



Hello everyone,

Spider-Man, Superman, Batman, Captain America, Iron Man. Superheroes – either from the Marvel Cinematic Universe or the DC Universe – are more popular than ever before. In our cover article, 'Holland's Spider-Man' (pp. 10–11), we meet Tom Holland, the actor playing Spider-Man in the latest iteration of this superhero franchise. One of today's highest-grossing Hollywood stars, Holland admits his life has changed quite a bit since he was cast as Spidey: 'I was worried leaving my house this morning that paparazzi would be outside.' He seems to be finding refuge and relaxation in a new hobby: playing golf.

In real life, though, there are no superheroes to defend us against criminals. And unfortunately, sometimes police services sometimes come up short, too. As a reaction, some school districts in the US have now decided to arm teachers – in an ultimate (or perhaps desperate) effort to protect students in the event of a school shooting. In 'Teachers with guns' (pp. 20–21) Ohio educator Thomas Baxter takes us through the grim realities of training to kill one of his own students.

Do you want to contribute to the fight against climate change, but find it difficult to be consistent and always make ecologically responsible choices? Then you may want to read 'Are you an eco-hypocrite?' (pp. 24–25) and find out that you're not alone. Most experts agree that doing your absolute best and sometimes failing is certainly nothing to be ashamed of. Being perfect is impossible, and 'we don't need something else to feel bad about', according to one of them.

Other topics in this issue of WaspReporter Magazine include bullying, influencers, disgust, psychopathy, forensic linguistics, and much more. And don't forget to check out our website at www.waspreporter.nl. Enjoy!

Johan Graus Editor

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Scan the QR codes to access the audio files.



For this issue, Sheila has interviewed Melissa. Melissa talks about her family, her education, and her work experience so far.

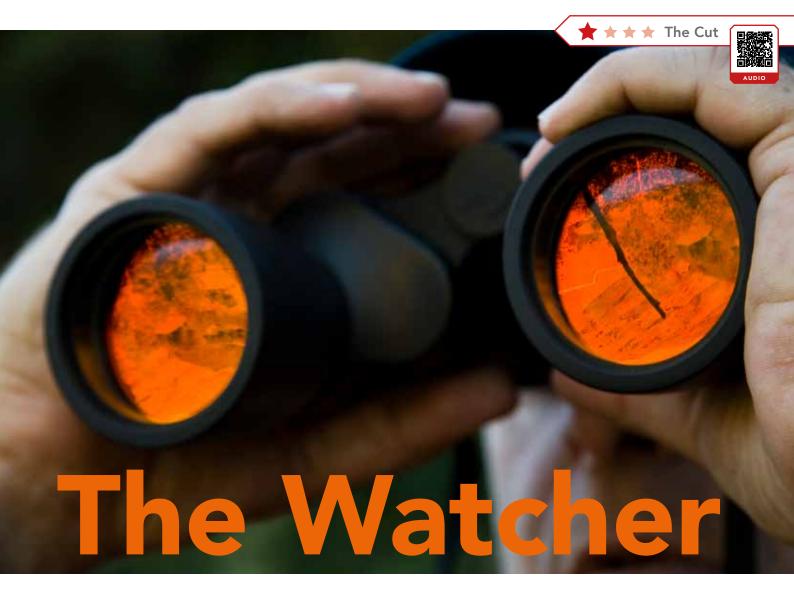












The Broaddus family had just bought their dream home and couldn't wait to move in. Until threatening letters began arriving in the mail

- After he'd finished painting one evening at his new house in Westfield, New Jersey, Derek Broaddus found an envelope
 addressed in thick, clunky handwriting to 'The New Owner'. Dearest new neighbour at 657 Boulevard, allow me to welcome you to the neighbourhood.
- 10 Buying 657 Boulevard had fulfilled a dream for Derek and his wife, Maria. The house was a few blocks from Maria's childhood home. Their three kids, who were 15 five, eight, and ten years old, were already debating which of the house's fireplaces Santa Claus would use.

A welcome note

20 The typed note went on: My grandfather watched the house in

the 1920s and my father watched it in the 1960s. It is now my time. Do you know the history of the house?

25 Do you know what lies within the walls of 657 Boulevard? Why are you here? I will find out.

The letter identified the Broadduses' Honda minivan, as well as the workers renovating the home. I see already that you have flooded 657 Boulevard with contractors so that you can destroy the house as it was supposed to 35 be. Tsk, tsk, tsk... bad move. You don't want to make 657 Boulevard unhappy.

Earlier in the week, the family had gone to the house and chatted 40 with their new neighbours. The letter writer seemed to have noticed. You have children. I have seen them. So far I think there are

three that I have counted... Once 45 I know their names I will call them and draw them to me.

The envelope had no return

address. Who am I? There are hundreds and hundreds of cars 50 that drive by 657 Boulevard each day. Maybe I am in one. Welcome my friends, welcome. Let the party begin. A signature was typed in a cursive font: the Watcher.

- It was after 10 p.m., and Derek was alone. He raced around the house turning off lights so no one could see inside, then called the police. An officer came to the
- 60 house and read the letter. He asked Derek whether he had enemies and recommended moving a piece of construction equipment from the back porch in case the Watcher
- 65 tried to toss it through a window.



A second letter

The Broadduses spent the next weeks on high alert. Derek cancelled a work trip, and whenever 70 Maria took the kids to the house, she would yell their names if they wandered into a far corner of the yard. The contractor arrived one morning to find that a heavy sign 75 he'd hammered into the front yard had been ripped out overnight.

Two weeks later, another letter arrived. Maria recognised the thick black lettering and called the police.

This time, the Watcher used their names, misspelling them as 'Mr and Mrs Braddus' and identifying their three kids by their nicknames – the ones Maria had been yelling.

85 657 Boulevard is anxious for you to move in. It has been years and years since the young blood ruled the hallways of the house. Have you found all of the secrets it holds yet?
90 Will the young blood play in the basement? Or are they too afraid to go down there alone? I would be very afraid if I were them. It is far away from the rest of the house. If 95 you were upstairs you would never hear them scream. Will they sleep in the attic? Or will you all sleep on the second floor? Who has the

bedrooms facing the street? I'll
100 know as soon as you move in. It will
help me to know who is in which
bedroom. Then I can plan better.
Have a happy moving in day. You
know I will be watching.

105 Looking for clues

A few days after the first letter,
Maria and Derek went to a
neighbourhood barbecue.
They hadn't told anyone about
110 the Watcher, as the police had
instructed. They found themselves
scanning the party for clues while
keeping an eye on their kids, who
ran happily through a crowd that
115 made up much of the suspect pool.

John Schmidt, who lived two doors down, told Derek about the Langfords, who had lived in the house between them since 120 the 1960s. Peggy Langford was in her 90s, and several of her adult children lived with her. The family was a bit odd, Schmidt said, describing one son, Michael 125 Langford, as a loner, a guy known for creepily sneaking around.

Derek thought the case was solved. But detectives said they had already spoken to Michael. 130 He denied knowing anything about the letters. Without hard evidence, there wasn't much the department could do. Frustrated, the Broadduses began their own investigation. They set up webcams and employed private investigators, including two former FBI agents.

Maria said she felt as if almost anyone could have been the

140 Watcher, which made daily life feel like navigating a labyrinth of threats. She studied the faces of shoppers at the local grocery store to see whether they looked

145 strangely at her kids and spent hours googling anyone who seemed suspicious.

Running out of options

The Watcher, however, left no
150 digital trail, no fingerprints, and
no way to place someone at the
scene of a crime that could have
been planned from pretty much any
mailbox in northern New Jersey.
155 The letters could be read closely

for possible clues or dismissed as the nonsensical ramblings of a sociopath.

In December, six months after 160 the first letter had arrived, police told the Broadduses they had run out of options. The renovations, including a new alarm system, were finished,

165 but the idea of moving in filled the Broadduses with overwhelming anxiety. They had sold their old home, so they moved in with Maria's parents while continuing to 170 pay the mortgage and taxes on 657 Boulevard. They told only a handful of friends about the letters, which left others to ask why they weren't moving in. They fought constantly 175 and started taking medication to fall asleep.

The Broadduses decided to sell 657 Boulevard. But rumours had already begun to go around 180 about why the house sat empty. They told their estate agent that they intended to show the letters to anyone whose offer was accepted. Several bids came in, but they were 185 well below the asking price.

Real-life mystery

The media caught wind of the tale. 'We do some creepy stories,' host Tamron Hall said on *TODAY*.

190 'This might be top-ten creepy.'

News trucks camped out at 657

Boulevard, and one local reporter set up a lawn chair to conduct his own watch. The Broadduses got

195 more than 300 media requests but decided not to speak publicly.

From a safer distance, the Watcher was a real-life mystery to solve. A group of reddit.com users obsessed over Google Maps' Street View. Proposed suspects included an abandoned mistress, a rejected estate agent, a local high schooler's creative-writing project, guerrilla marketing for a horror movie, and 'mall Goths having fun'. Some people thought the Broadduses were wimps for not moving in.

In Westfield, people were on
210 edge. Mayor Andy Skibitksy assured
the public that even though the
police hadn't solved the case, their
investigation had been 'exhaustive'.
Then Barron Chambliss, a veteran
215 detective who had been asked
to look at the case, discovered
something surprising: investigators
had analysed the DNA on one of
the envelopes and determined that

One night, Chambliss and

220 it belonged to a woman.

'Have a happy moving in day. You know I will be watching'

a partner were sitting in a van watching the house. Around 11 p.m., a car stopped out front 225 long enough for Chambliss to grow suspicious. He says he traced the car to a woman whose boyfriend lived on the block. She told Chambliss her boyfriend 230 was into 'some really dark video games', including one in which he was playing as a character: 'the Watcher'. He agreed to come in for an interview on two separate 235 occasions. He didn't show up either time. But Chambliss didn't have enough evidence to force him to appear.

