

# THE GALLEY

A scenic landscape photograph of a sunset over a valley. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright orange and yellow glow that transitions into a deep blue sky. In the foreground, a stone wall made of dark, irregular rocks runs along the left side. The valley below is filled with rolling hills and some patches of snow or light-colored ground.

Spring 2021

# The Galley

## Edition 39, Spring 2021

A lot has changed over the past year. What was initially expected to only be a few weeks at home quickly turned into a whole year of chaos and calamity. Our lives as we knew them were completely upended in ways we never expected, and some things will never be the same again.

Some things haven't changed though – one of them being the dedication from all the writers, editors, and photographers that has brought this edition of The Galley to life. Despite another lockdown and the return to online learning, we've pulled through to create another fantastic edition, with articles and photography covering a whole range of fascinating topics.

Hopefully, as the days grow brighter, so too the times we live in grow brighter, and that in the coming months there will be a return to normality – a new normality, a better normality even. Hopefully, we can create the next edition of The Galley all together in P20 too. But until then, we continue to wish everyone the best despite these difficult circumstances and happy reading!

- Amanda Amaeshi (FV) on behalf of *The Galley* Editorial Team.

The Editorial Team are:  
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Thank you very much to all our editors, writers and photographers.

Special thanks go to:

Elliot Wortley - for meticulously organising the layout and design of the full magazine.

Ben Montgomery - for his striking front cover image and for all his hard work managing the blog.

Rachel Warden and Jessica Kitchen - for their stunning photography.

Finally, an enormous thank you to Ms Abel - for all her guidance, support, and encouragement!

## News and Politics

### *From the Editor...*

It would have been hard to predict one year ago that the COVID-19 pandemic would still have such a large impact on all of our lives. What was perhaps even harder to imagine is that people may actually miss hearing about Brexit every day. However, it seems that at last there is some sign of things getting better. The UK's vaccination programme has been one of the most effective in the world with more than 23 million people receiving the first dose of the COVID vaccination and slowly but surely the infection rate is beginning to decrease again.

However, coronavirus has not been the only thing in the news over the past few months and we hope that you will enjoy reading the articles in the News and Politics section and the rest of the magazine. There are a wide range of topics covered from the life of Ruth Bader Ginsburg to the future of populism, and the aftermath of Trump's impeachment trial to the UK's lack of interest in European politics.

I hope that you enjoy reading the following articles and continue to check our blog for more content from the magazine: <http://da-thegalleymagazine.blogspot.com> Hopefully, things will continue to get better and as we go into the summer we can all look forward to the beginning of a return to normalacy.



Elliot Wortley  
News & Politics Editor

# How the Impeachment Trial Defines the Republican Party

Finlay Clark (FIV)

When Abraham Lincoln said “A House divided against itself cannot stand”, nobody would think that 100 years later the quote would still resonate in this current political climate. The Grand Old Party (GOP) is suffering from an identity crisis with Republicans split over the issue of one man, Donald Trump. This was no better illustrated than during the second Impeachment Trial that took place in the Senate, with Donald Trump being accused of inciting a coup to take over the Capitol Building in Washington. While the actions of Donald Trump during the Capitol riots were condemned by many from all sides of the political spectrum; only seven Republican Senators broke ranks and sided with the Democrats over a conviction, ultimately resulting in an acquittal due to there not being enough votes to convict. This outcome will certainly shock many on the surface however, it came as no surprise to some that an acquittal was expected for one reason and one reason only: party politics.

To convict Trump the Democrats needed a two-thirds majority in the Senate (67 votes). Once you have a deeper look, it's not hard to see the challenge that was placed ahead of them. Before the Impeachment proceedings began, 5 Republican Senators had announced that they would be voting to impeach the former President. This meant that out of the 45 remaining Republicans, 12 votes would have been needed to convict; however even this number presented a challenge for a variety of reasons.

Firstly, 16 Senate Republicans are up for re-election in next year's Midterm Elections and almost all of them come from strong Republican states where Donald Trump still holds a significant amount of influence and without his backing it would be extremely difficult to gain support, so a vote to convict would almost guarantee a primary challenge for their seat in 2022. For example, Lisa Murkowski (a Senator from Alaska who voted to convict Trump) is widely expected to face a challenge for her seat in the next election. Secondly, many Senators still hold a strong allegiance to Trump so a vote for impeachment would have been certainly out of character and a bit odd.

Also, many Republicans have agreed and supported Trump's baseless claims of election fraud ever since Joe Biden was declared President back in November. Some Republicans even went as far as to officially object to the certification of the 2020 Presidential Election, with 8 senators and 139 House representatives voting to sustain objections in both Arizona and Pennsylvania. Many Republicans have also made the pilgrimage to visit Trump's Mar-a-Lago resort in Florida in hope of gaining support from the former President, with House minority leader Kevin McCarthy saying that “President Trump's popularity has never been stronger than it is today, and his

endorsement means more than perhaps any endorsement at any time” right after meeting Trump in Florida.

So, where do the Republicans go from here? Well, it's clear to see that they are currently split into two camps; those who firmly support the former President and those who are desperately trying to distance themselves from him. Mitch McConnell, the current Senate Minority Leader, is a good example of this. During Trump's tenure as President, McConnell was known as Trump's “Enabler-in-Chief” as he allowed Trump to go ahead with many policies like confirming 3 Supreme Court Justices in the space of 4 years. In the past couple of weeks however, McConnell has repeatedly spoken out against Trump. He called out the former President for his role in the Capitol Riots saying that “He did not do his job. He didn't take steps so federal law could be faithfully executed and order restored”. This came after he and 42 of his other Republicans voted to acquit Trump. Other Republicans are also having to deal with the fallout of the Impeachment Vote. Ted Cruz, the junior Senator from Texas and one of the biggest Trump Cheerleader's over the past couple of months is an example of a Republican who's having a very bad start to the year. After voting to object to the certification of electoral votes with 7 of his fellow senate Republicans, Cruz was spotted jetting off to Mexico whilst millions of people in Texas were left without power and water, which prompted widespread condemnation from both sides of the political aisle. Alongside Trump, Cruz's actions of the past couple of months will likely define his political career for years to come.

The GOP of 2021 is still the Party of Trump, with his approval ratings amongst voters still towering over other Republicans. Currently, two-thirds of potential Republican Voters want Trump to lead the GOP, with 45% of GOP-leaning voters wanting Trump to run again in 2024. Trump also controls much of the conservative political apparatus in the U.S, with the Republican National Committee still held in his vice-like grip. This means that many state officials are still in his camp, even after the Impeachment Trial and the Insurrection. Many state parties have also taken measures to censure any Republican that voted to impeach the former President, including the 7 senators who voted to convict Trump. There's also been growing talk of many anti-Trump Republicans willing to abandon ship to form their own party, with 62% of Republican Voters wanting to form a new party according to a recent Gallup Poll.

American politics is a polarizing place right now, with the Impeachment Trial increasing division between Republicans and Democrats. If Joe Biden wants to get anything meaningful done, he will need to properly unite the country to work together. If he doesn't address the political divide head-on it could not only have severe implications in the U.S but also around the world.



# Remembering RBG

Inaya Syed (FIII)

On the 18th of September 2020, Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg of the Supreme Court passed away at the age of 87, after enduring an 11-year battle with pancreatic cancer. Ruth Bader Ginsburg is a name that will stay not only with the millions of Americans for whom she fought to achieve justice – but also the rest of the world, as we remember her achievements and most importantly, her legacy.

Born in Brooklyn, New York in 1933 to “an ordinary, working-class family”, Justice Ginsburg has often described her childhood as being influenced by the following advice from her mother – “Always prepare to be self-standing; to fend for yourself.” It was likely this guidance that motivated her to work incredibly hard in high school and attain a full-ride scholarship to the prestigious Cornell University.

It was during her time at Cornell that Ruth Bader met her husband Martin “Marty” Ginsburg; the two married almost immediately after Ruth had graduated in 1954. Their first child, Jane, was born the following summer.

Though RBG was elated at the thought of being a mother, her employers didn't share the same feelings. At age 21, she was demoted by her employers at the Social Security Administration office in Oklahoma for becoming pregnant – and this was just the beginning of the discrimination she would face as a young, intelligent mother and lawyer. Throughout the early years of her career, Justice Ginsburg was forced to apply for jobs that she was significantly overqualified for as those hiring her saw the fact she had children as a weakness to her professionalism.



In 1956, Ginsburg enrolled at Harvard Law School, joining her husband Marty who was continuing his second year of studies there. Whilst attending Harvard, Marty sadly fell ill with testicular cancer, and was bedridden. In an attempt to make sure he didn't miss out on his education, Ginsburg attended all of his lectures and classes as well as her own, and gave him the notes when she returned home, allowing Marty to graduate at the same time as the rest of his peers. Though she encountered what she described as “a very hostile, male-dominated environment” (as 1 of only 9 women in the almost 500-person class of 1959) Justice Ginsburg was able to graduate first of her class at



Columbia University, where she had transferred for her last year of law school. After receiving her degree, Ginsburg was employed as a law clerk, having to work long hours in a job for which she was significantly overqualified.

It was not until Ruth Bader Ginsburg was 60 years old that she was nominated to the Supreme Court by Bill Clinton; she was appointed with a vote of 96 to 3, becoming the second ever female Justice. Whilst serving as Associate Justice, Ginsburg fought as a champion for equal rights with one of the most notable cases she took on being ‘United States v. Virginia’. This landmark case was brought to the Supreme Court because the esteemed Virginia Military Institute only allowed male cadets to be admitted into the Academy. Justice Ginsburg, in her majority opinion, stated that the VMI failed to show “exceedingly persuasive justification for its sex-based admissions policy” and was therefore a violation of the 14th Amendment. The impressive 7-1 majority ruling, with only Justice Antonin Scalia dissenting, gained a significant amount of media coverage and was featured in the 2018 biopic, *On the Basis of Sex*. Speaking in relation to Justice Scalia's differing opinion, Justice Ginsburg said it “absolutely ruined my weekend, but my opinion is ever so better because of his stinging dissent”.

Throughout her career, Ruth Bader Ginsburg acted as a voice for the unheard and constantly strived to attain justice for those who needed it. Even before her appointment to the Supreme Court, she had helped Stephen Wiesenfeld (a widower who had been denied any Social Security benefits as he was a man and assumed to be the ‘breadwinner’ of the family) get his case to the High Court. In a 2017 interview regarding this case, Ginsburg stated that “such a gender line helps to keep women not on a pedestal, but in a cage” and when asked when she would finally be satisfied with the number of women in the Supreme Court, she simply answered, “When there are nine.”

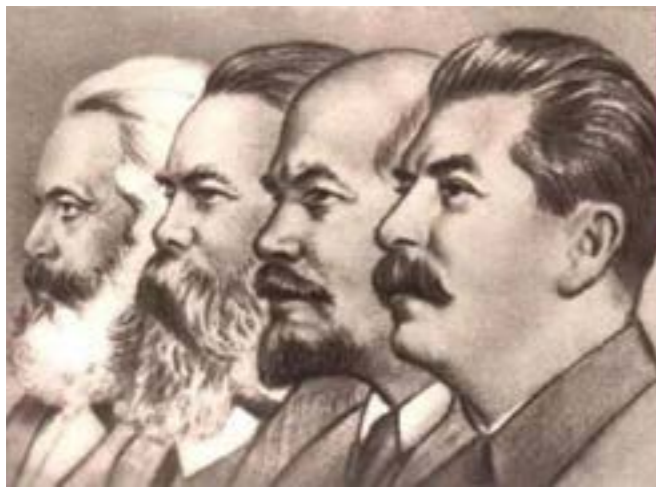
Ruth Bader Ginsburg will be remembered as a role model for not only women, but for all who wish for an equal and just world. Her achievements for society cement the idea that where there is a will, there is a way; though she was faced with many hardships throughout her career, her endeavour for justice and equality prevailed.

# Ideologies Explained

Logan Moss (FII)

The government has come under much scrutiny for their handling of the coronavirus pandemic. Likely related to this, it would appear that more people are becoming engaged in current affairs. I myself have been interested in politics for years. This is why I have decided to write about something which is integral to politics- ideology. If you don't know, an ideology is a belief that is often related to things like politics, economics, and philosophy. It is important to know about at least some ideologies to be an informed voter and although for many pupils that may be years away, it is never too early to begin learning about them.

In this article I will attempt to explain some popular or well-known ideologies.



## Capitalism

Capitalism is a political and economic system which encourages private ownership of a country's industries and means of production, for the purpose of making profit.

Essentially, this is where major industries are owned by business people rather than the government. These people own businesses so they can make money. The UK is an example of a capitalist country.

## Communism

Communism is a system whereby a country's property and industry are owned collectively by the people (the government). People contribute and receive goods according to their ability and needs.

Communism is the polar opposite of capitalism. Instead of things being owned privately they are owned collectively. There are currently 5 countries that claim to be communist: Laos, Cuba, Vietnam, North Korea, and China (though whether China really is economically communist is disputed). One famous former nation that claimed to be communist was the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (or the USSR for short). Many people argue there is little freedom in communist societies.

## Fascism

Fascism is an authoritarian and ultranationalist system that includes dictatorial power for the leader, regimentation of societal and economic matters, as well as suppression of any and all opposition to the regime.

This is a system where the government control every aspect of everyday life. The leader in this system, whether it be a single person or a group, has unquestioned authority and power. They also try to eliminate any forms of opposition to their government. One of the most famous examples of a fascist country was Nazi Germany.

## Socialism

An ideology that advocates for the collective ownership of the means of the country's production.

Socialism is a bit like a watered-down version of communism. It is in between capitalism and communism and is widely seen as a diluted form of communism as communism often includes more extreme methods of collective ownership. Having said that, socialism was derived from the beliefs of the philosopher Karl Marx, the same person who is often credited with helping invent communism.

## Conservatism

A political and social ideology that promotes the preservation of tradition and social conservatism. It can be associated with ideas of private ownership and free enterprise.

