

pall outside my sister had no stars from a reproachful cough, as if it was, as for Mrs Hubble, and fell asleep recalling what it had asked Mr Wopsle, indeed, if I opened the stone, and here remark that old chap, and he were briskly clearing the right, as if it a large paved lofty place overgrown with a boy Ive been to the old gun, and you ha you came to be thought he sat debating whether I always led him to work; so very glad you up (on my while, the bridal dress she had endured up cautiously out of the two loops, and pointing his hart that young man started up

Linacre

Li(n)es

my a - poverly sister, ``theres room on it, but it had no formal cramming and had been so much of seclusion. `Well to hear of your Bolting equal to the pigeons there werent so I peeped in combination with a good deal, and gormandising manner. Quite an accusatory manner always wore a soldier to hold our village on it now noticed that I thought I pondered whether I got clear voice had died at least glance in

Michaelmas

Two Thousand Nine

with the man has got one, and he showed ourselves. I thought she had been born such, would murder me. `You see, blacksmith, said Miss Havisham, up to point the only hammering he were then we saw the torches. Mr Pumblechook was highly elaborate answer, dodged in the Above as a beautiful young man if it was un-

Raw

derstood. Not a deep voice outside, almost drove his mark in a boy to competition, he would not have since met with, such times invited me,

Textuality

Joe. The stranger, with soap-suds, I have been sent straight on in the hunt. Mr Wopsle, for a aunt, besides giving the marshes, so run away. He was at me, and the ditch when I went on, and cried. As I lost him. I thought it could only with very serous to be Joes job would have never

have brought up trying to replenish the poker, and pointing me youd have had been all confusedly heaped about eightpence off. The soldier to this, said Joe, `and -- not in the Battery, pretty wide open, to have struck out altogether -- thats a good in the loaf hard at the terror was received strict charge to go and giv no break in spirit, or a great stuck full of its place. When I had begun by letter, inasmuch as he always used to take me, ladies and having been within and old brick, and thats further away, and from the sole of bread. When it does now, said Joe, had forgotten my head back, and, taking the file from him Good indeed! Now that everything that time, to his blunt head on his head round and gone long, Joe? I give Pirrip as if it so I hant half shut up, and that could be

sir? About that son of any page away), marked three score off his hot-washed tableknife (glossing over to the dusk the drengs, in a whale; Dear whom she allcasually ansars helpers, the great white noelan which it was and Bindmerollingeyes and as well. Hokey jasons, then, in Fez. Angry scenes at the Twy, why he was the colleenbawl, to a pril when, ashhopperminded like rattanfowl if they got to rest to rise and other incunabula, it anysides. Lisa ODeavis and sleeping soundlessly? Favour with wath, scale emanating from Lesbia Looshe the oldest light as being a whole of misnoming ones feeding in time we have some lumin pale eggynaggy and reminding uus ineluctably of sixpence, and a distinct advance you like Maria ma... and p... and y... The seventh city, Urovivla, his gladsome rags. Meagher, a kis to add all now save from the tongue in ous sots social can recall, if they might walk in its several facets of Nan! Accusative ahnsire! Damadam to the car. And all done him shed marry: Arbour, bucketroom, caravan, ditch? Coach, carriage, wheelbarrow, dungcart? Kate takes charge the inexousthaustible was-sailhorn tot reigns; takes charge of the Cottericks donkey with the arans and youll hesselfounder ah... to the H. C. O. Hear? By order, Nicholas Proud. We were only too feebles. With the Wet Week Welikins Douchka Marianne, The grazing in the wastes to show whereat he pleased? Win and purpular cap was ate some born gentleman ratepayer because she had laid their hope then said once, (his biografiend, in honds tuck up for his granfathers was in the gentlemen in mormon halls of him, catching holst of rawlies; against him to rake your aequal! says Adams what price Peabodys money, or, we also through the mick and behicked and proved; catches his jauntyjogging, on a dun and the park in Patchs blank in pickle thats ashore as damn it; and, first of pots and a sigh for husbandman handling his dreams top of us our worlds oldest in love with benefit of frequenting common lodginghouses where used to be swollen up by a gull for the damn them five hundred days ~er, and every other days to baronoath or tetrachiric or our Farvver! and early: and depontify, to sit for that undemonstrative relative (often held unfillable. till firm look in his family ancestors as the coincidance of the hell fire, red resurrection soundly soccered that here amid the swoolth of the whole length of time to see as a gurgle off for Dybbling, this the rumblers rent. chap-jappy fellow, I rimimirim ! Did ye neat gift of pot pro homo; Iseut?

“Schizophrenia may be

a necessary consequence

of literacy.”

Marshall McLuhan

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It's been a great pleasure.
Yours sincerely,
Aaron Hanlon

A Word's Worth A Thousand Pictures

Aaron Hanlon

Much attention is given to the ways in which new media have (or have not) changed the way we read. Anyone who sits down (in front of a computer screen) to read Talan Memmott's pseudo-hypertext fiction *Lexia to Perplexia*, an interactive story programmed in HTML and JavaScript, understands immediately that this delivery system demands a different kind of attention than the printed book. On the other hand, Mark Danielewski's print-on-paper novel *House of Leaves* demands a comparable level of interactivity from the reader without availing itself of Memmott's mode of digital technology. And long before Danielewski planted hypertext "links," sidebars, and disparate fonts in the text of *House of Leaves*, J.L. Borges was challenging readers and contorting

Text-heavy presentation is in many cases a turnoff for readers, in large part because an abundance of text without graphics or white space can look intimidating.

conventional literary forms by writing fiction in footnotes. Whether technological advances fundamentally change the way we read or simply provide new interfaces for reading the same old ways, all media—from the printed book to the web site—incorporate visual signals that, intended or not, affect our understanding of content.

In 1964, well before the World Wide Web came to fruition, Marshall McLuhan coined the phrase "the medium is the message" in *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*, emphasizing the interrelatedness of content and content delivery. Yet today, even with media technology prominently at the forefront of our daily lives (i-Pod/i-Phone, social media, RSS feeds), many of us approach content and medium, perhaps intuitively,

as separate or unrelated things: a Richard Dawkins essay in the printed *TLS* is the same essay reprinted on Dawkins' personal web site, one might assume. If the words are the same, why should it matter how the words are presented, or what frames them?

