

BATTLE OF IDEAS 2009 – SPEAKER QUOTES

This was my first year as a speaker at the Battle of Ideas and I thought that the quality of the programme and the engagement of the participants was second to none.

Jessica Asato

Acting director, Progress; editor, *Progress Magazine*

The Battle event I took part in was a treat - well organised, a splendid panel, a highly engaged audience, and an intelligent and thoughtful discussion. Differences were aired, but in a constructive and enjoyable way. Congratulations to all involved.

Richard E Ashcroft

Professor, bioethics, Queen Mary, University of London; deputy editor, *Journal of Medical Ethics*

2009 was my first year at the Battle of Ideas and I will certainly be returning again next year. Having such a forum for free thought, ideas and debate is vital in 21st century Britain, and thank you very much to Claire Fox and the Institute of Ideas for organising such a stimulating programme of events.

Alexandra Ballard

Head of science, Castle School, Thornbury, South Gloucestershire

I thought it was great that so many people were willing to gather on a Saturday to think and debate. The Battle of Ideas is an inspired and inspiring event that grapples with the important issues in ways that are refreshing and imaginative.

Peter Barron

Director of communications and public affairs, North and Central Europe, Google; former editor, *Newsnight*

It was a pleasure - not to mention an adventure - participating in the Battle of Ideas festival. I was amazed at the sheer raw energy, passion and insight of both the speakers and the audience.

It was certainly one of the deepest and most probing debates on South Africa I have taken part in for some time. One was almost in need of post-traumatic stress or at least another series of debates to decompress!

John Battersby

UK Country Manager, International Marketing Council of South Africa

The room was packed with people on a Sunday morning wanting to listen and debate their views hard - this was no place for the weak willed. The debate was lively, thought provoking, direct and diverse. I know it was good - I am already looking forward to next year.

Simon Blake

National Director, Brook; author *Sex, Alcohol and other Drugs: exploring the links in young people's lives*

The Battle of Ideas continues to grow in strength and influence. It's established itself as a crucible of political and social debate.

Colin Blakemore

Professor of neuroscience at the universities of Oxford and Warwick; chair, Neuroscience Research Partnership, Singapore; chair, general advisory committee on science, Food Standards Agency

For freeing the mind from prejudice, the debates in the Battle of Ideas festival cannot be beaten, Lively, ambitious, and sophisticated, engaging and gripping, where else does the breeze of free intellectual debate blow so keenly?

Clive Bloom, emeritus professor, English and American studies, Middlesex University; author, *Gothic Histories*

I spoke, I learned and I had a great time. These battles ended not with casualties but with new friends and more to think about.

James Boyle

Former controller, BBC Radio 4; founder, Edinburgh UNESCO City of Literature and Glasgow UNESCO City of Music; chair, British Council Scotland

It was absolutely fascinating to hear the wide ranging views and perspectives at this year's Battle of Ideas. As science advances, it becomes increasingly important to understand how society views new developments, and the debates are a rich resource for learning more and sharing ideas.

Philippa Brice

Head, knowledge and communications, Foundation for Genomics and Population Health

The energy debate in 2009 was the first time I had taken part in the Battle of Ideas festival. It was fascinating to be able to test your ideas and arguments against other speakers and debate with the audience. There was a mixture of ages, sexes and disciplines with a thirst for information and discussion both in the sessions and afterwards - obvious in the hubbub of conversations during coffee and meal breaks. It was both stimulating and fun and I would be keen to take part again.

Paul Brown

Journalist; fellow, Wolfson College, University of Cambridge; author, *Voodoo Economics and the Doomed Nuclear Renaissance*

Sadly 24 hour news seems to have squeezed considered debate out. The Battle of Ideas festival is a great innovation providing an arena for intelligent engagement that is both open and informed.

Dominic Bryan

Senior lecturer, social anthropology and director, Institute of Irish Studies, Queen's University, Belfast

I found the debate subjects thought provoking and I hugely enjoyed preparing for the event

David Cohen

Chairman, F&C REIT India; president, United Jewish Israel Appeal UK

Engagement with refined and well-articulated ideas within a structured yet unconstrained environment is uplifting and challenging. The Battle of Ideas never disappoints.

Barrie Collins

Researcher and writer, African politics

The Battle of Ideas is an excitingly open experience in a culture which too often seems to be composed of small self-regarding elites talking to themselves.

