

PALAZZO  
STROZZI

# **Spaces and Dreams**

**The time and space of informal learning**

**Dr. James M. Bradburne**

*Direttore Generale, Fondazione Palazzo Strozzi*

The Children's University Annual Meeting 'Twinkle twinkle little star'

Shrigley Hall. Cheshire, 8 December. 2011



**All stars are allstars...**





# The dreams of informal learning

“the museum has to function as an **institution for the prevention of blindness** in order to make works work... Works work when, by stimulating inquisitive looking, sharpening perception, raising visual intelligence, they participate in... the making and re-making of our worlds”

Nelson Goodman (1980)



# The spaces of informal learning

- ▶ ‘the aim of teaching is **not to produce learning** but to produce the **conditions for learning**, this is the focal point, the quality of the learning’

Loris Malaguzzi

- ▶ ‘The document is a public place’

Carla Rinaldi



# Who is James Bradburne?

**'There is no theory that is not part of an autobiography'**

**Paul Valéry (1924)**

Co-initiator, SEE School, Toronto, 1970

Graphic designer, exhibition maker, architect (1979 - 89)

Museum consultant, UNESCO, UNICEF (1989 - 1994)

Head of Design, newMetropolis, Amsterdam (1994 - 1998)

Director General, mak.frankfurt (1999 - 2003)

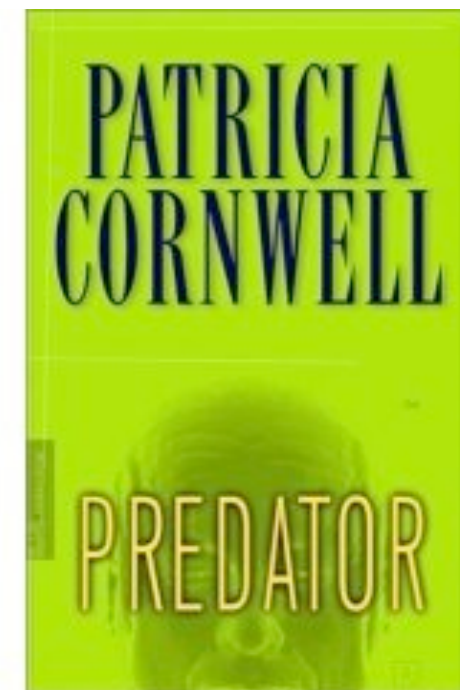
Director, Next Generation foundation (2003 - 2006)

Director General, fondazione Palazzo Strozzi, Florence

# Body in the library

Drew Ann Wake & James Bradburne (1991)

- ▶ Science Alberta Foundation
- ▶ increase public understanding of science & technology/women in technological education
- ▶ exhibition designed as forensic laboratory
- ▶ ‘Who killed Ruby Keene?’
- ▶ developed with librarians/travelled exclusively to libraries
- ▶ became focal point for community
- ▶ spawned similar exhibitions by Librarians’ Association/RCMP





# Beyond the Naked Eye

Drew Ann Wake & James Bradburne (1991)

- ▶ Designed to address interests of women
- ▶ travelled exclusively to hospitals
- ▶ developed with Association of Radiologists
- ▶ reconfigured after full-scale prototype
- ▶ five clusters to explain different medical imaging technologies
- ▶ hands-on exercises/case studies
- ▶ not always a 'right answer'
- ▶ widely copied (Eksperimentarium, Science North)



