Bijlage VWO

2018

tijdvak 2

Engels

Tekstboekje

Tekst 1

Myth of genius ignores science's real method

The heroic genius was always something of a myth: an exciting tale, but not a very __1__ depiction of how science and scientists operate. Science progresses because people become expert in what is known and then debate, try something out and then something else when the first doesn't fit. It progresses because people reject hypotheses as they learn about colleagues' and rivals' work and because people both share ideas and compete. Out of such endeavours novel ideas emerge and new fields develop.

Athene Donald

adapted from *The Guardian Weekly, 2013*

Tekst 2

The Opinion Page

Obstacles to College

1 Princeton students are calling on the university's administration to stop receiving information about criminal records from the Common Application for undergraduate admission. At New York University, students leading the Incarceration to Education Coalition are making similar appeals in their "abolish the box" campaign, and Harvard undergraduates are organizing a campaign on their campus as well.

2 According to the Admissions Opportunity Campaign led by Students for Prison Education and Reform, or SPEAR, a Princeton student organization: "The United States criminal justice system is inequitable and ineffective. In light of the racial and economic discrimination perpetuated by U.S. justice institutions, we believe that past involvement with the justice system should not be used to evaluate personal character or academic potential."

3 **2** "ban the box" on employment applications passes in many cities and states, universities have a chance to lead the movement in providing educational opportunities for more people.

adapted from *nytimes.com, 2014*

Tekst 3

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

1 Democrats are currently crying big crocodile tears about jobless Americans running out of emergency unemployment checks, and they're accusing Republicans of being cruel monsters for not voting to extend the benefits. **3**, these same Democrats vote consistently for illegal-alien amnesty, which would immediately let loose millions of workers into the legal job market, thereby increasing competition for employment. In fact, all Senate Democrats voted for the deeply flawed immigration-amnesty bill last year.

2 Notably, the Congressional Budget Office reported that the Senate bill would reduce average wages in America for 12 years, increase unemployment for seven years and reduce per-capita gross national product growth for more than 25 years. The Senate bill also doubles legal immigration at a time when the accumulation of immigration, outsourcing and smart machines have created a jobless economic recovery for Americans. The automated future will require far fewer humans for manufacturing and services.

3 The pose of Democrats that they are the friends of the American worker is simply not credible, given their open-borders strategy aimed at creating a permanent Democrat majority of big-government voters.

4 America doesn't need more imported labor now or anytime soon, owing to the effects of globalization and automation. Washington must get real about the economic realities workers face now and in the future.

BRENDA WALKER
Berkeley, Calif.

adapted from *washingtontimes.com, 2014*

Tekst 4

Inside Whitehall

Oliver Wright

1 There is a joke that does the rounds in Whitehall that there is no phrase more likely to spread fear down the corridors of power than: "Oliver Letwin has given a wide-ranging speech". Such is the fear of the Minister of State for Policy's erudite mind and novel views that he is usually encouraged not to share them with the outside world. So when Mr Letwin does venture out of the Cabinet Office to speak to a wider audience he is worth listening to — and not just on "gaffe watch".

2 And so it was last week when he addressed the Institute for Government on the deliciously broad subject of "the role of the state". Now it should be said that Mr Letwin easily got through this ordeal without uttering anything that could be described as news. But what he said was neither boring nor unimportant. It was both erudite and posed an interesting philosophical question about the future direction of government.

3 Mr Letwin's argument was this: until the fall of communism the great debate about the role of the state was between Marxism on the one hand and capitalism on the other. Marxists believed that the state should control all means of production while extreme capitalists believed that outside the realms of defence and justice it should control almost none.

4 Then the end of the Cold War and the transformations in China put an end to **8** and in its place a more nuanced political dichotomy emerged.

5 In Britain that was played out between those who believed it was the job of the state to regulate markets for social and environmental purposes and those who favoured a laissez-faire approach. This was perhaps best exemplified by New Labour's plan to bring in a minimum wage and the Conservatives' opposition to it. But Mr Letwin's argument was that now, even this is a false dichotomy and that there is a "third", better way by means of which governments can intervene in free markets and influence behaviour without law and regulation.

