism in the economy. The important thing then is to look at *to what extent and for which purpose*.

The difference with the first East-Asian countries that really moved out of poverty—with South Korea, Taiwan and so on—was

Basically all third world countries have had authoritarian governments. With few exceptions, all of them have had a lot of government intervention and protectionism in the economy. The important thing then is to look at to what extent and for which purpose.

that they protected the whole market in many cases, but they never protected the companies. The idea was instead to make the companies global and international. They were supposed to use their own comparative advantage, the cheap labour and labour-intensive industry, and always produce for the world market. So it was the idea of division of labour and of forcing them to face foreign competition all the time, so whereas other companies in places like Latin America, India or Africa, who were really protected, never implemented the new technologies or ideas. They didn't have to. They were protected. They didn't face the competition. Well the Taiwanese, South Korean and Japanese companies, they were always exposed to the strongest and the best, and that's why they also prospered, became more efficient, did that all the time. So the difference was that they went global at a very early stage.

The second difference was that when that happened, when people got richer, they also began to challenge the old dictatorial, authoritarian system and demand their rights. So earlier than in other countries, the governments were challenged by opposition groups, forced to implement more freedom of the press and independent organisations and in the end they became democracies.

I think there's an inherent problem in combining authoritarian governments with economic

liberalism. The problem is that you create new power structures. You create other groups that aren't as dependent on the government as they were before, and then they can begin to challenge the old things. When you have more international trade and communication, this also means that you have better access to and transfer of information. That's what I think is happening in China now as well. Even though you have thirty thousand policemen sitting at computers all day looking at the internet and trying to find out what to censor next, so many things slip through. The SARS epidemic was revealed by Chinese bloggers. Chinese websites constantly challenge

and push the frontiers of the government system...

TDA: *Still, we've been saying this for a long time, that the economic development is going to tip the power scales of the political structure, and we saw this happen very early of course in Russia. Immediately after economic reforms were introduced [the Soviet Union] just collapsed, but we're still waiting in China. How long is this going to take?*

Norberg: Of course, if you have an idea of the future on a sufficiently long scale, then you'll always be right eventually! But I can think we can already see it happening. First of all, the government has been forced to abandon so many restrictions on people's private lives, which they were in complete control of just ten or fifteen years ago. What people do, what they wear, where they work, where they choose to live their lives, whom they marry, whom they divorce—those were the decisions that the local Communist Party used to make. In people's lives, those are very important differences.

You can also see it happening when it comes to people's demand for more freedom. Last year we heard that the Chinese police admitted they had something like two hundred public small scale protests *every day* in China. It shows that there is something going on.

People who become richer, who see new alternatives, that it's not necessary that we have to live as we always did, they begin to challenge things and they become a problem and nuisance for the Party, and I think that the Party is beginning to feel that heat. They're really worried about how they are going to handle this. I'm not saying that everything will turn out fine and it'll be a great liberal democracy or something like that. It could also mean a collapse. It could mean

You can also see it happening when it comes to peoples demand for more freedom. Last year we heard that the Chinese police admitted they had something like two hundred public small scale protests every day in China. It shows that there is something going on.

separatism and even civil war, but what I'm saying is that it's difficult in the long run to combine increasing wealth, more economic liberalism and authoritarian governments.

TDA: *But still, it has been very successful so far. Couldn't we paint a picture of some sort of dystopia here? What we used to call "Soviet state capitalism" wasn't true, but this could be a kind of state capitalism of the worst sort, with no political freedom but a lot of economic freedom. Could you make the argument that the combination of liberal democracy and capitalism that we have in the West is really just a historical coincidence and that it doesn't have to be that way?*

Norberg: Well, in my worst nightmares I sometimes have the thought that perhaps this is really a new challenge to capitalism and liberal democracy that actually seems to work, but when I talk to Chinese people—to dissidents when I travel there and so on—that's not the impression I get. I don't get the impression that this is a stable system that will stay that way forever, but instead that there are enormous imbalances that will make it slip in one or the other direction. I don't think it's an historical coincidence that we have democracy and free markets in Europe and the U.S. I think they are two different ways of responding to the same basic urge, of trying to remove the limits on people's potential, their ideas, dreams and visions. When it happens in one of those areas, I think it has a tendency to also happen in the other places as well.

TDA: *Could you make the conclusion then, if you look at how development has been in Asia, that the question is not of more or less regulation but rather the right regulation? One leading Danish politician stated not long ago that when markets grow, regulation must grow as well. Even though that's a paradoxical statement in a lot of ways, you can see Asia experiencing huge growth rates and still having interventionist states. Could you actually make some sort of ideal regulation model out of this?*

Norberg: Well in a way you can say that, but only in a very trivial sense, that all economies are dependent on the rules that they're based on—the rules on property rights, on financial markets, the rule of law and so on—so you're only really regulating in a different way.

But I think there's a huge difference. It's a difference of: are those rules really part of a rule of law, rules that are non-discriminatory and apply to everybody? Is it easy to foresee how

they're going to rule in a specific incidence? In other words, are they rules that help people to do what they want to do, whatever it is, to give them that stability in their lives? Or are they *intervening* rules that give bureaucrats or politicians the right to block you and demand that you do things in a specific way? I think that those two are in a way contrary to one another, and I also think that what has happened in Asia so far—in China and other places—is that where you see the growth, the opportunities, the new companies and so on, is in the areas which have begun to open up and apply those liberal rules rather than the interventionist regulation.

In India it happened in telecom and computers, because that happened to be one area that the government didn't care about. They didn't think that that would ever work in India, so they never regulated it as much as manufacturing and farming, and it happened to be the one area where they succeeded. In China, you can see that growth in the provinces that got the right to have free zones, to allow individuals, entrepreneurs and families to experiment with foreign investments, world markets and so on, and *they* prospered. And we can see that the problems, the huge problems that do exist are in the parts that are really controlled by the governments and local elites.

Take the banking industry in China, for example. You have these huge debts, bad loans, money going straight into bad old government industries that really don't produce anything and it's still being given to the friends of civil servants and the politicians. And those are the imbalances that might really threaten the entire economy. I know that I might sound predictable, but I think it's fairly obvious when you look at the specific case studies, that too-heavy government intervention opens the room for those enormous mistakes and the old structures of control. When you open it up, you see the experiments, the new

individuals and innovators who are allowed to try the new things, the new ways.

* * * *

TDA: *I would like to finish by asking you, in general terms: what would your version of the Good Society look like? What would be the proper role of government and what should be left to the market and the individual?*

Norberg: Well, I happen to believe that the best way of thinking about that vision is to think of the classical liberal idea that we need the government to do the things that people cannot do, where we all have to abide by the same rules, the same structures and we cannot do anything else—basically, the areas of society where we need force, where we need to enforce specific rules and regulations. And that means that I have a very modest role for the government in my vision, because most things can be taken care of by people—individuals, organisations, businesses, cooperatives, whatever it happens to be—and are done better by individuals because then we can innovate and have a constant exchange of ideas and competition between different solutions on everything from healthcare to schools to how to organise things like communications and infrastructure...

TDA: *So let's be specific. Which areas do you see as core government areas?*

Norberg: The core areas are where we really need to enforce decision and where we cannot have competition—that's about the things that deal with force. It's about crime. It's about the threat of foreign invasions. Basically: the police, the defence, the rule of law, the system of law and legislation in a society. That's where we really need the government, because competition there, between police forces, that's not really competition, that's more like a civil war.

TDA: *So if you had been a member of the new Swedish government, you would have suggested to privatise healthcare and education?*

Norberg: (Laughs) I wouldn't have been part of the Swedish government, especially not with these opinions. But completely hypothetically, I'm not sure if I would have gone about things that way, trying to create that revolution and privatise everything, because that's not the way I think of politics, at least not nowadays...

TDA: *But in an ideal world, you would like to see healthcare and education being privatised?*

Norberg: I think so, but the way to go about it is to open up more in those sectors, giving people the freedom of choice, giving more private providers, private companies and private money the opportunity to enter the

system and create innovation and choice, so that it grows and evolves and the government share gets smaller and smaller as the private sector grows bigger and bigger. That's what I want to do, but I wouldn't want to go about this in a revolutionary way, for the simple

Chydenius or the French liberal Frédéric Bastiat had. The idea of: let's try to make sure that force and government intervention play as small a part as possible in our lives, because life is so much bigger than one single solution to all problems. It should be about

TDA: But to me it sounds like you would limit democracy, at least in its modern form that we know from modern western liberal democracy, which is very much to do with majority rule. So is there a clash between democracy and your classical liberal version of the Good Society?

What has happened in Asia so far—in China and other places—is that where you see the growth, the opportunities, the new companies and so on, is in the areas which have begun to open up and apply those liberal rules rather than the interventionist regulation. In India it happened in telecom and computers, because that happened to be one area that the government didn't care about.

reason that people are now dependent on those systems, because for some strange reason—basically ideological reasons and old bad habits—we've just kept expanding the government sphere in the last fifty years or so. Just to remove it would not really be showing the right consideration and respect for people, but instead giving them the new opportunities of building those private sectors up, that's what I would want to do.

TDA: Is this vision of the Good Society based on purely utilitarian motives or does it also have a moral foundation?

Norberg: For me, it's a moral foundation and that is really more important than the empirical and utilitarian consequences. That's basically the same kind of moral base that the classical liberals like John Locke or the Swede Anders

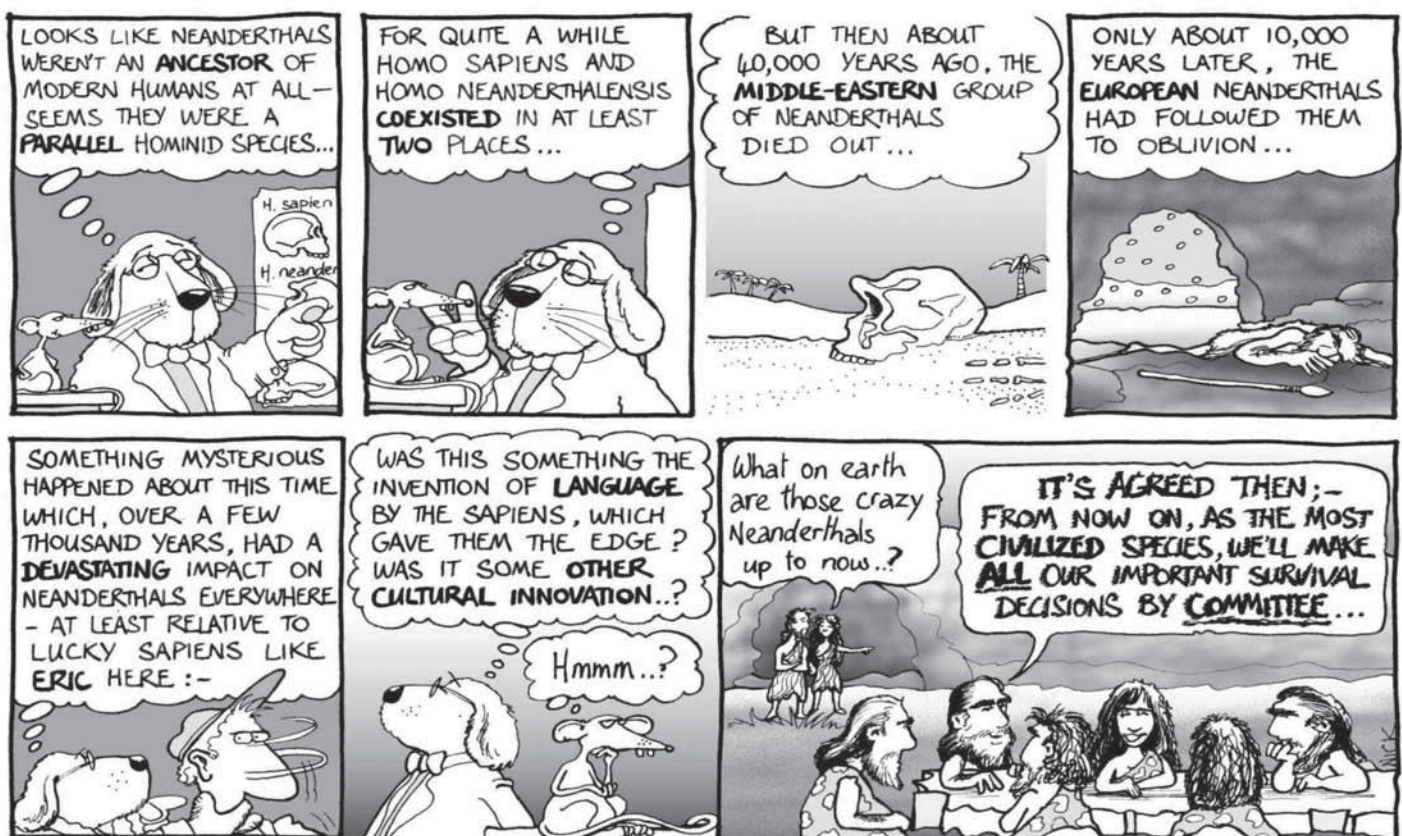
opening up opportunities, abilities, freedoms for people generally, but it has and is very closely associated with a utilitarian case, and that's not a coincidence.

My moral ground for this is based on the idea that individuals are actually quite smart. They're quite creative. They can do many things. That's why I think that freedom is a good idea, basically because people can create wonders, and that's what I think that history has taught us. In the last one hundred years of relative freedom we have created more than in the one hundred thousand years of oppression, slavery and feudalism before that. When freedom is being instituted at least partially, and it creates good healthy consequences and things improve. That's not a coincidence. That's really connected to the case.

Norberg: Well there's perhaps not a clash, but definitely a tension that will always be there, because whichever way you control or make the decisions in government, you can do it in such a way that really interferes with the liberal idea of a minimal state and less government intervention. Without a doubt, we see that every day. But I would also say that I think democracy is an important part of the liberal idea. It's the way of controlling the government that is, in Churchill's terms, the "least bad" version. All other ways also run the same risks, but to a much bigger extent because then you will see the risk that minorities will suddenly control the government and oppress the society. So democracy, in combination with division of powers, strong constitution, external checks and balances, as well as the media makes it possible for the people in control of the system to be kept in as tight a leash as possible.

TDA: Does that mean that for you it's more important to respect the rights of the individual rather than being able to make majority decisions?

Norberg: I definitely think so. If I don't vote every fourth year, it doesn't hurt the world that much. But if I don't have the right to speak



up, to use freedom of expression and so on, that's really lethal, and that's lethal for a society as well.

You can have majority dictatorship in a society, and we've seen that, where majorities really control and oppress people. To that extent, I think that having a free society—meaning independent organisation, people who feel independent from the government, have the freedom of expression and so on—is actually more important for democracy than formal voting. I think that historically, that's how democracy came to be born as an idea. We began with the idea that: whoops, here we have small tiny governments that control people, oppress and hurt them. The first thing we thought was: wow, this hurts people,

Things have really changed in Europe and the US. We don't see those strong classical liberal or libertarian influences in the big centre-right parties that we saw fifteen years ago. That's true and partly I think it's because if you have power, you begin to like it.

this destroys our freedoms, we have to stop that. Now *how* do we stop that? And then you begin to think about the procedures, the specific checks and balances, for example the general franchise and how it can control government so it doesn't become tyrannical. So the most important thing for me is always to avoid despotism and tyranny, rather than the specific procedure.

TDA: *But in the democratic models that we know in Western Europe, politicians and bureaucrats always tend to make decisions which enhance the sphere of majority rule and administrative discretion. Really only in times of crisis have democratic governments moved in the opposite direction, such as Thatcher and Reagan in the eighties, and even they were only stemming the tide rather than dismantling the state. Is it at all realistic that we will see, for instance, Western European countries return to constitutionalism and the rule of law proper, with a decisively limited government?*

Norberg: I'm not sure, but I would partly challenge that interpretation of what we have seen so far. If you look to our societies—to Denmark or Sweden, perhaps to the U.S. and Britain as well—twenty-five years back, I wouldn't say that our countries were freer back then. Perhaps we haven't seen the big breakthroughs when it comes to cutting taxes and lowering public expenditure, but when we look at other things—for example a freer media, the opening up of economies, fewer monopolies, fewer privileges for specific companies and organisations and things like that—well in those areas, I think that the majority decisions in many cases have opened up and liberalised to quite a strong extent. That makes me hopeful about the

future of these things. What we always talk about is the taxes and the expenses because it seems so difficult to do something about that, and that's because the interests there are much stronger...

TDA: *But if you look at modern, current supposedly right-wing governments or political parties, they all seem to be very much at ease and even at home with the notion of a big state. The Bush administration in America has overseen a huge increase in public spending. There are no more Goldwater Republicans anymore, it seems. The Danish Liberal Conservative government has unashamedly said that it acts as a custodian of the welfare state, and even the newly-elected conservative government here*

in Sweden seems to be quite modest with its ambitions. With the Tories in Britain under David Cameron, it also seems there's no more of the old "nasty" Tory Party, as it used to be called. Are classical liberals in reality not confined to dreaming of a smaller state, while modern, progressive conservatives and reformed social democrats will wield the real political power?

Norberg: You have to stop giving me all those examples! I'm getting depressed over here, because you're absolutely right. Things have really changed. We don't see those strong classical liberal or libertarian influences in the big centre-right parties that we saw fifteen years ago. That's true and partly I think it's because if you have power, you begin to like it. That's what you can see with people like Bush, who suddenly when he's got power wants to do all manner of different things to institute *his* ideas rather than everybody else's. I think that's one of the reasons why we always need a change of government. Time in opposition is great for all parties because it makes them more suspicious of power, and it makes it more possible for liberal ideas to work.

I think you're right, and I think this might mean that it's time for a bit of a change in attitude for people like myself, when we try to speak for changes: that it's more important to create reforms that have consequences that follow later on. Rather than trying to run straight into the system and getting a nose bleed, we should instead look at those reforms that might expand people's freedom and increase the demand for more freedom. I think that the school voucher system in Sweden was such a thing. When people got the freedom to choose schools for themselves or for their children, it meant that we saw new groups of

teachers and families who liked that freedom and wanted to keep that system in place, and also began to ask: if we get to choose this, why don't we get to choose in other areas as well?

And I think we could do that when it comes to the government as well. Why shouldn't the new centre-right government have the attitude that: I know for fifty years we've kept increasing taxes and so on and I know that there's also resentment. People don't want to just go back and abolish this, but let's say OK, you're going to keep those benefits that you already have and receive from the government. We're going to keep the government expenses intact, but everything else, always when we see new growth in the future, every single *krone* or dollar of that is going to go to you, directly as individuals, and you're going to see every year that step by step the money you receive will be bigger, but the same amount will be given to government that you're used to. In that case, I think that people would suddenly understand the connections, what happens when you see growth in the economy, what happens if you take it away from people or if you really give it back to them. They should actually see a big cheque saying: this is what you get this year, because we as politicians haven't taken more. If that happens, well step by step if we double the economy in twenty-five years, it'll mean that we'll have reduced taxes and expenses by half.

TDA: *So basically you are saying that in a depressing situation, a classical liberal should become more pragmatic and less radical?*

Norberg: (Laughs) I think that a depressed liberal would try to find ways out of that depression and propose new solutions, at the same time not challenging or questioning the basic principles or the idea of where we're supposed to go in the long run, but also trying to be constructive in giving people alternatives to the idea of doing everything at once.

TDA: Johan Norberg, thank you very much for your time.

Norberg: Thank you very much.

Johan Norberg is a Swedish writer devoted to promoting globalisation and individual liberty, and the author of the much celebrated In Defence of Global Capitalism. He also presented the British Channel Four documentary Globalisation is Good, which is based on his book. Since 2006 he has been a Senior Fellow with the Brussels based European think tank Centre for the New Europe.

This edition of 'The Devil's Advocate' was edited and hosted by Lars Hvidberg and Jacob Mchangama, and can be heard in full at www.devilsadvocate.dk.





DAVID B. KOPEL

CURRENT CONTROVERSY

Gun-Free Zones

The bucolic campus of Virginia Tech, in Blacksburg, Va., would seem to have little in common with the Trolley Square shopping mall in Salt Lake City. Yet both share an important characteristic, common to the site of almost every other notorious mass murder in recent years: They are "gun-free zones."

Forty American states now have "shall issue" or similar laws, by which officials issue a pistol carry permit upon request to any adult who passes a background check and (in most states) a safety class. Research by Carlisle Moody of the College of William and Mary, and others, suggests that these laws provide law-abiding citizens some protection against violent crime. But in many states there are certain places, especially schools, set aside as off-limits for guns. In Virginia, universities aren't "gun-free zones" by statute, but college officials are allowed to impose anti-gun rules. The result is that mass murderers know where they can commit their crimes.

Private property owners also have the right to prohibit lawful gun possession. And some shopping malls have adopted anti-gun rules. Trolley Square was one, as announced by an unequivocal sign, "No weapons allowed on Trolley Square property."

In February of this year a young man walked past the sign prohibiting him from carrying a gun on the premises and began shooting people who moments earlier were leisurely shopping at Trolley Square. He killed five.

Fortunately, someone else -- off-duty Ogden, Utah, police officer Kenneth Hammond -- also did not comply with the mall's rules. After hearing "popping" sounds, Mr. Hammond investigated and immediately opened fire on the gunman. With his aggressive response, Mr. Hammond prevented other innocent bystanders from getting hurt. He bought time for the local police to respond, while stopping the gunman from hunting down other victims.

At Virginia Tech's sprawling campus in southwestern Va., the local police arrived at the engineering building a few minutes after the start of the murder spree, and after a few critical minutes, broke through the doors that Cho Seung-Hui had apparently chained shut. From what we know now, Cho committed suicide when he realized he'd soon be confronted by the police. But by then, 30 people had been murdered.

But let's take a step back in time. Last year the Virginia legislature defeated a bill that would have ended the "gun-free zones" in Virginia's public universities. At the time, a Virginia Tech associate vice president praised the General Assembly's action "because this will help parents, students, faculty and visitors feel safe on our campus." In an August 2006 editorial for the Roanoke Times, he declared: "Guns don't belong in classrooms. They never will. Virginia Tech has a very sound policy preventing same."

Actually, Virginia Tech's policy only made the killer safer, for it was only the law-abiding victims, and not the criminal, who were prevented from having guns. Virginia Tech's policy bans all guns on campus (except for police and the university's own security guards); even faculty members are prohibited from keeping guns in their cars.

Virginia Tech thus went out of its way to prevent what happened at a Pearl, Miss., high school in 1997, where assistant principal Joel Myrick retrieved a handgun from his car and apprehended a school shooter. Or what happened at Appalachian Law School, in Grundy, Va., in 2002, when a mass murder was stopped by two students with law-enforcement experience, one of whom retrieved his own gun from his vehicle. Or in Edinboro, Pa., a few days after the Pearl event, when a school attack ended after a nearby merchant used a shotgun to force the attacker to desist. Law-abiding citizens routinely defend themselves with firearms. Annually, Americans drive-off home invaders a half-million times, according to a 1997 study by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

In Utah, there is no "gun-free schools" exception to the licensed carry law. In K-12 schools and in universities, teachers and other adults can and do legally carry concealed guns. In Utah, there has never been a Columbine-style attack on a school. Nor has there been any of the incidents predicted by self-defense opponents -- such as a teacher drawing a gun on a disrespectful student, or a student stealing a teacher's gun.

Israel uses armed teachers as part of a successful program to deter terrorist attacks on schools. Buddhist teachers in southern Thailand are following the Israeli example, because of Islamist terrorism.

After the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks in the U.S., long-time gun control advocates, including Sen. Barbara Boxer (D., Calif.), agreed that making airplane cockpits into "gun-free zones" had made airplanes much more dangerous for everyone except hijackers. Corrective legislation, supported by large bipartisan majorities in both houses of Congress, allowed pilots to carry firearms, while imposing rigorous gun-safety training on pilots who want to carry.

In many states, "gun-free schools" legislation was enacted hastily in the late 1980s or early 1990s due to concerns about juvenile crime. Aimed at juvenile gangsters, the poorly written and overbroad statutes had the disastrous consequence of rendering teachers unable to protect their students.

Reasonable advocates of gun control can still press for a wide variety of items on their agenda, while helping to reform the "gun-free zones" that have become attractive havens for mass killers. If legislators or administrators want to require extensive additional training for armed faculty and other adults, that's fine. Better that some victims be armed than none at all.

The founder of the University of Virginia, Thomas Jefferson, understood the harms resulting from the type of policy created at Virginia Tech. In his "Commonplace Book," Jefferson copied a passage from Cesare Beccaria, the founder of criminology, which was as true on Monday as it always has been:

"Laws that forbid the carrying of arms . . . disarm only those who are neither inclined nor determined to commit crimes . . . Such laws make things worse for the assaulted and better for the assailants; they serve rather to encourage than to prevent homicides, for an unarmed man may be attacked with greater confidence than an armed man."



Mr. Kopel is research director of the Independence Institute in Golden, Colorado, and co-author of the law school textbook, *Gun Control and Gun Rights*.



LECH BELTOWSKI

CURRENT CONTROVERSY

Gun Control

It's Mental Health, Stupid!

To anyone able to think rationally the most obvious, the most important lesson to be learned from the tragedy at Virginia Tech is that the authorities simply cannot ever adequately protect ordinary law-abiding citizens from criminal violence and madness, no matter what they claim. It is yet another example of how the false promise of gun control has once again cost innocent lives.

In the aftermath of the Virginia Tech shootings, the response of the gun control lobby world wide has been totally predictable. Yet part of the reason for their hysterical (and as the facts become clearer, increasingly illogical) calls for "tougher gun laws now" may well be that many of their high profile activists are now belatedly starting to realise that they may well be at least partly responsible for such incidents.

Their frantic and emotive calls, (which started incidentally from the moment the news first broke rather than from the time the background facts started to become known, which is the point at which intelligent people start to form opinions) also demonstrates that they are less interested in solving this problem and thus saving lives and more interested in pursuing their theoretical social agenda.

In reality, there are only three questions that need to be answered if we are to answer the questions of why it happened and what needs to be done to prevent (or at least very significantly reduce the risk) of such incidents happening in future.

Three simple questions:

- What allowed it to happen in the first place?
- Why did the police/FBI check fail to pick up Cho as being severely mentally disturbed and needing treatment less than two years previously?
- Why was he able to kill so many?

All questions the gun control lobby have been fudging for years, questions they have time and time again successfully prevented from being asked and acted upon. They know it's not a gun issue, but they don't want you to realise it!

What allowed it to happen? The Virginia Tech tragedy is simply one of a number of high profile murder-suicides that have occurred throughout the world over the last few decades.

Yes- MURDER-SUICIDE! That's what really happened at Virginia Tech - the worst form of psychiatric violence. So it's simply not a gun issue but a mental health issue. Common sense -- albeit a scare commodity these days, especially among supporters of gun control -- would surely suggest that any attempt to fix a mental health problem with a tougher gun law is doomed to failure.

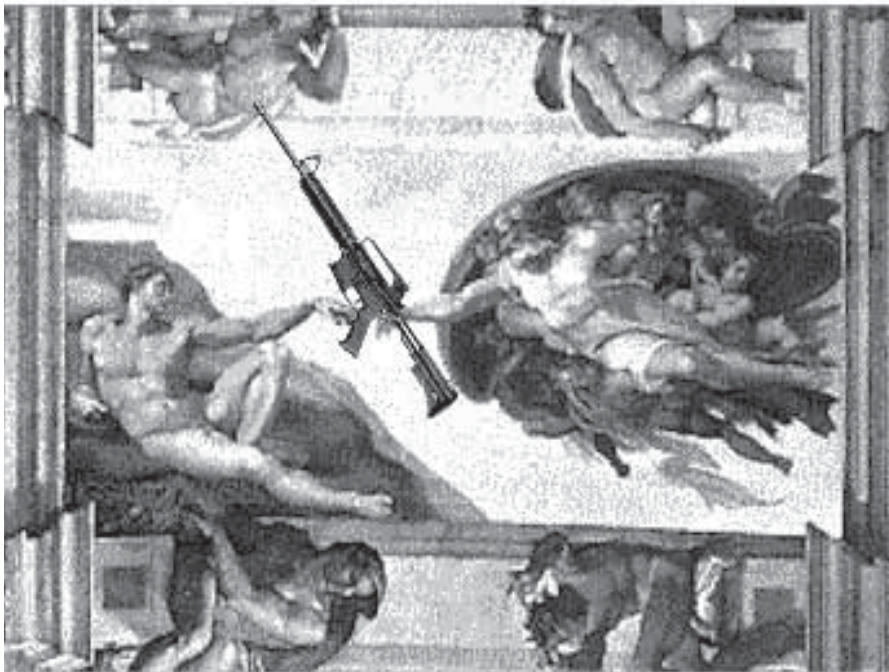
So what we really need to ask before anything else is precisely how and why this seriously disturbed and psychiatrically deteriorating young man was allowed to remain in the community, almost certainly inadequately medicated (if medicated at all) and apparently effectively unsupervised by mental health services. Because that is the real cause of the Virginia Tech shooting and until it is properly answered there cannot be any real solution.

The second question is also a no-brainer once all the facts are available: Why did the police/FBI check fail to pick up Cho as being severely mentally disturbed and needing treatment less than two years previously? Yet the "mass market" media continue to distort important information, and even days afterwards their articles and editorials show a massive bias against legal guns and towards more gun control.

For example, the *NZ Herald*, in one of its "Campus Massacre" articles immediately after the shooting offered its readers the information (given alongside a picture of two hands holding a Glock pistol and the caption "Easy Target") that Cho Seung-Hui needed "only" three pieces of identification and to pass a security check to buy a Glock pistol.

Now if anti-gun activists and their media fellow travellers feel that three pieces of ID and a police check are insufficient, they really do have to quantify precisely how much benefit a fourth, or possibly a fifth piece of ID would bring before calling for more law to further restrict millions of their fellow citizens. Or alternatively, they might belatedly start to ask the more logical question of why the check on the gunman, (done by the state police and the FBI at the time of the purchase) failed so tragically.

The reality is that the Virginia gun laws worked



"...he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one." Luke 22:36

Gun Free Zone



**In case of emergency call
911 and crawl to nearest
exit. If help is delayed in
arriving, kiss your
defenseless butt
good-bye!**

exactly as they were designed to work. The reason Cho was able to buy a pistol legally was not because the gun laws "failed" in some ill-defined and mysterious way, but because the state police and the FBI did not know Cho had been mentally ill. In short, the police/FBI vetting failed because Virginia mental health services had not flagged Cho as having a serious mental health problem. Now whether that was because he had been lost to follow-up, because of privacy issues or through human error, it does not change the fact that mental health professionals failed in their most basic and important responsibility to the community that employs them. This is one huge loophole that really does need tightening up urgently.

Furthermore, those baying for tougher gun laws need to admit that even if Cho had been prevented from buying a gun legally, he would still have been able to obtain guns *illegally* had he so wished. And what if instead of a gun he had used a knife, sword, bomb or poison? Once all these other totally possible different scenarios are thought about logically, it is clear that the "solution" offered by the anti-gun lobby is nothing more than a dangerous sham, a blatant and deceitful illusion.

The third and final question that needs an urgent answer is this: Why so many people were killed in this particular incident?

As renowned civil rights lawyer and researcher David Kopel has written, the most important characteristic shared by sites where mass murders have occurred in recent years is that they were all "gun free zones" That was precisely the situation with Virginia Tech, which had a policy of banning all guns on campus (except for police and university security guards) with even lecturers and professors being prohibited from keeping their own legally held and licensed guns in their cars.

So when Cho broke this university regulation by bringing his guns onto campus, he knew before he started shooting that there could not be any effective resistance for a considerable time.

In short, it was Virginia Tech's own "gun free zone" policy that allowed Cho to maximise his kill rate, to kill so many professors and fellow students with total impunity. The original

justification for this naive and dangerous relic from the gun control lobby's efforts in the late 80's, that it "would help parents, students, faculty and visitors feel safe on campus" rings very hollow now and will surely cause the administration of Virginia Tech much legal and financial anguish in future. Don't you wish you were a litigation attorney in Virginia just now!

Those active supporters of gun control in the past, those whose efforts and donations helped push the concept of "gun free zones" into legislation, must now accept that a large number of the victims at Virginia Tech (probably the majority) are dead because of their misguided efforts.

Three simple questions;

- What allowed it to happen in the first place?
- Why did the police/FBI check fail?
- Why was he able to kill so many?

