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tijdvak 1

Engels

Tekstboekje

Happiness

by Will Ferguson

Canongate £6.99

What would happen if someone came up with the ultimate cure for all modern woes? The world economy would collapse, as Will Ferguson demonstrates in this horribly plausible satire. Society depends on 1.

Fashion, fast food, sports cars, diet centres and religious cults would become redundant in a world without self-doubt and insecurity.

Guardian Weekly

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David Miliband: Why students are getting better and better at exams

From a speech at Imperial College, London, by the Minister of State for School Standards

One myth about education is that, because there is an unchanging distribution and level of intelligence and aptitude, there should, therefore, be an unchanging distribution and level of educational achievement. This deep-seated myth relies on two confusions.

The first is between different types of intelligence. It is a truism that different people are good at different things. And because different people are good at different things, it is silly to rely on a single metric of aptitude in measuring achievement. Increasingly, our tests and exams are focusing on a broader range of intellectual competence than was traditionally measured by conventional IQ tests. For example, students are asked to apply knowledge as well as recall it.

There is also the confusion between intelligence or aptitude, and achievement. Whatever your potential, it is its realisation that is the vital task of education. And education systems can be more or less successful at fulfilling potential. So even with a given distribution of aptitudes, there is plenty of scope for education to become more successful at realising potential.

For example, there is now an increasing range of teaching strategies that can substantially accelerate rates of learning and help students acquire a broader range of independent learning skills. My contention is not that today's students are born cleverer than their parents; it is that schools and teachers are getting better at getting the best out of them.

www.independent.co.uk

C I N E M A

A chillingly arrogant quasi-eugenic experiment, carried out in the name of Her Majesty the Queen until the early 1970s, is what is denounced by *Rabbit-Proof Fence*, a heartfelt, though somewhat heavy-footed movie. The scandal is appalling enough on its own terms for the movie to carry its audience along, even without the exceptionally strong performances of the three young stars: Everlyn Sampi, Tianna Sansbury and Laura Monaghan.

At the beginning of the last century, the Australian government instituted a policy of forcibly removing Aboriginal children from their families if they were “half-caste” and taking them away to a briskly Anglican education camp for training as domestic servants. The idea was if these children were denied access to Aboriginal culture they would turn to Western culture and could then be assimilated into white society. Theoretically, this was for their “own good” – but it quite plainly emerges here as a grotesque project to contain the evidence of miscegenation.

Three such children escape from the camp and walk 1,500 miles back home across featureless scrub, taking as their path the giant rabbit-proof fence which stretches from coast to coast, and followed by the Aborigine tracker, Moodoo (a great performance from David Gulpilil), the enigmatic



figure of whom we will come to be afraid as much as Butch and Sundance feared their pursuers.

Their epic journey is regularly intercut, slightly laboriously, with the fulminations of Mr Neville, the colonial official prosecuting this policy, played by Kenneth Branagh. He is a tight-lipped figure who does not reveal any psychological complexity.

Australian-born director Phillip Noyce does an honest and compassionate job, and the movie is beautifully shot by cinematographer Christopher Doyle, but perhaps partly as a result of his fidelity to the true-life source material, there is not much dramatic light and shade. It is a long, slow slog back home, and by the end we begin to feel the exhaustion in the auditorium, too.

*Peter Bradshaw in
Guardian Weekly*

Left-handedness

A sinister advantage

A possible reason why left-handedness is rare but not extinct

IT is hard to box against a southpaw, as Apollo Creed found out when he fought Rocky Balboa in the first of an interminable series of movies. While “Rocky” is fiction, the strategic advantage of being left-handed in a fight is very real, simply because most right-handed people have little experience of fighting left-handers, **5** 5. And the same competitive advantage is enjoyed by left-handers in other sports, such as tennis and cricket.

The orthodox view of human handedness is that it is connected to the bilateral specialisation of the brain that has concentrated language-processing functions on the left side of that organ. Because, long ago in the evolutionary past, an ancestor of humans (and all other vertebrate animals) underwent a contortion that twisted its head around 180° relative to its body, the left side of the brain controls the right side of the body, and the other way around. In humans, the left brain (and thus the right body) is usually dominant. And on average, left-handers are smaller and lighter than right-handers. That should put them at an evolutionary disadvantage. Sporting advantage notwithstanding, therefore, the existence of left-handedness poses a problem for biologists. But Charlotte Faurie and Michel Raymond, of the University of Montpellier II, in France, think they know the answer. As they report in the *Proceedings of the Royal Society*,

40 there is a clue in the advantage seen in boxing.