# 'Mine Games'

## Science World, Vancouver (1993)

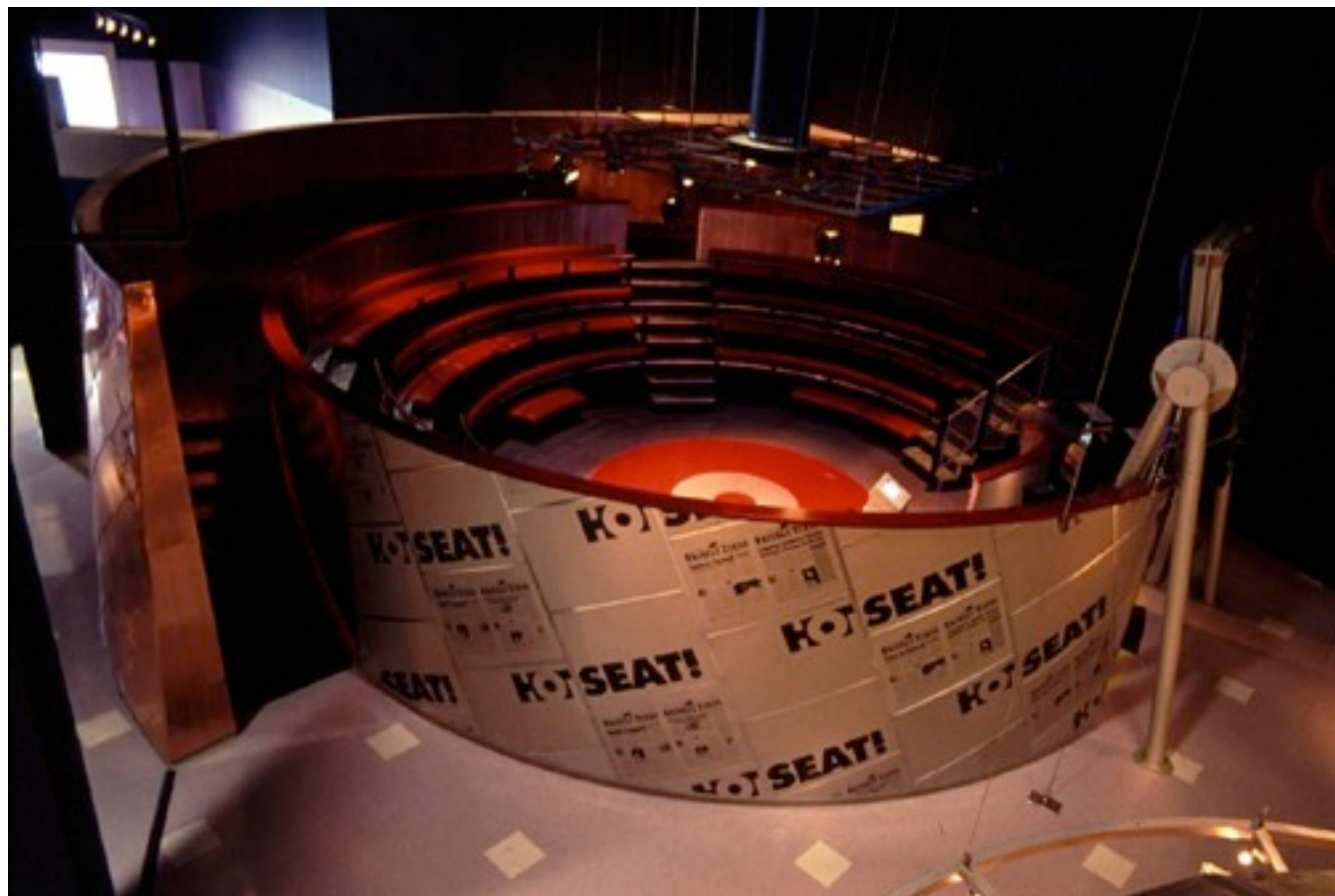
- ▶ Earth sciences exhibition became a forum for debate about resource development
- ▶ Designed as a walk-in game
- ▶ Based on a fictional town
- ▶ Fictional dilemma
- ▶ Mix of hands-on and digital
- ▶ Hotseat! Interactive theatre





*‘The issue at hand is very emotional for most of the people involved. Everyone wants the things they value preserved. I think there weren't enough options and compromises discussed. What to do about the old fort for instance. [...] we could have discussed more possibilities and come up with a compromise more tailored to the problem.’*

12-year-old Hotseat! participant



# What is Palazzo Strozzi?

- a masterpiece of **Renaissance architecture** at the heart of Florence
- a **dynamic cultural centre** - a Florentine 'Centre Pompidou' with libraries, research institutes, and auditoria
- Florence's **largest temporary exhibition** space, plus a centre for contemporary art
- an **urban 'piazza'** with cafe, shop, concerts





# Palazzo Strozzi is also...

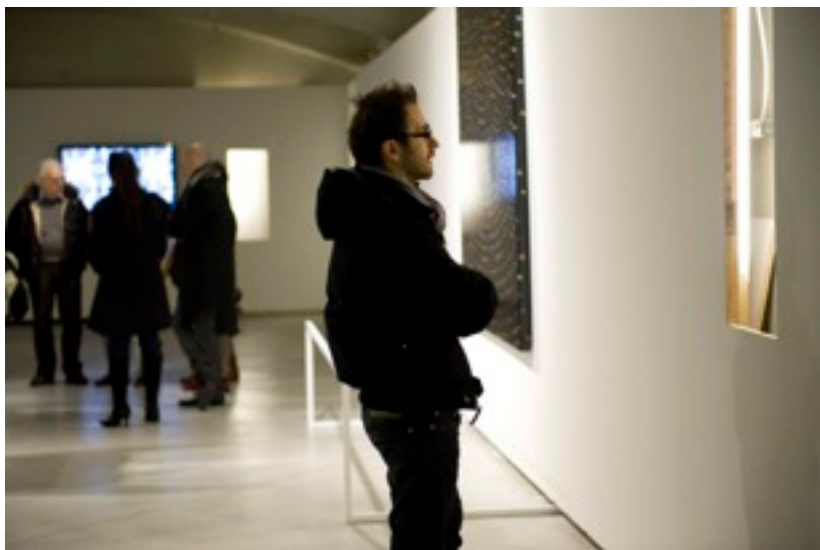
- an experiment in innovative governance
- a cultural experiment with two goals 1) to bring cultural events of an international level to Florence and 2) to give the Palazzo back to the city as a vital cultural destination
- the governance project is about **autonomy**
- the cultural project is about **‘visible listening’**





# The Palazzo Strozzi Mission

- 1] to bring international cultural events to Florence  
(*think global*)
- 2] to open the entire Palazzo to Florence and those who love it (*act local*)