6 He talked about the work of behavioural insights — or nudge theory — which has been used by the Government to achieve results that would otherwise have been brought about by regulation. An example of this would be HMRC's work to increase the number of people who pay their tax on time without fining them or new methods to motivate people back into work.

7 Mr Letwin also talked about neighbourhood planning — where communities can come together to decide where they want development to take place within their localities — without the need for planning committees to decide for them.

8 To this, you might add the Government's controversial payment-by-results model in areas such as drug addiction. This does not rely on regulation ─ it is the Government saying to a private provider: this is the outcome we want and how you do it is up to you.

9 None of this is to agree with Mr Letwin. But the Civil Service is much more attuned to this type of thinking than it was in the past. If Labour is re-elected this may change as, from what we know, regulation is still the approach favoured by Ed Miliband.

10 But before that happens there should be a debate about whether Mr Letwin is right ─ and what role we want government to play in our future lives. He should be unleashed more often.

based on *The Independent, 2014*

Tekst 5

Science and technology

Sexual selection

Hunkier than thou

1 Scientists are finally succeeding where so many men have failed: in understanding why women find some guys handsome and others hideous. When it comes to partners, men often find women's taste fickle and unfathomable. But ladies may not be entirely to blame. A growing body of research suggests that their preference for certain types of male physiognomy may be swayed by things beyond their conscious control ─ like prevalence of disease or crime ─ and in predictable ways.

2 Masculine features tend to reflect physical and behavioural traits, such as strength and aggression. They are also closely linked to physiological ones, like virility and a sturdy immune system. The obverse of these desirable characteristics looks less appealing. Aggression is fine when directed at external threats, less so when it spills over onto the hearth. Sexual prowess ensures plenty of progeny, but it often goes hand in hand with promiscuity and a tendency to shirk parental duties or leave the mother altogether.

3 **13**, whenever a woman has to choose a mate, she must decide whether to place a premium on the hunk's choicer genes or the wimp's love and care. Lisa DeBruine, of the University of Aberdeen, believes that today's women still face this dilemma and that their choices are affected by unconscious factors.

4 In a paper published earlier this year Dr DeBruine found that women in countries with poor health statistics preferred men with masculine features more than those who lived in healthier societies. Where disease is rife, this seemed to imply, giving birth to healthy offspring trumps having a man stick around long enough to help care for it. In more salubrious climes, therefore, wimps are in with a chance.

5 Now, though, researchers led by Robert Brooks, of the University of New South Wales, have taken another look at Dr DeBruine's data and arrived at a different conclusion. They present their findings in the *Proceedings of the Royal Society*. Dr Brooks suggests that it is not health-related factors, but rather competition and violence among men that best explain a woman's penchant for manliness. The more rough-and-tumble the environment, the researcher's argument goes, the more women prefer masculine men, because they are better than the softer types at providing for mothers and their offspring.

6 Since violent competition for resources is more pronounced in unequal societies, Dr Brooks predicted that women would value masculinity more highly in countries with a higher Gini coefficient, which is a measure of income inequality.

And indeed, he found that this was better than a country's health statistics at predicting the relative attractiveness of hunky faces.

7 The rub is that unequal countries also tend to be less healthy. So, in order to disentangle cause from effect, Dr Brooks compared Dr DeBruine's health index with a measure of violence in a country: its murder rate. Again, he found that his chosen indicator predicts preference for facial masculinity more accurately than the health figures do (though less well than the Gini).

8 However, in a rejoinder published in the same issue of the *Proceedings*, Dr DeBruine and her colleagues point to a flaw in Dr Brooks's analysis: his failure to take into account a society's overall wealth. When she performed the statistical tests again, this time controlling for GNP[1)], it turned out that the murder rate's predictive power disappears, whereas that of the health indicators persists. In other words, the prevalence of violent crime seems to predict mating preferences only in so far as it reflects a country's relative penury.

9 The statistical tussle shows the difficulty of drawing firm conclusions from correlations alone. Dr DeBruine and Dr Brooks admit as much, and agree the dispute will not be settled until the factors that shape mating preferences are tested directly.

10 Another recent study by Dr DeBruine and others has tried to do just that. Its results lend further credence to the health hypothesis. This time, the researchers asked 124 women and 117 men to rate 15 pairs of male faces and 15 pairs of female ones for attractiveness. Each pair of images depicted the same set of features tweaked to make one appear ever so slightly manlier than the other (if the face was male) or more feminine (if it was female). Some were also made almost imperceptibly lopsided. Symmetry, too, indicates a mate's quality because in harsh environments robust genes are needed to ensure even bodily development.