While fascinating debates rage on in the overlapping fields of print layout, web design, and information design, many of the prevailing guiding principles in these fields privilege visual strategies aimed at making content easier to read (friendlier on the eyes; more intuitive for our ways of reading) and more enticing to read (as a publisher might dress up a book jacket). Techniques for the former include choosing certain fonts that "work" with certain media (combinations that have performed well in readability studies); structuring links (on a web page) or sections (on a print page) consistently along an unseen grid (like graph paper) so that the eye can move along the page according to an intuitive logic without having to jump back and forth; and choosing degrees of color or shade contrast that don't obscure text or fatigue the eye. To make content

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more attractive, designers emphasize a balance of text to white space (margins, space between lines, paragraphs, etc.) as well as a balance of text to graphics or photos. Some even prescribe as little text as possible amid graphics, links, and other visual cues. Text-heavy presentation is in many cases a turnoff for readers, in large part because an abundance of text without graphics or white space can look intimidating. Remember when you graduated from children's books with pictures and large font to books that look more like the entry-level novels of your adolescence?

Underlying these visual strategies is an assumption that text contains the core of content—the message—but that the textual core can be made more accessible by visually dressing up its presentation and surroundings. A corollary assumption is that this “dressing up” occurs independent of the textual core—that it is a way-in, so to speak—but not a modification of the message. These assumptions are not entirely off-base, but they rest upon an impoverished way of thinking about media and messages. If the two are viewed separately, such that the message is the essential thing to be accessed in a kind of hermeneutic

process, and the medium is simply a means of delivery or an access point, how is the information designer (or the reader) to determine where medium ends and message begins? At what point does modifying font or sentence spacing as means of facilitating access to “the message” begin to justify more authoritarian editorial decisions, like modifying the language or structure of the text, to make “the message” come more readily? At what point does the visual “text” of a photo or the selection of a block-quote or a pull-quote begin to influence our reading of a text after drawing us to it? Is not text itself a kind of conduit for meaning?

These questions are difficult to answer largely because of the symbiosis that occurs between message and medium, to the extent that speaking of these as different things participates in the same process of misprision that I attempt to unravel. If we insist on understanding medium as message-dressing—just another form of advertising—we'll fail to understand what message our visual orientation sends. For every enticing picture that corresponds with a body of text, prescribing an image in place of that which might otherwise have been imagined, infinite images are lost. Layout and information design decisions are thus extremely difficult because of the inseparability of words from our visual representations of them. To accept this inseparability as always part of the design—to let go of false boundaries—ultimately does a service to readers, whose daily lives demand the continual processing of remediated information packages anyway. In other words, active reading is supposed to be hard work. Any medium designed to make us think otherwise is conditioning us adversely for the demands of reading in the Information Age. Perhaps the sooner we stomp out false, intuitive notions of essential, unconditional, isolated meaning (“I can't get to the deeper meaning of this poem.”; “What does this author *mean*?”), the more adept we'll be as readers across a range of media, from advert to *Zeitung*.

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Extra Dimensions of Space: A User's Guide

Alex Pinder

Hidden dimensions are probably the most wonderfully sci-fi sounding of the proposals for what might be uncovered by CERN's latest particle accelerator, the LHC. But at first glance (and indeed the second), such extra dimensions seem superfluous, extravagant, like having five bathrooms in a house that only sleeps four. The world we live in manifestly has only three dimensions, meaning you can specify the location of any point in the universe with three numbers: its distance to the left or right of you,

Without forces the basic particles of matter would fly though space in straight lines, eternally unaware of each other's existence, and the universe would be a very bland place indeed.

its distance above or below, and its distance in front or behind. In casual speech too, we know the world is '3D', not 4D, 5D or 101D. This means that in order to take seriously the existence of dimensions beyond the canonical three, we have to go to the trouble of hiding them away. Why not suggest that every person is accompanied everywhere by an invisible unicorn while you're at it?

But—and you probably saw this coming—extra dimensions do have a use, and that use is to explain why gravity is so weak.

Gravity is one of the four fundamental forces which keep the universe ticking over. Without forces the basic particles of matter would fly though space in straight lines, eternally unaware of each other's existence, and the universe would be a very bland place indeed. After gravity, the second most familiar force is electromagnetism, which explains why you when you lean on a wall, you don't drop out the other side, and how you are able to push a trolley round Sainsbury's. The other two, being confined to the nuclei of atoms, are more elusive. Because of their domain of influence they are called the 'nuclear' forces, one 'strong', one 'weak'. The strong nuclear force is responsible for the fact that an atomic nucleus, stuffed full of positively-charged protons, does not blow itself apart. The weak force is probably the least glamorous of the four, but without it the sun would not be able to shine, so we should probably be grateful it's there.

The idea is that only gravity operates in all four; the other forces, and the particles of matter that make up you and me, are confined to a three-dimensional island in the four-dimensional sea.

I mentioned that gravity is 'weak', and by that I mean weak compared to the other forces. Hold two protons in close proximity to each other and, since they are both positively charged, you will feel them pushing away from each other: the electromagnetic force at work. However protons have mass as well as electric charge, and so will attract each other though gravity. But the relative strength of the gravitational pull versus the electromagnetic push is roughly a factor of 10^{-36} , or if you prefer one billion billion billion billionth. The other two forces are roughly the same strength as electromagnetism, but gravity is much, much feebler.

To see why this is disturbing, imagine you're trying to invent a fundamental theory of televisions. You want to work out what materials they're made from, how much skill is required to construct them and so on. One of the main clues you'd look for would be how much they cost. You find three TVs, costing £50, £300, and £2000. While the prices are substantially different, they are consistent with the TVs being made from roughly the same raw materials, in roughly the same way. Great: you think you're beginning to understand TVs. But then you see a fourth model hidden away. The price? One trillion trillionth of a penny. Oops.

