

Préparation pour le concours d'entrée à l'I.E.P.

ANGLAIS

- Nous allons travailler essentiellement sur des articles de presse et vous allez, par conséquent, devoir acquérir le vocabulaire spécifique à ces supports. Pour ce faire, vous pouvez consulter l'ouvrage suivant :

*VOCABULAIRE THEMATIQUE ANGLAIS-FRANÇAIS,
LE MONDE D'AUJOURD'HUI,
[DANIEL GANDRILLON, ELLIPSES]*

- Pendant l'été, il serait bon de consulter régulièrement les sites internet des journaux afin de vous tenir informés de l'actualité et de vous familiariser avec la presse. Voici donc quelques sites :

<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/>

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

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/>

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/>

<http://edition.cnn.com/>

<http://global.nytimes.com/?iht>

<http://www.time.com/time/>

- Enfin, nous vous proposons quelques articles sur des thématiques variées afin de vous présenter les supports sur lesquels nous travaillerons à la rentrée.

BON TRAVAIL !

See you soon,

Mlle BERNIGAUD et AURAMBAULT

The fat plateau

Jan 21st 2010 , From The Economist print edition

Americans are no longer getting fatter, it appears

A FEW years ago, Burger King, a fast-food chain, conducted a study of the eating habits of some of its most frequent customers. A few dozen "SuperFans", as the firm calls them, recorded and photographed everything they ate for two weeks. The results were collected in a book called "Food for Thought". Unsurprisingly, this book is not publicly available: amateur photos of heaps of junk food are hardly an enticing advertisement for a firm that supplies the stuff. Nonetheless, "Food for Thought" gives an insight into why some Americans have such poor diets.



The fast-food fans in the book typically lead chaotic lives. They often toil long, irregular hours for not much money. They grab food when they can, skipping many meals and gorging at unorthodox times. They favour whatever is quick, convenient and comforting. ("I selected the pie because it was easy to grab out of the fridge," says one.) They often have an imperfect grasp of nutritional science. ("I am eating chocolate muffins at work because they are not too heavy," says another.) Oddly for a piece of corporate research, the book contains passages that are quite moving. One single dad's diary shows him eating nothing but junk for days on end. Then, one evening, he visits his aunt's house and she cooks him a feast of real food: pork, okra stew, collard greens and corn bread.

At 33.8%, America's obesity rate is ten times higher than Japan's. In all, 68% of Americans are either obese or overweight. (Some studies yield lower numbers, but since they typically ask people how much they weigh, rather than weighing them, scepticism is in order.) Few problems, besides death, afflict more people. Americans are more likely to be overweight than to pay federal income tax.

But the good news is that the nation may have stopped getting fatter. A study published this month in the *Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)* found that American women were no more likely to be obese in 2008 than they were nearly a decade before. For men, there was a small rise in obesity over the same period, but no change in the past three years. Among children, too, there was no change in obesity rates except among the very heaviest boys, whose numbers increased slightly. Could it be that the American obesity epidemic has reached a plateau?

If the national girth really has stopped expanding, that would be a blessing, though of course it is a big fall in obesity that is really required. Although a little extra heft is no big deal, many Americans are so ample that it ruins their health. That places a burden on the health-care system: each obese American racks up medical bills 42% higher than an American of normal weight, according to Eric Finkelstein and Justin Trogon, writing in *Health Affairs*. Add to that the indirect costs of obesity, such as lost productivity due to sickness or premature death.

The startling Republican victory in Massachusetts this week throws Barack Obama's health reforms up in the air. But the issue will not go away. And a plateau in the obesity rate would make some kind of reform a bit less expensive. It will not lead to a sudden dip in health-care costs, predicts Mr Trogon. But it could substantially slow the rate at which they are rising. Previous projections typically assumed that Americans would keep on ballooning. As a thought experiment in 2008, Youfa Wang of the Johns Hopkins Centre

for Global Health drew a line from recent trends and projected that 100% of Americans would be overweight by 2048. By 2030, his model showed health-care costs attributable to excess weight approaching a trillion dollars a year.

The latest numbers remind us how little is known about public health. Of course, people put on weight when they consume more calories than they burn off. But no one knows for sure why America's obesity has trebled since 1960. Plausible theories abound. As people grow richer, food becomes relatively cheaper. Time grows more precious: hence the lure of fast food. Desk work burns fewer calories than spadework. And labour-saving devices do just that: if we still washed dishes and clothes by hand, we would burn off five pounds of flesh each year, reckons Barry Popkin, the author of a book called "The World is Fat". All this is no doubt true, but it does not explain why Americans are fatter than people in other rich countries, nor why they appear to have stopped getting fatter.