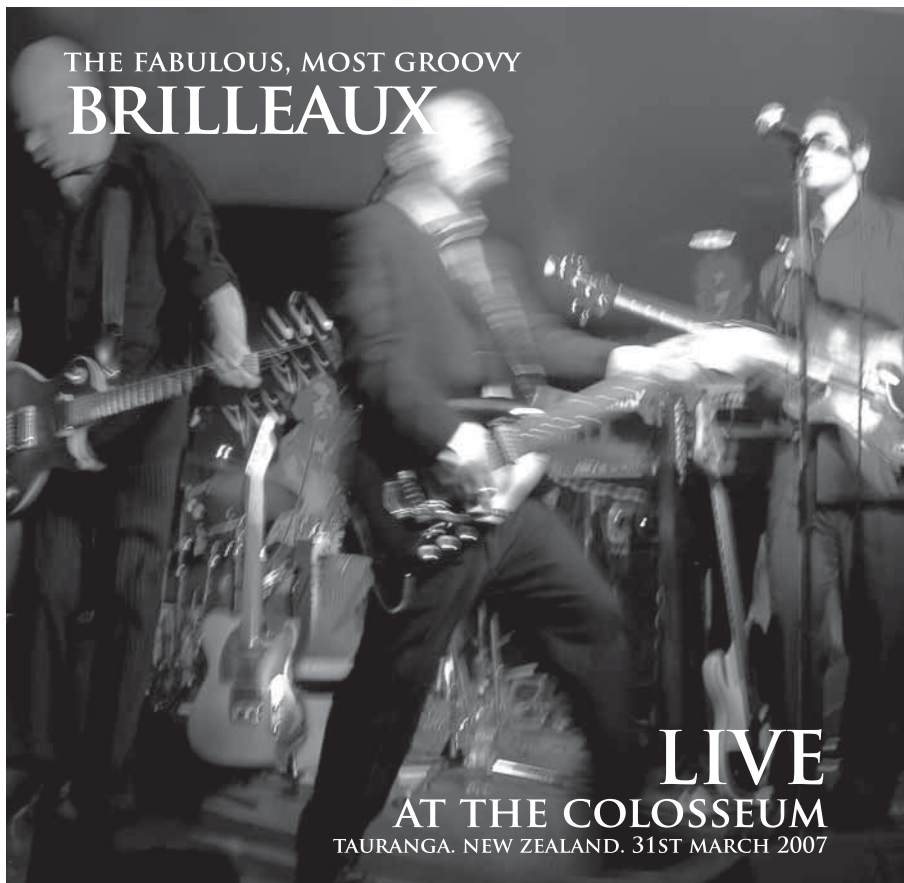
The answers show that authorities finally need to focus their efforts on the way mental health services function and on avoiding the tokenism of gun control laws that can never disarm criminals or the criminally insane if similar incidents are to be avoided.

And now that you also know, there is now no "not knowing" -- otherwise you too may have innocent blood on your hands, just like the gun control lobby!



**Lech Beltowski is an Auckland
doctor in general practice, and an
enthusiastic sporting shooter.**

THE FABULOUS, MOST GROOVY BRILLEAUX



**LIVE
AT THE COLOSSEUM**
TAURANGA, NEW ZEALAND. 31ST MARCH 2007

*50 minutes of hard-driving, progressive
Rhythm and Blues from the fabulous,
most groovy Brilleaux*

GET IT HERE - NOW!

Not available in stores

Proudly NOT funded by NZ On Air

3 other albums also available

NADINE (C. BERRY)
PHD IN STUPIDITY (G.CLARK)
HIT MAN (G.CLARK/B.ROLANDS)
GIMME ONE MORE SHOT (J.B. LENOIR)
SON OF A BITCH (G.CLARK)
BRILLEAUX SHOW (G.CLARK)
HOWLIN WOLF (G.CLARK)
HOOCHIE COOCHIE MAN (W. DIXON)
BEER GOGGLES (G.CLARK)
YOUR GOING HOME
(IN AN AMBULANCE) (G.CLARK)

Email: brilleaux@xtra.co.nz
www.brilleaux.orcon.net.nz

<http://brilleauxmaximumrnb.blogspot.com/>



32 Dead

When 32 people are shot dead and not one shot is fired back in anger, that leaves questions about why so many people were disarmed both literally and morally.

Virginia Tech was famous for being a "gun free zone". In June of 2005 a student, who had a gun permit, had a firearm on him when he went onto campus. He was disciplined as a result. At that time the governing board of the university approved another policy which made things loud and clear, they would never allow employees or students to carry firearms for self defense. The governing board openly, publicly, loudly, announced to the world *they had disarmed every person on the campus.*

Every person except, of course, any person who didn't mind violating the law . . .

Following the implementation of Virginia Tech's "gun free zone" policy in June 2005, Virginia Tech spokesman Larry Hincker declared he was "happy to hear" the bill allowing licensed students and security guards to arm themselves was defeated. "I'm sure the university community is appreciative of the General Assembly's actions because this will help parents, students, faculty and visitors feel safe on our campus."

Safe! As one commenter said, "So its not just that no one there was able to defend themselves but also that the gunman didn't even have to worry about the possibility." As another commenter noted, "The Universities in the USA would choose to be gun-free zones regardless of the Federal, State, County or City ordinances. Do not forget that the Universities are the nurseries for every left-wing canard, including the idea that you can legislate a 'gun free society' into existence."

Seems you can't. You can legislate guns out of the hands of law-abiding people, but you can't legislation murder weapons out of the hands of outlaws. Wishing so won't make it happen.

Twentieth-Century School Killings

Here's a list of the most tragic twentieth-century peacetime school killings in order of atrocity, just so we've got some context, and we're talking from the facts.

- Beslan School siege, Russia, 2004, 365 killed.
- Machakos school arson, Kenya, 2001, 58 killed

- Bath School bombing, USA, 1927, 45 killed.
- Virginia Tech shooting, USA, 2007, 32 killed.
- Ma'alot massacre, Israel, 1974, 26 killed.
- Dunblane School shooting, UK, 1989, 18 killed.
- Erfurt school shooting, Germany, 2002, 18 killed.
- University of Texas shooting, USA, 1966, 16 killed.
- Columbine High School shooting, USA, 1999, 15 killed.
- École Polytechnique Massacre, Montreal, Canada, 1989, 14 killed.
- Chinese Middle School riots, Singapore, 1956, 13 killed.
- Avivim school bus rocket attack, Israel, 1970, 12 killed.

You'll note that only four of that tragic dozen occurred in the United States. One tragedy that doesn't make that list is the shooting at the Appalachian School of Law in 2001, in which a disgruntled former student shot and killed three people. The reason the death toll wasn't higher? When students Tracey Bridges and Mikael Gross (an off-duty police officer) heard the shots they immediately ran to their cars to retrieve their handguns locked within, and within minutes the two had the bastard disarmed and restrained.

Fortunately for those whose lives they saved, the Appalachian School of Law had not been declared a "gun free zone."

Nor did the shooting at Pearl High School, Mississippi make their list. Another disgruntled student shot two students when Assistant Principal Joel Myrick, after retrieving *his* handgun from his locked car, stopped him on his way to kill more. Armed resistance put an early stop to wild killing, allowing responsible gun-owners to save lives.

Virginia Tech: A string of failures -- and one glaring failure tops them all.

In the wake of the Virginia Tech massacre, blogger Nicholas Provenzo notes that "like most disasters, it seems that the [Virginia Tech] massacre wasn't caused by just one failure, but by a string of failures."

Perhaps "caused" might state it too strongly, after all it wasn't those who failed who pulled the triggers, but there was one signal failure that does top them all, as Dr Michael Hurd points out.

Hurd notes that same failure in all those had observed the killer in the weeks before the massacre -- the killer's room-mate; the killer's creative-writing teacher; the killer's poetry teacher -- all of whom saw something that deeply disturbed them, *but all of whom failed to act.* Specifically, *what they failed to do was to pass judgement.* Says Hurd:

Come on... You can say it. Go ahead, I dare you. Say it. He was EVIL. He was BAD. He was not quantitatively different from your average, stressed out college student...he was qualitatively different. He acted with choice, no less so than the 9/11 killers, the Columbine killers, or the Oklahoma City killers. It's not mental pain or anguish. It's hatred and evil.

It's so clearly evil, the wonder is why those three individuals left themselves morally disarmed by their inability simply to make that clear judgement and to act on it. As Hurd indicates, just look just how reluctant these three individuals are to describe evil -- that is, "a substantive threat to the living and the good" -- when that evil does everything but jump up and hit you right in the face. Says Provenzo,

If the take-away from this tragedy is that people like Cho--that is, the viciously amoral and depraved--are helpless victims who only needed our "love" and "compassion" and understanding" to deter them from their path, I think we will only pave the road for the next unspeakable tragedy. There are people who choose to be utterly nihilistic, and it is our right to defend ourselves against them.

When nihilists say they're intent on destruction, we are entitled to take them seriously.

You can't be friends with a nihilist hell-bent on destruction. Evil is not the same as emotional conflict. If you still don't understand this in the aftermath of this tragedy, then you're never going to understand it; and the way is paved for another one, and another one after that.

Killers flourish in a psychological atmosphere where their potential victims think like this. This man didn't need counseling, and never would have benefited from it. He needed to be stopped, back when he was stalking women and making threats, and otherwise violating the individual rights of those on a campus. But he wasn't stopped, and all because of a failure to pass judgement.

As Ayn Rand says in her article "Our Cultural Value-Deprivation" (contained in her collected essays, *The Voice of Reason*):

The next time you hear about a crazed gang of juvenile delinquents, don't look for such explanations as 'slum childhood,'

'economic underprivilege,' or 'parental neglect.' Look at the moral atmosphere of the country, at the example set by their elders and by their public leaders.

What is the moral state of a culture in which it is too politically incorrect to pass judgement? And what can we say about the cultural leaders who made it that way?

On violence

There is one last point to ponder, and on which I'm sure most of us will agree:

1. Violence is bad.
2. But wishing it away won't make it go away.

I've noticed that many people commenting on the current tragedy -- and on other issues including the issue of smacking children and the overarching threat of Islamic totalitarianism -- have great difficulty distinguishing on the one hand between force used to *commit* violence, and force on the other hand that is used either to avert disaster or in self-defence *against* violence. It should be obvious that if one is barred either legally or culturally (or by Philip Alpers) from using force either in self-defence or to avert disaster, then force in the more violent form is going to predominate.



That should be a 'no-brainer.'

Who Am I To Judge?

Virginia Tech student Katelynn Johnson has been working overtime to memorialize Seung-Hui Cho, the cold-blooded executioner of thirty-two of her fellow students, who know each other as 'Hokies.'

Johnson added a 33rd stone to a memorial consisting of 32 stones, one stone meant to commemorate each victim of the shootings. The 33rd stone she added was meant for the shooter, with a stone placed alongside those of his victims. Her reaction upon noticing that Cho got "left out" of the memorial?

"I just lost it. I broke down. I was seething. I remember saying . . . 'How could people be so mean?' "

"To see this community turn on one of its own no matter what he did is heartbreaking to me," Johnson said. "If we're a community, we're a community. If we're a family, we're a family. You can't pick and choose your family."

"We lost 33 Hokies that day, not 32," she wrote. "Who am I to judge who has value and who doesn't? I am not in that position. Are you?"

Says blogger Rob Tarr at the 'Thrutch' blog:

There you go, folks, the perfect ultimate product of Progressive education: Identification with the collective as a primary which trumps everything; and the complete inability and unwillingness to make any moral judgements whatsoever. You can't even really say whether a mass-murderer is, well, maybe, a "bad" person.

I have to believe that Katelynn is still a somewhat extreme example. But if she is not, America is now primed for dictatorship -- give it one or two more generations. Who

can judge if a Hitler or a Stalin has value, or doesn't? If he's part of our community, then he's one of ours, and when you're family, you're family. Let's stick by 'em. Doesn't matter what they did.

Not exactly the kind of principles that would send you to the ramparts, willing to fight to the death for what's right. Who are you to judge?

After encountering the Katelynn Johnson story, the blogger at *bblog* ran it by a couple of coworkers.

One condemned it without hesitation and the other "totally agreed" with the student. Wha? I was dumbfounded. Unsurprisingly, the views belonged to a conservative and a liberal, respectively. If this sort of view is prevalent, I think we're in for a rocky couple decades.

And if one wants to get an inkling of how such an attitude as Johnson's is even possible, one need go no farther than an essay by Katherine S. Newman in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* [emphasis added]:

[R]ampage school shootings are never spontaneous. Before they loaded a single weapon, Michael Carneal, Andrew Golden, and Mitchell Johnson had let fly with dozens of hints, ranging from vague comments like, "You'll see who lives or dies on Monday," to more-specific warnings to friends to "stay away from the school lobby." Those warnings started months before the shootings themselves. ...

Why do **school shooters broadcast their intentions**? They are **trying to attract the attention of kids whom they hope will embrace them as friends but who have typically denied them the social status they crave**. Michael desperately wanted the acceptance of the "goth" group in his high school, which barely tolerated his presence. He posed as a delinquent when he was actually quite intellectual, passing CD's he owned off as stolen property. He stole pistols from his home and brought them to school as gifts for

the most charismatic of the goths. "Not good enough," was the response. "We want rifles." No matter how hard Michael tried to change the way his peers saw him, nothing worked until the day he started fantasizing out loud about taking over the school and shooting people. That did work. He began to get attention. And once he had announced his intention, he risked social failure if he declined to go through with it.

School shooters are problem solvers. They are trying to turn the reputations they live with as losers into something more glamorous, more notorious. Seung-Hui Cho, a student of creative writing, probably didn't get a lot of "street cred" for his artistic side. Young men reap more social benefits from being successful on the football field. When their daily social experience -- created by their own ineptness, and often by the rejection of their peers -- is one of disappointment and friction, they want to reverse their social identities. How do they go about it? Sadly, becoming violent, going out in a blaze of glory, and ending it all by taking other people with them is one script that plays out in popular culture and provides a road map for notoriety.

It is exactly as Rob Tarr says above: for such misbegotten products of Progressive education, *identification with the collective trumps everything else*.

It would seem that two obvious questions elude students such as Cho. First, if one repeatedly gets rejected by someone else, why not move on? And second, what good is it to you to be dead? Their answers make sense only when one realizes that they have been taught not that one's **life** is an end in itself, but that the approval of others is.

For them and the Katelynn Johnsons of the world? Excluding someone from the group is a worse crime than murder -- if they even have the sense to regard murder as a crime.

[Source: GusVanHorn.Blogspot.Com and AmitGhate.Blogspot.com].



TIM WIKIRIWHI

UN-PACIFIC POLITICS

The Right Of Revolution:

In Praise of Commodore Frank Bainimarama

The latest coup in Fiji by Commodore Frank Bainimarama has highlighted for me the corruption of so-called "indigenous rights," a recipe for division which is peddled around the globe by the corrupt socialists of the UN. Four coups in twenty years is hardly a good look, but the instability is itself a product of racist laws that makes instability inevitable.

Bainimarama's coup is the complete opposite of the previous three coups, each of which attempted to establish absolutely the UN's apartheid agenda for indigenous rights. Whereas Rabuka and Speight were acting to cement the racist laws that raised indigenous Fijians over other Fijians, Bainimarama is a defender of the principle of equality.

Bainimarama said he was compelled to act against the government because corruption had flourished under Qarase, whom he himself appointed after the 2000 coup, and because of proposed laws that would grant pardons to plotters in a 2000 coup and hand lucrative land rights to indigenous Fijians at the expense of the large ethnic Indian minority.

"Qarase betrayed our trust when he went back to team up with the very people who caused the political instability of 2000," Bainimarama said. The new electoral system he pledged to implement would ensure that all votes cast were equal, and the present race-based election system abolished. This requires indigenous Fijians to vote for Fijian candidates, ethnic Indians for Indian candidates, and others for a third group of candidates. "We want to rid the constitution of provisions that facilitate and exacerbate the politics of race", Bainimarama confirmed at the outset.

In seeking to put a permanent end to the racist Fijian electoral system and to permanently abolish laws that grant favouritism to indigenous racists, he is in my estimation worthy of praise and support reserved for the greatest benefactors of mankind.

Apathy and submission to injustice via political delusions

A basic principle of justice is that all law should be colour-blind; that everyone, regardless of race, should be equal before the law. We here in New Zealand have however grown soft on inequality. That this is true can not only be shown by the complete lack of protest against the blatant apartheid of the Waitangi Tribunal, of the many, many race-based policies still on the books in New Zealand.

This is an indictment against ourselves and our country, and a measure of our complacency and foolishness. So many people in so many places around the globe have been deceived into thinking that "the rule of democracy" is synonymous with "the rule of law"; that democracy is a safeguard of freedom. It is nothing of the sort.

Democracy is simply a counting of heads regardless of content. True liberty exists only when the inalienable rights of all individuals, regardless of race or colour, are put beyond the vote. Belief in the 'democracy fallacy' is so prevalent however that when a democracy is overthrown, even a racist democracy such as Fiji's undeniably was, many immediately say that the perpetrators are dangerous criminals!

The reality is that democracy can be as unjust as an absolute monarchy, and it is just as immoral for a parliament to grant legal favouritism upon the grounds of race as it is for a king to do so, no matter how many people might vote for it!

The rule of law means the rule of *principles* of justice especially of the principle of *equality* before the law – *equality for all, regardless of race!* The democratic "mandate of the majority" is a valid way of choosing *who* should be in government, but not a valid way of justifying *how* they govern, or *what* laws they pass, nor an automatic justification of any law proposed by a democratic Parliament! Democracy is *not* synonymous with freedom.

Totalitarian democrats dread the spread of Bainimarama's ideals

What the Clark regime are scared of is this: the simple realisation that a racist democracy not unlike the one they themselves are running has been overthrown, and overthrown in the name of overturning that entrenched and legalised racism. They can do nothing else but condemn Bainimarama!

The right of revolution

Let me state the fact that the principle of equality is no light or transient cause. What motivates me to support Bainimarama is exactly the same principle as motivated the American Declaration of Independence.

We must all be aware of the maxim of Edmund Burke: "All it takes for evil to prosper is for good men to do nothing." If you are in a position of power to stop a great injustice, but do not exercise that power, does your inaction not amount to complicity? Any man of virtue

in Bainimarama's position would be obliged to make the same choice: That is either do nothing and allow the evil of apartheid injustice to go unchecked, or to act and put an end to it!

According to Lockean principles, it is not unjust to overthrow a tyrant. Any good man has the right to stop the enemies of mankind *by the law of nature*, just as they have the right to kill any savage beast. We have the natural right to defend our lives and property. It is not a crime but a righteous necessity to overthrow a corrupt government.

The limits of political power and the supremacy of justice

While many people understand that the principle of equality before the law means you cannot have one law for blacks or browns and another for whites, few people appreciate the fullness of its limiting power over government whatsoever its form. This same principle guarantees absolute equal freedom for all: It means a president, a king, or an indigenous native has no more rights than the lowliest citizen or the most recent immigrant.

Equality before the law means you cannot have a state religion. It means you cannot have an official culture. It means you cannot have one law for the rich and another for the poor. *It means you cannot grant any favouritism whatsoever!*

The tyranny of the mob under demagogues

How many people really want true equality? Not many! Most would rather have some say over their neighbour's rights and liberties than enjoy their own – they would rather have an absolute, unlimited democracy – one in which nothing has been put beyond the vote – if it allows them to somehow bully their neighbour, or to gain preference for their own. There are plenty of demagogues willing to crush minorities and to ride the waves of bigotry into power, and plenty of people around the world ready to applaud the bigots.

The proper constitutional context of the conventions of democracy

The power of voting is more critical when the government has tyrannical powers. When government is kept in check by a just libertarian constitution – when the government has been limited to protecting the rights of the individual, and the elected government is barred from totalitarianism or unlimited majority rule – then the power to vote away the rights and liberties of minorities is of much

less consequence (and remember that the smallest minority is the individual, whose rights a just government is sworn to uphold).

In such a system, what the US Founding Fathers described as a constitutional republic, no matter what religion or culture is in the majority or who is voted into office, the government cannot pass discriminatory laws nor usurp greater powers at the expense of the rights and liberties of the population.

The fact that nations like Fiji and New Zealand don't have such constitutional restraints means that the right to vote is itself looked upon as the primary safeguard against corruption, and the notion of taking away an elected government by force sends dread through the Mobocracy -- yet that liberation will be met with jubilation by the liberated minorities who have borne the brunt of democratic injustice.

The limits of representative government and the power of consent

It must be remembered that the right to vote is not a licence to create a tyranny of the mob. The right to vote in a representative government is subordinate to the principles of justice. The mandate of the majority can never legitimately override the principle of equality before the Law. The principle of the consent of the governed is itself subordinate to the principle of equality before the law.

The principle of equality is the only condition of justice whereby **everyone** can be justly **expected** to grant consent, so this principle becomes an absolute justification for any form of government that is constitutionally founded upon it. Those who refuse to consent to equality and instead desire an unjust form of rule, whether they represent either a majority or minority, can rightfully be ignored and even suppressed (meaning: be halted from unjust revolution):

- It is just to impose equality upon an unwilling/barbarous population by force to keep their prejudice in check.
- It is just to crush socialist uprisings.
- It is just to overthrow racist democracies.
- It is just to hunt down religious terror groups who seek religious tyranny.
- It is just to go to war to liberate a slave pen, and to occupy foreign lands wherein the threat of ideological evil dwells.

The justice of all these things hinges on the principle of equality. Equality before the law is the standard by which to judge the validity of all law and government.

This ultimate truth is founded upon our God-given equal rights, rights that exist as inalienable absolutes irrespective of laws and governments. Fiji is technically in a state of civil war, and has been since it instituted racist government long ago, at which point it went to war against those citizens whose rights it overthrew. In overturning a racist government and in suppressing racist mob uprisings, I submit that Bainimarama is acting under this principle of justice. He must take care how he goes about this difficult task.

The current confrontation with the Great Council of Chiefs was inevitable, since it was this corrupt political body that was behind the Rabuka and Speight coups, and behind the apartheid system of favouritism for indigenous Fijians. He must divest these tribal chiefs of their corrupt powers that perverted the democracy of Fiji into an apartheid system. The best thing the chiefs can do is support a new constitution in which *all Fijians*, regardless of race, are recognised as being equal before the law.

The responsibility for government rests with the people

"Power corrupts and absolute power tends to corrupt absolutely." This is the great fear of any nation, and no doubt is a reason many fear the power of Bainimarama. I wonder why these same fearful souls are not leading a revolution against Helen Clark and Her Own Absolute Democracy!

How much evil will these frightened souls suffer before they rise up against her? Even in Western civilisations, millions are dying each year as a direct result of socialism, yet no one acts against it because democracy has turned them into spineless slaves. Ultimately absolute tyrants everywhere prosper because the population is too scared to overthrow them. They prefer the safety of slavery to the risk of dying for freedom. Mugabe will continue to tyrannise Zimbabweans until the people say enough is enough. Putin will continue to suppress Russian protest until the people say enough is enough. Their tyranny will continue until those sufficiently brave and staunch enough for freedom run into the seat of power and oust these tyrants!

The limits of tyrants are set by the resistance of their citizens. All would-be tyrants must fear the wrath of freedom-loving people! Dictatorships can only stand where the people choose submission over revolution. The price of liberty is indeed eternal vigilance.

Who ought to engage in such revolution? Every enlightened individual who refuses to submit to tyranny. New Zealanders need to sort out their own apartheid systems of state before they tell Commodore Bainimarama to surrender to the racists of Fiji!

Tim Wikipiriwhi is a Hamilton engineer, and a self-described Independent Libertarian.





'SPARTACUS'

BRITISH POLITICS

New Tory = New Labour: UK's Tories go pink

Former UK Conservative candidate 'Spartacus' describes how Britain's Conservative Party has been hijacked by a bizarre alliance, with a result that will already be familiar to followers of New Zealand politics.

In 1979, Margaret Thatcher brought both Britain and the Conservative Party back from the brink of disaster. Her government ended the trade union militancy that brought the country to its knees. Its privatisation of failed industries and liberation of the economy delivered prosperity. Now, less than two years since his election as Leader of the Conservatives in November 2005, David Cameron and his allies have repudiated "Thatcherism" and purged the Thatcherites from the party. So how did this hijack happen?

It began when Michael Howard remained as "caretaker" Leader after resigning following the May 2005 election defeat, and plotted Cameron's meteoric rise from election policy co-ordinator to Party Leader in a mere six months.

It is worth pointing out that Howard is a social authoritarian – he is no Thatcherite. Whilst leader -- and contrary to normal practice -- he secretly agreed to become a Patron of the Tory Reform Group, the dripping Wet and fanatically *pro*-European Union pressure group (as many readers will be aware, from McMillan to Heath to Thatcher to Major, the Tories have been split down the middle by

the issue of European Union). Significantly, several Tory Reform Group Patrons are now advising Cameron on policy.

After the 2005 election loss, Howard appointed Francis Maude – a leading "moderniser" – to the key post of Party Chairman. The leadership contest should have taken place immediately after Howard's resignation but in doing so that would have favoured David Davis, the "Thatcherite" frontrunner. Instead, "modernising" Maude and the departing Howard immediately proposed to remove the party members' right to select the Leader, and to return that power to MPs alone. The change was eventually rejected by the party's National Convention, but it did achieve its real objective of delaying the leadership contest.

The Cameron team took advantage of the delay to plan and execute a highly professional campaign, one which by contrast made the Davis campaign seem decidedly complacent and amateurish. To make matters worse, Davis's speech to the Party Conference bombed and from which his campaign never recovered. Cameron won easily with two-thirds of the members' votes. A newspaper later reported that Maude helped Cameron prepare his conference speech (so much for

the Chairman's impartiality!).

The purge of principle

Shortly after the election defeat, Maude announced that the Approved Candidates List -- on which all Conservative candidates had previously been gazetted -- would be scrapped and all candidates required to re-apply. At around that time, a new organisation was formed with official party backing: Women2Win (W2W). was set up to campaign for more women to be selected as Parliamentary candidates. Its website contains the politically correct statement that "Women2Win believes we will substantially increase our electoral support if we make a determined approach to ensure that the gender and ethnic mix of our candidates in winnable seats reflects modern Britain."

It was to be the first sign of the forthcoming purge of the Approved List, and the dripping wetness to begin pouring down from above.

W2W was soon given total control of the approval and selection of Parliamentary candidates. The Candidates' Committee contains two W2W officers and three members of its advisory board. Shireen Ritchie, Chairman of the Candidates Committee, is a member of the advisory board.

The purge started during the leadership contest. Around 300 approved candidates (from a total of around 800) were summoned to individual panel hearings. Through the grapevine, it became apparent that most were either Thatcherites or libertarians. My own hearing was chaired by one of W2W's stooges on the Candidates Committee. The unfriendly tone of the questioning suggested that my fate, and others like me, had long been sealed. Sure enough, the standard rejection letter arrived only a few days after Cameron's election. No reason was given, but the decision was final and there was no appeal whatsoever.

So what was the problem? My CV was dominated by a career in privatisation, and activism in libertarian and Eurosceptic pressure groups. In effect, I was the wrong sex, the wrong colour, and held completely the wrong views to be welcome any longer in Cameron's new Pink Tories. I was not the only one nursing a rejection slip. Several friends with similar profiles and views also received rejection letters. Others found themselves restricted to applying for local seats only.

However, the W2W cabal on the Candidates Committee carried on the purge and selected



WORLD'S FIRST FACE TRANSPLANT 'A SUCCESS'



BEFORE



AFTER

a "Priority List" of the "best" 150 candidates. Only those on the Priority List could apply to be candidates for target seats and for seats where the incumbent Conservative MP was standing down at the next general election.

The supposedly secret Priority List was soon revealed by independent Conservative Home website. More than half of the Priority List were women - nearly 90% of all the women on the original list! A large proportion had not fought a Parliamentary election and some had only just joined the Party. At least ten women were from Mrs Ritchie's own Kensington and Chelsea constituency - more than from all the northern regions! Most of the men on the list were either party officials, prominent Cameron supporters, or from an ethnic minority. Gone from the list were almost every Thatcherite and libertarian, and most of the best performers from the 2005 general election -- but front and centre were some of the worst performers, but who nonetheless fit the newly desired New Tory profile!

Conservative Campaign Headquarters (CCHQ) has interfered in the selection of candidates. Traditionally, it only supervised selections to ensure fairness. Informed sources tell me that it now advises local associations on whom to interview and to shortlist. As a result, inexperienced women have been selected ahead of men with proven track records.

Two libertarian friends for example who lost only narrowly in 2005 have been deselected by their local associations. One has been replaced by an authoress who has never fought an election before, the other by the Chief of Staff to Theresa May MP, chairman of W2W. The few remaining free-marketters on the Priority List have found themselves blocked by the Candidates Department.

The purge had been achieved successfully.

Policy? What policy?

Equally concerning however has been the Party's policy swing to the left, often times outflanking a more Thatcherite Blair on that flank. On policy, Cameron has returned to Old Wets in John Major's cabinet for advice. Kenneth Clarke, former Chancellor and lifelong wet, chairs the Democracy Task Force. John Gummer, former Environment Secretary and born wet, chairs the "Quality of Life" policy group. The Foreign Policy Council includes a veritable tidal wave of wetness from Michael Heseltine (Major's Deputy) to Douglas Hurd (former Foreign Secretary) and Chris Patten (ex Party Chairman, former EU Commissioner, and several miles to the left even of Ted Heath).

The result of this deluge of moisture is predictable. Education vouchers and tax credits for private health insurance have been

ruled out. State spending on state health and education will increase in real terms. The "proceeds of growth" will be "shared" by the state and the private sector. Tax cuts are out, but 'Green taxes' are in -- tax cuts will not be allowed to "threaten economic stability." Cameron has embraced environmentalism with an almost religious zeal (Al Gore, for example, was invited to address the Shadow cabinet in March, receiving a rapturous reception, and Cameron has made much of placing a wind turbine on his roof, which has generated no power but much applause). Cameron even proposes a form of personal air travel rationing to "tackle climate change." The man is a born-again statist. One leading Thatcherite described Cameron as "the grandson that Ted Heath never had."

Cameron has placed party management in the hands of his fellow Old Etonians. Oliver Letwin, MP, is in charge of policy co-ordination. Ed Llewellyn (aide to Patten in Brussels) is Chief of Staff. Dan Kruger is the chief speechwriter. George Bridges is Director of Campaigning. There are no fewer than 15 Old Etonians who serve as frontbench spokesmen in the Commons and Lords, all of whom owe allegiance to their new leader.

To sum up, Maude and Howard plotted to secure the leadership for David Cameron. Cameron has appointed as policy advisers the Old Wets of John Major's failed cabinet and prominent Patrons of the Tory Reform Group. To run his office, write his speeches and run his campaigning, he has appointed several Old Etonian cronies. Meanwhile, under the cover of promoting the selection of more women and ethnic minority candidates, the Women2Win cabal has purged the Thatcherites and libertarians from the party's candidate list, and ensured that "Cameroons" have been selected in most target and safe seats.

In the meantime, and without any real claim to having achieved it on his own, the Labour government has self-imploded and handed Cameron an 8 to 10 point lead in the opinion polls. Pink Tory MPs and activists can sniff power again and they're delighted. Cameron is secure as leader and the Thatcherites are left to lick their wounds and ponder how the Left managed to steal control of the Party from under their noses. The reality is that the "Tory Toffs" have executed a truly brilliant coup with a military efficiency that any ruthless dictator would be proud of.

If that coup and the 8 to 10 point lead is translated into electoral victory in 2009 or 2010, the big loser is going to be the British people -- if, that is, Cameron hasn't been shown up before then for the phony pretender that he is.

Watch this space.





The Peer Review Mafia

Scientific research was once the hobby of gentlemen with private means, sometimes even by a servant of such a gentleman (Leonardo da Vinci, for example,). The results of such research were often in private diaries, but more often in published books. Scientists would communicate by mail or personal visit. Newton's *Principia* was published in the Latin language.

Eventually scientists got together to form societies where discoveries could be aired and discussed.

In England an impetus seems to have been given by Sir Francis Bacon's writings in criticism and censure of the system of teaching in colleges. It is supposed that his suggestions as to what should be the aims of a scientific society led eventually to the establishment of the Royal Society. He pointed out how little had really been accomplished by the existing institutions of learning in advancing science, and asserted that little good could ever come from them while their methods of teaching remained unchanged. He contended that the system which made the lectures and exercises of such a nature that no deviation from the established routine could be thought of was pernicious. But he showed that if any teacher had the temerity to turn from the traditional paths, the daring pioneer was likely to find insurmountable obstacles placed in the way of his advancement. The studies were "imprisoned" within the limits of a certain set of authors, and originality in thought or teaching was to be neither contemplated nor tolerated.

Bacon's ideas were practically expressed in the learned body, the Royal Society of London.

The history of scientific journals dates from 1665, when the French *Journal des Sçavans* and the English *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society* first began systematically publishing research results. Over a thousand, mostly ephemeral, were founded in the 18th century, and the number has increased rapidly after that. Today scientists have become professional paid workers, often employed by Governments, Universities or Industrial organisations.

Reputation, and often salary and promotion of scientists is based on their ability to publish their research in established scientific journals. The quality and reliability of these publications is monitored by a system of peer review. Editors seek the opinion of scientists working in a similar area. Their names are supposedly

secret. The work of reviewing is carried out free.

This system has worked well in the past. Many of the most respected journals are operated by well-run scientific societies who try to keep to high ethical principles of free speech, genuine controversy and scrupulous fairness.