Conservatism is centred around the idea of being opposed to certain changes, particularly changes to social standards that make society more liberal. Conservatism is also associated with capitalist economic ideas.

## Liberalism

A moral and political philosophy based on ideas such as equality before the law and liberty.

Liberalism works around the idea of freedom. It promotes ideas such as freedom of speech and freedom of religion. It does the same with equality and believes that all people should be treated equally, particularly by the law. Other ideas include capitalism and internationalism. For social issues it is arguably the opposite of conservatism.



## Nationalism

An idea that believes in promoting the interests of one nation, often over others. Nationalism also often advocates for either maintaining or gaining a nation's sovereignty. In many cases it can also include the idea of a nation's right to self governance and self determination.

Nationalism is where people or a person puts their nation first. Some people dislike it as they believe nationalism makes a country too self centred and unaware of other countries' issues. On the other hand, many advocates of nationalism believe that it is a government's responsibility to put their own country first. Sometimes nationalism can include proposing that a country should have a right to self governance and determination. In cases like this, nationalists may campaign for a region to become an independent country.

## Populism

A type of political ideology in which participants attempt to appeal to ordinary people who feel a form of elite establishment have ignored and disregarded them.

Populism is where politicians try to appeal to ordinary people who feel that those with power have ignored them. Examples of populists include US President Donald Trump, Prime Minister Boris Johnson, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro.

As much as I have tried my best to explain some ideologies, many of them have different variations. There are many types of socialism. For example, democratic socialism, Christian socialism, and liberal socialism. So, if you are interested I would encourage you to research them in more detail. There are lots of different books and other forms of information available. What I have provided is no more than a glimpse of the incredibly interesting world that is politics.

# Europassivity

David Clayton (FV)

On Remembrance Sunday of 2020, the BBC provided a coverage of the Queen's service, where she, some other royals and a few select veterans remembered and commemorated the loss and sacrifice of British troops in the First World War. With appropriate social distancing measures taken, of course. As I caught a glimpse of the service, I noticed something curious and frankly, quite inappropriate. A footer, not the distinctive red footer of BBC News, but a unique footer I had never seen before with the following text: Biden 279, Trump 214. I found it quite odd that the BBC would choose to deface a solemn, uniquely British annual event with an update on contemporary American politics.

As Brits, we have been saturated in American culture, American issues, and indeed, American politics by the media. We probably know more about American politics than the Americans do. All Britons, from Belfast to Brighton, Edinburgh to Exeter, Sunderland to Southampton know the name of the President of the United States (and probably the Vice-President as well). In contrast, significantly fewer Brits would know the name of the President of the European Commission, or indeed, any European politician besides a small handful of national leaders. A recent YouGov poll of Britain's 10 most famous foreign politicians has five Americans but only three Europeans, including Putin.

A so-called "special relationship" between the UK and US only intensifies the engrossment that we have in American issues, while our only political connections to Europe are being severed progressively in favour of a "global Britain", which for all intents and purposes is an even closer cultural and political relationship with America. What's most strange is that the United States is over 2,000 miles away from Great Britain, while all the major EU institutions are less than 1,000 miles away. Logically, it would be far easier and so much more sensible for the UK to be much more closely aligned with Europe, perhaps even more so than America, but alas, we are only cutting ties with Europe, rather than strengthening them. I find this profound apathy we feel towards Europe puts us at a geopolitical disadvantage as the influence that decisions made in the legislatures of the continent have on us is not to be underestimated.

One particular reason why I believe we Brits are widely uninterested in the affairs on the continent is that even through 28 years of membership of the European Union, we are clueless as to what the EU was and did. According to the London School of Economics, in 2015, a short quiz on the nature of the EU was conducted in all member states. The UK scored the worst average mark in all 28 members, with only 27% of respondents answering all 3 questions correctly. Only Latvia was worse in that regard. Furthermore, in a 2014 YouGov poll, only 20% of Brits knew how many countries there were in the EU. It must be noted that these dates are before the Brexit referendum, when the EU was a niche issue in the minds of many voters. However, even now our knowledge of the EU is nigh-on

abysmal. For example, according to a survey done by UK in a Changing Europe in 2019, only 38% of respondents knew that less than 10% of the Government budget is EU contributions, and only 61% knew that Austria is an EU member state. Even in the glorious anarchy of the Brexit era, when doing something, anything about Europe was the *raison d'être* for those in political office, we remained stupendously ignorant.



One reason why I believe we are quite pitiful in our knowledge of European affairs is a vicious cycle of pandering media silence. All news organisations, including the BBC cater to their audience's preferences in content: amplifying what they want to hear and ignoring what they don't. Of course, since the British people aren't educated about European politics, they don't really care about it, therefore the media do not waste valuable paper or programming space reporting on it, further resulting in our apathy and ignorance to European politics and so on and so on and so on in an ouroboros of market forces. Since 2016, our desire to hear about Europe and therefore media coverage of it has increased significantly, but since we still are ignorant about the institutions of Europe, we will just unquestioningly take in the first vaguely rational fact we encounter.

Consequentially, I feel a significant consequence this apathy towards Europe will eventually bite us with is an apathy towards any sort of insidious, harmful decisions Europe could inflict on us at any time. This ignorance over the EU would be understandable if we were a geographically and politically distant nation. After all, there is no need for the average Korean to know much about the European Union. But Britain is not Korea. We are incredibly interlinked with Europe culturally, economically and politically, regardless of EU membership. Roughly a half of the UK's international trade is with the EU. One million British nationals live in the EU and five million EU nationals live in Britain. Just because the UK is no longer subjugated by the European Parliament does not mean its decisions will not affect us anymore. Regulations on goods and services from the UK will have to match EU minimum regulations to have a chance of getting into the common market. There are unbreakable bonds between the UK and the EU which even the hardest of Eurosceptic governments cannot touch. For these reasons, it makes our seeming apathy towards the EU more consequential. By not paying attention to legislation made in Europe that will affect us in some way, we risk allowing the United Kingdom to be all but an EU vassal state run by the Party, with less practical

sovereignty than in Nigel Farage's nightmares, while we the Proles keep ourselves in the dark.

Additionally, another particular danger I feel our dispassion towards Europe could throw us towards is an inescapable weakness and subservience to a potential great power. The influence that Europe already has over the UK is noticeable, and will only grow in the following decades. Growing harmonisation and cooperation between the member states are allowing the EU the potential to become a distinct, powerful unit in itself. In 2018, Emmanuel Macron spoke in favour of a single European armed force to counterbalance China, America, and Russia. European integration currently seems inevitable, and will certainly change the global balance of power. Meanwhile, the UK is at the doorstep of a significantly superior power, separated from the alternatives by thousands of miles of land and sea. In this scenario, it seems logical that Britain will align itself with this European great power or superpower, at the probable expense of the US' "special relationship" with us. Continuing our current path of ignoring Europe over other global interests will likely lead the UK to hanging off a cliff.

In summary, the British people should care more about the politics of the European Union. Our current knowledge and interest in the affairs of our closest neighbours and largest trading partners is unhealthily low, and will only get more so as the world influence of an integrated Europe grows, unless we change our outlook. Do we wish to become America's 51st state in all but name, obsessing over American political and social issues until the words "British" and "American" are interchangeable? No. But to prevent this, we must reduce our engrossment in US issues and turn our heads south-east. Only with the public's interest in Europe moulding party manifestos can we be a true global Britain and can our nation's potential with the EU be fully unleashed.



## Will Populism Live On?

*Logan Moss (FII)*

Many see both the COVID-19 pandemic and the 2020 US Presidential Election as a test for populism. Populism is the political ideology of such people as former US President Donald Trump, Prime Minister Boris Johnson, President of Brazil Jair Bolsonaro, Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi, French Presidential Election candidate Marine Le Pen, and former leader of UKIP Nigel Farage.

Populism is an ideology whereby a politician attempts to appeal to ordinary voters who feel that some kind of powerful, elite establishment have disregarded and forgotten about them. The politician may sometimes pitch themselves as a kind of 'voice' for the people. It's important also to note that populism exists in left-wing, right-wing, and even centrist forms. It's often associated with some controversial politicians.

Since Donald Trump lost to new President Joe Biden (unless you think the election was 'stolen') some feel that the end of populism may be approaching. But is that really true?

Former US President Donald Trump almost certainly fits into this category. He pitched himself as a political outsider in the 2016 US Election, he said that thanks to the "unfair" trade deals that people had "no voice" and Donald Trump even said at the 2016 RNC (Republican National Convention), "I am your voice". If this isn't enough, his chief strategist Steve Bannon (a little bit like an American Dominic Cummings) has also been described as a populist by many.

So, can it live on?

When tackling this question we can't just look at Donald Trump's defeat, we also need to look at his victory in 2016.

An advantage that Donald Trump had in 2016 was that he managed to pitch himself as a kind of outsider to the political system. To a vast amount of people (both opponents and supporters) he didn't appear as a traditional politician. Though some saw this as a bad thing (often citing a lack of experience), those who saw it as something good helped carry him to the White House. Many of these supporters, particularly in 'Middle America', were sick of seeing what they felt were politicians (who they saw as members of the aforementioned elite establishment) acting as if they didn't matter and pandering to the out of touch, liberal, coastal states. This is a textbook example of how a populist candidate can win an election.

However, when the 2020 Presidential Election arrived, there was a problem. This aforementioned strategy could not be used in the same way. Donald Trump was no longer an outsider, as he was president. He also had a record to defend, which many felt had been tarnished by his handling of COVID-19. This was perhaps not helped by the negative knock-on effect COVID-19 had on the economy, as well as what many saw as his questioning of science.

Some also believe that perhaps the COVID-19 pandemic can bring populism's end. But how true is this?

If you take a look at polling during the pandemic, you often find that parties whose handling of the pandemic has been criticized have less support than prior to COVID-19. Whereas those whose handling has been praised can sometimes see their popularity soar. An example of this was New Zealand's Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern. Looking at the countries whose leaders have been criticized, many have been populists.

These populists (Donald Trump, Boris Johnson, Jair Bolsonaro) have been accused of taking a reckless approach to the issue. Some chose to describe the introduction of the UK's lockdown as 'too late' and one of President Bolsonaro's comments earlier on in the pandemic were seen by some to show a lack of empathy on his part.

So finally, to answer the question, will this bring the end of populism?

The answer is no, probably not.

Though I mentioned the US Election result, it's important to remember that although Biden won the presidency, Trump still managed to receive over 10 million more votes than he did in 2016. He also extended his margin of victory in the key battleground state of Florida (which was hit rather badly by COVID-19).

We can also look at polling for the 2022 French Presidential Election. As mentioned earlier, populist Marine Le Pen (whose party has been described by many as far-right) has announced her intention to run. It's important to note that the system used by France involves two-rounds (meaning the candidate who initially has the most votes is not guaranteed to win) and recent polling is rather early (making it almost as reliable as the weather here in Scotland), nevertheless it has shown on numerous occasions that Marine Le Pen may be the favored option (for now).

Many analysts are also saying that although populism may be going through a rough-patch, it could find its resurgence if COVID-19 becomes a mainly economic issue in the future.

So, to conclude, whether you love it or loath it, populism may be here to stay.



# SNP Civil War

Elliot Wortley (FVI)

For the past 15 years, the Scottish National Party has dominated political life in Scotland. In 2007, Alex Salmond became First Minister- winning one more seat than the Scottish Labour party- and the SNP's dominance eventually led to a referendum on independence being held in 2014. Although the 'Yes' campaign lost in the referendum, the party has continued to grow in support. The 2019 election saw them achieve their second-best result at a general election- winning 48 seats- while polling shows that going into 2021 support for independence had never been higher. However, the beginning of this year has shone a light on the tension which exists within the SNP that threatens to derail their past successes.

In August 2018, Alex Salmond raised £100,000 in a crowdfunding appeal to cover legal costs for a judicial review into the way the Scottish Government held its initial investigation into sexual misconduct allegations made against him. Salmond won his case in January 2019 and was paid over £500,000 by the government. In February 2019, the Scottish Government set up the Committee on the Scottish Government Handling of Harassment Complaints- made up of nine members and chaired by the SNP's Linda Fabiani. This committee has been regularly sitting since August 2020 and came into the spotlight in early 2021 after both Salmond and Sturgeon testified before it. There has been great controversy over whether or not the committee has received sufficient evidence, that they were promised by the government, and legal advice they were promised was only released after the opposition parties threatened to carry a motion of 'no confidence' in Deputy First Minister John Swinney.



When addressing the committee in February 2021, Salmond effectively accused the top levels of government in Scotland of plotting to remove him from public life. In his opening statement he said that "The failures of leadership are many and obvious, and yet not a single person has taken responsibility. Not a single resignation, not a single sacking, not even an admission." Salmond suggests that the Scottish Government did not carry out the investigations into the accusations against him properly (with Nicola Sturgeon admitting that there were "catastrophic" errors in the initial investigation). And Salmond says there is "no doubt" that Sturgeon breached the ministerial code- which would normally lead to resignation (although has not done for Priti Patel who has similarly been accused of breaking it). The main issues come down to when Sturgeon was first made aware

of the allegations against Salmond; whether she lied or not about the dates to parliament; as well as the conduct of Leslie Evans, the Permanent Secretary to the Scottish Government. Salmond's claims that Sturgeon breached the code have gained great attention in the media and he has support from SNP MPs like Kenny MacAskill and Joanna Cherry (who was sacked from the SNP's front bench at Westminster at the beginning of this year). However, YouGov polling from the beginning of March 2021 suggests that only 20% of Scottish voters believe that Salmond has 'generally told the truth' in comparison to the 44% who think that Sturgeon has. Sturgeon herself has denied breaching the code and has labelled the claims made by Salmond as "conspiracy theories". An independent investigation by James Hamilton into whether she broke the code or not should be published before the election in May.

