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## The Ambassadors

### An Interview on Diplomacy Today with the British and American Ambassadors to France Sir John Holmes and Craig Roberts Stapleton.

By Pauline LAVAGNE D'ORTIGUE



**Sir John Holmes** GCVO KBE CMG has been HM Ambassador to France since October 2001.

He was born in the north of England, in 1951. He read Classics at Balliol College, Oxford and entered the Diplomatic Service in 1973.

He then held various positions in New York, in Moscow, and at the Near East and North Africa Department before becoming Assistant Private Secretary to the Foreign Secretary in 1982. In 1984 he was nominated 1st Secretary (Economic) to the British Embassy in Paris. He went back to London in 1987 as Assistant Head of the Soviet Department, and was later posted at the High Commission in New Delhi.

On his return to London in 1995, he became Head of the European Union Department in the FCO and then Private Secretary to the Prime Minister Tony Blair. Between 1999 and autumn 2001, he was HM Ambassador to Portugal. He is married to Penelope Morris and they have three daughters.



**Craig Roberts Stapleton** was nominated as Ambassador to France in June 2005.

He was born in Kansas City, Missouri. He majored in Government studies at Harvard College and went on to do an M.B.A. at Harvard Business School.

He had an extensive business career. Among many other things, he was a partner of President Bush in the ownership of the Texas Rangers baseball team from 1989-1998. In 2004, he was the Connecticut State Chairman for the re-election campaign of President W. Bush.

He served on the Board of the Peace Corps under President George H.W. Bush. He was the U.S. Ambassador to the Czech Republic from 2001-2004. He is President of the Vaclav Havel Foundation in the U.S. and he was awarded the Masaryk medal for service to the Czech Republic.

He is married to Dorothy Walker Stapleton ; they have two adult children.

### - What are the main issues which you had to tackle since you have been posted in Paris ?

**Ambassador Holmes** : The biggest single issue during my time in France has been the Iraq war. Given our disagreements, as Ambassador this meant frequent discussions with the French Government and numerous media appearances to explain British policy, motives and aims. Two other particular questions we had to resolve early in my time here were BSE and the beef ban, and cross-Channel illegal immigration through Calais, with the Sangatte camp. On the positive side I remember with fondness the Entente Cordiale celebrations last year, which were a great deal of work for the whole Embassy, but very worthwhile indeed. In fact the dominant set of questions concern the European Union in areas like the development of European defence policy, the proposed Constitutional Treaty, and how Europe should deal with globalisation. This is particularly the case at the moment with the British Presidency of the European Union, which started this summer.

Understanding French policy in Europe, before and after the referendum, and explaining British policy on Europe to the French is often quite a challenge.

**Ambassador Stapleton** : Since I arrived, I've been working on a long list of issues, which are important goals of U.S. foreign policy, such as anti-terrorism and supporting democracy in the Middle East. I have been working with the French government to find solutions to many global problems, such as non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Our two countries maintain very good military and intelligence cooperation, as illustrated in our efforts to help stabilize Afghanistan, Haiti and the Balkans. France is a member of the EU-3 negotiating with Iran on its nuclear ambitions, and the U.S. is working closely with France, Germany and the U.K on this dossier. Our two countries have been cooperating in the United Nations on the issue of Syria's involvement in Lebanon and the assassination of former PM Hariri.

I have been trying to improve awareness of our thriving transatlantic business ties, both in Paris and in my recent travel to some of the regions such as Bordeaux, Rennes, Marseille and Strasbourg. Not many people are aware that each day France and the U.S. conduct commercial transactions worth 1 billion dollars.

I have also enjoyed promoting cultural and educational exchanges. Last October, I had the honor to co-host, along with the Ministry of Culture, a New Orleans jazz concert in Paris as a way for the United States to say, "Thank you, France!" for the generous outpouring of support and sympathy following Hurricane Katrina. We appreciate the help we received from the French government, private citizens and NGOs

### - How much of your work involves matters related to the European Union ?

**Ambassador Holmes** : As I have already said, a great deal, especially this year with the French referendum and the British Presidency. France is a crucial and significant player in the European project, and as such it is important that we maintain close links on all the key European issues, even if from time to time we disagree. In many ways almost every subject we deal with as an Embassy is EU related in some way.

**Ambassador Stapleton** Given France's important role in the EU and America's support for a strong European Union, I have to be well informed of major European developments. But I leave the business of direct contacts with the European Union to the U.S. Ambassador to the EU in Brussels.

### - How does a diplomat prepare for taking up the ambassadorial post in Paris ?

**Ambassador Holmes** : In a sense, one's whole career is a preparation for a post like Paris. I was lucky because I had served in Paris earlier in my career at a more junior level. So I already had a good level of French and an understanding of the French political scene, social structure, and history. Usually, an Ambassador will have a series of talks with the key departments and ministries in London, brush up his or her language skills, and read himself/herself into the subject. But my wife would never forgive me if I didn't mention the equally important preparation in terms of moving the family and setting up in a new country. These are significant pressures and concerns and since she is also helping to run the Residence, with all the events we hold here, her contribution is immensely important.

**Ambassador Stapleton** : They can prepare in various ways. In my case, I was fortunate to have already served as Ambassador to the Czech Republic, and that posting gave me an excellent grounding in contemporary European issues and the workings of the Department of State. I was also in close contact with President Bush, and his staff briefed me extensively over several months on the French-American relationship and our priorities.

I have also been the president of a large U.S. business for over 20 years and co-owner of a baseball team; two activities that hone your managerial skills and make you appreciate the contributions of your diplomatic team.

Since being named Ambassador to France, I started studying French again and have continued working — since arriving in Paris — to improve my knowledge of the language. I conduct the majority of my meetings with French officials in French.

### - What is the main profile for British diplomats nowadays, both in terms of background and training ? How much has it changed over the last 20 years ?

**Ambassador Holmes** : The British Diplomatic Service is far more diverse than it used to be, and this process has accelerated in recent years. Jack Straw, the current Foreign Secretary, came to the Foreign Office with a clear commitment to diversify and modernise the office. I think it is fair to say that in the past it had a reputation of being predominantly white, middle class and Oxbridge educated. This was always exaggerated but it is certainly no longer the case now — we recruit from all backgrounds, academic, ethnic and otherwise. So there is no one main profile. In any case the traditional image which many people have of a diplomat is only representative of a small part of the organisation. Jobs in the Foreign Office are very diverse : we have Consular Officers, Visa Officers, Registry Clerks, Secretaries, Commercial Attaches, Press Experts, Aid Attaches, as well as Economic and Political Specialists. This means that training has to be extensive, and often targeted to the specific job. One area on which we do pride ourselves is our ability to speak foreign languages — the hard ones like Chinese and Japanese as well as the relatively easier ones such as French.

**Ambassador Stapleton** : In our system, diplomats can be career Foreign Service Officers who work for the State Department and gain expertise in such fields as consular, political, economic, public diplomacy, and managerial affairs. Alternatively, they can be appointed by the President from outside the State Department.

Our backgrounds widely vary. Some of us have trained as executives, but others can come from very different walks of life. I have diplomatic colleagues who started out as lawyers, economists, teachers, journalists and musicians, to name just a few professions. Our diplomatic corps is also a reflection of America's diversity: women or men, older and younger. What is important is to be an American, whether African-American, Asian-

American, European-American, or Hispanic-American. Similarly, our diplomatic corps includes people of all religious confessions and persuasions, including Muslims.

### - How different is it from the profile of French diplomats ?

**Ambassador Holmes :** I am not an expert on the French Diplomatic Service. But in many ways we are similar organisations, with similar structures and working methods. Both of us have a global presence, and a high reputation internationally. We both have high standards of recruitment, serve overseas several times during each career, and serve the government of the day, whether they be of left or right. At a European level, the French Diplomatic Service is one with which we always feel we have the most in common, despite our occasional disagreements.

