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Tekstboekje

Praise for Zara Phillips

The resolutely male-oriented sports pages of the Guardian Weekly over the past few years have managed to keep all but a handful of females well at bay, so I experienced a ripple of excitement when I saw that Zara Phillips¹⁾ had made it through the barriers (Crowning glory, September 1). Triumph was shortlived, however, when I realised that she was there not in recognition of her unquestionable talent and skill as a horsewoman and sportswoman but as a convenient target for a cheap bit of sarcasm and royal-bashing.

As it happens, I am not a royalist, but I am a sportswoman and am capable of giving acknowledgement and credit where they are due, even if the person is, heaven forbid, both female and royal.

Susan Garvin

Vicchio di Mugello, Italy

noot 1 Zara Phillips is a granddaughter of Queen Elizabeth

The Flip Side of Internet Fame

By Jessica Bennett

- In 2002, Ghyslain Raza, a chubby Canadian teen, filmed himself acting out a fight scene from "Star Wars" using a makeshift light saber. His awkward performance was funny, in part because it wasn't meant to be. And it certainly was never meant to be public: for nearly a year the video remained on a shelf in Raza's school's TV studio, where he'd filmed it. Sometime in 2003, though, another student discovered the video, digitized it and posted it online—and Raza's nightmare began. Within days, "Star Wars Kid" had become a viral frenzy. It was posted on hundreds of blogs, enhanced by music and special effects, and watched by millions. Had that teenager wanted to be famous, he couldn't have asked for anything better. But in Raza's case it became a source of public shame and embarrassment, precisely what every kid fears the most.
- 2 Razas of the world take note: among the generation that's been reared online, stories like this are becoming more and more common. They serve as important reminders of a dark side of instant internet fame: humiliation. Already dozens of websites exist solely for posting hateful rants about ex-lovers (DontDateHimGirl.com) and bad tippers (the S----ty Tipper Database), and for posting cell-phone images of public bad behavior (hollabackNYC.com) and lousy drivers. Such sites can make or break a person, in a matter of seconds.
- Public shaming, of course, is nothing new. Ancient Romans punished wrongdoers by branding them on the forehead. In Colonial America heretics were clamped into stocks in the public square, thieves had their hands or fingers cut off, and adulterers were forced to wear a scarlet A. More recently a U.S. judge forced a mail thief to wear a sign announcing his crime outside a San Francisco post office; in other places sex offenders have to post warning signs on their front lawns.
- 4 Although social stigma can be a useful deterrent, "the internet is a loose cannon," says ethicist Jim Cohen of Fordham University School of Law in New York. Online there are few checks and hardly any monitoring. Moreover, studies show that the anonymity of the net encourages people to say things they normally wouldn't. Some sites have turned into a stage for bigoted rants and stories that identify people by name.
- Regulators find such sites hard to control. Laws on free speech and defamation vary widely between countries. In the United States, proving libel requires the victim to show that his or her persecutor intended malice, while the British system puts the burden on the defense to show that a statement is not libelous (making it much easier to prosecute). A 1996 U.S. law specifically protects the operators of websites from liability for the speech of their users. (If AOL, say, were held responsible for every poster, it would quickly go out of business.)

- So, then, what's to stop a person from posting whatever he wants about you, if he can do so anonymously and suffer no repercussions? For people who use blogs and social-networking sites like diaries, putting their personal information out there for the world to see, this presents a serious risk.
- Shaming victims, meanwhile, have little legal recourse. Many people share IP addresses on college networks or Wi-Fi hotspots, and many websites hide individual addresses. Even if a victim identifies the defamer, bloggers aren't usually rich enough to pay big damage awards. Legal action may only increase publicity—the last thing a shaming victim wants.
- 8 Once unsavory information is posted, it's almost impossible to retrieve. The family of the "Star Wars Kid," who spent time in therapy as a result of his ordeal, filed suit against the student who uploaded his video, and settled out of court. But dozens of versions of his video are still widely available, all over the net. If the "Star Wars Kid" has anything to teach us, it's that shame, like the force, will always be with you.