Hera Cook

Lecturer, modern history, University of Birmingham; author, *The Long Sexual Revolution: English women, sex and contraception 1800-1975*

The Battle of Ideas is an event to be celebrated. The human rights session that I spoke at in 2009 allowed nuanced ideas to be expressed and developed. Discussion was vibrant. What the event proves is there is no orthodoxy of thought. I left my session effervescing with ideas, and passionately disagreeing with the chair of the session who had persuaded many of the audience to support his views. I learnt much from listening to their exchange. Hopefully, I will be asked back again next year to be involved in a similar session with same chair.

Jonathan Cooper

Human rights barrister, Doughty Street Chambers; editor, *European Human Rights Law Review*; co-author, *Human Rights in the Investigation and Prosecution of Crime*

I really enjoyed it and want to make sure I come for the whole weekend next year. What better way to make new friends, exchange views and try out more or less well formed ideas.

Stuart Corbridge

Head, Development Studies Institute, LSE; co-author, *Seeing the State: governance and governmentality in India*

NovoArgumente has been a German media partner with the Institute of Ideas right from the first Battle of Ideas. We are glad to be in a position to contribute to the debates in London. In 2008 we started to organize Satellite Events in Germany. Our clear aim is to expand this. Believe it or not, debate culture in Germany is dead. In comparison, even the UK and the US look dynamic. So there is a lot to do here and there to give freedom and democracy new meaning. The Battle of Ideas is the only festival I know that is struggling for human progress - on all fronts. It is open for anyone to discuss all issues confronting society and for those prepared to learn from clever people, wherever they come from.

Thomas Deichmann,

Editor *NovoArgumente*

It was great to be part of a community of people who are interested in exploring some of the key issues of the day. Well as the daily papers might lament the death of a caring society, it was exhilarating to be part of a community that deeply cares.

Benny Dembitzer

International development consultant; co-director, Ethical Events; author, *The Attack on World Poverty*

This is an event where I feel that I can say exactly what I think - which is an extremely rare situation these days

Geoff Dench

Senior fellow, Young Foundation; sociologist; writer on family and community issues

Even if you enter the battle of ideas with firm convictions you cannot help but leave with a host of questions.

Stuart Derbyshire

Senior lecturer, School of Psychology, University of Birmingham

A rigorous and invigorating exchange of ideas that transcended cliché.

Cory Doctorow
Novelist; co-editor, *BoingBoing.net*

As a visitor to London, 2009 marked my first experience with the Battle of Ideas Festival and I was impressed with the energy both participants and audiences brought to each occasion, the quality of the debates, and the range of topics engaged. By providing a spirited forum for debate The Battle of Ideas Festival serves a valuable purpose because thoughtful discourse about important ideas is critical to maintaining a diverse and healthy civil society.

Dennis Doordan
Professor, School of Architecture and Department of Art, Art History and Design, University of Notre Dame; author, *Twentieth Century Architecture*

I have not missed a single Battle of Ideas yet. Despite now having to travel half-way round the world to be there I aim to never miss it. It's like a workout and a holiday for my mind at the same time.

Dr Bill Durodié
Senior Fellow, S.Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

As usual, I loved the Battle of Ideas. The unique combination of academics, policy makers, journalists, practitioners and professionals across social and cultural fields, and students and the quality of speakers makes most of the academic conferences that I go to tame and irrelevant in comparison. The ideas I get from the debates are indispensable for my academic work in education and social policy, and in a university that values new connections across the social sciences, this is invaluable! So much so, that having sponsored a keynote session at this year's Battle of Ideas, the university is going to sponsor the setting up of a debating salon in Birmingham.

Kathryn Ecclestone
Professor of education and social inclusion, University of Birmingham; co-author *The Dangerous Rise of Therapeutic Education*

The Battle of Ideas just wakes you up again. It is always a breath of fresh air. The debates are hard but clean, and the headache is in having to choose between enticing discussions to attend.

John Fitzpatrick
Professor of law; director, Kent Law Clinic, University of Kent

I really enjoyed being duffed up by the Chairman. You do a great job - get on with it, make us think.

Nick Fraser
Series editor, *BBC Storyville*; contributing editor, *Harper's Magazine*; series editor, *BBC's Why Democracy?*

Simply the best free-range, hi-octane debates of the year.

Ann Furedi
Chief executive, British Pregnancy Advisory Service.

As far as I am concerned, this was the most intellectually stimulating event I attended this century.