The system is, however, prone to a number of drawbacks which have become more acute over the years.

- Firstly, journal editors are often no longer officers of a scientific society, but are more likely to be journalists or managers more interested in circulation figures. A range of shorter articles is likely to appeal to more readers than a few longer articles. Unpopular subjects are discouraged. Even a degree of sensationalism helps to sell journals.
- The peer review system is often an opportunity to kill competitors or encourage supporters.
- The delays in publication are often too long. Really important results usually appear in the popular press.
- The complexity of modern science means that it is impossible for a peer reviewer to check the work of others since it often requires access to expensive equipment or very large databases.
- Prejudice by editors is difficult to overcome. Sir Cyril Burt, as Editor of the *British Journal of Statistical Psychology* was able to publish several completely spurious articles. Some editors of pharmaceutical journals are able to publish work favouring particular manufacturers.

The result is that there have been a number of recent examples of scientific results which could not be reproduced and even some which were fraudulent.

This article outlines how the peer review mafia can prevent publication of any material which criticises the belief that increases in human-produced carbon dioxide causes global

warming. Several editors of well known journals have departed from the traditional impartiality by being vigorous advocates of this theory. They include the editors of *Nature*, *Science* and *Scientific American*. Criticism of the greenhouse theory is discouraged by these and other journals, and they seem to depend on a core of reliable "peer review Mafia" who can be depended upon for a rejection slip if the orthodoxy is questioned.

The IPCC Reports have an impressive list of "peer reviewed" papers to support their arguments, but very few who question them. There are some which appear from the title to be supportive, but are less so if the text is read.

Journals are becoming fiendishly expensive. I recently complained that the Wellington Central Library no longer takes *Nature* and *Science*, both of which I had got into the habit of reading there. They replied that they could no longer afford either the \$5660 it now takes for them to subscribe to *Nature* or the \$1050 for *Science*. Many scientists are concerned that nobody reads their stuff because personal subscriptions (\$500 for *Nature*) as well as library subscriptions are rarer.

Although publication in established journals is still the key to academic success they are becoming less and less relevant. One reason is the need for rapid publicity; essential for those who need evidence to support future finance. This has led to a rash of 'premature science' in the popular media; results which "might" or "could" be useful. Of course the journals are "on line" for a fee from an institution (even at the Wellington Public Library).

Science controversy is increasingly being transferred to the web. Peer review takes place by means of open discussion from people who do not hide under anonymity, but publications on the web have a much greater circulation than do the journals. I can cite personal experience. If I put one of my subjects in a search engine, my publications come first (including my Enviro Truth newsletter). Sometimes they take you to a publication in *Nature* where you are told you cannot read it without payment. Of course the Journals must make a profit, but publication on the web is cheap and articles published there are both freely and widely available.

A straw in the wind is the recent US Climate Change Science Program publication

Temperature Trends in the Lower Atmosphere which has been published on the NOAA website, but nowhere else. Abandoning their usual exclusive references to peer reviewed published papers, the IPCC has been forced to include a reference to this web publication, apparently for the first time.

The web publishes things the journals can't. Scientists prepare visual Power Point

presentations which can now be seen on the web. The very latest to hit the web are complete lectures or documentary presentations, such as the recent Channel 4 documentary *The Great Global Warming Swindle* which can be seen on YouTube.

They cannot censor the web, although they do try. They attacked the TechCentralStation website because it was allegedly supported by Exxon. They publish lists of "dissidents"

like myself in the hope that we will be silenced. But the web is where the battle is fought, and will be won; not the scientific journals with their peer review mafia.

Dr Vincent Gray, of Wellington, is the only scientist in New Zealand who has been an expert reviewer on every draft of the many IPCC Reports.

THE PROBLEM WITH PEER REVIEW

By S Fred Singer

The recent stem-cell fiasco in *Science* magazine has drawn renewed attention to the shortcomings of the scientific peer-review process. There have been many other such cases in which peer review failed, like the endocrine-disrupter scare featured in the book *Our Stolen Future*. In most of these cases it is difficult to blame the reviewers for failing to spot fraud. Eventually, the failure to replicate results in the laboratory would expose these fraudulent results.

But what about scientific results that cannot be verified by independent laboratory experiments? In the area of environmental studies we have seen the case of the "Hockeystick" – an elaborate analysis of proxy data for temperatures, which seemed to establish the 20th century as unusually warm and was accepted by many as a sure sign of anthropogenic global warming (AGW). It was exposed as false only through the diligence of a single investigator who had never published on climate issues but was able to carry out a detailed audit of the data and methodology.

Unfortunately, such audits cannot be conducted on a routine basis – and certainly not by referees. It is the editor, therefore, who bears a special responsibility, since it is the editor who chooses the referees. It is incumbent on editors, therefore, to be especially careful when dealing with "breakthrough" papers that promise unusual results.

In this respect, the record of the leading scientific journals, *Nature* and *Science*, is not very good. This is especially true in the environmental area, which has both high visibility and policy significance. Ozone depletion was a hot topic in the 1980s and led to the signing of the Montreal Protocol in 1987. Global warming continues to be a hot topic – before and since the signing of the Kyoto Protocol in 1997. I will confine my choice of examples to these two areas since I am most familiar with them:

BREAKDOWN OF PEER-REVIEW SYSTEM (Examples of breakdown are listed, together with the most prominent scientific 'debunker')

1. Environmental effects of supersonic transport (SST) debunked by Singer
2. *Limits to Growth* (1972) Maddox, Simon, Singer, and recently Nordhaus, Lomborg
3. Nuclear Winter (Sagan et al in *Science*) Singer
4. Acid Rain impacts Singer
5. Solar UV and Skin Cancer (J. Kerr in *Science*) Michaels et al
6. Arctic "ozone hole" (Anderson et al in *Science*) Singer
7. AGW in the 20th Century--before 1940 ... (Wigley in *Science*) Singer
8. Fingerprint of AGW (Santer in *IPCC-Third Assessment Report*) Michaels, Singer
9. Climate – Hockeystick (Mann in *Nature*) McIntyre, McKittrick
10. Scientific Consensus on AGW (Oreskes in *Science*) Peiser
11. Ocean Heat Storage – a "smoking gun" of AGW (Hansen et al in *Science*) Singer
12. AGW as the Cause of Disappearing Frogs (Pounds et al in *Nature*) Michaels
13. AGW and Human Health (Patz in *Nature*) Goklany
14. Nuclear Winter Redux (Turco et al in *Science* 2007)
15. Sea Level Rise (Rahmstorf in *Science* 2007)

Causes and remedies

There are many other examples; it would take a book to discuss them fully. But we know enough to (1) demonstrate a breakdown in scientific standards, (2) examine the likely causes, and (3) suggest possible solutions.

1. I put the cause squarely on the editors of *Nature* and *Science* (and more recently also the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*), on their personal prejudices and also on their competitive drive to outdo each other by attracting and publishing papers that advertise spectacular results and seemingly confirm that human activities are damaging the environment.

2. With authors clamoring to publish in *Nature* and *Science*, both editors can choose the papers they wish to accept, using their

personal criteria of "novelty," "relevance," "importance," etc. The underlying criterion might also be: Will it support the AGW thesis and attract media attention? They can then choose the reviewers, more or less as they please. None of the studies listed above would have been published if a different set of reviewers had been chosen; they would not have survived. From my personal experience, I review papers regularly for *Environmental Geology* and other journals, but have not been asked to review a single paper for either *Nature* or *Science* for at least 10 years.

3. Remedies for this situation do exist: Either competition will slowly displace these journals or editors or their policies will change. Consider that the first successful attack on the Hockeystick was published in *Energy & Environment*, a relatively new journal. I was one of the referees of this paper. And then there is the Internet and blogs. I spend an increasing fraction of my time reading them and their critiques of published papers. I list some of them:

1. ClimateSceptics (Yahoo group) edited by Timo Hameranta/ David Wojcik
2. ClimateAudit.Org by Steve McIntyre
3. CO2Science.Org by Sherwood, Craig and Keith Idso
4. WorldClimateReport.Com by Pat Michaels
5. ClimateSci.Atmos.ColoState.Edu/ Roger Pielke, Sr
6. Prometheus--Science\Policy Weblog Roger Pielke, Jr
7. JunkScience.Com Steve Milloy
8. CCNet: Staff.LIVJM.Ac.UK/SPSBPEIS/ CCNet-Archive.htm Benny Peiser
9. Center for Science and Public Policy: FF.Org/Centers/CSSPP/Index.html
10. NZ Climate Truth Vincent Gray
11. EnviroTruth.org National Center for Public Policy Research
12. And, of course, my own 'The Week That Was' at SEPP.Org

Reserve Bank of New Zealand encouraging cartel banking:

"Where's the outrage?"

State interference in the financial affairs of New Zealanders has reached a disturbing new low point. Reserve Bank Governor Bollard has purportedly orchestrated a 0.6% home loan rate increase in closed-door negotiations with the major trading banks.

While all other political parties have kept silent on the questionable legality of this price fixing, the brazen cartel-like behaviour seems to be welcomed by the governing Labour party, with only National's finance spokesman English suggesting more transparency is needed. Where's the outrage? While seemingly simultaneous petrol price rises bring about yelping from all quarters and calls for the oil companies to be either taxed more, nationalised or some such socialist nonsense, a state-sanctioned rise of around 0.6% on home loans goes by unmentioned and uninvestigated.

There is no law that allows the Reserve Bank to coordinate commercial banks to target home mortgage holders for special financial pain. For the Reserve Bank to talk directly to, and in concert with, the commercial banks has clearly taken it well beyond its lawful mandate, which is to keep prices stable via the Official Cash Rate (OCR). In fact, common law has a large case history when it comes to financial conspiracies to defraud.

What makes these actions all the more disheartening is that the home loan mortgage market in New Zealand was finally exhibiting some signs of real competition after years of the 'Big Five' sticking it to home-loan holders with little or no investigation by the anti-competitive behaviour watchdogs. Where are the highly-paid bureaucrats of the Serious Fraud Office when you really need them? The stranglehold of the 'Big Five' had been broken by the entry of Kiwibank and the TSB into the market, introducing some real competition: the basis point spread coming down to around the international average of 40-50 bps after a series of "home loan price wars." But now the Reserve Bank has given those same banks the green light to cream off an extra 60 basis points as pure, unearned profit, most of which will unfortunately leave the country for Australia, further widening the trade deficit in the process. In this light, the move could be considered in the very least as anti-New Zealand and in the extreme perhaps even treasonous. In what upside-down world is sending more money offshore to Australian-owned banks good for the New Zealand economy?

The role of the Reserve Bank in this possibly fraudulent activity calls into question the rationality and morality of the existence of a Reserve Bank at all, now that the willingness to abuse its state-given powers has been demonstrated. Secret meetings with the large commercial banks for the purpose of a state institution to pervert the natural processes of the market and financially penalise a particular sector of the community amounts to the moral equivalent of imposing a fine without a crime being committed.

The Reserve Bank has set a scary precedent; if the Government, or the Reserve Bank cartel for that matter, were to decide that it did not like the political opposition it was getting

There are several reasons why the Reserve Bank has been drawn into making such desperate and legally fraught moves, and they stem from the fundamental fallacies upon which modern central (statist) banking has been based

from one sector of society or another, what is there to stop it from using the demonstrated banking cartel powers to penalise or punish that sector using other financial measures? The Reserve Bank might just as well encourage special higher banking fees for farmers or cash withdrawal limits for "global warming deniers," a stretch to be sure, but the moral justification has now been put in place by these recent moves.

There are several reasons why the Reserve Bank has been drawn into making such desperate and legally fraught moves, and they stem from the fundamental fallacies upon which modern central (statist) banking has been based.

The first and most obvious fallacy is that the Official Cash Rate, as dictated to the financial markets by the Reserve Bank, is sufficient to control the supply and demand of money in the economy and thus to keep prices stable. It isn't. It is precisely because of the ineffectiveness of this one-size-fits-all interest rate lever that Bollard has had to direct the banking cartel to target home loan holders. It is a sure sign of policy failure when ever more contorted and morally questionable

activities are undertaken to compensate for the fallacies of the original premises, and their lack of practical effect in the real world.

The second fallacy is that the Reserve Bank has complete knowledge of all the necessary information required to correctly set the OCR and thus to regulate a perfect cost of money, keeping supply and demand in balance across all sectors of the economy that require financing. Expecting such omnipresence and omniscience from the Reserve Bank is a logical absurdity, and -- as it has turned out. -- an unreasonable expectation. At best, the Bank can only hope to approximate the capable, invisible hand of the free market, which has proven to be most efficient at regulating the cost of money.

Libertarianz monetary policy calls for the outright abolition of the Reserve Bank and its legal power to create fiat money. In an environment where many competing banks and finance providers are issuing credit currency and negotiating financing deals with the various sectors of the economy,

the interest rates will naturally vary widely across all sectors. Instead of exporters being whipped about by the whims of the housing market or of the sharemarket or other such economically-distorting artificial linkages, they would be able secure financing based solely upon their own prosperity and likely return on capital. In this regard, Libertarianz policy will stop New Zealand from forever repeating the tragic boom-bust cycle, inherent in centrally-planned statist monetary systems with a one-size-fits-all interest rate.

In summary, the discipline of a free market monetary system would deliver stable real-term prices across all sectors of the economy and a vastly more flexible banking environment. The spectre of a state institution, like the Reserve bank, going to secret meetings with the most financially powerful members of society, the banks, to organise a ganging up on and gouging of the financially most vulnerable, home-loan holders, should rightly become a thing of the dark past of a centrally controlled banking system.

Greg Balle is the Libertarianz Finance Spokesman.





Bollard's meddling exacerbates the boom he's trying to bust

Where's the sense in strangling producers and exporters in pursuit of a goal that is, at the very least, highly questionable? Reserve Bank Governor Alan Bollard has raised and raised the Official Cash Rate – whacking up interest rates ever higher in a Canute-like attempt to “fight inflation” and somehow control galloping housing prices. We have a house price inflation problem, the only agency mandated to do anything about inflation can only use interest rates, and all the other parts of the government are working to make things worse by artificially restricting new house supply

He's fighting a losing battle, but this is the only way he knows to fight it and he doesn't care how many exporters and producers he harms along the way. Alan has a job to do, and a battle to win. It's a battle that he's losing. He's losing it because of a *myth*, and because of a *mis-integration*.

The *myth* is that “inflation” consists of rising prices. It isn't, or at least *not exactly*. As Milton Friedman was fond of pointing out, “inflation is always and everywhere a monetary phenomenon” -- or to put it another way, “inflation” is specifically a measure of the expansion of the money supply. This is something of which Alan Bollard seems wholly ignorant -- he's still labouring under the idea that it's rising prices, an *effect* for which the expansion of the quantity of money is generally the *cause*. What the dumbarse hasn't noticed is *that it's him that's printing the money*. (M3, the usual measure for such things, increases at 13-15% year-on-year according to the Reserve Bank's own figures.)

Inflation (understood in terms of an increase in the quantity of money) enters the economic system in the form of new loans, driving up prices first in those markets in which this credit expansion has taken place.

Ask yourself which market is rising above all others at present? If you answered, “the one Bollard is trying to squelch,” then you get the prize.

Now, on to his *mis-integration*: The thinking, if one can call it that, behind Bollard's raising interest rates is the traditional one that a *lowering* of interest rates creates a credit expansion (credit becomes cheaper, you see), and by contrast *raising* interest rates reduces credit expansion. This is considered a general rule of economics, one which Bollard follows assiduously. He is nothing

if not a man who follows his textbooks. He doesn't however appear to have looked around at the New Zealand situation, which is rather different to his textbooks. In the textbooks, credit expansion comes in the main from a large central bank -- in the US, that's ‘The Fed.’ However here in the rather small but nonetheless perfectly formed country of Godzone, things are somewhat different to those textbooks that talk of larger markets.

In New Zealand, foreign investment has a far greater effect on credit expansion than it does in many other markets: raise New Zealand interest rates above international rates, and you attract a flood of investment -- or to flip that coin, an enormous expansion of credit, albeit at high rates. Hence the housing boom. New credit, new immigrants and new foreign buyers and new investors in the NZ housing market help drive up housing prices on the demand side -- meanwhile the RMA and the Building Act do their job in strangling supply -- and each time Bollard whacks up interest rates, he invites more foreign buyers and investors and their money into the NZ market.

As Don Brash said when Reserve Bank Governor, “in a small open economy such as ours, no central bank with a commitment to low inflation can be indifferent to major movements in the exchange rate.” His successor appears not to have heeded that advice.

Bollard doesn't seem to have realised that his own nostrums may have exacerbated the very boom he is trying to squelch -- strangling producers in the process as the interest rates they are paying to expand their businesses go up -- strangling exporters in the process as the New Zealand dollar rises again on the back of the increased foreign investment in New Zealand -- strangling savers in the

process, as they face very low compensation for the risks they take in investment -- and leaving him looking, not for the first time, like an economic wizard without a wand.

Our “fateful wish for price stability”

The Reserve Bank's inflation-fighting is keeping interest rates high and our dollar high, nailing producers, exporters and home-buyers to a cross of price stability that is itself a mirage. This “fateful wish for price stability” is described by Thorstein Pollett at the Mises Economics Blog:

The Austrian economists' great concern is that a government-dominated money-supply regime would ultimately lead to economic and therefore political disaster; the objective of price stability would not alter such a dismal prediction. Even if a central bank succeeds in stabilizing a targeted price index, it would — by an ideologically motivated increase in credit and money supply — generously increase credit and money supply. It thereby distorts the economy's price mechanism, promotes malinvestment and initiates subsequent economic downturns...

In other words, even if the Reserve Bank were to be successful in removing the evil of price inflation, in removing real price signals from the market (or trying to) they play havoc with markets, and likely lead to worse troubles down the track.

The story of one control after another, and how the “banking cartelisation” fits in.

The natural progress of things is for liberty to yield and government to gain ground.
- Thomas Jefferson

They say one bad apple spoils the barrel; one rotten apple will quickly affect a whole bunch. The same is true of government controls. One control is introduced to ‘correct’ something that's making some legislator unhappy, following which economic imbalances occur; new controls are pretty quickly called for to try to correct them, following which more are introduced to correct the dislocations that occurred from *those* controls, and so on. Control follows control, as dislocation follows imbalance.

The history of government controls is like the story of the Emperor's New Clothes in reverse: New controls are added all the time in order to fix the problems caused by previous controls, but no one is listening to the little boy who is saying, “Why not just take off the controls altogether, and then



Alan Bollard: "Oh shit, what have I done?"

you won't need to make up new ones."

The New Zealand history is no different to elsewhere. Last month, and on the recommendation of the Reserve Bank, finance minister Michael Cullen floated the idea of an "adjustable mortgage levy" -- a tax, in other words -- on home-owners' mortgages. This new idea was made up by Reserve Banker Alan Bollard, and was a sign of his desperation. It was swiftly shot down as being politically unacceptable, which did nothing to allay the ever-growing desperation of the would-be banker. Still struggling to keep price inflation under control, and desperate to do something -- anything -- Bollard most recently has resorted to behind doors negotiations with the Big Five banks to orchestrate a concerted raising of rates. Nothing more anti-competitive could be imagined, and nothing more desperate.

The reasons for his desperation are well known. Large increases in house prices and construction costs are affecting the Bank's inflation figures, and in order to control inflation, the Bank needs to control house prices. If they keep house prices down, then they don't need to put interest rates up. If they don't put interest rates up, then foreign investors won't find our currency so attractive, and if they don't find our currency so attractive, NZ exporters won't find it so difficult selling on the world stage with a currency that's so over-priced.

The *de facto* cartelisation is the latest measure desperately calculated to fix the symptoms while ignoring the cause. The proposed tax was another; in the words of Reserve Banker Alan Bollocks, it was "designed to force a wedge between the price paid for credit by mortgage borrowers and the returns available to the savers financing those loans (especially the interest-sensitive foreign savers)."

The interesting thing here -- and here I go back to the apple analogy I started with -- is that every link in this inflationary chain is the result wholly or in part of some government control.

The money supply is controlled by the Reserve Bank, a central bank in the model of the US Federal Reserve, which as economic historians have repeatedly demonstrated, have between them propped up statism and generated inflation, malinvestment, and the boom-and-bust business cycles they were themselves supposed to remedy. NZ's Reserve Bank Act was itself a remedy of this sort. In an effort to 'tame the inflation monster,' the Bolger Government created the Reserve Bank Act which has for some time now been strangling producers, exporters and economic growth on the cross of "price stability." It hasn't worked. Growth is said to be "too fast." Property keeps "blowing out." And no matter how much Bollocks shakes his fist and stamps his feet, it just keeps right on "blowing out" -- and as long as the laws of supply and demand remain in place, they'll keep blowing in and out.

There are of course many reasons for his impotence, and for the current blowout. As much recent research has shown, a major factor for housing in NZ's major cities being rated severely unaffordable is the regulatory strangling of land supply and the enormous rise in construction costs brought on both by huge spending on long-delayed infrastructure projects, and by excessively 'gold-plated' regulation to belatedly 'fix' leaky homes (regulations which were themselves brought on to "fix" earlier government regulations).

So as control has followed control and as dislocation has followed imbalance, newer and newer measures are dreamed up to "fix" the problems created by all these earlier "fixes." Another tax. A "mortgage levy." A new cartelisation. Another imposition on taxpayers. Another hurdle for home-owners.

It's always more of the same, isn't it. New controls are added all the time in order to fix the problems caused by previous controls, but no one is listening to the little boy who is saying, "Why not just take off the controls altogether, and then you won't need to make up new ones."

The Emperor is still naked. And he's getting fatter every day.

More myths about inflation

If oil prices keep falling, that'll be good for inflation, right? Well, not exactly. Frank Shostak points out that it is not increases and decreases in oil prices that drive the inflation rate, it is actually increases and decreases in the money supply -- and we know who controls that. Check out his analysis here. As the Mises site summarises:

The idea that increases or decreases in oil prices are what drives the inflation rate ... is an ancient Keynesian-style myth, based on the idea that producers have exorbitant power to make consumers shell out no matter what the economic conditions. Of course the myth has a

convenient advantage for [central banks], in that it completely removes the [central banks] from blame, which is why you often find [central bankers] promoting the myth--most recently [Alan Greenspan's successor] Ben Bernanke.

As Milton Friedman has always said, "Inflation is always and everywhere a monetary phenomenon." Think about that. And here's another related myth: the one that says "inflation is under control."

Is it? If inflation is "under control" how come some prices (energy, housing, medical care, education, interest rates) have been going through the roof, while some other prices (computers and computer accessories, wireless phones, watches, shoes and clothing) have been gently and benevolently been falling over recent years?

The answer of course, is that the official inflation figure, the Consumer Price Index, is simply an artificial fiction designed to conceal these changes -- but is an artificial fiction on the basis of which our central bank is strangling the economy and exporters with higher interest and exchange rates than would otherwise be the case.

Can anyone tell me why we put up with it? Why are even mainstream economists these days happy to accept that the markets for shoes, clothing and computer can be managed by the market, but the market for money has to be managed by a government department, even when it's demonstrably destructive? And as a supplementary question, why is it that it is the freer markets are the ones in which prices have been gently and benevolently falling, while it is the more controlled markets in which prices are increasing?

Have a think about that.



"Regarding the Great Depression.

You're right, we did it."

Four years before he became chairman of the Federal Reserve, Benjamin Bernanke (then "merely" a Fed Governor), gave a speech commemorating the 90th birthday of Milton Friedman. Below is his concluding statement:

Let me end my talk by abusing slightly my status as an official representative of the Federal Reserve. I would like to say to Milton and Anna: Regarding the Great Depression. You're right, we did it. We're very sorry. But thanks to you, we won't do it again.

This goes up on the mantel next to Greenspan's essay lauding the Gold Standard. [Source: Tim Swanson, The Mises Economics Blog]

New report confirms runaway regulation feeding runaway house costs

A new study commissioned by the Housing Corporation says that policies set to restrict sprawl and to limit choice are making housing in Auckland severely unaffordable -- findings that due to the inanity of Alan Bollard and the Reserve Bank Act effect all of us, and effectively confirm what previous studies by Wendell Cox, Hugh Pavletich and Demographia have been saying all along: that envy is making housing unaffordable; that so-called sustainable cities are unaffordable cities; that sprawl is good, but regulation is not; that 'smart growth' is not green; that NZ housing affordability is in crisis, and the dream of home ownership in Auckland is now just that: a dream.

Among the key findings of today's report from the Centre for Housing Research[pdf] are:

- Since 2000, increases in demand for housing [in Auckland] have outstripped increases in its supply. The result has been a major increase in land and house prices. A range of factors have contributed to increased demand including positive net immigration, higher incomes and higher employment, coupled with strong ability to borrow to finance house purchase. A number of factors have constrained supply. One of these has been a limited supply of land. Another contributor has been difficulties in the consents process, especially its time consuming nature; lack of appropriate resources within councils to handle both non-notifiable and notifiable consents is partly responsible for this situation.
- Population in the region grew 35.0% in the fifteen years to 2006. Over the same period, the stock of dwellings rose faster (36.9%). In the five years to 2006, this relationship reversed: population increased by 11.6% while dwelling stock rose 10.9%. Manukau occupancy rates (population per dwelling) stayed high at around 3.6, indicating continued housing stress in South Auckland. Occupancy rates in Auckland City stayed constant, despite the increase in small CBD apartments, implying some increase in housing stress in parts of Auckland City.
- Between 2000 and 2005, the median house sales price rose by over 60% in Rodney District, North Shore City and Auckland City, by over 50% in Waitakere and Franklin, and by 48% and 39% in Manukau and Papakura respectively. Over the decade to 2005, the median ... price increased in a range of 88% (Papakura) to 131% (Rodney and Franklin). Apartment prices also rose strongly, but not as much as for house prices. This lower rate of apartment inflation may reflect a variety of factors

including: more responsive supply of apartments than houses; differential construction costs for the two types of dwelling; temporary oversupply of (some types of) apartments; differences in investor versus owner-occupier attitudes to risk and yield; and a preference by purchasers for stand-alone houses over apartments. The difference between house and apartment inflation also reflects land inflation. Vacant section prices doubled or more than doubled in the five years to 2005 in Auckland City, Waitakere and Franklin. Over the decade to 2005, the median vacant section price across all areas rose from a 'low' of 108% in Manukau to highs of 334%, 329% and 315% in Auckland City, Franklin and Rodney respectively.

- Auckland's Regional Growth Strategy (RGS), adopted by the ARC and all seven [councils] in 1999, sets the overarching strategy for Auckland development and urban form. The [Growth Strategy] promotes a compact city capable of accommodating at least 2 million people by 2050. Intensification of dwellings and population is sought around growth nodes situated around town centres and transport links. The Regional Growth Strategy adopts Metropolitan Urban Limits (MUL) that set a boundary within which residential, business and other 'urban activities' are to occur. Proposed Plan Change 6 to the Growth Strategy sees urban activities effectively banned outside the MUL.
- Surveyed private sector stakeholders (including developers) identify two key themes concerning Auckland house supply constraints: land constraints and council-related issues relating especially to consent processes and infrastructure. Most see three land issues as posing major constraints to development: land availability, land ownership, and cost of land. Land availability reflects the existence of urban growth controls (that is, the MUL).
- The MUL results in limited land supply available for greenfields development... Greater restrictions on development beyond the existing MUL under [the Auckland Regional Council's] Plan Change 6 would make [this] even more problematic.
- The overall effect of actual and proposed zoning changes is to limit urban expansion, leading to a shortage of land suitable for large scale development. Zoning changes have done little to enhance the rate of intensification. The latter is occurring but not at the rate envisaged in the Regional Growth Strategy.
- High land prices promote intensification by incentivising apartment living over stand-alone dwellings. This has acted to the benefit of [larger scale] CBD developers. However others note

that where land prices (and other costs) become too high, any kind of development becomes unprofitable and so does not proceed.

- Council planning procedures and consent processing times are the subject of huge dissatisfaction amongst private stakeholders. Over 80% of respondents see these two features as major development constraints. Consent approval processes tend to proceed iteratively within councils, each item having to be 'solved' before the next officer becomes involved. This leads to a prolonged process. Developers consider that councils are neither aware of the length of the consent process nor of the implications of delay.
- Delays are most extensive where a development is notifiable, opening up the potential for objections and lengthy hearings. Developers seek to avoid notification at all costs. This frequently means they settle for 'lowest common denominator' developments that meet all District Plan requirements, rather than including innovative features that might make the development notifiable.
- Freeing up land supply, while necessary to alleviate high land prices, is not sufficient. The manner in which land is made available is as important as any extension. Dribbling new land onto the market in a pre-specified pattern allows existing landowners to retain monopoly rights and high land prices.

To most of us trying to work in Auckland's increasingly frustrating regulatory environment none of this will come as news, but it might help explain to those who don't work here why the work is becoming much less enjoyable, and why the number of small private developers working in and around Auckland is diminishing.

The losers here are many: would-be new home-owners priced out of the market; developers and designers priced and regulated out of profits and innovation; producers and exporters suffering under the Reserve Banks' high and higher interest rates (and the resulting soaring exchange rates) hiked in an impotent attempt to cure the ills of a market that is being strangled by red tape.

Allow me to point out this disaster, and all the remedies that have made the disaster worse, are almost single-handedly the fault of people who almost ironically go by the title of "planner." Isn't it about time to make "planning" in the way that they use it a dirty word?

The full report can be found online at HNZC.Co.NZ/CHR/pdfs/Housing-Supply-in-the-Auckland-Region-2000-2005.pdf



“Put That BBQ Down, and Move Away From the Coast!”

The New Puritans

The “New Puritans” in our midst are determined to prevent us enjoying our traditional “glorious days at the beach.”

Local bodies are enthusiastic protectors of our “Heritage” when it comes to stopping us doing up old houses and the like, but seem to have no regard for our “Heritage” of spending the summer days frolicking in the sea and sand. How else does one account for their enthusiastic response to the predictions of the United Nations’ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) of sea levels rising on our coast line?

The news media are full of stories about the possible impact on property values, and local councils’ responses to potential flooding and associated risks. Councillors and staff talk about prohibiting development near the coast. It seems that some insurance companies will now refuse to insure coastal properties, and hence we may not be able to mortgage the seaside bach, let alone the sea-side MacMansion – which serves us right, of course.

The insurers seem to be over-reacting. But we have to remember that insurance companies make their money out of the difference between “perceived risk” and “real risk” – which is why they frequently sell insurance policies in airports. We should not be surprised if a “climate change” premium on your coastal property is an attractive proposition for an insurer.

How real is this perceived risk?

How big is the difference between perceived risk and real risk for the average property owner on the Coast?

The latest IPCC report estimates that sea levels around New Zealand could rise by half-a-metre over the next hundred years. Sea levels have been rising slowly in the South Pacific since the end of the Little Ice Age in 1850 – at a rate of about one to two mm per year – or four to eight inches in one hundred years. There has been no sign of any overall increase in this rate in recent decades. But for its own reasons the IPCC estimates that the rate will increase about threefold during the next century. (One can “cherry pick” your start and end dates to get data which provide higher rates of increase or equally high rates of decrease. The Pacific Ocean is a volatile place.)

But let’s accept the IPCC’s estimate and agree

that sea levels will rise about one-quarter of half-a-metre over the next 25 years – which is about 125 mm, or six inches. Many of us who own these coastal properties have a life expectancy of about 25 years. And 25 years happens to be the life of most residential mortgages. Consequently, many of us ask why we should worry about events more than 25 years in the future. After 25 years many of us will be six feet under. Those with longer life expectancies can focus on the length of their mortgage.

The end result is that the vast majority of people have little interest in events more than 25 years out, which coincides with what standard “discounting” of costs and benefits would tell us anyhow.

Furthermore, the IPCC’s estimated sea level rises twenty five years out are no greater than those we have already experienced in our lifetimes to date. Where is the damage?

Why should the next 25 years pose any greater threats than we have experienced in the last 100 years?

The real risk of catastrophic inundation on the coast line comes from Tsunami. These events can come out of the blue, at any time, and be of any size. If we are concerned about Tsunami risk we should make sure we are covered by our Earthquake and War Damages Fund because Tsunami are caused by earthquakes anyhow.

Unlike Tsunami, sea levels rise very slowly. We can measure the trends and take appropriate responses. Any problem in New Zealand is trivial compared to what the Dutch have to cope with. We get richer all the time and people in twenty five years time will surely be able to afford to raise their houses a few inches or take other actions. They will have plenty of warning.

The rush to regulate.

For some reason local bodies seem to feel they should be rushing to “zone out” developments on the coast rather than looking at appropriate mitigation and adaptation measures. For example:

- Local bodies might warn people (on their LIM report if appropriate) that over the next twenty five years sea level *might* rise by 150 mm or six inches. The resulting panic should be manageable.
- However, they should also point out

that when seas rise slowly they erode headlands and cause accretion in the bays – so it may be self-correcting anyway, which is why we have not noticed the impact of sea level rises which have already occurred over the last one hundred years.