Beatles and the Bard

Martin Wainwright

- 1 William Shakespeare's 400-year reign as the world's primary transmitter of the English language has finally been ended by John, Paul, George and Ringo and their album Sergeant Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band.
- An academic conference heard yesterday that the collection of songs released more than 40 years ago with perhaps the most famous sleeve¹⁾ in music history has overtaken Shakespeare's Hamlet and Romeo and Juliet as a global cultural reference point.
- Catching a mood, pioneering social trends and drawing skilfully on its musical predecessors, the 1967 album hit every possible cultural button, delegates at Leeds University were told. "With Sergeant Pepper, the Beatles addressed the effects of a huge shift in the western mindset in the middle of the 20th century," said Thomas MacFarlane of New York University.
- 4 Jayne Sheridan, of Huddersfield University, said: "When I was a teenager, I was taught that a new study on Hamlet was published every day somewhere in the world. Today that honour goes to Sergeant Pepper."
- The power of the collection was rooted in mass culture, Deena Weinstein of DePaul University, Chicago, told the conference. "Not only the songs, but Sir Peter Blake's sleeve, are filled with riddles and mysteries which have had enormous popular appeal," she said.
- 6 Some riddles were planted by the artist and at least 10 collaborators, but others were fostered by fans, including the deep-rooted myth that the album forecast McCartney's death. Evidence for this included supposed messages in the pattern



m Shakkear

of flowers and the letters OP on the singer's armband, which were alleged to be the first part of the American acronym OPD, for Officially Pronounced Dead. "In fact, the band was borrowed from the Ontario Province Police in Canada," said Professor Weinstein.

noot 1 sleeve = platenhoes

Adults behaving badly

Frank Furedi

It was recently reported that young people in Britain consider having an ASBO – an anti-social behaviour order – to be 'a badge of honour'. These arbitrary rulings against youths are now seen as 'glamorous must-haves', evidence that you are a rebel standing outside of conformist adult society. How did such a situation arise?

The Institute of Public Policy Research recently published a report titled *Freedom's Orphans: Raising Youth in a Changing World.* It raises important issues, but its interpretation of the problem is wrong and its policy-orientation misguided. Pointing the finger at the bad behaviour of teenagers overlooks the fundamental issue. The problem is the ___11__ of adults to take responsibility for guiding and socialising children. Men and women rarely interact with children other than their own, often feeling too awkward to intervene when children misbehave and too confused to give support to those who are in trouble. A long time before they become teenagers, children sense and know that they face no sanctions from any adult other than their parents.

A constant display of adult responsibility for children is a precondition if youngsters are going to be properly socialised. But today, we actively <u>12</u> and are suspicious of all forms of adult solidarity. Apparently only the parent and the professional have the authority to deal with kids. With the breakdown of inter-generational relationships, children rarely have constructive encounters with grown-ups – and thus the real damage is done when children are as young as seven or eight. The breakdown of adult solidarity leads to a situation where young people's behaviour is <u>13</u> by the intervention of responsible grown-ups.

The IPPR is concerned that youngsters learn too much from one another instead of from adults. __14__, it's perfectly normal and desirable for teenagers to share experiences and devise a common culture. They are entitled to kick against the adult world; and so long as grown-ups are prepared to interact with them, such generational tensions can be creative and dynamic. __15__ who actively intervene help to create a world where youths themselves will regard anti-social behaviour as unacceptable.

Frank Furedi is author of Politics of Fear: Beyond Left and Right, published by Continuum.

Carnival queen

by Bagehot

During her short, sad life, Diana was seen as a scandalously modern princess; after her sadder death she has been enlisted as a posthumous poster girl for various progressive causes. "She wasn't seen as posh. She was one of the people," argues *Time* magazine, hailing her as "the princess who transformed a nation". She wasn't—and she didn't. Beyond her roles as fairy-tale princess and floundering, suffering divorcee, Diana's appeal rested



in part on an ancient example: the monarch who walks among the people, working miracles; in her case among lepers, AIDS patients and maimed children.

Primitive fears of mortality; feelings of guilt; globalised media; a hot August 1997: all that, and a lot else besides, contributed to the hysteria of "Diana week", between the crash in Paris and the surreal funeral. The precise chemistry is still a mystery; like many great events, it is remembered differently by different people. But at least one interpretation that seemed plausible during those strange days in London now looks conclusively wrong. At the time, a few optimistic republicans thought the end of the monarchy was near. Yet five years later, huge and loyal crowds turned out for the queen mother's funeral, and for the queen's Golden Jubilee. Nowadays, the Windsors' poll ratings are even rosy.

Instead of heralding a republic, that week is now often said to have saved the monarchy, by forcing it to emulate the mourned, modern princess' behaviour. In fact, the royal family started to change before Diana became part of it: the queen had begun to "let in daylight upon the magic" as early as 1969. With hindsight, the public seems to have lamented Diana as much because she was one of the royals as because she was estranged from them. The masses are more conservative than rebellious—and were quickly calmed when the queen walked amongst them.

