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The Guardian, 2009

Cameron gets on ‘purr-fectly’ well with his cat

LONDON: British Prime Minister David Cameron’s office denied yesterday that his family has no love for Larry, the Downing Street cat. Following claims in a new book that Cameron acquiring the cat was little more than a public relations stunt, a ‘savelarry’ hashtag began trending on Twitter. But a spokesman for the Prime Minister dismissed suggestions that Larry was an unloved pet: “Totally untrue. He is liked by everyone in the building and we get on purr-fectly well.”



Larry was acquired after a rat was spotted in two television news bulletins scurrying outside the black door of the Prime Minister’s residence in central London. However, his efficiency has been regularly called into question and it took him a few months to make his first confirmed kill. Reports have made him out as a cat more interested in snoozing than putting the frighteners on inner-city rodents.

The Downing Street website says Larry has “captured the hearts of the Great British public. The nation sends him gifts and treats daily. Larry spends his days greeting guests to the house, inspecting security defences and testing antique furniture for napping quality. His day-to-day responsibilities also include contemplating a solution to the mouse occupancy of the house. Larry says this is still ‘in tactical planning stage’.”

There have been resident cats on the prowl in Downing Street since the 1920s. They have even been given the title of chief mouser to the Cabinet Office and put on the payroll.

Times of Oman, 2013

Waiting is good for you

- 1 IT probably doesn't feel that way when you're standing behind ten others... but waiting is good for you.
- 2 In tests, University of Chicago researchers found that if someone is given a choice of 50 dollars now or waiting weeks for 55 dollars, they would pick the lower amount straight away. 5, if they were given the same option and then given time to think about it, most would hang on for the larger amount.
- 3 Those who waited longer not only gained patience but ultimately made the better decision, according to the findings of the test published in the *Journal of Organisational Behaviour and Human Decision Processes*. Professor Ayelet Fisbach said: "When people wait, it makes them place a higher value on what they are waiting for, and that higher value makes the experience more worthwhile."



'We'll have to come back later, there's no queue'

Daily Mail, 2013

Emma Watson reveals red carpet secrets



By Anita Singh, Arts and Entertainment Editor

- 1 When Emma Watson attended the New York premiere of Noah, she looked the perfect example of natural beauty. But the actress has revealed just how much 7 a red carpet appearance actually requires, by posting a photograph of the lotions, potions and products involved.
- 2 Watson, 23, shared the picture on Twitter after the New York premiere of Noah, under the heading: "Couldn't have survived today without..." Her flawless complexion was aided by applications of a 'radiance booster' by Dior, a 'skin illuminator' by Giorgio Armani and an application of 'pure jojoba' by Australian brand MV. Hair straighteners, false eyelashes and 'make-up mist' also featured in the picture, alongside various cosmetics from upmarket beauty brands.
- 3 Evidently, Watson likes to be equipped for disaster. Emergency items to deal with last-minute mishaps included safety pins and instant stain remover, plus a guardian angel trinket. Double-sided toupee tape ensured her Oscar de la Renta gown fit like a glove.
- 4 Once the hair and make-up artists had done their work, the Harry Potter actress shared another picture with her 12.5 million Twitter followers. It was titled: "I did NOT wake up like this!" Watson's willingness to disclose her red carpet regime is evidence that she is that rare thing in Hollywood: an actress who does not 10.

- 5 The former child star also has a realistic approach to body image. “It makes me sad to hear girls constantly putting themselves down. We have these unbelievably high expectations of ourselves, when actually we’re human beings and our bodies have a function,” she has said. “We say that the pressure is coming from men but actually it’s from each other. I think women feel so much pressure these days and it can turn us against each other. But we really damage our own confidence when we put ourselves down, so I try not to.”
- 6 She has also admitted that film premieres make her nervous. “Every now and again, I feel a bit wobbly before hitting a red carpet,” she said last year. “It’s always nice to bring friends, especially because I love to see their reactions. It’s not normal to get out of a car and have, like, 80 people screaming at you. And so when they say, ‘This is crazy,’ it makes me feel slightly more sane.”

The Daily Telegraph, 2014

Jason Lewis: The first human-powered circumnavigation of the globe



Thirteen years after Jason Lewis left London for what would be the world's first human-powered circumnavigation of the globe his name was etched into the Guinness Book of World Records.