**Ambassador Stapleton :** Let me start out by saying that I am not an expert, but I believe most French diplomats enter their field after having gone through a Grande Ecole, such as ENA, and then take part in a competitive examination. Maybe one could say the French system is more academic and more uniform than the U.S. system. In our system, any U.S. citizen over the age of 21 can take the Foreign Service exam and, if he or she passes, can become a diplomat.

### - How much has your profession changed in the last 20 years ?

**Ambassador Holmes :** Enormously. When I first joined the Foreign Office the pace of life was slower and resources were more abundant. Some of my colleagues would have gone to Post by boat, in some cases taking weeks to arrive. The Cold War was in full swing. The Foreign Office's focus was narrower, on purely foreign policy questions, with little or no attention to the global issues like the environment and climate change and international terrorism which dominate much of our lives today. The way we do our work has had to change accordingly. The organisation itself has had to adapt rapidly to meet the challenges of a world which is more complex, fast-changing and inter-dependent than ever. But in other respects the bread and butter of the job has stayed the same. The job is still — in an overseas post — to report back to London on views and events in the country concerned, political, economic and social, to explain British views to the host government, and to try and influence their thinking. So in that sense I still do a similar job to the one I did 20 years ago.

Of course IT and new technology have revolutionised communications. The pace is faster and often more demanding. The range of issues is much bigger. The Foreign Office is more focussed on what it wants to achieve strategically, and is more specific in terms of what it wants us to do. What hasn't changed is the requirement to make contacts. A crucial part of the job is to know people, to understand your host country, and to help them understand you by talking to them, often by entertaining them. That is why the Residence remains such an important diplomatic tool and asset, not just for me, but for the whole Embassy, because it can host interactive events of all kinds smoothly, successfully and enjoyably.

**Ambassador Stapleton :** I would say that globalization and telecommunications have revolutionized all international exchanges. We need to be faster and both more reactive and pro-active. Today's diplomat needs, more than his predecessors, to understand that international relations cannot be summed up by government-to-government communications. Academic and scientific exchanges, international trade, the arts communities and citizen-to-

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citizen ties are playing ever more important roles on the world scene. Today's diplomat must conceive his job in terms of action, forging relationships and building cooperation.

### - How do you foresee diplomacy's future ?

**Ambassador Holmes** : The future is never clear or predictable, but I fear that the world we live in will always need diplomats. Indeed in many ways, given the increasing challenges we face from globalisation, regional conflicts, environmental concerns, and poverty, diplomacy is a growth industry. However the future will see further changes in the way we conduct diplomacy. I have no doubt that one of the principal challenges will be developing a Foreign Service that is flexible enough to adapt and react quickly to changing trend and events.

**Ambassador Stapleton** : Diplomacy is more important than ever in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It can bring nations and citizens together, help them recognize their shared values and goals, and lead our governments and societies to collective action. We need to bridge differences and find common ground so we can promote our democratic values, ensure our societies' security, and together solve global problems that are transnational and require cooperation and coordination like never before.

**British Embassy, 35 rue du Faubourg Saint Honoré, 75008 Paris**

<http://www.amb-grande Bretagne.fr/>

**British Council, 9 rue de Constantine, 75007 Paris**

<http://www.britishcouncil.fr/>

**American Embassy, 2 avenue Gabriel, 75008 Paris**

<http://www.amb-usa.fr/>

## POLITICS & SOCIETY

### London's boozing.

By Anne-Laure COZANNET

#### **Will the new Licensing Act change or jeopardize British drinking culture ?**

On November 24<sup>th</sup>, the British government enforced "Licensing Act 2003" allowing pubs to remain open 24 hours a day. Its aim is to encourage self-restraint in people allowed to drink when and where they want. The idea is also to change Britain's drinking culture and make it more "civilised" and more "family-friendly", with people now having more time to appreciate what they are drinking instead of consuming alcoholic beverages in a rush before closing time.

However not everybody agrees on the likely outcome of this act, and a lively public debate has ensued. James Purnell, the Labour MP who initiated this act, has been strongly criticised due to fears the new laws will increase alcoholism in the UK. Conservative MPs, doctors, policemen, and people who live next to pubs (fed up with loud and vomiting drunkards), were among the most vocal early opponents to the new Licensing Act.

In 2004, the average Briton drank 9.4 litres of pure alcohol, which is a quarter more than was registered 10 years ago.<sup>1</sup> Binge drinking has been a lasting cause of alcoholism in Great Britain. Up to now, the highest alcohol sales were made in the last 15 minutes before pubs closed at 11pm. Alcoholism is also greatly favoured by the "vertical drinking" common in most pubs, where there are few tables, even fewer chairs and patrons always have a glass in their hand. Cheap drinks, happy hours and bonuses never helped matters.

Alcoholism is an extremely serious matter for public health: liver-related diseases have increased 10 times since 1970. It also puts future generations at risk since women, including pregnant women, are drinking more and more.

Alcoholism also accounts for an increasing share of violent incidents from ordinary street fights to rape crimes. Policemen frequently report that in city centres throughout Britain -- but particularly in the South West -- chaos begins at dawn. 44 % of all crimes are alcohol-related and drinking plays a key role in 70 % of weekend hospital admissions.<sup>2</sup> The hope is that the new licensing laws will dilute the 11 pm rush, with people leaving pubs over a longer period of time.

The British situation is most worrying. Whereas Britain's rate of alcoholism is increasing, it is either stable or decreasing in most Continental countries (such as France or Italy). Only one recent finding is heartening: a study showed that the use of drugs has decreased enormously among young Britons. In 1996, 12% of youngsters between 16 and 24 said they had used amphetamines as opposed to less than 4% today. Even if they drink more, they do seem to take fewer drugs.<sup>3</sup>

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"Drinking Culture," *BBC News* 26 January 2004.

<sup>1</sup>"Teenage Kicks," *The Economist* 1 September 2005.

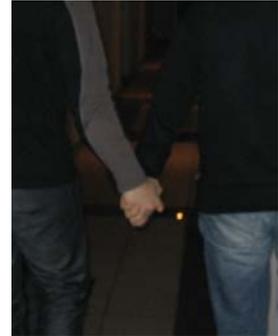
<sup>2</sup>"Britain: a Nation 'in Grip of Drink Crisis'," *The Observer* 21 November 2004.

<sup>3</sup>"One Bar, Three Hours – I Was Sold Enough Drink To Kill Me," *The Observer* 23 October 2005.

"Residents Revolt on Change in Drinking Laws," *The Guardian* 3 November 2005.

**POLITICS & SOCIETY****“I choose you above all others to share my life“**

By Aure CAPLIEZ

**One month to go before the first gay and lesbian couples are allowed to get “married” in the U.K.**

Before New Year’s Eve, The Civil Partnership Act will become effective in Great Britain. To officially marry, gay and lesbian couples will simply have to register their union with their local authorities, effective in December, starting from the 19<sup>th</sup> in Northern Ireland, the 21<sup>st</sup> in England and Wales, and the 22<sup>nd</sup> in Scotland.<sup>4</sup> The Government anticipates recognising 22,000 civil non-heterosexual partnerships by 2010.<sup>5</sup>

The new “newlyweds” rights will be comparable to those of conventionally married couples. They will benefit from pensions, tax and inheritance privileges. The traditional “divorce” will be officially called “dissolution”, providing relevant division of property and alimony. If one of the partners dies without a will, automatic inheritance will be granted. Obtaining parental responsibility for each other’s children will be made possible, pending decision by the Courts.

