

Texts for analysis in class

1. Jeremy PAXMAN. 2009. "Introduction" (extract) In George Orwell *Shooting an Elephant and other essays*, ed. Jeremy Paxman. London: Penguin: vii-xiv.
2. Alain DE BOTTON. 2012. "Community". *Religion for Atheists*. London: Penguin: 41.
3. Suman GUPTA. 2009. "The Seriousness of Social and Political Effects". *Re-Reading Harry Potter*. Second Edition. Basingstoke/ New York: Palgrave Macmillan: 17-18.
4. George ORWELL. 1936. "Bookshop Memories" (extract). Reprinted 2009 in *Shooting an Elephant and other essays*, ed. Jeremy Paxman. London: Penguin: 41-47.
5. George ORWELL. 1946. "The prevention of literature" (extract). Reprinted 2009 in *Shooting an Elephant and other essays*, ed. Jeremy Paxman. London: Penguin pp 207-225.
6. Arthur HERMAN. 2001. *The Scottish Enlightenment: The Scots' invention of the modern world* (extract) London: Fourth Estate.
7. Bill BRYSON. 2003. "The Mighty Atom" (extract). In *A Short History of Nearly Everything*. London: Black Swan.
8. Bill BRYSON. 2003. "Goodbye to all that" (extract). In *A Short History of Nearly Everything*. London: Black Swan.
9. Vance PACKARD. 1957. "Class and Caste in the Salesroom" (extract). In *The Hidden Persuaders*. London: Penguin.
10. Vance PACKARD. 1957. "Self-images for Everybody" (extract). In *The Hidden Persuaders*. London: Penguin.
11. Tam DAYELL. 2000. "On the Decline of Intelligent Government. Conversation with Ivo Mosley" (extract). In *Dumbing Down: culture, politics and the mass media*, ed. I. Mosley. Bowling Green (OH): Imprint Academic: 11-18.
12. Melvyn BRAGG. 2004. *The Adventure of English* (extract). London : Hodder & Stoughton.
13. Ivo MOSLEY. 2000. 'Dumbing Down Democracy'. In *Dumbing Down: culture, politics and the mass media*, ed. I. Mosley. Bowling Green (OH): Imprint Academic: 19-31.
14. Neal ASCHERSON. 2015. "Scotland's High Road to Home Rule". *The New York Times*, May 21, 2015.
15. Marina WARNER. 2015. "Learning my lesson" (extract) *London Review of Books* 37 (6): 8-14. Online version <http://www.lrb.co.uk/v37/n06/marina-warner/learning-my-lesson> (accessed 20/5/2015)
16. Tom HENNESSY. 2015. "Letters". *London Review of Books* 37 (7). Online version <http://www.lrb.co.uk/v37/n06/marina-warner/learning-my-lesson> (accessed 20/5/2015)
17. *Wine Tasting Notes*. <http://www.thewinecellarinsider.com> (accessed 15/2/2015)
18. David LEE. 2000. "What Contemporary Art Means to Me". In *Dumbing Down: culture, politics and the mass media*, ed. I. Mosley. Bowling Green (OH): Imprint Academic: 197-199.

Jeremy PAXMAN. 2009. 'Introduction' to George Orwell *Shooting an Elephant and other essays*. London: Penguin, ppvii-xiv.

1 ...something paradoxical has happened to us. The
2 abundance of the mass media offers greater choice than ever
3 before. We are adrift in a sea of newspapers, magazines, radio,
4 television and the limitless extremities of cyberspace. It is not
5 merely that the more there is of it, the less any individual part
6 of it matters. It is that so little of it seems *intended* to have any
7 meaning. The mechanical processes of printing and broadcast-
8 ing seem somehow to have been applied to the generation of
9 content, too. To take one small example; no one ever experi-
10 ences inconvenience as a result of motorway traffic jams or a
11 broken-down train. Instead they – invariably, meaninglessly –
12 suffer 'misery'. They have not, of course. It is just that that is
13 the word the mental function key brings up when someone is
14 required to write about disruption on the transport system.

Community, p41

1 5. It feels relevant to talk of meals because our modern lack of
2 a proper sense of community is importantly reflected in the
3 way we eat. The contemporary world is not, of course, lacking
4 in places where we can dine well in company – cities typically
5 pride themselves on the sheer number and quality of their res-
6 taurants – but what is significant is the almost universal lack of
7 venues that help us to transform strangers into friends.

8 While contemporary restaurants pay lip service to the notion
9 of companionability, they provide us with only its most inade-
10 quate simulacrum. The number of people who nightly patron-
11 ize restaurants implies that these places must be refuges from
12 anonymity and coldness, but in fact they have no systematic
13 mechanisms by which to introduce patrons to one another, to
14 dispel their mutual suspicions, to break up the clans into which
15 people chronically segregate themselves or to get them to open
16 up their hearts and share their vulnerabilities with others. The
17 focus is on the food and the décor, never on opportunities
18 for extending and deepening affections. In a restaurant no less
19 than in a home, when the meal itself – the texture of the esca-
20 lopes or the moistness of the courgettes – has become the main
21 attraction, we can be sure that something has gone awry.

22 Patrons will tend to leave restaurants much as they entered
23 them, the experience having merely reaffirmed existing tribal
24 divisions. Like so many institutions in the modern city, res-
25 taurants are adept at gathering people into the same space and
26 yet lack any means of encouraging them to make meaningful
27 contact with one another once they are there.