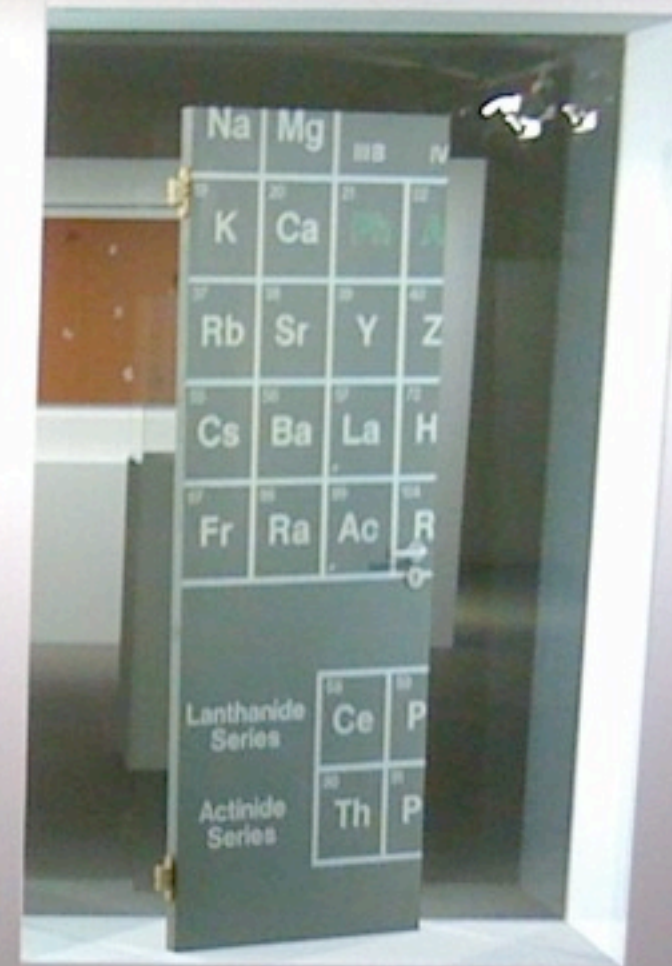


# ARTE PREZZO e VALORE

Arte contemporanea e mercato

14.11.2008 - 11.01.2009

strozzina | cc  
centro di cultura contemporanea a palazzo strozzi



strozzina | cc  
centro di cultura contemporanea at palazzo strozzi



PALAZZO STROZZI COURTYARD JEAN PAUL GAULTIER FASHION SHOW





PALAZZO STROZZI COURTYARD INSTALLATION NUMEN/FOR USE





# CAFFÈ BAR LA GIACOSA: DESIGN MARKUS BADER





# AGORA | Z DESIGN + BOOK SHOP WITH READING ROOM AND EXHIBITIONS





# Visible listening at Palazzo Strozzi



# Why other voices?

There were three paintings of *Bathers* in the Fabbri collection painted between the end of the 1870s and 1885. It was one of Cézanne's favourite subjects, treated in more than 140 watercolours, drawings and oil paintings. He showed an early interest in nude studies but his figures were far removed from anatomical precision: they were distorted and depicted with thick brushstrokes and strongly contrasting colours. At the same time Cézanne worked on setting his nudes in landscapes.





# Why other voices?

*Well, Cézanne sure does like green! He has used beautiful shades of green so that even if we spend hours looking at this work we shall never get tired of that luscious colour he has chosen. These five bathers seem to be bathing in a wood that shows they all get along except one of them (on the right) who seems to be crying. This could be a reference to Cézanne's first steps into entering the impressionist world and being an outsider at first then entering their circle.*

*This must be a cool, breezy day in spring, I think this because the sky is grey and the people are trying to dry off quickly. I think this is a depressing painting because most of the people are frowning.*





# Art & Illusions

(fall 2009)

- posed the question ‘what is the difference between *trompe l’oeil* and hyper-realism’
- every object hung in a *trompe l’oeil* frame, thresholds completed in *trompe l’oeil*
- thematic look at the various genres of *trompe l’oeil* from antiquity to the present
- scientific aspect curated by Richard Gregory† (University of Bristol) and Priscilla Heard (University of the West of England)
- ‘conversation’ on Otis Kaye’s DJIA ‘VU initiates wave of new scholarship (visible listening)





Thursday, 8 December 11







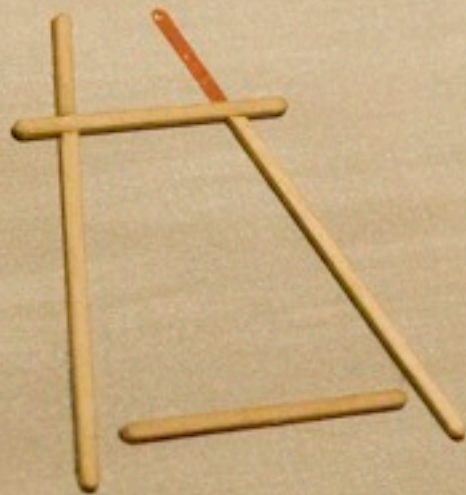
Freccia di Müller-Lyer, 1889.

Müller-Lyer arrows, 1889.



Illusione di Ponzo, 1913.

Ponzo illusion, 1913.



E linee convergenti suggeriscono distanza, gli oggetti appaiono più piccoli quanto più sono lontani da noi, e quando l'oggetto è dotato di continuità, come i binari del treno o la facciata di un edificio, le linee parallele convergono verso un "punto di fuga" all'orizzonte. Da Brunelleschi in poi, gli artisti usano la conoscenza del fatto che certe forme sembrano allontanarsi per creare l'illusione dello spazio nel mondo. La nostra conoscenza di questo comportamento crea illusioni davvero stupefacenti. Alcune illusioni funzionano anche a occhi chiusi, prova a formare con le tue dita. Quale è la linea più



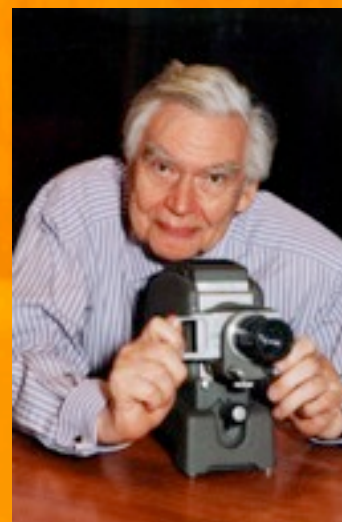


















# De Chirico, Max Ernst, Magritte, Balthus

(spring/summer 2010)

- second 'reading' of the exhibition looked at spaces, dreams and fears
- interactive exhibits on human psychology: social conventions, obedience (Millgram), emotions
- world's first interactive exhibit of Wittgenstein's thought experiments
- 'draw your dreams' postcards (visible listening)
- playwriting workshops





# LA RIVELAZIONE E L'ENIGMA

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LA RIVELAZIONE E L'ENIGMA

LA RIVELAZIONE E L'ENIGMA







that build self-confidence, independence and emotional resilience.