As any schoolboy could tell you, winning fights enhances your status. If, in pre-history, this translated into increased reproductive success, it might have been enough to maintain a certain proportion of left-handers in the population, by balancing the costs of being left-handed with the advantages gained in fighting. If that is true, then there will be a higher proportion of left-handers in societies with higher levels of violence, since the advantages of being left-handed will be enhanced in such societies. Dr Faurie and Dr Raymond put this hypothesis to the test.

Fighting in modern societies often involves the use of technology, notably fire-arms, that is unlikely to give any advantage to left-handers. So Dr Faurie and Dr Raymond decided to confine their investigation to the proportion of left-handers and the level of violence (by number of homicides) in traditional societies.

By trawling the literature, checking with police departments, and even going out into the field and asking people, the two researchers found that the proportion of left-handers in a traditional society is, indeed,



75 correlated with its homicide rate. One
of the highest proportions of left-
handers, for example, was found
among the Yanomamo of South
America. Raiding and warfare are
central to Yanomamo culture. The
murder rate is 4 per 1,000 inhabitants
80 per year (compared with, for example,
0.068 in New York). And, according to
Dr Faurie and Dr Raymond, 22.6% of
Yanomamo are left-handed. In
contrast, Dioula-speaking people of

85 Burkina Faso in West Africa are virtual
pacifists. There are only 0.013 murders
per 1,000 inhabitants among them and
only 3.4% of the population is left-
handed.

90 While there is no suggestion that
left-handed people are more violent
than the right-handed, it looks as
though they are more successfully
violent. Perhaps that helps to explain
95 the double meaning of the word
“sinister”.

The Economist

Tekst 5

De volgende tekst is het begin van The March, een roman van E.L. DOCTOROW.

At five in the morning someone banging on the door and shouting, her husband, John, leaping out of bed, grabbing his rifle, and Roscoe at the same time roused from the backhouse, his bare feet pounding: Mattie hurriedly pulled on her robe, her mind prepared for the alarm of war, but the heart stricken that it would finally have come, and down the stairs she flew to see through the open door in the lamplight, at the steps of the portico, the two horses, steam rising from their flanks, their heads lifting, their eyes wild, the driver a young darkie with rounded shoulders, showing stolid patience even in this, and the woman standing in her carriage no one but her aunt Letitia Pettibone of McDonough, her elderly face drawn in anguish, her hair a straggled mess, this woman of such fine grooming, this dowager who practically ruled the season in Atlanta standing up in the equipage like some hag of doom, which indeed she would prove to be. The carriage was piled with luggage and tied bundles, and as she stood some silver fell to the ground, knives and forks and a silver candelabra, catching in the clatter the few gleams of light from the torch that Roscoe held. Mattie, still tying her robe, ran down the steps thinking stupidly, as she later reflected, only of the embarrassment to this woman, whom to tell the truth she had respected more than loved, and picking up and pressing back upon her the heavy silver, as if this was not something Roscoe should be doing, nor her husband, John Jameson, neither.

Letitia would not come down from her carriage, there was no time, she said. She was a badly frightened woman with no concern for her horses, as John saw and quickly ordered buckets to be brought around, as the woman cried, Get out, get out, take what you can and leave, and seemed to be roused to anger as they only stood listening, with some of the field hands appearing now around the side of the house with the first light, as if drawn into existence by it. And I know him! she cried. He has dined in my home. He has lived among us. He burns where he has ridden to lunch, he fires the city in whose clubs he once gave toasts, oh yes, someone of the educated class, or so we thought, though I never was impressed! No, I was never impressed, he was too spidery, too weak in his conversation, and badly composed in his dress, careless of his appearance, but for all that I thought quite civilized in having so little gift to dissemble or pretend what he did not feel. And what a bitter gall is in my throat for what I believed was a domesticated man with a clear love for wife and children, who is no more than a savage with not a drop of mercy in his cold heart.