Suman GUPTA. 2009. *Re-Reading Harry Potter*. Second Edition. Basingstoke/
New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

3 The Seriousness of Social and Political Effects, pp17-18

1 The *Harry Potter* books and their offspring have apparently transcended
2 cultural boundaries more effortlessly than any other fictional work
3 of recent years. By March 2002 it was reported that these have been
4 translated into 47 languages and had sold well in most of the coun-
5 tries where available; 57 publishers covering different countries are
6 involved. The second and third international best-sellers listed in
7 March 2002 by *Publisher's Weekly* were significantly behind in the
8 range of languages that they had been translated into: in the second
9 spot, John Grisham's *The Brethren* was at that time available in
10 29 languages, and in the third spot Umberto Eco's *Baudolino* in
11 32 languages. The extraordinary sales in the US and the UK were
12 accompanied by similarly healthy figures in most other European
13 countries, and newspaper reports indicated that the phenomenon
14 had extended to a range of countries in other continents. The film of
15 *Stone* was also a substantial hit in each of these countries, as the status
16 of being the second highest grossing film ever world-wide indicates.
17 A November 2002 survey of the reception of the *Harry Potter* books
18 and films in Germany, Japan, France, Indonesia, China, Spain,
19 Australia, India, Mexico and Norway gives some indication of the
20 success of both in all these contexts. Giving more figures here
21 would be tedious.

George ORWELL. 1936. 'Bookshop Memories' reprinted 2009 in *Shooting an Elephant and other essays*. London: Penguin pp 41-47.

This extract pp44-45

1 In a lending library you see people's real tastes, not their
2 pretended ones, and one thing that strikes you is how com-
3 pletely the 'classical' English novelists have dropped out of
4 favour. It is simply useless to put Dickens, Thackeray, Jane
5 Austen, Trollope, etc. into the ordinary lending-library; nobody
6 takes them out. At the mere sight of a nineteenth-century novel
7 people say, 'Oh, but that's *old!*' and shy away immediately. Yet
8 it is always fairly easy to *sell* Dickens, just as it is always easy
9 to sell Shakespeare. Dickens is one of those authors whom
10 people are 'always meaning to' read, and, like the Bible, he is
11 widely known at second hand. People know by hearsay that
12 Bill Sykes was a burglar and that Mr Micawber had a bald
13 head, just as they know by hearsay that Moses was found in a
14 basket of bulrushes and saw the 'back parts' of the Lord.
15 Another thing that is very noticeable is the growing unpopu-
16 larity of American books. And another – the publishers get
17 into a stew about this every two or three years – is the
18 unpopularity of short stories. The kind of person who asks the
19 librarian to choose a book for him nearly always starts by
20 saying 'I don't want short stories', or 'I do not desire little
21 stories', as a German customer of ours used to put it. If you ask
22 them why, they sometimes explain that it is too much fag to
23 get used to a new set of characters with every story; they like
24 to 'get into' a novel which demands no further thought after
25 the first chapter. I believe, though, that the writers are more to
26 blame here than the readers. Most modern short stories, English and American, are
27 utterly lifeless and worthless, far more so than most novels. ...

George ORWELL. 1946. 'The prevention of literature' reprinted 2009 in *Shooting an Elephant and other essays*. London: Penguin pp 207-225.

This extract pp209-10

1 [...] it is the peculiarity of our
2 age that the rebels against the existing order, at any rate the
3 most numerous and characteristic of them, are also rebelling
4 against the idea of individual integrity. 'Daring to stand alone'
5 is ideologically criminal as well as practically dangerous. The
6 independence of the writer and the artist is eaten away by
7 vague economic forces, and at the same time it is undermined
8 by those who should be its defenders. It is with the second
9 process that I am concerned here.

10 Freedom of thought and of the press are usually attacked by
11 arguments which are not worth bothering about. Anyone who
12 has experience of lecturing and debating knows them off
13 backwards. Here I am not trying to deal with the familiar claim
14 that freedom is an illusion, or with the claim that there is more
15 freedom in totalitarian countries than in democratic ones, but
16 with the much more tenable and dangerous proposition that
17 freedom is undesirable and that intellectual honesty is a form
18 of antisocial selfishness. Although other aspects of the question
19 are usually in the foreground the controversy over freedom of
20 speech and of the press is at the bottom a controversy over the
21 desirability, or otherwise, of telling lies. What is really at issue
22 is the right to report contemporary events truthfully, or as
23 truthfully as is consistent with the ignorance, bias and self-
24 deception from which every observer necessarily suffers. In
25 saying this I may seem to be saying that straightforward
26 'reportage' is the only branch of literature that matters: but I
27 will try to show later that at every literary level, and probably
28 in every one of the arts, the same issue arises in more or less
29 subtilized forms. Meanwhile, it is necessary to strip away the
30 irrelevancies in which this controversy is usually wrapped up.

1 'By 1885,' writes historian Keith Webb, 'Gladstone was fully
2 converted to Home Rule for both Ireland and Scotland.' Ireland
3 was the more urgent case: unfortunately, Gladstone's hopes for a
4 peaceful transition to self-government ran aground on
5 the rocks of religious and ethnic conflict, and even split the Liberal
6 Party itself. Scottish Home Rule became a back-burner issue, with
7 the failure of Ireland as a warning to anyone trying to undo
8 Westminster's control over other parts of the United Kingdom.

