

25/4/16

Separated at birth #57: Jabba the Hutt and Mulayam Singh Yadav



6/5/16

Donald Trump backs Brexit

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-eu-referendum-36219612>

That confirms it. I'm voting for Britain to remain in the EU.

8/5/16

Flight delayed after passenger becomes suspicious of equation

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-us-canada-36240523>

This is what scientists are up against, nowadays.

3/6/16

Two Weeks in January: America's secret engagement with Khomeini

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-us-canada-36431160>

I found this account of negotiations between the US and Khomeini in 1979 to be absolutely fascinating ... & how naive the Americans were!

9/6/16

Seagull turns orange after falling into curry

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-36490552>

"A seagull turned bright orange after falling into a vat of curry. The bird fell into a container of chicken tikka masala while trying to scavenge a piece of meat from a food factory bin. He was rescued by workers at the undisclosed site in Wales and picked up by a volunteer for Vale Wildlife Hospital near Tewkesbury. Staff at the centre used washing up liquid to clean the gull's feathers. They managed to return him back to his original white colour but have not been able to wash away the smell."

22/6/16

Two-systems critique of referendums

Reflection on tomorrow's EU referendum, and on referendums in general. The longer the 'debate' (= increasingly bad-tempered repetition of well-established points) has gone on, the more difficult it has become to predict the outcome. Perhaps this is because the effect of heated argument is to make many people withdraw from reasoned analysis, instead relying on 'gut instinct' (= psychological and/or social predisposition). In other words, they give up on System 2 and decide to vote with System 1 alone. Consequently, the outcome of the referendum is determined by simple group psychology rather than rational decision-making. There are all sorts of cognitive biases at work here, including WYSIATI, the regression fallacy, and the inability to weigh the advice of experts: which suggests that holding a referendum is one of the worst ways of coming to a collective decision.

23/6/16

'Cut!' - the AI director

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/technology-36608933>

Note the emotions used: Anger, Disgust, Fear, Joy, Sadness; just as in 'Inside Out'; and IDEAL, of course.

24/6/16

More reflections on Brexit

The EU referendum is not legally binding, see <http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2016/jun/23/eu-referendum-legally-binding-brex-it-lisbon-cameron-sovereign-parliament>. I think that the referendum result plus DC's resignation creates the conditions for civil war in the Tory party, effectively neutering it as the party of government, and thereby potentially scuppering the Brexit negotiations. Doubleplusgood!

25/6/16

More reflections on Brexit

"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of light, it was the season of darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair."

Charles Dickens, 'A Tale of Two Cities', referring to the French Revolution.

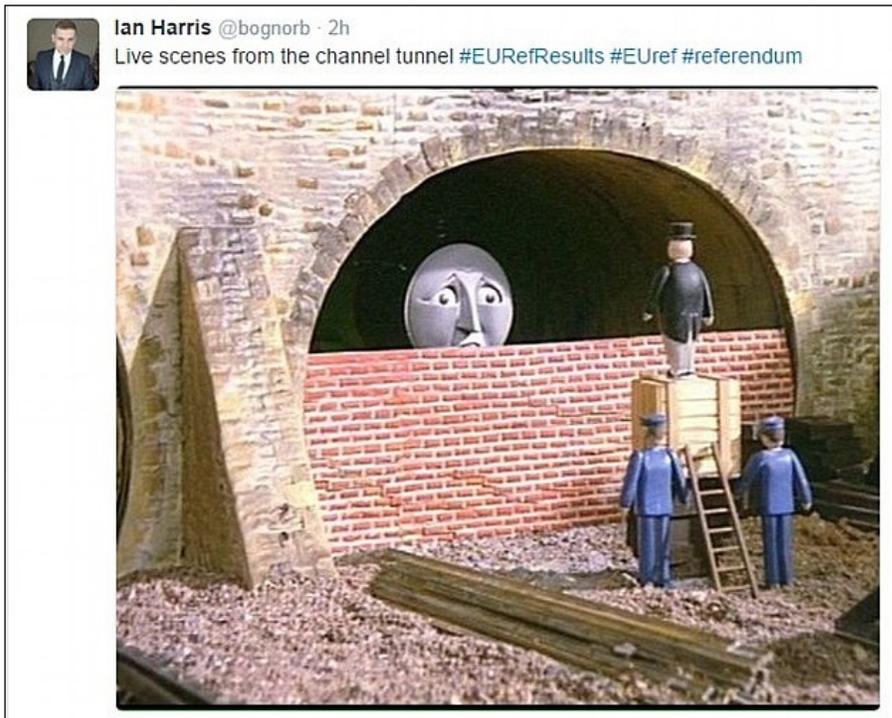
26/6/16

Brexit: EU spells out procedure for UK to leave

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-36632579>

See the diagram near the bottom, 'Steps to UK leaving the European Union'. At the end it says that 'UK Parliament must repeal the 1972 European Communities Act and replace with new agreement.' But with its current makeup of MPs, there's no way that Parliament is going to do that. There will have to be a general election, and goodness knows what that will bring.

28/6/16



28/6/16

Nigel Farage = Father Ted? Compare and contrast:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-36650014>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kOzNsQyamvk>

14/7/16

The UK's new top diplomat

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2016/07/13/boris-johnson-britains-new-top-diplomat-has-said-some-very-undiplomatic-things/>

"There was a young fellow from Ankara,  
Who was a terrific wankerer,  
Till he sowed his wild oats,  
With the help of a goat,  
But he didn't even stop to thankera."  
(Enough said.)

15/7/16

Separated at birth #58: Nicola Sturgeon and Puss in Boots



21/10/16

Does Hitler's legacy still cast shadow over the world?

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-37703416>

An easy target, comparing Putin and Trump to Hitler, but well-argued, and it raises several interesting questions.

16/11/16

Boris Johnson attacked over 'Prosecco insult'

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-37995606>

"Also in his Czech newspaper interview, Mr Johnson reportedly said it was a "complete myth" that free movement was one of the fundamental freedoms of the European Union. In response, the European Parliament's lead negotiator on Brexit, Guy Verhofstadt, tweeted: "Can't wait to negotiate with @BorisJohnson, so that I can read him Article 3 of the Treaty of Rome.""

Treaty of Rome (1957) Article 3(c) refers to "the abolition, as between Member States, of obstacles to freedom of movement for persons, services and capital". Oh right. A pity this wasn't made clear before 23 June 2016. Or 1 January 1973.