Considering the purchasing power and the standard of living enjoyed by most gays and lesbians, the “pink pound” has become a matter of increasing interest. Indeed, a race against the clock has started in cities competing to become England’s gay capital. Westminster and Brighton are in the top league, as they will each have their first union registered at 8.00 am on December 21<sup>st</sup>. Requisite forms will first be filled out online, and the ceremony to register the *first* official couple, which consists merely in the signing, will only last a few seconds. Brighton (Essex) has marketed itself as the perfect place for gay weddings and the first ceremony will be relayed on a giant screen. The London borough of Westminster, which includes Soho (home to one of the largest gay communities in London), has rethought and hurriedly lifted its June 2005 ban on rainbow flags above gay bars, clubs and shops. Ken Livingstone, London’s mayor, declared that “London is making great progress as one of the most gay-and-lesbian friendly cities in the world, and ... the gay community should be congratulated as they offer a lot to the Westminster borough.”<sup>2</sup>

Champagne is being ordered; rings are being chosen; and bookings for limousines are booming, as Great Britain becomes the fifth country to legalise gay and lesbian marriages after the Netherlands, Belgium, Canada (last June) and Spain (last July).<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> « Cities in Race to Host First Gay Wedding, » *The Observer* 13 November 2005

<sup>5</sup> « Gay Couples Add a Pre-nup to Their Wedding List, » *The Guardian* 1 October 2005

## POLITICS & SOCIETY

### The Price of Life and Grief.

By Bérangère MAILLET

#### **Compensation: Anger and frustration for London terrorist victims**

52 people died and 700 were injured in London buses and the underground in last July's terrorist attacks. Four months later, the highly sensitive issue of compensation for the victims and their relatives is being raised.

According to the Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority (CICA) the maximum amount a victim can receive following serious injury is £500,000. Amounts of £ 1,000 to £ 250,000 are to be allotted for injuries and pain inflicted by the terrorist attacks, with for instance £27,000 for serious disabling and trauma, and £31,000 per annum for a complete loss of hearing. However, for the loss of a spouse or parent, relatives are to be awarded just £11,000, plus £2,000 a year for every child under 18! <sup>2</sup> These discrepancies are obviously fuelling indignation and outrage on the part of the victims.

A comparison of these sums with those paid to the victims of the 9/11 terrorist attacks makes matters worse. In the United States, the 9/11 Fund "paid an average of about \$400,000 each for the 2,680 accepted claims of injuries stemming from the attacks", and "the average award to families of those killed was \$2.1 million"<sup>3</sup> The biggest compensation received amounted to 8.6 million US dollars. This sum is almost 13 times greater than the maximum award injured Londoners can expect to receive....

Of course, behind these harsh figures and financial claims, many painful issues and questions remain. Parents, spouses, as relatives and friends know full well that no sum of money, however consequential, will bring their loved ones back. The discovery that the value of a loved one has been fixed at the price of a second-hand car is bound to rub more than salt in the wound. In the face of such discrepancies, the CICA may be forced to review its scale of compensation. This organisation was established in 1964 to compensate victims of violent crime, but has never had to cope with anything on the scale of the London bombings. Having said this, who can assess the fair price of a human life? What amount of money can help people in their grief? The CICA is certainly not making the claim that a son or wife is only worth £11,000. These compensations are intended as civic gestures to assist families in mourning. Victims of violent crime elsewhere in the world rarely enjoy such privileges. It is a sobering but important thought to keep in mind.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Marcel Berlins, "What is Adequate Compensation For Grief?" *The Guardian* 12 October 2005.

<sup>2</sup>Sandre Laville, "Bomb Victims Angry Over Compensation Confusion" *The Guardian* 31 October 2005.

<sup>3</sup>David Barrett, CBS news, 18 November 2004.

<sup>4</sup>Sandra Laville and Sam Jones "Compensation for London Bomb Victims Within Days" *The Guardian* 27 September 2005.

## **POLITICS & SOCIETY NEWS BRIEFS**

By Pauline LAVAGNE D'ORTIGUE

**On the Prisoners' Right to Vote, the Views of Ugandan-born British Archbishop on Englishness and Multiculturalism, the American President's triumph in Mongolia and the British Royals' flop in America.**

### **British Prisoners Allowed to Vote**

The European Court of Human Rights has ruled that denying prisoners the right to vote was a breach of their human rights. This could give the vote to many of the 77,000 inmates in local and general elections. Until now, a 134-year-old law prevented them from taking part in the civic process that makes Britain a democracy. Seven other European countries with similar bans will also have to lift them as a consequence of this ruling.

Sources: "Prisoners must be able to vote, European court says," *The Independent*, 7 October 2005; "In praise of ... the European court of Human rights," *The Guardian*, 10 October 2005.

### **Ugandan-Born Archbishop's Views on Englishness**

Speaking before his enthronement as the church's No2 on 30 November 2005, the Archbishop of York, Dr John Sentamu, called for the English to celebrate their history and national identity. As a direct product of the British Empire, Britain's first black Archbishop says multiculturalism does not encourage integration but promotes separateness.

Sources: "Multiculturalism Stifles English Culture, Says Black Archbishop," *The Guardian*, 22 November 2005; "English urged to reclaim identity," *The Australian*, 23 November 2005.

### **President Bush's Seminal Visit to Mongolia**

President Bush became the first sitting American president to visit Mongolia, which has a population of 2.7 million people and about 160 troops in Iraq. After stating in his official speech that, "Americans and Mongolians have much in common," President Bush proceeded to discuss economic cooperation, a trade agreement and scholarships for Mongolian students to U.S. universities with Mongolian President Nambaryn Enkhbayar.

Sources: "In Mongolia, Bush Grateful for Iraq Help," *The New York Times*, 21 November 2005; "Mongolia Hopes Bush Visit Lifts Trade, Aid," *The Washington Post*, 22 November 2005.

### **Charles & Camilla's Underwhelming Visit to America**

The Prince of Wales and the Duchess of Cornwall made an 8 day tour to the USA, the first official visit by the heir to the throne in two decades. A Gallup poll published in *USA Today* under the headline, "Visit is a royal bore for most in the USA," found that 81% of Americans were not in the least interested in the royal couple, however 30% wanted to meet Princes William and Harry.

Sources: "How reassuring: America is paying no attention to the Prince of Wales," *The Times*, 4 November 2005; "Visit is a royal bore for most in the USA," *USA Today*, 31 October 2005.

## ARTS & BOOKS

### [A Rough Diamond in the Dark](#)

By Radan JOVANOVIĆ

**The glamorous American diva Diamanda galás sings memorial songs for the forgotten victims in History.**

Diamanda Galas is a singing monument to experimental music and performance. Her sonic adaptations of poems written by Adonis, de Nerval or Michaux are striking pieces, broaching serious and painful themes. "For some, the things of which she sings are too much to bear; for Galás, it would be unbearable to remain silent about them".<sup>6</sup>

Diamanda Galás was born in 1955 in San Diego, California of Greek origin. She first appeared on stage as a lead vocalist in the opera "Un Jour comme un Autre" at the festival d'Avignon in 1979.<sup>7</sup> Then, she started a solo career in 1982 releasing several studio masterpieces and live recordings as well. She also worked with cult figures such as Iannis Xenakis and John Paul Jones, bassist of the highly praised Led Zeppelin and the Berlin grandfathers of industrial music Einstürzende Neubauten. Galas' image has gradually grown into that of a dark demonic diva. She is very popular among underground music groups and aficionados.