Our faces to express  
emotions like when we  
our foreheads wrinkle  
pleased, we smile when  
try mixing the faces  
different physical  
emotions close to  
our expressions.  
the people in the  
gallery









# Follow your Florins!

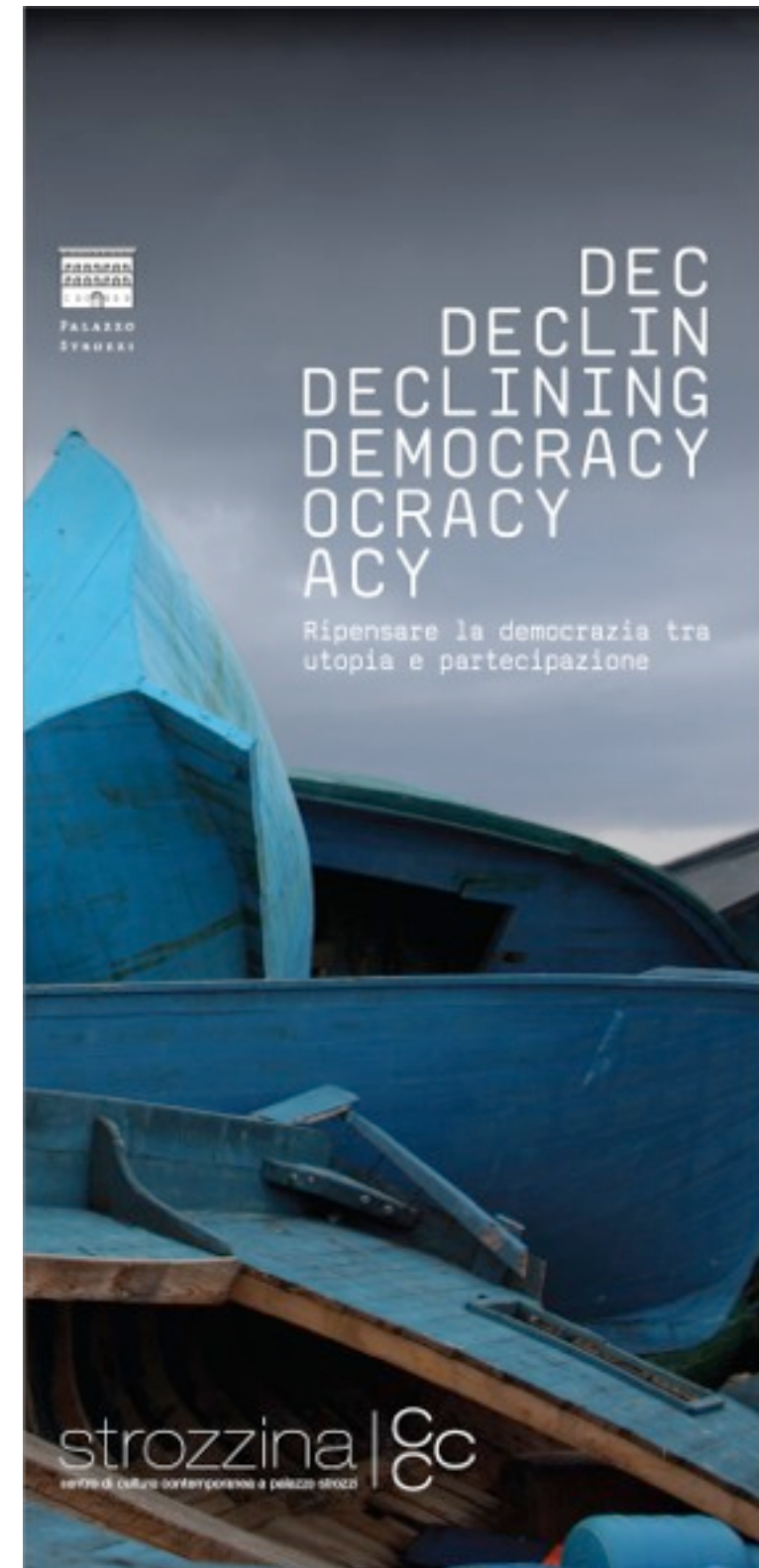
- essential for the visitor to understand the way merchants made their money
- label booklets in Chinese and Russian
- the Banker's Change Purse and the Botticelli Code
- 'Easy Money' family guide to money
- passport (+ iPhone), city map
- interactive game by Tim Parks & Giuseppe Palumbo - despite the pirates, nearly everyone is a winner