As well as shaking up the throne, Diana's death has been regarded as the spark of broader shifts in Britain's politics and personality. Because of her colour-blind taste in men and the diversity of the crowds, "Diana week" has been seen as a milestone in the evolution of a multi-ethnic nation—mostly by people who hadn't noticed that Britain had already become one. The massive public weeping and hugging have been seen as evidence of a general longing to be part of something bigger. That longing, if it existed, seems to have faded.

Still more ambitiously, "Diana week" is extolled as the time when Britain's upper lip definitively relaxed. That notion overestimates both how stiff the lip was before—Britain was never quite as emotionally deformed as alleged—and how slack it has become since. Even now the British do not routinely weep at

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funerals; subsequent and greater tragedies, such as the terrorist attacks of July 7th 2005, have evoked touchingly restrained responses.

- The exception to this phenomenon involves the institution that once seemed most likely to be changed by Diana's death: the press. Hated, like the Windsors, for their contribution to her fate, the media 20 intruding in her two sons' lives—but only temporarily. Now grown up, sometimes dating girlfriends, they are considered fair game. The commercial and technological forces that made their mother a hyperstar have made celebrity yet more desired, and privacy still less respected.
- Had she lived, Diana would eventually have become less beautiful, less interesting. By dying, she immortalised herself as the "queen of hearts". But in truth she became a carnival queen: monarch of a temporary disorder that, when it passed, left the old order intact, or stronger.



TIME TRAVELER

ONE GIANT LEAP

ost people who go on South African safari holidays hope to see Big Five game—lions, leopards, buffalos, rhinos and elephants—but what about the Small 110? That's how many South African frog species there are, and Amakhosi Lodge, a five-hour drive southeast of Johannesburg in the Kwazulu-Natal province's 10,000-hectare Amazulu Game Reserve, is offering frog-tracking safaris to find some of them (tel: [27-034] 414 1157; www.amakhosi.com).

Frog watching can involve three-hour sessions of nocturnal wading; a headlamp leaves your hands free for holding a net and a guidebook. Expect to see up to 12 species a night, from the sharp-nosed grass frog, which holds the world record for longest amphibian jump, to the foam-nest frog, which lays its eggs in—you guessed it—a foam nest. The reserve is home to over 20 species—more than in the whole of Europe—but it's not just frogs you'll experience. "You see a huge amount of other life as well, including creatures

rarely seen on big-game drives because the habitat is not accessible," says Alwyn Wentzel, the lodge



manager. "Such as rare serval cats, monitor lizards, terrapins, aquatic birds, cane rats, pythons" and more. But why does the safari leader carry a rifle? Because the Big Five frequent the watering holes, too. *By Nick Easen*

Global warming hotheads would burn sceptics at the stake

NOTEBOOK

Mick Hume

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The television advert about the apocalyptic dangers of climate change from the government-funded Carbon Trust is very shocking. It begins with an actor playing Robert Oppenheimer, "father of the A-bomb". The portentous voiceover tells us: "One man has been where we all are today. When he saw what he had done, he said, 'I am become the destroyer of worlds' (cue shot of atomic explosion). Now we all have to face up to what we've done. Our climate is changing."

To make us feel guilty about "what we have done", we are shown cities, electricity pylons, personal computers and cars, followed by violent storms, huge waves and flooded towns. The message is that we are destroying the world through climate change, which has been brought about by modern industry and technology. So we must change the way we live and work in order to repent of our sins — or as they put it now, "reduce our emissions".

What we ignorant laymen are rarely told is that there remain serious uncertainties about the extent and causes of climate change — as even some scientists working with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change will quietly concede. Yet any expert who tries to raise such questions in public is treated with contempt.

When it comes to climate change, "sceptic" is a dirty word. Scientists who dissent from the strict orthodoxy on man-made global warming have been shouted down, labelled dupes of the US oil industry, even branded "climate change deniers" — a label with obvious historical connotations. Instead of taking up the sceptics' case, the accepted response of our illiberal age is to yell: "You can't say that!"

But is not scepticism crucial to scientific inquiry? Timothy Ball, a leading climatologist, says that those trying to test the theory of man-made climate change — "a normal course of action in any real scientific endeavour" — are now being "chastised for not being in agreement with some sort of scientific consensus, as if a worldwide poll of climate experts had been taken, and as if such a consensus would represent scientific fact. Nothing could be farther from the truth; science advances by questioning, probing and re-examining existing beliefs."