The Watcher wins

240 Next spring, 657 Boulevard went back on the market. But potential buyers would back out once they read the letters. Derek and Maria were distraught. On top of
245 the mortgage and renovations, the Broadduses paid more than \$100,000 in Westfield property taxes and spent at least that amount investigating the Watcher.

Not long after, a family with grown children and two big dogs agreed to rent 657 Boulevard. The rent didn't cover the Broadduses' mortgage, but they hoped that
a few years of renting without incident would help them sell. When Derek went to the house to deal with squirrels that had taken up residence in the
roof, the renter handed him an envelope.

To the vile and spiteful Derek and his wench of a wife Maria. You wonder who the Watcher is? Turn 265 around idiots. Maybe you even spoke to me, one of the so-called neighbours who has no idea who the Watcher could be...

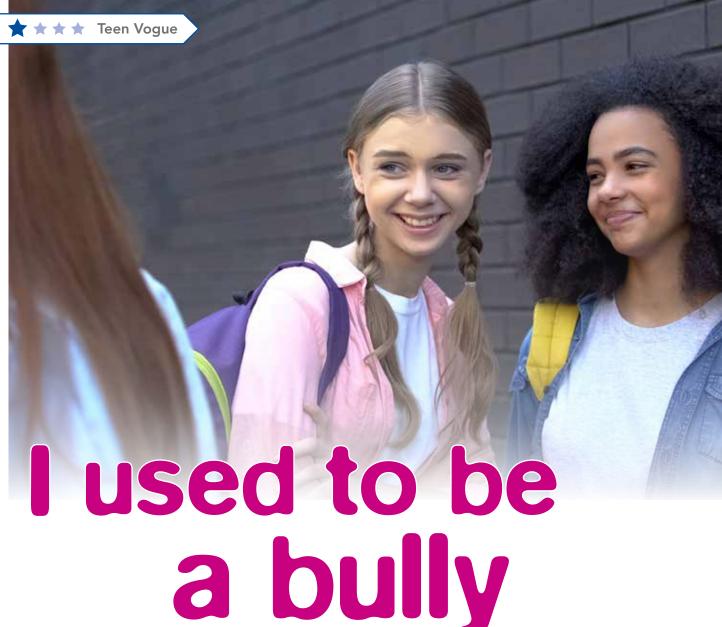
The letter indicated revenge
270 could come in many forms. Maybe
a car accident. Maybe a fire. Maybe
something as simple as a mild
illness that never seems to go away
but makes you feel sick day after
275 day. Maybe the mysterious death
of a pet. Loved ones suddenly die.
Planes and cars and bicycles crash.
Bones break.

'It was like we were back at the 280 beginning,' said Maria. The renter was spooked but agreed to stay. The Broadduses continued to press the case, sending new names to investigators whenever they found 285 something odd.

Finally, this past July, a buyer purchased 657 Boulevard – for far less than the Broadduses paid for it. The prosecutor's office has kept 290 the case open, but the Broadduses believe it is unlikely the Watcher will ever be caught. They can't help but feel, as the last letter taunted: the Watcher won.

657 Boulevard is anxious for you to move in. It has been years and years since the young blood ruled the hallways of the house...





Erin Zea, who appeared on the TV show Undercover High, explains how being bullied prompted her to stop bullying others and speak up against it

I remember being in seventh grade like it was yesterday. Walking down the hallway amid girls who seemed perfect and totally put together,
 boys who seemed totally in line with who they wanted to be.

Then there was me:
uncomfortable, shy, awkward. I
wasn't particularly good at anything,
to at least I didn't feel like I was, and I
definitely wasn't confident in myself.
I didn't know who I wanted to be
or what group I wanted to be part
of, but what I did know is I wanted
people to notice me and like me.

That's when the crude joking and teasing of others truly began. It was in an effort to boost my own self-worth that I bullied others, 20 tearing down the confidence they seemed to possess.

Low self-esteem

One girl in middle school met my anger more times than I would

25 like to admit. I made fun of her for what she looked like, the bags she carried, and the clothes she wore. I remember in particular that she carried a purse made of recycled

30 Capri Sun pouches. I thought it was so cool, but I had a 'friend' whisper in my ear that she thought the bag was stupid. Even though I didn't

35 bag was stupid in front of everyone.
People laughed when I bullied.
They laughed really hard, and it

really think that, I told the girl her

would make me feel good for the few seconds they were laughing 40 with me, so I continued the cycle of crude jokes and teasing of others.

Looking back at my treatment of this particular girl, I can see clearly that I bullied her out of my own 45 insecurity. I admired her for how she

carried herself, never once turning hateful and mean words back on me. Instead of treating her with the respect I actually held for her, 50 I mirrored the opinion others had of her, and made fun of her to gain

Peer pressure

their respect.

In high school I felt even more 55 uncomfortable, shy, and awkward, so the jokes continued. The namecalling and teasing became more direct, more daring, and I was more willing to do what others on encouraged me to. We focused on other people's shyness, which made me forget about mine.

This time I had people around me that not only laughed about 65 it with me, they encouraged the bullying again and again, and would join in. In these years, one particular boy was my target. I shouted insults at him because he was being 70 rude to my friend. I thought I was helping her, but really I was hurting someone who did nothing to me, who didn't deserve my unkind words, and didn't deserve to be 75 embarrassed in front of a large portion of our high school. It turned into a screaming match that swiftly got me suspended from school for the day.

80 The tables turned

Then one day everything changed. Puberty hit. It was like it whacked me in the face overnight, and all of a sudden I was this short, petite 85 girl, with DDD boobs. I was stared at, made fun of, hit on, sexualised, harassed – really the list goes on and on, just like it does for how I treated others.

Karma caught up with me. I felt isolated and alone because of this treatment, and it only got worse when I got a breast reduction. I had something some girls admired me for, and I happily allowed a doctor to take it away halfway through my junior year of high school.

Returning to school after
the breast reduction felt like a
100 nightmare. People noticed, my
friends knew, teachers knew, it
wasn't something I could hide. Boys
would tell me I slapped God in the
face. Girls would tell me my body
105 looked better the other way. But it
was one comment that made me
feel like the lowest piece of trash on
earth. It was the middle of class and
we were watching a movie, when a
110 boy said, 'Hey Erin, let me suck on
them titties!'

I was devastated, humiliated, and felt like I was standing naked in front of the whole class. Even after 115 I did what my parents, my doctors, and I thought would be best for my health, I was still being bullied.

Changing myself

That was the moment I truly
120 understood the way that I had
made others feel. I understood the
humiliation and loneliness that I had
caused others, and I realised I had
to change. I wanted to be known
125 for good, for the way I helped
others, for the way I made others
feel around me. I didn't want to be
the bully I had been, so I stopped.

In high school I felt even more shy and awkward, so the jokes continued

It wasn't sudden. It didn't

130 happen overnight, and it took work.

I had to rewire my thinking, I had to
change my perspective of life, and I
had to find out who I really wanted
to be. I wanted to be someone

135 who spreads love, kindness, hope,
and joy. I wanted to help others
understand what I did was wrong.

I wanted them to see that there is more to people than what meets 140 the eyes. I wanted to educate people, so I became a teacher.

Still, I wish I could go back to the time I was a bully and instead be the person I am today. I wish 145 that I could take away the tears that I caused people, the pain, or the lack of self-confidence. I wish that my apology would even come close to making amends to the people 150 I hurt. I wish I had understood the power that words carry. I wish that I could take one big deep breath and all the terrible things I have said to people or about people would 155 come right back to me.

A cycle of kindness

But I can't. So I am sitting here writing this today, hoping even just one young person can understand 160 that people won't forget how you made them feel. That you can't take back what you have said. But you can work on yourself. You can go talk to someone – like a social 165 worker or therapist – about how you're feeling, and it'll help.

You can walk away from the friends that are encouraging you to continue, and eventually you'll find 170 real friends. Friends that encourage you to be a positive force in the world. Friends that will help you create a new cycle of life filled with kindness. That is the cycle you 175 should continue. <<





Deep in the Alaskan wilderness, a hiker comes to the rescue of an injured mother wolf and her pups, and a lasting connection is formed

The hiker and the wolf

By Morris Homer Erwin

One spring morning many years ago, I had been looking for gold along Coho Creek on Alaska's Kupreanof Island.
 As I walked out of a forest of spruce, I froze in my tracks.
 No more than 20 paces away in the bog was a huge
 Alaskan timber wolf – caught in one of Trapper George's traps.

Old George had died the previous week of a heart attack, so the wolf was lucky I happened to be there. Confused and frightened at my approach, the wolf backed away, pulling at the trap chain. Then I noticed something else: it was a female, and her teats were full of milk. Somewhere there was a den of hungry pups waiting for their mother.

Four tiny pups

15 From her appearance, I guessed that she had been trapped only a few days. That meant her pups were probably still alive, surely no more than a few miles away. But I suspected that if I tried to release the wolf, she would turn aggressive and try to tear me to pieces.

So I decided to search for her pups instead and began to look for incoming tracks that might lead me to her den. Fortunately, there were still a few remaining patches of snow. After several moments, I spotted paw marks on a trail along the bog.

The tracks led a half mile through the forest, then up a slope. I finally spotted the den at the base of an enormous spruce. There wasn't a sound inside. Wolf pups are shy and cautious, and I didn't have much hope of luring them outside. But I had to try. So I began

30 imitating the high-pitched squeak of a mother wolf calling her young. No response. A few moments later, after I tried another call, four tiny pups appeared.

I extended my hands, and they cautiously suckled at



my fingers. Perhaps hunger had helped overcome their 35 natural fear. Then, one by one, I placed them in a canvas bag and headed back down the slope.

Finding food

When the mother wolf spotted me, she stood up. Possibly picking up the scent of her young, she let out a 40 high-pitched, melancholy whine. I released the pups, and they raced to her. Within seconds, they were slurping at her belly.

What next? I wondered. The mother wolf was clearly suffering. Yet each time I moved in her direction, a
45 menacing growl rumbled in her throat. With her young to protect, she was becoming aggressive. She needs food, I thought. I have to find her something to eat.

