

## Children and the Net.

In 12 teenagers users has met a stranger via the internet  
6 in 10 have personal profiles on networking sites.  
50,000 paedophiles are online at any time.  
Two thirds of 12 to 19 year-old users hide online activities.

5 MP's call for 'e-safety' lessons in British schools.

An 'Independent on Sunday' investigation reveals that children are unwittingly leaving themselves open to abuse by revealing personal details about themselves, say children's charities.

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School children are to be taught about the dangers of the internet amid government and police concern at the growing threat posed by paedophiles targeting chatrooms and social networking sites.

15 A « family friendly » system of \* « kite-marking », on government approved web sites and computer software, is one of several measures being considered by the Home Secretary, John Reid.

20 Children will also receive lessons in « e-safety » in the drive to educate young people to protect themselves in cyberspace.

The classes which will be part of the national curriculum ; will be rolled .out nationally from September after being piloted in a number of schools.

25 The Government's internet child protection watchdog, the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre, will also launch a national campaign warning of the dangers of sharing information online.

30 These actions follow the 'Independent on Sunday' investigation, which reveals that children are unwittingly leaving themselves open to abuse by giving personal details, say children's charities.

\* 'Kite-marking' = Safety marking.

By Danny Forston.

Adapted from 'The Independent on Sunday', 6/8/2006.

It was Hoxey whom I got to know first. The day I arranged to rent from him, he happened to have received several Reginald Marsh prints, of which he was very proud. I acted as if I'd heard of Reginald Marsh. I didn't know one painter from another, but I had a hunger for this sort of information—I was sure that it would be useful later, when I was rich. Hoxey was a  
5 pleasant old man who must have once been very fat, because he had loose flesh hanging from him everywhere and as many as seven chins. I always tried to count them while he was speaking to me, but then something in his remarks would break my concentration. This physicality, which bespoke a lifetime of phlegmatic living, gave his discourse on prints the authority that a weathered desert rat would have if he told you about cactus. I remember  
10 Hoxey carefully unpacking one of the prints—a kind of crazy thing with blank-faced people swarming in and out of doorways, no one reacting to anyone else. He said that it was the calmest Reginald Marsh he'd ever seen. "No 'Moonlight and Pretzels' in this one!" he cried. I could see both that he'd be an agreeable landlord and that many health issues lay before him. As a medical student, I could make a little game of guessing which one would kill him.

15 A few days after I moved in, Tessa asked me over for drinks. She had done a beautiful job of making her apartment habitable, with old, comfortable furniture that she'd bought cheap and re-covered. She also had a good many of Hoxey's prints on loan, though, as she explained, she was really just providing storage for them, because her collection changed as things were sold. She made a little face when she told me that she couldn't afford to get attached to any of  
20 the prints, a particular trial for her as she loved the art of all nations. Cocktails and art, I thought—maybe I'll get into her pants. I'm sure that I had a big goober smile on my face as I contemplated such an outcome.

*An excerpt from TANGO by THOMAS MCGUANE © THE NEW YORKER 2006*

# Language lessons must be made relevant to teenagers, report says

By Ben Russell, Political Correspondent

*Abridged from The Independent 15 December 2006*

5 A comprehensive overhaul of language teaching is needed to reverse the dramatic decline in pupils taking French, German and other languages, a report commissioned by the Government has said. "Urgent" changes should be made to GCSE \* courses to make them more relevant to teenagers, while foreign languages should be a standard part of primary school lessons, Lord Dearing said.

Lord Dearing said that the widespread perception that language GCSEs are more difficult than other subjects may have contributed to its decline because schools shun the subjects to bolster their standing in league tables.

10 Since compulsory languages were axed in 2004, the proportion of pupils taking a foreign language at GCSE level has fallen from 80 per cent to just 50 per cent.

Lord Dearing said that a return to compulsory language teaching for 14 to 16-year-olds was not his "preferred" option, but said it "should be used if it proves to be needed".

15 Instead he called for languages to become a "standard" part of the national curriculum in primary schools to "respond to the enthusiasm and ability to learn through games and play at primary level."

Lord Dearing also called for regulations forcing schools to teach at least one European language to be lifted, to give pupils a much wider choice of non-European languages.

20 He said: "For today's young people, languages matter: they are an investment that can enrich their lives socially, culturally, and economically. There is a significant danger that if some pupils - particularly low achievers - are restricted to a monolingual, monocultural education they will be increasingly unable to deal with the complex demands of our society."

\* GCSE = General certificate of secondary education

# Gap years: disaster or trip of a lifetime?

## Students may like the idea of a year out, but not all are happy with the experience, says Robert Nurden

*Abridged from The Independent 05 October 2006*

Martha Sedgwick had taken a number of jobs to finance her three-month stint working with deprived children in Lima. With a place secured at York to read history, she signed up with Gap Challenge, one of many organisations offering pre-college students and career-breakers the chance to work in a developing country.

5 She was told she'd be staying with a family, enabling her to practise Spanish. And she reckoned the work at the children's refuge would stretch her in new and exciting ways.

10 But, as her mother Carole explains, it turned out to be a "disastrous" experience, so much so that she is warning other parents against sending their children on gap-year schemes. "Martha's placement was badly organised and she was unclear what she was supposed to be doing," she says. "There was little supervision from the organisers. We allowed her to go because we were led to believe she would be staying with a family, but she lived in a hostel in a seedy part of the city where volunteers were continually getting mugged.

15 "If we had known what lay ahead we would not have let her go. Many gap-year organisations charge a lot of money for not very much in return, and I believe thousands of students are being ripped off. The gap year is just not worth it."