Her songs can be quite disturbing at the first listening. This is music and at the same time, it is much more than that. "These are not your ordinary yells, but rather a repertory of skillfully modulated moans, shrieks, whoops, wobbles, gurgles, stage whispers and spitting consonants".<sup>8</sup> Her primal screams have a different quality from those of Marilyn Manson, who seems to have been deeply influenced by Galas' theatrical gothic and provocative airs. "But efforts to categorize Galás mostly fail. Though she holds appeal to goths with her "child of Satan" look – jet-black hair and mascara – she is not about that subculture," says journalist Graham Strahle.<sup>9</sup>

Her lyrics also serve History, which starkly differentiates her music from popular entertainment. In "Defixiones, Will and Testament" (2003), her Byzantine tone is a tribute to the forgotten victims killed in genocides committed by the Turks on Armenians, Assyrians, Anatolians and Pontic Greeks during World War I. This album pays tribute to her national and religious roots as she comes from a Greek orthodox family. Her personal history was seminal too as her brother died from AIDS. "Plague Mass" (1996) dealing with AIDS dementia and clinical depression was recorded in St Ann's cathedral in New York. The best way to categorise Diamanda Galás is to describe her as the voice of the fallen and the forgotten.

*Diamanda Galás will be on stage on December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2005 at All Tomorrow's Parties in Camber Sands, UK.*

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.diamandagalas.com/bio.htm>

<sup>7</sup> "Un Jour comme un Autre" was composed by Vinko Globokar. Galas recorded "Vena Cava" (1992), "Schrei 27" (1996). For further information, visit <http://www.diamandagalas.com/>.

<sup>8</sup> Bernard Holland, « Unbearable Grief Given Full-Throated Voice, » *The New York Times* 10 September 2005.

<sup>9</sup> Graham Strahle, « Diabolically Different Divas, » *Adelaide Review* 28 October 2005.

## ARTS & BOOKS

### Chenjerai Hove: Portrait of an Eclectic Zimbabwean Writer cum Political Activist

By Magali PASQUALINI

**The story of one of Zimbabwe's most respected novelists, currently living in exile in France.**



Born in 1956 in Zimbabwe, Chenjerai Hove is a poet, novelist and essayist. He is also an outspoken social critic. He was educated at the University of South Africa and the University of Zimbabwe and has worked as an educator and journalist.<sup>10</sup> Having publicly criticized the Mugabe government and accused it of being close to dictatorship, he was put under pressure to leave his own country in 2001. The Parlement des Ecrivains welcomed him in Rambouillet, where he continues to censure the Mugabe government.<sup>11</sup>

Chenjerai Hove goes beyond finding fault with the Zimbabwean government. He strongly condemns the education and cultural policies adopted by most African governments. According to him, Africa's reading habits are deteriorating: "African governments have not put in place well-planned book development policies. Books are subject to the same sales and duty taxes as other commodities. Materials for producing books like inks, newsprint are all taxed (...)"<sup>12</sup>. School- and academic textbooks are also taxed; African colleges and universities increasingly produce what he calls "new illeterates".

Chenjerai Hove's eclectic works, including both poetry and fiction, are very much informed by his political beliefs. His four volumes of poetry, *Up in Arms* (1982), *Red Hills of Home* (1985), *Rainbows in the Dust* (1998), and *Blind Moon* (2003), are imbued with his own experiences of repression during the time of colonial rule, and his feelings of disillusionment and bitterness over the new government's failed promises. His first novel, *Bones* (1988), translated in French in 1997, shows the depth of his empathy for rural people, in particular women in a rural setting.

By means of political satire and his literary works, Chenjerai Hove depicts an often sour picture of the African social and political landscape while never relinquishing his hope to find ways to make it more sweet.

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<sup>10</sup> See the Centre for Creative Arts of the University of Kwazulu-Natal's website : <http://www.cca.ukzn.ac.za/images/tow/TOW2004/Hove.htm>.

<sup>11</sup> "The Zimbabwe Bird now Flies as a Symbol of Betrayed Promise," *The SundayTimes* 1 March 2005.

<sup>12</sup> "African Writer Wants Books, Not Bridges," *BBC News* 1 November 2005.

## ARTS & BOOKS NEWS BRIEFS

By Pauline LAVAGNE D'ORTIGUE

### On President Nixon's Library, Bruce Lee Bronzes and Spelling Mistakes

#### Nixon's Library to Become Public

Until 2004 President Nixon's papers and tapes could not legally leave the Washington DC area. A federal ban dating back to the President's resignation in 1974, together with a law giving the government ownership of the records, ensured that the documents concerning Watergate remained intact. Lawmakers have now approved a \$4 million budget to move the files to Yorba Linda, California, 30 miles southeast of Los Angeles, where Nixon enthusiasts have been operating The Richard Nixon Library & Birthplace as a private venture since 1990.

Sources : "With \$4 Million in Federal Funds, Nixon Library Is Poised to Go Public," *The Washington Post*, 21 November 2005 ; <http://www.nixonfoundation.org/>.

#### Martial Arts Icon Celebrated in Hong Kong and... Bosnia

A 2.5m bronze statue of Bruce Lee (1940-1973) was unveiled on the Avenue of the Stars, Hong Kong's harbour side equivalent of Hollywood's Walk of Fame. The Bruce Lee Club, which campaigned and raised funds for the long overdue statue, was rather upset when a life-sized bronze statue of Lee was unveiled in Mostar just one day before the HK celebration.

Born in San Francisco to a Chinese opera actor, the young Lee moved to Hong Kong where he received his kung fu training. His international success helped popularise martial arts in the West.

Sources : "Hong Kong Honours Bruce Lee," *The Australian*, 25 November 2005; "HK Beaten to the Punch on Lee Statue," *South China Morning Post*, 28 November 2005.

#### The Spelling Chequer

<p>Eye have a spelling chequer It came with my pea sea It plainly marks for my revue Miss steaks eye cannot see</p>	<p>Each thyme when eye have Struck the quays Eye weight for it two say If watt eye rote is wrong or rite (It shows me strait a weigh)</p>
<p>As soon as a mist ache is maid Eye no bee fore two late Sew eye can put the error rite Lest eye should find it grate</p>	<p>I've run this poem threw it I'm shore you policed to no It's letter perfect in its weigh My chequer tolled me sew</p>

Source: anonymous email appropriately sent to ANGLLOW's editor.

**BUSINESS & MEDIA****[Bad Day for the USA ? Videogames as a new media for social satire](#)**

By Vincent MONDIOT and Jérôme VASSILIEFF

**With *Bad Day L.A.*, political incorrectness has reached new heights in the videogame industry.**

Los Angeles facing a terrorist attack, urban riots, an earthquake or a hurricane: these topics could be news, but today they are also part and parcel of a new politically incorrect videogame: *Bad Day L.A.* It is not the first of its kind. Politically incorrect games are becoming more and more staple. For instance *Grand Theft Auto San Andreas*, aka *GTA*, where the hero had to keep on stealing cars and killing people, was both a huge scandal and a major commercial success. But while in *GTA* and most of these games, mostly resort to violence and immorality, *Bad Day L.A.* offers a different type of subversion.

In *Bad Day L.A.* it is not so much the style as the message which is controversial. Its unlikely hero is Anthony Williams, a cynical and egotistical tramp, homeless by choice, who will reluctantly become Los Angeles's saviour. As the city faces a series of natural and not-so-natural disasters, Williams is accidentally forced to rescue the Angelinos whom he despises. *Bad Day L.A.* is an action/adventure game as well as a ferocious social satire. Its designer, American McGee, aims at ridiculing American patriotic feelings, latent racism, and consumer values. The hyper-realistic situations ensure that the game is also relevant outside its American context. The biting satire can easily be extended to most so-called developed countries.