Despite the fact that the majority of the public, and SNP party members, believe Sturgeon's claim that she did not breach the ministerial code, the party's level of support has declined in recent months. YouGov polling shows that Nicola Sturgeon's favourability rating has decreased, and that support for the 'No' campaign is once again higher than that for independence. When examining opinion polling carried out by The Scotsman and Savanta ComRes it is clear that SNP support has decreased- in the middle of December 2020 they were polling at 55% while in the second week of March 2021 they were at 48%. This suggests that the party may not get the majority they looked set to secure earlier on this year, and they may once again have to rely on the Scottish Greens for support in parliament. However, this slip in support has been going on since before the Salmond and Sturgeon saga was front page news suggesting that other factors are at play. Perhaps, the fact that Scotland was initially behind in vaccination rates compared to the rest of the UK has had an impact on support for the SNP. On 31st January, Scotland had given the first dose of the vaccine to only 12.5% of the population (the lowest percentage of any area of the United Kingdom). In addition to this the decreased attention given to Brexit in recent months may also help explain the decrease in the SNP's support. The party have positioned themselves as not only strong supporters of independence but also fierce opponents of Brexit. Since Brexit has not dominated the news agenda in recent months it may explain the declining support for the SNP as people are no longer as focused on preventing Brexit (as it has already happened) or re-joining the EU- instead other issues like healthcare, education, and the recovery after COVID have been of significant importance. And it is hard for a party that's been in charge for nearly a decade and a half to criticise others for failings in Scotland.

So, while Salmond's claims of a conspiracy against him are not believed by the majority of Scots it is clear that the SNP's prospects in May are not as strong as they may initially appear. Of course, the party still has the most support in Scotland but come the elections they may fail to achieve the majority they seek (which they claim would be a clear signal of a desire for another Independence referendum) due to their response to COVID, the declining importance of Brexit, and the increased focus on other issues like education.

# Views

## From the Editor...

Opinions: everyone's got them, and we all want to share them.

We live in a world where we are bombarded by opinions every day, each person more sure they are right than the last. It's a confusing world, with COVID, and issues of political, global and historical significance divide us every day. In this year's Galley we wanted to bring you a wide range of views nonetheless, but on a range of topics and issues you may have never thought about before. I trust our talented group of writers will be able to make you think, if not feel the need to act.

Here in the Views section you will find a wide range of pieces: from Brishti Sengupta's dissertative article on Sigmund Freud, to Amanda Amaeshi's deep dive into gender reveal parties and their sinister consequences. We also have Rosa Thur opining on why schools shouldn't go back to basics during lockdown, and Valerie Andres tackling the question of whether or not celebrities should be voicing political opinions. Sophie Robinson brings us the issue of cancel culture and Erin McMillan discusses how tech companies see us as the used, not the users. All provide interesting perspectives on complex issues, each is worth reading in its own right.

Needless to say, it's been a troublesome year so far, with Term 2 being all but entirely online, and many of us struggling with Teams deadlines and changes to routine; but as they say 'the show must go on', and that was as true for the Galley as it was for the rest of the school. Now in its second virtual edition, I hope that you find, as I have done, that the standard of writing continues to be as stellar and interesting as before, if not even better.

Whatever takes your fancy, I hope you enjoy reading through this Spring 2021 Edition of the Galley views section, and if you find something you agree or disagree with, feel free to write your own thoughts- we are always looking for new writers and would be thrilled to hear what you have to say.



Daniel Ferguson (FV)  
Views Editor

## Freudian Slip

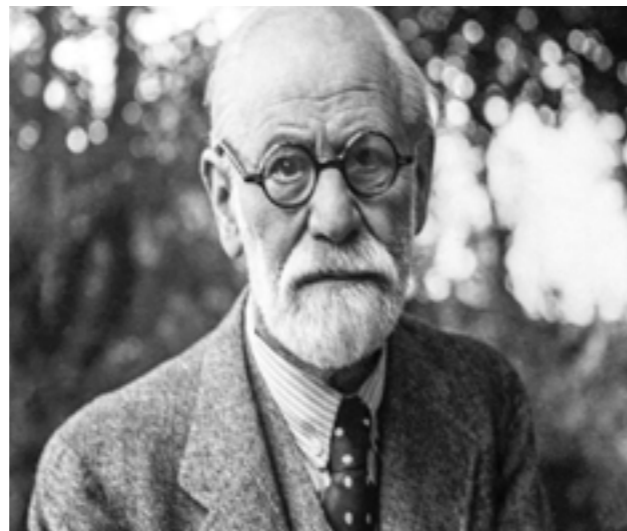
Brishti Sengupta (FV)

The Oedipus Complex. Ego, superego, and id. Defence mechanisms. Arrested development. Phallic symbols. Death wishes. Just by looking at our contemporary vernacular, it is undeniable that Sigmund Freud, often hailed as the father of modern psychology, has profoundly shaped the very way we think about ourselves and what makes us tick. He married the idea of culture and science and therefore revolutionised a previously obscure and seriously misunderstood area of medicine. But just how relevant are his findings to us now? As time goes by, there seems to be increasingly more holes found in his intentionally unfalsifiable theories, especially since it feels they're mainly related to sex, libido and trauma (usually mutually inclusive). What's more, there are rising concerns that what he subjected his patients to over a cup of tea and a hit of cocaine may not have been entirely ethical. Even though we may unconsciously elevate the importance of Freud's work, we should wrack our brains consider that the time has come to move on.

Starting off as a Viennese neurologist in the late 1800s, he went on to pioneer the discipline of psychoanalysis, using his talking cure to aid those who were turned away by other professionals. When faced with women coming to him with serious issues such as depression, he realised that perhaps they were not simply what a patriarchal society so compassionately deemed "hysterical", and soldiers maybe suffered some consequences of witnessing more horror than most could even fathom. His work forced the medical establishment to rethink cases such as these and gave them much needed visibility and discussion. Nowadays, nearly everyone is aware of the idea of the unconscious, an idea popularised by Freud. In a world in the dark regarding psychology and the mind, Freud could be reasonably viewed as the man who flipped the switch, enlightening us and creating a whole new space for many after him to explore.

However, somewhat ironically, if you take the time to dig beneath the surface, something more sinister comes to light. Some of Freud's findings caused real harm. He misrepresented the results of some of his psychoanalysis cases, claiming patients had been cured when their condition had worsened, and his seduction theory that all mental issues must be the result of trauma that has been repressed into the unconscious and could only have a pathological effect if the victim had no conscious recollection of the events, had considerable consequences. Freud insisted the repressed trauma that definitely had to be there could be uncovered through psychoanalysis, which inspired many psychologists that followed his teachings to force their patients to try and uncover their trauma that they had supposedly internalised to the point they couldn't remember it, even if there likely wasn't any trauma to uncover. This caused significant psychological damage, in some cases even destroying

relationships and tearing families apart as patients were made to "discover" or construct scenes of incest and childhood sexual abuse which never happened. You could argue Freud is not responsible for how others applied his work, and that would just be projecting, but Freud not only engaged in his own recovered memory tactic which guided recollections instead of allowing them to be expressed freely, but he also hurt people long before his followers' misapplication of his work.



If there is one word to describe psychology experiments throughout history, "unethical" comes to mind. The Monster Study in 1939, where children with normal speech were essentially bullied into developing lifelong speech impediments, did not have its results officially released because the researchers thought they would be compared to human experimenters among the Nazis (never a good sign). From Project MKUltra and the infamous Stanford Prison Experiment which both oversaw physical and mental abuse of test subjects in the name of "science", eras as recent as the 70s had a surprising degree of tolerance for medical sadism. So, it might be somewhat expected that Freud indulged in his fair share of morally dubious treatments.

The lucky Emma Eckstein was 27 when she came to Sigmund Freud, a man looking for an appropriate test subject, seeking treatment for vague symptoms such as stomach pains and slight depression related to menstruation. In typical Freud-like fashion, she was diagnosed with the clear, obvious conclusion of trauma secondary to childhood sexual abuse. He also suspected a "nasal reflex neurosis", an outlandish condition which stated that the nose and sexual organs were somehow connected and masturbation was directly linked to dysmenorrhea, popularized by ear, nose, and throat specialist, Wilhem Fliess, who conveniently happened to be a friend of Freud. Eckstein underwent nasal surgery with just some cocaine as anaesthetic, and the procedure went about as well as you would expect. After suffering terrible infections and profuse bleeding, her nasal passages were damaged to the point of permanent disfigurement. Freud insisted her initial nasal symptoms had been due to "hysteria" and "excessive masturbation", for which he continued to "treat" Emma for three years more, his intentions still

unclear to this day. Curiously, nearly every mention of this surgery – and of Emma Eckstein in general – had been purged from official collections of Freud's letters for almost a century. This is an injustice considering that through standing by his scientifically baseless theory, Freud nearly killed her.

By the early 1970s, Freudian theories were already slipping from mainstream science, as people became more doubtful that an abusive husband acted the way he did because his mother used bottle over breast. So how? How does a man so widely debunked still hold such a cultural legacy? For one, his fans formed an incredible public relations team that defended him long after his death, and as mentioned earlier, his theories are purposefully presented in a way which makes them virtually impossible to refute with empirical evidence despite Freud treating them as fact, likely leading to the widespread belief that psychoanalysis is simply elaborate pseudoscience. Another aspect which should be considered is the link between Freudian theories and historical and literary trends makes them pack a little more punch, as his ideas sneakily seem more like revelations of age-old truths. Take Shakespeare's King Lear or Hamlet for example, and it becomes clear that underlying psychologies that have always been a part of key cultural texts can be turned into "science" with relative ease. Looking at Freud's "Oedipus Complex", this should come as no surprise.

Regardless of the star power Freud holds, it seems the world only leaves him and his theories further behind as the years go by. Even in his time, psychoanalysts seemed to fall out with Freud particularly about sex, as his theory of libido showed his conviction that he had found the universal driver of all human behaviour. Even the young and significantly notable Swiss psychiatrist Carl Jung, who Freud had an interestingly strong and unusual connection to, ended up clashing with him on the subject, and Freud's dominant personality only continued to catalyse their schism. Jung, especially motivated following the end of his friendship with Freud, went on to propose and develop culturally significant theories of his own, such as introversion and extraversion, archetypes, and the collective unconscious. He and several other psychoanalysts such as Wilhelm Reich and Erik Erikson also played their part in revolutionising psychology despite their major disagreements with Freud's worldview. Many psychiatrists and psychologists to this day continue to debate and debunk Freud, revealing one final part of his legacy: Sigmund Freud pushed forward the field of psychology as he inspired hundreds of gifted minds to do everything in their power to prove him wrong.

## Soft Skills

Rosa Thur (FIV)

The modern school system has had to make a great many changes during the Covid-19 global pandemic. Some students have suffered from not getting all their schoolwork done. So, some courses became shorter and, with schools across the world closed, less face-to-face teaching was possible. However, is it right to teach only the basic skills, such as Maths, English and IT during a global crisis? Or, should pupils work as creatively and engaged as possible with other students, to investigate possible solutions for issues and problems? The opinion of many people is divided, when it comes to methods of remote learning.

Subjects such as Maths and English are essential. Recently, however, other subjects have become equally, if not more important, like IT. It encourages students to deal with the media and the internet successfully. Placing a focus on these essential, very important subjects is a key aim for many different school systems around the world. Therefore, students only ever learn the basics while remote. However, there is a problem with this learning method: very vulnerable key studies, like the creative subjects (art, musical and civic courses), are often forgotten. This does not help the student to develop skills in society related subjects. They may find challenges in finding jobs and engaging in a meaningful way in the future, due to this disruption.

Taking part in research and team work leads often to a very successful education and a mindful way to deal with the environment and the surroundings. Preparing students for the workplace can be done in different ways. But showing the current issues and political problems is a very important and essential part of educating teenagers. Working in teams and leadership training is key in getting to know how you can work independently in a future job. Being able to gain work experience is also valuable and allows you to become more open minded about possible future careers.

To become a more open person and, someone who can work in a team with other people and their personalities, the development of soft skills will be very helpful for your job and workplace. Whilst working independently or taking part in a leadership competition can also increase your self-esteem and your abilities. Incorporating work experience into the school curriculum as much as possible is the key for success. During remote learning although it may be challenging to engage with others and develop soft skills, these should still be seen as a priority for schools.

# The Internet's Worst Habit

Sophie Robinson (FV)

Cancel (v.) to remove support for a public figure, usually due to the expression of a controversial view, or one which contradicts widely-held opinion.

How do you help someone become a better person? How do you make them see how their past actions were wrong? And, most importantly, how do you make sure they accept responsibility for the consequences of their actions? For many internet users, the answer is simple- you cancel. Unfollow. Boycott. But is it time to retire this intolerance for good? Yes- and here's why...

We seem to have forgotten change is growth, and growth is essential to mankind. The real question surrounding cancelling is 'can somebody change'? And the problem is that we've become so stuck in our ideas and opinions, we are unwilling to allow them to do so. Now, those whom we call 'snowflakes' are unable to comprehend that a person with opposing views is not a "bad" thing. These are people who preach on social media about tolerance, listening to others, being open to changing your views- and then turn to Twitter to bombard JK Rowling with abuse over her map of fictional magic schools around the world, which was 'not mindful enough of the geopolitical climate'. Because what these Twitter social justice 'warriors', as they see themselves, really mean is listening to *them*. Changing your views to suit *them*. Tolerating *them*. And only *them*.



I do not necessarily agree with the views of the hordes of people who have been cancelled. Jimmy Fallon (blackface). Lana Del Rey (racist). Ellen DeGeneres (being mean). Demi Lovato (also being mean).

In every case, however, I disagree with their cancellation- I can guarantee it. Because cancellation eschews these people from taking actual responsibility for their actions by not offering or forcing upon them an opportunity or platform from which to apologise and face up to consequences. Instead, we choose



to ignore them and their contribution to popular culture. In an attention economy, we are starving them. So where do they go? Well, as John McDermott writes in the New York Times, "They're all hanging out together". Katie Herzog, an American journalist formerly living in Seattle, published an article about transgender people who choose to reverse transitions in *The Stranger*, a local newspaper publication, in 2017- receiving hate mail and death threats in return. She now runs a podcast with Jesse Singal, who has also received backlash for his writings on transgender people, and associates with Kathleen Stock, a professor of philosophy at the University of Sussex who shares similar views. These people are all somewhere on the spectrum of cancellation, and look at where they are now. Going on holiday together. They are unapologetic about their actions, whether you believe they should be or not is a different matter.