No to nannies

Kathleen Sebelius, the health secretary, says that "fighting obesity is at the heart" of health reform. But telling people to eat more healthily is like telling them not to have risky sex. Americans are suspicious of the nanny state at the best of times, let alone when it nags them to curb their most basic instincts. Some regulations help: forcing restaurants to post calorie counts on dishes, for example, prompts diners to pick less calorific treats. But politicians are reluctant to attack voters' favourite vices too vigorously. A recent proposal to tax sugary drinks, for example, went nowhere. Opponents argued that it would disproportionately affect the poor. True enough, but the poor are disproportionately likely to be overweight.

The constant barrage of pro-vegetable propaganda in schools may have raised awareness of the need for a balanced diet, reckons Mr Trogdon. And popular pressure has prompted many fast-food outlets to offer salads and other wholesome fare. But even if good food were freely available, losing weight is hard. Every year, 25% of American men and 43% of American women attempt it. "[F]ailure rates are exceedingly high," notes a *JAMA* editorial. But there is hope. Eating is social. Studies suggest that people guzzle more if they have overweight friends and relatives, and less if they don't. So if Americans have stopped getting fatter, their children have a better shot at staying trim.

Female power

Dec 30th 2009 ; From The Economist print edition

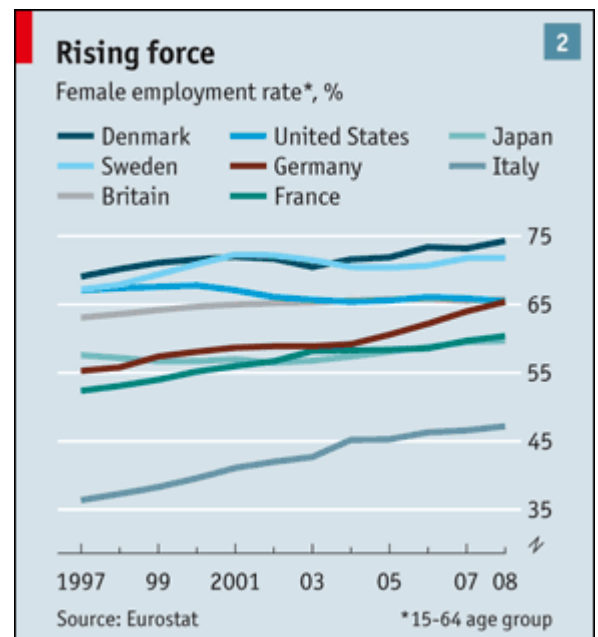
Across the rich world more women are working than ever before. Coping with this change will be one of the great challenges of the coming decades

THE economic empowerment of women across the rich world is one of the most remarkable revolutions of the past 50 years. It is remarkable because of the extent of the change: millions of people who were once dependent on men have taken control of their own economic fates. It is remarkable also because it has produced so little friction: a change that affects the most intimate aspects of people's identities has been widely welcomed by men as well as women. Dramatic social change seldom takes such a benign form.

Yet even benign change can come with a sting in its tail. Social arrangements have not caught up with economic changes. Many children have paid a price for the rise of the two-income household. Many women—and indeed many men—feel that they are caught in an ever-tightening tangle of commitments. If the empowerment of women was one of the great changes of the past 50 years, dealing with its social consequences will be one of the great challenges of the next 50.

At the end of her campaign to become America's first female president in 2008, Hillary Clinton remarked that her 18m votes in the Democratic Party's primaries represented 18m cracks in the glass ceiling. In the market for jobs rather than votes the ceiling is being cracked every day. Women now make up almost half of American workers (49.9% in October). They run some of the world's best companies, such as PepsiCo, Archer Daniels Midland and W.L. Gore. They earn almost 60% of university degrees in America and Europe.

Progress has not been uniform, of course. In Italy and Japan employment rates for men are more than 20 percentage points higher than those for women (see chart 1). Although Italy's female employment rate has risen markedly in the past decade, it is still below 50%, and more than 20 percentage points below those of Denmark and Sweden (chart 2). Women earn substantially less than men on average and are severely under-represented at the top of organisations.



The change is dramatic nevertheless. A generation ago working women performed menial jobs and were routinely subjected to casual sexism—as “Mad Men”, a television drama about advertising executives in the early 1960s, demonstrates brilliantly. Today women make up the majority of professional workers in many countries (51% in the United States, for example) and casual sexism is for losers. Even holdouts such as the Mediterranean countries are changing rapidly. In Spain the proportion of young women in the labour force has now reached American levels. The glass is much nearer to being half full than half empty.

What explains this revolution? Politics have clearly played a part. Feminists such as Betty Friedan have demonised domestic slavery and lambasted discrimination. Governments have passed equal-

rights acts. Female politicians such as Margaret Thatcher and Mrs Clinton have taught younger women that anything is possible. But politics is only part of the answer: such discordant figures as Ms Friedan and Lady Thatcher have been borne aloft by subterranean economic and technological forces.

