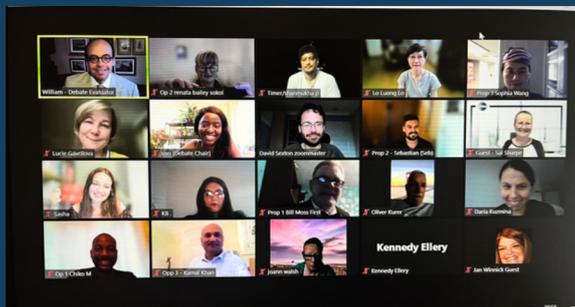




**MAN IS BY NATURE GOOD!**

**BARONESS FOX VISITS 104!**



20 people showed up for the Zoom debate on Tuesday 8th of August with some guests present too.

Oliver Kurer lead the table topics and excited the audience with interesting mini-debates on the weather, on the US presidential election process, the healthiness of fish & chips and on Fridays as the best day of the week.

Despite many people being on holiday, the first meeting in August was still a fabulous evening. The present members filled many roles in the evening; Oliver Kurer was the man wearing many hats – zoom co-host, TT master, guest introducer and to top it all he was the debate chair too!

This was the second time recently that 104 tried out the Blind Debate format, where the motion is disclosed to the speakers earlier the same evening at 6pm, meaning the speakers have very little time to prepare and must speak almost completely off the cuff.

The motion this time was **THB Man Is By Nature Good**.

The opening vote had 8 in favour 6 opposed and 6 undecided. On the Proposition side Chiko and Sophia joined energies and on the Opposition side Bill and Kristina were arguing against the motion.

After the debate 2 doubters had been convinced to join the Proposition side which meant 10 in favour, 6 against and 4 still undecided (although there was a tech issues, so who knows) - well done to Prop for winning the vote and swing.

Our founding member, Paul Carroll, provided the debate evaluation, and pointed out that simply characterising your opponents views (saying they are “wrong” or “ignorant”) seldom works - you need to bring your audience with you to that conclusion, so they can reach that too.



Chiko (above left) won the vote for best debate speech and Joann won the best Table Topic speaker. Congratulations to both of these prominent speakers!

After a warm welcome by Club President David, Sarah Beckwith led the Table Topic mini-debates in the first part of the meeting. The topics ranged from de-banking, e-scooters, offensive jokes and MPs making money for media appearances, to paper boarding passes and World Cup money for women’s footballers. The winner of the vote for Best Table Topic speaker was our debate coach and former Club President, Lo Luong Lo, for her opposition to banning e-scooters. Congratulations Lo!



Baroness Claire Fox (L) with Club President David Sexton

The meeting reconvened after the drinks break under the chairmanship of our VP of PR and Immediate Past President, William. He introduced the special guest, emphasising her untiring efforts in favour of open debate and free speech.

Baroness Fox, or Claire, as she prefers, then gave a 20 minute talk entitled **Cancel Culture May Cancel Debate**, on the inherent dangers to debate in a culture of offence-taking, safetyism and a “no debate” attitude to certain issues.

She pointed out that although “cancellation” often does not affect famous people all that much, it has a chilling signalling effect further down the food chain on those less well-known who do not have a platform to fight back from. These people either self-censor or suffer very real cancellation from contracts, jobs and engagements.

Claire warned against allowing “lived experience” to trump objective knowledge and finished by making an impassioned call to arms to people like us at 104 London Debaters to fight for freedom of speech and expression, as without it debate is impossible.

After the speech Claire answered generously in a Q&A session that lasted a full half hour and pushed us into overtime – but nobody wanted it to stop.



Baroness Claire Fox (L) in conversation with Philip and Lo during the after meeting drinks

*New members welcome!*

Maria Golovanova



Maria was born in Moscow and has been living in the UK for 15 years. Maria has a Masters degree from the London School of Economics, and is currently working in management consulting. Maria loves travelling, experiencing new cultures, learning languages and reading.



## Highlights from the Summer Club Social on Sunday the 27th of August!!

It was a truly exciting club social at Speakers' Corner, on Sunday 27th August. Members of the public joined in as we debated abolishing democracy, introducing rule by lottery, banning sugar, abolishing the NHS and making people walk 8000 steps every day. Afterwards members of 104 and guests sat down for a picnic and continued with Table Topic debates on aliens, lycra, shapely men and much more.



## Club podcast reaches 1000 listens!

Since January when the club launched its Debating Toastcast we've had a total of 1069 listens (individual streaming of most of an episode). The most popular so far is the conversation with Sarah Beckwith, with 192 plays.

The second most recently published episode is with Lo and William on fallacies, so far with 110 listens. A new episode is just published, a debunking of Alex O'Connor's arguments against monarchy.

Meanwhile, the club also has a **YouTube** channel, and there, William's analysis of Konstantin Kisin's famous Oxford Union speech on wokeness has garnered 4100(!) views and counting. **Just look for 104 London Debaters on YouTube or The Debating Toastcast on Spotify.**



## NEXT DEBATE MEETINGS:

September 12th:

on Zoom  
**This House Would Ban TikTok**

Improvised mini-debates in the first half and a prepared debate in the second half with 3 debaters on either team.

**104 London Debaters**  
This House Would  
**Ban TikTok!**  
**DEBATE**  
Tuesday 12th Sept. 6.45pm on Zoom

September 26th:

at The Windsor Castle Pub  
**This House Believes Brexit Is a Success.**

Improvised mini-debates in the first half and a prepared debate in the second half with 3 debaters on either team.