- They should also point out that in many parts of the country – such as the Bay of Plenty – the tectonic plate movement is raising the land faster than the sea is rising. The net result is falling sea levels.
- Councils can also require that those who chose to ignore these “dire warnings” can sign a contract which indemnifies councils, and hence ratepayers, against any liability or responsibility for any inundation resulting from rising sea levels, or storm surges or whatever. After all, if people are prepared to take the risk, why should other ratepayers be liable? People continue to live beneath Mt Vesuvius.

People can also take other measures to mitigate rising seas on their own account. The Dutch are now promoting designs which enable houses to float in the event of flooding. The floor plate of the house is made of buoyant concrete slabs which are “moored” to foundation piles by steel collars. When floods occur the house simply rises until the flood waters recede and then settle down again. Connections to sewage and water lines must be flexible, but that is no problem. This solution has the great advantage of dealing with floods of any kind. And in New Zealand most flooding will continue to be the result of severe rainstorms.

Finally, in spite of all the panic responses to the IPCC’s latest exercise in alarmism, I have yet to read of anyone suggesting we should reconsider putting the extension to the Victoria Park motorway in a tunnel below sea level immediately adjoining the water front. Wouldn’t it be sensible to put it up on pylons and continue to give motorists the view – *and* a safe passage over any Tsunami that might strike one day?

IPCC Report damned as “dangerous nonsense”

Before we rush to take actions which could harm us and our grandchildren it’s worth pausing to remind ourselves that the belief in the IPCC as the font of all wisdom is not universally shared. The New Zealand Climate Science Coalition media release damns the report as Dangerous Nonsense. This media release contains excellent commentary from the Coalition’s Dr Vincent Gray and Prof Bob Carter.

Sample:

Dr Vincent Gray, of Wellington, is the only person in New Zealand who has been an expert reviewer on every draft of the many IPCC Reports. He recalls "My greatest achievement was the second report where the draft had a chapter 'Validation of Climate Models.' I commented that since no climate model has ever been 'validated' that the word was inappropriate. They changed the word to 'evaluate' 50 times, and since then they have never 'predicted' anything. All they do is make 'projections' and 'estimates'.

And again, from Prof Bob Carter:

Our most accurate depiction of atmospheric temperature over the past 25 years comes from satellite

measurements (see graph of temperature variations on page 47) rather than from the ground thermometer record. Once the effects of non-greenhouse warming (the El Niño phenomenon in the Pacific, for instance) and cooling (volcanic eruptions) events are discounted, these measurements indicate an absence of significant global warming since 1979 - that is, over the very period that human carbon dioxide emissions have been increasing rapidly. The satellite data signal not only the absence of substantial human-induced warming, by recording similar temperatures in 1980 and 2006, but also provide an empirical test of the greenhouse hypothesis as understood by the public - a test that the hypothesis fails.

Pity the Governor of the Reserve Bank

Pity the Governor of the Reserve Bank. He has to impose high interest rates to curb inflation driven largely by an inflated housing market, and these high interest rates attract foreign buyers of our currency, who drive up the dollar which in turn leads to increased import consumption and overseas travel, which generates more inflationary pressures and the housing prices just keep inflating.

Is there any other product where ever-rising prices are greeted with such enthusiasm and described as as "strong" and "booming"? When did we last cheer about cars getting 15% more expensive every year?

While the Governor might have thought these interest rates would be biting by now he is faced with a housing market inflating from one end of the country to another. We should all know the role of strangled land supply on these prices by now.

But now the Government has now decided to promote rising prices in the dwelling itself - not just the land it sits on.

Markets are not dumb. Potential buyers have been exposed to host of warnings about the dire need to make our houses "greener" and more "sustainable" which means more and more expensive. Make no mistake - "Green Plating" means "Gold Plating."

People know that doubling insulation, and making double-glazing and solar heating compulsory will add to the price of the end product. They also know that as the new licensing regime for builders kicks in, the

price of labour will kick up too. Why do you think the medical specialists protect their supply lines so well.

And the new codes continue to gold plate new dwellings. When people look to a future when every new house costs say 20% more to build that the last lot, they decide to buy now rather than wait, and this puts more demand pressure on the already strangled supply.

They also know that extended consent processing times add costs at every stage.

So why would anyone be surprised if house prices rise and generate an inflationary head of steam?

The overseas experience tells us this will finally be "cured" by out-migration, first from our big cities to the micropolises.

So just make sure you own property where people are heading to, rather than where they are leaving from.

Garth George has decided to leave Auckland. I wonder where he is heading.

The Effect of House Prices on Incomes, Savings and even Green Energy!

As readers may know the Demographia Survey recommended that countries concerned about housing affordability should survey their regional markets rather than focus solely on the major urban centres. I too hope the Commerce Select Committee will take up this proposal.

This will not only illuminate local body performance, but will enable governments to prepare a cost-of-living ranking taking housing affordability into account. The results could be startling - as this survey of incomes of Software Developers illustrates so dramatically.

If you were a New Zealander software developer you might look at standard US salary rankings and conclude that San Jose and San Francisco were the cities to head for, because they pay top salaries of around \$93,000 pa. But if you take into account the cost of living (mainly affected by house prices) then Houston ranks number one with a corrected salary of \$103,000 pa, while San Francisco is second to **bottom ranking**, at only \$44,937. San Jose is seventh to bottom at \$52,000. A software developer in Houston has more than twice the buying power of his equivalent in San Francisco.

Mr Cullen and others who fret about productive investment should consider how much money the skilled people of Houston have to invest in stocks and shares, and in their own business enterprises. Affordable housing promotes real saving and investment.

Sure enough, we find that Houston is among the Top 10 Cities for Green Technology Innovation.

It's normally the Greens who rail against making housing affordable by deregulating land supply, but maybe they will change their mind if they make the link between affordable housing and Green Technology - but I wouldn't hold my breath.

Understandably, the good folk of Houston are pleased to find themselves ranked as a "Green Energy Capital" when this Texan city is normally despised for being home to those nasty Oil and Gas Barons.

Owen McShane is the director of the Centre for Resource Management Studies and the convenor of the Climate Science Coalition. You can read all the Climate Science Coalition's press releases and much more at their website, ClimateScience.Org.NZ.



Decentralisation, And Those Who Oppose It

Centralisation was the ideal of monarchy . . . the individual unit compelled to revolve around a common center.

Integration is the ideal of democracy . . . many units, free in themselves, functioning together in freedom.

Frank Lloyd Wright, 'New York Times, 1932

Planners have fought the car since the planning profession was invented. The car is the enemy of the planner. The car gives people individual choice, and the freedom to locate oneself where one will; the planner despises individual choice—the only 'taste' he recognises is his own; taste he thinks should be prescribed from above: "Get with the programme!" he commands.

The car gives people mobility, the freedom to seek out one's own happiness; the planner despises mobility—he prefers people to seek their happiness in the 'community,' in one another, rather than seeking it out in the wilds alone; lone wolves, people who seek their own happiness in their own way, are not the pillars of the community that planners would have us emulate. The car is the enemy of centralisation, and centralisation is the planner's friend—indeed, it is centralisation that is the planner's goal: a self-anointed elite prescribing the way of living for the lumpen masses they despise.

The planners are fighting reality.

The human spirit refuses to bow to the commands of the self-anointed, and like trying to divert a raging torrent, the flow escapes the planned strangulation of the spirit and breaks free of its bounds. As Frank Lloyd Wright described so presciently back in 1932, mobility and technology combined kill the planner's drive to centralisation, and make a joke of his prohibitions:

Centralization, whether expressed as the city, the factory, the school or the farm, now has the enormous power of the machine-age setting dead against it. It is in the nature of universal or ubiquitous mobilization that the city spreads out far away and thin. It is in the nature of flying that the city disappears. It is in the nature of universal electrification that the city is nowhere or it is everywhere. . . .

By means of the motor car and the inventions that are here with it the horizon of the individual has immeasurably widened. A ride high into the air in any

elevator today only shows the man how far he can go on the ground. And a view of the horizon gives him the desire to go. If he has the means, he goes, and his horizon widens as he goes. The physical release is at work upon his character. . . . After all, he himself is the city. The city is going where he goes and as he goes. When he goes he will be going where he may enjoy all that the centralized city ever really gave him, plus the security, freedom and beauty of the ground that is his. That means he is going to the country with his machine by means of the machine, in a larger sense, that is opening the way for him. [From Frank Lloyd Wright's 'Disappearing City']

The city's expansion is inevitable—equally inevitable is its decentralisation. Technology makes it so. Fighting that is like fighting on the side of Canute, only when one fights this inevitability, one fights against the will of individuals seeking their freedom from the city, not against the tides. The city will continue to go out to meet the country, and the planners will seek to bring it back again. 'Containment!' 'Sprawl!' These are their watchwords. Meanwhile, 'lifestyle' properties continue to surround the city—the planner's compromise between individuals who seek to escape the city and the planner's wish to contain that desire—and the planner's latest weapon, the mis-named 'Smart Growth!', seeks again to rein us all in.

The Smart-Growth weapon of choice in Auckland at present is something called 'Plan Change 6.'. Countryside living, according to this thinking, is "unsustainable" because it "takes productive land out of production" and "undermines public transport." How they hate people making choices for themselves! The provisions of Plan Change 6 are in essence a plan to end countryside living and to make rural New Zealand a National Park—such is the aim of the New Apostles of Smart Growth. Their chief achievement so far is to make Smart Growth-adopting cities severely unaffordable—houses in New World cities that have adopted the 'urban consolidation' policies of Smart Growth take two to three

times as much of a household's annual income to purchase, as compared to those cities that have rejected this fashionable nonsense. That's two or three times as much of your life spent working to pay for your home, if you can afford to, and all due to the planner's desire for control. This is little more than a lifestyle tax, with no beneficiary except the planner's ego.

The planner would like us all reined in. Compliant. Obedient. Living where we're told to, in the way that we're told to, following the tastes we're required to subscribe to. But it can't be done, and the wish to do so impoverishes us all. The human spirit breaks out from the prisons of the soul in which it's been placed by the planners and the meddlers of the welfare state. It breaks out with violence sometimes: spectacularly in the *banlieus* and the *cités* of Paris; quietly and grimly in the inhospitable concrete squalor of East Europe's bourgeois-proofed, planned cities, and in the planned precincts and New Brutalism of housing projects across the U.S. and Western Europe. 'Suburban neurosis' has nothing on the battleship existence of the housing projects, and the atopic suburbs themselves in their present zoned-and-controlled form are just another product of the planner's pen. As I've said before, the planners themselves know they've failed:

As the schemes for worker housing became increasingly uninhabitable, the plans for radiant cities drawn up by planners quietly began to be shelved, but the town planners themselves were harder to get rid of, and they began to look around for other pastures to pollute.

Jane Jacobs pointed out in *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* that some of the places so hated by Le Corbusier and the planning fraternity actually worked very well. The 'mixed use' of streets of terraced housing and brownstones in places like Manhattan, she pointed out, are very good places to live, with private houses often cheek by jowl with shops, cafes, and the like all an easy walk away. People choose to live in such places because they like them.

So too with the explosion of the suburbs—people like living in their own house in the suburbs. People everywhere, including all across Europe, and all across New Zealand But planners hate suburbs. Too bourgeois! And they never really understood Jane Jacobs. They drew up plans that zoned the hell out of everything, ensuring that 'mixed-use' became a dirty word, and restricted the density of

suburban subdivisions, thus ensuring more of the sprawl they are so against.

Planners hated suburbs all the more for the sprawl they themselves created. American suburbs are “a chaotic and depressing agglomeration of building covering enormous stretches of land,” said, not a planner, but a book titled ‘The New Communist City’ produced by Moscow State University, whose graduates had designed Halle-Neustadt and the other concrete wastelands of Eastern Europe. Western planners agreed with those graduates, and bought into their “search for a future kind of residential building leading logically to high-density, mixed-use housing.”

Thus was born a new movement called ‘Smart Growth’ that eager young planners have subscribed to in droves. Portland, Oregon is the home of this drive, and as an eager young Portland planner told a reporter in the late sixties, “We got tired of protesting the Vietnam War, read Jane Jacobs, and decided to take over Portland.” They did, and the city is only now beginning to recover.

With the zeal of those for which there is only ‘one true way,’ smart-growth advocates gloss over Jacobs’s key point that choice is the key to what makes some places work and other places just suck, and they declared that everyone must live

in the One True Way prescribed by the planning profession.

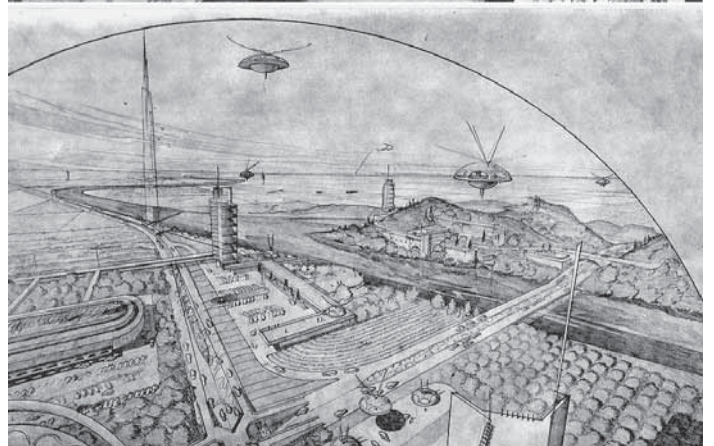
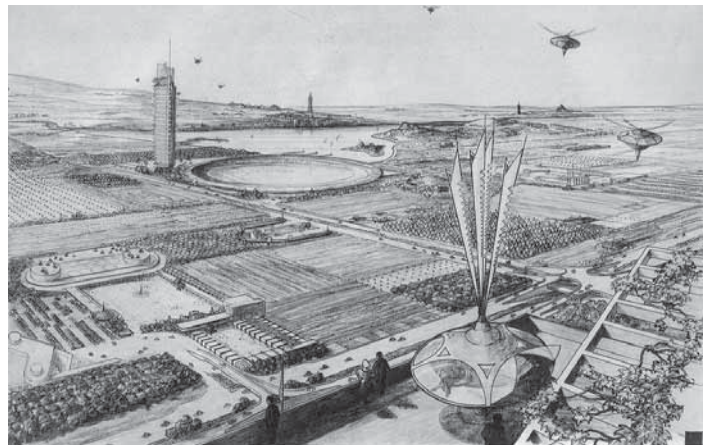
Asked when speaking in London many years ago about the desirability of the lower class’s high-density ‘battleship existence’ for providing sturdy yeomen to fight the causes of Empire, Wright admonished the questioner and recoiled at the sentiment behind it. What sort of person would want to keep human beings in squalor, he responded? Why indeed, especially just to please the planner’s own sense of taste and esthetics?

Of course, there is nothing inherently or necessarily wrong with high-density living any more than there is with low-density living—San Tropez in summer enjoys one of the highest population densities anywhere, and you don’t see anyone complaining. The crime comes when either is forced upon people by the impositions of the planning profession, and the misdirections of the architectural profession. The twentieth-century mass-production of squalor began when the Brave New World of architectural modernism joined hands with central planners and Soviets-in-spirit to knock up their Radiant Cities and shining cities of the plains; their “row after Mies van der row of glass houses,” the “worker housing” that has spread over our land like the elm blight,” as Tom Wolfe described in his ebullient *From Bauhaus to Our House*. It continued on with the blight of zoning and other meddling mandating the mediocrity of uniformity.

Forget this mass production of standardised misery. “There should be as many kinds of houses as there are kinds of people and as many differentiations as there are different individuals,” said Wright. And why not? One man’s buzzing inner-city enclave is another’s high-density rabbit warren; one man’s suburban paradise is another’s soulless sprawl; one family’s lifestyle block pastorate is another’s blot on a pristine landscape. Let them all be! Why impose? Why not let people *choose for themselves* the way that they wish to live?

What’s wrong with choice, and letting people exercise it? What’s wrong with a cornucopia of choices, an abundance of options, a profusion of possible housing choices? Why can’t we leave people alone to choose for themselves their own manner of living? For when one strips away the veneer of buzzwords surrounding the planners’ latest fads—for which we’re all required to pay—when one burrows beneath the latest fashionable gibberish of ‘sustainability’ and ‘smart growth,’ of ‘environmental responsibility’ and ‘urban redevelopment,’ of ‘alternative transport options’ and the ‘new urbanism,’ when one sees what’s underneath all the fashionable verbal clothing worn by all the apostles of control, here’s the raw reality you’re left with: these people don’t like the choices you make about how to live, and they will make *you* pay any price to avoid letting you do so.

Don’t let them get away with it.



Frank Lloyd Wright’s home and his ‘Broadacre Cty’ concept -- and by contrast (bottom left) a Paris ‘banlieue.’

"The Real Child Abusers Are In There, The Beehive!"

Comrade Bradford is very amused at the spectacle of the likes of Christians and libertarians coming together for a common cause.

Newsflash for Comrade Bradford: It's not just Christians and libertarians. We've got Family Rights and Labourites and National Party supporters, conservatives and liberals, Christians and atheists like me -- people of all manner of beliefs across the religious and political spectrum coming together to say, in unison, "You do not have the right to nationalise our children! Parenting is for parents!"

They say they are protecting children from abuse. Make no mistake, the real abusers of children are the people who do not want children but are paid by Nanny State to have children and then they kill them! Ultimately, the real child abusers are in that building, the Beehive, as we speak.

Comrade Bradford said, "Oh yes, the law as it stands allows for reasonable force, but juries are too lenient in implementing that." "Well then," Chester Borrows said, "let us define, in Parliament, reasonable force." What did Comrade Bradford do? She said, "Oooh, if that gets any support I'm going to withdraw my bill!"

That shows the dishonesty and hypocrisy of the supporters of this bill.

Now I confess I was a bit complacent about it myself. I took Comrade Bradford at her word when she said: "Oh, don't worry about the law, it won't be enforced." But then Greg O'Connor from the Police Association came out and said "We will have to enforce that law, alright, any parent about whom there is a complaint, or from whom there is a confession will have to be arrested."

To all of you, I suggest you give your children a lovely little friendly smack right now, we'll get it on camera, and you can be arrested if this bill becomes law. And that's exactly what you should do if it does become law; parents up and down the country should go to the local police station and confess. And the police will be obliged to arrest them. That is the Nanny State Police State that this bill will usher in -- and it is nothing about protecting children, my friends, they are already protected.

Ladies and Gentlemen, this Bill is Nanny Statism verging on fascism. Legally, you're in charge of your children, but Nanny State will take control of them. We must not let it happen.

Some of the politicians have been a bit weak on this, I think they are observing public opinion, and coming into line. Today we must make it our purpose to give Nanny State a smacking she'll never forget.





Heather Roy, Lindsay Perigo, Larry Baldock, Judith Collins and Bob Clarkson protest the anti-smacking bill -- just three weeks later the latter two voted for an ever-so-slightly amended version.



Blonde reporter asks Plain Jane anti-smackers what's up.



PICS FROM PARLIAMENT: The April anti-anti-smacking rally.



New Zealand's Spending Binge

Introduction

'Presumably, governments tax their citizens to be able to carry out public programs that should increase the well-being of their citizens.

Unless this occurs, there seems to be little point in reducing individual economic freedom through higher taxes...'

- Vito Tanzi and Ludger Shuknecht

Since the year 2000 the New Zealand government has been on an unprecedented spending binge. Core government spending is \$20 billion higher than it was in 2000, an increase of 32% in real terms.

Healthy economic conditions have given the government the illusionary luxury of being able to afford this extra spending. Not adjusting tax thresholds for inflation means that every year (in real terms) our tax rates subtly increase, giving the government more fiscal room to play with.

The previous papers in this series have examined the *cost* of this extra taxation. Most estimates now suggest that raising a dollar of tax costs the economy at least \$1.20, because of the changes in economic behaviour it induces. Therefore the *benefits* of the resultant spending must meet a high threshold of quality.

Trying to assess the value of government spending is a surprisingly difficult task. Politicians often boast about spending increases, but what results are we actually getting? Can we measure them? And are the returns increasing or diminishing?

For example, health spending has increased by 49% since 2000. Is our health system 49% better? Are we any healthier as a nation? If not, why not? The rest of this paper addresses these questions.

How much do we spend?

According to the latest accounts, government spending (core crown expenses) for 2007 will be **\$54 billion**, which is 33.2% of GDP.

Since 2000 core crown spending has gone from \$34.5 billion a year to \$54 billion, an increase of \$19.5 billion. Adjusting for inflation, this is a 32% increase in real terms.

Including local government, capital outlays and spending by State Owned Enterprises, the OECD estimates total public spending in New Zealand is closer to **\$65 billion**, or 40% of GDP.

On a world scale, 40% is the OECD average for spending. However, a closer look shows the world divided into two blocks: the high spending and economically stagnant European nations, and the lower spending and more prosperous countries, which include Australia, the USA, Ireland, Singapore and Hong Kong. New Zealand is right in the middle of these two distinct groups, but trending upwards.

Treasury's graph below shows New Zealand's increase in spending as a percentage of GDP and in actual terms, through to 2011.

What do we spend it on?

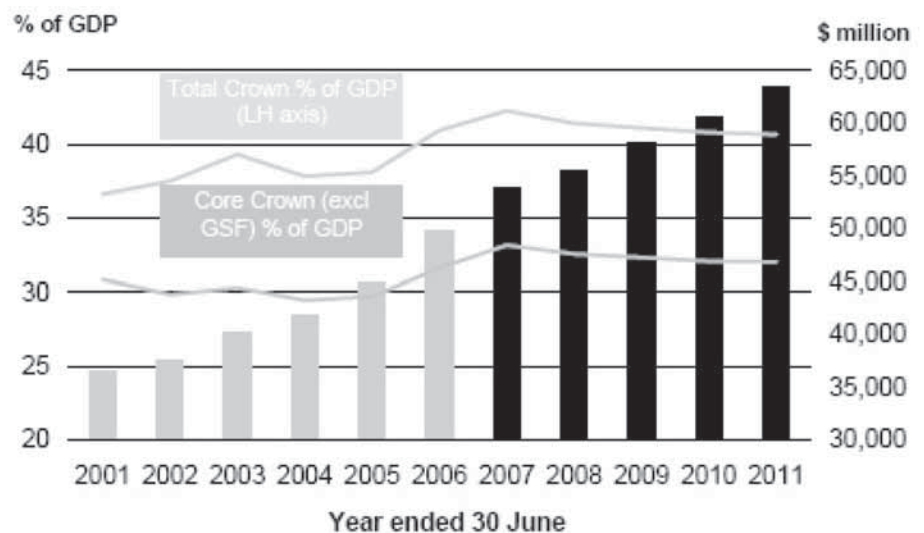
Nearly three-quarters of all government spending goes into social policy, including health, education, benefits and superannuation.

The biggest increases since 2000 have come in health, education and family tax credits. In particular:

- Health spending has increased from \$6 billion to \$10.4 billion since 2000, and by an average of 8% a year for the last 10 years.
- Education spending has increased by 7% a year for the last 10 years (and tertiary education by 6%).
- Extensions to the Working for Families package means the cost will soon rise to \$1.6 billion a year.
- \$2 billion a year is now allocated to the Government Super Fund to partially pre-fund superannuation costs in the future.

Figure 1: Core crown spending for the decade

Source: Treasury, Half-Year Economic and Fiscal Update December 2006



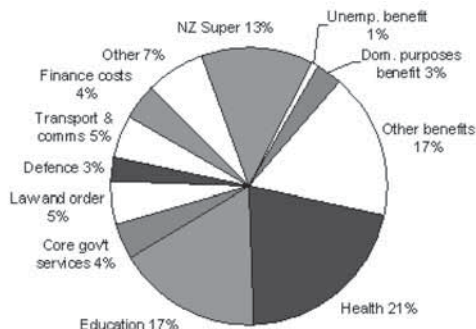
For the decade 2000–2010 core crown spending will have increased from \$34.5 billion to \$60.6 billion.

In the longer term, an ageing population will put upward pressure upon superannuation and health spending. A recent long-term planning paper from the Treasury says that even if spending and tax policies remain about the same, serious deficits will begin to emerge from 2030 onwards.

- The indexing of benefits to the consumer price index costs around \$1.5 billion a year (note that in contrast, tax thresholds for workers are not indexed).
- \$1.9 billion a year is reserved for new, unallocated spending.
- Large chunks of the budget surplus are now being used to fund capital projects. In the 2006 budget \$1.2 billion is allocated for capital projects, mostly transport.

Figure 2: Breakdown of government spending, 2006

Source: Treasury's Key Facts for Taxpayers



On the positive side, the cost of servicing debt has decreased and social welfare spending has increased at only the level of inflation, thanks to falling unemployment.

How can we measure the results?

The billions of extra dollars spent must have done *some* good for New Zealand's overall wellbeing. But exactly *how* much benefit has it delivered, and how can we measure the results?

It is easy enough to measure the inputs; we know the government now spends an extra \$20 billion a year. Trying to measure the *outputs* (for example, number of operations, new schools etc) and the *outcomes* (for example, the health and education levels of society) is more difficult, but critically important.

Outputs and outcomes tell us the efficiency and effectiveness of the public sector, and therefore its productivity. Without this kind of information it is impossible to judge the true merits of public spending, and whether the rate of return is increasing or decreasing.

However, trying to find this kind of information is difficult in New Zealand. Of the information that is available, little of it is specifically linked to spending initiatives. The OECD warned the government in 2005 that '... a lack of information makes it difficult to judge the real increase in outputs achieved as a result of the additional resources allocated over recent years.'

These concerns were echoed by the Treasury in the same year, noting that 'Very little information is currently publicly available regarding expectations, targets, costs, productivity and value for money' and that 'We also need to get better at improving the information we have on the effectiveness of government interventions and social services provision.'

Since then, only limited signs of progress have been made. Treasury began a wide-ranging review of government spending last year, and recently released a series of discussion papers on how to measure productivity in the health sector. This is a good start, but it

is remarkable that such a framework wasn't developed *before* this new spending began.

Of course, measuring the results of government spending is no easy task. Many services are difficult to quantify in dollar terms, and it is hard to calculate the worth of 'free' services, given that consumers don't have to pay and thus give them a monetary value. However this is a task that other countries (especially Australia and the UK) have tackled far more effectively.

Whatever the difficulties, the amount of resources involved makes it essential that the government invests in better measurement procedures. Better information would let us judge the benefits of specific programmes, allocate resources more efficiently and allow for a more informed debate on the merits of tax cuts versus extra spending.

Despite these gaps, we can still look at general indicators to assess the 'state of the nation' and then look for any correlation with government spending. Are we a healthier, better-educated and more socially cohesive nation as a result of our investment?

There are many different statistics that can be selectively used to show the health and well-being of a society, so the key is to use the broadest possible objective indicators. The following section looks at basic measurements used by the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Social Development, the OECD and the United Nations, such as life expectancy, infant mortality, literacy, crime and poverty.

The health of the nation

Public health spending doubled in the last ten years, and has increased in real terms by 49% since 2000. It has also been the area of greatest concern over the efficiency and effectiveness of spending.

One of the most basic measures of health used around the world is life expectancy, which reflects better living standards and improved public and personal health care.

The graph below shows the trend for New Zealand since 1950.

The anomaly is obvious here—since 2000 the increase in life expectancy has slowed right down. From 2000 to 2004 (the latest available year) the average has only moved from 78.7 to 79.4 years.

The lack of a positive relationship between public spending and life expectancy is evident. During the 1970s and 1980s an increase in spending accompanied a rise in longevity, but it was a below-par increase; other OECD countries (even those with lower spending) improved much faster than New Zealand.

New Zealand's best decade was actually the 1990s, with our longevity improving faster than the worldwide average. Yet this was a period (especially the early 1990s) of instability

Executive Summary

*Core government spending is now almost **\$20 billion** a year higher than it was in 2000, a 32% increase in real terms.

*Total government spending now makes up 40% of GDP, compared to 35% in Australia. This is higher than it was under the Muldoon government in 1984.

*If this extra \$20 billion of expenditure was allocated to tax cuts, nearly all income tax could be abolished. All the remaining public services could be solely funded by GST and a low corporate tax rate.

*The government has little specific information on how effective this extra spending has been. We lack information on outputs and outcomes from the public sector, which makes it difficult to measure exactly what return taxpayers are receiving for their investment. Other countries do a much more comprehensive job of this.

*The available social indicators we have show negligible improvements since 2000. Life expectancy, infant mortality, hospital outputs, literacy, violent crime, suicide, poverty and income inequality have barely changed despite a massive increase in social spending.

*Around the world there is little relationship between higher public spending and better social outcomes.

*A major explanation for why this spending has been ineffectual is because of middle class welfare. A large proportion of government spending is simply recycled (or 'churned') straight back to those who paid the tax in the first place.

*Therefore much public spending today is not 'new' spending; it is displacing spending that would have happened anyway, by individuals themselves. It follows that more public spending will not necessarily increase public welfare, and may even reduce it.

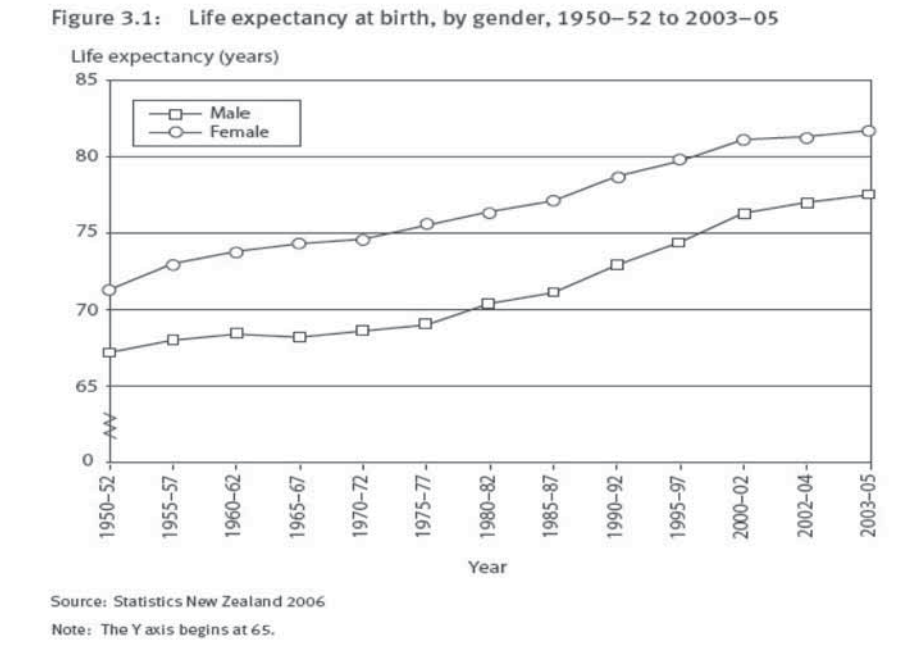
*Many people could afford to purchase their own social services if taxes were lower. This would allow for more competition, innovation, and personal responsibility, and would reduce unnecessary bureaucracy.

*Australia provides an interesting comparison to New Zealand, because they have a smaller government with more reliance upon private health, education and superannuation. They also outperform New Zealand on most social indicators.

*Diminishing returns from spending are coinciding with rising costs of taxation. This means New Zealand could achieve better social and economic outcomes with less taxation and spending.

Figure 3: Life expectancy at birth, by gender, 1950–52 to 2003–05

Source: Ministry of Health Annual Report 2006



for public health with controversial reform and only modest funding increases.

Infant mortality is another key indicator used around the world, and once again the positive relationship with higher government spending is weak. There has been a big decrease since 1975, but since 1997 the decrease has slowed; it has gone from 6.1 to 4.8 deaths per 1000 births.

Outputs produced by public hospitals are similarly disappointing. Treasury has concluded that from 2000/01 to 2003/04 ‘... hospital efficiency would appear to have fallen by 7.7% over the last three years.’ This is in contrast to a 1.1% improvement in efficiency from 1997 to 2000.

The major indicators from the Ministry of Health’s annual report paint a similar picture:

- The number of elective surgery operations (one of the government’s top priorities) has actually declined since 2000, from 107,366 operations to 105,437 in 2006.
- Hospital readmission rates—a key indicator of the quality of care—are unchanged from 2000.
- Hospital mortality rates are unchanged from 2000.
- Patient satisfaction with District Health Board services has declined since 2002.
- The average length of stay in hospital—a key indicator of efficiency—is largely unchanged from 2000.

Higher wages for medical staff are a big driver of costs. Treasury estimates that 60% of the extra health spending has gone into higher

wages, but the outputs per doctor and nurse have slightly declined. In some ways this cost has been inevitable because of the tight market for medical staff, but by itself it doesn’t explain the decline in efficiency.

This lack of improvement in the most basic health indicators shows a poor return from what has been a massive investment. It may reflect the limits of medical technology and the human body itself, but it is a remarkable slow-down compared to the dramatic improvements made in the late twentieth century.