Q: 1

I was 26. I had a small business cleaning windows and carpets. I felt very claustrophobic in England and I was eager to get out and see the world. The idea to circumnavigate the globe was proposed by my friend, Steve Smith, over beers at 2am. We had long hair and tattoos and weren't the kind of people that any sensible company would want to associate with. So we borrowed £10,000 from friends and family. And then we just left.

Q: 2

To use just your mind, your body and your spirit to get somewhere sounded like the ultimate challenge. I liked the purity and the simplicity of it. If you could ride a bike, or put one foot in front of another, you could do this trip. A trip of 46,505 miles of pedalling, walking, rollerblading and kayaking. I've always been interested in sustainability. I'm always thinking about my footprint, trying not to consume without thinking.

Q: 3

The route changed often depending on how the trip evolved. The ocean sections were set because you're going on the prevailing winds and currents and trying to avoid the hurricane seasons. The land sections were more arbitrary and were dictated by political barriers. For example, getting permission to kayak across Indonesia was difficult. No one had ever kayaked through Indonesia before, so the customs and immigration authorities had no idea what a kayak even was.

Q: 4

We started by going West. Americans still have an appreciation for pioneers, the kind of spirit that built this country. When we reached Miami, after 111 days of pedalling across the Atlantic, we were at the mercy of people we met on the dockside and started networking. We got talks lined up at yacht clubs, Rotary clubs; we put the boat on display at a boat show; we printed up t-shirts that we sold. If we had landed almost anywhere else, I think the expedition would have died then and there. After six months of fundraising we had enough to pay back our friends and family in the UK and could continue on the next leg to San Francisco.

Q: 5

For every hour of travel, it took three hours of fundraising to pay for it. That was much more difficult than anything else. Arriving on a new continent without any money and trying to book talks and figure out how to raise money, that's the exhausting part. When you're from a rich country trying to raise money to cross the world, to a lot of people it seems ridiculous.

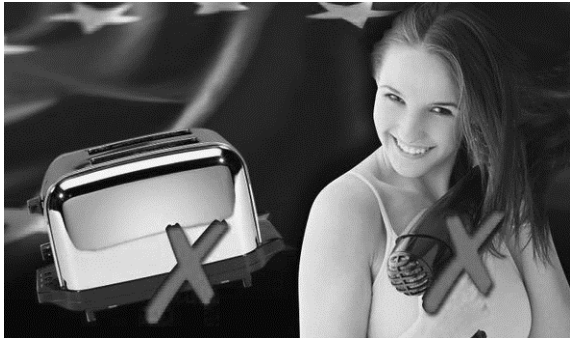
Q: 6

I was sick of travelling by the time I finally got back to London. I knew I'd been out there too long but I'd already invested so many years of my life in the expedition. And so many people had invested in me, people who had given \$20, bought a t-shirt, whatever. I felt this groundswell of support. I had to finish, if for nothing else, for all these people.

bbc.com, 2015

EU ban on electrical appliances

adapted from an article by Nathan Rao

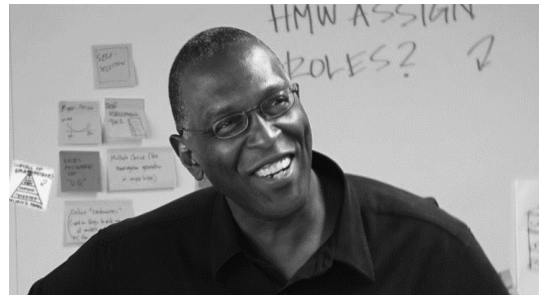
- 1 Campaigners last night rallied round to vent their fury as Brussels bureaucrats unveiled their latest plan to erode the “lifestyles and choices of ordinary people”. It follows the banning this week of vacuum cleaners which have motors above the new EU limit of 1,600 watts in a bid to cut energy usage. The permitted wattage will be almost halved again from September 2017 as the limit is reduced to 900 watts.
- 2 Dozens of other everyday appliances could have the power sucked out of them too. What’s more, some could be scrapped altogether if new rules around climate change are brought in. A report commissioned by the European Commission, the EU’s executive body, sets out plans to look at the energy usage of a range of items and whether they could be made more efficient. The list of around 30 appliance categories includes toasters, kettles, heated greenhouses, power tools, aquarium lights and filters and gym equipment. Meat slicers and popcorn machines are to be spared the chop as they are ‘niche markets’. Mixers, rice cookers, blenders and deep fat fryers, however, are also under threat.
- 3 It forms part of an energy efficiency drive – Ecodesign directive – to reduce consumption by 30 per cent by 2030. However, campaigners repeated calls for the EU not to mess around with Britain’s household appliances. Louise Bours, spokeswoman for Eurosceptic party Ukip, said: “This is unnecessary interference in the lifestyles and choices of ordinary people. Who in the UK asked the EU to make up a list of banned electrical goods? People should be able to choose whichever toaster, juicer and hair dryer they like. It is the EU we need to take power from, not our hair dryers.”
- 4 Alan Murad, of campaign group Get Britain Out, accused the EU of robbing Britons of basic choices. He said: “These proposals are astonishing. The fools who dreamt them up only reveal their economic illiteracy, as high-wattage devices are often more energy efficient than what they’ll be replaced with. The meddling in our affairs by unelected bureaucrats, the relentless stifling of consumer choice, prove the EU have no democratic credentials to speak of. It is yet another assault on the British way of life.”