20 The gap-year industry is booming. According to the Year Out Group, a trade association for 38 gap-year companies, the availability of cheap travel means that up to 200,000 British people of all ages now take time out each year. Most of those are school leavers, 40,000 of whom have a university place but choose to defer; another 40,000 are waiting for their A-level grades before applying; while another 50,000 leave school not knowing what to do.

5 On the other side of Edinburgh, in another season, Cat, an attractive young woman in her mid-twenties, stood at Isabel Dalhousie's front door, her finger poised over the bell. She gazed at the stonework. She noticed that in parts the discoloration was becoming more pronounced. Above the triangular gable of her aunt's bedroom window, the stone was flaking slightly, and a patch had fallen off here and there, like a ripened scab, exposing fresh skin below. This slow decline had its own charms; a house, like anything else, should not be denied the dignity of natural ageing—within reason, of course.

10 For the most part, the house was in good order; a discreet and sympathetic house, in spite of its size. And it was known, too, for its hospitality. Everyone who called there—irrespective of their mission—would be courteously received and offered, if the time was appropriate, a glass of dry white wine in spring and summer and red in autumn and winter. They would then be listened to, again with courtesy, for Isabel believed in giving moral attention to everyone. This made her profoundly egalitarian, though not in the non-discriminating sense of many contemporary egalitarians, who sometimes ignore the real moral differences between people (good and evil are not the same, Isabel would say). She felt uncomfortable with moral relativists and their penchant for non-judgementalism. But of course we must be judgemental, she said, when there is something to be judged.

20 Isabel had studied philosophy and had a part-time job as general editor of the Review of Applied Ethics. It was not a demanding job in terms of the time it required, and it was badly paid; in fact, at Isabel's own suggestion, rising production costs had been partly offset by a cut in her own salary.

An excerpt from **Friends, Lovers, Chocolate** by Alexander McCall Smith  
Copyright © 2005 by Alexander McCall Smith.

## Ad ban takes £100m bite into Burger King

By Harry Wallop, Business Correspondent  
Daily Telegraph 27/12/2006

Burger King, the world's second largest fast-food chain, estimates that the ban on children's advertising could cost it up to £100m in lost UK sales next year.

The prediction came as the company's new management in the UK vowed to fight regulatory interference and a declining fast-food market.

5 Giorgio Minardi, the company's head of north west Europe, in his first UK interview, said: "Advertising is a key part of our drive to get kids and families into our restaurants. It will have a major impact on our top line advertisement."

His comments come less than a week after Burger King aired its last advert aimed at children — an advert promoting penguin toys based on the hit animated film Happy Feet.

10 Mr Minardi, a former senior McDonald's executive, joined its arch rival earlier this year and is leading an almost entirely new team in the UK, vowing to turn around the struggling fast-food chain. "There is life yet in the burger," he said.

Like McDonald's, Burger King has suffered from the relentless competition on the high street and the change in consumers' habits.

15 One of his first decisions was to end adverts aimed at children, before regulators enforced any ban, outmanoeuvring many of his competitors.

He and his new head of marketing David Kisilevsky, have also, controversially, heavily promoted its calorific Double Whopper burgers.

20 Mr Kisilevsky said: "People are starting to get a little bit fed up with the nanny state intrusion in our lives. It was important for Burger King to come out in a light-hearted way and say there is nothing wrong to partake in your love of a great burger."

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### Pupils 'should switch off phones'

- 5 The union wants phones to be switched off in schools  
A leading teachers' union has urged schools to crack down on the misuse of mobile phones.
- 10 The Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS) said it was concerned that camera phones were being used to bully staff and pupils.
- 15 It wants schools to order all phones to be switched off during the school day and for teachers to be given rights to confiscate phones and delete images.
- Local authorities have welcomed the union's guidelines.
- 20 There have been reports of youngsters deliberately winding up teachers so they can secretly record angry outbursts, or taking compromising photos or video clips of classmates.
- The EIS said that such technology was a serious breach of privacy and took bullying to a new level.
- 25 It said it wanted all phones to be put away during the school day and suggested that nobody should be recorded unless they gave their permission.
- The union has sent a guidance pack all schools in Scotland, advising staff to look out for any inappropriate photography.
- 30 There has to be a clear and shared understanding on the acceptable use of this technology - and on the potential consequences of misuse.
- 35 The pack suggests serious bullying and harassment can be uncovered by identifying misuse of mobiles and warns teachers that they may be being photographed or videoed without their knowledge.
- 40 EIS general secretary Ronnie Smith said: "Teachers have long been concerned about the potential for mobile phones to be used to bully pupils, but now the prevalence of camera phones has taken the problem to a new level in our schools.
- "The potential for pupils or teachers to be photographed or videoed without their knowledge is a real concern, and represents a serious breach of privacy and personal liberty."

## Your Blog \*PGCE diary: The cattle market

09 March 2006 The Times Educational Supplement

I'm calling it The Cattle Market. Forty beginning teachers sit with baited breath in a tight in walks the tutor with the list. It's time.

5 "Joanne, you're at Dundesbury Community College." A small yelp. "Brigitte, you're in The Lanes School." A sigh of relief. "Chris, you're at Josephine's Academy of Technology." Silence. Three of our course have passed through its doors, one is in therapy, two have disappeared. It sinks in: it isn't me. I smile.

I don't really understand why we trainees focus so much on which school we're placed in.

10 We're only there for 10 weeks. We toil and trouble 25 hours a day, and all the while we are subjected to that incessant chant: "Why on earth are you training to be a teacher?"

As one helpful person told me, "kids are there to stress you out, give you germs, steal your voice and eventually kill you. But there'll be some moments you enjoy".

15 Anyway, I'm back at school after the Christmas work break eager to get back into things. and I've got this sense that I'm actually a real teacher.

That's right, kids have to do my bidding. If I ask them to dance around the class with their pencil cases on their heads, they'll do it. Face it: I've got the power. Pity I've been so useless using it.