These indicators clearly suggest that productivity from the health sector is declining, and that the results of our spending are diminishing. It is no surprise that Treasury says ‘... it is difficult to tell what improvements

in health outcomes or services have been achieved for the additional expenditure on health, and whether New Zealanders are getting value for money.’

Education outcomes

Since 2000 education spending (on primary, secondary and tertiary) has increased by \$3.1 billion, a 26% real increase. Once again the most important indicators show little change.

The Ministry of Education and the OECD both use the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) as the leading indicator for education outcomes. This test measures the literacy of 15 year olds in reading, maths and science on a world scale.

New Zealand performs well above the international average in all three areas, but two of our three scores have actually declined from 2000 to 2003.

Table 1: PISA literacy scores for New Zealand 2000–2003

	Reading	Science	Maths
2000	529	528	524
2003	522	521	525

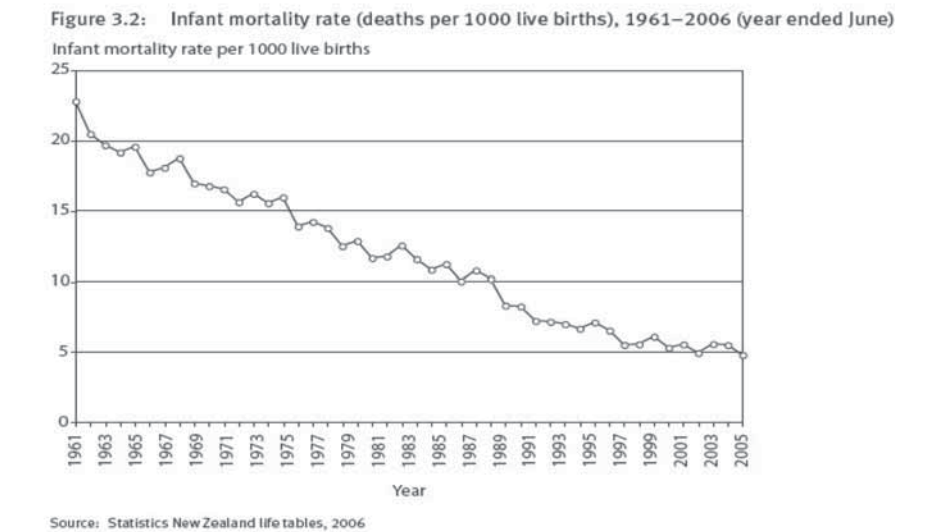
Source: Ministry of Education and OECD

The only other assessment of this type is the National Educational Monitoring Project (NEMP) for Year 4 and 8 students, which measure cross-curriculum achievement. Once again the changes are negligible; for Year 4 students there has only been a ‘slight improvement’ since the late 1990s, and ‘little improvement’ for Year 8 students.

The other main indicator of education outcomes is the qualifications achieved by students. In this area New Zealand has improved: the percentage of school leavers with little or no qualifications has dropped from 16.5% in 2000 to 12.9% in 2005. There

Figure 4: Infant mortality rates (deaths per 1000 live births), 1961–2006

Source: Ministry of Health Annual Report 2006



are now 32.8% of school leavers achieving university entrance scores compared to 27% in 2000.

Social outcomes

Overall social spending (health, education, welfare and superannuation) now makes up 72% of all government spending, and has been the biggest area of increase. According to Prime Minister Helen Clark, before this spending increase New Zealand was 'a badly divided and disillusioned nation' and 'The balance in our country wasn't right ... Our society with its history of caring about its members had become a harder, meaner place, with significant numbers of excluded people.'

Has this extra social spending actually created a more equal, caring and cohesive society? Once again, the fairest way to measure the outcomes is to use the government's own indicators.

Last year the Ministry of Social Development released *The Social Report 2006*, which uses a range of statistical indicators to monitor the social well-being of New Zealanders. The most relevant and substantial indicators are suicide rates, crime, poverty and income inequality.

Suicide

Suicide rates are an important indicator of mental health and the well-being of society in general.

The suicide rate in New Zealand reached an all-time high in 1998 before declining over the next two years. From 2000 to 2004 the rate has changed little, from 13.1 per 100,000 people in 2000 to 12.8 per 100,000 in 2004.

Longer term, the rate is now back to where it was in 1986. There appears to be little positive relationship with the level of government spending or the economic health of the nation.

Crime rates

Crime is an important indicator of personal safety, the effectiveness of law enforcement and the general health of a society. Since 1970 the number of reported crimes has doubled, with the peak reached in 1992. However since then there has been a steady decline—on a population basis reported crime is down 22% since 1996.

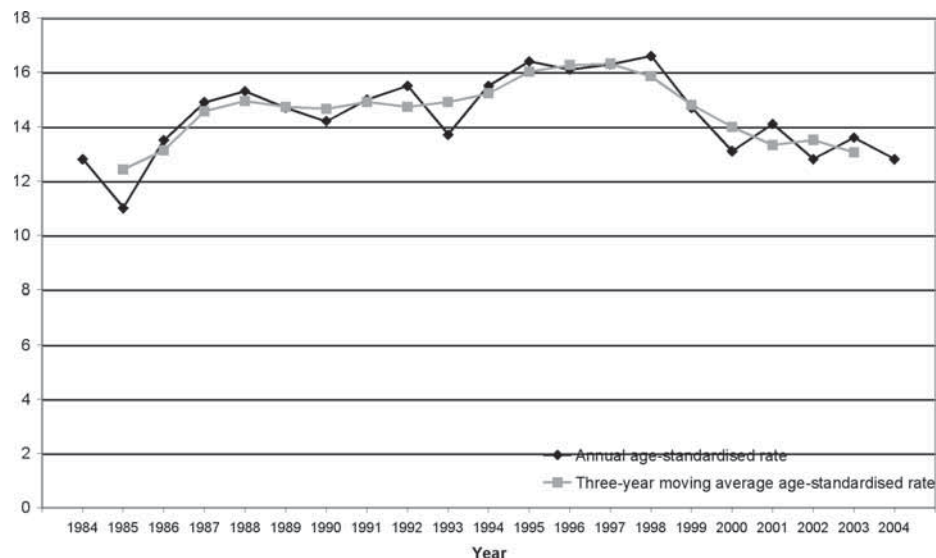
Once again there is no real relationship with government spending. In fact, since 2000 the decrease has actually slowed; there has been a 10% reduction, a good indicator but slower than the 13.5% decrease in the previous five years.

Violent crime has increased by 9.3% since 2000, compared to a 0.9% increase for the preceding five years.

Visit 'The Free Radical online' at: www.FreeRadical.co.nz

Figure 5: Suicide: Age-standardised rate (per 100,000)

Source: Ministry of Health



Poverty

Reducing poverty has been a major goal for the government, with spending on health, education, pensions, housing, economic development and Maori development greatly increased since 2000.

According to the Ministry of Social Development, between 2000 and 2004 '...the average living standards of the low-income population fell slightly.' The proportion of the population experiencing some form of hardship was unchanged at 24%, but within that group 'severe hardship' has increased. In particular:

- The portion of Maori families living in severe hardship has risen to 17%, up from 7% in 2000.
- For Pacific Island families living in severe hardship the figure rose from 15% to 27%.
- The proportion of all New Zealand children in severe and significant hardship has increased from 18% to 26%.

Income inequality

Reducing income inequality has been a key priority of the government, but again there has been no measurable change since 2000. In 2004, the disposable income of a household at the 80th percentile was 2.8 times larger than the income of a household at the 20th percentile, compared to a score of 2.7 in 2001.

Likewise the OECD has found only a negligible change. The Gini coefficient measures income inequality, with a score of 100 indicating perfect inequality and a score of 0 indicating perfect equality. From 2000 to 2004 New Zealand's score has gone from 33.9 to 33.5.

Summary—the state of the nation

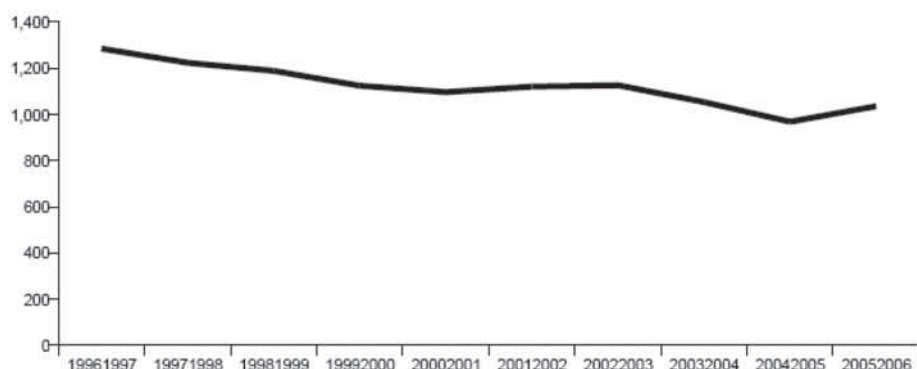
'There is little information to indicate that New Zealanders are getting more services and better results from the public sector for the large increase in resources provided. What little information exists is not encouraging.'

- Treasury briefing to Minister of Finance, September 2005

New Zealand's lack of substantial progress on any of these social indicators is reflected

Figure 6: Overall recorded offences per 10,000 population

Source: New Zealand Police Crime Statistics for year ending 30 June 2006



in our United Nations Human Development Index (HDI) rating, which is a measure of life expectancy, literacy, education and GDP per capita for countries worldwide.

From 2000 to 2004 New Zealand's score has moved from 0.917 to 0.936, an increase of 2%, while our world ranking has dropped from nineteenth to twentieth.

Overall, it is a disappointing scorecard. Given the scale of public investment the indicators should show much more positive results.

Even more remarkable is that many of these indicators actually performed *better* in the five years prior to 2000, with a much lower level of public expenditure. New Zealand's HDI had its fastest rate of increase in the early 1990s, after below-average performance in the 1970s and 1980s.

Of course none of these indicators is definitive, and none is completely up to date; it takes several years for the relevant data to be collected. But the best available evidence clearly suggests there is little correlation between higher social spending and better social outcomes.

Has more public spending worked around the world?

This outcome is not unique for New Zealand. Around the world there is little relationship between government spending and the Human Development Index, as this plot of OECD nations shows.

New Zealand's experience largely matches the thesis of economists Victor Tanzi and Ludger Schuknecht. Their 2000 book *Public Spending in the 20th Century* looked at the progress of industrialised countries and theorised that beyond a certain level (30% to 35% of GDP) government spending has a sharply diminishing impact on social outcomes. Remember that New Zealand is now at 40%.

Tanzi and Schuknecht found that government spending up until 1960 coincided with a great increase in living standards and social outcomes, but since that time the gains have only been moderate. Using a range of broad social indicators, they found almost no difference between countries with big, small and medium-sized governments.

Further backing this theory is the fact that newly industrialised countries (such as Chile, South Korea, Hong Kong and Singapore) have rapidly caught up to the western world in terms of social outcomes, yet they have achieved this with a much lower level of public spending.

All this suggests that with the right policies governments could achieve the same social and economic gains with much less public spending (and tax).

Summary: Change in indicators since 2000

Life expectancy	Negligible
Infant Mortality	Negligible
Hospital operations	Negligible
Education literacy	Negligible
School leavers with qualifications	Increase
Suicide rate	Negligible
Crime	Decrease
Violent crime	Increase
Incidence of hardship	Negligible
Income inequality	Negligible
UN Human Development Index	Negligible
Government Spending	+32%

Why hasn't the spending achieved more?

So why has the effectiveness of public spending declined in New Zealand and around the world? A major explanation is that of 'churning', or 'middle-class welfare', whereby government spending is simply recycled straight back to those who paid the tax in the first place.

Most government spending originally came about through necessity. Healthcare, unemployment insurance and the cost of schooling were the beyond the reach of most families in the 1930s, so government intervention was seen as justified and worthy. Labour Prime Minister Michael Joseph Savage described this as 'applied Christianity'.

However from the 1970s onwards social policy began to change. Services were expanded and made available to more and more recipients. Instead of providing services that wouldn't otherwise exist, the government began taking over what was previously the responsibility of individuals. Examples include family support payments, a generous universal pension, and greatly increased health and education spending.

The inevitable problem with making services universal is that they benefit the middle and upper classes. In effect, a large proportion of tax money is now recycled (or 'churned') straight back to the taxpayer in the form of social services.

Working out exactly how different households benefit from spending is a difficult undertaking, and was last attempted by Statistics New Zealand for the period 1997/98. Michael Cox broke these figures down further in his 2001 book *Middle Class Welfare*, concluding that wealthiest 40% of households receive 23% of all social expenditure.

In particular, Cox found that these top households receive 45% of education spending and 34% of all health spending.

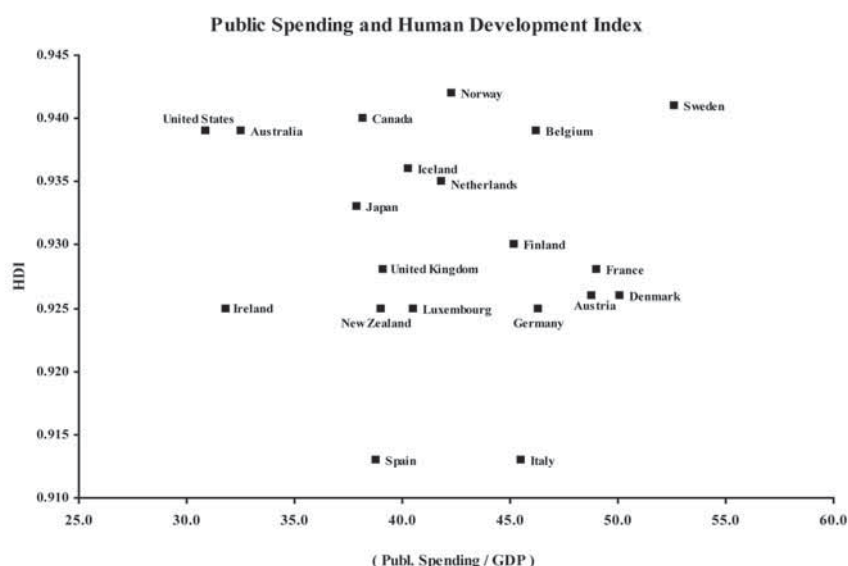
These figures are indicative only, and the actual amount of churning is likely to be much higher. A major limitation is that these figures are static; they only measure one period in time, whereas churning over the course of a lifetime is likely to be much higher. Many people are only on low incomes for a short period of time (for example, students) and will eventually pay higher tax.

And of course the figures are dated. There have been many policy changes since 1997/98 (the latest data) that are likely to have increased churning even further. Health and education spending—which tends to benefit all households—has greatly increased over this period.

In particular, extra spending on tertiary education (such as interest free student loans) tends to benefit middle class families and those who will go onto become New Zealand's highest earners. As the OECD

Figure 7: Public spending vs Human Development Index

Source: CATO Journal, Fall 2005



remarked in 2002, 'to increase the generosity of the student loan scheme ... will largely benefit medium and higher income families.'

The Working for Families (WFF) package will eventually deliver tax credits to 360,000 working families, all of whom pay tax and then have to apply to get some of it back from the IRD. Last year the government further extended the scheme to include families earning up to \$100,000, many of whom are also paying the top rate of personal tax. This is perhaps the most obvious example of churning.

Therefore, much public spending today is not 'new' spending; it is displacing (or 'crowding out') spending that would have happened anyway, by individuals themselves. It follows that more public spending will not necessarily increase public welfare, and may even reduce it.

It also means that most people could easily afford to fund their own social services if taxes weren't so high.

What's so bad about churning?

Why is public spending of money inevitably going to be less efficient than letting individuals spend it themselves? Here are seven main factors that help explain the poor results from our public spending:

- *Administrative costs.* Transferring money on this scale is like using a leaky bucket because it requires a large bureaucracy to collect the tax and then distribute it. To cope with this extra spending, the number of people employed in the public service has had to increase by 27% since 1999.
- *The economic cost of high taxation.* Taxation affects the behaviour of individuals, and alters their decisions on things like employment and investment. These deadweight losses are a major handbrake on economic growth.
- *Lack of knowledge.* No matter how hard they try, a public monopoly will never understand the specific needs and requirements of an individual better than the person themselves. Given the equivalent resources, most individuals could buy cheaper and better services tailored to their needs.
- *Crowding out the private sector.* Government spending and regulation make it difficult (or impossible) for the private sector to get involved in many areas and find new solutions to problems. According to the Treasury, 'Agencies also, it must be said, tend to be risk-averse and, as a consequence of this, they are inherently less inclined to innovate than private companies constantly required to respond to the latest market developments.'

- *Lack of competition.* People can't switch to an alternative health or education system or re-arrange their spending if they are unsatisfied with the performance.

- *Lack of personal responsibility.* In health for example, the emerging challenges are illnesses such as obesity and diabetes, which are strongly linked to lifestyle—diet, smoking and lack of exercise. Governments do attempt to influence behaviour with various marketing campaigns, taxes and incentives, but with only limited success.

- *Equity.* Churned spending does nothing for the poor and disadvantaged in society. By definition the spending goes straight back to the person who paid the tax.

Looking across the Tasman provides an interesting illustration of this. Government spending has also greatly increased in Australia, but there is still a much higher level of private involvement in social policy than New Zealand.

New Zealand versus Australia

Australia has a smaller government than New Zealand; their government spends 34% of GDP compared to New Zealand's 40%. It is also a much richer country with better social outcomes.

Incomes are a third higher across the Tasman, and the Australians also outperform us on a range of social indicators, including life expectancy, infant mortality, income inequality and suicide rates.

Australia doesn't necessarily have less social spending; the difference is that private provision is more prevalent, and actively encouraged by the Federal Government. In health for example, 33% of Australian spending comes from the private sector compared to 23% in New Zealand. In education, the corresponding figures are 26% for Australia and 17% for New Zealand.

What if we hadn't spent this money?

In a proper evaluation of public spending we need to consider the alternative; what if the extra \$20 billion a year of spending for 2007 was returned to taxpayers instead?

Incredibly, \$20 billion would almost be enough to abolish all income tax. For 2006/07 the government is expecting to receive \$20.5 billion in PAYE tax. Therefore, if the government had frozen existing spending in 2000, by now all public services could be solely funded by GST, corporate tax and other indirect taxes.

In real terms of course, this would have meant a cut in public funding because of inflation and population growth. But would this have left us worse off as a society? The impact might be a lot lighter than expected, as per the theory outlined above—so much public spending has simply replaced private spending, and done so with less effective results.

A 0% tax rate would allow an enormous amount of people to afford private health and education and lift themselves entirely out of the state system. Additionally, it would have delivered a major boost in economic growth and living standards.

This is a radical and purely theoretical example, but it shows the substantial benefits from controlling the rise of government spending. It only takes a few years of economic growth for the relative size of the state to shrink, allowing for substantial tax cuts with no cuts to public services.

Conclusion

Trying to measure the effectiveness of public spending is an imperfect science, one that governments around the world have been grappling with for years. Choosing the right indicators is a subjective choice, and even if a value has increased or decreased, there is no proof that it is a direct result of government spending.

Inevitably, it is much easier to disprove a relationship of causation than to prove one. Clearly in New Zealand's case, even with our limited information, there appears to be little relationship between the dramatic increase in public spending and the general social welfare. Given the scale of the new spending, it should be much easier to find obvious improvements. Instead, most indicators have plateaued, enough to seriously worry the government's own advisors in the Treasury.

It appears that the size of government in New Zealand has reached such a high level that not only is the *cost* of government spending increasing, but the *benefits* are diminishing.

Spending is now at a level where it is crowding out private involvement, and taking over things people could do for themselves. As a result we are getting a poorer return on our investment in public services and suffocating the economy.

Too often politicians take the view that all government spending is inherently 'good'. There is not enough scrutiny of public spending, of its benefits and of the alternatives available to policymakers. Too often this reflects an ideological commitment to the role of the state, rather than a dispassionate look at what the state can realistically achieve.

There needs to be a wider debate on what the proper role of government is and what services should be realistically provided by people themselves. We need to consider what governments *can* do as well as what they *should* do.

Phil Rennie is a Policy Analyst working in the Centre for Independent Studies' New Zealand Policy Unit.
See them on the web at CIS.Org.AU.





Parable of the broken window

Sean Kimpton delivers a classic lesson: people and politicians should look beyond obvious and short-term effects on some people to longer-term effects on all people.

In his 1850 essay 'The Seen and the Unseen' Frédéric Bastiat introduces what he calls The Broken Window Fallacy—a fallacy relating to hidden costs, to an incomplete accounting for the consequences of an action. The fallacy is so well known to economists of the Austrian school of economics that economist Henry Hazlitt based an entire book on it called *Economics in One Lesson*.

The parable describes a shopkeeper whose window is broken by a little boy. Onlookers sympathise with the shopkeeper, but they soon start to rationalise: the broken window makes work for the glazier, who will buy bread, benefiting the baker, who will then buy shoes, benefiting the cobbler, etc. "It is an ill wind that blows nobody good," say the good townsfolk. "Everybody must live, and what would become of the glaziers if panes of glass were never broken?" The onlookers finally conclude that the little boy was not guilty of vandalism; he was actually a public benefactor, creating economic benefits for everyone in town!

Put like this the idea is clearly nonsensical, which is precisely why Bastiat put it this way.

The fallacy overlooked by the onlookers' argument is that they considered the positive benefits of purchasing a new window, which they see, but they ignored the hidden costs to the shopkeeper and others, which they didn't see (and didn't think about): The money spent on the new window can no longer be spent elsewhere. Perhaps the shopkeeper was going to buy bread, benefiting the baker, who would then have bought shoes, etc., but instead he was forced to buy a window. Instead of a window and bread, he had only a window. Alternatively, perhaps he would have bought a new suit, benefiting the tailor; in that case the glazier's gain was the tailor's loss, and again the shopkeeper has only a window instead of a window and a suit. That suit will now never be made. The child did not bring any net benefit to the town – it is now poorer by one suit, but unlike that broken window that 'missing suit' is never seen.

The Broken Window Fallacy is extremely common in popular thinking. Indeed once, you are familiar with the parable the fallacy can be observed repeatedly, not only in popular thinking, but also in work of an allegedly scholarly nature.

You might hear, for example, that war is a benefactor, because historically it has often triggered advances in technology and other areas. Indeed, the increased production and employment associated with war (all that is seen) often leads people to claim that "war is good for the economy". However, the money spent on the war effort is money that is no longer available for food, clothing, health care or other needs. The stimulus felt in one sector of the economy comes at a direct—but hidden—cost to other sectors. The economy is 'richer' by one war, but all the poorer by all the other boons that could have been produced with all that money.

More importantly, however, war literally destroys property, buildings and lives. The economic stimulus to the "defence" sector is offset not only by immediate opportunity costs, but also by the costs of armaments, and damage and the very real devastation of war. It is often claimed that the rebuilding that follows war provides a further stimulus to the economy, this time mainly in the construction sector, but here is just a further second application of the Broken Window Fallacy. Immense resources are spent *merely to restore things to the condition they already were before the war began*. After the war, the nation has a rebuilt city; before the war, it had a city and years of time ahead in which its labour could have been used for purposes that are far more fruitful than warmongering.

Paul Krugman is one economist on whom this lesson is lost. After the September 11 attacks Krugman suggested that the rebuilding in New York would stimulate billions of dollars of economic activity, providing a net benefit to the United States economy which was in recession at the time. But this ignored the billions of dollars in assets which were a

net loss as a result of the attack. If the World Trade Center should be rebuilt exactly as it was before the attack, the US would have a World Trade Center, whereas *without* the September 11 attack, the US would have not only the World Trade Center, but also all the resources that must now be allocated to rebuilding it, not to mention the small matter of the lives lost in the attack!

This also ignores the hidden costs of actions that as a result of the attacks just never occurred. Business travel and business plans not taken because of fear of terrorism; the loss of business to suppliers of those services, their suppliers, and so on. It is quite likely that the fear of terrorism, including subsequent events such as the anthrax scares, deepened the existing recession and made things even worse for the economy consequently.

Bastiat, Hazlitt, and others equated the glazier with special interests, and the little boy with government. Special interests request money from the government (in the form of subsidies, grants, etc.), and the government then forces the taxpayer to provide the funds. The recipients certainly do benefit, and are seen to do so by the television crews who visit them and who praise the government's largesse. However, what no television crew can show are the hidden costs: the taxpayers who are now poorer by exactly that much money, and the things on which they could have spent their own money. The food, clothing or other items they might have purchased themselves with that money are un-purchased—but since there is no way to count these "non-purchases" this cost is hidden. It is an "opportunity cost." What Bastiat called "what is not seen."

Because the costs are hidden, there is an illusion that the benefits cost nothing. But this is just airy nonsense. As Hazlitt summarised the point, "Everything we get, outside the free gifts of nature, must in some way be paid for."

Not everything that is paid for is seen.



Clapton on Robert Johnson: Going With Flow

What an odd mix is Eric Clapton. A reserved, almost donnish Englishman, yet considered one of the world's great guitar heroes. Born and raised far from Mississippi or Chicago, yet he wields unquestionably one of the finest blues guitars the world has heard thus far.

And not only that, he understands the psychology of creativity too, about which more below.

But first, his music, which has always been constrained by genre. Listening to much of his music over the years, too much of it is far too pedestrian. His blues solos are really the moments which are clearly and majestically *him*, the moments when he really stretches out, and his guitar gently aches and weeps -- at these moments he seems to be playing from and expressing his soul. But over the course of many years the number of solos has been too few, and the song structure within which those solos are contained has too often been too constraining, and to my ear often just too insipid to allow his soul to sing.

Most of his albums -- including his most recent dreary offering *Back Down*-- have not unfortunately been crammed full of emotionally and technically challenging blues music, but instead are mostly featureless terrains of musically- and emotionally-shallow mush-- stretching neither him nor his audience. They have however paid for an awful lot of fine living.

Just occasionally it's possible to hear the real Clapton -- and boy can he play when he wants to! A recent DVD/CD set in which Clapton plays songs from blues legend Robert Johnson (pictured right) is one recent and brilliant example: this captures the real Clapton, playing beautifully, expressively, and from the heart. The blues, it's sometimes said, ain't nothin' but the sound of a good man feelin' bad, and Johnson's songs are the real thing: they *ache* with that emotion, and Clapton clearly feels it -- and when he does feel it you can hear it in his guitar.

He points out however in an interview on the DVD (and here we come back to the subject of creativity) that playing these songs is by no means easy -- Johnson's seemingly simple-sounding songs are a mare's nest of difficulties and complexity. This guitar hero of most the last half-century (a famous piece of graffiti in sixties London declared boldly "Clapton is God" -- few were found at the time to demur),

he confesses that he's not *entirely* able to play what Johnson himself played and recorded over seventy years ago.

You see, like listening to the piano phenomenon Art Tatum, listening to Johnson's recordings sometimes makes you convinced there's two people playing. But there isn't. Says Clapton,

When I first heard him, and I think Keith Richards said this too, that we all thought there was, he was being accompanied by someone, it sounded like it. And it wasn't unusual in those days, I mean, you often had a piano player and a guitar player, or two guitar players. And it wasn't until later that I realized you could do it, what he does. But you have to really, I mean, I've had to, I've had to work really hard in the last few days, to try and do some of the things that I needed to do to play along. And I, and, and, and my, my take on Robert Johnson so far is that it needs two people, to play what he plays and sing at the same time.



**Blues legend Robert Johnson:
"Fiendishly difficult" to play**

Clapton describes to camera his monumental struggle trying to get *just one song* right, and concludes that to get it *exactly* right, "I think to do that would be a life's work. I

mean, it seriously would be a life's work for any musician." He has problems with one song in particular, 'Stones in My Passway,' and despite never completely mastering it, he's clearly relishing the artistic and technical challenge.

Until I and I still can't, I can't do it completely right, I can kind of get an approximation. But, I mean, it's almost one of those things where you listen to it, it just sounds so relaxed. And yet when you come to try it and do it, you find out how almost virtually impossible it is. And I've had to work on this every morning and every night for the last week, to try and just do one song like that. So that's pretty difficult.

"Pretty difficult" for Eric Clapton (Clapton is God) means "well-nigh impossible" for ordinary mortals --- this simple-sounding music of Johnson's turns out to be fiendishly difficult to play, which is part of what offers Clapton his reward for playing it.

In an interview for the DVD, Clapton describes what he feels when he's playing this difficult music; his description makes fascinating reading for anyone interested in the psychology of creativity, and of what makes people truly happy, satisfied and fulfilled:

Well, it's the closest thing to being truly in the moment I can experience really, I think. If I'm, if I'm just in a social situation, and we're, I mean, me alone, part of me is there, a good deal of it. You know, maybe 75% part of my brain is off somewhere, thinking about what I'm gonna do tomorrow -- have I got everything I need to make the journey I'm gonna make, etcetera, etcetera. Did I do, did I forget something about what we were supposed to do yesterday.

I mean, but doing that kind of work, especially the stuff that we're doing, with just me and the acoustic, requires such concentration that I am, I think this is close as I get to being really in the moment. And then everything, time just sort of stands still, and at the same time seems to go by very quickly. It's all, it's all like, a kind of roller, it's like being in a, in an accident. It's just a blur. But I love it, you know, I love, I love that kind of, when it feels like it's really going well, and, and, and I'm just in tune and in harmony with time. It's a great, it's a great feeling.

Anyone who's ever been fully absorbed in that creative moment, of being "in the moment" or "in the zone" will know exactly what he's talking about -- and we don't have to be a world class guitar hero to feel it. Hungarian-

US psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (pronounced Chik-sent-me-hie) describes that state as one of "optimal experience, or flow," a state in which you are, he says:

being completely involved in an activity for its own sake. The ego falls away. Time flies. Every action, movement, and thought follows inevitably from the previous one, like playing jazz. Your whole being is involved, and you're using your skills to the utmost.

Csikszentmihalyi has studied creative and high-achieving individuals, and he describes the phenomenon of their 'being in the flow' in their work as both their defining attribute, and their reward. 'Flow' itself is a function of a

work is our psychological reward for doing it well. There are a number of implications of Csikszentmihalyi's research, including important implications for career choice, for artistic creativity, for education, and even for how we choose to relax (see image at right). Productive and creative work can be seen not just as important existentially, but also psychologically, and selfishly.

Once we understand what 'flow' is and its importance to us, we can seek to maximise our time 'in the flow' rather than simply existing in a drone-like manner, or engaging in mindless pleasure-seeking. Csikszentmihalyi for example contrasts enjoyment and

What is Flow?

'Flow' is what sportsmen call *being in the zone*, and what psychologists call a state of being in *focused attention*.

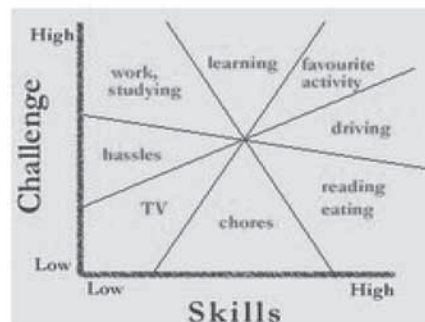
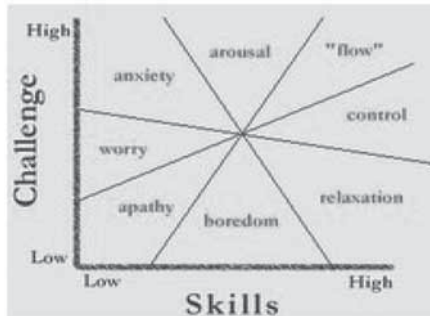
The leading researcher into flow is Chicago psychologist Mikhail Csikszentmihalyi ("pronounce my surname Chick-sent-me-high" he says with a smile) says that this is a subject not just of academic importance. "A typical day is full of anxiety and boredom," says Csikszentmihalyi. "Flow experiences provide the flashes of intense living against this dull background."

It's the name we give to the experience that people report when they are completely involved in something, so they forget themselves, forget time. It seems to be the kind of moments when people feel the most alive and their life is the most meaningful. Over the years, I've [tried] to see whether it's possible to transform everyday life — whether in school or family — into something that resembles the state of Flow.

Unlike many psychologists, who view every positive human attribute as somehow a negative -- work hard and you're obviously 'craving the approval denied you in childhood'; become a successful artist and discover that Freud declares that you simply want to mould your own faeces -- Csikszentmihalyi's studies work at "providing further insight on what makes life prosperous and full." His Quality of Life Research Centre was founded with that explicit aim. Amongst the online research papers there is one giving more detail about the concept of Flow, and how it can help transform education for the better. Asked why schools don't create more of a Flow-like atmosphere he says:

First of all, schools are a recent phenomenon. We have had 200,000 generations who grew up without schools and they learned perfectly well. In the last six generations, we developed this method of teaching, which we call school, and it's a pretty sorry experiment at this point...