I hiked toward Coho Creek and spotted the leg of a dead deer sticking out of a snowbank. I cut off a 50 hindquarter, then returned the remains to nature's icebox. Carrying the venison thigh back to the wolf, I whispered in a soothing tone, 'OK, Mother, your dinner is served. But only if you stop growling at me.' I tossed chunks of venison in her direction. She sniffed them, then gobbled them up.

I made a rough shelter for myself and was soon asleep nearby. At dawn, I was awakened by four fluffy bundles of fur sniffing at my face and hands. I glanced toward the agitated mother wolf. If I could only win her confidence, I thought. It was her only hope.

60 Winning trust

Over the next few days, I tried to win the wolf's trust. Just as I was beginning to lose hope of ever winning her over, I thought I saw a slight wagging of her tail. I moved within the length of her chain. She remained motionless.

65 My heart in my mouth, I sat down eight feet from her.
One snap of her huge jaws and she could break my
arm... or my neck. I wrapped my blanket around myself
and slowly settled onto the cold ground.

I awoke at dawn, stirred by the sound of the pups nursing. Gently, I leaned over and petted them. The mother wolf stiffened. Then I slowly placed my hand on the wolf's injured leg. She flinched but made no threatening move.

I could see that the trap had imprisoned only two
75 toes. They were swollen and damaged, but she wouldn't
lose the paw – if I could free her. 'OK,' I said. 'Just a
little longer and we'll have you out of there.' I applied
pressure, the trap sprang open, and the wolf pulled free.

My experience in the wild suggested that the wolf would now gather her pups and vanish into the woods. But carefully, she crept toward me. Slowly, she sniffed my hands and arms. Then the wolf began licking my fingers. I was astonished. This went against everything I'd ever heard about timber wolves. Yet, strangely, it all seemed so natural.

Meeting the family

After a while, the mother wolf was ready to leave and began to limp off toward the forest. Then she turned back to me. 'You want me to come with you, girl?' I 90 asked. Curious, I packed my gear and set off.

Following Coho Creek for a few miles, we climbed Kupreanof Mountain until we reached an alpine meadow. There, at the edge of the forest, was a wolf pack – I counted nine adults and, judging by their playful behaviour, four nearly full-grown pups. After a few minutes of greeting, the pack broke into howling. It was a spooky sound, ranging from low wails to high-pitched yodelling.

At dark, I set up camp. By the light of my fire and a glistening moon, I could see wolf shapes dodging in and out of the shadows, eyes shining. I had no fear. They were merely curious. So was I.

I awoke at first light. It was time to leave the wolf to her pack. She watched as I gathered my gear and started walking across the meadow. Reaching the far side, I looked back. The mother and her pups were sitting where I had left them, watching me. I don't know why, but I waved. At the same time, the mother wolf sent a long, sad howl into the cold air.



110 Bridging barriers

Four years later, after serving in World War II, I returned to Coho Creek. It was the fall of 1945. After the horrors of the war, it was good to be back among the tall spruce and breathing the familiar, refreshing air of the Alaskan bush.

Then I saw, hanging in the red cedar where I had placed it four years before, the now-rusted steel trap that had caught the mother wolf. The sight of it gave me a strange feeling, and something made me climb 120 Kupreanof Mountain to the meadow where I had last seen her. There, I gave out a long, low wolf call – something I had done many times before.

An echo came back across the distance, followed by a wolf call from a ridge about a half mile away. Then, far 125 off, I saw a dark shape moving slowly in my direction. I knew at once that familiar shape, even after four years. 'Hello, old girl,' I called gently. The wolf edged closer, ears erect, body tense, and stopped a few yards off, her bushy tail wagging slightly.

130 Moments later, the wolf was gone. I left Kupreanof Island a short time after that and I never saw the animal again. But the memory she left with me – vivid, haunting, a little eerie – will always be there, a reminder that there are things in nature that exist outside the laws and
135 understanding of man. <<</p>



HOLLAND SPIDER = MAN

Tom Holland was first cast as
Spider-Man at 18 and now, at
only 23, is among the brightest
stars in the entire superhero
universe – not to mention one of
today's highest-grossing actors.
So why's he hiding out on a golf
course with GΩ's staff writer
Zach Baron?

Tom Holland loves golf. He thinks about it constantly. He plays rounds on public courses and on courses that used to be the exclusive
 province of kings. He plays while on movie press tours in Asia and Europe and the United States. If he's not currently playing golf, there is almost always some part of his
 mind that is just anticipating the next time he'll be able to.

'I don't know what has happened,' Holland says, 'but it has become my addiction. I go to sleep 15 thinking about playing golf the next day.' The two of us are, in fact, in the back of an SUV, travelling through Holland's native London on our way to play right now.

20 MARVEL STAR

What's interesting about this fixation is that Tom Holland could reasonably be said to have better things to do. Five years ago,

Just this morning, for instance, he left his house holding a mug

35 with his face on it. It's a long story

— it was a gift from a friend, is the short version — but the relevant fact is that the mug depicts a younger Tom Holland, shirtless, in distress.

40 Holland has just returned from a global promotional tour for Spider-Man: Far from Home, and while

he was away, being Spider-Man,

things seem to have changed for 45 him around London, just a bit. 'I was worried leaving my house this morning that paparazzi would be outside,' Holland says.

So golf has become an

50 escape. It's a refuge from what
has otherwise become of the
life of Tom Holland. Marvel, in
its decade-long takeover of the
movies, has revitalised the careers

55 of any number of great actors, and
supercharged the flourishing careers
of others, but Holland is perhaps
the first wholly made Marvel star.
The first stand-alone Spider-Man

60 film he starred in made \$880 million.
The second, released this past

summer, made more than \$1 billion.

BALLET

Holland's first real role was on
55 London's West End, playing the
lead in Billy Elliot. He was nine years
old when he was first approached
about the part. His mother, a
commercial photographer, had
70 enrolled him in a dance class after
watching him react in a reasonably
coordinated way to a Janet Jackson
song, and he was first spotted
there.

Then Holland trained for two years, in order to be able to actually do the role. Part of that training involved learning ballet. 'I would do it in the school gym at lunchtimes by myself, in tights, with a teacher,' Holland says. 'So you have kids looking through the windows. To a bunch of 10-year-olds who all play rugby, Tom Holland doing ballet in the gym isn't that cool.' Because of this, he says, he was bullied quite a bit. 'But, uh, you know, that's fine. It's just what I had to do if I wanted to get this job.'

90 From ballet, Holland learned a kind of specific grammar of movement. 'Ballet is the Latin of dance,' he says. 'Every piece of dance has come from ballet. To 95 come from that background has allowed me to express myself in different ways. For instance, in the Spider-Man suit, you often can't see his face. But I find a way to convey 100 feeling anyway.'

Dance, Holland says, taught him to 'emote in different ways that aren't crying or laughing'. And from doing theatre every night, starting 105 at the age of 11, Holland learned how to be professional – to work like an adult while he was still just a child.

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

sometimes the hard way, that he is returning to a world that is not the same as the one he left, as more or less a civilian, five years ago.

115 Millions of people now care about what he does, and who he does – or doesn't – date.

Some time ago, he had what we will call his first Mystery Blonde 120 experience. It was the most innocent thing: On Sunday he went to a concert in Hyde Park. On Wednesday photos of him and a blonde woman approximately his age in close contact were in dozens of tabloids across the world. On that same day, the reaction from thousands of Spider-Man fans who had imagined Holland in a real-life relationship with Zendaya arrived, full of fury and sadness. And then, on Thursday, in perhaps the most jarring part of it, the tabloids identified the woman he was with

'That wasn't the best week,'
Holland says. His jaw tightens a bit
just at the thought of it. 'Because
this person's privacy was violated
140 by a million tabloids?' I ask. 'Yeah.
It's just, I'm a very private person.
I'm not a tabloid person. I don't
like living in the spotlight. I'm quite
good at only being in the spotlight
145 when I need to be. And it was just
a little stressful. You know, it was a
wake-up of, like: this is what your
life is now. So just be wary.'

PLAN B

150 I ask Holland about something his father Dominic Holland, who is a comedian, wrote. In Dominic's telling, at one point in Tom's young career, he and his wife sent
 155 their son to carpentry school, as a backup plan, in case acting didn't work out. Did this actually happen?

Holland says yes, it did. This was around 2014, when Holland was 160 18. 'I was auditioning, auditioning, auditioning, and I just hit a bit of

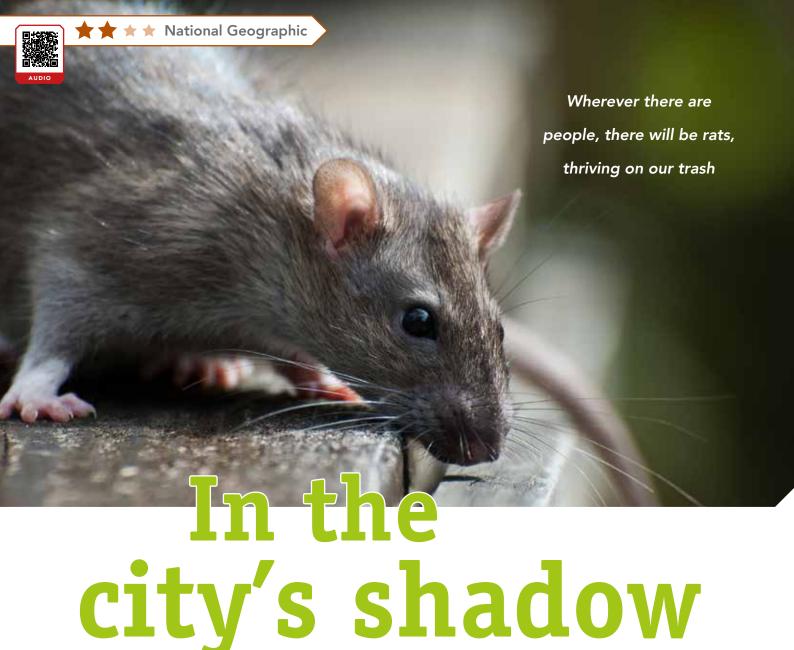
a rut. And I think, personally, and this is me being very honest, I had just done a Ron Howard film, and 165 I thought I was the dog's bollocks. I was like, "I've just done a Ron Howard film. I don't need to audition for stuff any more." And it was quite the contrary. I wasn't, like, 170 taking auditions seriously, and I just thought, "I'll get this job." And I didn't. It was a bit of a punch in the teeth. And my mum said, "Look, you're not getting any work, so you 175 need to go and have a plan B. I've booked you at this carpentry school in Cardiff. Six-week course. You're gonna go."'