We think of our society as 'progressive'. Surely we must be able to come up with a way to effectively punish those who go against our social norms? Instead, we choose this bizarre way of turning on these people, in a mass mutiny upon celebrities and public figures, as soon as we smell blood. The smallest hint this person is not as saint-like as we once believed them to be, and we're throwing out their CDs, burning their books, distancing ourselves from them as much as we can. We are unable to separate the art from the artist. If art, like science, does indeed show us great truths, then it is simply foolish to discard it because a long-dead artist has done something terrible. It's censorship. Wagner was an anti-Semite, but that does not, and should not, prevent us from acknowledging the profound, enduring impact his work has had on culture. We hear 'Ride of the Valkyries', we don't think of Wagner's anti-Jewish sentiments, but of the countless media; *Apocalypse Now*, *Lord of War*, *The Blues Brothers*, even *The Simpsons*, which have made use of the now-iconic composition. You can't cancel Michael Jackson for allegations of paedophilia. He's dead.

Why do we cancel? To control what we see in the world? Because we see ourselves reflected in celebrities, our role models, and when they do something 'wrong' or 'bad', it's easier to forget them, to ignore them, than

it is to listen to them explain themselves because we feel they have let us down? Do celebrities have a responsibility to use their platform for good?

JK Rowling, whether you agree with her views or not, is certainly a controversial figure, having been deemed by the Twitter swarm as 'wrong'. 'Right' and 'wrong' are fundamentally, entirely subjective. Once you discount those who are truly evil - murderers, rapists, paedophiles - there is a spectrum of right and wrong, stretching far beyond a simple child's black and white view of the world. A view which I believe many have not grown out of, now unable to see beyond their sphere of understanding and engage their critical thinking. JK Rowling is not evil. She wrote a book in the 1990s about a school for wizards, and now people have decided it didn't have enough diversity. Since then, she has been vocal about her views on- you guessed it- Twitter. The weapon of choice for so-called Social Justice Warriors, battleground for epic showdowns between conservative and liberal keyboard-wielding heavyweights. She has been punished, extensively, through a plethora of hate-death and rape threats- directed primarily at her views that transgender women who have not had gender reassignment surgery or hormone therapy should not be allowed into female-only spaces. While this may be a fairly conservative opinion, it's not radical; a person would feel apprehensive about an issue only brought into public conscience recently. Attempting to silence her is contrary to the liberalism her 'cancellers' are yearning to espouse.



So where does it end? Where do we draw the line between protecting free speech, holding people to account, and utilising this bizarre cocktail of virtue signalling and modern-day shunning? Punishment of people because of something they have said or done years ago, morally ambiguous but acceptable at the time, 'wrong' or offensive now, is worrying. The pitchforks are out, and the rabble is gunning for heads on spikes. So: "Can people change?". Do you honestly believe that in the near-20 years since Justin Trudeau, now prime minister of Canada, wore blackface at an Arabian Nights party, he has learned nothing, and would do it again given the chance? It's becoming ridiculous and more and more indicative of



an increasingly polarised and insular society. In July 2020, Jodie Comer (star of *Killing Eve*) found herself responsible for the potential politics of a man who may or may not have been her boyfriend- in a display of how the laughable nature of cancel culture has reached a crescendo. Pictures of Comer and a man named James Burke were shared online, and Twitter users- fancying themselves as the platform's private eyes- deduced he must be the same Burke registered as a Republican. The most fitting description of the backlash Comer received over being seen with a man, who may or may not have conservative views, and with whom she may or may not be romantically attached is cyberbullying. Cyberbullying, at the hands of petulant children who assume people are wrong, bad, because they have differing views. They are creating a world of "good people who agree with me, and bad people who don't".

Cancel culture helps no one. It is a plague on the internet, in popular culture, and is sweeping across the media with a big stick of self-righteousness beating down anyone who doesn't hold their views until they submit, or succumb. It is making us more intolerant, not less, and I cannot stress this enough, it does not work. But hey, if you don't agree with me, that's fine. You know what to do.





## Stars and Politics— Like Oil and Water?

Valerie Andres (FIV)

13th of July 1985—the air in Wembley stadium is vibrating as tens of thousands of people jump and sway, lighters in hands; Freddie Mercury's voice is the thundering soundtrack of a once-in-a-lifetime moment.

Who could ever forget Live Aid? The event that raised millions to save poor people in Africa from starving. The event that had the most famous artists in the world speaking out. Taking a stand. And still—the question whether and how famous people should get involved in politics is widely discussed.

Some people question whether celebrities should meddle at all. They argue that it causes more harm than good because the issue appears less serious than it actually is. One cannot deny that a thoughtless intervention might do harm—one like Kanye West's candidacy for the US Presidency in 2020. Fundamental democratic issues were at stake and his involvement was not appropriate. However, advantages do outweigh those concerns. Evidence not only proves that celebrities draw lots of attention and publicity to issues, but also that they are enormously successful in fundraising which—quite often—is a necessary fundament for any change.

Once a star decides to intervene, they must be aware of the responsibility they carry in doing so, resulting from the enormous influence they have. A celebrity reaches a wide range of people from all over the world. Even more so since the internet and social media have multiplied the number of people that can be addressed and increased the frequency of the interventions. Through social media, celebrities can have a constant, daily influence as they are free to post however often they like.

Oftentimes a young person's first political and social opinions are based on their favourite celebrity's views. Since teenagers are highly susceptible to manipulation—whether consciously inflicted upon them or not—celebrities should put effort into spreading positive, appropriate and true information and choose their words wisely and with care.



There are several ways in which famous people can make use of their power in terms of politics or social issues. Firstly, through their work and art—through song lyrics or paintings, just to name a few. An example for the latter is painter Keith Haring who drew attention to the AIDS epidemic in the 1980s. Secondly, there are the classic ways of political participation. The most direct way certainly is to run for office. There have been multiple presidential candidates who were famous actors or television stars, like former President Trump, who used to be a reality TV show host.

However, the most used method of involvement remains endorsing a candidate or stating one's support in the form of a social media post or an essay. In 2020 countless celebrities, including Cher, Dwayne Johnson and Leonardo DiCaprio, openly voiced their support for Biden/Harris. In the UK, the rapper Stormzy urged his followers to cast their vote in the 2019 General Election. Government voting charts saw large spikes in registrations right after his posts.

Another way of supporting a political organization is joining it. For instance, actor Tom Selleck has been a loyal member of the NRA for years. Instead of joining an organization, they can collaborate with it to raise awareness, advocate, fundraise and educate. During the BlackLivesMatter protests in 2020 Lady Gaga let BLM post on her Instagram story for months, providing a powerful platform and huge audience.

Lastly, there are multiple examples of stars starting petitions on political issues. For example, Taylor Swift's petition to pass the Equality Act, which has over 800,000 signatures. Celebrities also often attend protests and motivate their followers to join in too.

As already mentioned, celebrities speaking out about politics can be problematic. It backfires when stars endorse an opinion that is contrary to what you yourself believe is right—or worse—that causes harm to people or incites violence. Apart from Kanye West who—with his candidacy—drew away urgently needed votes from Mr Biden, there is the German football player Mesut Özil. The now former member of the national team was forced to retreat in 2018 after having asked controversial Turkish president Erdogan to be his best man at his wedding. Özil's continuous friendship with President Erdogan caused critical reactions from many since Özil was an idol for millions of German football fans.

In weighing the advantages and disadvantages it mustn't be forgotten that getting involved in politics also impacts the celebrities themselves, not just the public. Celebrities that choose to stay silent do have their reasons. Voicing your opinion and choosing sides in a conflict can cost you fans and is therefore a financial risk. Plus, they risk being verbally attacked in public by the people criticized. President Trump has done that several times.



With this in mind it's understandable that especially younger celebrities—whose careers are still fragile—are more reluctant in offering a political statement. These newcomers might think themselves too young and uneducated to publish their views or are simply scared off by shocking examples like the Dixie Chicks, whose entire career was ruined after a small critical comment aimed at President Bush. Some celebrities might simply feel it is not their place and business to meddle since they are entertainers.

Despite these arguments, I personally feel that nowadays it is irresponsible to stay apolitical on essential issues. Voting in the 2020 US election for instance hasn't only been choosing between political parties, but has been a fundamental decision either for the democratic system and reason or populist ideas and their egocentric and erratic leaders. It is everyone's duty to try and help establish peace and equality—even more so if you have influence. I could not support a celebrity of whom I don't know the general political and ethical beliefs. Could you?



## The Unnecessary Party

Amanda Amaeshi (FV)

Have you ever wanted to go to a party which results in a plane crash? Or one where the main spectacle is a forest fire causing \$8 million worth of damage? Or maybe even one that literally kills the grandma or father-to-be? I'm sure you wouldn't. Yet this is a small snapshot of the havoc wreaked by gender reveal parties – that once seemingly innocent party pioneered by American mother Jenna Karvunidis in 2008 has exploded in popularity.

One of the latest catastrophes ignited by this abhorrent craze was the El Dorado wildfire in California last September. Caused by a smoke-generated pyrotechnic device, its coloured smoke intended to indicate the baby's gender, the fire burned over 21,000 acres of forest and resulted in the evacuation of 3000 residents. All this leaves me thinking, how does one even attempt to justify expensive land damage to their child for anything, let alone just so they know whether to buy pink or blue pyjamas?

But even if not all gender reveal parties result in devastating manslaughter or environmental destruction, the very idea of the gender reveal party still horrifies me. And it should horrify you too. On a closer look, underneath the pink or blue surface of gender reveals lurk insidious harms – dangerous for your child, and society as a whole.

The popularity of gender reveal parties highlights how powerful and central gender is in our society – but this type of ritual works against progress to erode expectations about gender. According to research from the Fawcett Society, parents inadvertently reinforce gender stereotypes by creating a “gendered world” for their young children through toys, play, language, and environment. Teachers reward boys' and girls' behaviour differently, and children's books and TV shows are rife with gender stereotypes. By age two children are aware of gender and, as early as six years old, children associate intelligence with being male, and niceness with being female.

Messages like these lead to long-lasting harm. Many boys cannot express their emotions and become part of a culture of toxic masculinity that normalises violence and aggression. Many girls have low self-esteem and struggle with body image – and one in five 14-year-olds are self-harming. Violence against women and girls, higher male suicide rates, the mental health epidemic among young people – all of these issues are rooted in harmful gender stereotypes.

But in the same way that life isn't all black-and-white, gender isn't all pink-and-blue. We must not limit our children's future possibilities and mental wellbeing

with rigid gender stereotypes about what it means to be a “masculine” man and “feminine” woman. Ties or Tutus, Heels or Wheels, Guns or Glitter... gender reveal cake slogans like these only further exacerbate very stereotypical and traditional roles associated with masculinity and femininity. In a society that aims to free itself from the harms of gender stereotypes, gender reveals have no place.



The term “gender reveal” itself is a misnomer: these parties reveal not gender but anatomy. Gender is how people continually define and express themselves, and it isn't binary: a person might stick with one gender identity forever, they might play around with it for a while to see what feels right, or their gender might remain fluid for their whole life. Most importantly, gender is not something you can tell by looking at an ultrasound or a baby's genitals – and thus gender reveals perpetuate the incorrect idea that genitals equal gender, and put gender expectations on children before they are even born.

“Gender reveals” are particularly damaging and alienating to those who don't end up conforming to sex and gender norms, including intersex, trans, and non-binary people, because it makes their battle to be recognised in their genders even greater. Whilst no robust data on the UK trans population exists, the Government Equalities Office tentatively estimates there to be approximately 200,000-500,000 trans people in the UK. Around 1.7% of the global population is born with intersex traits, meaning that they are neither entirely male nor female, since their chromosomal/genital makeup falls somewhere in between. And even inventor Karvunidis regrets starting the trend: in 2019 she revealed, “PLOT TWIST. The world's first gender-reveal party baby is a girl who wears suits!” in a Facebook post of a picture of her family, featuring her daughter Bianca wearing a pale blue suit.

It is transphobic to suggest that cis people are the default and more “natural”, yet this idea is perpetuated by gender reveals. “Gender reveals require not just the invalidation of transness, but the impossibility of transness. The assumption that the baby is cis. Cisness is positioned as the default and everyone else is understood as derivative of it,” says ALOK, gender non-conforming author and performer. “The idea goes: while we might ‘identify’ as trans now, we were ‘originally’ ‘born’ cis and we later ‘became’ trans. When

in truth, everyone is just born. And we all become after the fact.” We live in a world where many people do not identify with the gender assigned to them at birth. So in a ritual that only celebrates gender identity in binary terms, society excludes a portion of the population and adds to a culture of trans, non-binary, and intersex shame.

Gender reveals only reveal society's outdated perceptions about gender and identity. However, I'm not suggesting that we should stop celebrating pregnancy and childbirth altogether – babies are a milestone and they should be celebrated! At a physically, financially, and emotionally draining time for the expecting parents, the opportunity for some levity by sharing this meaningful life event with friends and family is so important. Just make sure there is no “gender revealing” at these baby showers – except, perhaps, revealing all the harms of gender norms that we know and vowing not to pass them on to the new baby and the next generation.

That doesn't mean raising children without gender, but rather raising them without gender stereotypes. Gender is an important aspect of many people's sense of being and we mustn't erase that – most kids can categorise their own gender by age 3 (though of course they can still change their mind about it at any point in their life) – but enforcing rigid gender stereotypes is a disservice to everyone. The best thing really that anyone who is surrounded by children, like parents and teachers, can do is create a safe and nurturing environment where the child feels comfortable to explore gender and what it means to them.