11 Next, the participants were shown another set of images, depicting objects that elicit varying degrees of disgust, such as a white cloth either stained with what looked like a bodily fluid, or a less revolting blue dye. Disgust is widely assumed to be another adaptation, one that warns humans to stay well away from places where germs and other pathogens may be lurking. So, according to Dr DeBruine, people shown the more disgusting pictures ought to respond with an increased preference for masculine lads and feminine lasses, and for the more symmetrical countenances.

12 That is precisely what happened when they were asked to rate the same set of faces one more time. But it only worked with the opposite sex; the revolting images failed to alter what either men or women found attractive about their own sex. This means sexual selection, not other evolutionary mechanisms, is probably at work.

The Economist, 2010

noot 1 GNP: gross national product

Tekst 6

Letters

Affirmative action

SIR – You treated race-based preferences for college admissions as somehow immoral, a well-intended injustice meant to remedy another existing injustice ("Time to scrap affirmative action", April 27th). But this assumes that admissions policy is just about merit, and that the deserving are those who do better on standardised tests. Universities do not exist solely to serve such students, but also to attain broader, complex social and economic goals.
RON DAVIS
Cambridge, Massachusetts

SIR – It would not be fair to stop using race as criteria in admissions until admissions based on family or other "legacy" connections are also banned. The fact that being the son or daughter of alumni can get someone into a university for which they may be "academically unsuited" is just as unfair. To know that you have struggled and overcome only to meet someone whose daddy put in a good word and got them in without effort can be soul destroying.
BREANA WHEELER
London

SIR – Affirmative action is only a symptom of the wider problem, which is that American liberal discourse uses race as a proxy for economic class. This prevents many liberals from even speaking about the distressingly low class mobility in America. It creates a climate in which it is acceptable to mock the poor and uneducated, so long as they are white. It also creates a divide between poor whites and all others in the lower class that inflames racial issues.
ADAM EMERSON
Ann Arbor, Michigan

SIR – You gave some credence to the claim that universities foster diversity among students. This might be more persuasive were academia not rife with speech codes and other enforcements of political correctness, suppressing the kind of diversity that really matters most: diversity of thought and opinion.
FRANK ROBINSON
Albany, New York

The Economist, 2013

Tekst 7

Regret is the Perfect Emotion for Our Self-Absorbed Times

BY Judith Shulevitz

1 We are a nation gnawed by regret. The most visible symptom of this condition is celebrity regret, which sloshes through nearly every news cycle. "I regret the use of that word," said Tom Perkins, co-founder of a powerhouse venture-capital firm, after comparing verbal attacks on America's richest 1 percent to Kristallnacht, the Nazi pogrom against German Jews. "I deeply regret accepting legal gifts and loans from a diet-supplement executive," said Virginia's ex-governor, Bob McDonnell, after his indictment for corruption, though he didn't say what there was to regret if the gifts and loans were legal. "I am sorry that so many people have been making insincere apologies," wrote *The Washington Post*'s Dana Milbank in a recent sardonic column. "I hasten to add that I am not to blame for these terrible apologies, but I regret them deeply, all the same."

2 These public shows of regret come off as cringe-worthy because they fall short of apologies and stink of self-justification, but in fact they express a real emotion and reveal a plain truth. Regret is what we feel when we realize that we've hurt ourselves ─ damaged our careers, tarnished our reputations, limited our options. Regret is not remorse, which is what we feel when we've hurt others. Remorse ─ from the Latin mordere, to bite ─ implies the nip of conscience. It's remorse that we want from our public figures after they misbehave, and remorse that they'll almost never admit to.

3 For one thing, their lawyers advise them not to. But the current explosion of self-absorbed self-criticism reflects more than just American litigiousness. We rue our actions **__20__** we don't have to apologize for them. Personally, I'm convinced that regret is the dark counterpart to American optimism, as widespread and characteristic. It's certainly what I feel most of the time, and while I realize that that makes me sound neurotic, I refuse to regret the confession.