9 Home Rule was originally a Liberal Party issue, just as the
10 Liberal Party was Scotland's principal political party. As the
11 Liberals withered and died after World War I, so did Scotland's
12 hopes that it might reverse the trend of two centuries and bring
13 some control over its own affairs away from London and back to
14 Edinburgh. Tories were inalterably opposed to any devolution, so
15 Home Rulers turned to the Labour Party – after all, many of its key
16 founders, such as Keir Hardie, were also Scotsmen. But Labour
17 had come to see Scotland's working class as an essential part of
18 their own political base: they saw Scottish self-rule as political
19 suicide. So in 1928 disgruntled Scots broke from Labour and
20 formed their own Scottish Nationalist Party, or SNP.

21 The amazing story of the SNP's rise and eventual triumph in the
22 face of tremendous official hostility and bitter factional infighting
23 closely follows the decline of traditional British politics. The SNP
24 came to fill the void created by the demise of the Liberals and
25 classical liberalism: as the other political parties made class struggle
26 and whether to extend or demolish the welfare state their principal
27 issues, Scottish voters began to turn to a party that, if nothing
28 else, offered a way out of Scotland's malaise. Whether it was devo-
29 lution, or autonomy, or outright independence (the SNP leadership
30 often quarrelled bitterly over which they wanted), it was at least
31 something different – and something that struck a chord that most
32 Scots deeply felt but had been afraid to acknowledge: a sense of
33 national pride.

Bill BRYSON. 2003. *A Short History of Nearly Everything*. London: Black Swan.
This excerpt: pp180-1 (Chapter 9: The Mighty Atom)

1 For all his success, [Ernest] Rutherford was not an especially
2 brilliant man and was actually pretty terrible at mathematics.
3 Often during his lectures he would get so lost in his own
4 equations that he would give up halfway through and tell
5 the students to work it out for themselves. According to his
6 longtime colleague James Chadwick, discoverer of the
7 neutron, he wasn't even particularly clever at experi-
8 mentation. He was simply tenacious and open-minded. For
9 brilliance he substituted shrewdness and a kind of daring. His
10 mind, in the words of one biographer, 'was always operat-
11 ing out towards the frontiers, as far as he could see, and that
12 was a great deal further than most other men'. Confronted
13 with an intractable problem, he was prepared to work at it
14 harder and longer than most people and to be more re-
15 ceptive to unorthodox explanations. His greatest
16 breakthrough came because he was prepared to spend
17 immensely tedious hours sitting at a screen counting alpha
18 particle scintillations, as they were known – the sort of work
19 that would normally have been farmed out. He was one of
20 the first – perhaps the very first – to see that the power in-
21 herent in the atom could, if harnessed, make bombs
22 powerful enough to 'make this old world vanish in smoke'.

Bill BRYSON. 2003. *A Short History of Nearly Everything*. London: Black Swan.
This excerpt: pp416-7 (Chapter 22: Goodbye to all that)

1 Crises in the Earth's history are invariably associated with
2 dramatic leaps afterwards. The fall of the Ediacaran fauna
3 was followed by the creative outburst of the Cambrian
4 period. The Ordovician extinction of 440 million years ago
5 cleared the oceans of a lot of immobile filter feeders and,
6 somehow, created conditions that favoured darting fish and
7 giant aquatic reptiles. These in turn were in an ideal position
8 to send colonists onto dry land when another blowout in the
9 late Devonian period gave life another sound shaking. And
10 so it has gone at scattered intervals throughout history. If most
11 of these events hadn't happened just as they did, just when
12 they did, we almost certainly wouldn't be here now.

13 The Earth has seen five major extinction episodes in its
14 time – the Ordovician, Devonian, Permian, Triassic and
15 Cretaceous, in that order – and many smaller ones. The
16 Ordovician (440 million years ago) and Devonian (365
17 million) each wiped out about 80 to 85 per cent of species. But
18 the real whopper was the Permian extinction of about 245
19 million years ago, which raised the curtain on the long age
20 of the dinosaurs. In the Permian, at least 95 per cent of
21 animals known from the fossil record checked out, never to
22 return. Even about a third of insect species went – the only
23 occasion on which they were lost en masse. It is as close as
24 we have ever come to total obliteration.

Vance PACKARD.1957. *The Hidden Persuaders*. London: Penguin.

Chapter 11: Class and Caste in the Salesroom. pp99-100.

1 When Lloyd Warner, of the University of Chicago, published
2 his book *Social Class in America* in 1948 it created a respectful
3 stir in academic circles; but in subsequent years it was to create
4 an even greater stir in merchandising circles. In fact it came to
5 be regarded as a milestone in the sociological approach to the
6 consumer. The book became a manual by which merchandisers
7 could forge appeals that would be particularly persuasive with
8 the various social layers of the American population. The
9 *Journal of Marketing* called Warner's definitions of the social
10 classes in America 'the most important step forward in market
11 research in many years'. His book created so much excitement
12 among merchandisers because it dissected the motivations and
13 desires of people by class levels.

14 Burleigh Gardner in founding the M.R. firm of Social Re-
15 search, Inc., took the Warner layers as his main guiding thesis
16 and in fact retained Warner as an associate in the firm.

17 Warner laid down his concept of a layered America as a
18 society of six classes. These classes, he felt, were distinct, and
19 in each class you got a uniformity of behaviour that was fairly
20 predictable. He defined his social classes not only in terms of
21 wealth and power but in terms of people's consumption and
22 sociability habits. This broader approach to differentiation has
23 received support from other perceptive observers of American
24 society. Russell Lynes, the *Harper's* editor and writer, in his
25 famous dissection of upper brows, lower brows, and middle
26 brows, used the tossed salad as a more reliable indicator of a
27 person's status brow-wise than the size of his bank account. And
28 David Riesman in his now classic *The Lonely Crowd* makes the
29 point we are seeing the emergence of a new social system with
30 criteria of status that were not considered in traditional systems
31 of class structure.

