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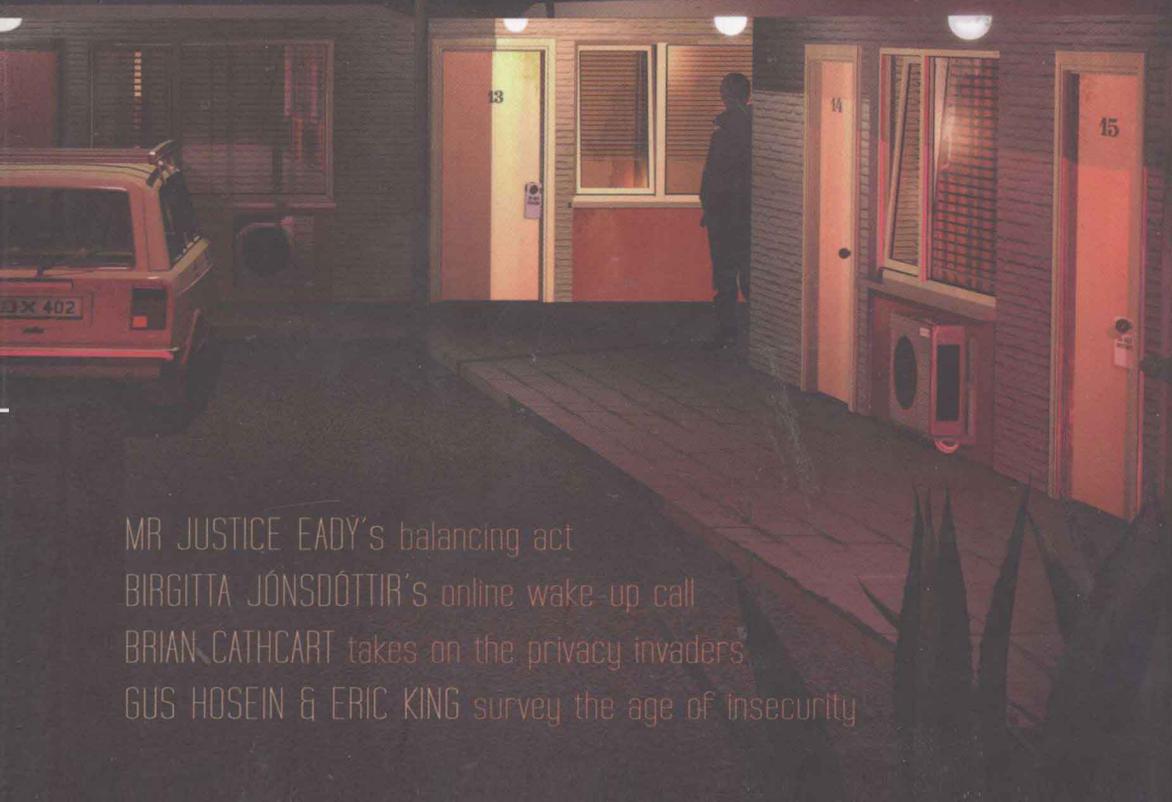
ON CENSORSHIP

Volume 40 Number 2 2011

Privacy!

IS DEAD

LONG LIVE PRIVACY



MR JUSTICE EADY's balancing act
BIRGITTA JÓNSDÓTTIR's online wake-up call
BRIAN CATHCART takes on the privacy invaders
GUS HOSEIN & ERIC KING survey the age of insecurity

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fire
presents

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By Christine Bacon and Noah Birksted-Breen

Director Michael Longhurst Designer Chloe Lamford

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Index on Censorship

Free Word Centre, 60 Farringdon Road, London, EC1R 3GA

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FRIEND OR FOE

Jo Glanville

Is privacy the friend or foe of free speech? Celebrities' use of injunctions and superinjunctions to stop the publication of stories about their private lives in the UK, and the perception that judges are inclined to weigh privacy in the balance at the expense of press freedom, continue to be a leading media story. In May, the former Formula One boss Max Mosley lost his attempt to create a European-wide law that would have made it mandatory for editors to give prior notification to the subjects of privacy stories, while Prime Minister David Cameron has voiced his concerns about judges' so-called creation of a privacy law. Read Joshua Rozenberg's interview with Mr Justice Eady for a rare response from a judge whose name has become most identified with privacy in the press [pp. 47–55].