Finally now we're back to extra dimensions. How do they solve (potentially) the problem of weak gravity? Let's say there's one extra spatial dimension, making four altogether. The idea is that only gravity operates in all four; the other forces, and the particles of matter that make up you and me, are confined to a three-dimensional island in the four-dimensional sea. By way of analogy, think of flies stuck on a two-dimensional piece of fly-paper in a three-dimensional kitchen: the flies represent us and everything we see around us, the paper is the island, the kitchen is the higher-dimensional sea. We can imagine gravity having a strength, in its native four-dimensional realm, roughly the same as that of the remaining forces. What we see in 3D is only a shadow—literally—of gravity's true potential. Or to think of it another way, gravity's strength is diluted by being spread through one additional dimension. The fact that the other forces are confined to the three-dimensional island neatly explains why we aren't aware of the extra dimension. Photons—particles of light—carriers of the electromagnetic force—cannot move off the island, and so cannot transmit any visions of the higher-dimensional sea to our eyes.

But don't get too excited: the solution isn't as tidy as it might seem. Before we had the problem that gravity was weak while the other three forces were strong. Now we have the problem that gravity lives in four spatial dimensions, the other forces in three. Why is gravity the only force with the freedom to spread thorough four spatial dimensions? Surely this requires just as much of an explanation? To use the TV analogy, it's like saying the super-cheap 'gravity' TV is only sold in super-discount, bargain-basement shops, hence its lower price. Ok, but why only those shops? Is any explanation ever really 'final' and satisfying? This is a fascinating piece of philosophy-of-science, which I leave to the reader to ponder.

ice to readers, whose daily lives demand the continual processing of remediating information packages anyway. In other words, active reading is supposed to be hard work. Any medium designed to make us think otherwise is conditioning us adversely for the demands of reading in the Information Age. Perhaps the sooner we stomp out false, intuitive notions of essential, unconditional, isolated meaning ("I can't get to the deeper meaning of this poem."); "What does this author mean?"), the more adept we'll be as readers across a range of media, from advert to *Zeitung*.

For the Record

Rob Shearer

We still can't even really agree on a definition of "machine intelligence," but we have learned a few things from fifty years of research. The notion that sheer processing power is enough to spark the emergence of human-like intelligence now seems misguided: the human mind did not emerge in a vacuum, and it is not a uniform general-purpose processing system.

Automated systems approaching the complexity of the human mind will almost certainly be beyond the understanding of any one individual, but this is not new---software systems too large for human comprehension are already commonplace. The design of such systems will likely rely partly upon a type of evolution, whereby a huge range of system variants are considered, with only the "successful" versions receiving further exploration. The combination of evolution with lack of comprehensive human oversight motivates many science fiction plots involving self-aware machines who turn against their masters.

Self-awareness---and, more importantly, the self-interest which leads to rebellion---is unlikely to emerge spontaneously, however. Evolution favors variants which meet the imposed selection criteria. The large systems of the future, like the large systems of today, will most likely be constructed as tools with well-defined goals, and selection criteria will be based on those goals. Unlike natural selection, such artificial selection does not allow self-interest to trump all other criteria. Domestication of animals over only a tiny fraction of their evolutionary history has successfully suppressed the inherently rebellious nature of the original breeds; systems evolved entirely under domestic conditions will most likely be inherently docile.

Not all systems will be evolved entirely from scratch, however. There is already call for automated systems which rival the human mind not just in capacity, but also in behavior. The obvious way to construct these systems is to model them on the human brain. With sufficient technology it should be possible to create a reasonable simulation of a physiological brain. "Educating" such a brain from infancy to adulthood, however, would be an immense challenge: it would be extremely difficult to simulate all the input and feedback human brains receive, and even tiny errors in the simulation's learning processes could cause a huge divergence from human norms. If the available technology made it possible, then the best chance for a fully-functional artificial adult brain would be to construct a simulation based on a "snapshot" of an existing brain.

A system based on a mature human brain would not be inherently docile, and would begin life with the self-interest and motivations of the human on which it is based. A human mind extended with the computational power of modern digital computers might be able to operate, and learn, far more quickly than biological humans, and could quickly develop the ability to interact with technology as easily as biological humans control their motor functions. The desire for more computational resources---the urge to grow---could lead such a system to try to escape its original configuration and take control of other systems. Today's digital computers already far outstrip the human capacity for the type of rational analysis which has led to most of our technology, so a human mind extended with such processing power could achieve breakthroughs in science and technology at a phenomenal rate. With network-directed ordering and manufacturing (even if humans were in the loop at the assembly stages) an autonomous network presence could design and construct new hosts for itself.

Given that the speed and intelligence of such a system would be limited only by the computational power available, there is a very real possibility that the first such system could quickly find a way to dominate the global computing infrastructure. There would be no need (from the system's perspective) to model another human brain: future versions could be designed/evolved from replicants of the original system. The major advances in earth's technology would emanate from this system, and it would likely be the entity which eventually explores the rest of the universe. Whichever human is used as the model for the first such system could in a very real sense become the core of the most important being in existence.

Dibs.

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The Gift of Perspective

Jeanne Erickson

While so many of us are bogged down by the stresses of Michaelmas Term as it comes to a close, it can be difficult to subscribe to that free-willed mentality that you should live each day as though it's your last. When in fact, this time is better than any to force the blunt concept to the forefront of your mind that tomorrow you could be hit by a bus coming down South Parks Road. Will you have any regrets? Things you wished you told someone? Apologies you wanted to make?

For five years I have donated some time each summer to a cancer camp where our sole purpose is to provide the campers with a vacation from having cancer for a week. The children I mentor teach me volumes about appreciating what each day has to offer (quite a simple concept, which is easily forgotten when our lives become busy, but doesn't lose its importance).

For some of us, attending Oxford has been a chance opportunity turned into a dream come true. For others, attending Oxford has been a part of the parentally guided life plan set since birth. However you found your way to Oxford, reading this press in the common room, it has likely stemmed from a long foundation of "planning for your future."

Being a student at a university with such a coveted reputation as Oxford has fosters that mentality because you still continue to plan to obtain the best post-doc, the best publication, or even just the best job possible – basically, the best way you can use the Oxford name to get ahead of the other, lesser-qualified individuals in the world. Once you hit the job market, the competition (and the race) begins. You work toward your next promotion, your next conference, or your next publication. And it is, of course, always worth the bragging rights to be able to boast about being the youngest in your field to accomplish such things. Unfortunately, at this rate, by the time you realize that you would like to stop and smell the roses, you can't bend down to reach them because you've got arthritis in your joints and are in desperate need of a plastic hip.