32 Warner's six classes shape up roughly as follows, in terms of
33 typical constituents:

- 34 1. The upper upper – old-line aristocrats in a community;
- 35 2. The lower upper – the new rich;
- 36 3. The upper middle – professionals, executives, owners of
37 some of the larger businesses in a community;
- 38 4. The lower middle – white-collar workers, tradesmen, a few
39 skilled workers.

40 5. The upper lower – mostly skilled and semi-skilled.

41 6. The lower lower – labourers and unassimilated foreign
42 groups.

43 From a merchandising standpoint the three top classes are
44 the so-called 'quality market' and constitute about fifteen per
45 cent of the total population. Another twenty per cent of the
46 population can be found in the 'lower lower' class at the
47 very bottom. It is the fourth and fifth classes that fascinate mer-
48 chandisers because they constitute, together, about sixty-five per
49 cent of the population in a typical community and make up a
50 great concentration of the nation's purchasing power.

51 Merchandisers have been particularly interested in the female
52 of the species in this sixty-five per cent of the population. They
53 call her Mrs Middle Majority. Gardner calls her the 'darling of
54 the advertiser'. (The female interests merchandisers more than
55 the male breadwinner because it is the female that typically con-
56 trols about eighty per cent of the family's purchasing decisions.)

57 Happily for the merchandiser, Mrs Middle Majority is simply
58 delighted by many of the products geared to the American house-
59 wife, particularly products and appliances for the kitchen, which
60 is the centre of her world. Her kitchen, Warner found, is actually
61 a lot nicer than an upper-class kitchen in terms of objects there.
62 Warner says, 'It sounds crazy, but it is true. . . . She is a wonder-
63 ful market because she has all these beautiful objects just pushed
64 in all around the place. When you go into her home you are
65 often expected to go out and look at her kitchen and admire it.'

1 The subconscious salesmen, in groping for better hooks, de-
2 ployed in several directions. One direction they began exploring
3 in a really major way was the moulding of images; the creation
4 of distinctive, highly appealing 'personalities' for products that
5 were essentially undistinctive. The aim was to build images that
6 would arise before our 'inner eye' at the mere mention of the
7 product's name, once we had been properly conditioned.
8 Thus they would trigger our action in a competitive sales
9 situation.

10 A compelling need for such images was felt by merchandisers,
11 as I've indicated, because of the growing standardization of, and
12 complexity of, ingredients in most products, which resulted in
13 products that defied reasonable discrimination. Three hundred
14 smokers loyal to one of three major brands of cigarette were
15 given the three brands to smoke (with labels taped) and asked to
16 identify their own favourite brand. Result: thirty-five per cent
17 were able to do so; and under the law of averages pure guesses
18 would have accounted for a third of the correct identifications.
19 In short, something less than two per cent could be credited with
20 any real power of discrimination. Somewhat comparable results were obtained
21 when merchandisers tried 'blindfold' tests on beer
22 and whisky drinkers.

Tam DAYELL. 2000. 'On the Decline of Intelligent Government' Conversation with Ivo Mosley. In I. Mosley (ed) *Dumbing Down: culture, politics and the mass media*, pp 11-18. Bowling Green (OH): Imprint Academic – p17

1 *IM: Does the increasing control exercised by party machines, and*
2 *the role of 'spin doctors', make modern democratic parties seem*
3 *increasingly totalitarian?*

4 Well, my use of 'party machine' begs a number of questions. In
5 the case of the present Government, is it the party machine or
6 the 10 Downing Street machine? I think the latter is the more
7 accurate description. If people talk to those of my generation
8 about the party machine or party policy, we tend to think in
9 terms of the policy of the National Executive Committee of the
10 party, hammered out on the anvil of resolutions at party
11 meetings, particularly the former House Policy Committee of the
12 National Executive Committee of the NEC, and endorsed by
13 the Party Conference. Right or wrong, recent decisions on single
14 mothers, incapacity benefit and a number of other matters
15 were not, by any stretch of the imagination, *party* policy – they
16 were *Government* policy. Equally, it is the Leader and his office
17 in the Conservative Party who have been instrumental in the
18 expulsion of Julian Critchley and other pro-Europeans from
19 the Tory tribe. It would not have occurred to previous leaders
20 to do anything of the kind. (The case of Viscount Hinchinbrooke
21 in Dorset being rather different.) .

22 'Rocking the boat' has escalated up the rungs of the ladder
23 of political sin. Much fun has been made of MPs having 'pagers'.
24 Actually, although I do not have a pager, ribaldry on this
25 particular point is misplaced. With offices as far away as the
26 Outer Mongolia of Number Seven Millbank, Members who
27 are not Sebastian Coe do require warning of impending
28 divisions. What is not a joke is the requirement to be 'on message'
29 on matters of policy. Not only when a General Election looms,
30 but even when there is a whiff of a by-election, there falls the
31 veil of a taboo on tricky, albeit urgent, issues.

32 The trouble is that a ridiculous and ill-conceived yearning for
33 day-to-day public approval prevents Government from
34 tackling difficult social issues. If the attitude is not quite, 'one
35 of these days is none of these days', it is at least, 'we'd better be
36 careful not to offend too many voters until after the next election!'
37 This does not synchronize with prompt good government!