*Bad Day L.A.* has not come out yet, but it has already generated a lively debate in the media. Hilary Clinton wants to give it an AO (Adults Only) rating, or even to forbid its sale. *GTA* had also met with her opposition, prompting her to try and create a law that would "put some teeth into videogame rating." She has not been unsuccessful so far but *GTA*'s rating in America was changed—from "M" for mature (over-17s only) to "AO" (over-18s). She still intends to push for stricter ratings. On his website McGee claims that Mrs Clinton demonizes the videogames while asking for more kids to go fighting in Iraq, which is certainly not his best argument. However McGee seems to have intentionally left strong language in the dialogues, so that the game would be officially forbidden to under-18s. However a recent study showed that 50% of boys between the ages of 7 and 14 had successfully purchased M-rated video games, so it is difficult to see how children could be protected.

The videogame industry keeps on increasing its market shares in the entertainment business and rivals ticket movies in sales. It is supposed to have generated more profits than the cinema industry in 2004, with some "experts" even claiming that it will overtake the music industry in the next few years. Whether true or not, these prospects explain why politicians such as Mrs Clinton worry about videogames, even if they are created by small developers such as McGee. Who knows how many people will play *Bad Day L.A.* in the future ?

The controversy is bound to become more spicy as we get closer to April 12<sup>th</sup>, 2006 when the reluctant hero's adventures will be released.

Sources: - American McGee's website : [www.AmericanMcGee.com/wordpress](http://www.AmericanMcGee.com/wordpress)

- "Senator Clinton Announces Legislation to Keep Inappropriate Video Games Out of the Hands Of Children 14 July, 2005 on <http://clinton.senate.gov/news/statements/>

- J. Ocampo, "Bad Day L.A Updated Impressions: French Terrorists, Zombies and More," 2 September 2005 on <http://www.gamespot.com/>

- Engligh "Gaming News," April 2005 on [www.gamerstemple.com/games/](http://www.gamerstemple.com/games/)

## BUSINESS & MEDIA

### Are journalists an endangered species in the US?

By Christophe JAMOT

**After journalist Judith Miller revealed her source in the CIA leak case, journalists fear their right to protect their sources is endangered.**

The Plamegate has been on the front pages of American newspapers for ever, or so it seems. It all started two years ago when journalist Robert Novak "outed" CIA secret agent Valerie Plame in a *Washington Post* column. One week before, Plame's husband, Joseph C. Wilson, had written an article in *The New York Times* denouncing the Bush administration for having twisted evidence to exaggerate the Iraqi threat.

Exposing the cover of a CIA agent being crime in the US, a full criminal investigation was thus launched and is still going on. Several top White House officials are believed to be involved, including I. Lewis Libby, Vice President Cheney's chief of staff who was charged on five counts in October 2005. Libby's indictment came after *New York Times* journalist Judith Miller finally decided to testify before the grand jury investigating the leak, after spending 85 days in jail for refusing to do so.<sup>13</sup> She claims: "I went to jail to preserve the time-honored principle that a journalist must respect a promise not to reveal the identity of a confidential source."<sup>14</sup> She only testified after Mr. Libby (her source) relieved her of her promise.

If anyone else was involved in the leaking of Plame's name, it is not yet known. Mr Libby, who resigned last month, now faces a maximum sentence of 30 years in prison. Other White House officials might meet the same fate. The Plamegate is definitely another hammer blow for the Bush administration.

What will be the consequences on journalism? Ms. Miller insists on the fact that the right of journalists to protect their sources is as vital as the one that enables psychotherapists to grant confidentiality to their patients. However, she still ended up revealing her source. "Can a free press exist without this privilege?" she asks.<sup>15</sup> Yet, it seems this privilege is now under threat as prosecutors might tend to think they can get whatever they want from journalists by jailing them for a while. Only time will tell to what extent the principle of protecting one's source has been compromised, but from now on people wanting to remain anonymous might not trust reporters to keep their vows.

Miller recently left the *New York Times*, amidst renewed criticism on her pre-war reporting on Iraqi alleged weapons of mass destruction. She is now fighting for the creation of a federal law shield for journalists, and she insists that she did not go to jail only to protect her source but also to "dramatize the need for such a federal law".<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> « Journalists Fear Impact on Protecting Sources » *The New York Times* 1 October 2005.

<sup>14</sup> <http://judithmiller.org>

<sup>15</sup> « Role of Rove, Libby in CIA Leak Case Clearer » *The Washington Post* 2 October 2005.

<sup>16</sup> « Judith Miller's Farewell, » [on http://judithmiller.org](http://judithmiller.org)

## BUSINESS & MEDIA

### Did French riots remind the South African media of darker times ?

By Caroline ADAM & Sébastien DEMOUGEOT

**Unlike most other anglophone media, the South African press did not show great interest in the events.**

France has just experienced its worst period of civilian unrest since 1968. Urban riots quickly spread from the Paris region to most big towns in the provinces. A curfew and emergency law was voted on November 8, after thirteen nights of increasing violence.

The American, British and Australian media covered the unrest extensively, sending scores of special correspondents. Both the French government and the French media were alarmed at the way this recent crisis was reported worldwide. The words "segregation" and even "apartheid" came up quite often in the reports about a country which usually prides itself on being true to its motto "Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité". For a self-appointed champion of social and racial integration, France was more often than not depicted in a grim perspective.

Strangely enough, in South Africa, a country where apartheid, segregation and urban riots are not necessarily a thing of the past, the media seemed rather unmoved. Only a few English language newspapers like *The Mail and Guardian*,<sup>17</sup> *Business Day*<sup>18</sup> and *The Sunday Times*<sup>19</sup>, which have the largest circulations, dealt with the matter. The fact that the two countries are so far apart geographically, politically and economically speaking might account for this somewhat superficial coverage.<sup>20</sup> Taboos and old sores, in other words memories and legacies of the Apartheid regime, might also be an explanation. The word apartheid literally means "to live apart"<sup>21</sup> and was coined by the Afrikaaners after the 1948 polls. The segregationist regime collapsed in 1994, but "blacks and whites remain largely separated, occupying different worlds".<sup>22</sup> Ethnic and urban integration is a very sensitive issue in both South Africa and France, but on different levels as the roots of the problems are not quite the same. In both countries tackling these issues require important political choices but also strong economic reforms. When commenting upon the French riots, Trevor Manuel warned : "Not resolving the nation's issues of race and class has and will cost much, much more."<sup>23</sup> And as South Africa's Finance Minister, Mr Manuel should know what he is talking about.

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<sup>17</sup> Hugh Schofield, "French Riots Spiral Out of Control," *The Mail and Guardian* 7 November 2005.

"We Hate France and France Hates Us," *The Mail and Guardian* 9 November 2005.

<sup>18</sup> Jon Boyle, "French Curfew Law Reins in Rioters," *Business Day* 10 November 2005.

<sup>19</sup> "Violence Spreads in Paris Suburbs," *The Sunday Times* 2 November 2005.

<sup>20</sup> The last agreement was signed on June 26, 2003, about the abolition of Visa Requirements for Diplomatic, Official and Service Passport Holders

<sup>21</sup> Nobel Prize website [http://www.nobel-paix.ch/paix\\_p1/apartheid.htm](http://www.nobel-paix.ch/paix_p1/apartheid.htm)

<sup>22</sup> Lynne Duke, "Apartheid and Cinema Verity," *Washington Post* 3 April 2005.

<sup>23</sup> Speech by Trevor Manuel at the City of Angels Awards Dinner, Cape Town. November 17, 2005.

