



Rod Liddle

Mosley puts a kinky boot into the press to get his bondage fix

I have been feeling a little jaded of late and wonder if a new experience of some kind might perk me up. For example, I have never attended an orgy and whipped whores dressed in prison uniform with a leather belt while shrieking at them in German. To be honest, I have never wished to, either – but that's the thing with new experiences: one needs to step outside one's comfort zone. Once you have crossed that Rubicon, who knows what might happen to your psyche?

It had a remarkable effect upon Max Mosley, the former boss of Formula One. A vast orgy took place with some expensive whores but, according to Mr Justice Eady, contrary to reports, there were no horrid "Nazi" connotations to this dignified and charming event. It was just liberal, democratic whoring, with maybe an agreeable 1940s-style element of nostalgia thrown in.

Mosley won his legal battle and the experience has had a novel outcome. The press is being coerced into a position where he could influence, through proxy, much that it can and can't report. Especially, I would suggest, can't.

His proxy is the officially recognised press regulator Impress (geddit?), which he has largely funded and which wants to preside over us all. Its power derives from section 40 of the new Crime and Courts Act, which would put newspapers that don't join Impress at risk of having to pay the entire legal costs even when they have won libel actions brought by rich people like Mosley and the whining legions that support Hacked Off. I think that's a somewhat counterintuitive approach to justice.

These are not particularly fortunate times for newspapers: sales are down and costs have been cut to the bone. Henceforth, if we write anything nasty about the rich and famous we will be

Exciting news about Heaven arrives from an evangelical Texan pastor who visited the place briefly. Dr Gary Wood "died" in a car crash and his soul took the opportunity to migrate to Heaven for a quick shufti. He was given a tour by a friend who had died in a lawn mower accident (they have very big lawn mowers in Texas). Wood met Jesus, who seemed a decent bloke, and an angel with exquisite golden hair, like the Tory MP Michael Fabricant.

The most striking thing Wood revealed was that there's a room in Heaven with hundreds of legs hanging from the wall. These are for people who have lost their own legs in some traumatic earthly incident, apparently. You hop up to Heaven, join a queue and bingo: you get a nice new leg. I hope they do teeth up there as well, as mine are shocking. That's assuming I get in, of course. Wood later returned to Earth, incidentally, and was none the worse for his crash. Never been better.

billed for vast amounts of money, even – perhaps especially – if what we wrote was absolutely true. The imperative, therefore, will be not to say anything nasty about the rich and famous ever again. Leave them alone or it's oblivion.

As someone who has never been terribly impressed when newspapers report stories of pop stars hoovering the entire GDP of Colombia up their fatuous nostrils – I mean, quelle surprise – it nonetheless seems to me that a fairly important reason we have a press is to hold the rich and powerful to account and to reveal what they get up to when they think we're not looking.

Yet it seems Impress wants Mosley to be pretty much in charge. I hope he's ditched the leather belt. I don't mind the shrieking in German but my buttocks, at 56, have become unaccountably tender.

We face many assaults on freedom of speech right now. Not just the safe-space imbeciles banning every even marginally contentious issue in case it offends, in an imaginary sense, anyone perceived to be this week's victim. It is there in the howled rage that greets anyone who might dare to say we have too much immigration, the beating down of the argument simply by hurled insults, invective and the threat of official censure under "hate crime" legislation.

Even the decent succumb: my Times colleague Danny Finkelstein argued last week that the internet should be policed more rigorously because he'd seen some hateful stuff. Ah, Danny, my friend, no. The internet is indeed full of crazies but the internet is just us, in all our stupidity. If you arrest people for saying idiotic stuff, it will become even more potent. Leave it alone. If there is a message from 2016, it's this: freedom of speech is more precious now than ever.

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ST DIGITAL

Liddle's Got Issues: the images of the year

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Our excluded need to feel more British, and we can help them

When I was about eight years old I went to see my family GP in Bristol. I wasn't unwell; I didn't need medical help – I was there to serve as interpreter for my mum, who, a decade after arriving from Pakistan, could still speak only the most basic English.

Eventually she decided that enough was enough. Today she's completely fluent and her life has improved immeasurably as a result.

Her story is shared by the vast majority of immigrants. But I know some who haven't made such an effort. There are people I knew as a child who in the past 40 years have met only a handful of people from outside the south Asian Muslim community. I can name individuals in my hometown of Rochdale, Greater Manchester, who have lived in this country for half a century but speak barely a word of English. I've seen friends packed off to the subcontinent to find a wife because the idea of them marrying a British woman was simply shocking. It's not the norm, not by a long way. But it's not exactly rare, either.

Dame Louise Casey's report on community cohesion, published earlier this month, proves that my experience is far from unique.

The report shows how some minority groups are particularly prone to living in ethnic bubbles; children in one school assumed the British population was, like everyone else they encountered, 50%-90% Asian.

Dame Louise demonstrates a link between cultural isolation and poor economic prospects: ethnic minority individuals who don't integrate with wider society suffer from lower wages and higher unemployment than those who do.