Frank Furedi
Professor of sociology, University of Kent, Canterbury; author *Wasted: why education is not educating* and *Therapy Culture*

I've spoken at Battle of Ideas for two years now. One of the most enjoyable aspects has been the intelligence and enthusiasm of those who come to listen and ask questions. It amazes me that in today's digital world, there is still such a demand for face-to-face engagement with ideas, but perhaps it is a product of that. For all that I love about computer and video games, it seems that real people want to talk to - and battle with - other real people, not machines.

Ruth Gledhill

Religion Correspondent, The Times

Battle of Ideas 2009 was a fantastic opportunity to connect and share with thinkers whom I wouldn't have met anywhere else. I am looking forward to more fresh ideas and new contacts in 2010.

Michael Green

Freelance writer and consultant on international development; former senior official, Department for International Development

Taking part in this year's Battle of Ideas has massively raised the profile of the Belfast Salon. Apart from increased visibility and more people taking part, being involved in a national programme of discussion and debate has helped us to define our sense of identity and purpose. Looking forward to 2010.

Pauline Hadaway

Director, Belfast Exposed, gallery of contemporary photography and photography resource; convenor, Belfast Salon

I was stunned at the incisive level of debate, the packed venues, the calibre of the panellists and audience - and it revealed to me that far from being glued to Facebook and social networking sites, people are getting out for face-to-face intelligent, gritty and gloves-off exchanges of views.

Humphrey Hawksley

BBC World Affairs Correspondent

Attending my fifth Battle of Ideas had the same intellectual impact as the first. I started looking at a dozen different social, political and philosophical issues differently. In just two days many of the ideas and assumptions that framed my thinking were challenged and I remembered why the Battle of Ideas is unique. It is only over this weekend that you can experience the debates and discussions that are missing in intellectual life today. If you missed this one you won't know what I mean, so time to book your tickets for the sixth Battle of Ideas. I will be there!

Dennis Hayes

Professor, University of Derby; chair, Academics for Academic Freedom; author, *Defending Higher Education: the crisis of confidence in the academy*

The Battle of Ideas isn't just a debate. Yes: it's fun and the discussion is vigorous. But more importantly it's a forum for public intellectual life. So, in addition to the pleasure of scoring points inside, its real value is making reasoned argument reverberate outside once the battle itself is over.

Richard Howells

Director, Centre for Cultural, Media and Creative Industries Research, King's College, London; author, *Using Visual Evidence*

It was another great Battle of Ideas. What I like best about the Battle is that the attendees to the sessions contribute as much as the panellists. I always find myself catching up with a couple afterwards to comment on their comments.

Jennifer Howze

Lifestyle editor, *Times Online*; lead blogger, *Alpha Mummy* (*Times Online*'s parenting blog)

Ideas are not just tested, but knocked about in a forum that is fast and free. The Battle of Ideas has done more than anything else in recent years to restore faith in reason, and integrity to the public square. Bring on 2010!

Austen Ivereigh

Catholic commentator; lead organiser, West London Citizens; former press and policy advisor to the Archbishop of Westminster

If we are at a point of transition between two economic systems—one that didn't work, and one that doesn't yet exist, then the Battle of Ideas has got a crucial role: to forge the approaches that are going to work.

Leo Johnson

Partner, PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP sustainability and climate change practice; co-founder, Sustainable Finance Ltd; author: *The Future of Finance: Sustainable Banking and the Banco Real Model*

Battle of Ideas made the adrenaline flow and forced one to think. Overall the event was both intellectually stimulating and great fun. I look forward to being invited back next year.

Luke Johnson

chairman, Channel 4; chairman/owner, Giraffe and Patisserie Valerie/Druckers; chair, RSA; essayist, *Financial Times*

The 2009 Battle of Ideas once again addressed both the major issues of our times and some of the more subtle, rarely debated questions relating to arts and culture. It was a pleasure to take part in the event, and to see so many people engaged in discussion to meet old friends and make new ones. I look forward to the next Battle of Ideas, which seems to go from strength to strength each year.

Barb Jungr

Chansonniere; CDs include *Just Like a Woman (Hymn to Nina)*, *Walking in the Sun and Love Me Tender*

Of all the political and cultural festivals, none beats the Battle of Ideas for its eclecticism and willingness to invite controversial and absorbing debate.

John Kampfner

Chief executive, Index on Censorship; former editor, *New Statesman*

The ESRC is pleased to once again headline sponsor the Battle of Ideas. From the state of the economy to questions of consumption and the environment it seemed that all subjects were focussed on the big questions facing us today. It is because of events such as the Battle of Ideas that we really begin to get a grasp of the complexity of these issues - issues that the ESRC strives to understand via the research it funds.