It was difficult to get the information from her, she ranted so. John did not try to, he began giving orders and ran back in the house. It was she, Mattie, who listened. Her aunt's hysteria, formulated oddly in terms of the drawing room, moved her to her own urgent attention. She had for the moment even forgotten her boys upstairs.

They are coming, Mattie, they are marching. It is an army of wild dogs led by this apostate, this hideous wretch, this devil who will drink your tea and bow before he takes everything from you.

And now, her message delivered, her aunt slumped back in her seat, and gave her order to be off. Where Letitia Pettibone was going Mattie could not get the answer. Nor how much time there was, in fact, before the scourge arrived at her own door. Not that she doubted the woman. She looked into the sky slowly lightening to its gray beginnings of the day. She heard nothing but the cock crowing and, as she turned, suddenly angry,

the whisperings of the slaves gathered now at the corner of the house. And then with the team away, the carriage rolling down the gravel path, Mattie turned, lifting the hem of her robe, and mounted the steps only to see that horrible child Pearl, insolent as ever, standing, arms folded, against the pillar as if the plantation was her own.

John Jameson was not unprepared. As far back as September, when the news had come that Hood had pulled out and the Union armies had Atlanta, he sat Mattie down and told her what had to be done. The rugs were rolled, the art was taken down from the walls, her needlepoint chairs – whatever she valued, he told her – her English fabrics, the china, even her family Bible: it was all to be packed up and carted to Milledgeville and thence put on the train to Savannah, where John's cotton broker had agreed to store their things in his warehouse. Not my piano, she'd said, that will stay. It would rot in the dampness of that place. As you wish, John had said, having no feeling for music in any case.

Double trouble

Catherine Bennett

A Clone of Your Own: The Science and Ethics of Cloning

by Arlene Judith Klotzko

- 1 Considering that hardly anyone is quite sure what it is, we hear an awful lot about cloning. True, many people registered the arrival of Dolly the sheep, in 1996, and may be dimly aware that whatever process produced this arthritic herbivore is now connected with the claims of various braggarts that they have either just created, or are on the verge of creating, the first human clone. However, the respectful hearing accorded to these implausible clinicians, who would be left to yell in the street if they made similarly unfounded assertions about any other area of medical research, confirms only how much we have to learn. Step forward bioethicist and lawyer Arlene Judith Klotzko.
- 2 Her plan, in this handy introduction to the science and ethics of cloning, is to help us distinguish the current state of laborious scientific experiment from the fervid, largely fiction-induced images of doom that distort virtually every debate on the subject in British public life. Cloning means Brave New World, zillions of Hitlers, Frankenstein, Jurassic Park. It is as if we were unable to talk about the landings on Mars without invoking Dr Who, or rising sea levels without mentioning Kevin Costner and his fins in Waterworld.
- 3 Klotzko tells us to calm down, for two main reasons. First, because human cloning probably won't happen for ages, and not only because it's illegal. Most animal clones are still "seriously abnormal". "Cloning has produced lambs that could not catch their breath - unable to propel their blood through enormous blood vessels that were 20 times larger than normal." Scientists have yet to clone a dog or a monkey. Second, cloning is not inherently ethically distasteful. Cloned individuals would be individuals too.
- 4 The first part of her argument is less reassuring than the second, not least because, as she lets slip rather early on, the art of nuclear transfer "is not all that difficult to learn. Indeed a teenage girl, working as a summer intern at an American biotechnology company, was able to clone a pig." What a promising scenario for a Hollywood teen slasher: working alone in her bedroom one long, hot summer, a brilliant young science student decides to prove to her mocking friends that she really can clone a litter of cute piglets. Experimenting, she puts some of her own DNA in the mix. Within weeks, giant killer swine are prowling the American suburbs, each one equipped with manicured trotters and the mind of an Einstein ...
- 5 In reality, Klotzko assures us, cloning science is frightfully well regulated, sometimes overly so, and not remotely lurid. Indeed, in her tranquillising hands it is virtually drained of colour. Although she is a fairly capable interpreter of laboratory language for the scientifically illiterate, Klotzko is deficient in the narrative and descriptive skills that are, as some of her peers have shown, the most effective way to narrow the gulf of

understanding between scientists and the public. Dotted through her imperturbable summary are hints that the history of cloning research is as full of intriguing characters, plot twists and consuming rivalries as any other field of human endeavour. But Klotzko avoids the details, biographies and quotations that might bring it to life, and glosses over disputes and research scandals.