20 It seems that everything I do has an entirely different effect than I'm anticipating. I shout, they shout over me. I get tough, they laugh. I cry, they feel sorry for me (actually, I haven't tried that one yet, but I felt the urge with 8G on Friday).

After spending 10 minutes explaining a concept to a kid who couldn't hear me over his iPod, I came to the conclusion that kids are aliens, and if we try to understand them, their little alien antennae will pick up the signal and throw all our hard work straight back in our insignificant faces.

25 So I say let them run riot, let them scream and shout and take over the school, I'll just hide in the old staff toilets and pretend I'm not a real teacher.

\*PGCE = Post graduate certificate of education

## How far would you go?

Hannah Frankel 22 December 2006 The Times Educational Supplement

Would you lend your pupils money? Let them stay at your house? Or could you risk your life to save theirs? Patsy Donahue did not hesitate when she heard that one of her pupils would die without a kidney transplant.

5 Even though she could have died during the operation, she gave Brandon Shafer – a 10-year-old pupil she had known for just three months – her kidney.

When Brandon was diagnosed with polycystic kidney disease, an incurable genetic condition that affects one in every 10,000 children, his family were tested to see if they could become donors. They were not suitable matches, but his teacher was.

10 “It wasn’t a difficult decision,” Patsy, 25, says. “My father had leukaemia and wouldn’t be alive if it wasn’t for the bone marrow transplant he received. I know how important it is to give if you can.”

15 After taking three weeks off work following the operation, Patsy is now back teaching at her elementary school in Illinois, America. Brandon has also made a speedy recovery. “Brandon and I will have a special connection for the rest of our lives,” says Patsy. “He’s a part of me now. I would do it all over again in an instant.”

Such examples are almost unheard of in the UK, which has nearly exclusively favoured live organ donations from family members and close friends. However, the Human Tissue Act now provides greater flexibility in who can donate to whom.

20 Teachers in the UK can donate live organs to a pupil as long as a “close and meaningful relationship” is proved to exist.

## Language barrier leaves children lost for words

Parlez-vous? Not any more if the decline in modern language study continues. Zoe Thomas reports

[...] Modern language teaching in Britain's schools is deep in crisis. Fewer and fewer children think it worthwhile to learn a foreign language, many of them opting for "soft" subjects offering easier pickings in a world where A\* and A-grades are the only currency.

5 The government has encouraged this process by making languages optional post-14. The effect of this policy change three years on has been devastating. In 2004, 318,963 children took GCSE French; this year just 236,189 candidates sat the examination, a 26% fall in just two years. It is the same story with German. The number of entries has slumped from 122,161 in 2004 to 90,311 this year, again a fall of 26%, as the majority of comprehensives abandon compulsory language study post-14.

10 This rapid decline has prompted the government to appoint Lord Dearing, that master of the official report, to conduct a review of languages policy. Alan Johnson, the education secretary, has even conceded that the government might have got it wrong three years ago.

[...]

15 While students clearly think languages are optional, Hefce is rather more robust, insisting that mastery of foreign languages is key to the UK's future prosperity.

Fortunately, many of the leading schools on this 2006 Parent Power CD-Rom, where modern languages remain a core part of the curriculum, share this view. In independent schools, 95% still make languages compulsory until GCSE, regardless of the government's line.

20 Education experts say the problem is due to languages being seen as hard subjects that pupils will have more trouble getting good grades in than drama or media studies.

Others blame poor-quality teaching.

## Telegraph speaker's' corner

Thursday, January 04, 2007

### Should boys and girls be taught differently?

A new report by the head of Ofsted, the inspectorate for English schools, advocates adopting different teaching styles for male and female pupils to help close the education gap between boys and girls.

5 Boys already make up a majority of the 20 per cent of children who cannot read properly by the age of 11. But research shows that they are likely to fall even further behind by the age of 16. "Research into boys' and girls' motivation shows that differences appear from a very early age, with boys placing a greater value on believing themselves to be better at mathematics and science and girls at reading and art," the so called 2020 Review said. "Boys are more likely to attribute their successes to internal, stable causes (such as ability) and their failures to external, unstable causes (such as bad luck)."

10 Do you think different styles of teaching would remedy this state of affairs? What should the different styles be? What about teaching boys and girls separately, in single-sex schools, for example?

15 Was this always the problem it is now? Is it really getting worse and, if so, why? Does it really matter? Shouldn't boys just be allowed to be boys and girls girls?

Do you think the disparity between boys and girls in their performances at school is particularly bad in England or the UK? If so, why? If you live outside Britain, are boys in your country as far behind their female classmates?

**Personalised education 'is way forward for schools'**

ALEXANDRA FREAN, EDUCATION EDITOR

Pupils would be able to choose what they study, ask each other for help in answering questions, mark their own work and grade their teachers' performance under ambitious government plans to tailor education to the needs of individual children and young people. Traditional grades or marks would go, to be replaced by "feedback", where the teacher would suggest what steps a pupil could take to improve performance. Pupils would be entered for exams as soon as they were ready to take them, rather than wait until they reached a certain age. Catch-up classes for those who trail behind and extra tuition for the brightest pupils are also recommended in a review of personalised learning published today.

The review, written by Christine Gilbert before her recent appointment as head of Ofsted, sets out the Government's vision for schooling by 2020. It aims to stop some children falling behind by replacing a "one size fits all" approach to teaching with one designed to fit the needs of each child. At the centre is a relentless focus on "keeping up", through regular assessments and individual target-setting. This could involve grouping children according to attainment, not age. There would also be surveys of pupil and parental satisfaction to ensure a shared understanding of each pupil's goals. Alan Johnson, the Education Secretary, emphasised that personalised learning did not involve teaching each child differently. It meant involving each child in its own learning.