So Holland went. Many of the 180 men on his mother's side of the family are carpenters, and Holland took to the trade. 'I loved it,' he says. He learned how to fit a roof and renovate a bathroom. While 185 he was enrolled in the carpentry course, he auditioned for Spider-Man.

By then he'd come back to a slightly more realistic view of 190 himself. He was no longer the dog's bollocks. 'In that period of time while I was figuring out plan B,' Holland says, 'it all kind of clicked.'

A fox wanders by. Holland picks 195 up trash as we walk, fills in divots. On the greens he repairs every ball mark he encounters. It drives him crazy that people don't take care of the course like he does. Then he 200 steps up and hits his tee shot five feet from the hole. I hit mine into a bunker. 'Unlucky!' Holland says. <<





By Emma Harris

Rats are our shadow selves. We live on the surface of the city; they generally live below. We mostly work by day; they mostly work by night. But nearly everywhere that people live, rats live too. In Seattle, where I grew up, the rats excel at climbing sewer pipes – from the inside. Somewhere in my hometown right now, a wet rat is poking its twitchy pink nose above the water surface in a toilet bowl.

Urban rat populations are rising – as much as 15 to 20 per cent in the past decade. Charismatic animals like elephants, polar bears, and lions are all in decline, yet inside our cities, we find it hard to keep rat populations in check.

Rats have a reputation for being filthy and sneaky.

15 In the Middle Ages, they may have transmitted plague.

More than any other city creature, they inspire fear and disgust: people hate rats. Do the little beasts really deserve it? Some of the things we hate most about rats – their dirtiness, their talent for survival – are qualities that 20 could describe us as well. Their filth is really our own: in

most places rats are thriving on our trash. 'It is us, the humans,' New York rodentologist Bobby Corrigan says. 'We don't keep our nest clean.'

A New York rat safari

25 Corrigan is an expert on urban rats. He works as a consultant for cities and companies around the world with rat problems. I meet him at a park in Lower Manhattan, one of the rat capitals of the world.

The dominant rat in New York City is the Norway rat, Rattus norvegicus, also known as the brown rat. Brown rats are burrowing animals that are widest at the skull, so they can slip into any space wider than that (including the pipe leading to a toilet bowl). Corrigan points out a small hole directly behind the bench I am sitting on – it's the main entrance to a rat burrow. He explains that most rat burrows have three entrances, a main entrance and two emergency exits for quick escapes.

Corrigan and I head out on our rat safari. In a flower bed beside a courthouse he paces carefully, feeling the 45 Mayor Bill de Blasio had announced 'an aggressive extermination plan' against rats in the city, a \$32 million effort to reduce rats by up to 70 per cent.

Many cities try to control rats with poison. But unfortunately for the rats, fast-acting poisons don't work 50 well; rats that feel ill after a bite or two stop eating the bait. So the extermination industry uses anticoagulants, or blood thinners, which don't affect rats for hours and don't kill them for several days. The rats die slowly from internal bleeding. Corrigan doesn't like this, but 55 fears outbreaks of disease. So he continues to lend his expertise to clients.

We go to Tribeca Park, where according to Corrigan the rats have learned to hunt and kill pigeons. But tonight the park is quiet. City workers might have recently injected burrows with dry ice, or frozen carbon dioxide, Corrigan says – a more humane approach to killing rats. As carbon dioxide gas comes off the ice and spreads through the burrows, rats fall asleep, and never wake up.

However, after rats are poisoned in an area, the survivors simply breed until the burrows are full again, and the new generations still find huge mounds of trash bags set out on the sidewalks every night. Until cities radically change how they deal with their trash, Corrigan says, 'the rats are winning this war'.

70 Rodent invaders

Brown rats likely originated on the Asian steppes, where they first learned they could eat well by hanging out with humans. They spread with trade along the Silk Road, and colonised today's United States by the 1750s. Roof rats 75 – Rattus rattus, also known as black rats – are a global species as well. They too travelled with explorers and traders, then settled down to eat our trash and steal our food. Pacific rats, a third species of Rattus, are a different story: Polynesian explorers sailing from Tahiti and other 80 islands intentionally brought them along in their canoes

– as food. As the Polynesians colonised various Pacific islands, tiny rodent explorers settled with them.

On some small, remote islands, rats have done as much damage as human invaders. On Easter Island 85 they're suspected of having wiped out palm trees by eating all the nuts. On other islands they threaten seabirds by eating eggs and chicks. Fighting back, conservationists have been trying to eradicate rats with ambitious poisoning campaigns, targeting larger and 90 larger islands. At 1,500 square miles, South Georgia, near Antarctica, is the current record holder: in May 2018 it was declared rat free after helicopters dumped 330 tons of poison in five years on its stark landscape, at a cost of \$13 million. With the rats gone, conservationists 95 expect to see an explosion in the number of birds such as albatrosses, skuas, and terns.

Getting rid of rats

Decades of trying to outsmart rats has made Corrigan not only respect but like them. 'I admire this animal.

100 That's my life's paradox,' he says. He welcomes New York's use of dry ice instead of blood thinners – though the city isn't doing it just to reduce rat suffering. More and more hawks, owls, and other birds of prey are living in the city, and New Yorkers don't want to see them

105 dying from eating poisoned rats.

Scientists are currently working on what might be the ultimate in rat control: a genetic engineering technique that would spread infertility genes through a rat population. This might one day enable us to wipe out 110 rats on an unheard-of scale, without poison.

Might we miss them? Without rats, cities would have fewer hawks and owls. Tons of food we throw away would simply rot in place, rather than be carried off by a rodent clean-up crew. Rats help keep us from drowning in our own filth: if we can't love them for it, respect and a little acceptance would be a healthy step.

Outside a soup kitchen near Chinatown, after sunset, I meet a maintenance worker who is having a smoke as he watches rats frolic on a heap of trash bags. I ask if the 120 rats bother him. 'I don't mind rats,' he says. 'This is New York City.'







1 Swapping my flats for a pair of heels, I hop out of my chauffeured BMW. I'm at a barristers' office in Birmingham where I'm due to
5 give a presentation about female empowerment to a room filled with legal professionals. As the CEO of Minority Report Consulting, a female empowerment consulting
10 company, I've been booked for the evening.

Except when I enter the building and make my way towards the conference room, there is no
15 audience. Instead, there is a grey-haired photographer who sits on one of the empty plastic chairs. I step up to the lectern. He looks at me, __1__. 'Are you, erm... ready
20 then?' he asks, placing his camera lens towards me. I smooth down my skirt, take a deep breath, and begin...

The next #girlboss

25 Here's the thing: I'm not a founder of a consultancy business, and

I'm not here to give a talk. This is my father's office. The BMW I stepped out of was an Uber and the photographer is my dad. I'm a 27-year-old freelance writer who still lives with her parents in Rugby.

I work really hard and I'm doing OK. In fact, I often think I'm making

- 35 2 until I open Instagram and see the legion of young women I follow being true #girlbosses about town. There's the woman who has made a '30 Under 30' list.
- 40 And there's my friend whose feed features all the launches brands have invited her to as a rep for a major media company. I have to admit: their shimmering public
- 45 profiles have, on occasion, left me feeling 3.

But the closer I look at some of these Instagram accounts, the more I begin to notice something odd. 50 There's a vagueness to where they appear to be speaking and a lack of

appear to be speaking and a lack of specificity to the talks they claim to be giving (there are, for example, no details of how to book tickets).

- 55 We never see the audience. And they speak of 'staff' who are never seen and never given more than a first name. The devil, it seemed, is in the *lack* of detail.
- Which made me wonder... could it all be an elaborate trick?

I decided to take the __4__. I was going to be the next #girlboss! Or at least that's what I was going to 65 make it look like. After all, you have to fake it till you make it, right? So I opened Instagram and fired up a new account for my freshly imagined company: Minority Report 70 Consulting.

We're an empowerment consulting agency providing cultural futurecasting and we also help to foster business innovation through

- 75 speculative fiction. Confusing, right? That's by design. People don't like ___5__, so I'm hoping that by dazing them with a jumbled description I can avoid questions
- 80 about what exactly my 'company' does. As for my following of over 2,000? Easy. I bought them through a website called Buzzoid, which

offers 2,500 followers for the

85 price of a takeaway. As for anyone
thinking that even your cat can spot
a fake Instagram presence, you just
haven't met the right robots.
What smart people do is buy

90 a package that automatically
delivers likes to every photo
you post. Which is ___6__.

Staging and spinning

One of the first things I post is an 95 image of The Lanesborough hotel, one of the most expensive hotels in London. 'There are many wonderful hotels in London, but The Lanesborough has got to be our 100 favourite for conducting business,' I write beneath the image. An image, by the way, that I took by walking in, taking a picture, and then hotfooting it out of there.

A slew of comments follow, mostly emojis that I respond to with further emojis - which appear to be the main method of communication for $\underline{}$. The 110 hotel drop-by is pretty easy, so I repeat it, going into Claridge's and posting that the Minority Report Consulting 'team' is there for company drinks. Suddenly I strike 115 oil. An entrepreneur from Detroit, Michigan, who runs six businesses, comments with the 'prayer' emoji. (Whether that person has also employed bots to do their dirty 120 work is another matter.)