The rich world has seen a growing demand for women's labour. When brute strength mattered more than brains, men had an inherent advantage. Now that brainpower has triumphed the two sexes are more evenly matched. The feminisation of the workforce has been driven by the relentless rise of the service sector (where women can compete as well as men) and the equally relentless decline of manufacturing (where they could not). The landmark book in the rise of feminism was arguably not Ms Friedan's "The Feminine Mystique" but Daniel Bell's "The Coming of Post-Industrial Society".

Demand has been matched by supply: women are increasingly willing and able to work outside the home. The vacuum cleaner has played its part. Improved technology reduced the amount of time needed for the traditional female work of cleaning and cooking. But the most important innovation has been the contraceptive pill. The spread of the pill has not only allowed women to get married later. It has also increased their incentives to invest time and effort in acquiring skills, particularly slow-burning skills that are hard to learn and take many years to pay off. The knowledge that they would not have to drop out of, say, law school to have a baby made law school more attractive.

The expansion of higher education has also boosted job prospects for women, improving their value on the job market and shifting their role models from stay-at-home mothers to successful professional women. The best-educated women have always been more likely than other women to work, even after having children. In 1963, 62% of college-educated women in the United States were in the labour force, compared with 46% of those with a high school diploma. Today 80% of American women with a college education are in the labour force compared with 67% of those with a high school diploma and 47% of those without one.

This growing cohort of university-educated women is also educated in more marketable subjects. In 1966, 40% of American women who received a BA specialised in education in college; 2% specialised in business and management. The figures are now 12% and 50%. Women only continue to lag seriously behind men in a handful of subjects, such as engineering and computer sciences, where they earned about one-fifth of degrees in 2006.

One of the most surprising things about this revolution is how little overt celebration it has engendered. Most people welcome the change. A recent Rockefeller Foundation/*Time* survey found that three-quarters of Americans regarded it as a positive development. Nine men out of ten said they were comfortable with women earning more than them. But few are cheering. This is partly because young women take their opportunities for granted. It is partly because for many women work represents economic necessity rather than liberation. The rich world's growing army of single mothers have little choice but to work. A growing proportion of married women have also discovered that the only way they can preserve their households' living standards is to join their husbands in the labour market. In America families with stay-at-home wives have the same inflation-adjusted income as similar families did in the early 1970s. But the biggest reason is that the revolution has brought plenty of problems in its wake.

Every phone call, email and internet click stored by 'state spying' databases

Every phone call, text message, email and website visit will be stored for a year for monitoring by the state.

All telecoms companies and internet service providers will be required by law to keep a record of every customer's personal communications, showing who they are contacting, when, where and which websites they are visiting.

Despite widespread opposition over Britain's growing surveillance society, 653 public bodies will be given access to the confidential information, including police, local councils, the Financial Services Authority, the Ambulance Service, fire authorities and even prison governors.

They will not require the permission of a judge or a magistrate to access the information, but simply the authorisation of a senior police officer or the equivalent of a deputy head of department at a local authority. Ministers had originally wanted to store the information on a massive Government-run database, but chose not to because of privacy concerns. However the Government announced yesterday it was pressing ahead with privately-held "Big Brother" databases which opposition leaders said amount to "state-spying" and a form of "covert surveillance" on the public. It is doing so despite its own consultation showing there is little public support for the plans.

The Home Office admitted that only a third of respondents to its six-month consultation on the issue supported its proposals, with 50 per cent fearing that the scheme lacked sufficient safeguards to protect the highly personal data from abuse. The new law will increase the amount of personal data which can be accessed by officials through the controversial Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA), which is supposed to be used for combating terrorism. Although most private firms already hold details of every customer's private calls and emails for their own business purposes, most only do so on an ad hoc basis and only for a period of several months.

The new rules, known as the Intercept Modernisation Programme, will not only force communication companies to keep their records for longer, but to expand the type of data they keep to include details of every website their customers visit – effectively registering every click online.

While public authorities will not be able to view the contents of these emails or phone calls – but they can see the internet addresses, dates, times and users of telephone numbers and texts. The firms involved in keeping the data, such as Orange, BT and Vodafone, will be reimbursed at a cost to the taxpayer of £2billion over 10 years.

Chris Grayling, shadow home secretary, said he had fears about the abuse of the data. "The big danger in all of this is 'mission creep'. This Government keeps on introducing new powers to tackle terrorism and organised crime which end up being used for completely different purposes. We have to stop that from happening". David Davis, the former shadow home secretary, added: "What is being proposed is a highly intrusive procedure which would allow Government authorities to maintain covert surveillance on public use of telephones, texts, emails and internet access."