- 5 EU energy commissioner Gunther Oettinger said the regulations are needed to tackle climate change. He said: “All EU countries agree that energy efficiency is the most effective method to reduce energy consumption and dependence on imports and to improve the climate. There need to be mandatory consumption limits for small electrical appliances.”
- 6 18, Benny Peiser, of the Global Warming Policy Foundation, said sapping the energy out of electrical appliances will only lead to people using them for longer. He said: “Of course this is not going to have any impact on climate and it is not going to save the planet. There is no example in history when any product technology has become more energy efficient and this has led to a decrease in energy usage, in fact the opposite happens. And if it leads to people saving money, then they will just buy more electrical appliances, the theory is nonsense.”
- 7 The Daily Express is the only newspaper to call for Britain to leave the European Union with our Get Britain out of the EU crusade.

express.co.uk, 2014

The World Peace Game

US teacher John Hunter found global recognition when he devised the World Peace Game. He discusses its impact.



- 1 Being thrown in the deep end in my first job gave me the creative freedom I needed. It was 1978 and I was given a ninth grade group in inner-city Richmond, Virginia. These were mostly ethnic minority students who were not well off. My task as a social studies teacher was to cover the subject of Africa, but this was the kind of school that didn't have many textbooks; you had to create your own exercises and assignments. So I created the World Peace Game, which started out as a simple four-by-five plywood board on the floor with a map of Africa taped on it. I gave them all the problems I could find and said, "Let's solve them."
- 2 The students are human agents in the game. The rules state that I can do nothing to interfere. I can only ask questions and point out whether they have considered the consequences of their actions. It's a huge risk every time, but my faith and confidence in the children makes me think they can.
- 3 Some really do dark deeds, but the game allows them to see, experientially, the effects of their positive and negative actions. They almost always choose to do the right thing because it feels better. There is something in children, and all humans at some level, that means they simply want to be helpful, useful and kind. It's not something you have to teach or preach to them. Since the teachers have given control and power to the students in the classroom, they have also got to deal with and be comfortable with the unknown, their own fears, expectations and hopes around that concept.
- 4 In 2006, a documentary filmmaker called Chris Farima filmed one of the World Peace Game cycles in my fourth grade classroom. Four years later in 2010, the film was shown at the South by Southwest film festival (SXSW) in Austin, Texas. Out of 145 international films that were shown there, we received the number one audience prize. 24, a little film about education led to my game being played by world leaders.

- 5 I began touring the world, sharing my game with other teachers. I was invited to attend a screening of the film at the UN and then we were invited to the Pentagon, where the film had been screened four times already. They brought my students in for another visit and four or five generals spent an entire day having serious strategy and tactics discussions with my nine-year-olds. Although it was a game, it was taken quite seriously and with due respect. While the leaders know how to do war, they don't always know how not to do it.