4 Psychologists suspect that we regret more than we used to, because we make more choices than we used to. Economists spend a great deal of time nowadays trying to quantify both regret and 'regret aversion', because second thoughts, and the fear of having them, can have a volatile effect on markets. And yet, although the list of choices required of even a minimally functional person is now very long and very tiresome, its lengthiness alone doesn't explain the psychic torment it can occasion. So here are a few theories about that. First, regret hurts because we venerate competence. Personal success is as much an American fetish as freedom of choice, so we feel duty-bound to make the kinds of decisions that lead to the best possible outcomes ─ to maximize our utility, as the economists say. If you subscribe to the cult of competence, it will feel like

a bigger sin to sabotage yourself than others. The shame you suffer when caught doing something wrong will have less to do with having violated someone's trust than with knowing you now look stupid or crazy.

5 Second, regret is the product of a simple but discomfiting contradiction. Though we have near-infinite options, we have a finite amount of time to sort through them. Given how much we prize proficient decision-making, this puts us in a bind: We can never obtain enough information to choose wisely. And that leads to a paralysis akin to the learned helplessness that experimental psychologists like to induce in dogs and rats through the administration of random, unavoidable shocks.

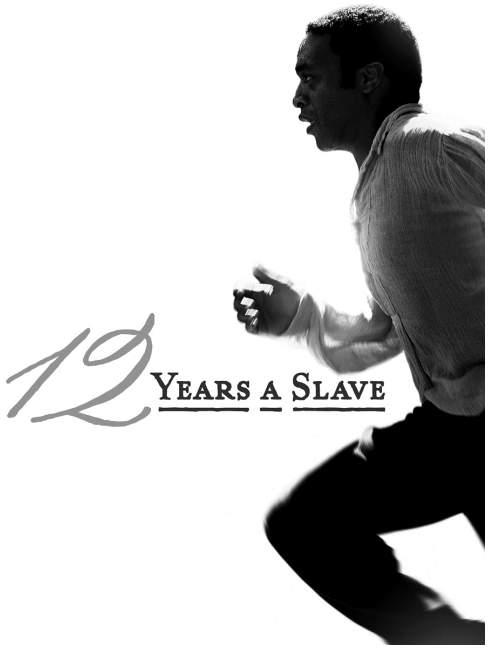
6 Here are two more findings about regret that psychologists have repeatedly replicated. One, we deplore loss more than we enjoy gain, just as we remember unhappy experiences more vividly than happy ones. And two, in the heat of the moment, we brood more obsessively about the dumb things we did, and as we age, we grieve more about all the things we failed to do. Finding number two strikes me as the more disheartening. I have come to see it as the lifelong tyranny of the counterfactual. I can never stop dreaming of what might have been, because it will always be better than what is. And this turns regret into a sort of existential tragicomedy. The regret I'm afraid of being pierced by, right here and now, traps me inside the farcicality of a detergent commercial. At some inadmissible level, I really do fear that buying the wrong product will lead to the wrong me ─ and so do you, because the brand-makers have always already outsmarted us both. But the regret we endure when we look back at everything we didn't do, perhaps because we wasted so much time not being stupid, is the stuff of despair.

adapted from *The New Republic, 2014*

Tekst 8

Not a single leg chain smashed

by **Cosmo Landesman**



1 No film in the past decade has had the kind of emotional impact on audiences that "12 Years a Slave" has. Hardened men and even heartless critics have left the cinema weeping. The film has won 134 awards, made more than £100m, generated vast media attention and public acclamation. Yet it has failed to do the one thing it set out to do: get the public actively involved in the issue of modern-day slavery.

2 The film tells the true story of a freeborn black man called Solomon Northup who was drugged, kidnapped and sold into slavery on a cotton farm. It shows in disturbing detail the shocking reality of 19th-century slavery in America. When it was released in the United States in 2013 (and this year in the UK), anti-slavery organisations were quick to see the potential of the movie as an aid to increasing public awareness and public action over the issue of present-day slavery. This term covers a multitude of sins, from bonded labour in India to the sex trafficking of young women to Britain.

3 The new mood of optimism was summed up by Bradley Myles, chief executive of Polaris Project, an anti-slavery and anti-trafficking organisation based in Washington: "The opportunity to eradicate slavery is truly before us. Now let's rise to the challenge to seize it."