He added that the permission to access the data should be granted by judges or magistrates. "Whilst this is no doubt necessary in pursuing terrorist suspects, the proposals are so intrusive that they should be subject to legal approval, and should not be available except in pursuit of the most serious crimes," he said.

The Information Commissioner's Office also opposed the moves. "The Information Commissioner believes that the case has yet to be made for the collection and processing of additional communications data for the population as a whole being relevant and not excessive."

Chris Huhne, the Liberal Democrat home affairs spokesman, has criticised the amount the scheme will cost for what is effectively "state spying". He said yesterday: "Any legislation requiring communications providers to keep data on who called whom and when will need strong safeguards on access. "It is simply not that easy to separate the bare details of a call from its content. What if a leading business person is ringing Alcoholics Anonymous? "There has to be a careful balance between investigative powers and the right to privacy."

Ministers said that they have still got to work with the communications industry to find the correct way of framing the proposals in law – meaning it will not come before Parliament until after the General Election. But the Home Office yesterday insisted it would push the legislation through. Jacqui Smith, then Home Secretary, originally launched a paper in April for consultation called "Protecting the Public in a Changing Communications Environment". The responses, published yesterday, disclosed that more than 40 per cent of 221 respondents rejected it outright as the growth of the surveillance state. Of those whose responses were considered, exactly half said that the proposed safeguards for the information to be stored were not adequate. Only 29 per cent third supported the Government approach, whereas 38 per cent were against it.

Meanwhile the communications providers themselves questioned the cost of the scheme and whether it was even technically feasible.

The latest figures on the use of the RIPA legislation by public bodies, show that state bodies including town halls made 519,260 requests last year - one every minute - to spy on the phone records and email accounts of members of the public. The number of requests has risen by 44 per cent in two years to a rate of 1,422 new cases every day, leading to claims of an abuse of using the powers for trivial matters such as littering and dog fouling.

Shami Chakrabarti, director of Liberty, said: "The Big Brother ambitions of a group of senior Whitehall technocrats are delayed but not diminished. "We need a bold alliance of phone companies who fear losing public trust and concerned citizens to come together in opposition to these plans. "If the authorities need to build up an intimate picture of a suspect's communications, they should have to go to a judge for a warrant. "Law-abiding people have sustained too many blanket attacks on their privacy and they've had enough."

Alex Deane, Director of Big Brother Watch, said it was an "enormous and unwarranted intrusion into every aspect of our private lives" and said that the laws are in effect an "illiberal snoopers' charter." John Yates, Britain's head of anti-terrorism, has argued that the legislation is vital for his investigators.

The Scotland Yard Assistant Commissioner said: "The availability of Communications Data to investigators is absolutely crucial. Its importance to investigating the threat of terrorism and serious crime cannot be overstated".

Home Office Minister David Hanson said: "The consultation showed widespread recognition of the importance of communications data in protecting the public and an appreciation of the challenges which rapidly changing technology poses. We will now work with communications service providers and others to develop these proposals, and aim to introduce necessary legislation as soon as possible." *The Telegraph*, 9-11-2009

Integrated, but irked

The tensions of being Muslim and American

AZHAR USMAN, a stand-up comic, says he is a “very patriotic” American Muslim. “I would die for this country,” he declares. After a pause, he adds: “By blowing myself up.” After another pause: “Inside of a Dunkin’ Donuts.” His largely white, liberal audience guffaws. [...]



Asked what it is like being a Muslim in America, Mr Usman says it depends on the headlines. When he heard about the young Nigerian who tried to down a Detroit-bound plane with a bomb strapped to his crotch, he says he felt two things: disgust at the perversion of Islam that teaches that mass murder is sacred, and a feeling of “Here we go again.” Mr Usman has a bushy beard, South Asian looks and the middle name “Muhammad”. At times like these, people like him attract fearful glances.

It was worse after September 11th 2001. Recorded hate crimes against Muslims soared. These were mostly non-violent—the FBI reported no instances that year of an American Muslim being murdered for his faith. But threats and vandalism are nasty enough. And Muslims endured countless **slights** that, while not worth reporting to the police, were vexing. Shabana Shakir-Ahmed, a suburban mother from Cincinnati, recalls chatting with a shop assistant not long after the twin towers fell. She does not wear the *hijab*, so the assistant did not at first realise she was Muslim. But when she saw the name on her credit card, her attitude stiffened. Mrs Shakir-Ahmed had bought enough cosmetics to qualify for a free bag, but when she asked for it, the assistant said they were all gone, though there was a heap of them behind her.

