



leased just before Christmas
the shady Legatum Institute
continues to wheedle its way

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AFTER Toby Young's controversial
appointment to the board of the Office
for Students, comments he had
made on Radio 4 about "progressive
eugenics" were shared far and wide.
But his interest in the area has made
him some friends.



Last year Young was invited by
psychologist James Thompson to attend
a secretive conference at UCL called the
London Conference on Intelligence (LCI).
"Attendees were only told the venue at the last
minute... and asked not to share the
information," Young recalled. What he kept to
himself was why the conference he attended
was so secretive.

Although a request for the invitation-only
conference's 2017 programme was declined,
LCI 2015 included papers arguing that racial
differences in penis length predict different
levels of parental care, that racial "admixture"
has a negative effect on population quality, that
"skin brightness" is a factor in global
development, and that country-level differences
in the number of Nobel Prizes can be explained
by racial differences in male hormone levels.

One paper presented at the 2016 conference
argued that "low IQ, high fertility Southern
non-Western immigration... threatens the
sustainability of European democracy, welfare
and civilisation". Another argued that children
from working-class households tend to have
"aggressive, antisocial" personalities, and that
the welfare state promotes this by letting
working-class households have children. Three
papers, all by men, were presented on the topic
of women being innately less intelligent.

The conference serves as a rendezvous for
academic racists and their sympathisers. One
speaker, Emil Kirkegaard, whom Young
follows on Twitter, presented papers at the
2015, 2016 and 2017 conferences. Writing
about paedophilia on his website, he argued in
2012 that "a compromise is having sex with a
sleeping child without them knowing it (so,
using sleeping medicine). If they don't [*sic*]
notice it is difficult to see how they cud [*sic*] be
harmful." He added in April 2017 that he
advocated a "frank discussion of pedophilia-
related issues".

Another speaker in 2015 and 2016 was
Richard Lynn, described by the US non-profit
organisation, Southern Poverty Law Center, as
a white nationalist and extremist. He has
previously called for "incompetent cultures" to
be "phased out" and argues that black people
have naturally "psychopathic" personalities.

"No idea is shocking. An idea is only
something that you investigate whether it is true
or not," said LCI organiser James Thompson
when asked about some of the views at his
conference. After telling a female *Private Eye*
reporter at length about gender differences in
IQ, Thompson then managed to call the *Eye*
back by mistake – and promptly asked for Toby.

Responding to the *Eye*, Young said: "I don't
accept that listening to someone express an idea
constitutes tacit acceptance or approval of that
idea, no matter how unpalatable. That's the kind
of reasoning that leads to people being 'no
platformed' on university campuses." In the same
statement he managed to misname his own
lecture, referring to the "Amanda Holden"
Memorial Lecture, rather than Constance Holden.

Young himself kept in touch with Thompson
and other attendees over Twitter. Speaking
alongside them at another conference in Montreal
last July, he reminisced that LCI had been "like a
meeting of Charter 77 in Václav Havel's flat in
Prague in the 1970s". Is this the kind of free
speech universities minister Jo Johnson hopes to
see more of on university campuses?

AFTER Boris Johnson said Toby
Young was "an ideal man for the job"
(at least, he was when the *Eye* went to
press), reciprocating the support Young
had offered in his *Sun* columns when
Johnson was London mayor, Michael
Gove endorsed that verdict ("Quite
right too"). No surprise, as Gove and
Young have a long and fond history.

From 2010 until Gove was moved in a
reshuffle in 2014, Young regularly defended
Gove in his columns, hailing him as "the most
radical education secretary since the Second
World War".

Then, in June 2016, after David Cameron's
resignation, Young talked up Gove's credentials
as successor to the prime minister in the *Sun*.
"Some have greatness thrust upon them and
Gove is looking increasingly as if the crown
would fit. You can get 5/1 odds on him becoming
the next PM. I've already put down £25." A
month later, Gove dropped out of the
Conservative leadership race after gaining just
14 percent of the vote in the first round.

JOINING the board of the Office for
Students isn't Toby Young's first taxpayer-
funded job. In October 2016 he became
director of the New Schools Network (NSN),
a charity that promotes academies and free
schools and relies heavily on government
funding.

The NSN's latest accounts, filed in October,
show it received £2,126,512 from the
Department for Education – 86 percent of its
income. The previous year government money
made up 89 percent of its income. The NSN
pays £90,000-£100,000 to Young, who will also
now receive £9,180 a year in his new post,
playing "a key role in shaping Office for
Students' strategic direction".

Young claims to be a "free market"
enthusiast, but his high-profile positions are
state-funded and crony-looking. The *Eye* asked
him if the NSN – government-funded and
running government policy – was more like a
quango than a charity. He said the "NSN is a
charity, not a quango. I was appointed by the
trustees of the charity, not the government. If
you look at NSN's income going back to 2009
when it was set up, less than half of it has come
from the Department for Education."

THE aim of the Office of Students is "to
ensure that every student enjoys a rewarding
educational experience and secures the
outcomes that they want, whatever their
background and whatever their aspirations".
So said a government press release last July.

Oddly enough, aspirations and the hopes of
enjoying a rewarding educational experience
pop up briefly in Toby Young's 2001 memoir,
How to Lose Friends and Alienate People, when
he recalls his infatuation with an undergraduate
while studying for a PhD at Cambridge in the
late 1980s.

"It was the first day of the academic year and,
in keeping with College tradition, me and several
other 'mature' students were checking out the
latest batch of 'freshettes'," Young frothed. "Not
that we had any hope of getting into their
knickers... Lusting after first years, and knowing
that it would never be reciprocated, was just
another exercise in self-flagellation, a favourite
post-grad pastime.

"My misery was compounded when she
chose a seat directly opposite mine in the
College library, making it impossible for me to
concentrate on my philosophy books. For the
remainder of that academic year, until I
abandoned my PhD altogether, I tortured myself
by imagining what her nubile, 18-year-old body
would look like in the nude."