4 Myles's optimism was easy to understand. Not only did the anti-slavery cause have a powerful film that could stir people's hearts, it also had a passionate, high-profile advocate in its British director, Steve McQueen, who could change minds and get people to respond.

5 At a star-studded Bafta award ceremony in February, McQueen told the assembled audience that "as we sit here tonight, 21m people are still in slavery". This month, at the Academy awards ceremony in Hollywood, McQueen ended his acceptance speech for best film with much the same message ─ only this time he was reaching an audience of more than 43m Americans.

6 All the anti-slavery organisations then had to do was sit back and wait for the rush of new members, volunteers, donations, celebrity endorsements, online hits and Facebook "likes". Only it didn't happen.

7 "No, there has not been the groundswell of activity we'd hoped for," said Aidan McQuade, the director of Anti-Slavery International. He had hoped that the film would produce something more than "anguished hand-wringing" as people left the cinema. Now he admits to feeling "disappointed".

8 Other groups __**26**__. A spokesman for the UK branch of International Justice Mission (IJM) told me: "Since the release of "12 Years a Slave", IJM UK has seen no significant increase in the number of inquiries, donations or sign-ups compared to that which is usually experienced."

9 Following McQueen's Bafta appearance, Anti-Slavery International had 516 hits on its website, just 146 more than its monthly average of 370. Compare this with the late 18th-century British campaign of abolition, when 390,000 people signed petitions against slavery.

10 The film's political impact has been disappointing, too. It has earned praise from the likes of Ban Ki-moon, the United Nations secretary-general, but the UN shows no sign of taking up the cause of anti-slavery as one of its developmental goals, much to the frustration of activists.

11 Does this matter? After all, you might argue that a film has no responsibility to anything but itself. But McQueen has made it clear that his film isn't just another movie to be watched, wept over and forgotten. As he told the audience at the Museum of Tolerance in Los Angeles last November: "The reason for making the film is to put things right."

12 Consider the way Al Gore's "An Inconvenient Truth" ─ for better or worse ─ played a large role in revitalizing the green movement and helped to put the idea of global warming in the public mind.

13 The anti-slavery cause is a victim of Hollywood's own success. Thanks to films such as Steven Spielberg's "Amistad", Quentin Tarantino's "Django Unchained" and now McQueen's "12 Years", people assume that slavery belongs to the past. It doesn't matter what modern-day film-makers such as McQueen say at award ceremonies; what they show at the cinema is the key to popular perceptions and thus possible change.

14 Theresa May, the home secretary, is set to introduce a Modern Slavery Bill, cracking down on modern traffickers and gangmasters, but the movement needs to find __**28**__ Solomon Northup for her bill to have the impact it deserves. So far, despite numerous documentaries, books and online footage, present-day slavery hasn't yet had its equivalent of "12 Years a Slave".

adapted from *The Sunday Times, 2014*

Tekst 9

Comment&Debate

Don't cap banking bonuses; scrap them

Deborah Hargreaves

While the EU should be applauded for tackling the thorny issue of bank bonuses, my concern is that the plan to cap payouts at a year's salary will have perverse consequences. Already base salaries in the banking sector have been rising sharply as regulators try and choke off the multimillion-pound annual bonus awards. The EU's plan could lead to **30**.

Banks have increased salaries across Europe by 37% in the past four years in response to a crackdown on bonuses and pressure from regulators to claw back some rewards if bets go wrong later on. Banks are very good at getting round the letter of the law and bankers are very competitive. Bank bosses say they are held to ransom by star traders who threaten to walk off to a rival if they believe they are not compensated adequately.

However, bank executives should dig their heels in and resist calls to jack up wages if bonuses are restricted. Few banks are hiring at the moment since all are facing a squeeze on profits. Star bankers probably have few options for poaching by rivals and the threat to leave could be an empty one.

Investment banks generally pay fairly low salaries to keep their fixed costs down. In a good year, they can pile on the rewards in the annual bonus round. In a bad year, they can cut back on bonuses rather than sack a load of trained staff.

But what has tended to happen is that bankers continue to get paid large bonuses even if it has been a loss-making year for the bank. The Royal Bank of Scotland has just announced a $7.5bn loss along with a £432m bonus payout for the investment bank. Stephen Hester, the CEO, said bonuses were a lot lower than in previous years.