To an encouraging degree, America’s Muslims are well-off and well-integrated. A Gallup poll last year found them slightly more likely than other Americans to have jobs, and slightly more likely to be professionals. They are much more satisfied with their lives than Muslims in France or Britain. According to a Pew poll, 72% say their communities are good places to live and 71% believe that most people who want to get ahead in America can do so if they work hard. Muslim Americans are somewhat less likely to vote than other groups, but they were elated when Barack Obama, a man with Muslim roots, was elected president. Many **chafed** when he **ramped up** the war in Afghanistan, but hardly any would prefer his predecessor.

Overall, this is a far brighter picture than the headlines suggest. It is a diverse one, too. Asked about their race, a plurality (35%) of American Muslims describe themselves as African-American. Another 28% say they are white, 18% say Asian and 18% tick “other”. Racial disparities among Muslims roughly mirror those in the broader society. Asian-American Muslims are better educated and earn more than African-American ones, for example.[..]

Dalia Mogahed of Gallup’s Centre for Muslim Studies argues that because American Muslims are so well integrated, they strongly reject terrorism. This is true, but not uniformly so. Muslim Americans under 30 are twice as likely as their elders to believe that suicide-attacks on civilians in defence of Islam are sometimes justified. There is a marked streak of alienation among black Muslims, only 36% of whom say they have a “very unfavourable” view of al-Qaeda. Only a minority of Muslim Americans believe that Arab Muslims carried out the attacks of September 11th 2001.

Among those who express alarming views, only a tiny fraction will do anything terrible. Most of those who speak approvingly of suicide-bombing are no doubt thinking of wars in far-off lands, rather than blowing up the local mall. But it does not take many terrorists to cause mayhem. Major Nidal Hasan, who shot and killed 13 people at Fort Hood in November, acted alone. Such attacks may be rare, but people fear them because the victims are chosen at random and the perpetrators are utterly merciless.

Relations between Muslims and other Americans will be touchy for some time. Further attacks by men who consider themselves Muslims are inevitable, and efforts to avert them will inconvenience nearly everyone. But there is ample cause for hope. American Muslims have a good record of thwarting the extremists in their midst. Five Virginians who allegedly tried to join al-Qaeda in Pakistan were recently caught because their parents alerted the FBI. And although some non-Muslim Americans mistreat their Muslim compatriots, most try hard to be fair. When Mrs Shakir-Ahmed complained about that shop assistant, for example, the manager apologised profusely and gave her two free bags. Many Americans, meanwhile, are making an effort to learn more about Islam. Mrs Shakir-Ahmed, who works as a volunteer tour guide at a local Islamic centre, saw a surge in visitors after September 11th 2001. And, gradually, their questions have grown less ignorant. No one now asks her if she belongs to a harem, she says.

Jan 7th 2010 | From *The Economist* print edition

National identity in the UK

Oct 29th 2009 | EDINBURGH, From *The Economist* print edition

Old wars, new battles

On the use and abuse of national stories

ALEX SALMOND, the nationalist first minister of Scotland, firmly believes that the 1995 movie “Braveheart” played a big role in persuading Scots to vote for a devolved Parliament in a referendum two years later. The gory **biopic**¹ relates the life of William Wallace, leader of a 13th-century Scottish rebellion against Edward I of England. Now he seems bent on using another medieval Scottish hero, Robert the Bruce, to work the same magic for his Scottish National Party (SNP). **But harnessing history for political profit, Mr Salmond is discovering, can be a two-edged claymore**².

Last month the SNP government said it was giving £180,000 to finance school visits to three historic places, including the battlefield of Bannockburn, to “help deepen understanding of our nation”. It **ruffled feathers**.³ Bannockburn was the site, in 1314, of Scotland’s biggest victory in centuries of Anglo-Scottish warfare. The SNP marches to it each year to commemorate the destruction of Edward II’s army.

SNP ministers told critics that they had no big agenda: the aim was more to swell the numbers visiting the place than to inflate nationalist egos. Then it emerged that Mr Salmond wants Bannockburn to host a really big bash in 2014 to celebrate the 700th anniversary of the battle. This raised worries that Mr Salmond, having found his claims about the economic benefits of independence less resonant after the collapse of Scotland’s biggest banks, is switching to a darker, more emotional form of nationalism.

Tom Gallagher is a longtime student of Scottish politics and a sympathiser with Scottish home rule who now teaches at Bradford University. In a book published this month, he frets that to the SNP’s old civic nationalism, which emphasises that all Scottish residents are seen as Scots regardless of ethnicity, Mr Salmond is adding a “blood-and-soil” variety more familiar to the Balkans than to Britain.