<http://www.info.gov.za/speeches/2005/05111810151002.htm>

## **BUSINESS & MEDIA NEWS BRIEFS**

By Pauline LAVAGNE D'ORTIGUE

**On Naming Barbecued Kangaroo, Lethal Adverts and the BBC's renewed attempt at Arabic TV.**

### **Branding Kangaroo Meat**

Veal, pork, mutton, poultry, but what do you call roasted kangaroo? Marsu? Skippy? Roo? *Food Companion International* magazine and the Kangaroo Industry Association of Australia are organising a competition to find a palatable culinary name for Australia's national icon. The Australian kangaroo population is estimated at more than 57 million. With 15 to 20% of animals being culled annually, the industry is worth about \$147 million USD.

Sources: "Throw Another Skippy on the Barbie?" Reuters, 21 November 2005; "Another Roo on the Barbie," *The Globe and Mail*, 21 November 2005.

### **Lethal Adverts**

One in five male British motorists confessed that their eyes were sometimes diverted from the road by posters of semi-dressed female models, while only one in 10 women were distracted by posters of semi-dressed male models. Garish billboards, flashing signs and Christmas decorations also put drivers at risk; but so does motorway monotony, claims the advertising industry.

Sources: "Semi-nude models drive UK motorists to distraction," *Cape Times*, 22 November 2005; "Motorway Advertisements," Lords Hansard <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/>, 15 June 2005.

### **BBC vs al-Jazeera, 2<sup>nd</sup> Round.**

From 1994 to 1996, the BBC had an Arabic language TV service funded partly by Saudi investors. Saudi government objections to some of the programs and a lack of other financial resources forced the channel to close. The BBC-trained Arab-speaking journalists then started al-Jazeera.

With the now famous Qatar based news channel preparing to launch an English language service next spring, the BBC has announced the creation of a new Arabic television channel in 2007. It hopes to capitalise both on the reputation of its radio service which has been broadcasting in Arabic since 1938, and on the success of its online news service. This new £19m-a-year operation will be made at the expense of BBC radio broadcasts in Bulgarian, Croatian, Czech, Greek, Hungarian, Kazakh, Polish, Slovak, Slovene and Thai, which will have to cease by March 2006. 218 jobs will be lost. The World Service is funded by the Foreign Office. The BBC will try and learn from the mistakes of the unpopular American al-Hurra satellite TV.

Source: "World Service Confirms Arabic TV," BBC News, 25 October 2005; "BBC goes head-to-head with al-Jazeera," *The Guardian*, 26 October 2005; "Bush House of Arabia," *The Economist*, 29 October 2005.

## SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

### Space Fanatic to Launch Space Ship Races

By Antoine PIETRI

**Buy earplug manufacturing shares now ! You might soon be watching space ships racing in space at 300 miles per hour.**

#### **Races to boost innovation and scientific research**

This sounds just like a Ray Bradbury novel: Peter Diamandis, a major space industry manager, is about to launch rocket races, in order to boost research in the field. Further (and better) propulsion is desperately needed in the space industry. This space enthusiast is the founder and chairman of the X Prize Foundation, a non profit organization which funds space related projects. The 10 million dollar X Prize was last awarded to Space Ship One in October 2004. As he grew tired of waiting for the government to put up the money for decent space research, Diamandis decided to try and make it attractive to the general public so as to encourage private investment. 5 years ago, he figured that rocket ship races would be the way to go about it. He then discussed the idea with Granger Whitelaw, director of the global venture-consulting firm BlueCar Partners, with whom he recently created a rocket racing league.

#### **“It blows you away”**

“It’s nothing like Nascar [*an extremely popular car racing competition in the US, which is becoming more and more popular in Europe*]. It blows you away”, claims Mr Whitelaw, while expecting the space races will be just as successful as Nascar if not more. Sponsorship will be sought from various brands (soft drinks, TV channels or banks for instance) just like in the traditional car race business. The rocket ships, called X Racers, will be as impressive as “fire breathing dragons,” capable of “sporting a 20-foot bright brilliant flame out the back”, says Peter Diamandis.<sup>24</sup> The tracks should be about two miles long and one mile wide, and approximately 5.000 feet high. The contestants will not be racing in outer space, but in the atmosphere of the earth. They will follow 3 dimensional tracks with long straight ways, vertical ascents and deep banks.

#### **“A remembrance of *Star Wars*”**

Whether these races will actually help to stimulate space research will depend on the number of corporations ready to invest in this new market. The public is always interested in space, particularly when it is entertaining. One of Diamantis’ potential arguments is that the races should be somewhat reminiscent of the pod-racing found in *Star Wars*. The very name of the “X Racers” refers to the X Prize, but it might also be a hint at the mythical X Wings. Judging from the historical success of the film, this should prove a powerful incentive for would-be sponsors. Fans will be able to watch the competition from viewing stands as well as on giant screens. GPS positioning, provided by the league, will also make it easier to follow the X racers.

The first ever space race is due to take place next September.

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<sup>24</sup> Tariq Malik, “Rocket Racing : New League Promotes High-Flying Contest”, USA Today, 3 October 2005.

“Racing Rockets,” *The Economist* 8 October 2005.

## SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

### Disease, Poverty and Business: A Real Maze

By Fatima MEZARI & Samir BENKHALFOUNE.

#### **Fighting the AIDS pandemic in South Africa has given birth to new kinds of pharmaceutical companies.**

Generic drugs are often seen as the key to cheaper medicine for a wider number of people both in developed and developing countries. However claims that generic drugs ultimately endanger scientific research show that the issue is more complex than first meets the eye. Patents are designed to protect intellectual property and ensure that companies can market the products they researched and developed. More often than not, some of their profits are reinvested in R & D, thus enabling these companies to invent new products and eventually patent them. But in some cases intellectual property does not serve public interests, and balancing that of the pharmaceutical industry with issues of public health is no easy task.

The HIV pandemic exemplifies this point. Due to tremendous international pressure, drug companies such as Glaxo Smith Cline were compelled to waive their patents before they expired for anti retroviral drugs, aka ARVs, to be manufactured in Africa. The avian flue scare might prompt a similar move, but so far, this is a unique instance.

Most of the Aids patients in South Africa who now get treatment, which is still a minority, currently use ARVs produced locally by Aspen Pharmacare. Aspen has become South Africa's leading drug manufacturer. When it was founded in 1997, its headquarters occupied a small suburban house in the coastal city of Durban. Since then, it has grown at an average rate of 40 % a year, partly thanks to its links with major NGOs such as the Clinton foundation or foreign government initiatives such as the emergency plan for Aids Relief launched recently by the Bush Administration.

Aspen has also become an international venture with branches in the UK (Co-Pharma) and in Australia (Aspen Pharmacare Australia Limited). Its new ambition is to expand into the highly lucrative market for generic anti HIV drugs in both America and Europe. This bold move is seen as a major threat by the pharmaceutical companies which originally waived their patents on these drugs. Many among them feel they have been cheated and are now crying piracy. They are asking the US government to take action. Whether generic or not, whether for the developing or developed world drugs are seldom philanthropically produced goods.

#### Sources:

"Aspen Manufactures Africa's First Generic Anti-Aids Drugs." *The Daily Mail & Guardian* 6 August 2003.

"Glaxo Gives Up Rights to AIDS Drugs in South Africa." *HIV/AIDS Documents and News Articles* 2001.

"Drugs for Poor Countries. A promising prognosis." *The Economist* 8 September 2005.

"Patents and Technology. A market for ideas." *The Economist*. 20 October 2005.

"Pharmaceuticals in South Africa. Aspen's upward slope." *The Economist* 6 October 2005.