Csikszentmihalyi's Quality of Life Research Centre can be found online at QLRC.CGU.Edu/About.htm

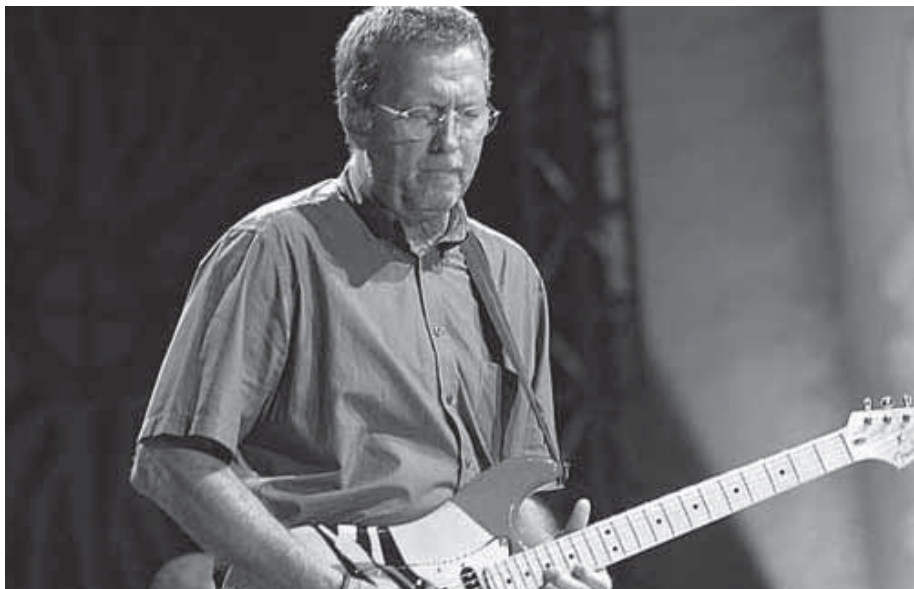


person's skills and the challenge before them. "Optimal experience, or flow, occurs when both variables are high," says Csikszentmihalyi. Too simple a challenge for our skills and we feel bored; too much of a challenge and we feel anxiety. But like Red Riding Hood eating Baby Bear's porridge, if things are 'just right' and our skills are being challenged to the right degree, then we too find ourselves in 'flow' in just the way Clapton describes.

Ayn Rand described "productive work [as] the central purpose of a rational man's life, the central value that integrates and determines the hierarchy of all his other values. Reason is the source, the precondition of his productive work -- pride is the result." If our work is what integrates us, then being in 'flow' through our

pleasure, explaining "that the difference was that pleasure lacked a sense of achievement or active contribution to the result." Work or pleasure done 'in flow' need not be tiring; if done properly, it might instead be galvanising!

The North American Montessori Teachers Association have been working with Csikszentmihalyi to apply his model for education with children -- Montessorian David Kahn lists eight conditions of "the flow experience," all of which he maintains are found in the Montessori classroom. His introduction to Montessori and Optimal Experience Research is a good place to start understanding the concept of flow, and one example of its concrete application.





Montessori And Optimal Experience Research:

Toward Building A Comprehensive Education Reform

Maria Montessori talked about 'normalization' as an educational process in which a child is made ready to learn, and a classroom made a place in which children are able to learn. Recent psychological research on high-performance athletes and high-achieving individuals talks about the phenomenon of being 'in the zone,' or 'in flow.'

Montessori educationalist David Kahn – the founder of the modern Montessori Erdkinder farm-school programme for adolescents -- explains that this research reinforces Dr Montessori's own insights: the Montessori classroom, he says, is a place in which 'flow' is strongly encouraged.

On Normalization

In 1996, I asked Margaret Stephenson about normalization for the second and third planes (that is, for elementary and adolescent education, respectively). She responded in this way: There is no such thing as normalization for the second and third plane. Normalization is a 'first plane' phenomenon – in other words, a phenomenon of early childhood. After I explored the Montessori literature, it became clear that she was quite right. Montessori distinguishes between *normalization* and *normality*.

What is *normalization*? Montessori's most succinct description of normalization is as follows:

Only "normalised" children, aided by their environment, show in their subsequent development those wonderful powers that we describe: spontaneous discipline, continuous and happy work, social sentiments of help and sympathy for others....

Its principal feature never changes. It is "application to work." An interesting piece of work, freely chosen, which has the virtue of inducing concentration rather than fatigue, adds to the child's energies and mental capacities and leads him to self-mastery.

In her book *The Formation of Man*, Montessori writes about *normality*:

Let us now suppose that a method of education recognizes that it is necessary to normalize a child right from the beginning and then to keep alive the natural continuation of this state of normality. That

method would then have for its foundation a kind of "psychic hygiene" which helps men to grow up in a good mental health.

This passage suggests that *normalization* is foundational and that *normality* is the sustaining of psychic health and motivation beyond the first plane.

On 'Flow,' and Optimal Experience Theory

Psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi described *flow* as "the quality of experience as a function of the relationship between challenges and skills. Optimal experience, or flow, occurs when both variables are high."

In the same article, Csikszentmihalyi presented the chart shown here as Figure 1. When skills are high and challenges are low, for example, a person can experience states like relaxation or even boredom; when challenges are high and skills are low, anxiety or worry can result; when both skills and challenges are low, a person can experience apathy. When challenges and skills are matched at a high level, the resulting state is flow.

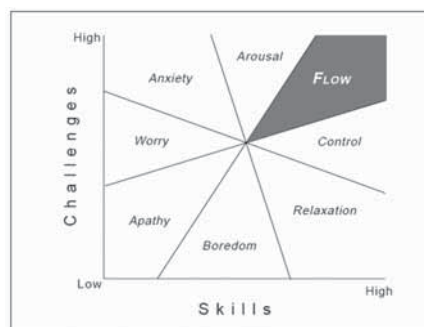


Figure 1. Quality of Experience as Relationship between Challenges and Skills.

Csikszentmihalyi listed the conditions of the flow experience as follows:

1. *Goals Are Clear:* One knows at every moment what one wants to do.
2. *Feedback Is Immediate:* One knows at every moment how well one is doing.
3. *Skills Match Challenges:* The opportunities for action in the environment are in balance with the person's ability to act.
4. *Concentration Is Deep:* Attention is focused on the task at hand.
5. *Problems Are Forgotten:* Irrelevant stimuli are excluded from consciousness.
6. *Control Is Possible:* In principle, success is in one's hands.
7. *Self-Consciousness Disappears:* One has a sense of transcending the limits of one's ego.
8. *The Sense of Time Is Altered:* Usually it seems to pass much faster.
9. *The Experience Becomes Autotelic:* It is worth having for its own sake.

Flow, then, includes spontaneous discipline, concentration, and engagement—all of which part of the normalization concept. When told about Montessori's normalization idea, Dr. Csikszentmihalyi quipped, "My goodness, this is fascinating. Dr. Montessori regarded normalization or *flow* as the norm of the species!" At this point a world-celebrated psychologist from the University of Chicago began to pursue the connection between his optimal experience called *flow* and Montessori's normalization.

The Marriage of Flow and Normalization

The introduction of flow into the Montessori culture has had an invigorating effect. Csikszentmihalyi maintained that the Montessori concept of normalization was solid, but the semantics were limiting.

Flow is a different word than *normalization* and seems to speak to more people. Tested in parent education sessions where the word *flow* has been introduced, adults relate easily to what gives them flow. Flow is deep engagement, they are told. Flow is when you lose track of time because you are so involved with your work. When you are in flow, problems fade away and your involvement goes deeper with every step. Every adult can give examples of flow in a parent education workshop—skiing, knitting, reading, etc.

Then, dramatically, the Montessori professional can state: "In the Montessori school, every child chooses activities that give flow. What if

you went to a school where the environments were designed to create an optimal learning experience called *flow*? *Flow*, applied to the adult stage, is able to help adults connect with Montessori's concept of *normalization* in early childhood.

This connection applies to Montessori teachers as well. Using the accessible term *flow* has encouraged the Montessori practitioner to see normalization as central, as an external manifestation of inner development. Although the concept of normalization is

pedagogy may be able to facilitate through its educational efforts.

Researching Flow and Normalization

Csikszentmihalyi introduced NAMTA to a student he had mentored at the University of Chicago, Kevin Rathunde, a brilliant PhD graduate from the Committee on Human Development. Currently, Dr. Rathunde is Associate Professor at the University of Utah. Having co-authored and collaborated on significant research with Csikszentmihalyi over a ten-year period, Dr. Rathunde accepted

suggest real measures of normalization and normality throughout the planes of education. The work of Rathunde and Csikszentmihalyi, based on optimal experience theory as it pertains to intrinsic motivation, begins to externalize the elusive "unknowns" of psychic development.

Montessori has often referred to "hidden powers" needing to be discovered by the science of human development (see for example her book *The Formation of Man*): "The basis of the reform of education and society which is the necessity of our times must be built upon the scientific study of Man the unknown."

Dr. Rathunde opens his article with a review of the literature on the inner needs of adolescents and the failure of secondary education to meet those needs. He selects Montessori philosophy and practice as a model for secondary education reform, stating, "Furthermore, when the Montessori philosophy is applied to middle schools, it is surprisingly consistent with contemporary perspectives on motivation and school reform."

The "poor fit" between adolescents' developmental stage and the typical middle school environment, says Rathunde, "could not come at a worse time" in life: "Habits formed in adolescence could undermine lifelong learning and the future quality of life." Given the high stakes of 'third-plane' adolescent development, Rathunde focuses not only on data about Montessori's effectiveness in motivation and healthy socialization as compared with traditional schools, but he also links Montessori's strengths to two contemporary motivation theories, flow theory and goals theory, to help clarify Montessori's contribution to school reform. He is serious about bringing Montessori into the public forum through publishing his results in mainstream educational journals.

Montessori's writings depicted secondary school reform as a radical departure from traditional education. Montessori saw the *Erdkinder* (living on the land) as a model for social reform, as she states at the beginning of the *Erdkinder* appendices in *From Childhood to Adolescence*:

The need that is so keenly felt for a reform of secondary schools is not only an educational, but also a human and social problem. This can be summed up in one sentence. Schools as they are today, are adapted neither to the needs of adolescence nor to the time in which we live.

The orientation to reform as a "human and social problem" indicates that the essence of Montessori's revolutionary thinking is found in the early adolescent stage. She goes on to suggest that secondary school reform cannot solve all the problems of the times, but "it is certainly a necessary step, and a practical,

Although the concept of normalization is given much attention in Montessori teacher training, the actual importance of the idea at the classroom level may not yet be fully explored or understood as the powerful indicator of optimal experience that it is. Flow captures the imagination of the Montessori professional and reinforces the understanding of normalization.

given much attention in Montessori teacher training, the actual importance of the idea at the classroom level may not yet be fully explored or understood as the powerful indicator of optimal experience that it is. Flow captures the imagination of the Montessori professional and reinforces the understanding of normalization.

However, flow is not normalization. Until now, it has not been attached to scientifically created environments such as the Montessori prepared environment. Flow has been applied to adult and adolescent psychology, a top down application. Although flow's introduction to Montessori supports the Montessori mission of psychic wellness from birth through adulthood, flow does not really address early childhood and childhood. The marriage between flow and Montessori education has many future possibilities because both theories are dedicated to unmasking the truth about intrinsic motivation and observing and measuring levels of engagement. The North American Montessori Teachers' Association (NAMTA) plans to explore flow in relation to all stages of development as well as to review best practices at the adolescent education level. The flow research model creates a tangible, scientific view of normalization that has not yet been detailed in the Montessori literature even at the early childhood level.

So with Montessori theory working from birth up and flow theory working from adulthood down, the combined theories support the entire developmental continuum. The developmental framework is now richer as the two theories "frame" spontaneous discipline throughout the life span. In addition, Csikszentmihalyi's research has investigated the creative adolescent and adult, providing a glimpse of the "new adult" that Montessori

a research commission with NAMTA and published his "Montessori Education and Optimal Experience: A Framework for New Research" in *The NAMTA Journal*. [Available online at Montessori-MANTA.Org/NAMTA/GenInfo/CurrentResearch.htm.]

He opened this seminal article by stating these goals:

First I will argue that not all the gold has been mined out of Montessori's ideas. Some of her best insights about children and education have only recently found a corresponding theoretical perspective in the field of human development that can highlight them and provide empirical support. The perspective referred to is recent work on optimal experience (i.e., states of "flow" or deep interest) and its role in human development. Once a conceptual bridge has been established between Montessori ideas and optimal experience theory, a second goal will be charting a course for new research on adolescent development within Montessori environments.

The conceptual bridge between Montessori and optimal experience (flow) theory was facilitated not only by Kevin Rathunde but by Annette Haines, who coordinated the field study for Rathunde and provided context to what he was seeing.

Exploring Uncharted Waters: New Pathways to Educational Reform

Rathunde's research results published in the *NAMTA Journal* are extremely important to Montessori as a whole, because they focus on the end stage of extant Montessori education, namely, the young adolescent. Not only do these findings characterize the motivation and socialization of adolescents, but they begin to



interest" is when intrinsic motivation and seriousness are above average at the same time. Undivided interest is a very important condition to look for and characterize in our observation of older Montessori students. Playfulness and seriousness correspond to the balance between freedom and discipline.

2. It confirms that Montessori adolescents have a deep and satisfying community life, which increases as they get older. One can speculate from this that Montessori adolescents very likely will look forward to their careers and social interactions as part of their service to society and to the world. The study indicates that there is a basis for anticipating a more highly motivated and socially healthy human development within the Montessori educational plan of work and studies. Flow is the final, all-inclusive outcome, which registers very high in Montessori adolescents.

though limited contribution, to an urgently needed reconstruction of society." To be or not to be an *Erdkinder* is the ultimate question because, as Montessori contends, the dynamic of a microcosmic farm community motivates studies in nature, history, and science that build social interest.

Since Montessori and Rathunde have both emphasized educational reform, it will be interesting to look at these findings again as to what they have to say about the future evolution of the Montessori *Erdkinder* model as well as the role of urban and suburban adolescent projects in motivating and socializing the adolescent.

Rathunde's present study focused on one public Montessori adolescent program, three private "urban" Montessori adolescent programs, and one farm-based adolescent project.

The specific measures chosen were found to exist in all five Montessori adolescent programs, regardless of location or orientation. This suggests that Montessori adolescent programs all have general characteristics that support adolescents across the board.

Teachers and prepared environments support student interests and provide high challenges and skills, playfulness, thinking combined with acting, freedom combined with discipline, positive motivation, flow, etc.

The measures used in the study include affect, potency, salience, intrinsic motivation, flow, and undivided interest. These measures begin to explore the subjective inner life of the student. The measures are also ciphers, which

point in the direction of Montessori educational reform, in which children and adolescents are allowed active exploration and spontaneous concentration, resulting in "unending human development and lifelong learning." These liberated capacities of the individual, as he or she interacts with society, transform the focus of the adult world. Society, under ideal conditions, incorporates the process of child-becoming-adult as a powerful revelation of what it means to be human.

Conclusion: Research Results As Indirect Preparation For Further Reform

It is encouraging that the report pinpoints Montessori effectiveness in improving motivation and socialization in comparison to traditional schools, but the most valuable insights are found in the exploration behind the results, what Rathunde has called a "new framework for research," which would explore the inner functions of human intelligence and emotions. The present study points up two very important connections to Montessori theory into practice:

1. It confirms that Montessori adolescents enjoy what they do. But at the same time they also see what is important about their work for the future. They are able to combine playfulness and seriousness. It therefore follows that Montessori teachers must learn to see normalization as operating between "drudgery" and "fooling." Drudgery is an outcome of too much seriousness due to an emphasis on structure, discipline, and future usefulness. Fooling results from too much playfulness without real challenges. Rathunde's measure called "undivided

Rathunde and Csikszentmihalyi's two research articles from this study will speak to the educational mainstream about Montessori's ability to lead school reform. The comparisons between Montessori and traditional public schools are helpful, but it is the *contextualization* of the research that will inform Montessorians. The commentaries by Haines, Baker, and Zener bring Montessori theory and practice together around optimal experience theory, expanding Montessori's experiential and psychological parameters.

More importantly, the findings suggest that we are getting a little closer to Montessori's compelling vision of human reconstruction, which is nothing less than to change the world through compassion, social interest, and intrinsic motivation across the planes of development.

The Rathunde/Csikszentmihalyi study injects Montessori philosophy into the current education reform debate, fulfilling Montessori's commitment to social change and optimal development of the human personality.



David Kahn is the leading light of the modern Montessori *Erdkinder* farm-school phenomenon, and the founder of the Hershey Montessori Farm School for adolescents in northeast Ohio. Information about the Hershey school can be found at MontessoriFarm.Org. This article was originally published in the *NAMTA Journal*, the professional journal of the North American Montessori Association. A full list of references for the article can be found at Montessori-NAMTA.Org/NAMTA/GenInfo/CurrentResearch.htm

MMEF

MARIA MONTESSORI EDUCATION FOUNDATION

email: mmef@ihug.co.nz

to receive details about these forthcoming events

to find out more about the AMI 3-6 course

visit: www.mmef.org.nz

MARIA MONTESSORI EDUCATION FOUNDATION
invites you to the following events with AMI 3-6 trainer **CHERYL FERREIRA**

1. Montessori workshops

"Language - towards total reading" and "Mathematics - from concrete to abstract"
Saturday, 21st July 2007
9am-5pm
Titoki Montessori School
70a Stredwick Drive
Torbay
Auckland



2. A public address

"From today's child to tomorrow's adult"
Wednesday July 18, 7pm-9pm
venue to be confirmed

3. An evening of edible delight from the regions of Italy

"Celebrate the Montessori centenary with a taste of Italy"
Friday July 20, venue to be confirmed

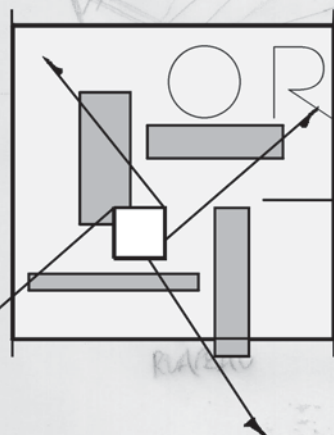
MMEF is selling *The Soft Letter Book* as a fundraiser.
Order by email from: mmef@ihug.co.nz or call (09) 473-0362

ONLY **\$15** + GST+ p&p

WWW.OrganonArchitecture.Co.NZ

If you are looking to get a flower instead of a weed out of the system -- if you're interested in design that integrates the architecture with your site -- then you should give me a call:

Peter Cresswell, at
Organon Architecture
(09) 631 0034, organon@ihug.co.nz



ORGANON ARCHITECTURE

*Integrating architecture
with your site...*





Film Review

300:

Review by Joe Maurone

Every Greek knows what is right

"Every Greek knows what is right. Every Greek knows...but only the Spartans choose to do it!"

-Frank Miller, *300*

As Aaron notes in his own review on page 44, *300* presents heroes without doubt or apology. There are no anti-heroes to be found, none just going through the motions, no muddled or conflicted 'heroes' succumbing to this or that weakness or folly. The rhetoric of Leonidas and others inspire, touting reason, freedom, and deriding the mysticism not only of the East but of the Greek's own gods and Oracle. Their confidence is unshaken, resolve unrelenting, and words matched by actions to the last stand. Not just imagery, not just presentation, but heroism and sense of life make this film awesome.

After seeing the film myself, I can truly say, "Well said."

Many will see the movie *300* and judge it by how well it conforms to the graphic novel and/or the historical events on which it is based. Personally, I saw *300* as nothing less than a rallying cry to stand up and speak out for what's right. When at the end of the movie, there are not 300 but *tens of thousands* of Spartans spurred on by the brave few who dared to take a stand, I couldn't help but feel the same. I was hoping for a standing ovation in the theater. That didn't happen. Aside from the fact that it was a sparse Saturday matinee crowd a week after the opening, I wasn't holding my breath, given the war-weariness and disillusionment of many Americans.

But that just makes the timing of this movie all the more poignant. The parallels between the story and the present day are there for those who want to see it (forget about the history; this story is of *our* time.) I can imagine that in the past, when the Spartan Queen gave her rousing speech, the audience would have cheered. But like her audience in the movie, she is more likely today to be met with blank stares and indignation. But here's an

interesting thought: Frank Miller, the author of the original comic, is known for dialogue such as: "I'm no Ayn Rand, she didn't go nearly far enough!" And like Rand's characters, Miller's Gorgo does not rest her argument on the acceptance or denial of her audience, she takes matters into her own hands, sticking the sword in her enemy and exposing the Judas-like betrayal.

The same of her husband, King Leonidas, who does not wait for the "disease ridden mystics" who would have Sparta bow down before the Persians to preserve a tradition. Neither would sell their souls for the proverbial "30 pieces of silver." No compromise, no unearned guilt, no surrender.

This movie *should* be nothing short of a rallying cry, especially for Objectivists.

I want to say that this movie should be nothing short of a rallying cry for *Americans*. But America does not mean what it once did. The ideal that America stood for is heading for the history bins, an ideal that has been sold for far less than even a few pieces of silver. America has gained the world and lost its soul. It's too big, too bloated, too unorganized, too lazy, too fat, too pampered, too cynical, too jaded. What it lacks is the Spartan lack of fear. Leonidas learns that "fear is constant"; that it must be faced; that it "heightens his senses." America has realized that fear is constant, but has dulled its senses with modern-day breads and circuses. America has abdicated self-determination to the "diseased-ridden mystics," the anti-industrialists, the bribes of slavery. America has heard King Xerxes' appeal, that Leonidas cruelly asks her to stand, and has decided instead to kneel in supplication.

Her Republicans are no soldiers of Leonidas; they are groveling along with the Democrats. The Libertarians talk of freedom, but until

they acknowledge the proper justification of freedom, they are -- like the Arcadians -- "more brawlers than warriors."

Objectivism is the equivalent of those 300 Spartans. Its army is relatively small, it is unsanctioned, and it is alone among thousands. Its proponents are surrounded on all sides. Yet there are more potential warriors among them. I say potential, because there is the risk that this mighty army may itself cave to the pressure. "The helmet is stifling, and the shield grows heavy."

What Objectivism needs is to look to the Spartans, not to the actual historical example, but in *spirit*. The Spartan lifestyle may be extreme, but it is instructive. Historically, the Spartans trained their bodies and minds against the elements, to bear pain, to stay hungry, to never surrender. Objectivists need to take this to heart. Its proponents must not hide from the fear. They must be true capitalists, yet they must not sell their souls. They must be diplomatic, yet they must not reason with the unreasonable. They must not accept the promises of wealth from self-proclaimed gods in exchange for subservience.

They must remember the Spartans of their own inspirations, the Howard Roarks and John Galt, who neither served nor kneeled, who could not be tempted by the Wynands and Tooheys, who could not turn on their own ideals for a comfortable lifestyle. There is "Kira's Viking," who never submitted or yielded -- who was fiction, yet truer than any iconic heavy metal barbarian. There is a story of an "Ideal" who visited those who proclaimed to love her. Some betrayed her; some did not even recognize her; some accepted her only on the condition that she cease to be that ideal.

Objectivism is not a game or a Platonic fiction. It is a method, a philosophy for living on Earth. When you meet the idea, how will you greet her?

Will you count yourself as one of the 300?





Film Review

300:

Review by Aaron Bilger

[Warning: this short review may contain minor spoilers. Nothing here should give away key parts of the film or detract from the experience of seeing it for yourself.]

I saw *300* on opening weekend in the US - and I loved it! I consider *300* joins that celebrated list of films such as *Shawshank Redemption* and *Incredibles* that are 'mandatory films for Objectivists.'

But first, some criticisms, minor compared to the great spectacle overall. Director Frank Miller seems initially conflicted in his presentation of the Spartans. The beginning shows realistic dark aspects of Spartan society such as exposing weak babies to the elements and forcing male children into violent training. These led me to believe the film would be true-to-life, but dark and gritty. The majority of the film, however, portrays a romanticized view of the Spartans. This portrayal works so well I'd have preferred Miller just chosen it from the beginning.

The Spartan image and some other historical elements admittedly do not exactly fit the history - but they serve well a heroic epic. I personally enjoy ancient military history, and I read about the battle of Thermopylae before seeing the movie. I soon realized you must set aside pure concern for historical accuracy to revel in the larger-than-life tale. Miller's presentation, I think, approaches genius in allowing such suspension of disbelief. By including some truly fantastic creatures that obviously never existed, he quickly lets viewers realize not to expect or demand a documentary, but instead to fully enjoy the thrilling experience and to completely accept *300* as a heroic and romantic re-imagining.

Watching *300* is - in a word - awesome. The imagery of the world and scenery alone is breathtaking - to say nothing of the battle scenes themselves.

Action speeds change, but the film lacks gratuitous camera spins or drawn-out fights between individuals. Fights are brutal, bloody, quick, but many. I found chilling the presentation of Persian masses, of creatures either real or fantastic, and the Persian emperor Xerxes. Though I expect the sensory experience of this film impressive regardless, I consider the IMAX viewing well worth it.

300 unfortunately has very few scenes with nudity or that could be called sexual. Yet those few really stood out. I believe the powerful sensual experience of the entire film definitely helps make those scenes incredibly erotic.

While Miller rather than the Greeks created much of the inspiring rhetoric, I reveled in a couple of the best exchanges from the battle which *do* spring from the annals of Thucydide's *History*:

PERSIANS: "Lay down your arms!"

LEONIDAS: "Come take them!"

GREEK MESSENGER: "The Persians number so great their arrows shall blot out the sun."

SPARTAN SOLDIER: "So much the better! We shall fight in the shade!"

Most significantly, *300* presents heroes without doubt or apology. There are no anti-heroes to be found, no one just going through the motions, no muddled or conflicted 'heroes'

succumbing to this or that weakness or folly. The speeches of Leonidas and others are not just rhetoric: they *inspire*; they promote the ideals of reason and freedom; they deride the mysticism not only of the East but of the Greek's own gods and Oracles. Their confidence is unshaken, resolve unrelenting, and words matched by actions to the last stand. Not just imagery, not just presentation, but heroism and sense of life make *300* awesome.

It fully stands up as a celebration of what historian John Lewis calls "the single most important battle in all of Western civilization" and of those "awesome heroes of the Greeks—the "greatest generation" of their day—who defended their freedom with their lives and made possible all that we are today."

Bravo!





Film Review

Unseen Movie Reviews:

Rocky Balboa

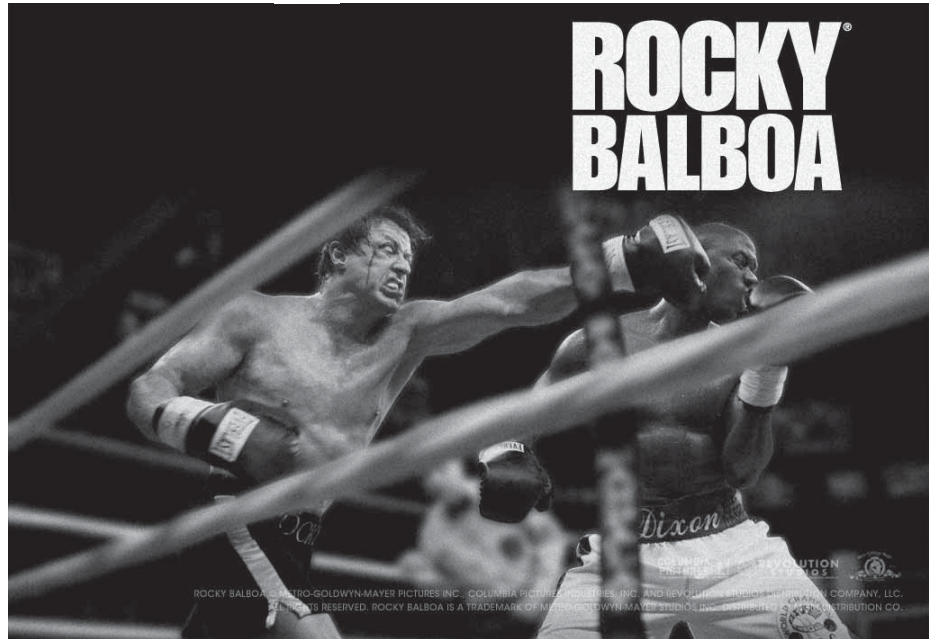
Review by Jason Roth

Rocky stands over the grave, his head hanging, his eyes filled with tears. He fights to win some inner battle we can only imagine he must be fighting. His lips tighten, and he cries out in despair: "Help me, Mickey!"

He looks to an old friend for an answer: Should I fight? Should I stay retired? The audience is now holding back its own tears, and as we await the answer and a decision from this, the sixth incarnation of the Hollywood hero, we wonder, silently, "Why can't that be somebody else talking to Rocky's corpse?"

For some reason, Sylvester Stallone thinks that watching a metaphor of his life after what should have been his retirement will be more interesting than his actual life after what should have been his retirement. Unfortunately for us, neither Rocky's movie son nor his real son (starring in the movie as his movie son) have had the balls to say, "Yo dad, haven't you milked that tired, uneducated, right-hooker with a heart of gold, recycled bullshit long enough?"

As much as we'd like to see *Rambo Does Tehran*, the only implausible, covert mission we get to see in this movie is Rocky breaking



out of a maximum-security nursing home and deluding himself and entire audiences into thinking he can beat the fuck out of his latest thirty-something arch-arch-rival, played this time by Antonio "Magic Man" Tarver. Too bad for Tarver, and for the entire sport of boxing, that Tarver already got executed in real life by

Bernard "the Executioner" Hopkins in June of 2006. Shit, if 40-something Hopkins can do it in 12 rounds, why not Rocky?

What the hell, here's my prediction: Rocky over Tarver by split decision. And no, I still haven't seen the movie.



Film Review

The Great Global Warming Swindle

Review by Marcus Bachler

Global Warming: A-pseudoscientific-morality.

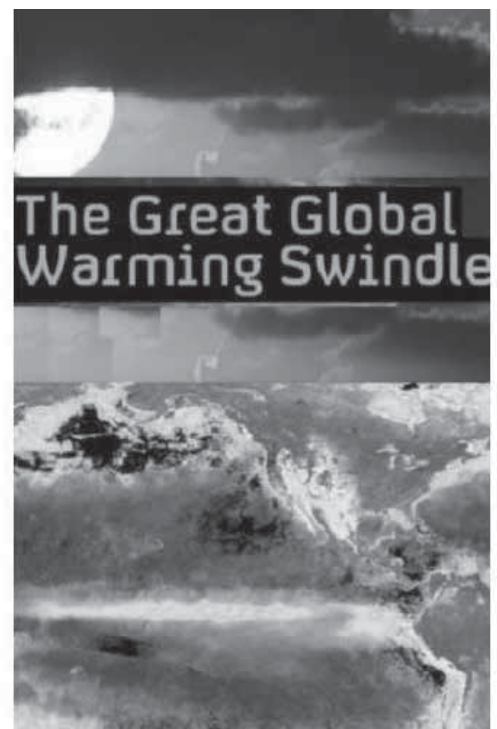
"Man-made global warming is no longer just a theory about climate: it is the defining moral and political cause of our age. Campaigners say the time for debate is over; any criticism no matter how scientifically rigorous is illegitimate, even worse dangerous. But in this film it will be shown that the earth's climate is always changing, that there is nothing unusual about the current temperature, and that the scientific evidence does not support the notion that climate is driven by carbon dioxide, man-made or otherwise. Everywhere you are told that man-made climate change is proved beyond doubt, but you are being told lies."

So began the brilliant documentary by filmmaker Martin Durkin that was aired on UK TV earlier this year. What it illustrated clearly and convincingly is that the theory that global climate change is caused by man-made CO2 is based upon the most contrived and morally corrupt pseudo-science of the last 30 years. The scale of the fraud is staggering and overwhelming – everywhere in the media

we are bombarded by scare stories of impending global doom of our own making with accompanying images of hurricanes, third-world famine, tropical diseases and drowning polar bears. I say overwhelming because the propaganda machine that turns out these stories is relentless and impervious to contradicting evidence or facts of reality and yet continually claims to share the authority, authenticity and consensus of all respected scientists! It might not be such a frightening situation if the environmental lobby hadn't already got the undivided attention, support and complicity of most western Governments including the UK and the US.

The film stripped away the emperor clothes of the theory of "Global Warming" being caused by man. Its main points of argument against the theory are that:

1) "We are told that the earth's climate is changing, but the earth's climate is always changing. In earth's history there have been



countless periods when it was much warmer and much cooler than it is today. When much of the world was covered by tropical forests or else vast ice sheets. The climate has always changed, and changed without any help from us humans."

And yet major UK newspapers are still publishing photos of drowning baby seals and polar bears, supposedly caused by Global Warming, supposedly the fault of human-made pollution and supposedly "photos that will change the world". However nothing in these nicely cropped photos (they neglect to show us the surrounding environment) indicates that these animals are drowning. In fact, the photos could just as believably be labelled, "Polar Bear sunbathing" or "Baby Seal frolicking in Arctic sea".