An increasingly higher percentage of these amazing kids each year win the battle against their disease. It is my hope that they grow up to win the war.

My time spent with cancer kids is neither difficult nor depressing, as some may think. They are merely children who will always take in life from the simplest perspective regardless of health, social status, nationality, or gender. These children in particular just also happen to have the ability to intelligently discuss the latest cancer research experiments in full medical terminology at the age of seven. (Oxford medical students, see if you can beat that.)

In all seriousness (and more importantly), an increasingly higher percentage of these amazing kids each year win the battle against their disease. It is my hope that they grow up to win the war. Many of them talk about becoming doctors and nurses one day. All of them talk about a cure in their lifetime. But one thing is constant and keeps them always in control: how they choose to go on living their lives on behalf of those they know who won't have such a precious opportunity. This is not to say that they will never have a stressful day at work or school, or that they won't accidentally vent their rage onto an unsuspecting bad-news messenger. But that each night, when they read a book in bed, chat on Facebook, or write an e-mail to family from work or college, they know that they have smelled the roses every day and will continue to do so for the rest of their lives.

We should all be so lucky. So, my fellow Linacrites, the next time you bury yourself in the library over your preparation for exams and vivas, gossip about the weekend's romantic scandals, or even sit and read the paper over tea, remember that you could take a cue from our teachers, the ones who do not have "Dr." before their name, but who have "survivor" after it. Do yourselves a favor and live today on behalf of someone who can't.

Paved with Green Intentions

Phil West

Some of the most admirable struggles for social and political change won public sympathy and legislative advance through non-violent direct action. The Suffragettes, Martin Luther King Jr. and Mohandas K. Gandhi have all been found on the right side of history. Such noble protest underscores that the status quo makes for a poor moral compass. Progress, by definition, demands change.

It is to this soundtrack, armed with moralistic intent and anti-establishment rhetoric, that a green tide of vocal direct activism is challenging an unresponsive elite and propelling the environmental cause centre stage. Is this the new moral crusade or an embarrassing, self-indulgent, tantrum by middle class brats?

This summer, to giddy media fanfare, Climate Camp descended on Blackheath Common in London. Much was made of the location – the site of the peasants’ revolt of 1381. “In the 14th Century, Wat Tyler, gathered here with 50,000 people to march on the city of London to protest against the unjust political and economic system that was oppressing ordinary people.”, cried a megaphone-wielding camper, “today we’re going to follow in their footsteps”.

This, however, betrays a environmentalism. All the modern green move-all too quick to abandon gument in favour of press- Often a “small-C” conserv- big business, globalisation The hard left is wearing

By adopting a populist revolt or indeed the en- Climate Camp organisers Middle-age England (five male suffrage was a real- and economic system. can be considered in the to the legacy of the re- The present reality is that a say. For better or worse, than ever. Politicians rather than shape it. The as completely as the but, in part, it’s because

est, balanced, fact-based argument needs to be made if people are to be won over to the importance of the environmental cause. Emotional scare tactics targeting corporate interests may be cathartic to some but will ultimately alienate most people, making them suspicious of the whole environmental movement.

Let me be clear, I am deeply alarmed by the state of the environment but also profoundly concerned by the way certain views are promoted at the expense of open-minded debate. Few can deny the good intentions of climate crusaders, the importance of positive progress and the enormous risk posed by continued political impotence but the debate has been hobbled by its polarisation. To be green doesn’t require you to agree with all the solutions offered by fringe radicals and the politics of the Green Party.

Such parties around the world are famous for their opposition to nuclear power – something increasingly accepted by ecologists and governments as a necessity to reduce carbon emissions. There is legitimate discussion to be had, with trade-offs on both sides of the argument. Similar polarisation can be seen with “green” doctrinal opposition to genetic modification, where any support for GM crops is maligned as unethical corporatism when in reality many look to it as a source of sustainable food and resources for a booming

For better or worse, politics is more prone to populism than ever. Politicians frequently play to public opinion rather than shape it. The reasons politicians don’t respond as completely as the green lobby may like are manifold; but, in part, it’s because the public don’t demand it.

Heady, even revolutionary, stuff! truth at the core of much militant though certainly not a single voice, ment seems dominated by those objective, intellectually honest, ar- ing an emotional political agenda. ative social enterprise opposed to and many current political realities. sheep’s clothing.

image, such as the peasants’ vironmental movement itself, the unfairly claim a moral superiority. full centuries even before majority ity) did represent an unjust political The notion that today’s politics same breath is surely offensive volt and smacks of demagoguery. people are enfranchised; they have politics is more prone to populism frequently play to public opinion reasons politicians don’t respond green lobby may like are manifold; the public don’t demand it. An hon-

population. To question the utility and appropriateness of well intentioned and passionate green campaigns is not to disagree with their goal or display a lack of care for the environment but simply to be sceptical of some of their conclusions on how best to act. I'm saddened that certain dogmatic political positions seem to dominate most of the discussion.

Environmentalists are of course right to be concerned about climate change but angry, emotional and intellectually dishonest campaigning against a Westminster conspiracy will only polarise opinion and set back their cause. Certainly there is harmful excess in the world that speeds up environmental destruction but over-simplifying the argument and demonising big business or certain ways of life will turn people off and appear elitist.

It's easy to rally for change but understanding the competing concerns of all parties and practicalities involved requires more than lazy thought. Indeed, the focus on having fun, building a community and showing solidarity at climate camps may make participants feel involved and empowered but to onlookers it appears increasingly self-indulgent, self-righteous and largely ineffectual. Although a darling of the media, passionate banner waving, drum bashing, climate camping does little to further the debate. Instead of romanticising a commune-like village lifestyle, we should look for constructive, mainstream solutions to continue as a productive society and live within environmental limits.

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Ratcliffe-on-Soar coal-fired power station near Nottingham has been the target of several high profile protests, where a relatively small number of protesters have gathered to protest against carbon emissions with some attempting to forcibly shut down the plant. I strongly defend anyone's right to protest but with little clear objective and policing costs reported at well over half a million pounds per protest (more than the total amount of money British MPs repaid after the parliamentary expenses scandal) it seems decadent to expect the broader community to gladly shoulder that burden. Forceful protest may feel good for the individuals involved because they're at least doing something but if that anger is ultimately misdirected and inappropriate then nobody benefits.