- 6 Her more contained view of scientists may be the result of over-familiarity. For it becomes clear from her language when Klotzko explains the promise of therapeutic cloning - the process that produces stem cells and which may one day offer cures for terrible diseases - that she identifies her own efforts with the enterprise. "We want a metamorphosis with an endpoint: production of stable cells. What we don't want are new heart cells that suddenly veer off and become liver cells; or nerve cells becoming bone; or liver cells becoming nerves." We? How will we - sorry, they - stop this happening? "As stem cell therapy nears the clinic," she soothes, for all the world as if she will be there, policing every lab when the great day approaches, "great care must be taken, and it will be."
- 7 Klotzko is at her most thoughtful and convincing when she applies herself to clearing "the moral fog surrounding human cloning". Why do so many people recoil from this particular branch of assisted reproduction? A marvellously lucid little critique of the "slippery slope" argument so often propounded by pro-lifers is supported by a tribute to human uniqueness. Refreshingly, she illustrates an essay on the impossibility of creating exact human replicas with the example of Mozart, an admirable person, instead of the cast of perverts and demagogues - Hitler, Stalin, Saddam, and so on - who traditionally parade through any cloning debate. Her analysis of the singular family environment and vanished musical world that brought about Mozart should be enough to reassure anyone who has never encountered identical twins that 20 is impossible. Something everyone might bear in mind next time a crazed cloner comes calling.

<http://books.guardian.co.uk>

Materialism damages well-being

By Richard Tomkins

Is it going too far to suggest that, until very recently, the leitmotif of human history had been misery? It is easy to imagine the past as some kind of bucolic idyll, but only by ignoring the perpetual visitations of war, pestilence and famine. In between, you might have hoped to avoid living too much in the shadow of fear, superstition or religious persecution but **21** what the economist John Maynard Keynes described as the permanent problem of the human race: want, or the struggle for subsistence.

It is one of the **22** of recent economic history that, in the advanced industrial world, this seemingly permanent problem has been solved. For the most part, people in developed countries live in a state of surfeit, not of want. They no longer worry whether they can afford to put food in their children's bellies or keep a roof over their heads, but which cable channel package they should subscribe to, where to spend their holidays and which designer labels they should wear.

But some people are **23**. Even though they are richer, healthier and safer than ever before, and even though they enjoy more freedoms and opportunities, they continue to moan: about rising depression and suicide rates, about crime, about the decline of civility, about obesity, road rage and drug abuse, about hyper-competition and rampant materialism and, above all, about spam.

The fact is that, in the West, increases in economic output and consumption are no longer **24** by increases in people's reported levels of happiness. And as the gap widens, it is close to becoming an

obsession. This week, I received reports on the pursuit of happiness from two think-tanks on the same day: one from the London-based New Economics Foundation and another from the Canberra-based Australia Institute. Last week, the Royal Society, Britain's top scientific academy, held a two-day conference on the science of well-being. Last month, New Scientist magazine devoted a two-part series to the subject. And so on.

You can sum up the main findings of happiness research in a few sentences. Although more money delivers big increases in happiness when you are poor, each extra dollar makes **25** once your basic needs have been met. Much more important are non-material things such as a good marriage and spending time with loved ones and friends.

However, money and material goods do matter in one respect: people tend to seek status, and therefore judge themselves against the visible signs of **26**. Unfortunately, as the New Economics Foundation report remarks, this is a never-ending competition because the bar simply gets raised all the time. One house used to be a sign of status; now only two will do.

If people could only overcome their worries about status, their route to happiness would be clear: they should downshift, trading less pay for more time with their families and friends. It will never happen, you may say. But according to Clive Hamilton, author of the Australia Institute report and a visiting scholar at Cambridge University, an astonishing 25 per cent of Britons aged 30-59 have done just that in the past 10 years, voluntarily taking a cut in earnings to improve the quality of their lives.