theguardian.com, 2014

Short Stay

- 1 It's a common complaint that the cost of motoring is bringing drivers to their knees – now there is proof. Motorists are having to scabble on all fours to use what is thought to be Britain's lowest pay and display car park machine. They have to lean over to put coins in the slot of the 3ft-tall machine at a short-stay car park in Sheringham, Norfolk. Many then have to sink to the floor to reach the tickets, which are dispensed from a slot only 18 inches from the ground.
- 2 The machine was installed by North Norfolk Council, which intended it to be 'wheelchair-friendly'. But the disabled organisations said yesterday that it could even be unsafe for wheelchair users. Motorists were also astonished at the set-up. The machine – the only one in the car park – poses a problem because it does not stand on an island like those in the council's other car parks. Tickets cost £1 for up to two hours or £1.70 for a maximum of three. Pat Harvey, chairman of the Norfolk Association for the Disabled, is not happy with the machines. "If people have to bend down in their chairs to get their tickets out, then they could fall and injure themselves. It seems rather silly. There is also a problem at the other car parks in North Norfolk because the machines are on top of kerbs so it is impossible to get near them in a wheelchair," he explained.
- 3 The council decided five years ago that disabled drivers should also pay charges for using its car parks. A spokesman said: "We only had the choice of two plinths from the machine manufacturer – a tall one, or one that was supposedly suitable for wheelchair users." He admitted the machine 'does look a bit absurd' but said the council was intending to replace all its ticket machines later this year.



Daily Mail, 2009

Pampered Pooches

- 1 Camila celebrated her first birthday in a blue-and-white striped dress. She played with her guests in a room decorated with pink balloons, lilacs and Hello Kitty posters. When the cake arrived she barked at the single flickering candle. This provoked a similar reaction from the Chihuahuas, French bulldogs and Pomeranians in the room. Valery Palma, a single 35-year-old lawyer who owns Camila, spent \$300 on the birthday party for 11 canines and 16 people, complete with cake, presents and snacks, at a dog hotel featuring a gym and massage and aromatherapy services. "I've never had a female dog so I wanted to do something special with her," said Palma.



- 2 Over the last decade, the growth of Mexico's middle class has created a new market for dogs. Many of the estimated 40 million Mexicans considered to be middle class are having fewer children than their parents did. So they have more money to spend on things like pets. Fancy goods and services for pooches include clothing and accessory boutiques, spas and restaurants with doggie snacks cooked by a pastry chef.
- 3 Mexico has an estimated 20 million dogs or more. Many of these dogs roam the streets hunting for food in the trash. Some spend their days shut up in apartments by owners who use them as living burglar alarms. 31, there is also a growing group of people who see their dog as part of the family. "We're seeing the growth of this idea in which a dog is an alternative to children," said Raul Valadez Azua, a paleozoologist at the National Autonomous University in Mexico City. "On the one hand, they are people who feel that the economic obligations of having a family are too high. On the other hand, they have the resources to give a lot of care to a pet."

tweentribune.com, 2014

It's not you, it's my sneaky parents

- 1 ONE in three parents has embarked on a covert mission to rid their children of a boyfriend or girlfriend they do not like, a report suggests. The study of 2,000 parents, commissioned by Penguin Books, marks the release of the second book in a series for teen readers, *Girl Heart Boy: Rumour Has It*.
- 2 Common tricks include causing arguments between them, banning them from seeing each other and not passing on telephone messages. More than half regularly check their child's Facebook profiles, while 30 per cent read through their emails. Fifteen per cent admitted to posing as a friend on Facebook or Twitter to see their profile.
- 3 Around 24 per cent thought the person their offspring had fallen for was 'too old'. Other reasons include a 'troublemaker' reputation (23 per cent), not liking their family (22 per cent) or being from a 'rough part of town' (16 per cent).
- 4 Mothers are the biggest spies, with one in three admitting they have won a battle to rid their son or daughter of someone they considered 'not good enough'.



The Daily Telegraph, 2012

Chimpanzee wins \$10,000 prize for abstract painting

- 1 A painting by a 37-year-old chimpanzee has won \$10,000 (£6,450) for a Chimp Haven sanctuary in north-west Louisiana. The primate, who uses his tongue to apply colour instead of a brush, received the most votes in the art contest organised by the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS). Five other sanctuaries competed, using paintings created during “enrichment sessions”, but Brent’s delicate smears of blue, violet, yellow and turquoise triumphed before the judge.



