



# Reply

## **PERSUASIVE PUNISHMENT**

The approach proposed by BJ Fogg in 'The new rules of persuasion' (Summer 2009) offers an array of opportunities for change. We tend to assume that big hits make the most change, but sometimes a small hit every so often works better. Rather than punishing petty criminality and financial crime with a one-off hit in the form of a larger fine (from £80 to £8,000), perhaps software could hit convicted persons with a one per cent extra VAT point on every purchase, with half going towards UK crime reduction programmes and half towards poverty relief worldwide? The penalty would therefore reflect the length of time the court felt it would take to change the person's behaviour.

**Graham Rawlinson**

## **FACE TO FACE**

Although I was impressed by the Summer edition's contributors, who brilliantly paid tribute to the role of online technology in facilitating communication, it was reassuring to read about Brian Sewell's achievements without it and to hear Tim Smit's wonderful ideas for the Big Lunch, both dependent on face-to-face interaction. My own work on conflict management theory and practice suggests that, when trying to resolve personal, socioeconomic, political and global disputes, face-to-face contact can be a most enabling factor.

**Yvonne Joan Craig**

## **DIGITAL EXCLUSION**

Gerd Leonhard writes in 'The price of freedom' (Summer 2009) that "the information superhighway has become

“ Little can be gained from asking companies to gaze into the corporate navel in search of something more”

## **BEYOND THE CALL OF DUTY?**

The notion of 'values-based capitalism' in Rosabeth Moss Kanter's article ('Bringing values back to the boardroom', Summer 2009) requires further examination. Companies are not moral but legal actors and are obliged only to operate within a legal framework. When we say goods must be of satisfactory quality, or services must be provided with reasonable care and skill, this is not because of 'values' in the boardroom but because of consumer law. The law in turn is a reflection of our values within the legislative framework of a democratic society.

The question that arises is whether there are special obligations on board members to go further than the law requires. I am not convinced that there is or ought to be any such obligation beyond the normal standards of decency and courtesy we expect from anyone. Society benefits in numerous ways from the operation of companies for private profit and it may be that little can be gained from asking them to gaze into the corporate navel in search of something more. When companies do parade their 'values', it often amounts to little more than a cynical marketing ploy.

**Gary Kitchen**



the road of choice for 95% of the population". This cannot go unchallenged. What we really mean is that '95% of people like us' fit this picture. In fact, 17 million people in the UK are not yet online – that's far more than five per cent – and globally, this percentage is even higher. If you start from the false premise that everyone is online, you are creating non-democratic approaches and entrenching exclusion. Come back to a more realistic figure of about 65-70% and the story is less cosy.

## **Your feedback**

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Frances Hedges, RSA Journal,  
Wardour, Walmar House, 296  
Regent Street, London W1B 3AW.  
Letters may be edited.