Melanie Knetsch

Communications and Information Directorate, ESRC

Battle of Ideas, 2009 resulted in clashes so intense that a brigade of UN peace keepers wouldn't have been able to quell the ruckus.

Simon Knight

Director, Generation Youth Issues; board member, Play Scotland

The battle of ideas strikes a welcome blow for freedom of speech and against a growing tendency to stifle open, honest debates about controversial topics.

Jurgen Kronig

UK editor, *Die Zeit*; broadcaster; author, *The Secret Face of Nature*

Battle of Ideas is always stimulating and fun, one of the intellectual highlights of the year.

Stephen Law

Editor, *THINK*; senior lecturer in philosophy, Heythrop College, University of London

The new breed of cultural managers regards the content of art with total indifference. Their preoccupation is to use culture to achieve objectives that have little to do with aesthetic experience; their opportunistic manipulation of art has the effect of devaluing it. The arts and humanities need to be defended and we must fight for the freedom to extend barriers, not merely to work within them. What better arena than The Battle of Ideas?

Colin Lawson

Professor; Director, Royal College of Music

Despite torrential rain, I was amazed at the turn-out at the British Library for the Battle of Ideas debate on whether the Don was done and dusted! It was wonderful to have the involvement of some significant academic colleagues, many of whom I had not met before. And the audience engagement was totally fascinating – the only problem was that we ran out of time.... It could have gone on all evening!”

Gloria Laycock

Professor of crime science and director, UCL Jill Dando Institute of Security and Crime Science

The debates and discussions I attended provided a genuinely new and highly thought provoking angle on the issues up for discussion. As a speaker I was put under pressure to rethink issues, and as a member of the audience challenged, angered and entertained. As a University teacher, I would say the Battle of Ideas gives people two days when they can truly think and understand something about the world we live in now.

Ellie Lee

Lecturer in social policy, University of Kent

I enjoy the Battle of Ideas partly because of the new insights the diverse, smart and serious audience brings to subjects usually discussed by narrow groups re-hashing tired debates.

Nico Macdonald

Principal, Spy; writer, consultant and researcher on innovation, technology and media

The Belfast Salon offered a space to confront the city as a living entity - as a continuum - and the discussions recognised that urban violence may have accelerated the post-industrial wasteland but that such violence was the surface expression of a deeper socio-economic and ideological malaise. I have always been inspired by Dutch architect Aldo van Eyck's beautiful image of the house as a small city and of the city as a large house and such a poetic evocation could be the seed to help build the platform for democratic participatory citizenship. Future engagement will help

define positions from which to challenge the current orthodoxies and to challenge the metrics that define what is valuable in the city.

Ciaran Mackel

Architect, ARD Architects; senior lecturer, architecture, University of Ulster; broadcaster

Precision analysis, passion-fuelled controversy, robust interrogation, humour - it was all there at the Battle of Ideas.

Tessa Mayes

Investigative journalist and film director/producer

This year the Battle of Ideas brought together an exceptional mix of speakers with varied points of view that fuelled some exciting lively debate that extended into the audience. I am sure everyone that attended the event this year left feeling challenged, stimulated and armed with a fresh informed perspective on many of the tough global issues that touch our lives everyday. The festival gets bigger, better and more inspiring every year.

Elaine McCrimmon

Alcohol policy manager, SABMiller

Participation in the 2009 Battle of Ideas was one of the highlights of my year. I learned a great deal from the exchange of different views and came away with new insights on a whole host of issues. It will be a must-be-there-again for my diary in 2010.

Iwan Morgan

Professor of US studies and head of US Presidency Centre, Institute for the Study of the Americas, University of London; author, *The Age of Deficits: presidents and unbalanced budgets from Jimmy Carter to George W. Bush*

There was an astonishing range of opinions expressed while I was there, some of them pure nonsense, others profound, all of them provocative.

Daniel Moylan

Deputy chairman, Transport for London; deputy leader, Kensington and Chelsea Council; chairman, Urban Design London

The Battle of Ideas festival restores one's faith in the value and meaning of public debate. Informed and engaged, with energy and commitment from all kinds of participants, the sessions exemplify all that is good about intellectual discussion and development.

Stuart Murray

Professor, contemporary literatures and film, University of Leeds; author, *Representing Autism: culture, narrative, fascination*

The Battle of Ideas just gets better and better. Bigger, brighter, more controversial and more combustible. A much-needed antidote to political and corporate spin.

