



Maggie Thatcher - my part in her downfall

Tony Stowers

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Despite initially having a touch of the "Adrian Mole Diaries" (Sue Townsend) about them, these are entries from my own edited diaries from 1982 – 1984: the time of the Falklands Conflict, Cruise Missiles at Greenham Common, the Cold War, the Miner's Strike, Scargill, the Brighton Bomb, the IRA, the Ethiopian famine and the first hacking at the Welfare State. On 12th January 1982 I was admitted to hospital with bacterial meningitis after losing consciousness to an intense head pain. Two days later I woke up, groggy but in one piece and from that moment decided I'd write about the world through the eyes of a 18 year-old dumb, naïve, clumsy kid still living at home in a small town in Thatcher's Britain intent on getting himself an education in the School of Life. I'd accept most of what I'd write would be rubbish but sometimes, inevitably, I'd turn up something rare and shiny. There's no genius on display here, no great insights - just sheer stubborn determination to liberate myself from a narrow world-view. True, I'd make no money, sign on and scrape an existence on £17 dole a week but at least by not working I was perversely harrying the Thatcher beast, at least that's how I saw it then. State school largel failed me; I got the education I needed to carve the creative life I wanted from my own efforts and by drawing on the social, cultural and political landscape of the early 80's. You had to be there. I was. Will the real Billy Elliot please stand up?



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