# Interactive democracy

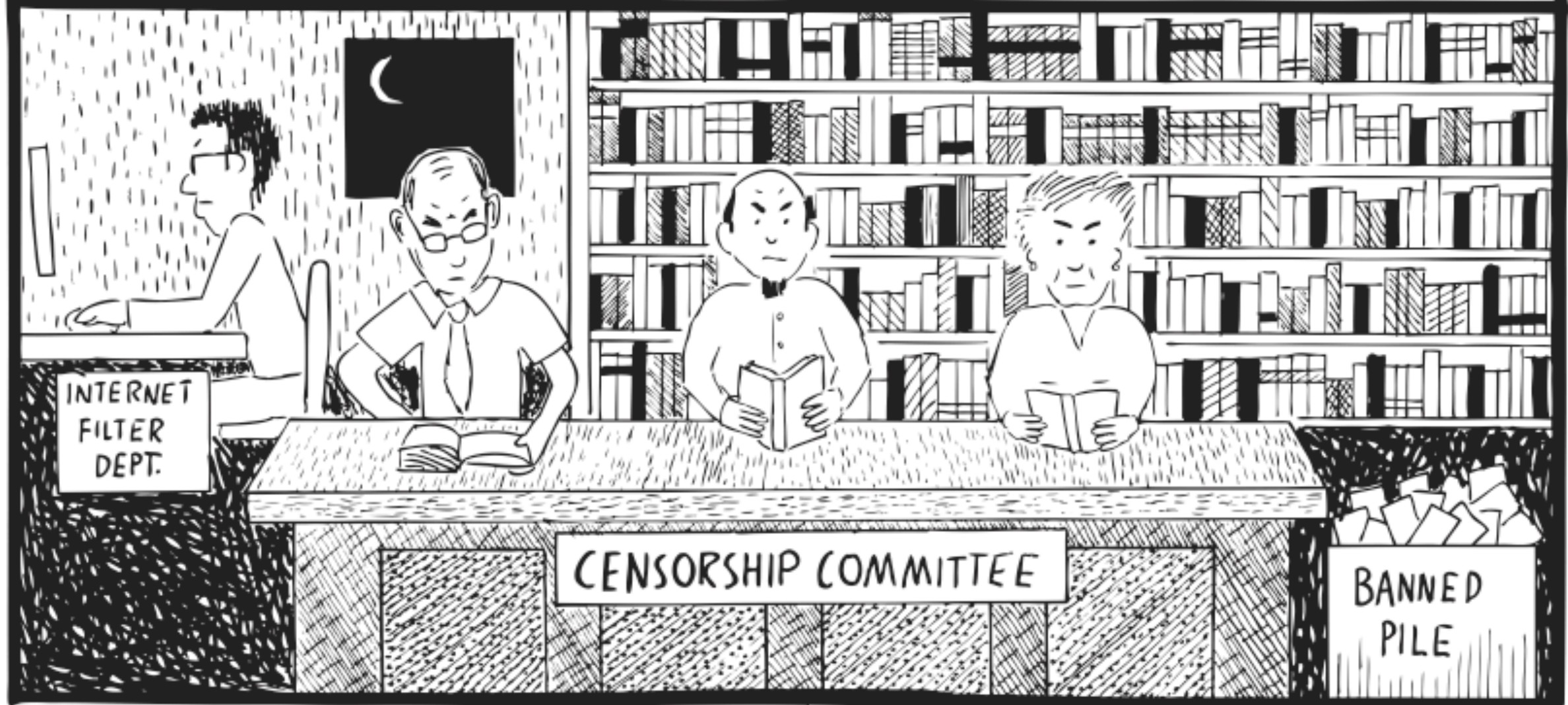
- Declining Democracy in the CCC Strozzina
- *Democraticamente* (Democratically) - workshops for teenagers in the issues surrounding democracy
- *Giovedì al quadrato G2*