Jeremy Myerson

Director, Helen Hamlyn Centre, Royal College of Art, London and holder, Helen Hamlyn Chair of Design; author *Space to Work: new office design*.

The Battle of Ideas is a unique institution. I hardly thought anything like this was still possible. A real meeting/confrontation, in a peaceful manner, between individuals and ideas.

The ceiling height was impressive. There is room for any discussion, any view, on any subject.

Somebody might claim that the Internet already provides this freedom, diversity and unlimited ceiling height. This is not true, because on the net you can hide - here you cannot.

You can say what you wish, but you have to stand for it. There is nothing like looking into the eyes of each other when debating.

Karl-Erik Norrman

Founder and secretary-general, European Cultural Parliament; former Swedish ambassador; opera singer

I have been coming to the Battle of Ideas every year since I read about the first one in the paper and hopped on a train into London. It goes from strength to strength and is something I look forward to each November. Wonderful venue, fascinating and diverse range of fellow delegates and so many interesting sessions that one is spoiled for choice. Where else could you find, under one roof, simultaneous discussions on children's literacy, assisted suicide, Obama's first year, the crisis in politics and a balloon debate on the merits of seven historical revolutions. I can't wait for next year's event.

David Oliver

Senior lecturer, elderly care medicine and consultant physician, University of Reading/Royal Berkshire Hospital

The Battle of Ideas continues to be THE event in the year which brings together the movers and shakers from the worlds of ideas, arts, science and media with members of the public, and asks them to push their ideas to the limit. In a time when politics lacks substance, academia lacks confidence in itself, and the future promises only more of the same, a Battle of Ideas has never been more essential.

James Panton

Lecturer, politics, St John's College, University of Oxford; press and campaigns coordinator, Manifesto Club

I found the session in which I participated most stimulating and informative. It has certainly helped me to focus and sharpen my ideas on the subject. I look forward with relish to next year's festival.

David Paton

Professor, industrial economics, Nottingham University Business School

Vibrant and insightful - all the buzz of a party political conference fringe season but much more open minded and intellectually stimulating.

David Perks

Head of physics, Graveney School; lead author, *What Is Science Education For?*; co-founder *The Physics Factory*

Vibrant and insightful - all the buzz of a party political conference fringe season but much more open minded and intellectually stimulating.

John Philpott

Public policy director and chief economist, Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development; economist and labour market analyst

The battles are as important as the ideas, or we'd never get to know what the good ideas are. We should be having arguments and enjoy having them. Parliament seems to have forgotten that.

George Pitcher

Religion editor, *Daily Telegraph* and Telegraph Media; co-founder and chief executive Luther Pendragon; Anglican priest

The 'Battle' in London was stunning: full of lively, mature and reasoned debates and individuals. A real buzz and intellectual haven. Thanks so much for that experience.

Sabine Reul

Society and politics editor, German magazine *NovoArgumente*; founder, writer and translator, *Textbüro Reul GmbH*.

Disagreement has never felt more important and more enjoyable than at Battle of Ideas

Jess Search

Chief executive, Channel 4 BRITDOC Foundation; co-founder, Shooting People

Challenging audiences and well-chosen panels make this the ultimate forum for exchanging, pooling, clarifying and crash-testing ideas – where whoever thought them up can rely on lively engagement with those who think differently. In 2010, with a new political order and much scope for new economic disorder, the Battle will be uniquely worth joining -whichever side you're on.

Alan Shipman

Department of Economics, Open University; former editor, *Finance Week*

It is stimulating to be involved in a challenging debate. The Battle of Ideas is a great place to be challenged!

Tim Smart

CEO, King's College Hospital NHS FT; former CEO, BT Global Services UK

With the two main parties battling over increasingly vacuous ideas in an ever shrinking middle ground the Battle of Ideas is more important than ever, if we're to reinvigorate politics and challenge the status quo

Graham Smith

Campaign manager, Republic; commentator on constitutional reform and abolition of the monarchy; regular contributor, *Guardian Comment is Free*

The energy of ideas during the energy debates at the Battle of Ideas 2009 was truly remarkable. Next year's conference will do well to improve on this.

Dominic Standish

Lecturer, sociology of management and journalism, University of Iowa (US) and CIMBA (Italy); author, *Venice in Environmental Peril? Myth and Reality (forthcoming)*

The Battle of Ideas has two significant virtues:

Firstly, every debate is intellectually stimulating. There's never a dud, so instead you're faced with an embarrassment of riches, because there are up to seven events going on at any one time. It's often hard to choose which debate to attend.