We need to separate the science from the politics. Let the experts thrash out the evidence. But let them do so free from the pressures of a political climate in which human intervention is always seen as the problem rather than the solution, precaution is always privileged over risk and the worst possible outcome is always assumed to be the best bet. Perhaps those commanding us to "face up to what we have done" to the world might first face up to the dangers of reducing complex scientific issues to a simplistic political message, and presenting moralistic sermons as scientific laws. Whatever the true impact on the environment of burning fossil fuels, there seems a real risk of damaging the atmosphere of scientific inquiry by burning sceptics at the stake.

Jamie's fowl sanctimony¹⁾

Zoe Williams

The conditions of the working chicken in the UK are turning into what Americans call a hot-button issue. Jamie Oliver, in his Fowl Dinners, gassed a generation of boy chicks for us. Well, it wasn't him, exactly, it was the industry. But it's such a moral grey area, isn't it, reportage? Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall, another famous chef, meanwhile, rammed home the realities by creating his own intensive chicken farm, which brought him to tears at one point, at the horror of it.



- Two facts stand out, beyond the grim stories of chickens suffocating in sweltering vans. First, this is not new information. The traumas of battery chickens have been common knowledge for as long as people have been campaigning against foxhunting, for as long as schoolgirls have been shopping in The Body Shop. Second, the new wave of protest hasn't put any dent in sales the big supermarkets were apparently bracing themselves for a downturn in the market after the broadcasts of Jamie and Hugh. In fact, daily sales of chicken have increased somewhat, up 7% on November's figures.
- So, what are we supposed to make of this? That, even knowing all we know, we are too hardhearted and greedy to act upon it, and we find it incredibly easy to disassociate the hateful life of the creature from eating its meat? To put it even more simply, we are bad people, except those who are buying expensive free range chickens at £25 each, who are good people. Immediately, this statement annoys us. Yes, we all have to take responsibility for our consumer choices. But those choices are a lot more meaningful for some than for others. To someone with dependants, living on the average national income of £24.000, the difference between a three-quid broiler and a £10 organic bird is enormous.
- To Jamie Oliver it is no difference at all, on account of how he is loaded. And why is he loaded? Because a) he makes quite a lot of money entertaining us by gassing boy chicks, and b) he hoovers up that much and more again by advertising for Sainsbury's, which has been one of the driving forces behind this cheap food since mass production began.
- Or, at least, this is the kind of petty-minded line of argument a person might be driven to, standing accused of cruel consumer choices. It is, frankly, obnoxious to see a rich person demanding impoverishing consumer choices from a poorer person. These chefs consider themselves outside politics, because they're being straightforward let's eat what came out of the ground naturally, what was raised in a happy way. Let's just do as nature intended, what could possibly be political about that?

They're right, it isn't political, in that it has no consistency of ideas. The fact is, ethics that come out of your wallet are not ethics. All these catchwords (fair trade, organic, free range, food miles etc.) that supposedly convey sensitivity to the environment, to animals, to the developing world are just new ways to buy your way into heaven. Anyone with a serious interest in this would be lobbying to tighten laws on animal cruelty. When we just preach to each other, it turns into the most undignified scramble – who can afford to be the most lovely? Well, you can, Jamie and Hugh. You've got loveliness to burn.

noot 1 sanctimony: schijnheiligheid

Tekst 9

Mick Hume

♦ ROY KEANE, the combative captain of Manchester United, has often been condemned for failing, as one manager put it, to "serve as a role model for children". To which my response has always been, why should he? Sportsmen such as Keane are our football heroes for 90 minutes, not our role models for real life. As a United fan I want him to teach the opposition a footballing lesson, not instruct my children in 33. But after watching Keane's magnificent chestpuffing, finger-jabbing, expletive-spitting performance in the tunnel leading to the football pitch at Highbury recently, I think he might be a role model after all. Warning Patrick Viera, Arsenal's 6ft 4in captain, not to intimidate his team-mates, and telling the French colossus: "I'll see you outside", Keane demonstrated many of the qualities sorely missing from our **34**: leadership, loyalty, plain-speaking and fighting spirit. So, if you want truth, vote Keane.