The irony is that just as the right to privacy began to be viewed as a threat to media freedom, with the introduction of the Human Rights Act in 1998, it also became a necessity for free speech online. It is now one of the central issues of the digital communications age. Gus Hosein and Eric King, two leading campaigners, describe how the battle for privacy was lost in the 1990s, when governments and business were left to define the terms. The consequence is what we're living with now: data breaches and data loss because of systems that were not built with protection of privacy as a fundamental concern. 'If the US State Department can't be bothered to adequately secure its own network of inter-embassy communications, what chance is there that Facebook and Google will take better care of your personal messaging and commonly used search terms?'

What's the answer? Hosein and King think it's time for a policy debate. Icelandic MP Birgitta Jónsdóttir, who experienced the insecurity of the modern age at first hand, when the US Department of Justice requested her private information from Twitter last year in the fallout from WikiLeaks, would like to see the same human rights applied online as offline: '... these two worlds have fused and it is no longer possible to define them as distinct any more'

LONDON LITERATURE FESTIVAL

30 JUNE - 14 JULY 2011

HISHAM MATAR TUESDAY 5 JULY

Hisham Matar reads from and discusses his latest novel *Anatomy of a Disappearance*, chaired by Rosie Goldsmith.

WHY BOYCOTT CULTURE? THURSDAY 7 JULY

We debate the motion 'Cultural boycott can be an effective, indeed morally imperative, political strategy'. Speakers include author and human rights activist Omar Barghouti and activist and poet Seni Seneviratne.

ELIF SHAFAK FRIDAY 8 JULY

Elif Shafak, Turkey's biggest-selling female novelist, reads from her new novel *The Forty Rules of Love*. Chaired by novelist and broadcaster Bidisha.

MOHAMMED ACHAARI & RAJA ALEM INTERNATIONAL PRIZE FOR ARABIC FICTION SATURDAY 9 JULY

Moroccan author Mohammed Achaari and Saudi Arabian author Raja Alem, joint winners of the International Prize for Arabic Fiction, read together at this event.

AATISH TASEER SATURDAY 9 JULY

Aatish Taseer's new novel *Noon* is a profound and far-reaching story set amidst two decades of convulsive change in the 'new' New World. He reads from and discusses his work with Jo Glanville, editor of *Index on Censorship*.

TAHMIMA ANAM & MIRZA WAHEED WRITING CONFLICT SUNDAY 10 JULY

Novelists from across the South Asian region discuss writing fiction as a response to violent conflict.

SAHAR EL MOUGY & YOUSSEF RAKHA BLOGGING THE EGYPTIAN SPRING MONDAY 11 JULY

Sahar El Mougy and Youssef Rakha read from their blog posts from Tahrir Square this spring and discuss with Greg Mosse what it's like to write from within the eye of the storm.

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[pp. 102–106]. However, as Peter Fleischer, Google's chief privacy counsel, illustrates in an interview with Index, privacy legislation can also lead to some unworkable, and at times absurd, expectations online. Take the case of a German law that protects former criminals by shielding their identity in the media. In the online world, it's an almost impossible law to enforce. Even if all German websites obeyed the law, what about sites overseas that link to news stories mentioning former criminals: how would they be policed? Google believes that there need to be global privacy standards, and for harmonised data protection law. But coming up with laws that will protect citizens' rights while being practical for the digital age is one of the biggest challenges of our time.

Also in this issue of Index on Censorship you can read an exclusive interview with leading Egyptian journalist Ibrahim Eissa, winner of this year's Index on Censorship *Guardian* journalism award, a short story by Libyan writer Ibrahim al Koni, and Anthony Lester on blasphemy. Keep up with censorship news at www.indexoncensorship.org □

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on press freedom in Egypt

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