Secondly, it's simply the best organised event there is. Sessions run to time, they happen as billed, there's always plenty of 'fringe' activities and stalls to occupy idle minutes – not that there are many of those! Frequently there isn't even time for lunch; if you stop to eat, you'll miss something interesting going on.

No doubt the next Battle of Ideas will continue this tradition. bringing a focus

to whatever the main issues are at the end of 2010. The Battle of Ideas is important because it keeps stirring the debate about topical issues, ensuring that the central concerns of our time are kept in the forefront of people's minds and conversations. Sloppy or casual thinking is exposed, defensive or entrenched attitudes are challenged; what more could one hope for from a conference of the mind?

Richard Swan

English teacher and vice principal, Harvey Grammar School, Folkestone; author of A Level study guides on a number of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*

The annual Battle of Ideas is the perfect fix. Christmas for the mind. It sets the standard for all other meetings aiming to stimulate thought.

Raymond Tallis

Former professor, geriatric medicine, University of Manchester; poet; author, *The Hand: a philosophical inquiry into human being*

Our society thrives when different ideas are advanced and points of view contended and probed. This process is messy and nobody comes away without a clearer understanding of the issues and where they stand. The Battle of Ideas festival reaches out beyond the standard sterility of much of the discourse we see in our daily experience. Points of view outside the main political party traditions or classic academic viewpoints get aired debated and tested. I participated in a debate about the opportunities and risks posed by the more coherent management of data by the public sector. The audience comments ranged from concerns about erosion of civil liberties to fears about safeguarding the data. The audience was from all across the spectrum of age gender race and colour-all participating in a thoughtful and interesting Battle of Ideas.

David Varney

Former executive chairman, HM Revenue & Customs; former CEO designate, British Gas; author

Only the Battle of Ideas could provide the platform for a discussion about a GCSE Science exam where the atmosphere was so electric. It felt like a battle for the soul of British education.

Philip Walters

Chairman, Rising Stars educational publishers; trustee, Book Aid International; lifelong Spurs fan

The Battle of Ideas brings a breath of fresh air to how we decide where we sit on the issues of our time. All too often, debate is stifled by a self-selected, commonality of view at a plethora of largely passive conferences. The Battle pitches idea against idea and, while not always comfortable, refuses to allow us to sit on the fence. Let battle commence.

Craig White

Founding director, White Design and ModCell

Another wonderfully exhausting Battle of Ideas which went some way to beating the doom and gloom merchants into submission. Not only were there more participants and attendees than at any other conference that I've attended this year, showing that it is eminently possible to withstand recessionary trends if you have sufficient confidence and content, but it showed that many people really want to understand the world in all its complexity and detail. As always, the Battle of Ideas bucks the cowardly trends of the mainstream media and politicians who prefer to hide from

meaningful criticism. Possibly more than any other year, this year's Battle indicated that hard political arguments can invigorate and galvanise people. The best yet.

Austin Williams

Director, Future Cities Project

This was my first Battle of Ideas and I am now a convert. The range of debates was huge and the arguments were about the ideas themselves, not about individual reputations or egos. It works because it forces participants to confront other ideas in a way that does not happen in most academic conferences

Glynne Williams

Lecturer, Centre for Labour Market Studies, University of Leicester

A radical conference that runs on time - now that's a rarity! An 80-90 per cent hit rate for excellence among panel speakers, also a rarity. All this, and free Wifi too....

James Woudhuysen

Co-author, *Energise! A future for energy innovation*

As ever, the Battle of Ideas is full of stimulating and lively argument. It's fun to be able to clash robustly in a good-humoured atmosphere.

Martin Wright

Editor in chief, *Green Futures*; visiting judge, Ashden Awards for Sustainable Energy

The Battle of Ideas is a highly engaging and informative forum that offers stimulating assessments of the issues of the day. Well worth attending

Linda Yueh

Fellow in economics, St. Edmund Hall, University of Oxford; visiting professor, economics department, London Business School; author, *Macroeconomics and Globalisation and Economic Growth in China*

One of the most impressive aspects of the Battle of Ideas is the sheer breadth of topics discussed. I went to a discussion on classical music, a debate about education, and a session discussing the Obama presidency. All were introduced by experts in their fields but all were wonderfully accessible to those of us more curious than knowledgeable about the subjects. Many thanks for a great conference.

Kevin Yuill

Richard Nixon and the Rise of Affirmative Action: the pursuit of racial equality in an era of limits.