The Times, 2005

Billionaires

- 1 "It should simply be called the green list," said the *Los Angeles Times* in an editorial. *Forbes* magazine released its annual tally of the people with the most greenbacks, identifying a record 946 billionaires whose mega-fortunes can only leave the rest of us green with envy. For the umpteenth year in a row, Bill Gates (net worth \$56 billion) led the way. Noting that the number of billionaires is up nearly 20 percent over last year, *Forbes* declared 2007 "the richest year ever in human history".
- 2 "Excuse me for not celebrating," said Tony Hendra in *Huffingtonpost.com*. In America, the gap between rich and poor is only growing, while the net worth of the world's 4 billion poorest souls actually dropped, to less than \$35 each. Those who demand more equitable distribution of wealth are often derided as socialists or "bleeding hearts". But when a handful of tycoons makes more in a day than much of the world makes in a lifetime, it's tempting to start humming the *Internationale*¹).
- 3 "Perhaps we'd be less envious," said Gregg Easterbrook in the *Los Angeles Times*, "if the super-rich were more <u>37</u>." Not counting the "sainted" Warren Buffett—who gave away \$44 billion last year—the 60 leading American philanthropists donated \$7 billion, out of their combined net worth of \$584 billion. That's a mere 1.2 percent of their vast fortunes. Multibillionaires such as software magnate Larry Ellison, eBay founder Pierre Omidyar, and even that great champion of equality, financier and liberal activist George Soros, all gave less than 1 percent. Consider that in his day, industrialist Andrew Carnegie gave away 78 percent of his net worth. Billionaires can use only so many yachts, cars, and estates. Which raises the question: "Why do the super-rich hoard?"
- 4 "Simple—that's how they keep score," said Michael Kinsley in *Slate.com*. Most megacapitalists are highly competitive, driven people who are measured—and measure themselves—by how much richer they are than everyone else. "People like me," said investor Carl Icahn, "are out to win, and winning is money."
- 5 "Nothing wrong with that," said Arthur Brooks in *The Wall Street Journal*. Billionaires, by and large, make their billions by creating products, companies, and entire industries. Oracle founder Ellison, for example, has created thousands of jobs, fueled economic growth, and paid billions in taxes. If billionaires choose to give away fortunes, bully for them. But even if they don't, they're still sharing their wealth with the rest of us.

noot 1 Internationale: socialistisch bonds- of strijdlied (1871)

Tekst 11

Sophie Butler

TRAVEL ADVICE FROM THE EXPERT

If you're planning to holiday across the Channel, driving rather than flying could prove a much cheaper option and that's not all...



If you haven't made your travel arrangements for a forthcoming holiday in Europe yet, don't automatically assume that a no-frills airline will offer you the best deal. For it's around now, as the peak summer travelling season approaches, that no-frills airfares start to look expensive, especially for families heading for the popular destinations in France and Spain. Once you've taken the extra taxes and charges into account, the final bill can be prohibitive.

So is self-drive the answer? Given some of the attractive cross-Channel deals available this year it certainly sounds as if it might be, though there are other considerations to take into account, such as the cost of wear and tear on your car, motorway tolls and fuel charges and where you live in the UK — good deals are rather less attractive if you live in the north of the country.

To discover which method is the most cost-effective, I took three different types of trip to France and Spain and compared prices for flying and driving.

First, I looked at fares for a family of four travelling to Bergerac in the Dordogne for the May half-term week. Eurotunnel's cheapest fare for a Saturday-to-Saturday return, travelling between 8am and 8pm, was £124 for a

car and four passengers. To this, I added £96 to cover the cost of motorway tolls and fuel. The cost of flying from Stansted to Bergerac, on the same day, with Ryanair was £735.52 plus £150 to hire a four-door group-B car for seven days. Verdict: flying was £660 more than driving.

Next, I compared costs for two people taking a long weekend break in Brittany in early June. Taking the ferry from Plymouth to Roscoff (daytime sailing) with Brittany Ferries came to £215. Flying from Exeter to Brest with Flybe came to £199, plus a group-A car hire cost of £70 for three days. Verdict: flying was only £50 more than going by ferry. As the journey time by sea is six hours compared with 55 minutes by air you might not think it is worth the £50 saving.

Looking at these figures, it's clear that for some key destinations, you can cut your holiday bills quite significantly by driving rather than flying, though the no-frills carriers usually offer a far quicker journey time, a great choice of destinations and, if you do manage to track down a good deal, the amount saved on the fares can often easily cover the extra cost of car hire.

On the other hand, parking charges at the airport can bump up overall prices — and you don't have to carry heavy bags or tie yourself down to strict luggage allowances if you're taking your car. In peak season when airports are busy, driving can also be more relaxing than flying. Moreover, just like airlines, most cross-Channel operators seem to be at last responding to their customers' needs in providing clearer website systems and adopting the simple at-a-glance pricing that makes it far easier to spot the bargains on their websites.