# George Orwell, 1984

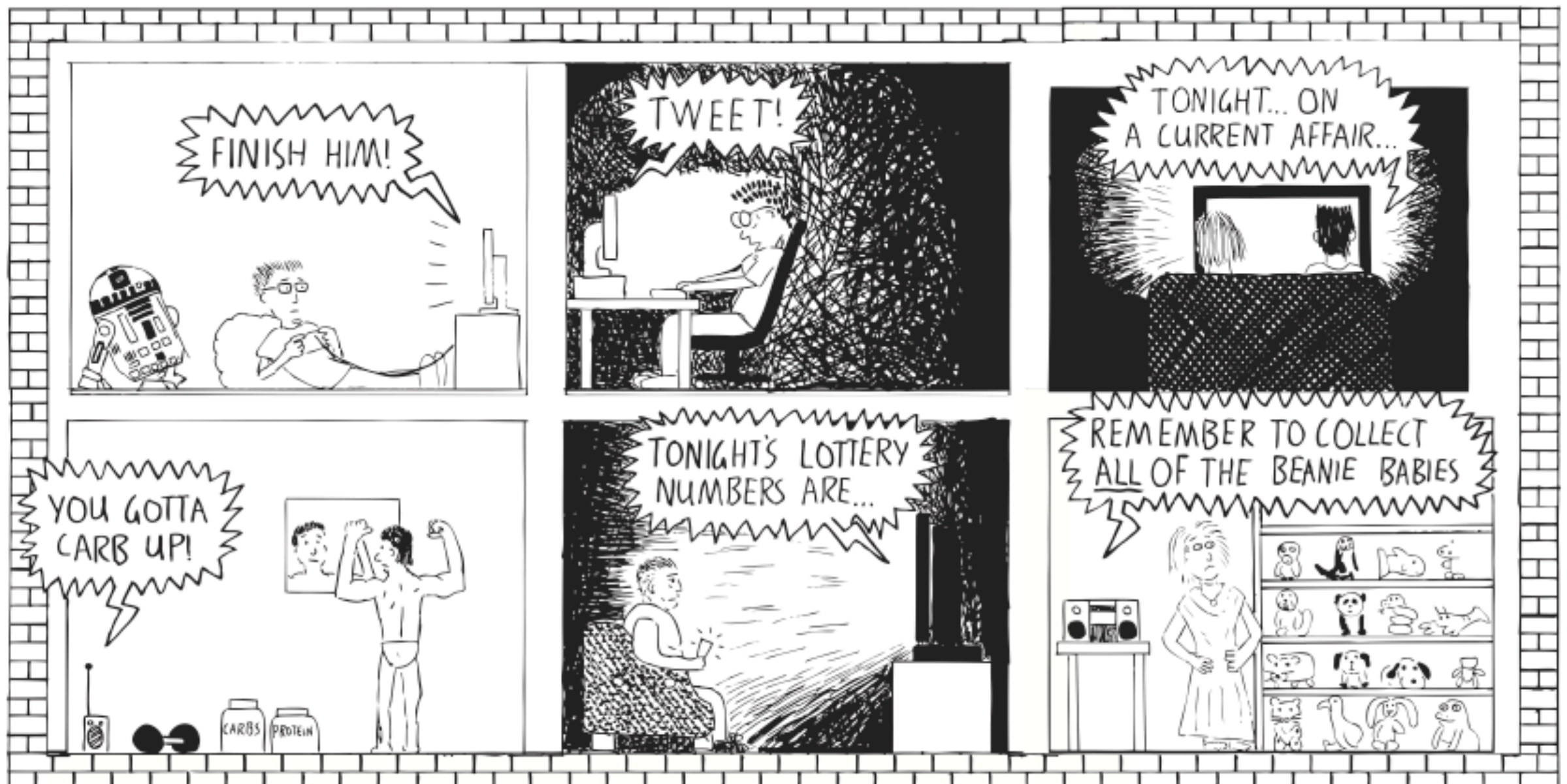
WHAT ORWELL FEARED WERE THOSE WHO WOULD BAN BOOKS.





# Aldous Huxley, Brave New World

HUXLEY FEARED WE WOULD BECOME A TRIVIAL CULTURE, PREOCCUPIED WITH SOME EQUIVALENT OF THE FEELIES, THE ORGY PORGY AND THE CENTRIFUGAL BUMBLEPUPPY.