He said: "Many disadvantaged pupils are bright and talented but lose interest or motivation. We need to make sure that no one is left behind at any point — from the most gifted and talented children at the top of the class to the uninterested child at the back." [...]

## Children who can't find the UK

The Times Educational supplement 23 October 2006

One in five British children cannot find the UK on a map of the world, new research shows today.

The study also showed that one in ten children were not able to name a single continent and more than 20,000 children in London failed to know they lived in England's capital city.

5 National Geographic Kids magazine questioned more than 1,000 6 to 14-year-olds to mark its UK launch but highlighted concerning gaps in children's geographical knowledge.

Less than two thirds of children (60%) were able to locate the UK's closest ally, the United States, and despite dominating news headlines in recent years, 86% failed to identify Iraq.

10 Professor Alan Smithers, described the findings as "rather frightening", he said: "These results underline the need for education to concentrate on the essentials, "making geography fun and exciting is so important because it makes children aware of the importance of caring for the environment and, by learning about the world, it helps bring other people's worlds and cultures closer to their own."

15 A Department for Education and Skills spokesman said: "Geography is a compulsory part of the National Curriculum for all children between the ages of five to 14.

The research also showed children to be worried about the environmental state of the planet.

A total of 87% of children say they recycle, 63% conserve water by turning off the tap when brushing their teeth and 63% save energy by switching off lights, TVs and computers.

A third of children (27%) ask their parents to use their car less and 93% avoid dropping litter.

20 Lauren Jarvis, editor of National Geographic Kids, said: "It's good to see so many young eco-warriors are already concerned about animals becoming extinct and consciously choose to recycle and save energy by turning off their TVs and computers."

### Infants on the \*treadmill

Adi Bloom 20 October 2006 The Times Educational Supplement

Zachary, aged 3, exercises on a treadmill at Little Learners nursery.

Primary and nursery pupils as young as three are working out on exercise bikes and treadmills supplied by a new company, Gymkids.

5 Gymkids produces smaller, brightly coloured versions of adult exercise machines, which enable children to mimic their parents' fitness regime.

The company, whose founders include two former teachers, is targeting nurseries and primary schools, with different machines recommended for each key stage. But it has been criticised for encouraging an obsession with fitness and weight.

10 Steve Bloomfield, of the Eating Disorders Association, said: "What's the message that you're giving to a child with this equipment? It's unlikely to be based around self-esteem or feeling good. It would be a terrible tragedy if we tell kids to go on these machines, rather than running around school grounds," he said. "As a nation, we're obsessed with trying to maintain body weight in very young children."

15 Gymkids, was launched in March. So far, 120 primaries and nurseries across Britain have bought the equipment. These include air-walkers and rowing machines. Matt Runacus, head of PE at Parkfield primary, in Birmingham said: "We use the calorie-counter in a positive way, for cross-curricular activities. In maths, they record how far they can row in three minutes. Children who aren't necessarily good footballers or cricketers can compete against themselves."

20 Stephen Smith, Gymkids director, said that the machines all involve cardiovascular exercise — none of them builds up muscle. He said: "We don't want children to grow up too quickly, but this is a great way to encourage them to get involved in physical fitness. It's a fun way to combat the obesity epidemic in this country.

#### \*treadmill

noun

1. any type of repeated work which is boring and tiring and seems to have no positive effect and no end:

2. an exercise machine which consists of a moving strip or two step-like parts on which you walk without moving forward

So, babies aren't self-raising\* ...

Schools news: The Guardian Tuesday December 19, 2006

It's not so easy being a parent, especially when you're only 10. Harriet Swain reports on the flour-baby project

In Anne Fine's children's book *Flour Babies*, each of the challenging boys in Form 4C has to look after a bag of flour as if it were a baby. By page 74, one of them has got so sick of his bag that he has booted it into the canal.

5 Nothing quite so drastic happened when year 6 at St Elizabeth's Roman Catholic school in the east London borough of Tower Hamlets did the same. But it was close.

10 "I got fed up with my baby in the first three days," says 10-year-old Gabriel. "I was going out to play and when they rang the bell I was jumping up and down and someone pulled it out of my hand. The baby ripped open and I didn't want to make a new one. "At the end of the project I got really angry," says Charlotte. "I spilled water on it, then ripped it and flour went everywhere. But I still have the head somewhere."

15 Teachers say some of this talk is bravado - many of the children became far more attached to their bags of flour than they had expected, or admitted to themselves. Most customised them with stuck-on heads, bonnets, blankets and drawn-on faces, and gave them names. "I called mine Malcolm," says Darren. The children's main responsibility was to look after their baby 24 hours a day for a week, or to arrange a babysitter if for some reason they couldn't be there themselves. But they were also encouraged to rock them to sleep at night and think about what other needs they might have, such as eating and being changed. The project, which  
20 included reading and discussing Anne Fine's book, was part of St Elizabeth's sex and relationship education programme. The topic was babies, the learning objective to recognise the responsibilities of being a parent.

\*self-raising flour = la farine + la levure chimique

## The best form of flattery

Nicola Solomon 20 October 2006 The Times Educational Supplement (TES)

You want to share your great teaching ideas, or copy or adapt someone else's. More than 40,000 visitors to the TES Resource Bank have done it since April. But what are your legal rights?

5 The internet is a great resource for teachers. When you prepare a fantastic idea and want to post it on the web to inspire other teachers, what are the risks and how do you protect your work?

Do you actually own the material? Normally, the author is the first owner of copyright. However, if the work is created in the course of employment then, unless your contract says something different, the first owner of copyright will be your employer, usually the school or  
10 education authority.

Henry Clinton-Davis, an employment specialist and partner at law firm Wilmer Hale, says: "The scope of a teacher's employment doesn't only encompass classroom teaching. They are also employed to plan lessons. If they create materials to assist their teaching, whether or not created in school time, those materials will belong to the employer."