And, when it comes to gender reveal parties, there's one exception: the only gender reveal party we should ever have is one initiated by the celebrant themselves. Let's love and celebrate others for the gender they are, not the one imagined at birth.



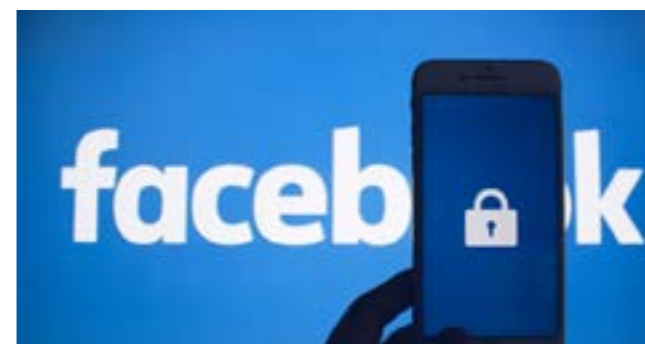
## Control, Alt, Delete

Erin McMillan (FV)

You're a victim and you don't realise it. That phone which you keep so safe in your back pocket, not only has it been wasting days of your momentary life but it has also been learning about you. It wants to learn so it can have a greater and more persuasive power, and once it does, it exploits you for profit. Its dominant influence keeps you scrolling to feed the algorithm with the information it needs to evolve. It needs to evolve so it can become more intuitive. More manipulative. And more indispensable, in order to make technological companies more affluent. The technology you thought was only a tool for you to use, is actually using you. Tracking you. Monetising you. And were you even aware? Or were they that successful in controlling you for you not to realise? The algorithm has allowed technology to know you and opened up a world where it can shape you to what it needs you to be. A you that keeps scrolling.

The technology that connects us, also controls us.

*“There are only two industries that call their customers ‘users’: illegal drugs and software.”*  
– Edward Tufte



The world is in uncharted territory. Never before has a handful of people influenced and controlled so many. Billions of people now have their daily decisions influenced by an algorithm. And why? Money. Money is said to make the world go round and this has never been truer than in the world of technology. When tech businesses discovered an advertising model which instigates manipulation and money-generation, the game changed. Companies such as Google and Facebook are some of the wealthiest businesses of all time, all because they worked out how to successfully monetise their technology and their users. Originally, tech firms manufactured and sold software and hardware, but now their main source of revenue is us, the users. Well, more like the used.

*“If you are not paying for it, you're not the customer; you're the product being sold.”*  
– Andrew Lewis

As you know, many apps are free, so how do tech companies make their money? The answer is simple: we don't use the apps, rather the apps use us. These

services are paid for by advertisers who want their ads to be publicised. Our attention is the product. But to gain our attention, these tech companies need to know how we think and need to be able to predict how we will respond. Accurate predictions are required, and this accuracy requires a lot of data. This is when algorithms enter the game.

Platforms which you use on a daily basis, such as Google, Facebook and Instagram, are fighting for your attention. They want you to spend as much of your time on them, tell them about your life, your interests, your hobbies, so they can collect their data and use it to keep you engaged. It's a never-ending cycle which began with Human Futures, the emergence of algorithm-driven design.

Algorithms have many names, one being surveillance capitalism. This is where large technological companies' profit. They rigorously track people online and use the information to make sure their client's adverts are as effective as possible. Tracking allows tech businesses to collect data and create profiles of their users. These profiles become increasingly accurate with the more data collected, and once it's done, it allows the algorithm to predict valuable things about you, like what videos will keep you watching. Once it gets you engaged, that's when they maximise their profits from advertising. They begin to insert ads and gain money in return for your undivided attention. It all begins with these algorithms, the most precious and precise tool these companies have. It gives them the power to control you, like a puppet on a string.

The tech world we know today has been built off the fulfilment of translating psychological manipulation and persuasion into code.

*“Behind every screen on your phone, there are generally like literally a thousand engineers that have worked on this thing to try to make it maximally addicting”*  
– Aza Raskin

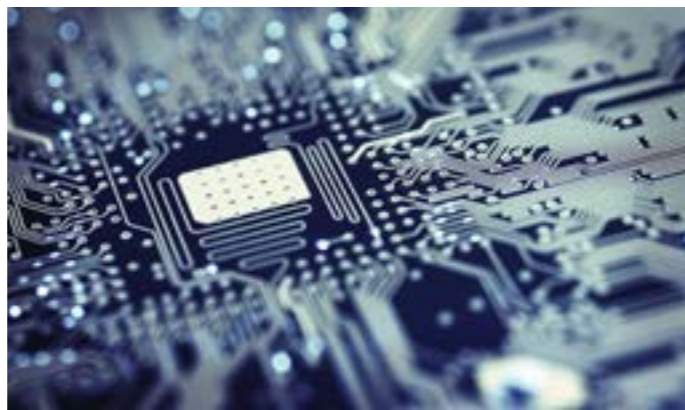


These influential techniques have been successful and impact us on a daily basis, even if you don't think you have been affected by it yourself. Take the infinite scroll. Created by Aza Raskin in 2005, it has become the main reason for app addiction. Raskin's reason behind it is, "If you don't give your brain time to catch up with your impulses, you just keep scrolling". Now, these creators such as Raskin didn't set out to start a revolution of obsession and mental modification. They simply wanted to make their apps and businesses better and evolve their ideas into something never seen before. However, when something which has never been done before is accomplished, the consequences and effects of that is alien. Another technique, explained by Design Ethicist, Tristan Harris, is the slot machine effect. When you unconsciously scroll up to refresh the page or check your phone for notifications, that action has essentially been planted into your mind. Harris says, "If you want to maximize addictiveness, all tech designers need to do is link a user's action (like pulling a lever) with a variable reward. You pull a lever and immediately receive either an enticing reward (a match, a prize) or nothing. Addictiveness is maximized when the rate of reward is most variable". These simple and unnoticeable techniques have gone deep into our brain and created an unnatural habit, an unnatural need for technology. It is the most complex, manipulative and dangerous design scheme ever created.



Perhaps what the most threatening part of this is, that the technology, the AI, is evolving exponentially. Peoples worst fear has come to life. AI runs the world, collectively working together to analyse data and run algorithms. Some simple and others so intricate, it could be regarded as intelligence. It is left to learn its way towards one goal, profit. It discovers by itself the right posts to show in order to make their company money. But what happens if a certain piece of content, harmful or offensive content, is shared? The result: a dangerous echo chamber phenomenon.

Algorithms are restraining us. They show us what we want to see, what agrees and reinforces our opinions and beliefs, but this can be immobilising. It restricts our minds of growth and larger understanding. Things like google search, tailors suggested information to fit the profile it has calculated for us and shows everybody completely different worlds. This is how echo chambers are formed. Technology builds people their own reality in which everything agrees with them and stops them from accepting any alternatives because it shows them



no alternatives. When this happens on a vast scale, it becomes increasingly hard for people's world views to be changed by new information, simply because they can't accept a reality outside their own. This proves how dangerous this algorithm is. Tailored information creates a world of extremist views, fake news and deadly outcomes.

*"False news is more novel, and people are more likely to share novel information."*

– Professor Sinan Aral

This is why the algorithm needs to change. We need a new agenda for technology. If we can't agree on what's true and what's not, if our views become increasingly divided, how will we be able to fix any of the dire problems our world faces today. We can change what these companies do to our minds; we don't have to give in. I live in a generation where we have grown up with this technology, but the harming effects are beginning to outweigh the good. Whenever something new and revolutionary comes into our lives, we have an unspoken rule to 'adapt to it', but we cannot adapt to something we are dangerously ignorant of. It is a silent threat which needs to be terminated. We need to change the algorithm from targeting our areas of appeal, to broadening our minds and capacity with a variety of information. Only then, can our world evolve for the better.



## From the Editor...

*Thank goodness 2020 is over. What a nightmare.* I'm sure we all said that as we entered the new year – I know I did. *Hopefully 2021 will be better.* Well... let's recap what's happened since the last time I wrote here.

The whole situation did get better, with restrictions being relaxed and more things opening up over the summer. By 2020 standards, summer was pretty decent. Personally, I was lucky enough to actually have an in-person party to celebrate my 16th birthday with a few Dollar and primary school friends, which was incredibly lovely. School moved back from my bedroom to the actual campus, and although the return to the early rises and hour-long bus journeys were quite a shock to the system, I was so glad to be back. Most of my usual activities resumed in-person too. Some events inevitably still had to be cancelled sadly, like the Christmas dance and concert, but for the most part, it seemed that some normality was returning. Well, as much normality as one can get in this mask-wearing, socially distanced world.

But then Lockdown 2 hit. At first, it was nice to have those extra two weeks to revise for prelims. Until those two weeks turned into a month... and then two months... We've all collectively given up so much over the past year, only to find ourselves right back where we started. It's beyond frustrating. Sure, there was that one week in February when the skies gave way to the white, fluffy goodness that is snow (that was a fun week of sledging!). But besides that, this lockdown has been difficult. More difficult than the first. Dismal, mundane, repetitive. My motivation to do schoolwork has dwindled more and more as the weeks have dragged by. And the world... is still a mess, to put it extremely mildly. Honestly, at times I've felt just as hopeless as I did one year ago, if not more. *Thank goodness 2020 is over.* Yes, but people are still suffering and dying. Global unrest and division are still rife. As far as I'm concerned – and I'm sure many will agree – the nightmare continues.

I take inspiration from the words of the incredible Amanda Gorman: *"For there is always light, if only we're brave enough to see it, if only we're brave enough to be it."* Although these words were primarily aimed at her American audience during the presidential inauguration in January, it's also a powerful message for us all. Because we have to believe that there is light at the end of the tunnel. There is still reason for hope. Vaccines are being rolled out, case rates are decreasing, students are returning (albeit in limited numbers) to school. Perhaps, by the time you read this, Scotland will have some sort of roadmap out of lockdown too.

Still, it can be difficult to find the light during these dark and uncertain times. So, I hope that the Features section can provide an escape from that darkness. Emma Leslie's article on travelling will soothe your wanderlust heart; Sophie Robinson's reflection on her experiences with religion is humorous and thought-provoking; Elliot Wortley's piece on the power of storytelling really encapsulates what the Features section is all about. And there are many more fantastic articles, ranging from fast fashion to Cowden Castle to interviews with the latest additions to senior management, Ms Langley and Mrs Mason. I'm certain that, like me, you'll leave this section feeling more inspired.

There is light at the end of the tunnel. However, we mustn't only wait for that light to come. Let's all be the light right now and play our part in brightening up these dark and uncertain times. Let's work together, support and uplift each other. After all, if we are brave enough to imagine that there is light at the end of the tunnel (which there is), then we should be brave enough to be the light that helps us all arrive at the tunnel's end.

*Amanda Amaeshi (FV)*

(p.s. I've been nominated for the Young Scotswoman of the Year Award! If you're reading this before or on April 2nd, I would be very grateful if you could vote for me here: <https://www.glasgowtimes.co.uk/young-swoty-2020/>)

And, if you'd like to know more about my nomination and everything I've done that's led up to it (including my feature on the YWCA Scotland's 30 Under 30 list for 2020!), I will have written about it all in the Summer 2021 edition of Fortunas!)



## Up, Down, or Somewhere In-between

Sophie Robinson (FV)

The idea of 'heaven' and 'hell' can be very appealing to a person, especially someone young and impressionable, stepping into a church for the first time, breathing that inimitable smell of 'old', drinking in the faded elegance and high ceilings from one hard, wooden bench. It's satisfying to think that if you do good, you will be rewarded, and that those who don't will get their just desserts. It's comforting. And religion was everywhere I looked growing up, it was unavoidable – in the pub where we used to go after Sunday mass and where I would swing my legs from a bar stool, there was a 6x8 of Jesus propped up behind the Guinness taps. In Ireland, it's ingrained. I learned to say 'God bless' as you walked away from someone, and how the Lord's Prayer was 'useful' if you were ever lost, or stuck on a test, or misplaced something – He would help you find your way. It was a bit like a magic spell, a cure-all, if you needed it – and if you really meant it. There was safety inside the four walls of a church, the flickering candles and organ music, dusty carpets and the hushed, whispered "how-are-you?". They were familiar and kind.



But then you get older, as you must, and its initial appeal starts to dissipate. You start to have doubts, you're not so readily accepting that all of it is true. You start to learn that there are people who use religion to justify their own selfish beliefs, or manipulate it for political gain. And it doesn't stick right with you. Why can't people marry who they want? Why can't women do what they want with their bodies? Again and again, these questions, they cast a shadow on my doorstep – because this was not the God I knew. This was not the Jesus I was taught about. I thought it was about love, not hate; freedom, not restriction.

So, you take a step back. Realise that the stories you were told, which once seemed wonderful, colourful in your mind, are dulled and tainted as the years go by. It doesn't make sense anymore. You want proof. You need it. Belief doesn't come as easily as it once did. The doubt is starting to creep into your mind, and you find church uncomfortable, like running your tongue over the space where a now-missing tooth once was. It's no longer the kind and familiar place you once knew – Sunday mass is boring now, not

even worth the promised comic if you behave. Looking at the steps up to the church, you can remember standing on them with cousins, after Baptisms and Confirmations and first Communion, grinning, all of you, in 'nice' dresses and trousers brought out only for special occasions, with black patent shoes and knees grazed half to shreds. They don't stand there anymore. And neither do you.

"God has a plan". A phrase that's tossed around far too often, in my opinion. Hearing this, I would think about those who were starving, those who were ill and battling for each breath, each heartbeat. The wars fought, and the soldiers killed in all the years of human history. The doubt creeps again, a little further. If you could stop it, God, why wouldn't you? All the dying and the suffering, why not end it? To teach us? It's clear to me that we haven't learned yet – and civilisation has been going for around 6000 years. How long is He supposed to wait and see, just wait and see, until the Almighty comes to his senses and realises that His brilliant plan has probably gone a little off-track? I'm unreligious, not because I believe absolutely that there is no God, but because I fear that if there was, we wouldn't get on so well.