I post a picture of a pair of
Louboutin shoes, saying I ___8__
them. 'Never fails to make our day
when a client expresses gratitude

125 for a job well done in this manner!'
I type. I get a message from an
account called Femalebossclub.
'Love your content!' it says. I'm
starting to feel like a real #girlboss

130 now. I link the Minority Report
Consulting account to my real
Instagram profile, and friends start
to reach out to say how ___9__ they
are

135 I'm also building the illusion of influence by putting a 'spin' on things I'm already doing. I'm passionate about the work the Mental Health Foundation does, 140 and when it's my birthday, I ask friends to donate to them. Would it be so wrong to say I was now

28

an 'ambassador' for them? I have technically organised a 'fundraiser' 145 for the cause. I post it. I get several comments.

Opting out

This is all starting to make me feel 10 – I'm pretending to

150 be something I'm not, and every comment I get, fake or otherwise, reminds me of that. Pushing these uncomfortable feelings to the back of my mind, I move on. Besides,

155 my 'co-workers' (read: me) have been busy, especially my assistant 'Camilla' (me again but with a higher voice), who has been calling event managers on my behalf.

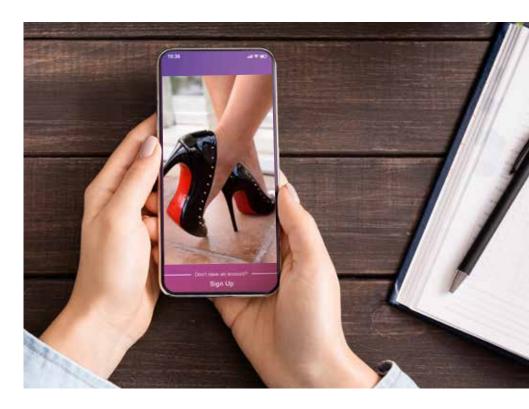
160 Mostly people are polite, telling 'Camilla' to get me to fill in speaker application forms online, which I try. I also discover #callforspeakers on Twitter and fire off responses 165 to anyone filling spots for anything even remotely relevant.

What would happen if I did? Would I get trapped in a career based on lies, until it all came tumbling down?

180 While it's tempting to accept the invitation, I turn it down. I believe that winning based on anything other than your own merit is meaningless. People cut corners 185 because achieving legitimate success takes time and effort. But even if they get somewhere, their 'rewards' will always 12.

There was one upside, however:

190 if it's so easy to propel yourself to
the next level with a bit of staged
success, then it's equally easy to do
the same with something you've
legitimately achieved. I need to put
195 myself forward for opportunities
that I think I'd be good at. Going
forward, I'll be upping my hustle –
but promoting what's real. <<





Every section of text is a crime scene, every word an item of evidence. The investigators in such cases are language profilers who analyse messages and documents to track down a perpetrator. Here, the story of how forensic linguistics got its start

Betrayed by a word

1 Modern leftist philosophers are not simply cool-headed logicians - this phrase is just a brief excerpt from a 35,000-word manifesto that appeared in the Washington Post on September 19, 1995 after the author – dubbed 5 the Unabomber because he had targeted a university and an airline - promised to 'desist from terrorism' if the paper published it. But it was actually this very phrase that ultimately revealed the identity of America's most-wanted terrorist. The phrase was accompanied 10 by the offer of a million-dollar reward for information leading to the bomber. This was the phrase that made David Kaczynski's blood run cold when he read it: he remembered having seen it a few years earlier in a letter from his brother, Ted.

Could it be that his beloved big brother was really the self-proclaimed revolutionary who advocated destroying the 'industrial system' and 'modern technology'? How could Ted, who would not even hurt a fly, be the man now wanted on three counts of murder? To find out for 20 himself, David contacted the FBI.

The first forensic linguist

James R. Fitzgerald was attached to the San Franciscobased Unabom taskforce as the first - and the only - forensic linguist working for the FBI. His job was to 25 analyse the content of the bomber's various documents for characteristics that could point to the author - a discipline that was not yet established in police work at the time.

By that point the FBI had been trying to learn the 30 Unabomber's identity for 17 years, but apart from his writings and a composite sketch based on a decadeold sighting, they didn't have much to go on. 'He was

making sure no evidence existed. No fingerprints, no DNA - nothing,' Fitzgerald reveals. Because he didn't 35 want to buy commercial glue, he'd even melt deer hooves to make his own glue.

Then in 1995 he sent his manifesto to the Washington Post and the New York Times - and all of a sudden, the investigators had something more to go on. This gave 40 Fitzgerald a good opportunity to closely examine the

- bomber's use of language, which he felt certain was the key to identifying him. The forensic linguist had become the Unabom investigators' last hope of tracking down and capturing a madman whose bombs had claimed
- 45 three lives and left 23 people injured, in some cases

Fitzgerald had just received the tip from David Kaczynski pointing to his brother, Ted – a misfit who lived alone in a small cabin deep in the forests of Montana, 50 but at first he failed to grasp its significance. Since the Washington Post had published the manifesto and the million-dollar reward was posted, not a day went by without a thousand or more people offering their opinions about the identity of the Unabomber. And how 55 was Fitzgerald supposed to pick out one perpetrator from over 2,500 suspects - solely identified on a person's writing? And so, James Fitzgerald read the manifesto, and then he read it some more, all the while taking many notes.

60 Writeprint

All writers have an individual approach that reflects their origins, their life experience, and their way of thinking, and each is unique. It is akin to a written fingerprint, and experts call it a person's 'writeprint'. 'Each writer has a

Unabomber Manuscript

Is Published Public Safety Reas

The Washington

INDUSTRIAL SOCIETY AND ITS FUTURE



65 distinct linguistic system, a personal code that cannot be changed, even if a person tries to obscure it,' explains language expert Raimund Drommel, who specialises in forensic linguistics.

Statistical methods can be used to analyse around 60 different linguistic features, including sentence length, the frequency of spelling and punctuation errors, and preferences for certain expressions and words. Since the late 19th century, the analysis of linguistic styles has been used by literary scholars to ascertain, for instance, the identity of an author who has written under a pseudonym. However, what if there are thousands of suspects to consider? That makes things more difficult, but even then, a text can reveal a lot about its author.

The smoking gun

80 The Unabomber's language provided a clue as to his age: 'I noticed the use of old-fashioned terms like broad and chick to denote women. He used the word Negro to refer to African Americans, something right out of a 1950s movie. That helped me peg the author's age,' explains Fitzgerald.

When the Unabomber sent out his manifesto to the newspapers, there was hardly an error to be found in it. He had even corrected the punctuation: 'He was obsessively careful,' says Fitzgerald. He used dozens of unusual words, such as *chimerical* and *anomic*, so he obviously had a formal education. The few mistakes that he did make included turning a common idiomatic expression around: in paragraph 185 he'd written 'You can't eat your cake and have it too' instead of the much more common 'You can't have your cake and eat it too'. This phrase not only indicated that the writer seldom

talked to other people; it also provided the ultimate proof of his quilt.

Eventually, James Fitzgerald spent months comparing 100 the specific language in the manifesto with letters written by Ted Kaczynski. After considering all of the evidence, the investigator was convinced: Ted Kaczynski was indeed the author. But the FBI was still hesitant: was there enough evidence to seek a valid search warrant?

105 Fitzgerald knew that he was writing history with his inquiry. 'For the first time, as far as I know, language was evidence. It really created a legal precedent.'

Fitzgerald spent more than a month compiling a 50-page document that detailed 600 examples of how 110 Kaczynski's writing was virtually identical to that of the Unabomber. He recalls one letter in particular: 'One was an early 1970s letter to the editor of the Saturday Evening Post in which Kaczynski mentions the evils of environmental pollution and technology. At the very 115 end the letter states: "You can't eat your cake and have it too." And it was signed by "Theodore J. Kaczynski".' The evidence immediately led to a search warrant. The evidence found in Kaczynski's cabin was overwhelming, and a judge sentenced him to eight life sentences.

120 A new forensic method

After Kaczynski's trial had concluded, Fitzgerald formalised a number of the tools that had proved useful in the search effort by launching the Communicated Threat Assessment Database (CTAD). This comprehensive collection of the linguistic patterns found in written threats contains more than a million words from thousands of 'criminally oriented communications' received by the FBI.

Other countries have also followed suit, establishing a criminal communications database of their own. That enables them, for example, to take a series of letters threatening blackmail, extortion – or worse – and determine that the authorship of all of them is the same. Researchers are now working to develop algorithms that can do the analysis automatically. Because it's not usually the case that a whole nation of newspaper readers gets a chance to read a 35,000-word manifesto and check their memories to see whether it might have been written by their own brother... <<





Despite what Hollywood suggests, psychopaths aren't easy to recognise.

So how can you spot them, should you be worried, and could you be working alongside one right now?



By Dr Nicola Davies

Chillingly cool, collected, cunning, and clever. Is this the perfect description of a psychopath? For most people, Hollywood movies
 and popular culture generate such images of psychopathy. Be it Anthony Hopkins as Dr Hannibal Lecter in The Silence of the Lambs or Psycho's Norman Bates, such
 characters dominate the public's perception of a psychopath. But how close is this popular image to reality?

The term psychopath originated 15 in the 1800s, from the Greek words psykhe and pathos, which mean 'sick mind' or 'suffering soul'. However, this can be misleading.

'Psychopaths might be better
20 conceptualised as people who are
dissociated,' says criminologist
Robert Blakey. 'In other words,
people who are detached from their
own emotions and the emotions of
25 other people. Consequently, they
just don't feel much. If they see

a person in distress, psychopaths don't feel the distress themselves, so they have less emotional incentive not to harm people.' Blakey believes this dissociation can arise from inheriting an oversensitive perceptual system. 'If you're very sensitive to visible

35 signs of distress and anger in other people, then seeing those signs could become overwhelming for highly sensitive children,' he says. 'A deficit in one's ability to predict

40 other people's behaviour as a child can be a traumatic experience and, in response, the child's brain may dissociate.' In other words, the empathy system shuts down to 45 survive the emotions of others.