15 Kate Pool, deputy general secretary of the Society of Authors, disagrees. "A teacher's job is to teach," she says. "They aren't employed to write teaching material, and anything they do create belongs to them."

20 Most teachers take the same view. Heather Cox, a teacher in the London borough of Barnet, says: "I work in the evenings preparing individual lesson plans and resources. I'm happy for my colleagues to use and amend them but I'd be annoyed if the school tried to profit from them without my permission. They don't belong to anyone but me."

## Parents' direct access to teachers by text message is "key to success"

ANTHONY BROWNE AND PHILIP WEBSTER

### Should parents have text and e-mail access to teachers?

Parents could be given direct e-mail and text message contact with their children's teachers under proposals to encourage greater public involvement in schools.

The Government wants to enable parents to follow closely their children's progress and have concerns answered quickly, rather than waiting for end-of-term reports and parents' evenings.

5 The proposals will enable parents to text teachers directly or to log on to a secure website to receive the latest progress reports. Parents may also be given e-mail access to teachers, so they can put questions directly, and be kept up to date with lessons by newsletters.

Truancy will be tackled by schools texting parents if their child does not arrive, and continuing to text each day until the child returns to school.

10 The Government hopes that the scheme will improve standards by getting parents more directly involved in the education of their children. It could meet opposition from teachers' unions fearing that it would increase workloads. [...]

"It's revolutionising the way that teachers can communicate with parents," Mr Johnson told *The Times*. "In the old days, parents would only know what was going on when they got the end-of-term report or went to the open day."

15 He said that a greater involvement of parents in the education of their children should have a dramatic impact on standards. "Parental involvement in education trumps every other factor in terms of whether a child is going to do well," he said. "It is more important than ethnicity, more important than social background."

5 On Friday 25 October, exactly one week before the first body was discovered at the Dupayne Museum, Adam Dalgliesh visited the museum for the first time. The visit was fortuitous, the decision impulsive and he was later to look back on that afternoon as one of life's bizarre coincidences which, although occurring more frequently than reason would expect, never fail to surprise.

10 He had left the Home Office building in Queen Anne's Gate at two-thirty after a long morning meeting only briefly interrupted by the usual break for brought-in sandwiches and indifferent coffee, and was walking the short distance back to his New Scotland Yard office. He was alone; that too was fortuitous. The police representation at the meeting had been strong and Dalgliesh would normally have left with the Assistant Commissioner, but one of the Under Secretaries in the Criminal Policy Department had asked him to look in at his office to discuss a query unrelated to the morning's business, and he walked unaccompanied. The meeting had produced the expected imposition of paperwork and as he cut through St. James's Park  
15 underground station into Broadway he debated whether to return to his office and risk an afternoon of interruptions or to take the papers home to his Thames-side flat and work in peace.

20 There had been no smoking at the meeting but the room had seemed musty with spent breath and now he took pleasure in breathing fresh air, however briefly. It was a blustery day but unseasonably mild. The bunched clouds were tumbling across a sky of translucent blue and he could have imagined that this was spring except for the autumnal sea-tang of the river—surely half imagined—and the keenness of the buffeting wind as he came out of the station.

*An excerpt from **The Murder Room** by P. D. James Copyright© 2003 by P.D. James.*

## Obese may be denied priority NHS care

Patients with 'self-inflicted' illnesses face discrimination

By Andrew Grice, Political Editor

Published: 26 December 2006

1 Smokers, people with alcohol problems and the obese could be denied priority treatment on  
the NHS if they do not try to change their lifestyle.  
The Cabinet is discussing the controversial idea as part of a drive by Tony Blair to secure his  
domestic political legacy by pushing through a final round of public service reforms before  
5 he departs next year.  
Ministers will confront a panel of 100 ordinary people with some of the "tough choices"  
facing the Government under a consultation exercise giving the public a direct say in the  
new policies. One question will be whether people whose lifestyle makes them ill should get  
the same priority as other patients. This would mean changing NHS\* guidelines saying that  
10 people should not be discriminated against "even if their illnesses are to some extent self-  
inflicted".  
A Cabinet review group on public services was shocked by the scale of the burden caused by  
people's lifestyles. "Ministers were shocked by the fact that half of all years of healthy life  
are lost as a result of behavioural factors (e.g. smoking and diet)," a Government source said.  
15 Ministers want a "cultural change" in public services so the state can support and encourage  
people to change their behaviour to improve their life chances and well-being.  
They also want to extend the number of "contracts" between the citizen and the state, such as  
the £30-a-week education maintenance allowances paid to over-16s who remain in further  
education.  
20 Experts warned this month that obesity, which costs the NHS £7bn a year, could bankrupt it  
if left unchecked and predicted that the proportion of obese adults would rise from one in  
five to one in three by 2010. Smoking-related diseases cost an estimated £1.7bn a year, with  
the same amount spent on alcohol-related problems. The treatment of alcohol-related harm,  
such as violent crime and traffic accidents, costs an estimated £20bn.