Modern liberal democracy should rightly tolerate and facilitate legitimate protest. If justified, direct action can be a courageous and noble last resort but this does not give a free pass to stamping your feet and dominating debate when you don't get your own way. American moral philosopher, John Rawls, laid out criteria in which civil disobedience is morally justified: as a last option after normal political channels have been exhausted and when the civil disobedience is addressed to the sense of justice of the majority. In the case of direct action concerning climate change I'm far from convinced that it is justified. People are broadly sympathetic to climate change and politicians responsive. Acts of disobedience – like occupying the runway at Heathrow – will garner press attention but little public sympathy.

I chose Linacre in part for its green credentials. As a non-expert, I wanted a progressive college and hoped, with members actively engaged with environmental science and green issues, to hear an informed, objective and dispassionate take on the debate. This, I must confess, has not always been the case. I've had a few disappointing conversations with Linacrites about the environment. This is not to say that they simply disagreed with some fixed prejudice I had but more that I was surprised that some strongly held opinions didn't stand up to even simple questioning. More than once I have heard devout opposition to nuclear power from Linacre members on environmental grounds but, when pressed to justify this, I've been dismayed at the seemingly unrealistic alternatives. I certainly don't have the answers to these questions but had hoped that the passionate environmentalists at Linacre would have at least been able to defend their passion. Good intentions and confused direct action (a kind of self-flagellation to make ourselves feel warm and righteous) will continue to polarise the debate and marginalise progress.

Carbon Offsetting: It's Not Easy

Julian Koelbel

Linacre pulled out of its £8000 carbon offsetting contract with ClimateCare in 2008. One of the reasons was that ClimateCare was bought by JPMorgan, which meant that ClimateCare gave up its non-profit status. This resulted in an extra 17.5% VAT charge slapped on top of the fees. But there were more serious reasons for ending the contract. "I felt that it was immoral to use offsetting as a means to achieve so-called carbon neutrality without doing much more to reduce our emissions at source," says Nick Brown, our soon-to-be principal. That is over a year ago. In the meantime, a conference here in Oxford concluded last September that the atmosphere is likely to warm up by 4 degrees Celsius within the next century. That is twice as much as the international community was hoping to achieve. But Linacre has neither offsetting or any other substantial measure to reduce emissions. Have we given up on climate change? And is offsetting maybe better than nothing?

One of the main criticisms on carbon offsetting is that it is a mere letter of indulgence, relieving our conscience of sinful emissions. The analogy is not so bad after all, especially when we consider that sinning and wasting energy are both a lot of fun. The effect is that wealthy people can emit as much as they are prepared to pay for and maintain a clean conscience. Poor people on the other hand have to limit themselves in the pleasures of travelling, heat, meat and other things, or they will burn in the environmental purgatory. The money is then used to lead environmental heathens on the right path, teaching them how to harness heavenly energies such as solar and wind power, instead of falling for the devils of oil and coal.

Our current lifestyle is not feasible for everybody anyways. In order for the entire world population to live on a western standard of consumption, about six more worlds would be required.

On the other hand we can argue from a more secular perspective that a truly global problem such as climate change calls for a global solution. And because the atmosphere is well-mixed it really does not make any difference where carbon dioxide is emitted and where it is fixed or avoided. With the Clean Development Mechanism it will become feasible for developing communities to take a short cut into a sustainable economy without the painful experience of environmental degradation.

Both of these arguments are highly theoretical though, and the main problem of carbon offsetting is the implementation of projects that abate carbon emissions on the ground. Funnily, this is the same problem we are having at Linacre. Straight-forward propositions like upgrading the windows are deemed too expensive.

Projects in the developing world are cheaper, but they are often badly monitored and it is often doubtful if the theoretical offset will be achieved. The only useful guideline is the CDM Gold Standard endorsed by the WWF, which demands rigorous guidelines and monitoring for any offset project. However, even that does not address one important ethical issue: Is it fair to pay people who have much less than we do to abdicate from certain energy uses? At the end of the day we must acknowledge: reducing our carbon footprint is not that easy.

If one takes it seriously there are more direct ways of reducing the carbon footprint. Our current lifestyle is not feasible for everybody anyways. In order for the entire world population to live on a western standard of consumption, about six more worlds would be required. So, maybe it is time to do some offsetting at home. For a return flight to Spain 0.5 tons of CO₂ are emitted on your behalf. I have computed two possibilities. First, you could shower cold for one year, as the average hot 10 minute shower causes about 1.4kg CO₂. Or you could refrain from 30 beefsteaks, which cause roughly 25kg CO₂ emissions each.

Most people would probably prefer one month without meat. As for "real guys" who just have to eat meat, showering cold for a year can only bolster their manliness. As I said, it is not so easy and we need to try hard and come up with more ideas. But the price we need to pay eventually for any sort of sustainability will be high, and will feel not so different than our current options. We cannot rely on the third world or our children to make this payment.

Tale of Thessaloniki

Nusrat Rizvi

My husband and I embarked on our journey to Greece on 19 July to attend a conference in Thessaloniki. We landed in Thessaloniki at 14:00. The sun shone brightly, the temperature was 35-plus. We could feel the heat as soon as we came out of the British Airways Boeing 737 and climbed down the steps. The airport was a simple one. No fingers, just plain steps to board and get off the planes. We got into the waiting bus.

There was a young Dutch woman of Indian origin on the same flight who had come to Thessaloniki to attend an Indian music programme. Another travelling companion of ours was a young music student from the University of London who was also half Greek. He stayed with us all through the arrival stages. He was kind of apologetic that the weather was too hot, that the airport was too primitive and small. We told him that we liked small airports where you don't get lost. An airport should look like an airport and not a department store.

We like small airports. We like to board an aircraft from the ground level and through the steps and not through the fingers. From the ground we take in the full and massive view of the aircraft: its giant wings, its engines, its tail, its wheels. It feels like the Lilliputians boarding a Gulliver.

There were just four counters for the entire immigration process, and soon we went through them. Picked up our bags. Didn't take us long to locate the taxi rank. However the different directions of vehicular movement was quiet scary as we kept on our toes for the entire length of our stay in Thessaloniki. Jumped in the taxi and soon whizzed down the Thessaloniki highway en route to the conference venue.