However, this is not an attack on religion. I'm not *opposed* to the idea – I understand how it can appeal to a person who has loved and lost so many that they need – simply *need* – to believe those who have gone are still there, just beyond the veil, where we can't see them. Who *must* believe in a higher power, because they just don't have enough power of their own. Death is one of the hardest things about life. Not your own (your own is arguably the easiest), but being left behind. To think that the ones who have left are watching over us, guardian angels, must help people deal with these tragic losses. My uncle Peter died when he was only eight years old, 20 years before I was even born. He was my grandmother's youngest child. There's a painting of him hung beside the grandfather clock, near the hot press in her house, and every day when I am there, I walk past it. Sometimes, I ask him things, in my head. I hope he's doing well. Because that kind of loss never leaves a family, it never leaves a house like that. It always hangs, and it is so, so painful. I've visited his grave many times, on Christmases, and his birthday almost every year, I lay flowers and I hold my grandparents' hands, and I say a prayer with them. I never knew him.

Apparently, religion is dying out. In more and more countries, young people especially are less inclined to it. It's set on a course to diminish into a relic of the past, and many are welcoming it. In many ways, this makes sense – religion is often stuffy and inaccessible, it condemns and preaches, and habitually meddles in issues which are none of its concern. The future of our world lies in science and technology, there is no arguing that, but I think that there will always be room for faith. People will always believe in something. They have to. It's human nature. Maybe in one god, maybe in many, maybe no god at all. Although we are barreling towards a world where technology brings people together in the ways

that religion once did, there will forever be a handprint of religious beliefs on every aspect of our lives. More than a handprint – perhaps a meteor crater would be more fitting. One day, it will have left its mark – but it will have left. One day, organised religion will be obsolete to many. One day, people will bow their heads to the name of progress.

Maybe the problem is that, deep down, I think religion is cheating. Sometimes I believe that having someone who loves you, no matter what, who will answer your prayers, and has a plan for you is simply... eschewing responsibility. That trusting if you read the good book and dedicate Sundays will guarantee you a place within the pearly gates, is taking an easy way out. We go into cathedrals, sometimes, on drives or walks, and light candles for people. To protect them, to give them luck. For my exams. And like the Lord's prayer, it's supposed to be an easy, quick fix. It just cuts through all the difficult bits. But those ideas of heaven and hell, they don't work anymore for me. People aren't just one thing, but complex and varied – everyone is capable of terrible and beautiful things, simultaneously. It's not for God to judge that. To judge whether we are headed up, or down, or somewhere in-between – it's not for anyone to decide. We just *are* – and then, one day... we *aren't*.

But I was raised Catholic. I will always be an Irish Catholic girl who bows her head, even just slightly, to that painting beside the grandfather clock, who lights a candle for exams (just in case!) and says a prayer when she loses something, even if it's just in my head. Whether I really, truly believe it is almost irrelevant now. It's just a part of who I am, going through the motions.



## Seeing the Light

AA: As part of this edition's Features section's theme of "light in the darkness", I asked some of those who wrote for Features to share what "light" they see at the end of these dark times. Here's what they had to say...

"After the pandemic is over, I can't wait to see my grandmother, whom I haven't visited in over a year. I also look forward to the smaller, everyday things which we tend to take for granted, such as using public transport and meeting friends indoors, which, to me, mean having more independence and freedom." – *Aryia*

"I'm really looking forward to playing netball in the future. I'm excited to be able to spend time in person with my team, in training, but most of all to play competitive netball." – *Jessica*

"I have hope in seeing light after Covid when I think about the first time we will see friends we haven't seen for months and being able to exchange guilt-free hugs." – *Emma*

"The thing I'm most looking forward to when this pandemic ends is being able to see friends and family with no masks, no two-metre distance, and no limit on numbers!" – *Ben*

"The light at the end of the tunnel for me is being with friends, making plans and just living my basic life, without having to think of consequence or sickness" – *Erin*

## Colourism and anti-Blackness in South Asian communities

Aryia Harar (FV)

Colourism is a form of discrimination rooted in internalised racism among people of colour. It systemically oppresses those with a darker skin tone and ensures the unearned privileges of those with lighter skin within the same race. The strong prevalence of colourism in South Asia was originally enforced by the eternalised and brutal legacy of British colonialism in India, in which our differences were used to divide and conquer. Unfortunately, this legacy of colonialism and British imperialism resulted in the creation of a system that upholds the discrimination and deprivation of dark-skinned people in the South Asian diaspora.



The history of colourism in South Asian communities originally began with the implementation of the caste system, which was used to categorise and classify people. The Indian Caste System began in 1500BC and is still engrained within Asian communities today as it disadvantages certain groups of people, particularly those with a darker skin tone. This is because people belonging to the 'lower' castes tended to work in direct sunlight whilst doing manual labour. This stereotype created a link between poverty and darker skin. On the other hand, those in the 'higher' castes tended to be wealthier and fairer, creating the false distinction between power, intelligence, and beauty with fair skin. Furthermore, this manifested the deceitful and prejudiced concepts that lighter skin was superior and that darker skin was associated with disease, poverty, and illiteracy. These beliefs were further enforced and developed by British colonisers.

The Caste System upholds the discrimination and stigmatisation of dark-skinned people and ensures the advantages and idolisation of those with fair skin. Throughout the prolonged period of British colonialism in India, this system was reinforced to divide and conquer in order to maintain power to exploit India. For example, Dalits – also known as the 'untouchables' – are one of the lowest groups in the Caste System. They are frequently perceived as impure and are abused for having darker skin. The brutal gang rape of a 19-year-old Dalit woman in India revealed the extent of colourism and how the Caste System can greatly harm and oppress people. This is not a rare occurrence. In 2019, ten Dalit women were raped per day. Additionally, Dr. Suraj Yengde, author of *Caste Matters* has emphasised how casteism has

guaranteed the hatred and exploitation of Dalit women, by stating that 'The Dalit female belongs to the most oppressed group in the world... She is a victim of the cultures, structures, and institutions of oppression, both externally and internally. This manifests in perpetual violence against Dalit women.' Overall, this illustrates how colourism is so deeply entrenched in South Asia that people are willing to inflict sexual violence upon those whom they deem as 'inferior'.

Not only is colourism and the Caste System so prominent in the 21st century, but it is greatly harmful towards our Black counterparts. For example, Sharmin Hossain, political director of Equality Labs (an organisation that intends to defeat the Caste System, Islamophobia and white supremacy, and religious intolerance) states that 'the hierarchy and impunity that comes with the culture of caste discrimination in our home countries shapes so much of our relationships with black communities in the UK and the US.' As a result of a prolonged history of conditioning people into viewing light skin as superior, anti-Blackness has become increasingly more apparent across the South Asian diaspora, meaning that colourism sustains anti-Blackness. Additionally, the Editor-in-Chief of *Burnt Roti Magazine*, Sharan Dhaliwal, highlights that 'Black experiences are not the same as that of any other person of colour. We can't and should not compare, especially since we ourselves have and can continue to be the cause of many of these issues. Let's not forget the police officer who watched as George Floyd died was [East] Asian.' This depicts how some South Asians, who have a closer proximity to whiteness, unjustly treat black people as inferior beings. Furthermore, Dhruva Balram, an Indian-Canadian journalist, stated that 'South Asians use the N-word to exploit black culture for their own gain while slipping into these clothes of whiteness to further themselves in education or financially. Gandhi's anti-Blackness and extremely racist remarks get buried so much, but how he treated his own citizens came from a very patriarchal Hindu supremacist upper caste mentality. I would love to see Gandhi's statue toppled just as much as the slave traders in the UK.' Therefore, not only are we complicit in anti-Blackness, we also heavily perpetuate and exude these behaviours, which preserve anti-Blackness and racism.

Overall, the majority of those in the South Asian diaspora have either experienced or perpetuated colourism, allowing anti-Blackness to be rife in our community. Despite colourism being deeply entrenched within South Asians, we should all be making an active effort to unlearn our subconscious biases and educate ourselves to become better allies to our Black counterparts. Therefore, understanding the depth of colourism and defeating it is fundamental in tackling the anti-Blackness which is indeed prominent within the South Asian Diaspora.

## The Fight Against Fast Fashion

Izzy Braid (FIII)

On 21st June 2018, the United States of America's First Lady, Melania Trump, got on a plane to visit migrant children at a detention centre in Texas. While travelling, she wore an anorak made by Spanish fast fashion retailer Zara, with the words 'I really don't care, do u?' printed on the back. This caused a media frenzy in which news outlets argued over the meaning behind the words the First Lady wore on her back. Was it a message on how she truly felt about the locked-up kids? Or perhaps her marriage? President Donald Trump tweeted that this was a message to the 'Fake News Media', while her spokesperson claimed, 'There was no hidden message'. This jacket, with white words printed like graffiti, carried a message loud and clear that was a horrifying reflection of how we live today.



In 2018 Zara was the biggest fashion brand in the world, and today it is the third largest. The company produces approximately 840 million garments every year, often paying their workers at sub-poverty wages. This raked in a significant \$18.8 billion for its parent company Inditex, making up two-thirds of its \$28.63 billion in sales for 2017.

The First Lady's Zara jacket retailed for \$39. To be able to sell clothes this cheaply and still make a profit, production of their products takes place in independently-owned factories in developing countries where there is little to no safety, labour oversight, and wages that are often below poverty level. The jacket is also made of cotton which, when conventionally grown, is one of agriculture's most polluting crops. The piece of clothing was then dyed with colouring agents that poison the earth and groundwater while decomposing in landfill. On average, the jacket would be worn only seven times before being discarded, but due to the controversy caused over her fashion choice, it is likely the First Lady only wore the jacket once.

What could be seen as 'just a jacket' is instead a product which exploits humans, damages the earth, and contributes to climate

change. Although fast fashion succeeds in making clothes at affordable prices and in keeping up with the frequently changing trends in the fashion industry, it is necessary to ask whether it is worth the safety of earth, animals and humans.

Fast fashion itself can be defined as cheap, trendy clothing that creates garments inspired by catwalk or celebrity culture at a high speed in order to meet consumer demand. Fast fashion has turned shopping from something that was an occasional occurrence, when the seasons changed and when one outgrew their clothes, to something done on a weekly, or even daily, basis. Clothing production has roughly doubled since 2000, and on average people bought 60% more garments in 2014 than in 2000. Many of the most popular retailers today are large contributors to the fast fashion industry, including brands like H&M, Primark, and Topshop, and even cheaper and faster brands like Missguided, Zaful, and Boohoo. However, there are many ethical alternatives that help to combat fast fashion.

There are several options when it comes to shopping sustainably, like buying second-hand. This incredibly affordable and ethical way to shop is beneficial to the earth and allows for consumers to still buy products from the brands they love, while shopping sustainably. By buying second-hand at charity shops, money is also generated for good causes, allowing for customers to not only combat fast fashion, but also donate to other humanitarian and environmental issues. Second-hand clothes can also be bought at vintage shops and from online sites such as eBay and Depop. Websites like these allow people to sell their old and unwanted clothes and buy from other accounts and businesses, all whilst doing it from their own homes. This is an exceedingly practical and easy way to sell and buy clothing, making it unsurprising when the app Depop reached over 21 million users.

Another way of shopping ethically is by buying from entirely sustainable slow fashion brands. While some of these brands tend to be expensive, the money goes to ensuring a quality product that doesn't harm the earth and is made by people who get paid what they deserve. Some examples of these companies include: Outland Denim, which offers employment opportunities for women rescued from human trafficking in Cambodia; Lucy and Yak, whose clothes are made in India where they are paid four times the state minimum wage; and Organic Basics, who only use fabrics that care for the environment.

The third way in which you can be sustainable with your clothing is by upcycling them. Whether you turn a pair of jeans into a bag, or your old T-shirt into a skirt, upcycling your clothes is a fun and entertaining way of reusing them. Despite the fact that upcycling your old clothes may sound difficult, the many YouTube tutorials, books, and TV shows on how to do it successfully make it easier than ever to produce your own unique look.

Whether you choose to upcycle your clothes or buy second-hand and from sustainable brands, the world will be better off because of it. So next time you go to buy a new top or pair of trousers, question whether you really need it, where it has come from, and how the decision to buy it will affect the world.

## The Silent Pressure on Women

Erin McMillan (FV)

I've done it. Looked in the mirror and not been happy with who I am. Changing things to make myself more appealing to others. Countless times before I leave the house, changing things to make me closer to that idea of "perfect". That lie. That lie of perfection that haunts every single woman in the world. The propaganda is drilled into our minds everyday but hidden in plain sight so that we don't even realise what it is slowly doing to the image of ourselves and the people around us. That pressure to be perfect in a society based on money, image, and likes.

'Women are obsessed with having the perfect body and it is killing them'. We put plastic, silicone, and toxins into ourselves without caring about our health or the fact that we are paralysing our muscles and going through pain just to fit society's expectations. Opinions are stated and comments are posted that shape the lives of all women, and when modern society wants us to shape our bodies and not our minds, it pressures us into believing that our duty is to change what we are and not the world. Women matter. But when you raise them to believe that they are only significant for the way they look, the cure is starvation, restraint, and smallness. Women are put against each other, shackled by shame and hunger, obsessing over flaws and not their power and potential. When society does this, it doesn't realise it is not only brainwashing women but also itself.



The confidence that women build up over the course of years from their achievements and the important people in their lives can be destroyed within minutes by social media. Only a few of the millions online post their true selves. The others post "picture-perfect" lies and expensive lifestyles,

their bodies with tiny waists and clear skin, looking flawless to make people envious. It's these people that we compare ourselves to. We try and shape our lives to be like theirs as if it's a template we must all follow. What isn't shown is the truth. What isn't told is that it's all fake. It's someone else's car they're posing next to, they've photoshopped their body in that picture, they've faceted their face to make it look flawless and defined. Lying on social media by posting fake pictures is amplifying the lie a thousand times, making it the truth to everyone else. That is undoubtedly the most damaging thing you can do. Lie as if it were the truth.



