

The New Criterion

Letter from Mumbai

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Wagging the slumdog

by [Christie Davies](#)

On the PC firestorm following the the Oscar victory of *Slumdog Millionaire*.

I arrived in India this past February 7 and stayed through March 2—my visit began and ended in Mumbai (formerly Bombay), a city I have visited many times. During my stay, I read the English-language Indian newspapers everyday, local, regional, and national, not just the articles and news but also the letters-from-readers section, and watched Indian English-language TV on many evenings. Much of the news was dominated by the discussion of *Slumdog Millionaire*, a film about a poor orphan and tiffin-boy (waiter) from Mumbai's slums, who, at the age of eighteen, wins 20 million rupees on an Indian quiz show. The film has justly received many international prizes: It is well-directed by Danny Boyle and well-acted. When it won eight Oscars, Indians were overjoyed. Some got up very early in the morning to watch, in real time, the award ceremony in California. In the days before the winner ...

Christie Davies is the author of *The Strange Death of Moral Britain* (Transaction).

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