1 In America the language of the southern blacks moved north as
2 they were sucked up-country to man the booming factories. (In the
3 last thirty years of the nineteenth century, for instance, US steel
4 production rose by over eleven thousand per cent.) In the 1890s over
5 ninety per cent of African Americans lived in the rural south; sixty
6 years later, ninety-five per cent had moved to the urban north. They
7 discovered that they had not left behind the 'colour bar'. Where they
8 settled was invariably on 'the wrong side of the tracks'. But their
9 language took over those for whom they worked. It was often lan-
10 guage associated with pleasure. People began to dance the 'cake walk'
11 and then the 'hoochy-koochy' and 'the shimmy', they started to
12 'jive' and 'boogie-woogie'. 'Jazz' and 'blues' arrived at the beginning
13 of the twentieth century and changed music for ever. 'Hip' probably
14 came from the African word 'hipikat', meaning someone finely
15 attuned to his/her environment. 'Jazz' later came to mean having
16 sex, as did 'rock'n'roll'. 'Jelly roll', 'cherry pie', and 'custard pie' were
17 all words for female genitalia. 'Boogie-woogie' was a euphemism for
18 syphilis – 'boogie' was a southern word for prostitute. 'Shack up'
19 meaning living together in common-law fashion also came from black
20 speech at this time. [...]

21 Language has its own force and works, I think, to demands and
22 impulses which cannot always be slotted into the received idea that
23 economic and military superiority alone produce linguistic domi-
24 nance. Pressure groups and revolutionaries can play a part. African
25 American English came from a minority, mostly poor, often
26 oppressed, all of whom were descended from a different language
27 pool than English, and yet their expressions colonized the English
28 language and not only of youth. Even President Nixon said 'right
29 on' and gave the 'thumbs up'.

30 A characteristic of English throughout is the ease with which it
31 can borrow or steal words from other languages. By the end of the
32 sixteenth century, there were words from fifty different languages
33 being used as 'English'. The flow of immigrants to America had the
34 same result. On to the bone of Puritan English so tenaciously nur-
35 tured by the *Mayflower* families and others who followed from Eng-
36 land, came Irish and Scots, especially on the frontier, together with
37 words from Native American, and words from other European languages [...]

Ivo MOSLEY. 2000. 'Dumbing Down Democracy'. In I. Mosley (ed) *Dumbing Down: culture, politics and the mass media*, pp 19-31. Bowling Green (OH): Imprint Academic – p19-20

1 We are used to thinking of democracy and totalitarianism
2 as opposites, so it comes as a surprise when, with grim
3 regularity, totalitarian regimes emerge from democracies. But
4 this surprise is misplaced, for in the liberal tradition of
5 thought there are many warnings that a tendency towards loss
6 of freedom is inherent in democracy itself.

7 Changes in democratic cultures of Western countries
8 have led to worries over whether some new kind of totalitari-
9 anism is creeping up on us. The cult of charisma, in the form of
10 pop and film idols; the continual celebration of violence in the
11 media; the cult of the body beautiful; the abolition of God; the
12 division of society into middle-class and underclass –
13 *ubermenschen* and *untermenschen*; more and more invasive
14 state control over our lives, all remind us of well-documented
15 totalitarian tendencies of the past.

16 Certain acts of government exacerbate these anxieties; the
17 abolition of traditions and therefore the past; the creation of a
18 new and ersatz national identity; the state's hijacking and cor-
19 ruption of art; ever-more pervasive state control in education;
20 the sidelining of parliament and civil institutions; an increase-
21 ing use of propaganda to supersede the processes of debate

22 Other developments send out warning signals. There has
23 been a huge increase in the amount of control that political
24 parties exercise over their members. The powers of the execu-
25 tive arm of government extend increasingly into the judiciary
26 and over parliament, as the Government takes it upon itself to
27 release convicted torturers and murderers for political rea-
28 sons, as it involved us in a war in Kosovo that it never had any
29 intention of declaring, and as it inflicts by *diktat* a myriad of
30 petty regulations, many of which are never ratified by
31 parliament.

32 Most recently, we have seen attempts at introducing the cult

33 of the leader as representing all the people (except for the
34 'dark forces of conservatism'). This is what the Nazis called
35 *Gleichshaltung*: 'coordination, streamlining, bringing into
36 line'. By this means 'the fuehrer, representing the will of the
37 people, directed the flow of policy through the institutions of
38 state and party down to the people'. This semi-mystical pro-
39 cess justified bypassing all the normal checks on state activi-
40 ties; vested interests, institutions, traditional groupings, the
41 conservative forces of law and religion. All such groups –
42 if they resist – were cast as 'backward-looking', 'anti-
43 progressive'; 'enemies of the people'.

Neal ASCHERSON 'Scotland's High Road to Home Rule'. *The New York Times*, May 21, 2015

1 LONDON — Almost no one in Britain expected the electoral earthquake of
2 May 2015. Twin shocks shattered expectations about the next government and left
3 a yawning fissure across the United Kingdom.

4 The first was that David Cameron's Conservatives won a majority in the House
5 of Commons, after opinion polls had predicted a "hung Parliament." The second
6 was Scotland's becoming a one-party state overnight, after the Scottish National
7 Party took 56 of Scotland's 59 seats in Westminster. The main victim was Labour,
8 once dominant, now vanquished.