6 How do the vast majority of people who work in the bank branches and deal directly with the customers feel about this? Starting salaries for branch staff are around £13,000 and Unite, the union at Barclays, recently said that some of the staff were eligible to claim tax credits to make ends meet. This cannot be good for morale across the banks.

7 I would suggest scrapping bonuses altogether and introducing a company-wide profit share. It works for John Lewis, where every member of staff gets the same percentage of their salary as a share of profits. Obviously, those on higher pay get more. But this is a big motivator for those who work there. It also gets round the reward for apparent failure when banks pay bonuses without actually making any money. If there's no profit, there shouldn't be any profit share.

8 PIRC, the influential pensions investment adviser, says the EU plan should be a starting point for a discussion about the effectiveness of variable pay in general. Some shareholders are beginning to doubt that it works in the right way and share-based awards and bonuses have driven pay packages for bankers and top executives to sky-high levels.

9 So the EU is right to take on the toxic issue of bank bonuses. Its plan hopefully will work to reduce payouts. There are also some new bank bosses in charge such as Sir David Walker and Antony Jenkins at Barclays who are talking about reforming pay structures. Maybe they can use this cap to exercise some restraint over pay.

10 But shareholders and regulators should watch the banks like hawks to see they don't just boost salaries to compensate for the loss of bonus potential. Given the way banks behave, this is what I fear may happen.

Deborah Hargreaves is director of the High Pay Centre

adapted from *The Guardian, 2013*

Tekst 10

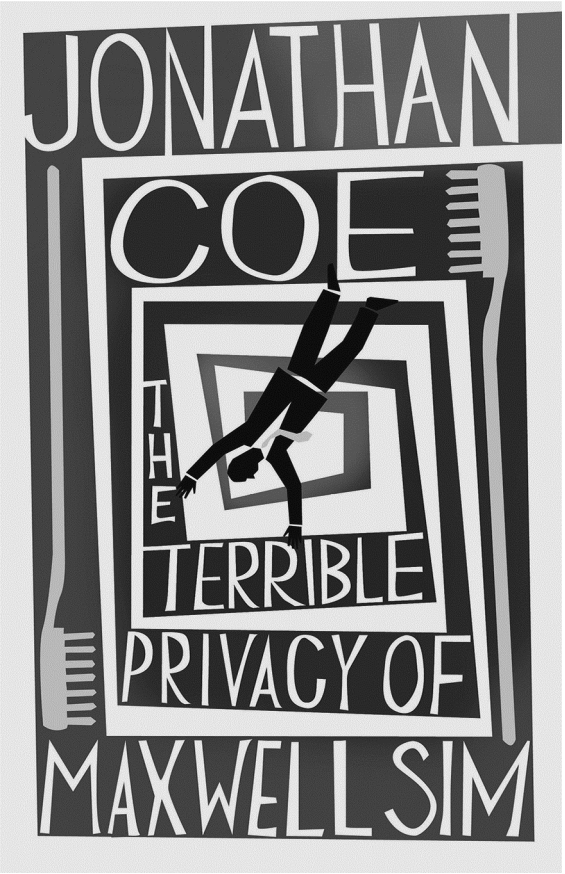
The following text is the first chapter of the novel The Terrible Privacy of Maxwell Sim*, by Jonathan Coe.*

Chapter I

When I saw the Chinese woman and her daughter playing cards together at their restaurant table, the water and the lights of Sydney harbour shimmering behind them, it set me thinking about Stuart, and the reason he had to give up driving his car.

I was going to say 'my friend Stuart', but I suppose he's not a friend any more. I seem to have lost a number of friends in the last few years. I don't mean that I've fallen out with them, in any dramatic way. We've just decided not to stay in touch. And that's what it's been: a decision, a conscious decision, because it's not difficult to stay in touch with people nowadays, there are so many different ways of doing it. But as you get older, I think that some friendships start to feel increasingly redundant. You just find yourself asking, 'What's the point?' And then you stop.