\* N.H.S= National Health Service

**Words on the street...they're listening**

The Sunday Times November 26<sup>th</sup> 2006

POLICE and councils are considering monitoring conversations in the street using high-powered microphones attached to \*CCTV cameras, *write Steven Swinford and Nicola Smith.*

1	The microphones can detect conversations 100 yards away and record aggressive exchanges before they become violent. The devices are used at 300 sites in Holland and police, councils and transport officials in London have shown an interest in installing them before the 2012 Olympics.
5	The interest in the equipment comes amid growing concern that Britain is becoming a "surveillance society". It was recently highlighted that there are more than 4.2m CCTV cameras, with the average person being filmed more than 300 times a day. The addition of microphones would take surveillance into uncharted territory. The Association of Chief Police Officers has warned that a full public debate over the
10	microphones' impact on privacy will be needed before they can be introduced. The equipment can pick up aggressive tones on the basis of 12 factors, including decibel level, pitch and the speed at which words are spoken. Background noise is filtered out, enabling the camera to focus on specific conversations in public places. If the aggressive behaviour continues, police can intervene before an incident escalates.
15	Privacy laws in Holland limit the recording of sound to short bursts. Derek van der Vorst, director of Sound Intelligence, the company that created the technology, said: "It is technically capable of being live 24 hours a day and recording 24 hours a day. It really depends on the privacy laws in a particular country. In Holland more than 300 of the cameras have been fitted in Groningen, Utrecht and
20	Rotterdam. Locations include city centres, benefit offices, jails, and even T-Mobile shops. The sensitivity of the microphones is adjusted to suit the situation. Police and local council officials are still assessing their impact on crime, although in an initial six-week trial in Groningen last year the cameras raised 70 genuine alarms, resulting in four arrests.

\*C.C.T.V.= close circuit camera

## Language lessons must be made relevant to teenagers, report says

By Ben Russell, Political Correspondent

Published: 15 December 2006

From *The Independent*

- 1 A comprehensive overhaul of language teaching is needed to reverse the dramatic decline in pupils taking French, German and other languages, a report commissioned by the Government has said. "Urgent" changes should be made to GCSE courses to make them more relevant to teenagers, while foreign languages should be a standard part of primary school lessons, Lord
- 5 Dearing said.  
He warned that the current GCSE syllabuses had a "dulling" effect on teenagers. He quoted one teacher saying that the exams put youngsters "in a cage" and warned that many teachers believed the way secondary school studies are organised had a "stultifying effect" on teenagers.
- 10 Lord Dearing, a former Post Office chairman who has produced a series of major studies on education for successive governments, said that ministers may have to reverse their decisions to make languages optional for the over-14s if the "severe" decline continues.  
His report said the decision had "undermined" efforts to improve language teaching.
- 15 Lord Dearing's report said : "There has been long sustained argument that the standards for the awards of grades are more demanding than for other subjects, and that this has contributed to the flight from languages, both because of the concern of students to get good grades and the concern of schools to do well in the 5 A\*-C achievement and attainment tables. This is a continuing sore point."
- 20 Since compulsory languages were axed in 2004, the proportion of pupils taking a foreign language at GCSE level has fallen from 80 per cent to just 50 per cent.

## "Bully" game targeted in the US

1 The developers of controversial videogame Bully have defended the title in the wake of a threatened injunction in Florida, in the US : lawyer Jack Thompson is attempting to stop the game going on sale, arguing it would cause a public nuisance. The judge in the case has agreed to take a look at the title and play it before reaching a decision.

5 A spokesman for developers Rockstar said the game had a teen-only rating in the US and a 15 rating in the UK.

Mr Thompson filed his legal action last month, claiming that the game would violate Florida's public-nuisance laws. These are typically used to prosecute environmental pollution.

10 The legal action is against the US publisher Take 2, as well as retail giants Wal-Mart and GameStop.

"I'm pretty sure that the game is harmful to minors," Mr Thompson told the Washington Post newspaper.

15 The BBC News website has been shown an unfinished copy of the game. In it, the main character has to defend himself from school bullies as well as form alliances with different cliques in the school. Tackling the bullies and stopping them from picking on other children is a key feature of the game.

"Hitting girls lands you in serious trouble. You can't hit girls or little kids or teachers and prefects - you're busted straight away," said the spokesman. Fighting forms a large part of the title but the developers said it was displayed like a "cartoon or Popeye fight".

20 He said: "There's no blood at all in the game. There's no physical damage. Nobody dies in the game. There are no guns." But the main character can use dustbin lids and baseball bats to hit other children in the school.

He added: "Anyone over 15 knows that hitting someone with a baseball bat is going to cause serious head injury and would not copy it just because they saw it in a video game.

25 "I'm pretty sure no parent will be giving this to their five-year-olds."

Story from BBC NEWS:

Published: 2006/10/13 09:00:23 GMT

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Times Educational Supplement

Nannyng claims as schools to teach emotion

Jan Trebilcock

November 2005

5 An initiative encouraging secondary school pupils to explore their emotions and learn about  
manners, respect and good behaviour has led to claims of “nannyng” as “teachers are told to do  
the job of parents”, according to the *Daily Mail*. Fifty secondary schools across six counties have  
sent the Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning guidance by the DfES, following a  
10 successful pilot in primary schools. The *Daily Mail* reports that ministers claim the lessons are  
needed because of a decline in parenting skills with some parents no longer taking their childrens’  
social and emotional development seriously. Secondary students will be expected to learn more  
than 100 ‘feeling’ word definitions ranging from ‘abandoned’ and ‘frightened’ to ‘proud’ and  
‘loved’. They will also have to judge their skills in self-awareness, empathy, managing feelings,  
15 self motivation and social interaction. The paper quotes Nick Seaton of the Campaign for Real  
Education condemning the initiative as “patronising” and “nonsense typical of nanny state  
interference” - adding that it would distract teachers from academic subjects. Teachers are  
expected to feed the guidance through everyday classes and raise awareness of good behaviour,  
according to *The Times*. Secretary general of the Secondary Heads Association John Dunford  
20 agreed it was the duty of schools to help children understand emotional literacy. But a spokesman  
for the National Union of Teachers told *The Times* that teachers did not need to be burdened with  
extra parental responsibilities. He said: “This concentration on schools adds up to some parents’  
assumptions that their children are someone else’s responsibility”. But primary schools piloting  
the scheme reported improvements in pupils’ behaviour, attendance and in tests.