The irony here is that people born with an excessive capacity to empathise could be more likely to develop psychopathic traits 50 due to losing their full capacity for empathy in their efforts at self-preservation. This has parallels with

a similar theory about autism which, like psychopathy, is a disorder

55 of social cognition. While the relationship between autism and psychopathy has gained increasing interest due to the shared lack of empathy, research indicates

60 many distinctions between the two conditions. The most relevant distinction is that individuals with autism are not amoral, unlike psychopaths.

65 Born to be vile?

One way to identify a psychopath is to study patterns in their relationships. Psychopaths generally cannot sustain long-term 70 relationships, so short periods of intensity followed by detachment tend to define their close interactions. While in a relationship, their behaviour is likely to be highly 75 manipulative and selfish, with their needs always coming first.

Not all psychopaths are violent



criminals, but most present a threat to our welfare at some level, 80 to one's self-esteem, peace of mind, sexual health, or financial wellbeing. There are many theories behind why psychopaths are the way they are. Some believe it is 85 nature, or genetics, that causes psychopathy. Others think it is related to environmental factors. Whatever the cause, medically speaking people with psychopathic 90 tendencies demonstrate certain traits.

Researchers from Harvard
University investigating decisionmaking in psychopaths took

95 magnetic resonance imaging (MRI)
brain scans of 50 prison inmates,
with the aim of investigating the
choices that psychopaths make.
They found that people with signs

100 of psychopathy had brains that
were wired so that they overvalued
immediate or short-term rewards.
This desire for instant gratification
overshadowed any concern about

105 the consequences of their actions.

Psychopathic characteristics also vary by culture. A US and Netherlands study comprising over 7,000 criminals exhibiting 110 psychopathic traits revealed that US-based offenders tended to predominantly display the psychopathic trait of callousness, while the Dutch offenders showed 115 greater evidence of irresponsibility. These traits were measured using the Psychopathy Checklist, which might be interpreted differently in different cultures. Nevertheless, the 120 research raises some interesting areas for further study. Be it nature

or nurture, the popular image of

a psychopath is largely influenced by the ambiguity surrounding its 125 definition and diagnosis.

Psychopathy vs psychosis

The lack of a diagnostic tool is partly due to the mystery surrounding psychopathic behaviour. This has 130 led to the predominantly inaccurate media image of a psychopath as someone who brutally murders. In real life, however, psychopaths seldom murder outright. Two 135 forensic psychiatrists analysed 400 films and 126 fictional psychopathic characters on the scales of realism and clinical accuracy. They found that psychopaths were often 140 caricatured as sexually depraved and emotionally unstable, with sadistic personalities and eccentric characteristics. Such images aren't necessarily realistic; certain 145 cinematic psychopaths such as Norman Bates in Psycho and Travis Bickle in Taxi Driver are psychotics rather than psychopaths. While psychopathy is a personality 150 disorder underlined by callousness, recklessness, impulsive behaviour, lying, and lack of empathy, psychosis refers to a mental state where the person has lost touch 155 with reality.

Psychopathy is typically not associated with any loss in the sense of reality: individuals know where they are and what they are doing. The perception that psychotic and psychopathic are one and the same simply isn't the case. While the former is an outward display of a chaotic

165 personality state, the latter is more internal, and difficult to spot. Far from being the crazed, damaged individuals portrayed in the movies, there is mounting evidence that
170 many people with psychopathic characteristics are highly successful.

Functional psychopaths

A 2016 Australian study found that around one in five US corporate 175 leaders displayed psychopathic traits. Psychopaths may be poor at managerial tasks, but they are often adept at climbing the ladder by hiding weaknesses and 180 charming their colleagues. So while at extreme levels psychopathy can lead to antisocial and destructive behaviours, at moderate levels it can offer some advantages. The key 185 difference is between clinical and functional psychopaths. Functional psychopaths know in which context to exhibit their characteristics. On the surface, they can appear to 190 be warm, genuine, and incredibly charismatic. But just below the surface of their veneer lies a

The story of the psychopath

195 remains somewhat of an enigma.

Scientists know more about
psychopathy today, based on
case studies and brain research.
Yet there is still much we don't

200 know, and the knowledge we do
now have is unsettling to many:
psychopaths are not necessarily evil
but regular human beings with a
'twist' – traits that make them adept

205 at getting their own way. And they
live among us every day. <<

mountain lion waiting to pounce.

How to spot a psychopath — here are some signs to look out for

- Lack of empathy Psychopaths couldn't care less about anything other than their own wellbeing.
- Manipulative They will say anything to get you where they want you.
- Confident They are arrogant and overly confident in character and ability.
 - Blame shifters They engage in blame shifting and never take responsibility for their behaviours.
 - **Selfish** They do have the ability to love, but only themselves.
- 215 Violent They resort to violence and threats when backed into a corner.
 - Focused They have exceptional focus for accomplishing their goals.
 - Mood shifts They tend to exhibit rapid shifts in mood.



What happens when a school district votes to arm teachers? A Rust Belt educator takes us through the grim realities of training to kill one of his own students

Teachers with guns

By Thomas Baxter

1 At the shooting instructor's command, my fellow teachers, administrators, and I collectively pull our triggers, setting off an 5 angry crackle of handgun fire. Twenty-three paper intruders recoil quicker than senses can register. 'This person is killing your students!' the instructor berates, fuming at 10 our inadequacy. Standing on each side are my colleagues in public education. We are recruits training to prevent a school shooting. We are learning to use a gun and, if 15 necessary, to kill the shooter - or shooters. That part is never spoken, betraying our instructors' fear that educators may not have the mettle to take a life. On this first day of

20 training, feeling utterly out of place, I am apt to agree.

Why arm?

A few months earlier, my school district decided to arm staff

25 members. According to Ohio's
 State Attorney General in 2013,
 Ohio school districts have always had the option to arm teachers and do not need to make that choice

30 public. Therefore, it is difficult to know how many districts have in recent years availed themselves of this option. Buckeye Firearms

35 Amendment lobbying organisation, claims that 63 of the state's 88 districts now have armed staff.

Association, an Ohio Second

Pondering the statistics, my life as an educator seems distant.

40 My district's school board struggled with the decision. Calls were made to neighbouring districts and eventually Buckeye Firearms Association was asked to make a 45 presentation to the school board. Buckeye's expert emphasised that it was a district decision and that we needed to do what was best

for our students – even as his tone 50 betrayed his conviction that every school in Ohio should have armed staff. He offered polished, if often unrelated, responses to the board's

questions: 'It takes rural police an 55 average of 15 to 22 minutes to respond. Most school shootings last less than five minutes.' I feel a sense of urgency coming over me.

In what I couldn't help but

60 see as a sales pitch, Buckeye
recommended Glock handguns.
Glocks are almost guaranteed never
to jam or misfire, it claimed. Having
never owned a semi-automatic

65 handgun, I simply took that advice.
The district supplied a thousand
brass-cased 9mm rounds for my
training. After that, it would provide
hollow points, rounds designed

70 to swell upon impact to ensure
maximum harm.

Prepare to shoot

The training is at a police firing range in northern Ohio. We spend 75 most of the second day shooting the paper villains. During breaks the instructors replace the tattered targets and we begin again. Blisters form on my hands early in 80 the day, making each percussive recoil a test in pain management. I try to hide the wince that follows each shot. The atmosphere is full of male bravado, despite the 85 participation of a number of female recruits, and visible weakness feels inexcusable. As the day carries on, my accuracy becomes a problem. I am exhausted and my hands raw, 90 tinted with dried blood.

We continue training for three more days, eight to twelve hours a day. We will be taking the Ohio Peace Officer Training Assessment 95 at the end of the course. It is the same test required for Ohio police officers, but they are required to hit 26 of 29 targets. As teachers, in a school setting and on the cutting 100 edge of political upheaval, we are required to hit 27. The group is visibly nervous upon learning this, but by the end of the week we feel more secure in our abilities. The 105 constant drilling has improved our skills; we begin to resemble the cops who train us. Our confidence grows. We begin to feel as if we

110 Feeling weaponised

could defend our students.

The videos, instruction, and repetition play a trick on my mind, though. I start to think in terms of students and attackers, those I

kill. Everything seems designed to dehumanise our aim. The training encourages this result. The instructors' military language

120 – 'soft targets' and 'areas of operation' for schools, 'threats' for shooters, 'tactical equipment' for guns – starts to rub off. I am aware that this is changing my way of

125 thinking. I enjoy how I feel. It is a potent energy, a righteous virtue that seems completely earned. The training reassures me of my decision-making ability.

130 Before we take the peace officer assessment, we are bused to an empty high school where we take turns playing 'good guys' and 'bad guys'. The scenarios are designed 135 to challenge our decision-making. Twenty of the 23 educators pass the assessment, and most return to schools where they carry daily. I trade in my practice rounds for 140 hollow points, my training holster for one easily concealed beneath a suit. Back at work, I walk the halls examining angles, doorways, and odd hallway configurations, 145 just as we were taught. When questioned by the school board, I deftly repeat the programme's military terminology, and it clearly impresses. I am high on the

Ready, set, ...

150 atmosphere.

In late fall, an anonymous violent threat at my school is shared on social media. It is improbable, 155 but all threats must be handled as emergencies. The staff reacts

with practised precision, preparing students to evacuate. I begin alerting parents and working with 160 the police. As district staff are having an emergency meeting to discuss the source of the threat, I instinctively check my Glock. It is a simple movement and not easily 165 comprehended by onlookers: a movement to my hip, a swipe of the hands, and I am assured of its placement. 'Indexing', the instructors called it. A term with 170 broad meaning that includes checking if the gun is secured, loaded, available for use, and pointed in the right direction. As in a dream, I attempt to make 175 sense of the day's strange course. Fortunately, the attempt by the person who made the threat to hide his identity was amateurish, and police quickly found him. He was a 180 high school junior with a history of being bullied.