If I were in advertising, I think I would be starting to worry a bit about findings like these. Our whole economic system, with its targeted annual increases in gross domestic product, is founded upon the concept of satisfying the desire for 27; and advertising exists only to help generate that desire. But what if people became convinced that acquisitiveness, rather than adding to their happiness, was standing in its way?

People have always been equivocal about advertising, worrying that it hoodwinks them into buying things they do not need. Perhaps that explains the paradox that, as society has grown more liberal, attitudes towards advertising have gone 28. It is no longer the case that you can market any goods that can be legally sold. People are demanding that advertising should operate within the parameters of social, even moral, objectives. Bans on tobacco advertising are now being followed by calls for restrictions on the advertising of other “undesirable” products such as alcohol and fast food. And there is a rising clamour for bans on marketing to children, much of it driven by fears that they are being brainwashed into consumerism from birth.

From there, it is quite a short step to argue that advertising to adults should be banned on the grounds that it makes them unhappy. It will never happen, of course; people will always require – indeed, desire – material goods, even if they give them a lower priority, so advertising will 29. But is it possible to imagine a day when every advertisement will have to be accompanied by a government health warning such as: “Danger: materialism may damage your sense of well-being”?

Acquisitiveness, after all, is a lot like smoking: harmful, addictive and much easier to quit if everyone else does so at the same time. So the greater happiness of the many would best be served if social policy were directed towards marginalising status-seekers and turning them into pitiful pariahs, leaving the rest of us to 30, in the comfortable knowledge that we were not only in the majority but also doing the right thing.

Convinced? I am. Tell you what, I’ll agree to stop being a greedy self-maximiser if you will, then we’ll both be much happier as a result. Ready? One, two, thr . . . Hey! What do you think you’re doing? Get your hands off my credit card RIGHT NOW.

Financial Times

Sex Ed at Harvard

By CHARLES MURRAY

Washington

- 1 FORTY-SIX years ago, in *The Two Cultures*, C.P. Snow famously warned of the dangers when communication breaks down between the sciences and the humanities. The reaction to remarks by Lawrence Summers, the president of Harvard, about the differences between men and women was yet another sign of a breakdown that takes Snow's worries to a new level: the wholesale denial that certain bodies of scientific knowledge exist.
- 2 Mr Summers's comments, at a supposedly off-the-record gathering, were mild. He offered, as an interesting though unproved possibility, that innate sex differences might explain why so few women are on science and engineering faculties, and he told a story about how nature seemed to trump nurture in his own daughter.
- 3 To judge from the subsequent furor, one might conclude that Mr Summers was advancing a radical idea backed only by personal anecdotes and a fringe of cranks. In truth, it's the other way around. If you were to query all the scholars who deal professionally with data about the cognitive repertoires of men and women, all but a fringe would accept that the sexes are different, and that genes are clearly implicated.
- 4 How our genetic makeup is implicated remains largely unknown, but our geneticists and neuroscientists are doing a great deal of work to unravel the story. When David C. Geary's landmark book *Male, Female: The Evolution of Human Sex Differences* was published in 1998, the bibliography of technical articles ran to 52 pages – and that was seven years ago. Hundreds if not thousands of articles have been published since.
- 5 This scholarship shows a notable imbalance, however: scholarship on the environmental sources of male-female differences tends to be stale (wade through a recent assessment of 172 studies of gender differences in parenting involving 28,000 children, and you will discover that two-thirds of the boys were discouraged from playing with dolls - but were nurtured pretty much the same as girls in every other way); but scholarship about innate male-female differences has the vibrancy and excitement of an important new field gaining momentum. A recent notable example is *The Essential Difference*, published in 2003 by Simon Baron-Cohen of Cambridge University, which presents a grand unified theory of male and female cognition that may well be a historic breakthrough.