doc 6

Times Educational Supplement

Teachers told to praise unruly pupils

Jan Trebilcock

06 January 2006

5 There's nothing revolutionary about the idea that praise for good behaviour is more effective than  
harsh discipline for unruly children. But ahead of the education bill giving heads and teachers  
'clear legal rights' to tackle bullies and unruly pupils, a new study has found constant praise is the  
best way to make children behave. Increasing praise for good behaviour and reducing criticism  
10 directed at unruly pupils can result in a dramatic improvement in discipline, according to  
academics from Liverpool John Moores University. A study was carried out at six schools in  
Trafford and Salford after heads requested staff training to improve pupils' behaviour. When  
teachers were persuaded to raise the amount of praise from 54 per cent to 85 per cent to reduce  
telling off from 46 per cent to 15 per cent, the result was six per cent of pupils disrupting or  
15 failing to work compared with nearly a quarter before the training. The findings were presented  
by psychologists Dr Jeremy Swinson and Professor Alex Harrop at the Division of Educational  
and Child Psychology conference in Bournemouth. Disciplining a child in front of the whole  
class is the worst thing a teacher can do, Dr Swinson told the Daily Telegraph. "If you want to  
motivate any group of people you don't do it by telling them off," he said. "You do it by  
accentuating the positives. That's what you need to do in the classroom." The psychologists have  
devised a training programme for teachers called Four Essential Steps to Managing Behaviour.  
The Daily Mail expressed scepticism, saying the approach could leave pupils confused over the  
difference between right and wrong. The Daily Express quoted educationalists branding the  
advice as ridiculous and simplistic.

## Silent jungle girl poses yet more riddles for Cambodia

Michael SHERIDAN, Far East correspondent January 21, 2007

The Sunday Times

The father sets hot water before his daughter in their wooden shack. She reaches out to touch it. Then she recoils in shock and runs from the room.

After 18 years lost in the jungle of North East Cambodia, she has forgotten what water is, along with the other rudimentary comforts of peasant life.

5 This weekend, the questions are multiplying about how the girl vanished in 1989, what she endured in the jungle and why she was not found until villagers stood guard to catch a thief last weekend.

"She just sat there and stared at us remaining entirely quiet," said Yun Samean yesterday.

10 "She seemed very frightened". The girl had already tried to flee once, tearing off her clothes to rush back into the jungle said Yun Samean.

Although the Phnong follow no organised religion, the family took her to a Buddhist pagoda, where monks sprinkled her with holy water and chanted sutras to calm her spirit.

Now she has become entranced by the family's collection of DVDs. Like many poor, rural Cambodians they have enough money for an electrical generator and a DVD player.

15 She is trying to get used to life among the family that has claimed her as their long-lost daughter, and spends her days and nights watching the films or sitting glassy-eyed while curious locals come to stare at her.

20 And there is a further enigma over the fate of the girl's sister, who vanished on the same day in 1989. "She was naked and walking in a bending-forward position like a monkey, exactly like a monkey. She was bare-bones skinny," a witness said.

The villagers told how they had been pestered in recent months by a strange thief, who stole food from rations left by workers around a small sawmill on the fringe of the forest. The mother, Rocham Soy, 41, said: "This is my daughter, I am sure of it." She now yearns to know what became of her other missing daughter. With ordinary Cambodian clothes. But the reporters noted a thick weal above her left wrist suggesting she may have been tied up for long periods.

25 Rocham Phoeung's family hope she can learn to speak again, that she may get psychological help and go back to school, 18 years late.

Doc 4

Times Educational Supplement

Teaching is our calling

Graeme Paton and Sophie Kirkham

January 2006

In for the long run: primary head John Wells, 53, has been hooked on teaching since his first job in a primary even though he says teaching narrows your horizons. The majority said they had no regrets about entering the profession and only 8 per cent said teaching was no longer their true calling. The poll of 500 teachers, including 82 heads or deputy heads, reveals that the promise of a “rewarding and varied” job and the chance to work with children were the main reasons for entering the profession. They are content with their lot despite overwhelming evidence that working conditions appear to be tougher than ever, with many teachers being forced to stay late at school and work at least an hour at home every night. Sixty per cent of those who have children say they no longer have time to share an evening meal with their families every night. An overwhelming 70 per cent of staff say they now find themselves under greater pressure than in the same period in 2002. This is despite the introduction of government reforms in September which aim to give them at least one half day a week outside the classroom to mark and prepare work. Only one in 50 teachers said they entered teaching for the money and career prospects, although pay and prospects were important secondary factors. The average salary for a teacher is £32,000 and it is not unusual for heads to earn six-figure sums. The survey, carried out by FDS International in November and December, showed that 71 per cent of the workforce said that they saw teaching as a vocation or calling when they first entered the profession. Overwhelmingly, teachers retain their sense of calling, with just one in eight teachers (12 per cent) confessing that they have lost their sense of vocation.

Doc 3  
Times Educational Supplement

Adapted from "Minus 6? Get out there."  
Hannah Frankel  
January 2007

Children as young as two are happily spending the entire day outside, even when the temperature turns sub-zero. Being among the elements, no matter how extreme, is integral to the Secret Garden in north-east Fife, Scotland, which is to become one of the UK's first open-air nurseries when it opens later this year. It is planned that the children will stay outside all day, every day, whatever the weather. "There is no such thing as bad weather - you just need good water-proofs," says Cathy Bache, who will be heading the nursery. She already looks after 17 children during the week on the nursery site, and, once they are kitted out in wet-weather gear they spend the day walking through the woods, rearing chickens, climbing trees and tending the vegetable garden. Last February they played outside, without complaint, when the temperature plummeted to minus 6.