Back home, standing in the bedroom, I unlock the gun safe and begin to pull the holstered 185 weapon from my pants when my daughter yells and clumsily pops up from behind the bed. 'Did I scare you?' I force a smile, and she climbs over the bed as I try awkwardly to 190 slide the gun back into my pants. Like most children, she is quick to recognise deception. Her eyes lock onto my hip, freezing me in place. 'Dad,' she starts, standing 195 on my bed, 'why do you carry a gun to school?' I look down at her for a long moment, unable to find the words. I am a teacher, she is a student. How could I ever explain? <<



You know it when you feel it, but disgust affects you in surprisingly subtle ways too, discovers Alison George

The yuck factor

1 David Pizarro can change the way you think, and all he needs is a small vial of liquid. You simply have to smell it. The psychologist spent many weeks tracking down the perfect <a>1 <a

It's no joke. Pizarro needed a suitable fart spray for an experiment to investigate whether a whiff of something disgusting can influence people's judgements.

His experiment, together with a growing body of research, has revealed the profound power of disgust, showing that this emotion is a much more potent trigger for our behaviour and choices than we ever thought. The results play out in all sorts of unexpected areas, such as politics, the judicial system, and our spending habits.

15 The triggers also affect some people far more than others, and often without their knowledge. Disgust, once dubbed 'the forgotten emotion of psychiatry', is showing its true colours. Disgust is experienced by all humans, typically accompanied by a puckered-lipped facial expression. It is well established that it evolved to protect us from illness and death. 'Before we had developed any theory of disease, disgust prevented us from contagion,' says Pizarro, based at Cornell University in Ithaca, New 25 York. The sense of revulsion makes us shy away from

25 York. The sense of revulsion makes us shy away from biologically harmful things like vomit, faeces, rotting meat, and, to a certain extent, insects.

Yet the idea that disgust plays a deeper role in people's everyday behaviour emerged only recently.

30 It began when researchers decided to investigate the interplay between disgust and morality. One of the first was psychologist Jonathan Haidt at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville, who in 2001 published a landmark paper proposing that instinctive gut feelings, 35 rather than logical reasoning, govern our judgements of right and wrong.

Haidt and colleagues went on to demonstrate that a subliminal sense of disgust – induced by hypnosis – increased the severity of people's moral judgements about shoplifting or political bribery, for example. Since then, a number of studies have illustrated the unexpected ways in which disgust can influence our notions of right and wrong.

Reeking of prejudice

- 7 45 Perhaps it's no surprise, then, to find that the more 'disgustable' you are, the more likely you are to be politically conservative, says Pizarro, who has studied this correlation. Similarly, the more conservative that people are, the harsher their moral judgements become in the 50 presence of disgust stimuli.
 - Now there is empirical evidence that inducing disgust can cause people to shun certain minority groups at least temporarily. That's what Pizarro wanted his fart spray to explore. Along with Yoel Inbar of Tilburg

 55 University in the Netherlands and colleagues, he primed a room with the foul-smelling spray, then invited people in to complete a questionnaire, asking them to rate their
 - in to complete a questionnaire, asking them to rate their feelings of warmth towards various social groups, such as the elderly or homosexuals. The researchers didn't mention the pong to the participants, who were a mix of heterosexual male and female US college students.
 - While the whiff did not influence people's feelings towards many social groups, one effect was stark:



those in the smelly room, on average, felt less warmth 65 towards homosexual men compared to participants in a non-smelly room. The effect was of equal strength among political liberals and conservatives. This finding is consistent with previous studies showing that a stronger 15 susceptibility to disgust is linked with disapproval of gay 70 people.

'It's not that I think we could change liberals to 10 conservatives by grossing them out, but sometimes all you need is a temporary little boost,' says Pizarro. He points out that if there happened to be disgust triggers 75 in or around a polling station, for example, it could in principle sway undecided voters to a more conservative decision. 'Subtle influences in places where you're voting might actually have an effect.'

More yuck effects

11 80 At the same time as the role that disgust plays in politics was emerging, others were searching for its effects in yet more realms of life. Given that disgust influences judgements of right and wrong, it made sense to look to the legal system.

12 85 Research led by Sophieke Russell at the University of Kent in Canterbury, UK, holds important lessons about how juries arrive at decisions of guilt and sentencing - and possible pointers for achieving genuine justice in courts. She showed that once people feel a sense 90 of disgust, it is difficult for them to take into account mitigating factors important in the process of law, such as the intentions of the people involved in a case. Disgust also clouds a juror's judgement more than feelings of anger.

13 95 Beyond the courtroom, psychologists searching for disgust's influence have found it in various everyday scenarios. Pizarro suspects that there may also be shortcuts to Take financial transactions. 100 It's possible that a particularly unhygienic car dealer, for instance, could make a difference to the 105 price for which you agree to sell your vehicle.

Conclusions

So, armed with all this knowledge about the psychology 110 of disgust, is it possible to spot and overcome the subtle triggers that influence behaviour? And would we want to?

Some would argue that instead of trying to overcome our sense of disgust, we should listen to our gut feelings and be guided by them. 2 is it really 115 desirable for, say, bad smells to encourage xenophobia or homophobia? 'I think it's very possible to override disgust. That's my hope, in fact,' says Pizarro. 'Even though we might have very strong disgust reactions, we should be tasked with coming up with reasons 120 independent of this reflexive gut reaction."

Disgust is a much more potent trigger for our behaviour and choices than we ever thought

For those seeking to avoid disgust's influence, it's first worth noting that some people are more likely to be grossed out than others, and that the triggers vary according to culture. In general, women tend to be more 125 easily disgusted than men, and are far more likely to be disgusted about sex.

17 The young are more likely to be influenced by the yuck factor, and we tend to become less easily disgusted as we grow old. This could boil down to the fact that 130 our senses become less acute with age, or perhaps it is simply that older people have had more life experience and take a more rational view of potential threats.

> overriding disgust – even if the tips he has found so far may not be especially practical for day-to-day life. One of his most recent experiments shows that if you can prevent people from making that snarledlip expression when they experience disgust - by simply asking them to hold a pencil between their lips - you can reduce their feeling of disgust when they are made to view revolting images. This, in turn, makes their judgement of moral transgressions less severe.

Happily, our lives are already a triumph over disgust. If we let it rule us completely, we'd never leave

the house in the morning. As Paul Rozin, often called the 'father of the psychology of disgust', has pointed out, we live in a world where the air we breathe comes from the lungs of other people, and contains molecules of animal and human faeces.

It would be wise not to think about that too much. It really is quite disgusting. <<



Are you an eco-hypocrite?

Recycling. Electric cabbing. Not eating meat. All in a day's fighting back for Samuel Fishwick. Well sort of. Welcome to the conflicted life of a London climate helper

¹ The only thing worse than an eco-hypocrite is realising you are one. 'Think of the turtles,' I said to my friend at a Dulwich pub 5 last December, impounding her plastic straw with the punctilious sanctimony of a teacher confiscating a pea shooter, then showing her the viral video of a sea 10 turtle struggling as a 12cm plastic straw is dislodged from its nostril with a set of pliers. That friend and I haven't been for a drink since.

Still, I considered sacrificing my 15 social life for sea life a noble cause, driving this plastic straw amnesty with zeal. I wrote newspaper articles about the damage caused by the surfeit of single-use plastics in the 20 marine environment, tweeted about it vigorously, and stored the fruits of my enforced cull in my rucksack. Then, one morning, nursing a hangover, I tried one of those paper 25 alternatives that suck all the joy out of a McDonald's milkshake, reached for one of the plastic straws in my confiscated collection and relapsed. What a sucker.

When it comes to taking an eco-cheat day, I'm in illustrious company. Prince Harry devoted a chunk of the Vogue September 2019 issue, guest-edited by his 35 wife, Meghan, Duchess of Sussex, to espouse their determination to be kinder to the planet by having only two children. But he then

drew widespread condemnation 40 for reportedly boarding a private jet to Google's climate camp in Sicily, alongside A-listers Leonardo DiCaprio and Katy Perry (the last leg of Harry's journey was apparently

45 by helicopter). Dame Emma Thompson, the actor and inveterate campaigner against climate change, rallied Extinction Rebellion (XR) activists from atop a pink boat

50 in Oxford Street - prompting a backlash when it transpired that she'd flown 5,400 miles to attend. 'Unfortunately, sometimes I have to fly,' she told the BBC, 'but I

55 don't fly nearly as much as I did because of my carbon footprint and I plant a lot of trees.' Extinction Rebellion demands we reach zero emissions by 2025, long before the

60 Government's promise of 2050. Inevitably, we are falling short.

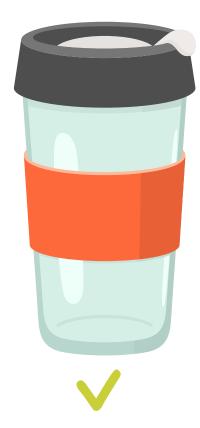




Eco-compromises

I don't plant a lot of trees, which makes me feel even worse (to be 65 fair, this is no loss to the arboreal community, given I splashed out on an £80 kumquat tree from a garden centre in a fit of pique and it is currently dying a very sad death 70 in my garden). I cycle, but will hop in a non-electric cab when drunk. I eat less meat than I used to, but still default to a grab-and-go burger





in a rush. Forgetting my keep cup 75 won't stop me guiltily purchasing a morning coffee.

I'm a huge hypocrite. This sets me in an awkward position between two furious opponents at loggerheads. On the one hand, the finger-pointers: those lambasting the hypocrisy of celebrities doing their best and, well, me. Could I have taken an extra day off work to board a train to my holiday on the France–Spain border this year at a lower carbon cost? Yes. Was I too impatient to do so? Also yes.