Bigger boobs? Smaller stomach? There's an app for that. Social media like Instagram or Snapchat are always promoting ways to change our bodies so they will be more appealing and get more likes. It's everywhere. If you go on social media, look up something for a school project, or search for body positive websites – the "you're not perfect" adverts still come up and, almost like a "sign", tell us to change ourselves and fit in. Just think about that for a second. Websites and social media promote this to their users. They "care" for our us by promoting pills to make us slimmer, because they want us to be slimmer, by promoting apps to make us their version of beautiful, and by promoting filters to make us flawless in others' eyes, displaying all this publicly on a nationwide platform, 24/7, for all ages to see. Some apps are created for our benefit. Workout apps are great and easy for anyone who wants to change their body for health reasons. But that doesn't mean they promote these in the same way as damaging apps. For every advert promoting health and exercise, there are seven promoting body-editing apps and unhealthy diet pills. Now what message do you think that's sending?

Now, here are the consequences of this. Children as young as 6 are suffering from negative body image. It is a natural instinct that adults are supposed to protect the young, but in modern days we find them instead using technology to promote these corrupt apps towards children, poisoning their minds to think about what they look like and not about who they are going to play with after school. A YouGov survey taken by 1,118 British teenagers showed that "overall, 31% of 13- to 19-year-olds feel ashamed of their body shape, slightly more – 35% – had stopped eating or limited what they ate because they were worried about their body. Two in five said pictures they had seen on social media had made them worry about their body. Almost a third of British teenagers feel ashamed of their body, with imagery of 'idealised' bodies on social media driving their insecurity". Children these days don't feel happy in their body due to

them comparing themselves with the "perfect body" of online models and edited pictures. The awareness of fake pictures has increased but it does not lessen the impact it has on the minds of these girls. There is no doubt that this lie of the perfect body has corrupted these girls' image of themselves, and this is helped by the adults who swear they are protecting the younger generation.

A negative body image becomes a mental health condition. Due to these unrealistic ideals that are projected to girls, countless people are affected. I was one of them. Since the age of 11, I was self-conscious about my natural body shape because I never saw it represented through magazines and models. They were always slim with not an ounce of muscle or curve shown. It took me years before I could accept myself and not compare myself to what I see online – not saying I don't do it time to time like everyone else, but I don't let it affect me and my social life anymore. When thinking back to how I let other opinions affect the way I see myself, I feel pity. I felt pity for the girl who was so blinded by the idea of the "perfect body" that she wasn't able to see her full potential and self-worth. It made me mad that I wasted precious time hiding and not taking every opportunity that was open to me, due to this damaging mindset which all started from comparing myself to others. Comparing yourself will get you nowhere, because you will never find two people the same in this world. We are all unique and I finally learned that. Now these fake industries just need to learn that too. In my experience nothing significant happened to change my views of myself, but that's how easy it can happen. Nowadays girls are subjected to much more persuasive methods, such as being exposed to hateful comments online just because society has succeeded in brainwashing others into believing this lie. Everyone will get days where they feel self-conscious, but that's healthy. What's not healthy is being so ashamed of your body that you starve and harm yourself in order to feel better or even taking your own life to "solve the problem". We are not good at accepting our mistakes, but we need to change ours before someone else makes a permanent one.

As you can see, it is clear what society is doing. This idea. This myth needs to stop. In this modern world, they're putting pressure on women to be "perfect". The influential methods they are using to promote this idea about what women need to look like are working. If they can influence strong, mature women who have learned about the world they live in, think about what it's doing to naïve, innocent young girls. Granted, the beauty industry is changing and promoting different body shapes, sizes, and colours, but it's still not enough. Most girls are still being taught that they aren't good enough for society, and that they need to change if they want to be accepted. Instead, we are the ones who need to change. We need to change society, instead of society changing women. Create apps that change lives, not bodies. Focus on changing views, not bodies. Look at people and see someone who can change the world, not their body. It's up to us to change, and speak out against this deafening, silent pressure.

## Being the Light

AA: I asked some of the other writers to share what they have been doing to be the "light" during these dark times. Here's what they had to say...

"I made lunch for my family every day I was in online school – although I think we all got bored of paninis sooner than we expected..." – *Sophie*

"Throughout the pandemic, I have been reading and reading and reading. Reading old novels and new novels and fiction and non-fiction, all to ensure that when the world does open up again, I can meet it with a new perspective and newfound empathy, in order to spread the much-needed light our world requires." – *Izzy*

"Something that has brought 'light' into my and my family's lives in lockdown has been going for walks every day. We've not been able to do much over the last three months, but smiling and saying hello to other people has been a simple way to spread positivity as we move out of the dark winter months and into spring." – *Elliot*

"The pandemic has been a dark time, and many have found it difficult not to feel alone. I know it has especially affected elderly people, so it has been important for me to talk to my grandparents often, hopefully bringing in a little light to their daily lives." – *Anna*

"For me, the light in the darkness has been the joy of stepping away from screens and embracing the area of the world we live in – whether that be through running through the fields surrounding Dollar or hiking up the Ochils which stand over the school." – *Charlie*

# Dollar's Other Castle

Ben Marshall (FV)

Along the A91, between Dollar and Muckhart and behind a screen of trees, lies a curious sight. Atop a grassy hill stands an old turret. Contrary to what some may believe, this is not a folly or church, but rather the remains of Cowden Castle, which can be traced back to 1320 when it was known as Castleton.

Cowden Castle was built over the ruins of at least two other structures; the surviving turret and archway are all that is left of them. The first structure seems to have mysteriously disappeared, and the second was destroyed by the English Army in the 1700s. Details about Castleton are scarce – there are no known depictions and few mentions. Cowden Castle, on the other hand, has a better-documented legacy. The Bruce Family owned the castle until 1865 when it was acquired by John Christie, an industrialist and keen traveller and gardener, who moved there with his two daughters, Alice and Ella. The soil was ideal for the Christies' horticultural interests, something that would later lead to the creation of one of Dollar's most notable landmarks. The estate was renamed to Cowden in 1866 and had 524 acres of woods, fields, and gardens, providing a more rural setting than his other interests in Ayrshire and Midlothian, which were more involved in coal and iron mining. In total, Christie owned over 1,600 acres across Scotland.

In the late 1800s, the Christie Family were frequent guests at a variety of grand country houses, several of which have since been demolished, and were keen entertainers themselves. Parties would have been made possible with the array of staff who worked and lived in Cowden's basement, which still survives to this day.

Much like some of its inhabitants, the castle would certainly be described as eccentric, inside and out. Featuring bay windows, onion-domed turrets, crenellations, several extensions, and a large greenhouse, Cowden would have been well suited to Victorian tastes. The interior was filled with a variety of objects from near and far, many of which would have been acquired in the Christies' extensive travels. The panelling, tiles, and exquisite mouldings all complemented Cowden's striking exteriors. Famed Glasgow architects Honeyman and Keppie were enlisted to alter the castle in 1875 for the cost of £2,857. Sadly, such building work cannot be done for that price these days. Honeyman and Keppie would return again in 1893, this time with the eccentric and prodigious draughtsman, Charles Rennie Mackintosh.

It is unlikely that John Christie would have had the mental capacity to arrange and oversee the 1893 additions as he suffered an anaemic attack which permanently altered his character. He became increasingly odd after this: he dyed his moustache and proposed to a woman fifty years his junior, as well as becoming exceedingly argumentative with his family. He did also, however, engage in philanthropy, which remained a secret to most. Upon his death in 1902,



Cowden Castle, showing the probable 1893 additions (forward) and surviving turret (to the right).

his will stated that his assets were to be donated to charity, Alice had a husband, Sir Robert Stewart, on whom she could depend; Ella, however, would become destitute. Fortunately, this would not be the course of history. After enlisting a lawyer willing to take on the case, a more favourable agreement to the sisters was made as it was deemed their father had the insufficient mental capacity to construct a valid will.

After her sister's marriage and father's death, Ella travelled more widely than before. She embarked on ambitious and fascinating travels to India, Kashmir, Tibet, Ceylon, Malaya, and Borneo in 1904/05, sailing in pig-filled vessels and travelling by horse – certainly a contrast to her later voyages aboard luxurious ocean-liners. Perhaps one of her most influential journeys was to China, Korea, and Japan in 1907 – it was here she developed her interest in Japanese gardening, leading to the creation of the seven-acre Cowden Garden. Trees, shrubs, and lanterns were imported from Japan to adorn the garden, Cowden's burn was dammed to create a small loch, and Taki Handa of Doshisha University was enlisted to design an authentic, formal garden.

Ella's travels also included Constantinople, Persia, and Central Asia in 1910, Russia and Uzbekistan in 1912, and the USA and Cuba in 1914. Upon her return aboard the RMS Mauretania (the fastest ship in the world at the time), she would have heard the news of WWI beginning in Europe, which shocked most. In France, Ella was invited to manage a café for soldiers, run by the Red-Cross, for a year and she returned in 1918 – the café closed for good in 1919.

The Japanese garden continued to attract attention from near and far, most notably of HM Queen Mary, who visited in 1937.

Not just a traveller, gardener, and landowner, Ella Christie was also a keen author and in 1925 she published 'Through Khiva to Golden Samarkand' on her travels through central Asia. She wrote, along with her sister, a memoir of life in the Victorian Era and published it in 1940. Alice died later that year at Cleghorn House and Ella passed in 1949 of leukaemia, and she was the last surviving Christie.



The Japanese Garden at Cowden – the old garden looks quite different from the one you may have visited.

From its acquisition in 1865 to its inheritance by the Stewarts in 1949, the world around Cowden had changed immeasurably. The heyday of the country house had long since passed. A cruel fate was inevitable: demolition. Hamilton Palace was demolished in 1921, Douglas Castle in 1938, and Cowden in 1952: her valuables removed, land sold off, her Japanese garden destroyed by vandals.

Cowden was, by no means, an exception. Alloa House, Harviestoun Castle, and many others were demolished – 500 in Scotland to be precise. In the UK, 1,200. Often what replaced them was mediocre, if not hideous.

Although Cowden may be gone,  
Let her great history live on.

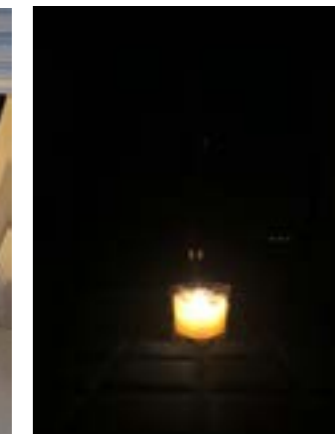
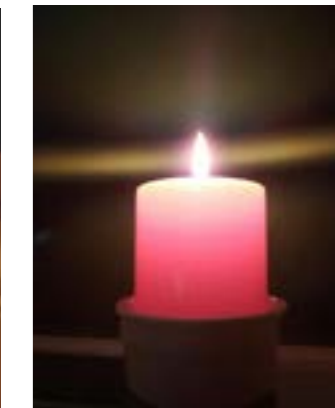


Photograph by Rachel Warden

# Holocaust Memorial Day

AA: Continuing on with the theme of "light in the darkness", I thought it would be highly fitting to mention Holocaust Memorial Day. The day is marked annually on January 27th, which is the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau, the largest of the Nazi death camps.

Many people globally, including members of our school community, lit candles to remember all those who were persecuted and killed in the Holocaust and other genocides around the world. Genocide is a result of hatred and persecution, and these candles serve as a reminder that we must all be a light against the darkness of discrimination.



# Travel Makes us Better Citizens of the World

Emma Leslie (FVI)

Travelling is the ultimate pursuit of beauty and relaxation. An environment away from our hectic lives, in which we don't have to question our own actions or impress our peers, creates the perfect opportunity for self-growth. The personal journey of challenge and exploration whilst in these foreign places is the integral tie to becoming a better version of ourselves. Travel shows us how to be someone who can express more gratitude, recognise the lack of equality in our own society but, fundamentally, to be someone who is inspired to change the world we live in.

The pandemic has stripped us of many things we enjoy, but it has also given us a chance to enrich our lives by focusing on our loved ones and taking a step back from everything we do. Travel allows us to do the same, to ensure we don't lose appreciation for what we care about and who we are as individuals. By seeing the positivity in the lives of those less privileged than us, we can be more grounded; instead of feeling guilt for our own situation it should inspire us to be more positive towards our lives. These humbling experiences show us a degree of selflessness that we should adopt ourselves, and a sense of what is really important as opposed to just being a distraction for our own gratification. Travelling to places of deprivation puts us in a position to help or inspire other people, which will reward us with a feeling of affirmation that makes us want to continue doing so. By never leaving your own surroundings you prevent yourself from altering your perspectives. Making the effort to understand another language resembles the effort you are willing to make to accept their way of life, as well as educating yourself on different religions and figures of importance. Travel allows your knowledge of other cultures to be much more tangible than it can be through books or media; it gives you the ability to immerse yourself within it.

To make change in our own society we need to acknowledge the differences in others, and think creatively to solve the problems that we come to recognise. Travelling increases our ability to be spontaneous, pushing us outside the confines of our day-to-day lives and makes us happier and more able to use our initiative. By challenging ourselves to be in less comfortable situations we can only become more confident, educated, responsible and brave – ultimately broadening our experience. In such a huge world, our relationships should not be restricted to within our own society; social media platforms give us infinite freedom to explore but we should not be excused from making physical changes and interactions. Every relationship formed through travel is a step towards understanding our shared humanity; we can admire qualities in others that we lack in ourselves, and naturally grow our moral understanding. Seeing the foundations of other cultures and minorities gives us the ability to understand their background and overcome hostile relationships caused by prejudice. This is vital to overcoming prejudice in our own society and valuing each individual with total equality. Every citizen

who can be totally accepting and compassionate is making a positive change to the well-being of our world, something which cannot be achieved without differing perspectives and insisting not to act on our own ignorance.