9 Labour's unexpected collapse, under the leadership of Ed Miliband, was such
10 that even if the party had held all its 41 Scottish seats (instead of losing 40 of them),
11 it would have been doomed by its failure in England and Wales. Several motives
12 drove Scots to desert Mr. Miliband's party. It was not so much his policies; many of
13 them were left-leaning enough to match Scotland's tradition of state intervention
14 and publicly funded welfare. Rather, it was a loss of faith in the Scottish Labour
15 Party's ability to fight for those policies.

16 The S.N.P. had more credibility after steadfastly blocking privatization of the
17 National Health Service in Scotland through years when both Labour and
18 Conservative governments were opening the English N.H.S. Scottish Labour,
19 subordinate to its London headquarters, lacked the conviction to compete with the
20 bursting confidence and energy of the S.N.P. as it promised to halt David Cameron's
21 austerity program and reverse his spending cuts.

22 The London connection was lethally damaging to Scottish Labour. Its first
23 leader, Johann Lamont, resigned, complaining loudly that her party had been
24 treated as "a branch office." Then, her successor, Jim Murphy, made promises
25 about maintaining benefits in Scotland — only to be brutally contradicted by
26 Labour's London-based finance spokesman. The S.N.P. used these gaffes mercilessly
27 to bolster its claim to be the only "party of Scotland."

28 Free of coalition partners, the new Cameron-led government intends to drive
29 ahead with public spending cuts, repealing European Union-inspired human rights
30 legislation and preparing for a referendum on Britain's membership in the European
31 Union. Yet Mr. Cameron's first post-election trip was to fly to Edinburgh and sit
32 down with Nicola Sturgeon, first minister of Scotland and leader of the S.N.P.

33 They talked calmly about transferring more financial powers to the Scottish
34 government. But Mr. Cameron's real need was to gauge how much damage Ms.
35 Sturgeon might do to him.

36 In theory, the threat seems slight. Before the election, members of the S.N.P.
37 thought they would hold the balance of power; now they are merely a powerful
38 minority in Parliament. With Labour and the Liberal Democrats so reduced, where
39 can the S.N.P. find the allies to challenge the Tory government?

40 A half-forgotten historical precedent suggests that the S.N.P. can make its
41 presence felt. Between 1884 and 1918, a large bloc of Irish nationalist members sat
42 in the Commons. Sometimes, they held the balance of power; sometimes not. But
43 even when Liberals or Conservatives governed with a majority, the Irish party used
44 filibusters and procedural tricks to press its demands for reform and, above all,
45 home rule.

46 The S.N.P. invaders, though new to the Westminster game, are no novices.
47 They are not from the promoted intern class that has made British lawmakers seem
48 so out of touch. They include Alex Salmond, a Commons member before he was
49 Scottish first minister, who is still regarded as a skilled political operator.

50 Mr. Cameron's majority is small, his parliamentary party divided on big issues.
51 If the Scottish party can enlist Tory rebels, as well as Labour and Liberal Democrat
52 survivors, it could frustrate significant policies.

53 The S.N.P., though, faces challenges of its own. Ms. Sturgeon fought a fine
54 campaign, but her nationalism is instrumental, not romantic — a means to achieve
55 social justice and prosperity in Scotland, not an end in itself. Other nationalists may
56 come to ask what the S.N.P.'s 56 members are achieving, if they win skirmishes in
57 London but bring sovereignty no nearer.

58 After the S.N.P.'s lost independence referendum in 2014, Ms. Sturgeon cannot
59 afford another. So she resists the pressure to set a date for a second referendum;
60 she says it will happen only if circumstances change and when the Scottish people
61 indicate they want one.

62 Her gradualism may be vulnerable to circumstances' changing. An
63 overwhelming S.N.P. victory in Scottish elections next year would create enormous
64 pressure to put a new referendum bill before the Edinburgh Parliament.

65 Another altered circumstance could be Mr. Cameron's referendum on British
66 membership in the European Union, in 2016 or 2017. If the result was an English,

67 Welsh and Northern Irish majority for leaving the European Union, but a clear
68 Scottish majority for staying, a constitutional crisis would erupt. Again, Scotland's
69 government would be bound to consult the Scottish people once more on
70 independence. Breaking one union would surely lead to breaking the other.

71 The other trap for Ms. Sturgeon is the Quebec Syndrome: A national
72 community votes for an independence party as its regional government, believing it
73 to be the only party not subordinate to a distant capital. But when that party
74 answers its calling and holds a referendum on independence, the voters narrowly
75 reject it — only to return to the party enthusiastically at the next regional election.
76 This dynamic — yes to “our party,” no to its core belief — caused a death spiral for
77 the Parti Québécois.

78 Conceivably, this could happen to the Scottish National Party. Its victory this
79 month was made possible partly by Scots who voted against independence last year
80 but see the S.N.P. as sole defender of their values and interests. The big question is
81 whether the contest between Edinburgh and Westminster in the next five years,
82 which is bound to be bruising, will convert that group to independence.

83 For a generation, majority Scottish opinion was for limited home rule within
84 Britain. But this election's sensational outcome shows how disaffected Scots have
85 become with British institutions.

86 Once again, Scots are governed from London by a party for which they did not
87 vote and whose policies most find repugnant. Fostered by Conservative tactlessness
88 and a new strain of anti-Scottish bias in the London-based media, the argument that
89 real self-government may not, after all, be compatible with belonging to the United
90 Kingdom grows only stronger.