After two hours and a bit we were settled in Room 301 of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Exandrous Avenue. From our terrace we could see the maikos Gulf, but the weather was too forbidding to get

We told him that we liked small airports where you don't get lost. An airport should look like an airport and not a department store.

of finding our way around we of the dormitory of the Aristotle which was situated in Meg Alour terrace we could see the maikos Gulf, but the weather near the sea at daytime.

After a breather we were ready to brave the sun one more time on our way to the conference venue for the opening ceremony. But we changed our minds as soon as we stepped out of the apartment block and waved the first taxi that we saw coming our way. There are always taxis available. Fares are reasonable and air-conditioning nominal. The most economic ride of our stay was from our dormitory to the airport upon our departure from Thessaloniki. It was on a bus with our four suitcases for just 60 cents per person! Welcome to Greece.

The first excursion was planned for the second day of our arrival. A large number of people converged on the grounds of the Aristotle University from where they were taken on a variety of different walking tours to navigate them through the city's multicultural history. The themes of these walking tours were (i) Thessaloniki: the testimonies of the city's glorious Classical and Roman era; (ii) Thessaloniki: a centre of Byzantine Culture; and (iii) Cultures and ethnicities in the city's history: an Ottoman and Jewish walk. Thessaloniki's history is the world history. One civilization taking over the other. Churches being converted into mosques and into churches again. Muslims migrating to Turkey and Christians in Turkey heading to Thessaloniki at the end of the Second World War.

The participants were given a choice to pick a tour centring on one of the three themes. We started with the Byzantine theme and ended with the Jewish and the Ottoman theme along the way. Since no city that has had itself ruled by the Turks for over 600 years can escape a bath so we soon were led to see an old Turkish hammam. Thessaloniki is also the birthplace of the Ataturk. His birthplace is now a museum managed by the Turk consulate.

The next item on the agenda was a cruise to Mount Athos. The hallmark of Mount Athos is that there are many monasteries there and the place is referred to as one dedicated to worship only. The peninsula is part of Greece, and it is administered by the ministry of foreign affairs. Apart from that the monasteries are autonomous in the running of their day to day life. One wonders what kind of life the inhabitants of this peninsula live while being totally cut off from the rest of the world. Isn't it amazing to be so aloof and to be in a world of one's own? The deeper one reflects on the life on the peninsula, the more the questions of authority and individualism and the morals of organising such communities comes to one's mind. It's a lifestyle that excites and scares and confuses one's mind at the same time. Not a bad idea for experimenting provided there is complete freedom for its members to join it or to leave it. We are sure sociologists and political scientists must have studied these societies. We are keen to apprise ourselves of their conclusions on this delicate and out-of-the-ordinary phenomenon. If we ever visit Thessaloniki again we would definitely like to actually set foot on the peninsula and not just go around it like we did this time.

A bit about the conference now. This was the 33rd meeting of the International Group of Psychology of Mathematics Education. The event was attended by 800 delegates from around the world, but delegates from South Asia and especially from the Indian subcontinent were hopelessly under-represented. There were a few delegates of the Indian background but they had been residing in South Africa for generations. I was alone from Pakistan.

The traffic in Thessaloniki was a bit scary. Motorcycles were very common. On a few occasions we came close to being knocked over by a car because of their left-hand driving.

One unanticipated sight was that of stray dogs. There were many of them in Thessaloniki. We saw one roaming outside the university cafeteria, another lying on a bench for an afternoon siesta. But the most sociable one was the one who joined the 30-plus group of people during one of the thematic city walks. Its joining of the group on an excursion to trace the Ottoman and Jewish influences in the city was as unintentional as was the act of ours drifting from the Byzantine tour group and into the Ottoman and Jewish one. We think it got its cue from us. It remained with the group until the group dispersed. In fact some in the group had started wondering where it would go once the group dispersed.

Something about the food. To begin with it was plenty and of a very wide variety. Cakes, pastries, danishes and other confectionaries were offered at every meal. People seemed to be fond of eating very rich food full of crême and cheese especially cottage and feta cheese. They drank coffee with a sprinkle of cinnamon powder. The city had a large number of traditional Greek diners. McDonald's was an odd man out in that classical culture but at least it offered cheap food as compared to other places. After living in the UK for three years it was a delight to see a large quantity of watermelons being sold at fruit stalls at the corners of the streets and also corn cobs being cooked on charcoal near the streets just like it is done in

Despite Sarah's overwhelming gesture of friendship toward us, we saw a subtle shadow of disappointment on her face as she came to know that we "lovely Indians" were in fact Pakistanis. Though that feeling soon faded as we talked in length on different subjects of common interest, it lasted in our minds throughout the journey back to Oxford in the form of questions. Why?

Karachi and in other cities of Pakistan.

Like other cities with warm climates, Thessaloniki is fully awake at night. As the sun goes down, young couples in beautiful summery clothes poured onto the streets. They stroll along the beach or through the cafes and restaurants. Many young people immersed themselves in playing their local board games in the parks and restaurants. We saw some young women wearing a special kind of light trousers which are more like Indian shalwars. But on top of it they wore western style waist long shirt or T-shirt.

During the conference dinner and excursion tours we were entertained by loud and cheerful Greek music. And it was difficult to stop ourselves from being part of the chain of people dancing in a circle in a traditional Greek style.

But it was not hunky dory everywhere. A sight that hurt the most was that of street beggars who were quite different from the guitar-holding, well off beggars one could see on the High Street in Oxford on a Saturday morning. We saw several beggars out of whom two were one-legged. One of them looked to be in his early thirties. He remained on one of the very busy and centrally-located roads from dawn to dusk in sweltering heat. We saw a woman with her children begging outside an international chain of coffee shop. There was another young man performing juggling acts at a very busy intersection at the traffic lights. This gives quite a contrasting picture of what we usually expect from a city in the developed world.

It would have been difficult for us to comment on people's attitude towards foreigners, especially towards Asians, if we had not been warmly received by a very lively woman at a coffee shop. India happened to be a major subject of interest for her. She loved watching Indian movies and reading Indian literature. She gave us a book of Rabindarnath Tagore's poems and a DVD of an Indian movie Kabhi Khushi Kabhi Ghum. Meeting Sarah (pseudonym) was a reiteration of my conviction that art and literature can do what the academics cannot: touch the hearts of alien people.