Cathy came up with the idea for the open-air nursery after living in Norway, where outdoor education is embedded in the culture. But now the trend for open-air classrooms is gathering momentum across the UK.

"The children are so much happier working outside," says John O'Brien, head of Cadle Primary in Swansea. "They don't see it as learning because they are not inside with a worksheet, but they are picking up so much." The school was one of the few that stayed open when it snowed last spring, and quickly turned the experience into a valuable learning resource. "We made snowmen during a maths lesson and measured their height, width and weight. It was a wonderful day," says John. At other times of the year pupils make camp fires, build log benches and plant hedges.

At Kitchener Primary in Cardiff, the children have gained a greater understanding of how weight impacts speed and distance by playing with water balloons in the playground; and because they are having fun, they remember what they learn. "It helped some of our Bengali girls come out of their shell," says Fran Gluck. "They are quiet and shy in class, but outside their natural curiosity emerges." Attendance has also shot up to 96 per cent from the mid-80s, and there are now no pupils in the school on the special needs register for emotional and behavioural difficulties.

England is also waking up to the benefits of outdoor education. Last November, Alan Johnson, the Education Secretary, unveiled a £2.7 million package to promote learning outside of the classroom.

Adapted from "When school is too scary."  
Charlotte Morbey and Adi Bloom  
January 2007

5 Six months ago I de-registered my 13-year-old son from school. As a former teacher I thought I knew about school phobia. In common with colleagues I used the terms "school phobia" and "school refusal" interchangeably. I was sympathetic but sceptical. I felt it was probably exaggerated and pandered to by parents who colluded with difficult children for a quiet life.

10 Then my own son developed school phobia. It started with headaches and stomach pains every day. My first thought was that he was making them up, but they seemed genuine. We talked about school - was he being bullied; was the work too hard; did he have friends? Everything was fine, he said. He just felt ill. With this came the nightmares and I'd hear him shouting in his sleep. He would appear at breakfast looking grey and exhausted. I would jolly him along and tell him to go to school, then go off to work assuming all would be well once he got there. However, I started getting phone calls to say he hadn't arrived. I'd spend the day trying to get him to school.

15 His head of year tried one strategy after another, the Educational Social Work (ESW) service was calling meetings and the GP referred us to the Adolescent Mental Health service. Everyone asked him "Why won't you come to school?" Every time he answered: "I don't know."

20 We battled our way through every morning, sometimes getting as far as the front door before the fear overtook him and he raced upstairs to barricade himself in his room. We talked through his door or, when I could get in, with him on his window sill threatening to jump.

## Caffeine addiction fear over soft drinks

ROGER DOBSON AND JOHN ELLIOTT

SOFT drinks manufacturers are adding caffeine to their products, increasing the likelihood that children will become mildly addicted to them, scientific research has suggested.

Russell Keast of Deakin University in Victoria, Australia, and his team conducted more than 1,000 tests — in which participants tasted various drinks and laboratory-made concoctions — and found that they could detect no difference in taste whether or not there was caffeine in the drink.

5 Manufacturers claim they add caffeine, which is slightly addictive, because its bitter flavouring counteracts the sweetness of the soft drink. Caffeine is added to more than half soft drinks, particularly colas.

However, the conclusion of Keast's team is that caffeine makes no difference to flavour. Instead, they suggest, manufacturers might add it to "modify consumer behaviour".

10 Keast has called for a ban on marketing caffeine-added soft drinks to children. He is worried that they risk developing an addiction to the drinks, so increasing their intake of sugar and becoming obese.

Deakin concludes in his study, published this week in the academic journal *Appetite*: "As the consumption of soft drinks has been associated with the increase in childhood and adolescent obesity, there are public health reasons to remove caffeine from sweetened soft drinks."

15 The average child in the UK consumes 73 litres of fizzy drinks a year, according to 2003 figures from the British Soft Drinks Association.

Keast said: "The level of caffeine found in 500ml of soft drink is enough to trigger the types of psychological and physiological responses that lead to addictive behaviour.

20 "A child who consumes a sugar-sweetened soft drink not only enjoys the sweet taste, but also associates the flavour with the positive effects of caffeine."

## Up before teacher

The Telegraph 09/12/2006

### It's parents' evening? Be on your best behaviour, warns Katie Tait

You've almost made it to the end of the longest school term. The joys of the nativity play, the Christmas fair and carol concert are finally in sight, but first you have to get through the ordeal of parents' evening, an event dreaded equally by parents and teachers alike.

5 Some schools have now done away with reports altogether and these termly sessions are the only way you're going to find out how your child's actually doing.

Linda Stevens, mother of Ruth and Evie, aged six and eight, finds the whole thing terrifying. "It's like dating all over again. You're not sure what questions to ask and there are these long, awkward pauses. Often, I come away feeling I haven't got any closer to what the girls are really like in the classroom."

15 This year, she asked her daughters what questions they'd like her to ask. "They wanted to know which piece of work their teachers had been most pleased with and why they didn't always notice when they were well behaved."

20 If you think it's bad for parents, spare a thought for the teachers. Most of them have been up for the previous three nights perfecting their classroom displays and doing last-minute marking. Then they have to remember what everyone's child is called and fend off parents who are determined to find out if Georgie is better at reading than his best friend Sam.

25 Clare, a teacher at a boarding prep school in Yorkshire, says: "A pattern tends to emerge. Fathers want to know whether their sons are top of the class and how they're doing at sport. Mothers want to know if they've made any friends or if they're being bullied."

30 Being the bearer of bad news is a problem. Every teacher has a few tricks up their sleeves. "If I have to tell parents that their child has a behavioural problem, I always follow it up by saying: 'But he displays a lot of emotional intelligence,' " says Steve, a London teacher. "It does the trick. Their child might be a nightmare, but the parents secretly believe it's because he or she is very sensitive."