- 6 “Exciting” is the right word for this work, not “threatening” or “scary.” We may not know the answers yet, but we can be confident that they will be more interesting than, say, a discrete gene for science that clicks on for men differently than it does for women. 35, it will be a story of the interaction of many male and female genetic differences, and the way a person’s environment affects those differences. Hardly any of the answers will lend themselves to simplistic verdicts of “males are better” or vice versa. For every time there is such a finding favoring males, there will be another favoring females.
- 7 Some people will find the results threatening - because some people find any group differences threatening - but such fears will be misplaced. We may find that innate differences give men, as a group, an edge over women, as a group, in producing, say, terrific mathematicians. But knowing that fact about the group difference will not change another fact: that some women are terrific mathematicians. The proportions of men and women mathematicians may never be equal, but who cares? What’s important is that all women with the potential to become terrific mathematicians have full opportunity to do so.
- 8 Of course, new knowledge will not be without costs. Perhaps knowing that there is a group difference will discourage some women from even trying to become mathematicians or engineers or circus clowns. We - scientists, parents, educators, employers - must do everything we can to prevent such unwarranted reactions. And the best way to do that is to put the individual’s abilities, not group membership, at the center of our attention.
- 9 Against the cost of the new knowledge is the far greater cost of obliviousness, which can lead us to pursue policies that try to make society conform to expectations that conflict with what human beings really are. In the study of gender, large and growing bodies of good science are helping us understand the sources of human abilities and limitations. It is time to accept their existence, their seriousness and their legitimacy.

<http://www.nytimes.com>

RUMBLE IN THE JUNGLE

Scientists have blunted Montezuma's revenge

1 It is the perfect moonlit night. The air is balmy as you gaze across to the grizzled Thai fishermen hauling in tomorrow's catch. An ominous rumble suddenly breaks the calm. You clutch your stomach apprehensively. "Damn, I don't think that squid was quite fresh enough." Too late. Tomorrow's session on the beach is already off. Even the meander through the bars of Phuket looks unlikely. Like 25 million tourists a year from the antiseptic North to the *E. coli*-rich developing world, you and your suffering innards have been conquered.

2 It is not only the backpackers in India and package tourists in Cairo who succumb to Delhi belly or gippy tummy. However selective they have been about the salad and fastidious with the shellfish, almost half the visitors to Africa, India, the Middle East, South-East Asia, Central America and the Caribbean suffer at least one bout of diarrhoea severe enough to empty half a packet of those invaluable emergency pills. But salvation is now on the horizon, thanks to boffins at Imperial College, London. A vaccine is about to be tested that promises almost complete protection from *E. coli* and from various other unpleasant ailments. No longer will inveterate travellers be able to boast about their cast-iron stomachs: now even wimps will be immune.

3 But is this development an unalloyed blessing? The need to ward

off those pesky bugs has served as an irrefutable medicinal pretext for several stiff G&T sundowners throughout the tropics. The high-spirited enthusiasm for the disinfecting properties of alcohol can add gaiety to many a visit to the nightclubs in Nairobi or Nicaragua. And though countries such as Italy have long ago, apparently, discovered the secrets of hygiene, those cultural gorgons who insisted on an improving visit to the *due belle cupole* of the local cathedral could be convincingly rebuffed with the excuse that you had "a touch of the tummy" – leaving an entire afternoon to slope off to the bars.

4 Delhi belly, indeed, was often nature's way of saying that the goat steak was underdone or that the mussels had absorbed a little too much local nutrient. What warning signals will there be now that you are about to be poisoned? Indeed, Montezuma's revenge might have been an ancient Inca guarantee that only the hardest modern tourist would make it through the jungle to swarm over the ruined pyramids. Without the dysentery disincentive, how can the fragile wonders of the Third World be protected from ruinous tourist feet? Suntan surfeit or pasta plethora offer no protection. And now, with the stomach conquered, tourists will be ready to conquer ever newer, remoter and still germ-laden worlds.

The Times

Tekst 10

Randy ruddy ducks sentenced to death

Thousands of ruddy ducks in Britain are to be exterminated, in the cause of wildlife protection. The problem is that the drakes are not only ruddy but randy. Their mating dance sends white-headed ducks into a swoon, and the resultant hybrid birds create further damage to the native species. The ruddy ducks were brought to Britain from North America as ornamental birds, but have successfully adapted to the wild and spread into mainland Europe. The white-headed duck is native to Spain, and is a seriously endangered species. The only other colony, ominously enough, is near Basra in southern Iraq.

Guardian Weekly