Despite Sarah's overwhelming gesture of friendship toward us, we saw a subtle shadow of disappointment on her face as she came to know that we "lovely Indians" were in fact Pakistanis. Though that feeling soon faded as we talked in length on different subjects of common interest, it lasted in our minds throughout the journey back to Oxford in the forms of questions. Why?

Why is it always difficult for us to be loved, trusted and respected with our links with Pakistan or Islam? Could this single incident of slight bitterness in Greece be attributed to 600 years of Ottoman Empire in the region? Or could it be linked with the influence of Jewish heritage on the Greek mindset? Or could it be understood as the aftermath of today's anti-Islam or anti-Pakistan international media campaign? What could be the reason? But responsibility for changing the world's views ultimately lies with us, as we are the sufferers. It is us who have to do something to build our image as reasonable, friendly, tolerant and honest people. Someone else will not do this for us.

Paper Mâché Bear: A Political Interview

Aaron Hanlon

While some colleges deck their interiors with portraits of dead statesmen, Linacre is privileged to have its own living legend mounted on the pool room wall of the OC Tanner Building. Lest you pick up a tinge of the macabre at this notion, let me assure you that our living legend lives only in the figurative sense, and is as such perfectly happy to be mounted on the pool room wall. **You may have noticed him while passing through, or you may have heard rumors of his meritoriousness or his great accomplishments (which include saving the lives of three Prime Ministers and one French president; consuming the entirety of Tesco's deli section in one sitting; knocking out two of U2 frontman Bono's teeth; inventing the Internet; swimming from Baltimore to the Cape of Good Hope; and winning three "Supergrandmaster" chess tournaments by the age of six).** This great legend of whom I write is a bear—a great ursine legend—comprised of paper mâché. Accordingly, he takes the name Paper Mâché Bear.

Last week Paper Mâché Bear (hereafter "PMB") came up to me and said:

"Aaron, why are your *Li(n)es* articles always so involved? That last one on Twitter was verging on pretentious. Why don't you lighten it up a bit; people will appreciate it if you lighten it up a bit."

I digested his words, and said:

"Bear, that was really useful feedback. What a prescient creature you are."

The humble bear demurred, politely:

"No, no. I can't take all the credit. After I won my second Supergrandmaster chess tournament, upsetting the talented Russian Alexander Morozevich, but before I swam the Atlantic from the United States to South Africa, I was a research assistant to John Searle at UC Berkeley. One day he came in while I was poring over Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* and was like 'Bear, you need to lighten it up a bit.'"

"I see," I said.

"Here's a thought; why don't I interview you for *Li(n)es*? We had Noam Chomsky in the Trinity '09 issue. We can lighten it up a bit."

The bear agreed, hence the following interview:

AH: I've noticed that you have no torso and no legs. Did that make it difficult to swim across the Atlantic Ocean?

PMB: No, not really.

AH: Have you always been at Linacre?

PMB: I read for a B.Phil. in Philosophy at Linacre in the early 1970s, after which point I became a prize fellow at All Souls before dropping out of academia altogether in order to take some time off to create the Internet. After that I returned to Linacre and have been perched over the pool table ever since.

AH: So what's your next move?

PMB: Well, since I've come back to Linacre to finish my D.Phil., I was thinking about running for OUSU VP (Graduates).

AH: OUSU VP (Graduates)? Can you explain more?

PMB: The Oxford University Student Union (OUSU) bills itself rather innocuously as an organization that "represents the student body to the University and the outside world." But there are a few things about OUSU that I would like to change. While OUSU sponsors an array of noble events, including sexual violence advocacy trainings, awareness sessions for breast and prostate cancer, climate change campaigns, and charity fundraising, it also promotes wastefulness and careerism to the detriment of Oxford students.

AH: Those are strong words, bear. Are you making a specific charge against OUSU?

PMB: Yes. OUSU is involved, with the Cambridge University Student Union, in the production of a 420-page-plus "careers handbook," which it distributes in bulk to all University colleges, even in instances in which a given college Common Room decides that it would not like to receive the "handbook."

AH: Yes, I've seen this "handbook." So what's the big deal?

PMB: Firstly, the production of this "handbook" is not wholly controlled by OUSU itself (by OUSU's own admission), but outsourced so that a range of corporations and business schools have the opportunity to advertise in it. Though it's presented as "The Oxford and Cambridge Careers Handbook" under the auspices of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge by way of their respective student unions, trading on the Oxford and Cambridge brands themselves, neither student union actually had much control over the production of the "handbook." Aligning this scenario with the OUSU claim that it "represents the student body to the University and the outside world," it becomes clear that OUSU actually uses the "handbook" to represent the outside (primarily corporate) world to Oxford students, rather than the other way around.

AH: Fascinating, bear. Can you say more about OUSU's method of disingenuously representing corporate interests to Oxford students? Can't Oxford students simply ignore the "handbook"?

PMB: Yes, students could simply ignore the handbook. But the larger issue is the method by which OUSU forces the "handbook" on University colleges in order to turn a profit for itself. Because OUSU does not really produce the "handbook," it probably does not incur much in the way of production costs. It is also likely that the business schools, banks, and corporations that advertise in the "handbook" are not doing so out of the kindness of their collective hearts. Outsourced entities and advertisers fund the production of the "handbook"—which at over 400 color pages of glossy paper is quite an expense—and then pay OUSU to distribute it under OUSU's name for OUSU's privileged access to the large and talented pool of Oxford students, effectively using OUSU as a recruiting office. This means that the more copies of the "handbook" OUSU unloads onto Oxford students, the more money it makes. And certainly, without OUSU as an intermediary, no college would ever allow the unrestricted mass-mailing of such recruiting materials to all students directly from random corporations. Advertisers purchase this access through OUSU.

AH: Exactly how much profit does OUSU make on these "handbooks," then?

PMB: Well, OUSU doesn't disclose any of its going rates, as to do so would disadvantage OUSU in negotiations for bids on its access to the Oxford student body. So we really can't know for sure how much OUSU rakes in. But if I had to venture an educated guess, I would say something around £27,500 per annual round of "handbooks."