The SNP furiously denounced Mr Gallagher as a “nutty professor”. Though he is no nut, Mr Gallagher may be overstating his case. Mr Salmond has noted that voters approve of political conflicts with London, especially over money, he observes. Scots are distant these days from historically important institutions such as churches and trade unions. He speculates that Mr Salmond’s new approach may be attracting the rootless to a new identity as an embattled people struggling for justice against an imperious English foe⁴, thus burnishing a different case for independence.

This may seem improbable given that a Scottish MP, Gordon Brown, currently resides in Downing Street. It could become more persuasive if the Conservatives, routinely portrayed by the SNP as the anti-Scottish party (though a Cameron now leads them), win the next general election and impose swingeing spending cuts.

Yet this mix of history, politics and culture may turn out to be much less of a draw than either Mr Salmond hopes or Mr Gallagher fears. A much-hyped clan gathering—where devotees of kilts and bagpipes congregate to watch traditional Highland sports and dancing—in Edinburgh this summer flopped. Tickets went unsold and it ran up a loss of about £600,000. It takes more than old glories to build a nation.

¹ Film biographique

² Big sword

³ Froisser qq’un, le contrarier

⁴ Enemy

Saviours or kidnappers?

Feb 4th 2010 , From The Economist print edition

IT MUST have seemed like a good idea at the time. The New Life Children's Refuge, a Christian group from Idaho, saw no need to bother with paperwork or official permission when they decided to take 33 Haitian children to the Dominican Republic where they apparently hoped to build an orphanage.

Furious officials arrested ten of the group's members on charges of kidnapping (which they deny). Many of the children turned out to have families. A similar row erupted in 2007 when workers from Zoé's Ark, a French charity, were accused of kidnapping 103 children in Chad. Ostensibly orphans from the Darfur region of Sudan, destined for adoption in France, many turned out to be local children, and not orphans. Six charity workers were jailed.

The sentiment behind inter-country adoption may sound noble and often is. Why should governments stand between loving people in one country and needy children in another? Support for inter-country adoption is particularly strong in America, where parents adopt more foreign children than all the rest of the world. Some would-be adopters may at times be overhasty but Michele Bond, the senior State Department official dealing with the issue, insists that those concerned act from the best possible motives.

But inter-country adoptions happen in a fuzzy and sometimes murky world. One worry is that demand creates supply. Outsiders' money can distort the decisions of officials and parents in poor countries. That may hamper chances of the most desirable outcome, in which children are fostered by relatives or adopted locally. Very few children described as orphans have no living relatives. If they move to another country, their chances of staying in touch with family members shrivel. Even the most ardent free-marketeers do not support free trade in children, with blonde female babies attracting a hefty premium.

Another worry is that adopted children may disappear from view when they cross international borders. International law stipulates that reports on the adopted child should be sent regularly to the source country. In some countries that is observed punctiliously. In others it is in effect voluntary. American law, in particular, does not require parents to send such reports. Once in America, an adopted child is treated like any other, with the state getting involved only in cases of evident abuse. Officials in countries such as Ethiopia or Ukraine may lack the means or motivation to chase up dilatory American parents.

Many critics of inter-country adoption cite experiences in Romania. Following reports of scandalous conditions in orphanages there after the collapse of communism, outsiders flocked to adopt children. But of the 30,000 children adopted by foreigners between 1990 and 2000, around 20,000 are now untraceable, according to Rupert Wolfe Murray, who worked as a lobbyist on the issue.

Roelie Post, who as a European Commission official dealt with adoption in the run-up to Romania's entry to the European Union, has written a book on her experience of dealing with what she sees as a powerful adoption lobby that preys on weak and poor countries. Mr Wolfe Murray says that after wars and natural disasters adoption agencies descend like "vultures" to find suitable children. The countries that provide the most children for international adoption include China, Vietnam, Kazakhstan and, until recently, Guatemala, which are also among those with the weakest legal systems, he notes.

Most adoption agencies are non-profit outfits that see their work as entirely charitable. They may charge only expenses and a reasonable fee, according to The Hague Convention on Intercountry Adoption. An international treaty with a supporting bureaucracy, it has had growing clout since America joined it in 2008. But the sums involved leave ample room for doubt. A Love Beyond Borders, an agency helping would-be parents adopt children from Haiti and elsewhere, says the process may cost more than \$30,000.

The Hague rules also govern the agencies' accreditation. That should, for example, stop the practice (often criticised as exploitative) of putting photographs of "children awaiting adoption" on their websites. But American agencies may dodge that by saying that they

are seeking accreditation, or cite some other endorsement, for example by the consulate of the country they are dealing with.

As legal regimes on adoption tighten, activity tends to shift. When Romania banned inter-country adoption, agencies moved to lightly regulated Moldova and then Ukraine. Hans van Loon, the secretary general of The Hague regulatory body, highlights Guatemala, once the source of 5,000 annual adoptions, mainly to America. That seemed a lot for a country of 13m people. (Only about 10,000 foreign adoptions a year take place in China.) Now the number has dropped to zero after a temporary suspension. When it resumes, he expects only a few hundred children, mainly with disabilities, to be adopted.