[www.Aspenpharma.com](http://www.Aspenpharma.com)

## SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

### Surgery: A Hope for Individuality

By Sugandhi NADARADJANE

#### **A worldwide fund raising campaign to save Indian conjoined twins.**

If twins are always a matter of wonder, conjoined twins are bound to attract worldwide attention whenever a case is brought to the attention of the public whose interest often verges on the freak-show attraction.

Farah and Sabah Shakeel are ten year-old Indian conjoined twins. The back of their heads are joined together. They come from a family of eight children. They live in Bihar where their father runs a small tea shop near the Patna railway station. The girls are unable to do basic things such as standing upright or simply watching TV. During these ten years, they have met both physical and moral difficulties. The girls rarely go out to avoid stares and mockery, but now they are in the spotlight. There is a new glimmer of hope as surgical separation now seems possible. But why did they have to wait for ten years? And who is going to take the responsibility for trying to separate them?

Farah and Sabah were born into a lower middle-class muslim family, and their parents could not afford the cost of surgery. They approached Doctor Yarlagadda Nayudamma, an Indian paediatric surgeon, who had already separated three pairs of conjoined twins for no fee. As he was working on another case he declined their request. But the Shakeels did not lose hope. They approached several politicians in order to raise funds but in vain. Fortunately Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the Prince of Abu Dhabi, read about their ordeal in a newspaper and decided to help them. The Crown will pay the cost of the operation, estimated at over 1 million USD.

Dr Carson who will perform the operation is not a random choice. A Black American neurosurgeon, Dr Carson is the director of paediatric neurosurgery at John Hopkins Children's Centre, in Baltimore. In 1987, he led the world's first successful operation to separate a pair of conjoined twins. He was then involved in four other cases, including that of the Iranian twins, which was a failure. Dr Carson, was recommended by the Crown and will be leading a team of twenty doctors in New Delhi. The procedure is separated into six stages and will last nine months.

Even though there is hope, the operation could also take a tragic turn as with the Iranian twins who died in July 2003, in Singapore. Farah and Sabah share an important blood drainage vessel in the brain and a pair of kidneys, but they have two brains.

#### Sources:

"Twin hopes," *India Today* 17 October 2005.

"Farah-Sabah Knock at all Doors," *The Times of India* 5 October 2005.

"A Royal Help for Conjoined Twins," *The Times of India* 11 September 2005.

## SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY NEWS BRIEFS

By Pauline LAVAGNE D'ORTIGUE

### On Intelligent Design and Freezing Penguins, High Tech Peeping Toms, and Videogame Studies.

#### Emperor Penguins as Scientific Evidence of 'Intelligent Design'?

High-jacking the French-made documentary film, *March of The Penguins*, the American religious right has praised it as a parable about monogamy and creationism. According to them the complexity of penguins' lives and mating rituals is evidence of 'intelligent design', a theory claiming that life is too complex to be the result of random selection as described by Darwin. Sceptics and bird specialists note that divorce rates are particularly high among penguins, that gay penguins are not uncommon, and that to design birds who cannot fly, who have to trek miles across the arctic to mate and then shuffle their eggs on top of their feet for months for lack of a ventral pouch, cannot possibly hailed as a sign of intelligence.

Sources: "Puzzle of the Penguin Trek Parable," *The Times*, October 22, 2005; "Penguins: A poor case for intelligent design, family values," *The Chicago Tribune*, 6 November 2005.

#### High Tech Peeping Toms in Australia

Spying on the Joneses is on the increase, according to the Australian State Privacy Commissioner. Taking advantage of loopholes in Australian law, high-tech peeping toms install CCTV cameras (usually used for security purposes) to spy on the neighbouring property. They are reported to be most prevalent in Northern Sydney.

Sources: "Suburban Spies Raise New Fears for Privacy," *Sydney Morning Herald*, 23 November 2005 ; "That's When Good Neighbours Become Good Spies," *The New Zealand Herald*, 24 November 2005.

#### A Videogame Degree at University

Whereas video game programming used to be taught only by a few vocational schools, studying game design or games as cultural artefacts, might soon become mainstream. Five years ago, the International Game Developers Association counted fewer than a dozen North American universities offering game-related programs. There are now more than 100, including the prestigious University of Southern California, University of Central Florida, Georgia Institute of Technology , and Parsons School of Design. Parsons' President says his courses also prepare students to work on Wall Street, since creating games and manipulating huge database systems require the same thing: critical thinking.

Source: "Video Games Are Their Major, So Don't Call Them Slackers," *The New York Times*, 22 November 2005.

## ENVIRONMENT & TRAVEL

### How Green are Uncle Sam's Hands?

By Charlotte MARCHALANT

**In America, various environmentalists are claiming to be the staunchest patriots, but they don't seem to be speaking the same language.**

The Oakland-based ecological foundation Circle of Life<sup>25</sup> has launched a new campaign to dispel all the prejudices, misconceptions and what it sees as downright lies equated with green activism and dissent in general. Its slogan is "Activism is Patriotism". Julia Butterfly Hill, the grassroots icon behind the Circle of Life's motto explains that nowadays speaking out will often have you accused of being unpatriotic or even a terrorist - two words that have sometimes come to mean the same thing in post 9/11, fear-riddled America. Civil disobedience is definitely frowned upon these days.

Among these environmentalists' most outspoken opponents are people such as Ron Arnold. As the executive vice president of the Center for the Defence of Free Trade, he fights against what he construes as a threat to individual liberties, property rights and limited government. His definition of the word patriotism has more to do with not hindering free-enterprise than with the "love and devotion" for the homeland Hill & Co profess.<sup>2</sup> Arnold bears a particular grudge to Miss Hill as she achieved fame with a 2 year-long sit-in atop a redwood to keep it from being logged by Pacific Lumber, one of the CDFT's main financial backers.

Both kinds of activists are convinced to be doing the right thing to defend and re-enforce American values. Indeed, more than a conflict centered on environment, it's a clash between two antagonist Americas. One of thriving capitalism with strong connections in the White House as opposed to one of idealistic individuals who believe in their power to change the world against the odds. America has got "a long tradition of civil disobedience" recalls Hill, a tradition may be best embodied by Martin Luther King Jr. In his time, he faced the same charges that are brought against his successors some 50 years later. However today not many would dare question what he did for America. The definition of what constitutes an American patriot is not fixed.

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<sup>25</sup> [www.circleoflifefoundation.org](http://www.circleoflifefoundation.org)

<sup>2</sup> His publications include: *EcoTerror: The Violent Agenda to Save Nature, the World of the Unabomber* (1997) in which he argues that eco-terrorism includes all crimes committed in the name of nature, including acts of non violent civil disobedience.

## ENVIRONMENT & TRAVEL

### [Oil Addicted Consumers Need to Wake Up](#)

By Sabrina HAMMOUDI

#### **A brief outlook at a potential alternative to ordinary fuel**

Even though oil prices have soared in the last few years, consumers are still amazingly indifferent to the current energy crisis: 13 million barrels of oil are imported every day in the US. The threat of outrageous gas and heating bills have recently scared some into driving less or buying wood stoves, but most are very reluctant to change their habits. Nearly all American cars and trucks still run on fuel derived from oil ; in the last few years gasoline thirsty Sport Utility Vehicles (SUVs) have become more and more popular, particularly in the U.S., to the dismay of environmentalists. As most consumers know, but try hard to forget, oil is a non-renewable resource: it is not everlasting and it will eventually run out. Financial woes apart, we need to find ways to replace it and wean down our oil addiction. Alternatives do exist, but bio and synthetic fuels have rather few champions in the US.