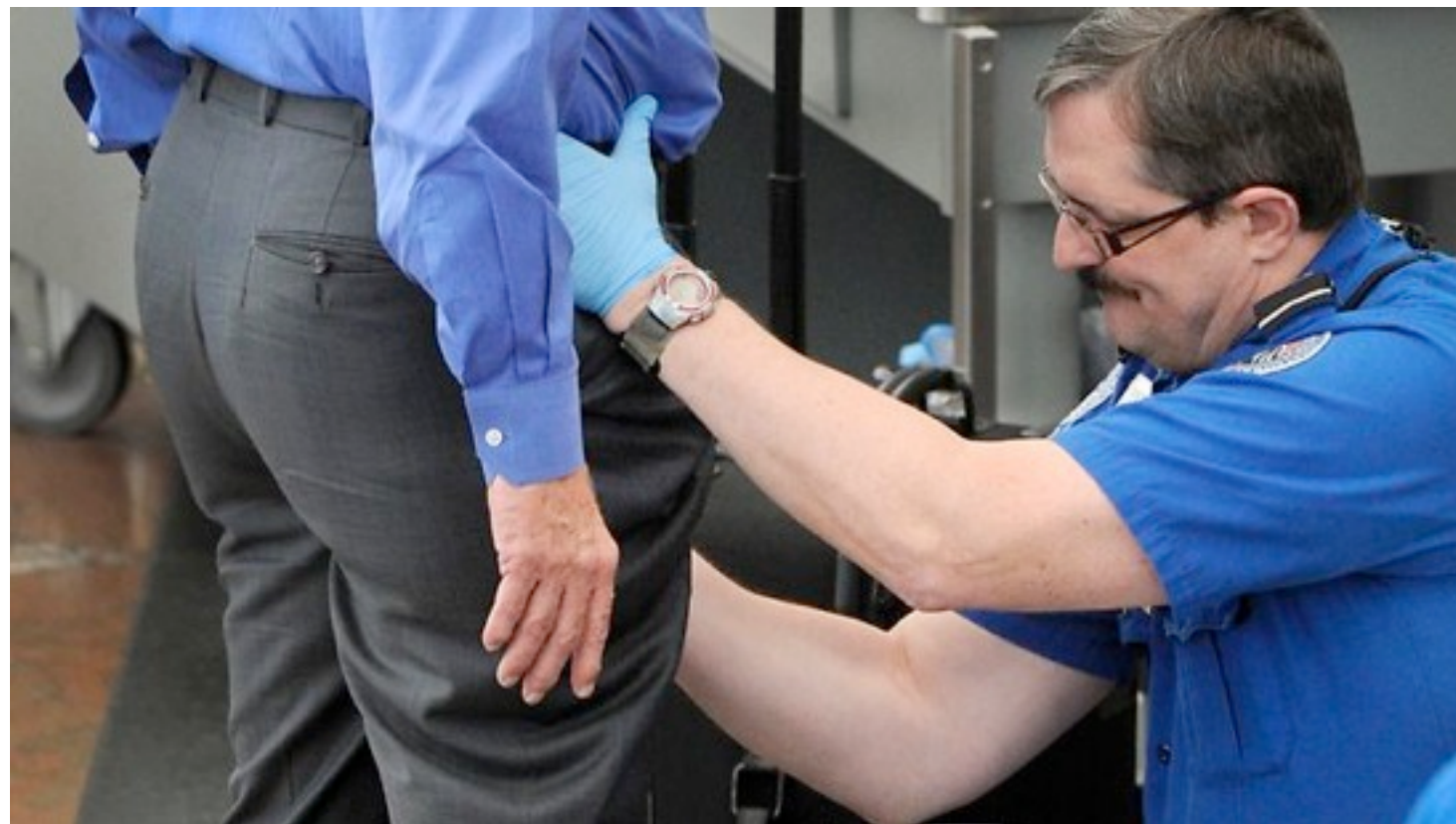




# The worst of both worlds...

- ▶ dangers not changed
- ▶ tech changed
- ▶ “Those who would give up essential liberty to purchase a little temporary safety, deserve neither Liberty nor Safety”

Benjamin Franklin, notes for the Pennsylvania Assembly, 1775





# Dreams at risk - what kind of world do we want?

- ▶ Real danger celebrity/\$\$/commodity/
- ▶ Instrumental values not intrinsic
- ▶ closing down rather than opening up
- ▶ fear rather than risk
- ▶ protect rather than prepare





# Preparation not protection

- ▶ Designed by Drew Ann Wake in 1994 to alert teenagers to the dangers of internet predation
- ▶ based on a true account of an internet-arranged abduction
- ▶ developed with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and Interpol
- ▶ distributed to the majority of Canadian high school students
- ▶ actively researched and proven a highly effective way for parents and teenagers to discuss the perils of internet use - without banning use of the social media













# Spaces at risk - what kind of schools do we want?

Schools began with a man under a tree who did not know he was a teacher, discussing his realization with a few who did not know they were students. [...] Soon spaces were erected and the first schools became. [...] In a school, the girl walks across a hall as in her own classroom where she is her own teacher.



The rooms required by our institutions of learning are stereotypical and uninspiring. The Institute's required uniform classrooms, the locker-lined corridors and other so-called functional areas and devices, are arranged in neat packages by the architect who follows closely the budgetary limits as required by the school authorities. The schools are shallow in architecture because they do not reflect the spirit of the man under the tree.

Louis I Kahn



# Cardinal Newman, The Idea of a University, 1909

The general principles of any study you may learn by books at home; but the detail, the colour, the tone, the air, the life which makes it live in us, **you must catch all these from those in whom it lives already.** You must imitate the student in French or German, who is not content with his grammar, but goes to Paris or Dresden: you must take example from the young artist, who aspires to visit the great Masters in Florence and in Rome. [...] It is in such assemblages and congregations of intellect that books themselves, the masterpieces of human genius, are written, or at least originated.



# A.E Housman

## Inaugural Address, 1892

Nor again will I pretend that, as Bacon asserts, 'the pleasure and delight of knowledge and learning far surpasseth all other in nature'. This is too much the language of a salesman crying his own wares. The pleasures of the intellect are notoriously less vivid than either the pleasures of sense or the pleasures of the affections; and therefore, especially in the season of youth, the pursuit of knowledge is likely enough to be neglected and lightly esteemed in comparison with other pursuits offering much stronger immediate attractions. But the pleasure of learning and knowing, though not the keenest, is yet the least perishable of pleasures; the least subject to external things, and the play of chance, and the wear of time. [and] it will be a matter of yet more concern than now, [...] **whether the windows of the soul look out upon a broad and delightful landscape, or face nothing but a brick wall.**



# Values for children - values for teachers

- ▶ civil society
- ▶ innovation
- ▶ creativity
- ▶ risk-taking
- ▶ trust
- ▶ generosity
- ▶ respect
- ▶ tolerance





# Creating the conditions for stories, not just telling our stories

Bob Archibald, Director, Missouri Historical Museum, 2006

“The question is whether we can really still keep telling the same stories the same way and assume that we can provide lives of decent quality for those who follow us in our places. I think the answer is no. Part of the solution is to find new stories that have new meanings and new value systems implicit in them. I don’t know what those stories are. And I don’t think it is the job of the historian or the museum to create the story. Our job is to create the context in which people can create those stories and reach some level of consensus around them.”



# How do we respond to a dangerous world?



Wednesday 02 November 2011

## The Telegraph

HOME NEWS SPORT FINANCE COMMENT BLOGS CULTURE TRAVEL  
UK World Politics Obituaries Education Earth Science Defence  
Road and Rail Law and Order Crime Religion Scotland Northern Ireland

UK News

### Gun crime rises despite Dunblane pistol ban

By Philip Johnston, Home Affairs Editor

12:01AM BST 17 Jul 2001

HANDGUN crime increased by 40 per cent in the two years after the ban imposed because of the Dunblane massacre, according to a new study.

The report from the Centre for Defence Studies at King's College, London, found no link between the legal possession of guns and their use by criminals.

Its findings appeared to support the position taken by pistol shooters in 1997 in response to the murder of 16 children and their teacher by Thomas Hamilton.