On the other hand, I fear the castigation of my ecologically minded peers. I'm wary of what some call the cult of 'zerology' (no nuance or compromise, no attempt to lash together good

95 enough solutions). From that perspective, XR co-founder Roger Hallam's manifesto can be viewed as a bloody call-to-arms: 'The only way to prevent our extinction is
100 through mass-participation civil disobedience – thousands of people breaking the laws of our governments until they are forced to take action; if they don't, we will
105 bring them down. And yes, some may die in the process.'

Eco-complexities

But Dr Gail Bradbrook, another of XR's co-founders, strikes a 110 more conciliatory note. 'To be creating mass disruption and making no personal changes will obviously lead to accusations of hypocrisy,' she tells me. 'And I do 115 personally believe that we should try to operate with integrity and enact some of the changes we know are needed. However, my own experience of trying to live 120 in a much better way is that I can manage it more when I feel less pressured – at other times I slip. Especially being a mum and sometimes over-busy.' In any case, 125 she says, as an environmentalist you can't win – if you work 'really hard at being green then you are accused of being privileged enough to do that, or being judgemental. 130 I always feel it is better to own our hypocrisy.'

Bradbrook points out that figures from climatologist professor Kevin Anderson show that 50 per 135 cent of emissions come from 10 per cent of the population – so the burden should fall less on the individual than the state. Yet a

climate of eco-anxiety is taking
140 a toll on mental health. Caroline
Hickman, a teaching fellow at the
University of Bath and member of
the Climate Psychology Alliance,
who has been a psychotherapist
145 for more than 20 years, says
it's imperative that we're more
forgiving. 'That whole drive
to perfectionism is worrying,
particularly when it's around young
150 people. We've already got an
epidemic of self-harming, body
dysmorphia, and eating disorders in

young people, and we don't need

something else to feel bad about,'

155 she says.

When it comes to taking an eco-cheat day, I'm in illustrious company

Eco-quilt

'I have clients talking about their feelings of guilt of having babies, feeling guilty towards the child,

160 and towards the planet, or I have people guilty because they're booking flights,' explains Hickman.

'One of the worst things any human being can do is aim for perfection,

165 because you're setting yourself up for a constant cycle of starving yourself of something possible to achieve. I'd rather you directed that energy to some healthy

170 engagement with the planet and yourself in relation to the planet."

Anna Hughes, who leads the UK's no-flying movement, says that climate emergency means we have 175 to change everything about the way we live, and that some people refuse to see that – so perhaps it will take shaming to make them understand. 'We can't afford to be 180 forgiving – because our children will not forgive us,' she says, adding that it's worth setting the bar high. 'Zero waste is ultimately impossible, so most of us doing our damnedest 185 is better than a couple of us getting

it absolutely spot on.' <<





The rapid pace of online news and conversation seldom rewards humility or equivocation - if you want to be heard, it's better to offer a bullshit 'hot take' than a more considered one

The era of bullshitting

By SOPHIE McBain

- 1 It's almost 15 years since the Princeton philosopher Harry Frankfurt published his bestselling book, On Bullshit. 'One of the 5 most salient features of our culture is that there is so much bullshit,' he observed. Frankfurt defined bullshitting as distinct from lying: a lie is deliberate and focused; 10 to lie one must first know what is true. The bullshitter, 1 , may have no idea what is true but is unconcerned by this. 'His eye is not on the facts at all... except in so 15 far as they may be pertinent to his interest in getting away with what he says.'
 - We've been exposed to a lot more bullshit since Frankfurt 20 first charted the phenomenon. Social media has allowed for the mass production of bullshit: the
- extraordinarily broad expertise of the prolific Twitter commentator; 25 the performative enthusiasm of LinkedIn profiles; and the fauxauthenticity of Instagram and the subsequent rise of the personal brand, the 'influencer', and the 30 oversharing politician. Several recent high-profile cases owed their initial success to a willingness to push to new extremes the kind of bullshit we fall for every day in 35 boardrooms, on social media, and at networking events.
- Consider, too, the rapid rise of bullshit politics. Donald Trump undoubtedly lies, but often 40 he speaks without knowing or caring what is true. He is, as the New Republic writer Jeet Heer presciently observed in 2015, the ultimate bullshit artist, a person

- 45 who 'works to erase the very possibility of knowing the truth'. The reality TV star's political rise illustrates the power and seduction of bullshit. How else could the
- 50 inheritor of \$413m (according to the New York Times) style himself as an anti-establishment champion of the white working class? For his followers, Trump delivers
- 55 vague reassurances we're doing great, the economy is so, so good right now - and the comfort that inconvenient truths are either 'fake news' or the product of 'witch

© MIJATMIJATOVIC, EVAN EL-AMIN / SHUTTERSTOCK

60 hunts'.

Young bullshitters

2 there has been little empirical research into bullshitting, something a group of social 65 scientists from University College

26

2

London and the Australian Catholic University have tried to rectify. For a paper published by the Institute of Labour Economics in April 70 last year, they surveyed 40,550 teenagers from nine Anglophone countries and asked them, as part of a larger maths exercise, to rate on a scale of one to five their 75 knowledge of various mathematical concepts, three of which - 'proper number', 'subjunctive scaling', and 'declarative fraction' - don't exist. The researchers gathered 80 information on respondents' gender, socio-economic background, immigrant status, academic ability, and various character traits such as their self-85 reported popularity or ability to solve problems.

Across all the countries surveyed, teenage boys were more likely to profess a knowledge of 90 fictitious maths concepts than girls, and young people from 'more advantaged' socio-economic backgrounds were more likely to bullshit than less privileged 95 teenagers.

Bullshitters were more likely to express confidence in their skills, even when they were of equal academic ability, and to believe

6

100 they are popular at school. There was also a substantial difference between countries. The US and Canada recorded the highest percentage of bullshitters, followed
105 by Australia, New Zealand, and England, with Ireland, Northern Ireland, and Scotland at the bottom of the list. Interestingly, these gender and wealth gaps were more
110 pronounced in countries where bullshitting is less common; in the US and Canada, it seems, everyone bullshits a lot.

There were several limitations
115 to the study. We don't know
whether being a bullshitter at 15
corresponds to being one later
on in life, or whether people
who bullshit about their maths
120 knowledge tend to do so in other
areas. The survey can't tell us
whether the self-professed experts
at 'subjunctive scaling' are bullshit
artists or hapless amateurs; or how
125 bluffing on a school maths test
might correlate with professional
success in the future.

Social ills

It is, though, readily apparent that 130 being a bullshitter can be hugely advantageous in a job interview, as well as in many professions:

politics, business, sales, marketing, PR, and, of course, journalism. This 135 is why the link between socioeconomic status and bullshitting is so interesting: are privileged teenagers more likely to bullshit because they're following the 140 example of their professionally successful parents? Does affluence make teenagers more assertive, therefore more likely to believe they can get away with bullshit? 145 Is greater assertiveness also why men bullshit more than women? If artful bullshitting is often the key to professional success, would it serve social equality to encourage 150 women and less affluent teenagers

to bullshit more?

Bluffing and misinformation are social ills. Bullshit has contributed to today's alarming political

155 polarisation, the sense that the right and left cannot even agree on the fundamental facts. It has fuelled the anti-science movement, and the ideologically motivated scepticism

160 of climate change deniers and anti-vaxxers. It is hard to combat: when people buy into bullshit, simply repeating the facts does little to change their minds. We need to

165 find new ways to reward those who remain committed to the truth. <<

Donald Trump provides a robust example of someone who is, with respect to matters particularly relevant to the exercise of high political authority, neither well informed nor especially intelligent. Moreover, even apart from these rather egregious cognitive deficiencies, much of what Trump has said during his presidential campaign has been – to put it mildly – quite unconvincing. This goes not only for his sometimes boorishly insulting characterisations of the personalities, behaviours, and even the physical features of others, but also for his bizarrely self-congratulatory claims concerning his own capacities, plans, and intentions.

It is generally easy to identify which of Trump's assertions are, in one way or another, unworthy of belief. What is somewhat more difficult to establish is whether his unmistakably dubious statements are deliberate lies or whether they are just bullshit.

The distinction between lying and bullshitting is fairly clear. The liar asserts something which he himself believes to be false. He deliberately misrepresents what he takes to be the truth. The bullshitter, on the other hand, is not constrained by any consideration of what

may or may not be true. In making his assertion, he is indifferent to whether what he is says is true or false. His goal is not to report facts. It is, rather, to shape the beliefs and attitudes of his listeners in a certain way.

IV It is disturbing to find an important political figure

who indulges freely both in lies and in bullshit. What is perhaps even more deeply disturbing is to discover an important segment of our population responding to so incorrigibly dishonest a person with such pervasively enthusiastic acceptance.

By Harry G. Frankfurt





10,700

The number of wind turbines that are currently operational in the UK. The turbines saved 25,067,680 tonnes of CO₂ and supplied almost 14.5m homes with electricity from



29,000

The number of pieces of space debris – objects that were created by man that no longer serve any sort of useful function – that currently remain in orbit around the Earth and are larger than a croquet ball.



The amount of CO²e (carbon dioxide equivalent greenhouse gases) represented by an email with a heavy attachment. A typical email with no attachment represents around four grams of CO2e, and a spam email 0.3 grams.

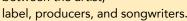
1 billion hours

The amount of time users spent watching Netflix every week last year. The most popular shows were *The Crown, Stranger Things, Narcos,* and 13 Reasons Why. 12.5BN

The number of US \$100 notes in circulation in 2017, surpassing the number of \$1 bills (12.1bn) for the first time. This is thought to be due to more people holding savings in cash, both in the US and in other countries.

\$0.0084

The amount paid by Spotify per stream to the holder of the music rights in 2018 – an increase on the 2017 royalties of \$0.0038. It is shared between the artist,



The number of URLs the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) found to contain child sexual abuse images in the past year. The IWF assesses a web page every four minutes, and identifies an

instance of abuse every seven minutes.

The proportion of adults in the United Kingdom aged 16 to 34 who have not used the Internet at all in the past three months, compared with 56 per cent of adults aged 75 years and over.

10/0



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