Anyway, about Stuart and his driving. He had to stop because of the panic attacks. He was a good driver, a careful and conscientious driver, and he had never been involved in an accident. But occasionally, when he got behind the wheel of a car, he would experience these panic attacks, and after a while they started to get worse, and they started to happen more often. I can remember when he first started telling me about all this: it was lunchtime and we were in the canteen of the department store in Ealing, where we worked together for a year or two. I don't think I can have listened very carefully, though, because Caroline was sitting at the same table, and things between us were just starting to get interesting, so the last thing I wanted to hear about was Stuart and his neuroses about driving. That must be why I never really thought about it again until years later, at the restaurant on Sydney harbour, when it all came back. His problem, as far as I can remember, was this. Whereas most people, as they watched the coming and going of cars on a busy road, would see a normal, properly functioning traffic system, Stuart could only perceive it as an endless



succession of narrowly averted accidents. He saw cars hurtling towards each other at considerable speeds, and missing each other by inches ─ time and time again, every few seconds, repeated constantly throughout the day. 'All those cars,' he said to me, 'only *just* managing not to crash into each other. How can people stand it?' In the end it became too much for him to contemplate, and he had to stop driving.

Why had this conversation just come back to me, tonight of all nights? It was 14 February 2009. The second Saturday in February. Valentine's Day, in case you hadn't noticed. The water and the lights of Sydney harbour were shimmering behind me, and I was dining alone since my father had, for various weird reasons of his own, refused to come out with me, even though this was my last evening in Australia, and the only reason for me visiting Australia in the first place had been to see him and try to rebuild my relationship with him. Right now, in fact, I was probably feeling more alone than I had ever felt in my life, and what really brought it home to me was the sight of the Chinese woman and her daughter playing cards together at their restaurant table. They looked so happy in each other's company. There was such a connection between them. They weren't talking very much, and when they did talk, it was about their card game, as far as I could tell, but that didn't matter. It was all in their eyes, their smiles, the way they kept laughing, the way they kept leaning in to each other. By comparison, none of the diners at the other tables seemed to be having any fun.

Tekst 11

An F for Mr. Starr's excuses

I was surprised and disappointed by Montgomery County School superintendent Joshua P. Starr's reaction to the report that 45 percent of public high school students in the county failed final exams in math ["Fail rate still high on math finals," *Metro*, July 27]. Mr. Starr's explanations were bizarre: First, blame **37a** (motivation), then the test creators or teachers (lack of coordination between exams and curriculum), then **37b** (unspecific, but getting a little closer) and finally **37c** (whatever that means, but it sounds like it's the darn students' fault again).

When students fail to master a given set of material, one should ask why the teachers didn't teach it. If they did, then see why the test didn't reflect it. In both cases, it is the responsibility of the school administrators to ensure that the teachers and the tests are working. The buck stops on the desk of the **38**.

Lewis Gollob, *Bethesda*

Washington Post, 2013

Tekst 12

Be wary of the media

What a terrifying world Amanda Vanstone must occupy, where a "posse" of reporters and commentators, behaving like "bear stalkers or duck shooters", are gunning for her political nearest and dearest (Comment, 8/12). Even worse, these "real players in our politics" are unelected. Of course, as a media commentator herself, she is equally unelected but in her own mind, at least, she occupies a rarefied sphere that allows her to deliver only objective opinion. This presumably accounts for the dispensation she grants herself in neglecting to identify who these carping Joe Hockey[1)] baiters might be, or what they have said that is so insulting. Unlike other commentators, it would seem, Amanda should simply be taken on trust.

Simon Boyle, North Carlton

theage.com.au, 2014

noot 1 Joe Hockey was a Member of the Australian Parliament from 1996 until 2015

Tekst 13

Preventing innovation

The problem with innovation today is that it focuses on forward rather than lateral thinking (Profit and PR kill off anything that's new, 17 August). Someone from 1950 visiting the world of 2012 may not be as surprised by our progression with technological breakthroughs as with our failure to spread existing technology throughout the world. William Gibson observed that "the future is already here ─ it's just not evenly distributed" and he was right.

We have an obsession with the new that blinds us to the immense progress we have already made. It is true that we have not found a cure for cancer but we have found the cure for diarrhoea and the way to stop children dying from it is not to develop new drugs, but to creatively engineer and fund the spread of the ones we already have.

Edward Tikoft
Leeming, Western Australia

The Guardian Weekly, 2012