However, some people do believe in replacing oil with fuel derived from coal. In this perspective, Montana could become the Saudi Arabia of coal, with reserves of around 120 billion tons. This represents a third of all American coal reserves and a tenth of the world's. Governor Brian Schweitzer, who is a Democrat, strongly believes that transforming black coal into transparent synthetic fuel is the solution to energy independence. Some experts say that there is enough coal in the US to cater for the country's energy needs for the next 800 years.

Cars, planes, trucks and domestic heating systems could be operated on coal derived gasoline, diesel or kerosens. The new coal-to-fuel technology also means that this long established chemical process can now be done in a much cleaner way which prevents it from contributing to global warming.

Most environmentalists seem to be interested in the idea, and even though some worry that grassland would be at risk, it could be an option well worth trying.

But making fuel out of coal is still a matter of well wishing speculation. Several energy companies have showed interest in it, but the issue is still considered to be fraught with financial risk. There are no specific plans to build coal-to-fuel plants in Montana so far. Hundreds of them would be needed throughout the country. Even though it is clearly time for a radical change, it might be slow to come about.

#### Sources:

"Oiloholics," *The Economist* 26 August 2005.

"Seeking Clean Fuel For a Nation, and a Rebirth for Small-Town Montana," *The New York Times* 21 November 2005.

## ENVIRONMENT & TRAVEL NEWS BRIEFS

By Pauline LAVAGNE D'ORTIGUE

### **On Borders in Kashmir and the Fate of the Siachen Glacier, The Panda House in Washington D.C., Biophilia and Therapeutic Dolphins.**

#### **Borders and the Glacier between India and Pakistan**

India and Pakistan have agreed on a January deadline to end their dispute over the world's coldest and highest battlefield: the Siachen Glacier, which is the natural barrier between Pakistani Baltistan and India's Ladakh.

There are now two crossing points on the Line of Control which separates Pakistan-occupied Kashmir from Indian-occupied Kashmir and Jammu. The earthquake that devastated the region on October 8th left more than 74,000 people dead.

Sources: "India doesn't Want a Repeat of Kargil: Mukherjee," *The Times of India*, 3 November 2005; "Kalam to Visit Last LoC Village in Kashmir," *The Times of India*, 25 November 2005; "Winter is Coming to Kashmir," *The Economist*, 10 November 2005.

#### **Timed Tickets to the Panda House in Washington, D.C.**

Given the enormous popular interest in Tai Shan (the National Zoo's giant panda cub), free, timed-entry tickets are issued on a first-come, first-served basis on the zoo's Web site. Visitors will have 10 minutes each to peep at the cub. No tickets will be required to see his parents who will be on exhibit outside on most days.

Sources: "Panda Ticket Scramble To Begin at 9 Tomorrow," *The Washington Post*, 20 November 2005; <http://www.fonz.org/pandaticket.htm>.

#### **Biophilia and Therapeutic Dolphins**

A study published in the *British Medical Journal* supports the theory of biophilia, which asserts that human health depends on relationships with the natural environment. Psychiatrists from the University of Leicester recruited 30 patients diagnosed with mild to moderate depression in the US and Honduras. The volunteers' psychotherapeutic and anti-depression drugs were replaced by outdoor activities which included swimming and snorkelling, with or without dolphins. After two weeks, measurable symptoms of depression and anxiety decreased in the dolphin group. The coral reef alone, no matter how bright the fish, did not have the same effect as did mammals. The improvement was still felt three months after the experiment.

Sources: "Swim with Dolphins 'Lifts Depression'," *The Australian*, 25 November 2005; "Swimming with Dolphins can beat Depression," *The Daily Mail*, 25 November 2005.

**SPORTS****The Sleeping Giant of Australian Sport has Finally Roused**

By Mohammed Lamine BOUZERIDA

**“World cup here we come! Goodbye soccer, hello football!” This is what millions of Australians sung after their team qualified for the world cup finals.**

For the first time since 1974, Australia won a ticket to the world cup finals after beating Uruguay in a play-off on a penalty shoot-out. The Australian team, AKA *The Socceroos*, went some way to avenging the hostile defeat they suffered 4 years ago in Montevideo. Nevertheless, this was not a settling of scores. Thanks to the Socceroos' heroic achievement, Australia forgot three decades of desperate hopes and rotten luck. Nothing but a qualification to the world cup in Germany next summer could restore the natural pride of a continent that has suffered for 32 years from a general sporting illness: failure on the pitch.

This qualification might be the biggest thing that ever happened to Australian soccer: the game's profile is rising quickly. Long despised as inferior to cricket and rugby, football now has the opportunity to capitalise on its success and on the recent failures of other national teams. Australia Manager, Guus Hiddink, who happens to be German, suggested: "Football is the No.1 sport in the world and I hope it will shortly be the same in Australia." Fans who have been suffering from national sporting languor, now have the right to go wild and express their joy; they've been dreaming of this for 32 years. All Australians now have a team of their own to support rather than being obliged to pick a surrogate one.

With 83 000 people in Sydney's Telstra Dome, and 20 million people waiting for the last penalty shoot-out, the historic gap between football and Australia's other athletic pursuits has finally come to end. After the final whistle of the match, Australian fans erupted with joy, with supporters' groups such as the Bay 23 Boys, the Fanatics and the Green and Gold army all mixed. People sporting rugby union and cricket shirts also joined in, with tunes you wouldn't expect to hear at a soccer event. Men, women and kids all attended, even though they couldn't bring themselves to watch the penalty shoot-out. Some supporters remained speechless for the good part of a week, others have stated stockpiling green and gold clothes to pack their luggage for this summer's trip to Germany.

**Sources:**Michael Cockerill "It's a lot more fun," *The Age* 17 November 2005.Rachel Kleinman "OK, so what is all the fuss about?" *The Age* 18 November 2005.Jon McDonald "Goodbye soccer hello football," *The Age* 17 November 2005."Socceroos book WC place," *The Guardian* 16 November 2005.

## **SPORTS NEWS BRIEFS**

By Pauline LAVAGNE D'ORTIGUE

### **On Smashing Pumpkins as a Sport, the Canadian Taxman's Reluctance for Physical Fitness and the Future of Pom-pom Girls.**

#### **Smashing Pumpkins**

The Punkin Chunkin World Championship took place November 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> in Delaware, where it has been an annual event for almost 20 years. Teams of contestants gather in a cornfield with their various self-made contraptions in order to blast pumpkins as far as they can. Rifle shooting is an Olympic sport after all, so there is no reason why a report on its slightly hyperbolic version—namely Punkin Chunkin—should not feature in ANGLOW's Sports section.

Sources: <http://www.punkinchunkin.com/> ; "The Meaning of America," *The Economist*, 12 November 2005.

#### **The Canadian Taxman Lacks Enthusiasm for Promoting Exercise**

Ontario's Health Promotion Minister wants to introduce incentives such as eliminating the provincial sales tax on gym memberships and bicycle helmets in order to encourage physical fitness. Giving parents a \$150 tax credit for signing their children up to play minor league baseball is also an option. But these carrots are said to be too expensive for the state budget.

Source: "No tax breaks for gym memberships, Ontario says," *The Globe and Mail*, 22 November 2005.

#### **Are Candid Cheerleaders an Endangered Species?**

What would an American university sport be without its sports minded pom-pom girls? Cheerleading is increasingly seen a springboard for a career in sales. It seems to be a particularly fertile ground for recruiting pharmaceutical sales representatives as athleticism, enthusiasm and good looks are very much sought after. However, convincing American doctors (still mostly male) to prescribe a drug is a dangerous sport...

"Why Was That Doctor Naked in His Office?" a study published in *Medical Economics*, reported that 12 out of 13 medical saleswomen said they had been sexually harassed by physicians.

Source: "Gimme an Rx! Cheerleaders Pep Up Drug Sales," *The New York Times*, 28 November 2005.