91 Scotland's nationalism is at the mildest, most civic end of the spectrum, yet
92 the eventual emergence of an independent Scottish state looks inevitable.

Marina WARNER. 2015. 'Learning my lesson'. *London Review of Books* 37 (6): 8-14. Online version <http://www.lrb.co.uk/v37/n06/marina-warner/learning-my-lesson> (accessed 20/5/2015) Section 2

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1 As universities are beaten into the shapes dictated by business,
2 so language is suborned to its ends. We have all heard the robotic
3 idiom of management, as if a button had activated a digitally
4 generated voice. Like Newspeak in Nineteen Eighty-Four, business-
5 speak is an instance of magical naming, superimposing the
6 imagery of the market on the idea of a university – through 'targets',
7 'benchmarks', time-charts, league tables, 'vision statements',
8 'content providers'. We may laugh or groan, depending on the
9 state of our mental health at the thickets of TLAs – three-letter
10 acronyms, in the coinage of the writer Richard Hamblyn – that
11 accumulate like dental plaque.

12 Such acronyms now pepper every document circulating
13 in every institution, not just universities. Like the necromantic
14 mirror of the Snow Queen, they swallow everything up and
15 deaden it. The code conceals aggression: actions are under-
16 taken in its name and justified by its rules; it pushes res-
17 sponsibility from persons to systems. It pushes individuals to one side
18 and replaces them with columns, boxes, numbers, rubrics,
19 often meaningless tautologies (a form will ask first for 'aims', and then
20 for 'objectives'). 'When I use a word,' Humpty Dumpty says, 'it means
21 just what I choose it to mean, neither more nor less.' Alice is
22 puzzled by this, but Humpty Dumpty explains: 'The ques-
23 tion is ... which is to be master – that's all.' The term that
24 is successfully imposed will occupy the field of meaning: call-
25 ing the work of writing a book 'generating an output' or a uni-
26 versity 'a knowledge delivery solution' has a cryokinetic effect: it
27 freezes the infinite differences that writing and research
28 make possible, and sets them hard in the mould of market
29 ideology, as sales items.

1 Marina Warner makes some very important general points about the state of
2 higher education in England and Wales (LRB, 19 March). It is essential that the
3 objective good of education is continually argued for, especially when
4 managerial language tends to dominate how HE is discussed and experienced.
5 However I felt somewhat left out of her broadside against the direction of the
6 sector. As an administrator at one of the London universities mentioned in the
7 article, as well as a self-funded PhD student, I have first-hand experience
8 navigating the byways and back-channels of these confounding institutions. I
9 also have a great deal of experience dealing with high-handed and unco-
10 operative academics, who feel that their administrative responsibilities are an
11 offence to their genius. Marina Warner's complaints about forms, timesheets
12 and grant applications are familiar, but I feel that her conflation of these duties
13 – familiar to anyone who is a part of a large, public institution – with an over-
14 generalised narrative of decline in the sector is a counter-productive
15 contribution to the debate. Her negative experiences are not uncommon but
16 nor are they typical, and her romantic imagining of academic labour is quite a
17 long way from the experiences of most scholars under the age of forty.

18 The idea that universities are analogous to a 'public coastal path or an urban
19 park' is entirely wide of the mark. Indeed the bucolic language and romantic
20 source material deliberately ignore the enormous volume of precious public
21 and charitable money that is pumped into universities every year. The fact that
22 academics have to 'play ball' might be inconvenient, but it is not a ploy by a
23 rising army of administrators and managers to undermine academic freedom. It
24 is a result of the fact that funders require transparency and accountability with
25 the use of their funds. Administrators exist to ensure that salaries are paid on
26 time and contractual obligations are met, while scholars do their bit under the
27 work description.

28 Universities in England have historically been bastions of privilege and elitism; a
29 finishing school for the establishment or a playground for the children of the
30 middle classes. This had to change, and many of the frightening turns towards
31 privatisation and scholarly decrepitude that Warner identifies were designed to
32 improve accountability and fiscal responsibility and to protect students from
33 the worst excesses/ incompetences of the academics that hold the keys to their
34 future. We can debate the extent to which this has been achieved, and the
35 extent to which this new culture has had negative side effects, but the HE
36 sector was disgracefully ill equipped to deal with the students of the 21st
37 century – and still is in many places.

38 Tom Hennessy

39 London E8

Wine Tasting Notes

<http://www.thewinecellarinsider.com>

2010 Tenuta dell'Ornellaia Masseto Toscana IGT

What a stunner, with its fat, juicy, ripe fruit laden personality, the wine is concentrated with layers of black and white cherry, kirsch, dark chocolate, caramel, fennel and earthy sensations. Young, as you would expect, the tannins are soft and ripe, but 5-10 years of cellaring, or at least 3 hours in the decanter are needed to get this going in your glass.

2009 Tenuta dell'Ornellaia Masseto Toscana IGT

Medium bodied and in a finesse style, this early drinking vintage of Masseto serves up fresh, sweet, black raspberries, kirsch, espresso bean and smoky characteristics.

2008 Tenuta dell'Ornellaia Masseto Toscana IGT

Riveting example of Italian Merlot that is packed with fleshy, ripe, chocolate covered, fat, juicy black cherries, licorice, truffle, espresso, caramel and smoke. Powerful, yet elegant, give this some time to soften and expand.

2007 Tenuta dell'Ornellaia Masseto Toscana IGT

Very sensuous expression of Merlot, with the texture of pure silk and velvet, the wine is rich, deep and long. With a few hours of decanting, this was showing great.