# Like this?

- September 20th, 2001 4:30 P.M. EDT: Americans are asking, why do they hate us? [...] Every nation, in every region, now has a decision to make. Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists. [...]
- November 2001 the **USA invades Afghanistan**
- March 2003 the **USA invades Iraq**





# ... or like this?

# MailOnline

## 'Extremism will be met with more democracy': Norwegian PM defiant as under-fire police reveal they saved 600 people on terror island


The New York Times

Europe

WORLD U.S. N.Y. / REGION BUSINESS TECHNOLOGY SCIENCE HEALTH

AFRICA AMERICAS ASIA PACIFIC EUROPE MIDDLE EAST

### At Least 80 Dead in Norway Shooting



Svein Gustav Wilhelmsen/Agence France-Presse — Getty Images

Emergency workers tended to a woman who had been rescued from Utoya, the island where a gunman opened fire on a camp. [More Photos »](#)

By ELISA MALA and J. DAVID GOODMAN  
Published: July 22, 2011

OSLO — A lone political extremist bombed the government center here on Friday, killing 7 people, the police said, before heading to an island summer camp for young members of the governing Labor Party and killing at least 80

RECOMMEND

TWITTER

LINKEDIN

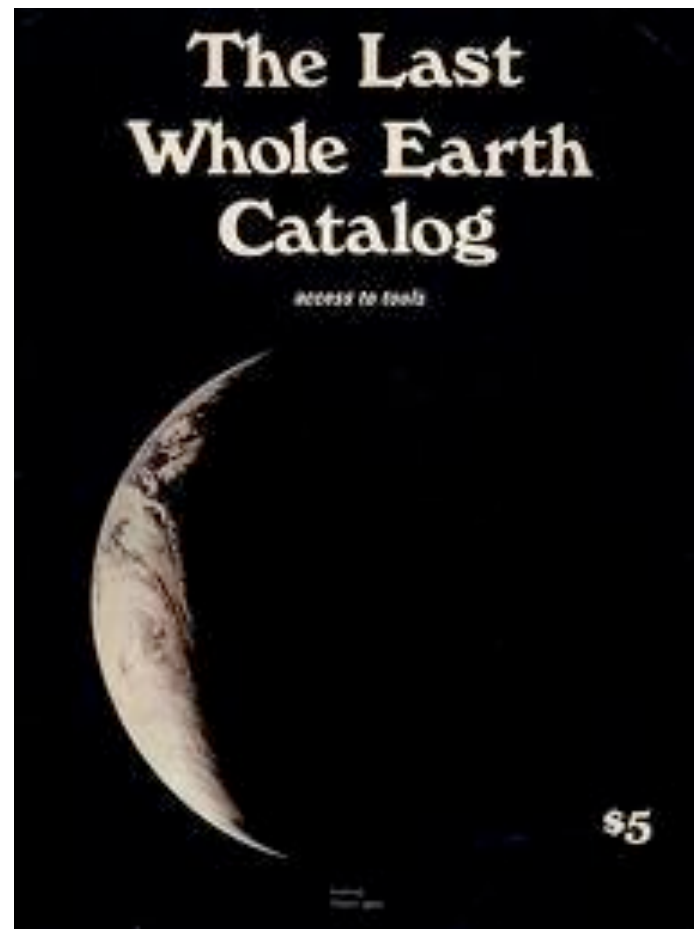
COMMENTS (712)





# What world?

“I believe that a desirable future depends on our deliberately choosing a life of action, over a life of consumption. Rather than maintaining a lifestyle which only allows to produce and consume – a style of life which is merely a way station on the road to the depletion and pollution of the environment – the future depends upon our choice of institutions which support a life of action”.



Ivan Illich (1973)



# T.S Eliot, Little Gidding V

What we call the beginning is often the end  
And to make an end is to make a beginning.  
The end is where we start from. And every phrase  
And sentence that is right (where every word is at home,  
Taking its place to support the others,  
The word neither diffident nor ostentatious,  
An easy commerce of the old and the new,  
The common word exact without vulgarity,  
The formal word precise but not pedantic,  
The complete consort dancing together)  
Every phrase and every sentence is an end and a beginning,  
Every poem an epitaph.

[...]

**We shall not cease from exploration  
And the end of all our exploring  
Will be to arrive where we started  
And know the place for the first time.**



# All stars twinkle...

[Third verse]

Then the traveler in the dark  
Thanks you for your tiny spark;  
He could not see which way to go,  
If you did not twinkle so.  
Twinkle, twinkle, little star,  
How I wonder what you are!



A close-up photograph of a computer keyboard. The focus is on the arrow keys (left and right) and the 'Q' and 'A' keys. A teal-colored rectangular overlay is positioned horizontally across the middle of the image, containing the text '// Questions?'.

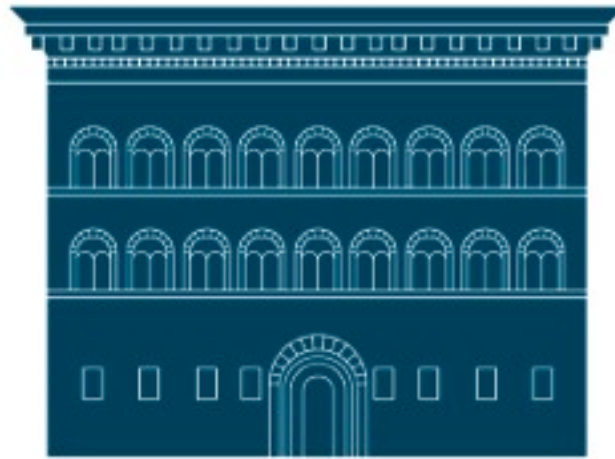
// Questions?



// Thank you!







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