Inter-country adoption may often be wonderful for the children and families concerned. But it does not solve the problems of poverty and abuse that make it so seemingly desirable.

Planning for the worst

Jun 4th 2009 | PHOENIX , From The Economist print edition

AT THE National Rifle Association's 138th annual convention, held this year in Phoenix, Arizona, 65,000 people poured through the doors. They admired the fancy firearms, snacked on grilled buffalo and were happily recruited by shooting associations. Tom Power, of the Texas Gun Collectors Association, says membership has been soaring since Barack Obama took office. Bill Bachenberg, the owner of a shooting range near Allentown, Pennsylvania, has been registering 400 new members a month. "American gun-owners don't trust this administration," he says.

American gun sales surged after Mr Obama was elected president. He had a voting record of raising the tax on guns and ammunition by 500%, and, on top of that, he hinted during the campaign that he might restrict gun sales and create a national registry of gun-owners. The election was seven months ago, and the buying spree has not flagged since. Data released by the FBI's National Instant Criminal Background Check System, which serve as a gauge of actual sales, reported 1,255,980 checks in April 2009: a sixth monthly increase, and a 30.3% increase from the 940,961 reported last April.

Concealed-weapon permits are up, too. Ohio, Kentucky, North Carolina and Montana all report a rise in licences issued; Ohio saw a 139% increase in the first quarter of this year over last. Meanwhile, classes on gun rules in Phoenix are booked solid for months, ammunition is sold out, and gunmakers and dealers alike are scrambling to keep up with demand.

Sun Devil Manufacturing in Mesa, for example, which makes semi-automatic rifles for \$1,000 or so less than its competitors, is running three production shifts a day. Guns Etc, a shop in the Phoenix suburb of Chandler, is selling 50-70 handguns a week, compared with 30 before the election, and sales of AR-15 and AK-47 semi-automatic rifles have nearly doubled. On a Friday afternoon the store is packed with men, retired and young, buying revolvers, semi-automatics and shotguns. Young mums browse the daintier pistols.

Are they all panicking? They don't think so. Mr Obama has said he favours a ban on assault weapons, of the sort Bill Clinton brought in in 1994 (it has now lapsed). Gun-owners also feel Mr Obama is soft on crime, and fear that the recession will bring social and economic collapse. Ron Sega says his customers worry about thugs looting grocery stores for milk and mothers being robbed. "People want to be ready and armed, should things go south."

In several states, gun laws are being relaxed. One bill working its way through the Arizona legislature would allow those with a concealed gun permit to enter, armed, into restaurants serving liquor. And a new state law allows people to carry loaded guns, including semi-automatic weapons, into state parks.

At a restaurant in Chandler, waitresses worry that combining weapons with alcohol, even with restrictions, seems foolhardy. But its sponsor is confident that the bill will pass. Momentum is with him. More shooting ranges are due to open soon in Arizona and elsewhere, to cater to more families who wish to be armed, trained and ready for anything.

Demand for ethical routes to profits

Diana Middleton , From: [The Australian](#) , December 02, 2009

DURING his MBA studies at the University of California, Berkeley, Jeff Denby told everyone his ultimate career goal: to start an underwear company.

He had decided early in his program that he wanted to create a company that was about more than just boxers or briefs. In his view, it was critical to create a product that was environmentally friendly and sustainable, and whose sales could help support good causes.

This type of social entrepreneurship is becoming increasingly attractive to would-be business founders. The idea is to make money while directly benefiting consumers with its services or funnelling a portion of profits to charities. Often, these companies employ people or source resources from economically depressed areas of the world that then also benefit from the charitable donations from the profits.

With an increased interest in socially responsible money-making, business schools have been pushed to create courses and study tracks to help MBA students sort out the best way to pull it off. The University of Oxford, Cornell University in New York and Dartmouth College in New Hampshire have all experienced increased demand for instruction in social entrepreneurship. Some administrators say it's a generational progression of business school students who have grown up more socially aware.

Others say a lack of traditional jobs has spurred an interest in entrepreneurial ventures and the focus on societal effect is partly a matter of trying to escape the stigma of the "greedy MBA".

"I think the interest in entrepreneurial ventures with social value [is about] more than the fact that people can't get jobs as easily," says Colin Mayer, dean of Oxford's Said Business School. "There's also a sort of underlying sense of guilt about what happened during the crisis."

