IN THE SHALLOW END

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Category: Observations

There has been a lot of talk about voting in the British press over the past week or so.

Quite a lot of excitement was generated when an ex-politician of limited terpsichorean ability was voted off a Saturday night TV dance show. This contrasted with the furore that was caused when an Irish lady was voted off a TV singing competition, when the show's producers apparently changed the rules from one day to another. Earlier in the week, there was a huge amount of wringing of hands over the fact that the World Cup would be staged in Russia in 2018 (bizarrely in Qatar in 2022) rather than in England.

I'm happy to admit that I'm a great fan of Strictly Come Dancing, and I was more than happy to see Anne Widecombe voted off the programme. But in the great scheme of things, it doesn't matter. It is only a TV programme - as is the Xfactor. And like it or not, the World Cup is only a footy tournament. Lots of people love it and get great pleasure from it, but it's only a entertainment, a game.

Despite the fact that none of these events are particularly earth shattering or important, they have been plastered all over the British media for the last week or so.

Meanwhile, the same media have more or less ignored what is going on in Ivory Coast. On balance, it seems strange that the media have not focussed on the events in Abidjan, there has been lots of high drama. Election results torn up on live TV by the supporters of one party, two rival presidents sworn in on the same day and the slow, but worrying descent of a country back into violence and discord.

I know why the media aren't covering events in Ivory Coast, but are obsessed by Xfactor and the football. In the words of Paul Weller, "the public gets what the public wants". We are fascinated with TV programmes, but don't really care about the deaths and sufferings of our fellow human beings.

Life in the Shallow End.