"The polar bears obviously survived [former warmer periods than today], they are with us today, they are very adaptable and these warm periods in the past posed no problem for them." Said Professor John Clark – Dept of Earth Sciences – University of Ottawa.

2) If you take the percentage of CO₂ in the atmosphere of all gases, it is 0.054%. CO₂ is a relatively minor greenhouse gas. The proportions that human are adding are even smaller and the main source of CO₂ is in fact coming from the world's oceans. The geological records shows that in fact CO₂ rises

do not even precede warming, but instead lag behind them by some 800 years. So, there is a correlation between CO₂ and temperature as Al Gore points out in his misleading Oscar winning documentary, *An Inconvenient Truth*. However it is not a positive one, but a negative one with an inverse correlation.

3) The atmosphere is made up of a multitude of gases and a small percentage of them are the greenhouse gases. And of that small percentage, 95% of greenhouse gases are water vapour, and that is by far the most important greenhouse gas seen in the form of clouds. Further, solar activity has been demonstrated to be the most accurate way of predicting climate changes on earth. The interplay between water vapour and solar activity is the main determinant of the earth's warming and cooling. Human beings have no influence upon them.

4) "If it is greenhouse warming you [would] get more warming in the troposphere, because greenhouse gases trap heat from escaping in the troposphere. However, that is just not the case." Says Professor Syun-Ichi Akasofu, Director of the International Arctic Research Centre.

The data collected from satellites and weather balloons show that the earth is warmer than the atmosphere. This fact alone directly contradicts the prediction made by global warming driven

by CO₂. [Global Warming theorists admit this, but yet they claim that the measurements were in error and have been corrected through a revised mathematical formula with a compensation factor. This point is not from the documentary, but from my own reading of scientific journals at the time. Not surprisingly during that previous uncompensated period of "erroneous temperature measurements" there was never any doubt amongst "consensus" IPCC climate scientists or politicians that Global Warming was driven by CO₂!]

Impressive was the list of "non-consensus" scientists and experts debunking the theory of man-made global warming in the documentary including Professor Syun-Ichi Akasofu – Director of the International Arctic Research Centre, Professor Patrick Michaels – Dept of Environmental Sciences – University of Virginia, Professor Tim Bell – Department of Climatology – University of Winnipeg, Professor John Clark – Dept of Earth Sciences and University of Ottawa and Professor John Christy – former Lead Author IPCC.

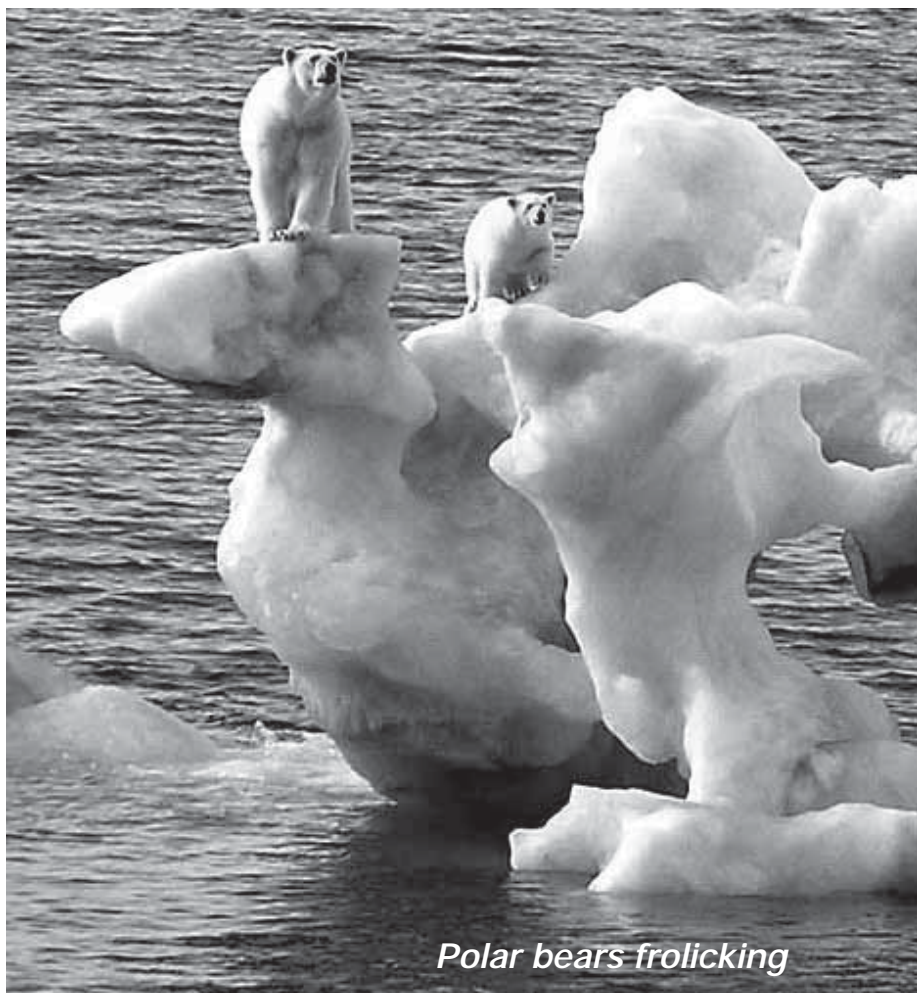
These are brave souls. As explained in the documentary and in a recent article in *The Daily Telegraph*, scientists and public figures who dare publicly refute the case for man-made global warming through CO₂ potentially face the loss of research funds and even death-threats.

"I have seen and heard their spitting fury at anybody that might disagree with them, which is not the scientific way. The whole global warming business has become like a religion and people who disagree are called heretics. I am a heretic. The makers of this programme are all heretics."
- Nigel Calder, former Editor of the magazine *New Scientist*.

In an atmosphere where Governments and the media have been ever more loudly proclaiming that the science of Global Warming is beyond question or debate and that the time for political action is imminent such a documentary was sorely needed.

So what did the environmental lobby, UK media and Government make of such a documentary? The first reactions (mainly from TV critics and not environmental journalists) were surprising positive (apart from *The Guardian*).

- "In 90 minutes, this programme managed to prick the balloon of self-righteous indignation surrounding global warming." *The Sun*.
- "You were left feeling that climate change was now less an issue and more a doom-laden religion demanding sacrifice to Gaia for our wicked fossil fuel-driven ways." *The Times*.
- "Durkin made a persuasive case, outlining the idea that Western politicians are



Polar bears frolicking

whipping up global warming propaganda as a key strategy in hindering industrial progress in the underdeveloped world. As conspiracy theories go, it was one to warm to." *The Metro*.

- "I hope you watched Durkin's film last night, if only to get a proper explanation of the alternative view of climate change, that it is largely (though not entirely) caused by solar activity." *The Independent*.
- "...it's just more of that age-old Fox News formula..." *The Guardian*.

However the global warming propagandists don't hang around. Within a few days environmentalist bloggers were claiming that Martin Durkin was a shady character who had previously made unorthodox documentaries with distorted evidence and that the Scientist Carl Wunsch had been tricked into taking part. *The Independent* (probably the most extreme mainstream propagator of Global warming hysteria) only six days later claimed to have undertaken an investigation into the documentary exposing it as being the real "swindle". These claims made by *The Independent* were then repeated as truth by major news programmes, newspapers and Blogs all over the internet.

"A Channel 4 documentary that claimed global warming is a swindle was itself flawed with major errors which seriously undermine the programme's credibility, according to an investigation by *The Independent*. *The Great Global Warming Swindle* was based on graphs that were distorted, mislabelled or just plain wrong. The graphs were nevertheless used to attack the credibility and honesty of climate scientists." - *The Independent*.

Most Governments and bureaucrats simply ignored the claims of the documentary, except when challenged by some in the media, in response to which they pleaded ignorance and simply deferred their opinions to the "consensus" of the IPCC.

Frightening too was the Blair Government, Conservative opposition and the EU, dismissive of any possible objections to Global Warming theory, simultaneously announcing massive new interventions in the economy to reduce "carbon emissions". A fixed target passed into UK legislation of a 60% reduction in CO2 emissions within the next 50 years, a personal "state rationed" carbon allowance for UK citizens, a "state rationing" of the number of flights per year each citizen may take, a copy of Al Gore's documentary "An Inconvenient Truth" to be sent (at the tax-payers expense) to all secondary schools for "teaching" purposes, the banning of tungsten light-bulbs in the whole of the EU by 2009 in favour of energy efficient fluorescent bulbs and EU legislation enforcing a common reduction policy for CO2 emissions in all member countries. European and US environmentalists are hell-bent on prompting their Governments to shut-down the wealth-generating apparatus of human industry and ingenuity.

I am not just lumping these things together to

exaggerate this point. All the above measures were in fact announced within a few short weeks after the documentary aired.

"Fact of the matter is that tens of thousands of jobs depend on Global Warming right now. It's a big business."

- Professor Patrick Michaels, Dept of Environmental Sciences, University of Virginia.

However there is some resistance by the public to the Global Warming theory and its political consequences by ordinary citizens in the "letters to the editor" columns in UK newspapers. At least for now, the media have woken up to the fact that there is a sceptical public that want news items that question Global Warming theory and that debate the claims. In fact, this month there is promised to be a serious scientific debate on the evidence of Global Warming theory on TV inspired by the documentary.

"This was an excellent series of arguments supported by experimental data; it completely demolished the idea that the current rise in average temperatures could be due to a tiny increase in a gas which is much less than 1% of our atmosphere. Particularly convincing to me was the tiny proportion of carbon dioxide released by human activity compared with that by natural processes and the fact that increased temperatures precede rises in carbon dioxide levels and not follow them."

- Dave Thompson, Haworth, West Yorks, letter to *The Times*.

There have also been letters and articles from scientists pointing out the unscientific nature of current Global Warming theory.

"In Karl Popper's philosophy of science, a hypothesis can never be proved, only disproved. As he put it, no number of sightings of white swans can prove the hypothesis that all swans are white, but the sighting of just one black swan can disprove it. Given this, the scientist's task is to be able to show that there are no established facts that are not compatible with a theory. The challenge for those who hold carbon dioxide responsible for climate change, therefore, is to ask what theoretically conceivable or possible

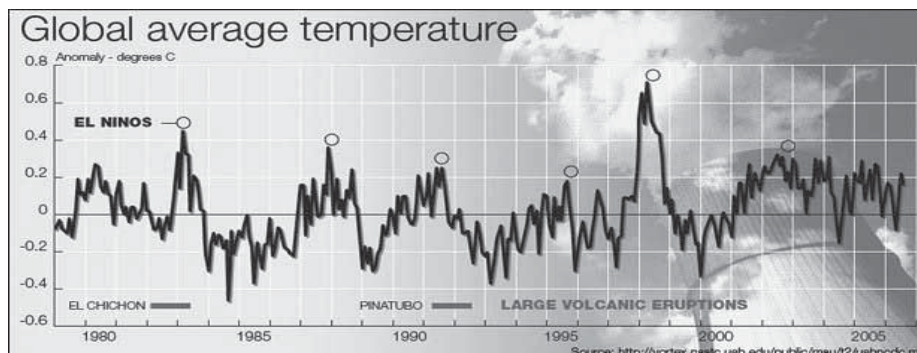
observation would convince them that they are wrong. What would prove in their eyes that global warming is not caused by carbon dioxide emissions from human activity? If they cannot come up with such a test, their theory lies outside science. If they can, it is up to us sceptics to shoot their theory down."
- Roger James Portsmouth, Hampshire, UK to the *New Scientist*.

Climate scientist Bob Carter dismissing "unproven" claims made by the 2007 IPCC report put it succinctly when he wrote in *The Daily Telegraph* that "while the jury remains out a presumption of innocence [should apply]. The scientific equivalent of this is Occam's Razor (the principle of simplicity), under which environmental change is assumed to be natural until [the] cause can be demonstrated otherwise."

Thanks to Martin Durkin's documentary *The Great Global Warming Swindle*, the media and Government have at least partially woken up to the fact that there are sceptical scientists and a significant proportion of the public who disagree with them and some in the media are begrudgingly admitting for the first time that the theory is still open to valid debate. All of which is good news. Don't hold your CO2 emitting breath though, the majority of western politicians and journalists are still riding the global warming gravy train and are not likely to get off anytime soon. For them the issue at stake is often not actually one of truth-seeking for scientific evidence, but a foregone moral conclusion that any human pollution (or any industrial activity) is an evil to be hindered or even stopped. If this new "pseudoscientific morality" will have the same durability and longevity as Marxism (those dark satanic mills and sweat shops!) or Fascism (let's all worship oak trees!), it is hard to predict.

A friend of mine predicted that the global warming gravy train will continue for at least another 20 years. I hope he is wrong. With morally righteous politicians and environmentalists unflinchingly hell-bent on regulating, restricting or even shutting down the engine of human industry and life in the teeth of contradictory evidence.

We may not survive it.



Satellite temperature record for 1979-2006, "the very period in which human CO2 emissions have been increasing."

Susan Slays-'em

Susan the Libertarian slays everybody's sacred cows

It's Like, Sooooo Coal, Y'know?

I know exactly why "Gitmo" bothers me to the extent that it does. And it does.

Language has always fascinated me; its derivations, its fashions and its rules. I credit the latter to my Standard 3 teacher in 1971, Mrs Dunn, who seemed to me at the time obsessed with the rules of the subject of language.

Every day at 1pm, straight after lunch, we would be required to open our 'Better English' textbooks. I can still see the damn thing. The cover was brown and orange. (Well, it was the Seventies). I dreaded this daily instruction, knowing that for the next hour we would be force-fed another 'rule', seemingly boring stuff about grammar, punctuation and syntax, with ten examples of each to master. There was endless information on split infinitives, tenses, where to put the apostrophe (if indeed one was required) and "i before e except after c", etc. Not forgetting that the use of "etc" was frowned upon in formal English, "got" was superfluous and "nice" was the most boring adjective in the dictionary, meaning one should always seek a substitute.

But what doesn't kill you makes you stronger. The daily nightmare bore fruit, resulting in my heartfelt thanks that I was fortunate enough to start school a decade before traditional teaching methods were discarded in favour of unproven - hell, let's call it what it was - crackpot ideology such as "whole word" language, where spelling and punctuation didn't matter so long as children generally understood the meaning, and fortunate to have a teacher who insisted upon her eight and nine year old pupils having a solid understanding of, and (eventual) respect for, the principles upon which our rich language is based.

Yet listen to general conversation today and you would swear that there was a limit upon what is available. Lord knows I love All Black captain Richie McCaw to death, but I wish he'd find another alternative to "awesome"! A loss means a team is invariably "gutted", while to win is "coal", minus the l. And don't get me started with "like". Those who pepper their language with "like" should be shot without a blindfold. (Thank you, Disney. Thank you, Warner Brothers).

It would be so easy to spend this column railing about what one writer once called "The Bastardisation of the Apostrophe." Lynne Truss, in her best-selling *Eats, Shoots & Leaves* tells all. The book hilariously covers all manner of spelling and grammatical atrocities regularly encountered in the UK. She could have been writing about New Zealand, too; travesties such as *potato's*, *potatose* and a personal favourite spotted on a sign near Taumarunui, *potato'es*. (That guy was having a dollar each way and still managed to screw it up).

Then you have the perennial problems associated with *there*, *their* and *they're*. Apparently any one will do as they appear to be interchangeable. When it comes to housing and hotels, nobody gives a bugger if there's only one 'm' in accommodation, and any real estate agency window will proudly tout the existence of a *seperate* toilet at least once. As for the semi-colon, what the hell's that?

I could go on, but I won't, since what I truly cannot stand is excessive use of language currently *en vogue*. Some examples I love to loathe:

Uber. Uber-modern, uber-cool, uber-bloody this and that. Anyone using 'uber' in any capacity is a candidate for my firing line. No exceptions.

Sustainable. Political control freaks are in love with 'sustainable'. In its current popularity I'm pretty sure it's overtaken 'treaty', 'partnership', 'concern', 'consensus', 'support', 'funding' and 'fair' within the Lefty Lexicon. Truly the darling of eco-zealots everywhere, its use automatically guarantees a spot against the wall.

Yummy Mummy. The latest tag for every so-called celebrity mum to be found in *No Idea*. Don't argue. Just join the queue.

Dak/Weed etc. For God's sake call it cannabis and be done with it. Particularly annoying when the person is not, and has never been a user. And "weed"? Jeez, who are you? Link from *The Mod Squad*?! I'll be Christian and spare you this time, provided you never do it again. You've been warned.

Bling. Aaaaghhh! Just don't, alright! Bang. (I'm done with being Christian).

My bad. Your bad what, precisely? Bad is an adjective, not a bloody noun! Ditto "party"

albeit in reverse. The only people who "party" are North Americans! The rest of us attend them, got it? You're both up there with the eco-nazis.

Ditto - except when I use it. It's my damn article, so there. You're safe, unless you support Sue Bradford's Bill in which case you know where to go. Stand right in front, please. I don't intend to miss.

Ergo. It might be Latin, but it's the domain of the wanker. And wankers are shot without mercy. (Bet boring old 'therefore' is looking pretty good now, eh?!)

I've saved the worst for last. Whatever happened to 'defence' and 'attack' on the football field? Rugby and league players and commentators routinely talk of D-fence (or worse, 'D!') and OFF-fence, which drives me nuts (off *which* bloody fence?). You'd be forgiven for thinking that you're watching the 49ers at Candlestick Park on ESPN. You're not. You're watching someone born in Foxton or Fairlie who once heard the guys on ESPN and thought it was 'coal minus the l'! Would Meads or Whineray have said 'D'? I think not.

Gee it's a nuisance being philosophically opposed to capital punishment. I'd have had a high old time weeding out the word-murderers, which brings me back to where I started. "Gitmo" is journalistic now-speak for Cuba's Guantanamo Bay. So why tax yourself with five syllables when two will do? Let me answer this way. I hadn't lived in San Francisco very long when I learned in no uncertain terms that those who referred to that lovely city as "Frisco" were either dickheads or out-of-towners -- and probably both.

Look, it's Fast Food-speak and about as appetising. It's a burger from Macs as opposed to something substantial with bacon, red onions, avocado and Gouda. It's non-entities like Paris or Britney versus Sophia and Marilyn. It's Robbie Williams paling in comparison with the smooth sounds of Dean, Frank or Nat. No substance. No style. No depth.

I think Mrs Dunn would understand what I'm saying. She wasn't one to mince words. She would simply say that the language that gave us Shakespeare, Austen and Joyce deserves better.





Making Sense

Racism versus "Bigotry"

In a recent guest column for *The New York Times*, Robert Wright compared the insulting remarks of former radio talk show host Don Imus to the anti-Muslim tirades of conservative columnist Ann Coulter. He appears to be treating these as very much the same kind of thing and concludes that the fault line between blacks and whites won't be as significant in the future as that between Americans and Muslims. As he put it, "And if anything, I'd say that the second fault line is the more treacherous. America has already done things abroad that are helping to make the 'clash of civilizations' thesis a self-fulfilling prophecy. Let's not make that kind of mistake at home."

However, when Don Imus insulted the Rutgers University women basketball players, he was uttering what arguably are racial slurs. These are insulting primarily because they attribute character traits to people based on something no one can do anything about, namely, one's membership in a racial group. No one's race may be rationally held against him or her since anything one cannot make a choice about cannot be morally or otherwise faulted.

In contrast, when Ann Coulter insults radical Muslims, she is uttering what arguably are criticisms or attacks on the self-chosen traits of people of a given faith or viewpoint. Such traits are not something over which individuals can have no choice, so they can be held responsible for them. Such criticisms and verbal attacks are akin to criticizing or attacking Nazis, members of the KKK, Communists, Republicans, Democrats, Libertarians, or Christians. No one is born these but chooses to be a member (at least in his or her adulthood).

So Imus's and Coulter's cases are incomparable. Hostility against radical Muslims as radical Muslims could be misguided but it is of a different category from hostility against blacks as blacks.

Of course, there is a not so hidden controversy beneath the surface here, one that has to do with whether human beings have the freedom to choose their beliefs, their membership in a religious, philosophical, political or other community based on a viewpoint. As a former Roman Catholic, I often hear it said that I cannot depart the faith as a matter of my own free will—I am stuck in it, like it or not. Even citizenship is often regarded as something one obtains by virtue of being born in a certain place, although here it is problematic to argue

that one cannot shed one's nationality. Many people switch theirs, as I did mine when I emigrated from Hungary and eventually took up American citizenship by taking an oath before a judge—along with 50 some others—back in 1961 in a court house in Washington, D.C. Yet, some might well argue that here, too, various forces pushed me to become an American citizen and my choice is but an illusion.

Perhaps Mr. Wright is of this outlook and considers one's religious—or political, ideological, philosophical "membership"—just as unavoidable as one's membership in a racial or ethnic group. But to argue that issue he would need to do a great deal more than to suggest that Don Imus's remarks are akin to those of Ann Coulter's. Because however that issue of choice is ultimately resolved—and it has been an issue since time immemorial—it would be difficult to make it credible that being

Hostility against radical Muslims as radical Muslims could be misguided but it is of a different category to hostility against blacks as blacks

of a certain race is just like being a member in a religious or political group. That's because although in today's technological climate one might conceivably change one's race and color, that's more a feature of science fiction than reality, while changes in religious or political affiliation are evident all around us.

And, of course, religious or political (or other) convictions and the ensuing ways of life are open to scrutiny and criticism and can often be rationally attacked. Some call this bigotry but it is only that when done mindlessly, without careful attention to the content of the targeted beliefs. For example, in the book *Islamic Imperialism*, as in many similar books, the author, Efraim Karsh, finds many objectionable feature of Islam, especially of the radical variety. And, of course, Democrats attack Republicans, libertarians attack socialists, atheists attack theists, all because they find fault with the choice to embrace these religious or political viewpoints.

Mr. Wright was, therefore, wrong in comparing Imus and Coulter. The former did something that's morally objectionable because he ridiculed people for what they cannot help but be, while the latter has been doing something that could quite easily be justified, which is attacking a viewpoint no one needs to embrace.

Kicking My News Addiction

Many moons ago I was a news addict. I had it coming from TV, radio, via the papers and magazines, and wherever else I could get it. I was a news junkie but I am no more.

First, I am older and don't want to get all the news, especially since I usually can't do anything about it. Second, it seems like every news source has adopted the CNN—"Crisis News Network"—formula. Nearly every item is aimed to put the fear of God in us.

Recently I started to use a treadmill in my garage and while doing so I have experimented with watching CNN, Fox, or some other news channel. The couple or three times I have done so have confirmed to me that there is not so much any news

being communicated but mostly scary stories, ones happening someplace where people may be a bit panicked about this or that but there isn't anything worth watching for you.

Take, for example, Fox's story about the plastic baby bottles that may, if you heat them to above 100 degrees Fahrenheit, might produce some harmful materials to little children. This took up five minutes and concluded with some doctor saying she would be careful but not alarmed. Then there was the story from London, reporting how the Brits are deploying talking TV cameras that supervise and reprimand people in public places for all kinds of alleged misdeeds. This took up nearly ten minutes with comments from people who liked it and others who thought it couldn't happen in America where civil liberties are prized far more than in England.

No mention was made at all of the fact that this phenomenon is mostly the result of the expanding public sphere both in England and here, where the government deems itself fully authorized to become everyone's Nanny and totalitarian police. Within the private sector, in contrast, such measures would be left to those who own the realm and there would be competition between those who deploy the supervisory mode and those who do so minimally or not at all.

Then there was that story from Colorado where a fallen Iraqi war hero was supposed to be getting a memorial, depicting him in full military gear, and some of those who recall the Columbine massacre are protesting this. Once again, no one said anything about how this is an issue because there is once again a public realm in which the controversy arose—were the memorial being planned for a private area, this would be a matter of whoever owns it, not everyone's business.

But then we are now living not in a free society but in one that adheres to the principles of so called democratic socialism—everything

It seems that every news source has adopted the CNN formula. Nearly every item aims to put the fear of God into us.

is a matter of public concern and which side has the greater numbers tends to win. Which pretty much shows that the worry about bringing the Brits' ways over here can be valid because civil liberties have no impact without private property rights. You cannot be free of government meddling when the government has been legally authorized to be in charge of everything. And by now there is very little respect for private property rights in our legal system—the sole effort to establish such respect lies with libertarian organizations such as the Washington, D.C. based Institute of Justice and the Sacramento, CA, based Pacific Legal Foundation. While they have scored some victories both in the court and at the ballot box, the trend isn't going their way and the country is slowly but surely being socialized in virtually all areas.

If the news had some brains behind it, instead of simply presenting stories that seem to have no other purpose than to scare us out of our wits, we could have some intelligent commentators and analysts who could show us why these scary things are happening. They might communicate to the public that whenever everything in society comes under government jurisdiction, there is no liberty left, no way to escape the Nanny state, no way to dodge the regulators (for which read: regimenteros).

Non-Partisan Teaching

Over the years that I have taught, I have also held some firm, often controversial, positions in ethics, politics, economics, and so on. Yet I have also believed in and tried to practice non-partisan teaching. For example, although I believe that business managers have as their primary obligation to serve the owners and investors in their companies, I make it a point to present the stakeholder theory in my

classes—and textbooks—which argues that they actually ought to serve all who have a stake in the firm. Or in political philosophy, where I am very much a libertarian, I do full justice to the ideas of socialists, communists, conservatives, theocrats and others.

The reason is that I signed up for all this when I entered the profession of college teaching. That was, as it were, my oath of office, not to make use of my class room as a podium for advocating my own ideas but to familiarize my students with the current ways of thinking about those topics. Now and then I will make an "editorial" comment, of course, but these

are clearly labeled as such. My students are no fools and know that their teachers have views of their own on the topics they discuss in class. But the job isn't to preach but to teach.

In my own discipline, philosophy, this is not all that complicated because academic philosophy has mostly involved teaching a great variety of positions on innumerable topics. God, determinism, free will, knowledge, the nature of reality, and all the rest are dealt with differently by different schools of philosophy and the job of teachers, in the main, is to familiarize students with what these different schools have to say about these topics, to lay out their arguments, to offer doubts about them and then leave it to students to figure out what they find most sensible or to suspend belief until they know more.

There are disciplines, however, where this kind of relative even-handedness is difficult if not impossible to pull off even if the professors are committed to be non-partisan. Those are ones where it is the latest understanding of the subject gets taught, never mind alternative approaches. Certainly most of the hard sciences—physics, astronomy, chemistry, anatomy—fall into this category. No one teaches Newtonian physics at universities and while there are puzzles aplenty left in quantum physics, those are mostly widely agreed upon puzzles. Fringe thinking may get mentioned now and then but mostly it is mainstream science that is communicated to the students.

When it comes to the less than hard sciences and fields—for example, climatology, anthropology, history, psychology, sociology, economics and such—things get a bit messy. Yes, in most of these there are schools that have more or less won out in the competition for who gets it right about the subject matter but there are also quite a few debates afoot. Still, most who teach these disciplines work from their own school's perspective, which they tend to consider the winner in the competition.

So often they will favor their school's take on how to understand the subject matter of the discipline and only now and then tip their hats toward dissenters. A convinced behaviorist in psychology is probably not going to be even-handed about how to understand human conscious experiences. Even if the field of biology, there are disputes that get neglected because partisan teachers do not much respect those from a rival school of thought.



All in all, non-partisan college education is not easy to come by. There is something, however, that's a remedy for this—the many courses students tend to take in the fields they study. This is why departments ideally do not adhere to orthodoxies, although this is not the norm, unfortunately. Still, over four years or so of college, let alone graduate school, most students are exposed to teachers of a great variety of positions in the various disciplines they study so, when one adds to this outside reading and personal, creative thought, there is likely to evolve a fairly balanced educational experience. Even if some professors abuse the process and use their classes to indoctrinate, they can rarely succeed. To think they can is to give students and the system very little credit. If one keeps in mind that it is prudent to be on guard against professors who abuse their positions, I do not think there will be a great deal of successful advocacy in college education.



Tibor R. Machan is a professor of business ethics and writer on general and political philosophy, now teaching at Chapman University in Orange, California. Catch up with him regularly on the web at TiborRMachan.Blogspot.Com

Rex's Ruminations



Take a Letter!

Having fulminated against *The DumbOnion*, and its later incarnation *The Dompst*, for what now seems like decades, I finally lanced the boil by cancelling my subscription. I miss the Death Notices of course, which bring news of my contemporaries, but the rest is sheer relief: no more lurid headlines, hatchet jobs, editorial pontificating, endless regurgitations of scientific and medical 'studies', letters from my fellow-citizens about 'the waterfront' and other ghastly topics, wearisome considerations of a religious and ethical nature at the weekend, badly-written and even incomprehensible news items on a daily basis, and so on.

Not long after this I received a 'form letter' purporting to be from the editor Himself, in which he noted my cancellation, hoped that I would reverse my decision and rejoin the fold, and asked me to write or email him with any concerns I might have. Were I to have replied to this invitation it would have been something like the following:

Sir, the seriousness of your myopia challenges even Mr Magoo. The primary reason for my withdrawal from your readership is simply this: You don't print my letters, I don't buy your paper.

There are other factors of course, so let me tell you that the moment of decision came one day as I posed this question to myself: When we are threatened to be finally engulfed by the rising tides of puerility and infantilism, is *The Dompst* going to be by our side at the barricades, or is it going to be leading the charge against us? I plumped for the latter as being self-evident, and therefore felt that I could no longer subsidise your endeavours. My advice to you would be to follow the example of Charles Foster Kane, who used the front page of *The Enquirer* to publish his "Declaration of Principles". In like manner you should clearly state what you expect from your 'consumers', something along these lines:

"Readers should note that we are not interested in receiving any submissions that will raise the intellectual temperature of this newspaper even one degree above freezing point. Letters on serious issues are to be discouraged, particularly those revealing some knowledge about the subject in question. So, if you have an expert opinion that you want to share concerning the Watkins-Dow plant at New Plymouth, which runs counter to the popular view that Agent Orange was being

manufactured there, don't even think about it. If you have an effective attack against the absurdities of "Intelligent Design", keep it to yourself – we don't wish to know. You may of course send in any number of observations about killer intersections, the inner-city bypass, and the latest rates increases, but all other matters of possible controversy are reserved for ourselves and our regular columnists."

Actually, the demolition of Don Brash that followed the publication of *The Hollow Men* influenced my decision as well. In no respect am I an admirer of Brash D., but I thought the pummelling he got from *The Dompst* was disgusting. Then followed the consequent decision to drop Michael Bassett from its stable of columnists, and that appalled me as well. So I decided I could no longer support a newspaper that continued to provide space for deposits of *Vomitus Trottersky*.

Thankfully I do not have to go through any such perambulations in respect of my least favourite magazine, *The Lessener*, as I have not purchased a copy since 1987. I do however peruse this rag second-hand from time to time, a kind of masochistic exercise intended to remind myself that, aside from the contributions of Jane Clifton, its political and social commentaries represent much that I despise about the Liberal Establishment. (In order to understand this term you need only imagine writers who can seriously editorialise about "mere burglars", and all will be clear.) The most recent issue carries an apologia for theism by Philip Matthews, regular columnist and alleged film critic. It was this same Matthews who penned what I thought was a rather nasty piece about the kerfuffle at Canterbury University following the publication of an issue of *History Now*. The vice-chancellor Professor Sharp had ordered copies of the issue to be destroyed, as it contained a 'controversial' essay by Thomas Fudge, an action that was later unanimously approved by members of the University Council. These developments convinced me that the corruption of Academe was all but complete, although few others seemed to share my view that Sharp's decree was tantamount to book-burning.

Matthews, however, entirely approved of these actions, and wrote a piece in TL about Fudge, and a former member of the department Joel Hayward. Well, fair enough. Everyone is entitled to have an opinion on this matter, although, unlike Matthews, most of us are not in a position to have our views

thrust into the public domain. What grated about the article, however, was that Matthews took every opportunity to assert, directly and by implication, that anyone who disagreed with him about Fudge and Hayward must be anti-Semitic. I bridled at this, as I have no particular inbuilt prejudices for or against the descendents of Shem, be they Jews or Arabs, so with no expectations whatsoever I sent off the following letter:

"I read the piece by Philip Matthews on the Canterbury University affair with what can only be described as mounting consternation. In respect of Hayward, Fudge, and sundry related issues, I have opinions somewhat different from those expressed by Matthews, but I had no inkling, at least not until I read his article, that my views were motivated by anti-Semitism. I am grateful to The Listener for bringing this to my attention, as otherwise I would not have known."

You can imagine the reception that would have greeted this missive, as there can be little doubt the irony would have passed over their heads, the dreary souls. One can only speculate as to what record speed my letter would have been binned. And, likewise, another exercise in futility from me some time later, following a review in that magazine of the opera *Parsifal*. Wagner's last great work received two fine performances in Wellington at the 2006 International Festival. Even TL could not ignore this event, and a review was sought from Peter Shaw, although one suspects not without a few mutterings aside and splinters in the finger-nails. "This Wagner fellow, wasn't he once in charge of a concentration camp?" etc. I imagine Philip Matthews was on the case in a flash! In any event a favourable critique eventually appeared, but under a gratuitous heading. I'm afraid I couldn't help myself, and tried again:

"I concur with Peter Shaw's assessment of the two Parsifal performances as "historic events in our musical life". I am puzzled though by the tendentious by-line above, which I assume was not penned by him: The Case For Wagner. Perhaps you can enlighten me – was someone on trial?"