- 2 Renowned primatologist and conservationist Jane Goodall picked her favourite piece from the selection of entries. Runners-up included the former performance monkey Patti, who painted with urgent swipes of primary colours; Jamie, who escaped from a lifetime of biomedical research to create an abstract image in violet and pink; and former lab monkey Cheetah, whose burst of hot reds and yellows earned him second place.
- 3 “All of the art was beautiful and unique – just like chimpanzees,” said Goodall. “It was difficult to choose.” The winning sanctuaries will receive grants from the HSUS to help care for chimpanzees rescued from research, entertainment and the pet trade. It is estimated that more than 1,100 chimpanzees reside in laboratories, entertainment facilities, private residences and other facilities in the US.

theguardian.com, 2013

Smart Baby Toys?

adapted from an article by **Cathy O’Leary**

- 1 Many parents are trying to turn their child into a ‘baby genius’ by buying expensive games and gadgets. Instead, it would be better if they let them learn naturally during play, according to an Australian education expert.
- 2 Expert Michael Nagel, who has written several books on neurological development in children, said many parents mistakenly believe they can speed up their child’s development.
- 3 Manufacturers of smart toys are taking advantage of this. They try to convince parents that buying products such as fancy flash cards, Mozart CDs, glossy activity books and language DVDs could greatly accelerate their child’s development.
- 4 Dr Nagel claims that children feed their brain through engaging with their environment. “When you let them run around outside, playing and socialising with other children, and provide them with a loving, safe environment at home, that’s all a child needs for healthy development. Young children also learn literacy and academic skills through daily activities such as writing shopping lists, counting towels in the wash and counting or colour-matching toys.”
- 5 “Trying to have children do too much too soon by performing certain tasks or producing certain results may engulf children in undue stress beyond their limited coping abilities. 39, this stress can turn off thinking processes and it may even hinder development in other important regions of the brain which can be harmful to later learning.”



The West Australian, 2012

WILD WONDER

GREY SEALS

WITH PUPPY-DOG EYES, a button nose and snowy white fur, it's hard not to fall in love with the grey seal pup. The white coat that seals are born with is replaced by its signature grey one after about three weeks, at which point most mothers abandon their young to mate again. Behind its cuddly exterior is an undoubtable might – 14kg worth at birth, and a whopping 230kg and 150kg



for adult 'bulls' (males) and 'cows' (females) respectively. Much of this weight is an insulating layer of blubber, which keeps the seal warm when hunting for sand eels, shrimp and cod, at depths of up to 70 metres. Grey seals also boast strong back muscles and webbed feet to propel them through the water at speeds of around 23mph. Hunted to near-extinction for their meat and fur, in 1914 they became the first mammal to be protected by law in the UK. They are now safeguarded by the Conservation of Seals Act and, although still under threat, numbers have recently risen. According to the Wildlife Trusts, almost 40 per cent of the worldwide population can now be found darting through UK waters. Find out more at wildlifetrusts.org.

Country Living, 2012

Tekst 15

QUESTION:

Is there any evidence that the medieval practice of putting wrongdoers in the stocks and throwing rotten food at them worked as a deterrent to crime?

ANSWER:

The main deterrent that actually works is the perceived chance of getting caught. In medieval society, most people knew everyone they were likely to meet, owned few possessions, and had a pretty good idea what their neighbours were up to and what they owned.

This made crime against property (such as theft) or against the person (such as brawling) easy to detect.

We should remember that many people put in the stocks in the middle ages were also marked in some way – branded, or having their ears cut off. This was probably a deterrent, because the person had a visible sign that he or she was an offender, and could expect to be treated more harshly next time.

Even if it is hard to tell how being put in the stocks worked for the people concerned, it may well have had a great effect on the people watching.



The Guardian, 2012

Tekst 16

Caracas

Passengers at the largest international airport in Venezuela are now being charged for the right to breathe clean air. According to officials at Simon Bolívar International Airport – aka Maiquetía – near Caracas, the \$20 surcharge is designed to cover the cost of using ozone to purify the air piped into the terminal, a system that eliminates bacterial growth and “deodorizes and sanitises” the building. However, this explanation provoked fury and ridicule on social media. “Could you explain to me the ozone thing in Maiquetía?” tweeted radio presenter Daniel Martínez. “The toilets don’t have water, the air-con is broken, there are stray dogs inside the airport, but there’s ozone?”

The Week, 2014