Perhaps most worrying, the report shows that women in Bangladeshi and Pakistani communities are twice as likely as men to speak little or no English. This leaves them, Dame Louise writes, "facing a double onslaught of gender inequality, combined with religious, cultural and social barriers preventing them from accessing even their basic rights as British citizens".

It is quite obviously not right to support this kind of isolation, yet that's exactly what some well-meaning people do. For years liberals have mocked British migrants who move to France or Spain without bothering to learning the language and confine themselves to little expat ghettos. Yet many of the same people have reacted with horror to the suggestion that more needs to be done to



SAJID JAVID



I AM DRAWN TO THE RECOMMENDATION OF A NEW OATH FOR ALL HOLDERS OF PUBLIC OFFICE

help immigrants integrate into British life. For too long, too many politicians in this country have refused to deal with the problem. They've ducked the issue for fear of being called racist, failing those they were supposed to be helping. I will not allow that to continue.

Let me be clear that I'm talking about integration, not assimilation. I don't want to see a government-approved, one-size-fits-all identity imposed on everyone in this country. The UK has long been home to many cultures, a rich tapestry in which the Three Choirs Festival coexists happily with the Notting

Hill Carnival, the South Bank's Meltdown and the National Eisteddfod.

That diversity is part of what makes Britain great, and we shouldn't lose sight of the fact that, by and large, we are already one of the most integrated, cohesive societies in the world. It's no surprise that the first Muslim mayor of a big western capital city was elected right here in the UK earlier this year.

So when I talk about integrating into British life or embracing British values, I'm not demanding that everyone drinks tea, watches cricket and bobs up and down at the Last Night of the Proms.

I'm talking about tolerating the views of others, even if you disagree with them. About believing in freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom from abuse. I'm talking about a belief in equality, democracy and the democratic process. And about respect for the law, even if you think the law is an ass. Because if you do disagree, you can change it. That's what freedom and democracy are all about.

Such values are not unique to this country. But if you don't accept that they're the building blocks of our society, you'll struggle to play a positive role in British life. That applies to all of us – black or white, Christian or Muslim, rich or poor, newly arrived immigrant or lifelong Brit. Community cohesion is a two-way street and we all have a role to play in making society a success. That's something we all too often forget.

I will be responding to Dame Louise's recommendations in detail in spring next year but she's completely right in saying that if we're going to challenge such attitudes, civic and political leaders have to lead by example. That's why I was particularly drawn to her recommendation that fundamental British values be included in a new oath for all holders of public office.

We can't expect new arrivals to embrace British values if those of us who are already here don't do so, and such an oath would go a long way towards making that happen. Studies show that public commitments can influence behaviour change and I believe an oath like this would make a real difference.

Half a century ago my parents were determined that my brothers and I should embrace British values and play an active role in British life. They even sent one of my brothers to a Catholic school so he could experience a whole different world of religion. Thanks to their foresight we've all thrived in modern Britain.

I want all new arrivals here to have the chance to do the same.

Sajid Javid is secretary of state for communities and local government

CHRISTMAS CHARITY APPEAL



Remember the lonely...

Wonder Woman is out and gull power in

The UN has dropped Wonder Woman as its "ambassador for the empowerment of women and girls" because feminists complained she was too fit. Attractive chiselled features, becoming leather outfit and huge breasts... I have to say, I felt empowered whenever I saw her. But a petition was got up by harridans who thought it would be more empowering if their ambassador were a grimacing hag with cropped hair in a boilersuit.

I like the idea of characters in children's literature being UN ambassadors – Winnie-the-Pooh was an "ambassador of friendship" once – I just wish it could be extended to all other posts within its ranks.

I would happily support Biggles, Voldemort or, better still, Kehaar out of Watership Down as secretary-general over any recent incumbent. Black-headed gulls

are intelligent and under-represented in decision-making at supranational level. Be cheaper too.

At last we have a transport secretary prepared to take the menace of cyclists seriously. Chris Grayling opened the door of his ministerial car to knock one off his bike – a beautifully timed manoeuvre. He then leant over the prone, whimpering Jaiqi Liu and told him he'd been cycling too fast. Respect! The cyclist had been "undertaking", a practice that, while not illegal, is discouraged in the Highway Code. Grayling devised a suitable method of discouragement. When in London I repeatedly open and close my taxi door to try to catch one of them at it and send him flying. I like to think I'm doing my bit to make London a safer place for normal humans.

Cheese eaters v vegans – it's crackers at dawn

Oh, I wish I'd been there. The Borough Market cheese festival – hellish, the cheese-crazed throng punching and jostling its way to the front of endless queues to get to the Blu di Capra aged goats' cheese. And then having to run the gauntlet of a vegan protest. Cheese is murder, you scum! The cheese lovers couldn't even complain on social media about their treatment without being slapped down. "I'm sorry, we are talking about a free cheese night, not the famine in Yemen or the Syrian war, aren't we?" they shrieked. The London middle class will eat itself one day, after a small plate of organic smoked brie for a starter.

Good taste, bad taste

How Britain's most stylish do Christmas – a guide to what's naff and what's not.

Pick up a copy of The Times tomorrow.

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