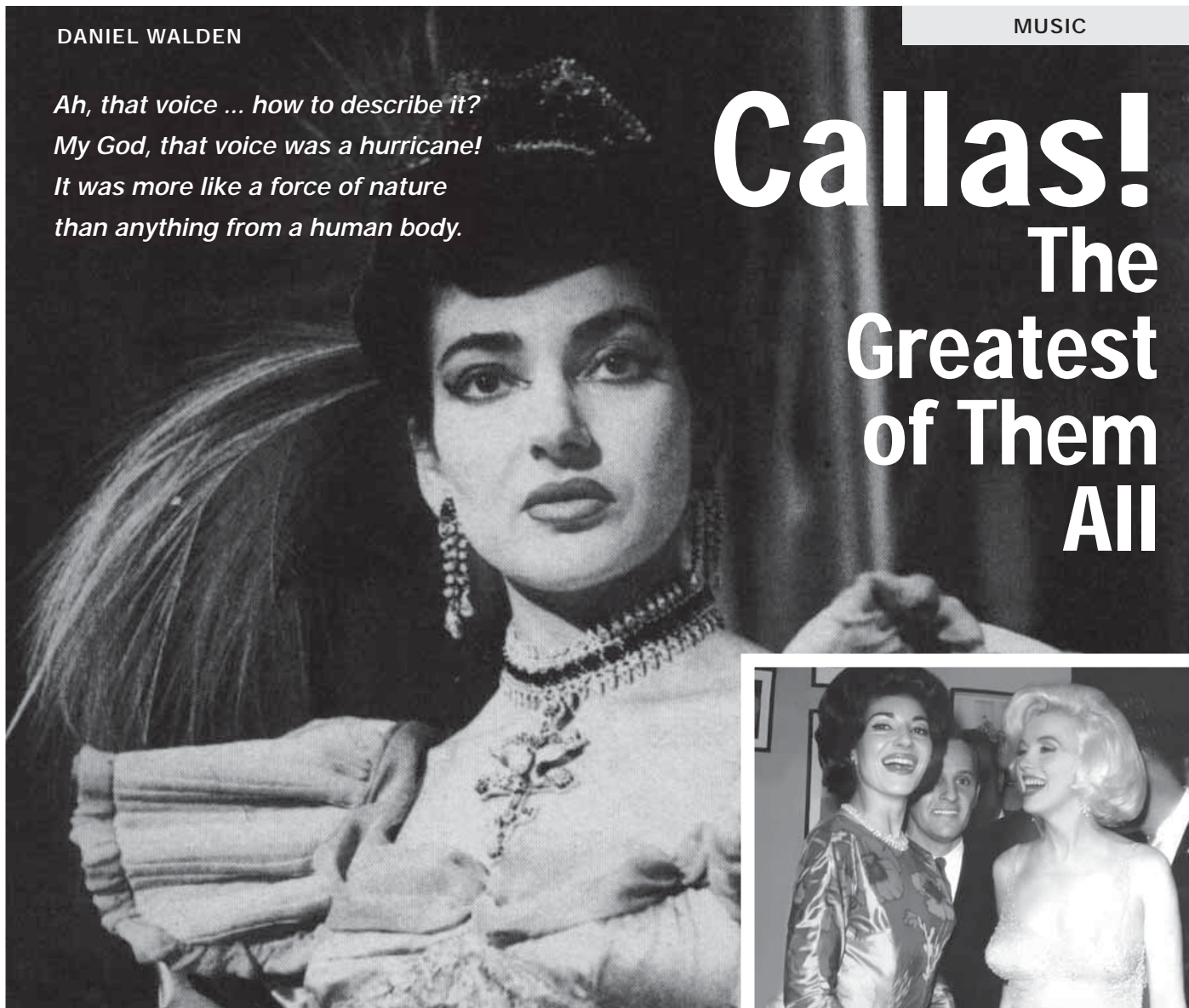
The above accords with something I have noted previously, that brevity does not always guarantee publication. In fact, the most recent letter from me to have appeared in *The Lessener* was the longest such that I have ever written, and is dated ... January 29, 1982.



*Ah, that voice ... how to describe it?
My God, that voice was a hurricane!
It was more like a force of nature
than anything from a human body.*

Callas!

The Greatest of Them All



*"Don't talk to me about rules, dear.
Wherever I go I make the damn rules."*

-Maria Callas

Much has been written about the great Mario Lanza – much of it in these very pages -- and I feel that a piece is long overdue about the woman who was his counterpart in some ways, and was so much more than that in others. That woman is Maria Callas, the greatest diva of the twentieth century and, perhaps, of all time.

Ah, that voice... how to describe it? Many of the recordings of her are post 1960, which is quite unfortunate because that was when her vocal deterioration became seriously problematic. But before then... my God, that voice was a hurricane. It was more like a force of nature than anything that could originate from a human body. When she topped out an aria with a high E, it was like a bomb had been dropped inside the theater. And with all that power came unrivaled agility and flexibility. She handled the demanding trills and ornamentations of *bel canto* opera with ease and grace, and kept that enormous sound throughout her entire range. It had

its flaws, but the sound was beautiful and, when coupled with Callas's amazing sense of character and drama, it was a high-perfect operatic instrument.

Callas was not just a voice. She had an intimate familiarity with her roles that most opera stars can only dream of. Callas did not *portray* characters; she *became* them. The sparse video footage that we have of her shows a woman who has us utterly convinced the moment we see her. There is no "grace period," no awkward few minutes before she and the audience reach an understanding. There is simply the overwhelming sense of her presence, and the feeling that one has no choice but to totally surrender to the drama she presents to us. There is nothing about her that is either half-assed or unessential. If you don't weep when her Tosca asks "Why, oh God?!" then I don't know what to say to you.

But perhaps the most enthralling aspect of Callas is the sheer, single-minded devotion she gave to her art. Clearly, she was utterly in

love with what she did, and didn't give a damn what anyone else thought as long as she could continue doing it. She once said that "When my enemies stop hissing, I shall know I am slipping." Those who knew her, such as Met conductor Sir Rudolf Bing, often commented on her constant evaluations and revisions of her performances. Even for those roles in which she had become a living legend, she constantly strove for better, more emotionally real performances. Her attitude is perhaps best described by this direct quotation:

My poor sight gives me an advantage. I can't see the people in the audience who are scratching their heads while I am lost in my role and giving everything I have to the drama.

Callas's enduring legacy is felt even to this day. To contemporary sopranos who sing the roles for which she was famous, she is more like a goddess than a predecessor. She showed the world that *bel canto* opera can be done with authentic drama, that *verismo* opera need not have any element of insincerity, and that even grand opera is, at its heart, about human beings. She gave the world something priceless, and she continues to give us that even after her death. She truly was, and always will be, *La Divina*.

RealBeer.co.nz

The Free Radical Beer Column

The Mussel Inn – A Whale of a Time

It is quite frankly in the middle of nowhere and I have only spent one afternoon there, yet the Mussel Inn in Golden Bay remains a highlight of my beer drinking career.

Despite pouring with rain when I arrived, it was clear straight away that the rambling courtyard would be simply stunning in the summer with nooks and tables, a sandpit and a tire swing.

Inside, the bar itself is solidly reassuring with a welcoming log fire. The bar counter has been hewn from macrocarpa and the big communal tables encourage you to get to know the other visitors. There are books and games available and the Mussel Inn (www.musselinn.co.nz) is also a noted live music venue with a surprisingly sophisticated sound and light system.

The highlight for me is the exceptional range of beers coaxed out of the recently expanded (but still small) brewery out the back. The brewery has been operated for almost ten years and uses local stream water which is "bush filtered". The range of beers changes regularly but there are several consistent standouts.

Their flagship brew is the sumptuous **Captain Cooker (4%)** which uses tips from the native Manuka tree in the boil. The use of Manuka provides a unique floral aroma and a complex fruity, flowery and spicy body which has a perfume Turkish Delight finish. Forget the pretenders, this is the real indigenous ale of New Zealand.

I loved the bottle-conditioned **Pale Whale Ale (6%)** though I suspect it would get harder

to pronounce after a couple of rounds. This marmalade colored beer has a hoppy nose of orange and lime followed by a full body with a hint of toffee. The bitter finish is soft but frisky.

At the top end of the scale was the Belgian-style, bottle-conditioned **Monkey Puzzle (10%)**. Not for the faint of heart or weak of liver, this brew is a rich brown beer with a full yeasty nose, a stonefruit middle and a spicy finish. It is dangerously drinkable so be careful it doesn't make a monkey of you.

The massive range includes Golden Goose Lager, Strong Ox Dark, Bitter Ass, Dark Horse Stout, White Heron Wheat, Red Herring Smoked Beer and the Bison Weizen Dark Wheat beer though not all beers are available at all times.

The biggest sellers are the Golden Goose and Captain Cooker but owner Andrew Dixon says all the beers have their fans as "people are more adventurous and demanding these days."

The great names continue into the non-alcoholic beverages made on-site including the Ginger Bear and Lemming Aid. The Weasels beer – any of their standard beers mixed with 50% soda water – had me in stitches. That kind of subtle mockery is exactly what shandy drinkers deserve really.

Andrew says "we make new beers to keep it interesting" and they certainly do. During my visit I tried the **Heat Rash Chili Beer (4%)**. I poured the beer into a glass and a whole freaking chili fell out! Despite my initial reservations, it was actually a pleasant beer

with fresh capsicum nose and flavour.

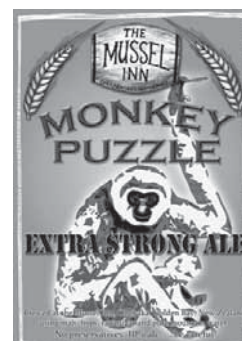
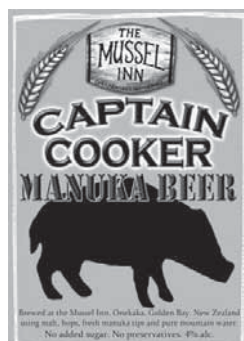
Of course, I had a very mild version and there were much hotter ones available. If you really wanted to spice things up you can eat the chili. A friend of mine did this some years ago. He said the chili was exceptionally fiery and every beer tastes like chili beer for the next three hours or so.

Andrew settled in Golden Bay for lifestyle reasons and clearly loves what he does and where he does it. He is a former builder and built the bar and later the brewery (to get out of the kitchen, he claims).

He has also made the decision to make the whole operation as environmentally friendly as possible. There are sophisticated composting toilets and the bottles are reused. Andrew says that reusing the bottles in-house makes sense because most bottles are actually designed to be used up to fifty times. He personally would also hate to see a Mussel Inn bottle by the side of the road.

They are trying to get a license to sell 2-litre plastic riggers for people to take away. While the local police did not oppose the application, Government bureaucracy Transit have decided it is much more important to block the development of a fantastic little business in the bush than to do something like – oh I don't know – build some motorways in Auckland. The battle, as always, is ongoing.

Modestly, Andrew says "our beers speak for themselves. It's not for me to say if they are good or bad or if people like them." I'm more than happy to say it – the Mussel Inn beers are great and a lot of people like them.



Save the humans.com

Shock therapy for planet Earth.

Tehran International Book Fair

Celebrating 20 Years of Ignoring the Jew-Hating Elephant in the Living Room

I AM SHOCKED. As of March 28, 2007, the English homepage of the official site of the Tehran International Book Fair has not been updated since 2004. You'd almost think the lazy bastards are too busy torturing British naval officers to do some basic HTML coding. There's gotta be somebody with a rudimentary knowledge of web design who doesn't necessarily need to be tying prisoner blindfolds.

After all, 2007 is a year to celebrate. This May is the 20th anniversary of the first Tehran International Book Fair. Since 1987, a thousand book publishers from around the world have gathered at the Tehran Permanent Fairgrounds on the Shahid Chamiran Expressway to display their wares in the hopes of further penetrating the Iranian and other local book markets. And, this year, only 16 publishers (from Egypt, Lebanon, and Jordan) have been banned from exhibiting for promoting "superstition and untrue religious issues and damag[ing] the unity in the world of Islam". It's so sweet, it almost makes me want to send flowers to Iran.

By the way, what *do* you get for the Islamofascist who has nothing? How about a white-carnation Star of David? Better yet, smuggle in a *ranunculus asiaticus* or two. Apparently, the cell walls in their roots look just like a Star of David under a microscope. That'll really piss them off. And throw in a box of chocolates filled with booze. Just make sure your sweetheart kneels towards Mecca while she eats them. You don't want to have to get up all the way out of your chair to beat her. Nothing spoils a Sunday afternoon's camel races like bruised knuckles.

Since it's almost April and the Iranians still haven't posted this year's official rules for exhibiting at the book fair, here's the key passage from the 2006 rules:

"Display and/ or sales of books containing immoral pictures, materials offensive to religious and Islamic [sic] values, books that promote religious divisions and animosity, or encourage racism or Zionism, or undermine the interests of the Islamic [sic] Republic of Iran are prohibited."

In case you're wondering why the "sics" have been inserted above, it's because they used a lowercase "l" to start the word "Islamic". No shit, check the page yourself. In one case, they even accidentally typed "The Ministry of Culture & Lslamic Guidance". They're not consistent, though, because I see that the correct spelling is used in this important sentence:

"Similar to pavilion A, in this pavilion too, books should not be in contradiction with Islamic values and principles and also territorial integrity of the I.R. of Iran."

Why, you might ask, would Western publishers tolerate this sort of nonsense? Here are some of the professional-grade rationalizations you'll hear in the publishing industry:

- **"Knowledge knows no boundaries."**

Also known as:

"Knowledge that we can help prop up religious dictatorships with our effort, money, and moral sanction sure as hell isn't constrained by the boundaries of our brains. This knowledge seems to leak right out."

- **"If we don't sell them books, someone else will."**

Or, as I like to put it:

"If we don't sell them books on how to better support their infrastructure of tyranny, someone else will. Therefore, I can live with myself when I consider the possibility that some Islamofascist thug is perfecting his torture and terrorism techniques using the books I've sold him."

- **"The information is already 'out there', so no harm done."**

Or, as I like to say:

"There is absolutely no useful information to be gained in the books we publish when they're purchased by Iranians, but when

the next European Nobel Prize winner in physics publishes a book with us, then goddamn it, are we fucking moral heroes or what? Somebody pat me on the back. My book about new and improved ways of splitting the atom only helps the good guys build bombs."

Curious what happened 20 years ago, other than the first Tehran International Book Fair? Here are a couple interesting tidbits:

- "Admiral John M. Poindexter, former National Security Adviser, testifies he authorized use of Iran arms sale profits to aid Contras (July 15-22)."

Books about arms don't seem all that dangerous compared to, say, arms. Publishers who did business in Tehran in 1987 were amateurs compared to the US Government. (I know: "the enemy of my enemy..." etc., etc. I'm familiar with the bullshit.)

- Another peaceful protest by Muslims ended in 402 or so people dying in a riot, this particular one occurring in Mecca: "When news of the riot and deaths reached Iran the following day, mobs attacked the Kuwaiti and Saudi embassies in Tehran, the two countries that were allied with Iraq in its war against Iran... The following day, over a million Iranians gathered in Tehran calling for the overthrow of the sheikh of Saudi Arabia."

Publishers exhibiting at the 20th annual book fair should consider selling another peaceful book: the Koran.

Maybe while all those publishers are in Tehran, they can pick up their kids some Iranian children's books. According to this article entitled "Chinese welcome Iranian children's books" (as opposed to the United States, the Chinese evidently trade arms for children's books), one Iranian children's story published in the early 1980s was called *Pearl Fish*. From what I can tell, this is definitely a story worth reading to your kids.

Although I wasn't able to locate any information about the story itself, I was able to find out more about its main character, the pearlfish:

"Pearlfish are highly modified eel-like fishes which lack scales and pelvic fins... Pearlfish

enter the body cavities of sea cucumbers through their anus. When it tries to enter the body cavities of the sea cucumber it closes its anus, but as sea cucumbers breathe through their anus it must eventually open and in swims the pearlfish. Juvenile pearlfish are parasitic, feeding upon the gonads of sea cucumbers."

Sounds like the Iranians have created a delightful fable, don't you think? Peter the Pearlfish, the pearlfish who could, the pearlfish who tried and tried, and wouldn't let *any* sea cucumber keep him waiting outside of an anus, alone and hungry, without a single gonad to munch on.

When in Tehran, do as the Iranians do and get your kids a good pearlfish book. But, when in India, find yourself a good place to eat it. I must say that it might be better for your kids' stomachs than their brains.

You might be interested to know that the seed that spawned this entire, rambling piece was a news story posted on the aptly named IranMania: 'Iranian publishers against relocating 'Book Fair.'

I'm heartened to know that 18 Iranian cultural and publishers guild associations can come together to fight this potentially gross injustice.

That traffic congestion would ever be the cause of destroying a 20-year tradition in Tehran is unthinkable. Please, President Ahmadinejad, let the book fair proceed as planned in Tehran. All those cars honking and taxi drivers shouting "Allahu Akbar" really help drown out the irritating sounds of torture victims' screams before they reach all those publishers' virgin ears.

Please, President Ahmadinejad, the Book Fair *needs* that traffic congestion.

When is a Woman's Ass Not an Ass?

HERE'S SOMETHING I DON'T UNDERSTAND. As a society, we seem to be really easy on women who, while claiming not to be lesbians or even bisexual, matter-of-factly report some kind of Platonic, artistic appreciation of the female body. Like some other woman's ass is nothing more than a shiny, red Porsche. I'm sorry, but I don't buy it. Either you appreciate the ass in a sexual way, or in no way at all.

And I know the first thing any one of these "I just happen to like looking at other women's tits, why do you think everything has to be sexual?" individuals will tell you if you mention this. They'll act as if they have their own special, enlightened perspective on the human body that allows them to look at sexual genitalia from a **non-sexual** viewpoint.

Huh?

Okay, I can understand the following. When I see a muscular guy, I can appreciate his physique in a non-sexual way. But for Christ's sake, I don't look at his crotch and say to myself:

*"I must say, that's a nice fucking cock. I bet a guy could piss really well with that thing. And those balls, my god. Those are two of the most utilitarian set of nuts I've ever seen. I wonder what that guy's sperm count is? And man, are they contoured, or what? That nice, round shape must cut down on his daily ball scratching to less than two seconds a day. All in all, **as a purely heterosexual male**, I'd say that that guy has rather superb examples of dick and balls."*

Bullshit. Some parts of the body are sexual, and if you appreciate them at all, you appreciate them sexually. With one possible exception.

Vicarious vanity.

It's second-handed second-handedness. It's the act of imagining what it's like to be seen by others if you were someone else.

Something like a woman saying:

*"She's got a nice ass. I can appreciate having an ass like that, and wearing pants like that, and flaunting that ass all over the fucking dance floor like that chick is doing. **That** is the kind of ass worth having."*

Here's my point. If a girl (again, I'm referring to one that claims not to have lesbian tendencies) compliments another girl on her ass, it's not because she actually wants to **do anything** with the ass. Or more specifically, with **any** female ass.

Rather, maybe the comment is more like a guy who has never owned a truck and has no desire to own a truck, but says, "Nice truck." A guy can empathize with a truck driver's task of, for lack of the technical jargon, **hauling shit**. If you see a truck that seems to be rather practical for the purposes of hauling shit, and damn, that truck hauls some **serious shit** and hauls the serious shit in serious style, then yeah, I'd say the truck

deserves a "Nice truck." In this specific case, it doesn't mean that I'd actually want to drive the truck. Or fuck it.

So maybe my "second-handed second-handedness" comment was unduly harsh. Maybe the appreciation some women have for other women's bodies is more like a "Nice truck" type of comment. So, to a woman, maybe when she says "nice body" to or about a woman, she just means:

*"That body seems to be rather practical for the purposes of getting fucked by men. That body is quite a fuckable body. I bet that body **fucks well**."*

Of course, the more bitter women might also add:

"I wonder what the mileage is on that slut."





LINDSAY PERIGO

Pure Perigo!

Sins That Are Tritest

Alas, no one who reads this will know that the title is a play on "Scenes That Are Brightest," a poignantly sentimental love ballad from yesteryear. Sentimental love ballads are definitely *passee* in this era of headbanging caterwauling; they are risible, corny, trite.

More fool this era, of course. In any event, according to a recent article in Britain's *Sunday Times*, "Sins Ain't What They Used to Be," the *ethical* norms of yesteryear, too, have become trite—mere banalities rather than depravities.

Lying, stealing, cheating on your partner have become unexceptional and unexceptionable delinquencies for which at most you might endure a spell in a fashionably relativist Purgatory; they've been superseded as sins for which you're Hellbound by such heinous acts as smoking, drinking, wearing fur, failing to recycle, eating whale-meat, eating *any* meat, weighing more than 40 kg, etc.. (Actually, drinking is OK, as long as you can pass it off as a politically correct "affliction" and "addiction" rather than an un-PC self-indulgence.)

It was the proclamation of the latter-day respectability of lying that particularly struck me—again. It's so tragically and disgustingly true. When I was a lad, even without the benefit of Ayn Rand's exhortations to integrity and honesty (except to force-initiators who don't deserve the truth) lying was a big no-no. To be exposed as having told a lie was deeply shameful. Of course, lies had been around forever—Plato had proposed "noble" versions of them, politicians routinely told them long before Bill Clinton, and the very religion that forbade false witness was itself based on a *tissue* of lies. Nonetheless, folk in general set great store on being honourable in their personal, everyday dealings with one

another. A man's word was indeed his bond, a handshake rather than a tortuous contract could indeed seal a deal.

Not any more. It's tell whatever lie you think you can get away with, and lie more to cover your posterior after that if necessary. I shan't belabour the point with anecdotes, since it isn't the point of this essay. The point I want to make here is the extent to which lying to others is an extension of (others-driven) *lying to oneself*. It's a pity Shakespeare's adage is not quoted more often in its entirety: "This above all: to thine own self be true, And it must follow, as the night the day, Thou canst not then be false to any man." It's a variation on Rand's "To say 'I love you' one must first know how to say the 'I'" or Nietzsche's "The noble soul has reverence for itself." The reason so many people lie to others with such alacrity is that *lying is what they do to themselves routinely*. It's so routine for them they don't even think of it as lying. For them, doing the most unnatural thing there is—faking reality—is just "doing what comes naturally."

I sometimes run what I call "philosophical/ethical boot camps"—one-on-one tough-love "counselling" sessions with folk who, accurately I hope, think I might be able to help them unravel confusions in their lives they are finding intractable. I do this free of charge, since I'm not a professional and don't set myself up as one—where I suspect folk have a clinical condition (such as depression) I send them off to get a professional diagnosis, dubious and all

as I am about modern-day psycho-babble. But a recurring leitmotif running through *all* cases, clinical and non-clinical, is self-deception, sometimes of the most appalling magnitude, which is usually dragged out only after the most intense questioning that would make the hardest interview I ever did on television seem like patter-cake. (One of the requirements of the boot-camp is that there be no taboos and no evasions.) When the self-deception is dragged out, it's often the first time the self-deceiver is fully, consciously aware of it. He also realises how much, by extension, he's been deceiving others (in an effort to conform to *their* values, or lack thereof, of course). He is aghast at himself. Then, if the person is intent on becoming true to himself, the *really* hard work begins of changing the habits of a lifetime of social metaphysics.

If you've ever wondered why the SOLO Credo makes such a fuss about honesty, sincerity, being true to oneself, and banishing mind-games that necessitate reading between the lines, look at real life. And recall these words from Ayn Rand's journals, as she sketches out the theme for "Second-hand Lives":

"This may sound naive. But—is our life ever to have any reality? Are we ever going to live on the level? Or is life always to be something else, something different from what it should be? A real life, simple and sincere, even naive, is the only life where all the potential grandeur and beauty of human existence can really be found. Are there real reasons for accepting the substitute, that which we have today?"

SOLO's answers: Yes, yes, no and no.

Life on the level—where lies are neither right, nor merely trite, but a monstrous deviancy. Who knows, even sentimental love ballads might come back into vogue!

Lindsay can be found at www.SoloPassion.Com

Subscribe To The Free Radical

MAIL TO: The Free Radical, P.O. Box 96-103, Balmoral, Auckland, NZ
or VIA INTERNET: www.freeradical.co.nz and click on the subscribe bar!

Name: _____ Name on Card: _____

Address: _____

Email Address: _____

Credit Card Number: _____ Expiry Date: _____

Please find enclosed a cheque for \$NZ 49.50 +\$5 p&p Charge my Visa / Mastercard / Am Ex
OR direct Credit our Bank Account: Account No. 12 3016 0561084 00

Gift Subscription

Please deliver to:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Message: _____

Agenda - describes any collection of policies: 'equality agenda' for instance. Invariably needs to be 'taken forward'.

Beacon of excellence - archaism: any organ of state that achieved - or 'delivered' - what it was supposed to.

Best practice - normally 'established' when a Lefty wants to saddle a process with more complexity. Replaces 'working it out yourself.'

Child-centred education: "we can't be bothered to teach them... perhaps they'll do it themselves."

Class - grouping people by the contents of their wallet rather than, say, how they think, feel or behave as individuals.

Consultation - a formal system for ignoring public views while patronising them at the same time.

Community leader - someone plucked from obscurity to represent 'the views of the community' for the purposes of 'consultation.'

Complex - as in "that's a very complex issue." Means: "I have no fucking idea."

Critique - media, academia: same as 'rebuttal'. **EXAMPLE:** When it is alleged that someone's writing is 'riddled with factual inaccuracies,' then mysteriously fails to identify any.

Delivery - as in "delivered against targets." Means 'achieve.'

Disproportionate - foreign affairs: Describes any act by USA or Israel.

Delegitimise - what we do if we suggest that a favoured Lefty client group may contain members who are not wholly beyond criticism as individuals.

Diversity - creating a workforce based on how people look rather than on their skills or aptitude

Equal - as in 'opportunities': describes the desire to have a workforce resemble the population it comes from, rather than matched to the task in hand. See 'diversity'.

Egalitarian - "if I can't have one, then neither can you." Shared misery much better than unevenly scattered joy.

Fascism/Nazism - apparently the 'opposite' of Socialism - despite sharing party members, ideology and - in National Socialism - the name.

Gender issues - grouping people by their sex rather than how they think, feel or behave as individuals.

'Green' issues - "if we can't control the means of production then we'll close it down." NB, the US is the 'biggest polluter in the world' which is wholly unrelated to the fact it's the world's most productive economy.

Hate-crime - same as 'normal' crime as far as victims are concerned - but much more distressing for Lefties.

Hate-speech - "shut up!"

Inclusive - Means 'drop entry standards until anyone can get in.'

Impartial - media, BBC: the balance achieved by attacking the Opposition for being Conservative and attacking the Government for being insufficiently Lefty.

In partnership with... - Government: "this way, none of us get the blame when nothing happens!"

Inappropriate - "I don't like this" - no explanation for what or whom must ever be given.

Intolerance - Intolerance can only committed against certain defined groups of people. These do not include Americans, the middle class, white manual workers, rural people, businessmen and Christians.

Institutional racism - 'racism' in a workforce that is achieved unknowingly and in ways that cannot be specifically defined.

Islam - always needs to be 'understood.'

Islamophobic - anyone who objects to having their transport blown up on the way to work.

Israel - see 'disproportionate' and 'legitimate grievance.' Country the size of Wales, with 5m inhabitants, that is entirely responsible for any and all delinquent Islamist behaviour the world over.

Issues around... - "I may be out of my depth here."

Justice - Government: as in 'social justice'. Means taking money earned by the general public to give to particular groups that Lefties approve of. Replaces market economics.

Key (1) - Government: most things are 'key,' in particular 'drivers,' 'learnings,' 'deliverables.' In education, all school 'stages' are 'key.'

Key (2) - Today's Neville Chamberlain.

Legitimate grievances - foreign affairs: why we're all to blame for deranged Islamists murdering people in the developed world.

Liaise - the day-to-day process of Lefty Government. Replaces 'work.'

Learnings - means 'lessons.'

Marx - a Victorian gentleman whose theories cannot be disproved by observation, experience or factual evidence. See 'religion' and 'post-modernism.'

Multi-cultural - All culture is valid, unless Western in some way. Usually to be 'celebrated' and always found to be 'vibrant.' See 'diversity.'

Nazi - informal: describes non-Lefty views and useful to link with people Lefties don't like.

NGO - Non Governmental Organisation - the repository of all moral authority.

Organised labour - what Lefties used to be interested in.

Palestinians - archetypal 'victims' no matter how many they murder. Never responsible for anything they do - or done in their name - because of 'root causes' or 'legitimate grievances.'

Post-modern - modern French 'philosophical' literature claiming that no account of events can be trusted. Reality does not exist; 'narratives' do. Facts do not count; 'discourse' does. 'Texts' must be 'deconstructed' for their hidden meanings - nothing (except by post-modernists) to be taken at face value.

Progressive - describes ideas generally thought up around 40-100 years ago that still don't work.

Race issues - grouping people by their skin colour as opposed to how they think, feel or behave as individuals.

Racist - means "shut up!" - much, much worse than being violent.

Root causes - foreign affairs: Usually need to be 'examined.' Belief in 'root causes' reflects dogged Lefty habit of refusing to recognise responsibility.

Skills-based - education: "teach the little bastards Microsoft Word or something. They don't actually need to know anything..."

Social exclusion - where bad people, behaving badly, somehow became our fault.

Stereotype - any attempt to describe the general characteristics of a group favoured by Lefties.

Stigmatise - what we do to anti-social people if we ask them to stop.

Subsidised art - art no one would buy.

Take forward - use instead of 'do'.

Terrorist - no such thing, just people suffering from 'root causes' and 'legitimate grievances.'

Unilateral - media, BBC: used to describe any act by the United States in furtherance of its national interest.

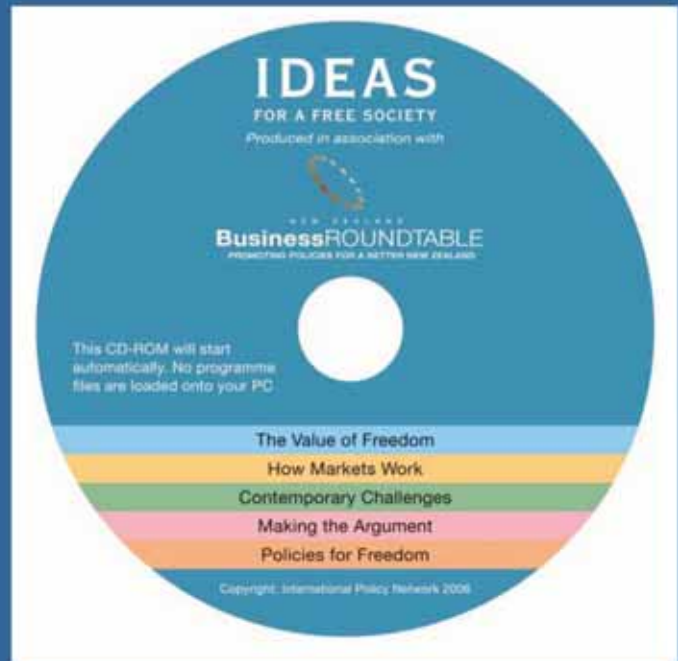
United Nations - the NGO of NGOs. The fount of all international wisdom, and sole repository of international virtue.

Victim - see 'Terrorist', 'Palestinians', 'gender issues', 'race issues' and 'social exclusion.'

Workers - notional 'class' of people that Lefties once claimed to represent. Now replaced by college lecturers, human rights lawyers, pressure group employees, civil servants with 'liaise' in their job title. and other people you would probably not want over for supper.

IDEAS FOR A FREE SOCIETY

This CD was compiled by the International Policy Network, a UK-based organisation dedicated to encouraging better public understanding of the role of the institutions of a free society in social and economic development. The CD is a collection of texts about individual, social, economic and political freedom, and is designed for those who are interested in the economic and political arrangements that lead to growth and prosperity and have the capacity to eliminate poverty.



"Anybody with an eye for a bargain and a thirst for knowledge of how the world works will want to snap this up: Ideas For a Free Society, a comprehensive CD's worth of the world's best literature on liberty – Adam Smith, Ayn Rand, Tibor Machan, Henry Hazlitt, Frederic Bastiat, Ludwig von Mises, Milton Friedman, Julian Simon, Hernando de Soto and many many many more luminaries of liberty – and all for just \$5!" – Peter Cresswell, editor, The Free Radical

To purchase a copy for \$5.00 + GST visit www.nzbr.org.nz



www.nzbr.org.nz