2006 Tenuta dell'Ornellaia Masseto Toscana IGT

Superb wine, with a complex nose of flowers, coffee bean, licorice, black cherry liqueur and wet earth. The silky, sweet tannins and long, fresh, plush finish are just now getting to the sweet spot.

2005 Tenuta dell'Ornellaia Masseto Toscana IGT

Medium/full bodied with some noticeable heat, red and black fruits, licorice, cherry, herbs, earth and spice, there was a minor sensation of dryness in the finish. I've enjoyed other vintages of Masseto much more.

David LEE. 2000. 'What Contemporary Art Means to Me'. In I. Mosley (ed) *Dumbing Down: culture, politics and the mass media*, pp 197-199. Bowling Green (OH): Imprint Academic

1 What does 'contemporary art' mean to me, as distinct
2 from plain old 'art'?

3 First of all, it means an income. Not a very good one, but
4 editing a magazine like *Art Review* beats working for a living,
5 especially if the alternative requires kowtowing to a suit with
6 business studies degree from the University of South Bacup.

7 It means having to look at and read about a huge quantity of
8 fashionable art whose qualities, when judged against any
9 known criteria, are conspicuously absent. Qualities claimed
10 for the work have to be taken on trust, there being no method
11 of objective assessment. Criteria proposed for evaluating the
12 work are arbitrary, and made up as the arbiter goes along. In
13 order to enjoy most fashionable art it is necessary to have end-
14 less patience and the blind faith of the religious convert.

15 It means the tyranny of the young and therefore, very prob-
16 ably, the tyranny of the badly educated – those who have no
17 awareness of their own derisory pretentiousness.

18 It means that in figurative painting one is expected to
19 overlook bad drawing and inept composition and pretend it
20 doesn't matter, because the artist is allegedly attempting
21 something else 'challengingly' beyond the range of the nor-
22 mal. In any other discipline – music or literature, say – the
23 equivalent 'experiments', with their demonstrable incompe-
24 tence, would be laughed at.

25 It means graduating students pursuing a reputation as fast
26 as possible and at all costs. The belief seems to be that there's
27 no virtue in obscurity, however brilliant you may be. Thus
28 there is a frenetic rush by youngsters to provoke column
29 inches and air minutes of news for their activities, because this
30 personal visibility will be the yardstick by which their artistic
31 success is judged. When notoriety is all, the work becomes an
32 impertinence, a mere epiphenomenon of the reputation.

33 It means the establishing of an instantly recognizable brand
34 image. In a competitive market, branding and distinctiveness
35 is the ticket. It is all that counts.

36 It means unreadable, lazily-edited art magazines of predict-
37 able content.

38 It means institutionalized corruption, prejudice and censor-

39 ship, and the self-perpetuation of governing oligarchies so
40 narrow-sighted that they are effectively blind. The Arts Coun-
41 cil springs to mind as an organization which has done nothing
42 to suggest that public funding of the visual arts should be con-
43 tinued. Indeed, their antics over the last decade might be
44 looked upon in the future, when we get around to deciding a
45 better structure for arts funding, as a way of how not to do it.

46 It means, through public funding, the institutionalization of
47 mediocrity, the creation of a layer of artists who previously
48 did not exist but which exists only because public funding is
49 there to pay for it.

50 it means young artists bleating incessantly about how little
51 they earn, as if the world owes them a living regardless of
52 whether they produce something anyone wants to buy.

53 It means self-pitying artists thinking their work is not
54 appreciated because viewers and collectors are blind, igno-
55 rant, ill-educated *etc. etc.* It never occurs to these artists that
56 the reason they are ignored might be because they are no good.

57 it means an art-funding apparatus in which crucial deci-
58 sions are made by administrators, and not by those known for
59 any judgment in art matters. And it means, therefore, the
60 accession to authority of the art-historically ignorant. Many of
61 today's art bureaucrats give every indication of having an
62 encyclopaedic knowledge of what happened a week ago last
63 Monday, but know bugger all about what happened at almost
64 any other period before that.

65 it means an Arts Council which discriminates against *any-*
66 *thing* historical or traditional, and which routinely contra-
67 venes the principles of its charter, which states that the best is
68 to be taken to the majority.

69 It means stunts, diversions and pseudo-entertainments
70 dropped on our streets and in our countryside which the per-
71 petrators have the effrontery to call 'public art', a misnomer on
72 two counts as it is rarely art and the public couldn't give a toss.

73 It means good artists are *not* exhibited because they are old
74 or unfashionable, and fail to come within the brackets of
75 'young', 'contemporary' and 'innovative'. They may excel at
76 their style, medium, technique, or whatever, but their efforts
77 are censored by a prejudiced state apparatus. In short they are
78 the wrong kinds of artists.

79 It means a great many artists working honestly, modestly
80 and quietly in obscurity, struggling with poverty and a lack of

81 recognition; resigned perhaps to these, but bitter at the manipu-
82 lation of art by a very few powerful people and galleries.

83 It means that, because conceptual art monopolizes art pub-
84 licity, all contemporary art is perceived by most people as a
85 monumental confidence trick.

86 It means that art, as an activity whose purpose is to give
87 pleasure and profound experience to the viewer and to arouse
88 and educate dormant imagination has been exterminated by a
89 deadly cocktail of polytechnic theorists, lazy educators, politi-
90 cal manipulators and gender bores.

91 But, most of all, it means an income. When I retire, for all I
92 care 'contemporary art' can vanish even further up its own
93 arse