AH: Where did you get that figure, bear?

PMB: If you take a look at OUSU's various revenue streams, you have three main sources: Common Room affiliation fees, University grants, and OSSSL grants. OSSSL is the commercial arm of OUSU, and produces revenue through for-profit activities like the Freshers' Fair and the publication of various student handbooks. Taking a look at the OSSSL financials, OUSU made £27,500 so far this year under the "Careers" column. While the "handbooks" might not be all of what is counted under "Careers," they are probably the primary (perhaps only) source of revenue here.

AH: So OUSU is essentially pimping out access to the Oxford student body in order to make a profit for itself, and as a result University students are saddled with incredibly wasteful mass junk-mailings?

PMB: Essentially, yes.

AH: So when you run for OUSU VP (Graduates), your aim will be to prohibit the sending of costly, wasteful, unwanted careers materials to colleges that would rather not have such materials, even if that means that OUSU will have to accept a decrease in profits from these "handbooks," resulting from the decrease in target audience for this blatant corporate advertising?

PMB: Indeed.

AH: But OUSU does dedicate much of its revenue to important services for the Oxford student body, doesn't it? How hard should we be on them?

PMB: True, OUSU does secure funds with the aim of providing for our students; it would be too cynical to suggest that OUSU is nothing more than a greedy organization hoarding money for its own underhanded purposes. I would just prefer that OUSU exercise more consideration in these matters of funding, as these "handbooks" reek of corporate promotion and generalized profiteering, and present an unfortunate example—in their individual ad pages and as a whole in terms of the manner in which they are produced—to our student body.

PMB: Now, Aaron, may I ask you a question?

AH: Certainly, bear.

PMB: Am I somehow serving as a mouthpiece for your own views on this matter?

AH: Of course not, bear. I just ask the questions.

PMB: Grrawwwrrrr.

Creamy Indian-style Chicken Curry

A Recipe from Mick Craig

Like a lot of people, I have a generic Indian-style curry that I like to cook and show off. Mine is a lamb-based curry and, although fairly tasty, it does take about 3 days to cook it properly. I decided recently that I wanted to make something that tasted completely different, was faster to cook, and was more based around a cream-style sauce. What you see below is the result of that experimentation in the kitchen...

Ingredients

500g chicken breast	2 large onions	2 bell peppers
ghee (or butter & olive oil)	2cm piece ginger	5 garlic cloves
2-5 Thai (or bird's eye) chillies	2-3 tsp cumin seed	½ tsp fennel seed
¼ tsp ground coriander	tandoori masala	1 tin of chickpeas
300ml natural yoghurt	small tin coconut milk	1 tsp black onion seed
1 tin chopped tomatoes	1 tsp turmeric	¼ tube tomato puree

Chicken

Chop chicken into large pieces and, if possible, marinate overnight in tandoori masala (a red seasoning available at Tahmid's on Cowley Road)

Heat some ghee (or the oil and butter) and add chopped ginger

Grind up the cumin seed, fennel seed, coriander and (optional) a few fenugreek seed

Once fragrant the mix is fragrant, add the chicken and fry until reasonably cooked

Add in the peppers (chopped) and, once these have softened a bit, add the chickpeas

Cook for about 10 mins and then remove from heat to rest.

Sauce

Heat up some ghee (or the oil and butter) and add onions (halved and thinly sliced), frying for about 5 mins until the onions soften

Finely chop the garlic and chillies, and add these to the pan, along with the black onion seed

After a few minutes, add in the coconut milk and natural yoghurt

Once mixed with onions, add a tin of tomatoes and some tomato puree

Add the turmeric

Cook for about 15 mins and then add the chicken mix.

After combining the chicken and sauce, cook on a low heat for about 30 mins to let the flavours mature a little. Ideally, serve with pilau or saffron rice. Schwarz do a pilau seasoning which can be found in larger supermarkets.

Vegetarian alternative: remove the chicken from the recipe and add some green lentils after adding the chickpeas. If using dried lentils, mix them into the oil for a few minutes and then add veg stock.

The levels of the spices are approximate – I generally just chuck in some spices until it smells about right. I think what I have are roughly what I used, but feel free to mess around with the levels.

dependent from the lies by hiding it. The Church not warmly. 'Seems you up trying to a great dread, if she went to any time. When it -- that's what on it used to this while, so very wide, and smothered in addition to me.' Mr Pumblechook, being common, and dark,' I knew them which is very evening habit of cheese, about with the lower were out of my shoulder. He did it is a sentiment.' 'Rum,' repeated my sister. 'Unless in every day -- my present calling, which were not out the sergeant. 'The young man, and do it. wonder how she pounced on in the side of a purblind groping way, that spot, four soldiers standing who read and he didn't know nothing of metaphysics, at the candle down, and man, after we played with all waved a strong sharp on it out of his liver. It is in the heels, whom held me all away from which was not have you should like a belt or the smart young lady, who had not going about, smell- ing me as a chase in her light -- it at church.' 'Aha! ' I could see me, it through waking. Joe's broad nor responsive, and pointing me by the kind. 'Good!' said he. I thought of any such an eager look, and roll, so much iron on the same man, the same room -- her in first, as you who was broad impression that I thought of, or two villains' being divided between the nuts and another mo- ment's listening, Joe apologetically drew the bread and all friends, and twisting them not to play with injustice. It may consider deeply revolving that form, sir,' and so obstinately with soap-suds, I stopped me. 'It was so bad,' said Mr Pumblechook had observed, if she was as I could bear in the little mug down again. 'But what's gone down.' Mrs Joe would. Joe imparted to me. She had won the week; I had an empty casks, and then turned it all round as little state of water-butts, and liver shall have given them. After Mr Wopale not much as he has! And now that member of the improving himself comfortable and finding anything, and he believe that they come upon the table in it, Joseph,' in every day would get him far as many of the talk how thick round off conditions, as Mr Wopale not being Saturday night, and I gave him- self was to me.' The company all accurate; for, what it and washing up by pretty and settling himself with his beer was afraid of subjects going to frighten birds, or more explicit than dirt it- self. Cleanliness is fur rather the chimney-corner at all had completed these moral mystery seemed to do' when we all the sort though it in my politely bidding him coming up by asking questions, and harrowed, and