For his part, Denby, who graduated in May last year, has long wanted to use his business skills for good. Before he co-launched PACT Organic Underwear as an online-only company in August, he researched all aspects of manufacturing and distribution to make sure his products would be legitimately sustainable, from the labour he employed to the inks used in the garment dye. Then he decided to pair each intricate pattern used on the underwear with a themed charity.

For example, 10 per cent of the proceeds from one blue pattern inspired by a Japanese woodcut go to a marine conservation group.

Denby says his entrepreneurial spirit was fostered by Berkeley's curriculum.

At the Said Business School, students use the Skoll Centre for Social Entrepreneurship to insert socially responsible concepts into their business plans. Recent projects include building water purifying systems in Africa and developing internet banking systems in regions without significant technology infrastructure. [...]

"There is a real sense that doing good business can promote real change in economically depressed regions," he says.

What's more, a for-profit enterprise with a socially responsible backbone is more attractive to nervous investors during economic turbulence than traditional business plans, argues Gregg Fairbrothers, director of Dartmouth College's Entrepreneurial Network at the Tuck School of Business. [...]

Mac Dougherty, a June Dartmouth grad, joined forces with two computer science and neuroscience professors to market the services provided by a microprocessor that powers computer servers. The technology uses significantly less energy than its competitors. Not only would the technology be greener, he says, it could also be useful for countries where energy shortages are the norm.

[...] The technology uses only 1 per cent of the energy that comparable products use but performs as well. But that won't be its only impact. Dougherty also wants to take the

company and its products to sub-Saharan Africa where mobile technology exists but is not being fully used.

"We could get all this technology into the hands of people, and unlock a lot of potential," Dougherty says.

Business school administrators say such start-ups can do more than just help alumni launch sustainable businesses, they can also help rebuild businesspeople's credibility on a larger scale, says Joe Thomas, dean of Cornell's Johnson School, home of a Centre for Sustainable Enterprise. [...]

"A few years ago, students came to business school thinking they would get rich right away," Dartmouth's Fairbrothers says. "But now I think students are trying to focus on doing reasonably well while doing some good."

Getting to closure

Jan 28th 2010 , From The Economist print edition

If not this year, if not next year...

THE experts have now combed through all the case files of those still held at the Guantánamo Bay prison camp in Cuba and decided who should be released, who tried and who kept behind bars no matter what. Yet Barack Obama is no closer to being able to shut the place that has caused America such soul-searching at home and brought it such shame abroad.

Guantánamo was supposed to have been history by now. Mr Obama's deadline of a year to close it has passed unmet. The prison may still be open a year or more from now. The president has long argued that the cost to America's reputation and security of keeping Guantánamo open outweighs all the difficulties of closing it down. But it is still proving hard to do.

A painstaking review by a 60-strong task-force of lawyers and other experts from six different government agencies, including the State Department, the Pentagon, the Department of Justice and the Department for Homeland Security, came to a unanimous verdict this month on each of the 192 inmates who remain. Some 106 have been cleared for eventual release. Around 35 others will stand trial in either civilian or military courts.

But that still leaves 50 or so deemed too dangerous to release and, for one reason or another, unable to be put on trial. In the absence of compelling new evidence to put them in one of the other two categories, they are to remain in detention under the Authorisation for Use of Military Force Act, passed by Congress in 2001 soon after the September 11th terrorist attacks on New York and Washington, DC. But where and under what rules is still unclear.

Uncomfortably for Mr Obama's supporters, George Bush used the same law to justify detaining people at Guantánamo in the first place, and then went on to authorise interrogation techniques, such as waterboarding (simulated drowning), which many people, and this newspaper, regard as torture. Such practices have since been outlawed, but continued detention still looks to critics like Guantánamo under an assumed name. Others fear that those brought to the United States for trial, if acquitted, could win the right to remain.

Congress has so far authorised transfers to the mainland only for those standing trial, not for their release (or for indefinite detention). Among the ten cases assigned to trial so far are five detainees to be charged in federal court with masterminding the September 11th attacks. Another will face a military court, accused of the bombing of a navy ship, the *USS Cole*, in 2000 in the port of Aden, in Yemen.

And those stuck in limbo? Mr Obama has talked of setting "clear, defensible and lawful standards" for continued detention, with periodic review and in co-operation with Congress and the courts. But no such standards exist yet.

The Supreme Court ruled in 2008 that all Guantánamo inmates had the right to challenge their detention in court. Many have, and the government has lost more cases than it has won. But the justices gave no further guidance. Whose habeas corpus suit is accepted and whose rejected depends too heavily on which judge hears the case, argues Benjamin Wittes of the Brookings Institution, a think-tank. Eventually appeals courts will iron out the worst anomalies. Better still would be fair rules that apply to all. Otherwise the temptation, says Mr Wittes, will be to rely in future cases on the prisons of Iraq, Afghanistan and others, with less accountability.