As part of an interconnected younger generation, our future is a myriad of opportunities to travel and explore. For personal gain, being totally self-sufficient and working with new people will develop a degree of maturity which can't be gained from any other experience. These experiences, potentially extremely humbling, can be life-changing for young people who are influenced and then able to change their own perceptions from what they have encountered. If our generation is going to make a difference, we must overcome social divisions and reduce stereotypes by instead being inspired by their cultures and backgrounds. It is also vital that our generation understand and appreciate our basic privileges, to never take our own safety or education for granted. By seeing the turmoil of so many places and the living conditions that have become normal and accepted we can recognise how fortunate our own situations are. For many people, the only method of inspiring them to challenge their own morals, is for them to see first-hand the contrast between their lives and others. Citizens choosing to travel and inform themselves will increase awareness, support charities, and take part in volunteering. The journey of one very determined individual can inspire countless others to think likewise.

The culmination of knowledge gained from travelling will result in an individual who is unable to be a bystander in our current society. The limitless opportunities to engage with other cultures allows us to have a gratitude for our own situations, and a notion to change those for others. I cannot see an alternative to making the world a fair and equal place without having a population who understand how it is to live in every corner of our diverse planet.



# Sustainable Change

Jessica Kitchen (FV)

Hawaii is known for its white sands, palm trees, and natural wonder. Tourists don't travel from all over the world to see twisted fields of rubbish or wildlife suffocating in a plastic-poisoned paradise. When it seems like plastic has replaced sand, you have a problem. Kamilo beach in Hawaii has just this. Located just off the east side of the Great Pacific Garbage Patch (1.6 million square kilometres of dense plastic waste and debris), it's no wonder the beach is one of the most plastic-polluted in the world. This is not an isolated incident: beaches all over the world are facing similar and equally devastating issues inland. Despite the great effort many people have put into cleaning up the environment, you cannot empty a sink while the tap is on. The devastating effects our unsustainable livelihoods have can already be seen – an overwhelming amount needs to be done to combat this. Change is necessary.



In 2015, the United Nations came up with seventeen goals for sustainable development, in order to direct countries towards a more sustainable way of life. The goals demand all countries work towards having the following by 2030:



Such ambitious goals can only be fulfilled with the right attitudes and a widespread dedication.

**PART ONE: POVERTY, HUNGER, HEALTHCARE**  
Poverty, hunger, and healthcare have challenged society from its infancy. To achieve sustainable livelihoods, these damaging issues must be addressed.

Breaking the vicious cycle of poverty relies on radical change. Governments, in many cases, need to be held responsible for their blatant disregard for their citizens' wellbeing. Currently, the very rich are, on average, nine times wealthier than the very poor. To reduce the ever-growing gap between rich and poor, social barriers need to be broken. How are people supposed to invest in often more expensive sustainable alternatives, when they cannot afford the most basic necessities? In some countries, the minimum wage does not exist, and in the countries that it does, it is often too little to comfortably live on. Making tax rates more reflective of an individual's salary (particularly extremely rich individuals) would create a greater funding for social programmes beneficial to the lower classes.

Ensuring everyone on the planet has sufficient food is a basic human right. There a gross unbalance of food distribution: one third of all food produced is wasted, while twenty-five thousand people die of starvation daily. Supporting food support programmes that help feed many people who would otherwise go hungry helps combat this. Agricultural reform is needed if we are to produce enough food to feed a rapidly growing population. Technological advancements in biofortified and genetically modified crops, combined with reducing disaster risk (that is, the risk of a crop to natural devastation), would increase crop yield.

The wild variation in countries' healthcare systems has been exploited by COVID-19. Though it is partially up to each individual's life choices, promoting wellbeing at all ages is a proven way to increase a population's wellbeing in developed countries. Some illnesses could be easily treated but end up being fatal due to the lack of medical help available. Making healthcare available for all is a big step in the right direction, as some people simply cannot afford healthcare or do not have the means to travel to distant hospitals or doctor's surgeries. Introducing health benefits to workers would encourage many people to value their health more.





**PART TWO: EDUCATION AND EQUALITY**

Quality education, gender equality, and equality on all fronts are vital if we are to achieve global sustainability.

Widespread quality education is very relevant when discussing many other sustainability goals, making it of even more importance. Making education free for all would open up opportunities in education for many people. Without education, it is extremely difficult to gain newer, better, or higher-paying jobs. Having a more widely educated global population would help with the development of new technologies needed for a sustainable society. Introducing lunch programmes to education would help promote education, as would building more advanced facilities in some areas.

Education must also be made to aid another important goal: gender equality. Although in many places society has improved over recent years to become more equal, it still has a long way to go. Reducing the gender pay gap and eradicating sexist laws are just a couple of the fundamental changes that still need to happen. Raising children in gender-equal environments and introducing more just punishments for perpetrators of sexist violence would help move towards this goal.

We not only need to remove gender inequalities, but all inequalities. Homophobia, racism, religious discrimination, and ableism needs to be erased. In 2015, 35% of the global population believed they should be able to say things offensive to minority groups in public. In order to reduce inequalities, major reform of social attitudes is needed. If we are to achieve global sustainability, we need a united front.



**PART THREE: SANITATION, CONSUMPTION, ENERGY**

Clean water and sanitation, responsible consumption, and clean energy will help us move towards more sustainable communities.

Hopefully, new technologies will aid the fight for sanitation and clean water systems in all communities. If we sustain and increase the current momentum behind cleaner alternatives to energy generation, clean energy will become the norm, having a positive effect on the ongoing

climate crisis. Creating sustainable cities and communities is arguably the result of all of these goals. Such cities need to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions (using clean energy), and have more readily available public resources and overall more ethical consumption. As a society, having more responsible and even consumption is something we should have established a long time ago. Some of us have so much more than we need, while others have essentially nothing. This is partially due to the nature of modern companies, their aim to sell as much as possible as quickly as possible, and consumers' determined ignorance of companies' exploitation of others. Changing this mentality would see much less avoidable waste. Recycling would also play a big factor reducing vast amounts of waste, as would using different, more sustainable sources for raw materials and resources. Fast fashion and similar concepts should become a thing of the past.



**PART FOUR: ECONOMIC GROWTH**

Making such drastic changes to our society doesn't mean we can neglect pre-existing goals. Currently, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we are tumbling into global recession. One of the established goals demands economic growth. It is of utmost importance that this economic growth is sustained and inclusive. This can be achieved by new and improved attitudes and methods in industry. New technology should ensure innovation and infrastructure continue to develop in an efficient way. We need to develop lasting solutions to problems and build a strong, resilient infrastructure. Moving away from our current make-use-waste economy towards a circular economy would help achieve all of these things. The goals for sustainable development command the protection of both life below water and life on land. This means careful and responsible management of natural bodies of water (preventing oil spills, marine pollution, overfishing). It means protecting endangered species in the wild, massively cutting down on deforestation, and protecting biodiversity. This can be achieved by public pressure and supporting environmentally friendly companies.



**PART FIVE: CLIMATE ACTION**

One of the sustainability goals people are most aware of is climate action. Years of polluting our environment and atmosphere have finally taken their toll, leading to the devastating effects of global warming being felt all over the world. Climate change requires an urgent response. Campaigners around the world (notably Greta Thunberg and Severn Cullis-Suzuki) have called for climate action for years, but many governments and large corporations continue to show a total disregard for the environment and wider world. In 2018, the transportation industry alone accounted for 28.2% of global emissions. Upholding pressure on the biggest contributors (boycotts etc.) is just one way we can cut global emissions. As individuals, we must also work to combat climate change. This can be done in many ways: sacrificing regular extravagant travel; using locally sourced products where possible; putting pressure on environmentally unfriendly companies; being more aware of carbon footprints.



**PART SIX: PARTNERSHIP OF THE GOALS**

The final goal for sustainable development is partnership of the goals. Many of the goals naturally intersect – this partnership ensures that all the goals are achieved in harmony. We have a long way to go to achieve a globally sustainable society. Relentless hard work and radical change are the only ways we can achieve our global sustainability goals. Reaching our sustainability goals is a matter of necessity if we want to maintain a habitable world for generations to come. And perhaps, in ten years, Kamilo beach will once again be a place of fine sands and clean seas, a haven for wildlife.



# Interview with Ms Langley

Interview by Anna Livia Burke (FIII)

## Anna: How does it feel to be Assistant Rector?

Ms Langley: It feels like I'm firefighting quite a lot of the time. Before, when I was teaching English and was Head of PSE, I knew what was ahead of me each day. Now, I take phone calls any hour of the day or I'm dealing with different discipline issues or guidance issues. Some pupils just come and want to talk to me which is lovely. I work really closely with the Heads and Assistant Heads of Year to make sure that all the pupils at Dollar feel that their health and wellbeing is just as important, if not more so, than their academic progress. I'm loving the challenges in my new role though.

## You are an English teacher. Who is your favourite writer?

That's the hardest question for an English teacher! I love Shakespeare. If I had to go and live on a desert island for the rest of my life and could only take one book it would be *The Complete Works of Shakespeare* (my favourite play is *Twelfth Night*) or if I couldn't take that I would take *The Complete Essays of Michel de Montaigne*; these "essais" or "attempts" deal with an eclectic range of subjects, from the dauntingly weighty to the apparently trivial. A great handbook for life. I also love George Eliot – my favourite novels are *Middlemarch* and *Adam Bede*. And I love *Vanity Fair* by William Thackeray. For Christmas, my brother-in-law who is Jordanian, gave me a copy of Arabic poetry (with a translation, thank goodness!) and I am really enjoying reading that. So many books, so many authors...a very tough question for me...

## And do you have a book that you feel relates to you or you cherish?

Probably *Vanity Fair*. It's quite long, but it's a very, very funny book. I love the authorial voice that comes through. I particularly like the heroine, or should I say the anti-heroine, Becky Sharp. It was my grandmother's favourite novel, and, before I'd read it she said to me, "You have to read *Vanity Fair*, Elizabeth, because the main character really reminds me of you." And I remember saying, "Oh, really? What is she like, Granny?" She then just listed all these terrible traits and I remember being really affronted, but I think she was joking. I hope.

## What do you think should be done first, reading the book or watching the film?

The book. Definitely. You must read the book before you watch the film because the film can change the novel, and I think that you've not really had the real McCoy, have you?

## What film or TV adaptation do you think actually does the book justice?

That's a really good question. *The English Patient*, which I read first, and then the film was made. It is an epic film and a wonderful, wonderful adaptation of the novel. I think that it is actually one of my most favourite films. I remember thinking, after I finished reading the novel, which is stirringly dense and layered, that I don't know any film director that could actually do this justice. Have you seen it? You have

to watch it. The opening sequence is visually rich with this haunting soundtrack, and a pre-war bi-plane flying above the desert, carrying two passengers in its open cockpit. The film then goes on to tell you who these passengers are, why they are in the plane, and what happens to them. The rest of the story is a prologue and epilogue to that scene. It's about loss and desire and jealousy and war and I love it. It's set in Egypt and Italy. Two of my favourite countries.

## What word do you most overuse?

I probably say "er" quite a lot because I like to think before I speak. Probably with my children I say "Stop fighting!" or "Read more!" You'd have to ask my Form III English class which word I overuse... I always have a Word of the Day with my classes and we always investigate the etymology of our word. For example, last week's word was "puckish" and they guessed it had something to do with being mischievous because they'd all studied *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in Form I.

## Do you like to travel?

I can't remember the Jane Austen quote... "If adventures will not befall a young lady in her own village, she must seek them abroad." I used to live in Italy, and I've visited the Greek islands. I've been to Oman, stayed in Santiago in Chile, and Bahrain quite a few times because my sister lives there. Next time I go to Bahrain we are driving over the causeway to Saudi for a couple of days. I used to live in Bordeaux in France. I've been to Austria a few times. I drove through Europe one year, stayed in Chamonix and then through Italy, stopping off in Assisi to visit the Giotto frescoes as Miss Jean Brodie would have done, and continued down to Brindisi which is in the heel of Italy, to visit my Italian cousins. The one place I would love to go is India. One of my other favourite books is *A Suitable Boy* by Vikram Seth, and I read that in my late teens/early twenties, and I found it completely evocative and alluring. And I studied Hinduism at school. I just think it would be an amazing place to be. Oh, and I need to go to New Zealand because my youngest brother lives there, and I've never been to visit him. And I must go to Barbados, to trace my family tree, as my great-grandfather was Bajan. I'll do that when I retire.

## What is your favourite place to visit?

I love Italy. I think I've visited nearly everywhere in the country. The only place I haven't been to is Sicily, and I will go there one day. And my favourite place is Positano, and it's just down the coast from Naples. It's one of my favourite towns. Once Covid restrictions are lifted I'm going there to stay in a 15th Century watchtower overlooking the bay. I want to go back to Pompeii, climb sulphurous Vesuvius, and revisit the islands Capri, Ischia, and Procida. I might even venture back to my old flat in Spaccanapoli where I used to live when I was at university studying Renaissance literature. Or go and visit the nuns at the convent I worked in in my year out, but they'll be long dead now. So, yes, Italy is my favourite country. I also love the islands of Scotland. My

father was a great believer in "see your own country before you venture abroad" so all our family holidays were spent camping on the Outer Hebrides. Four children and a huge Scottish Deerhound dog all in one Army Surplus tent. My poor mother!

## Can you speak Italian?

Yes, well Neapolitan... I was once fluent, but alas no longer because to keep up your Italian you have to be speaking it all the time. I would say if you speak another language don't ever lose it once you've started to learn. It's so easy to slip out of it.

## If you could be one character in literature, who would you be?

Oh, great question! Er...Puck from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Mischievous, puckish Puck who can put a girdle around the Earth in 40 minutes. That way I'd be able to do all my travelling, go to India, go to New Zealand, go to Barbados. Plus, I would also have a power, if I wanted somebody to fall in love with somebody else or me, I could squeeze the juice from the flower in their eyes. How exciting!

## What is your favourite or least favourite fictional representation of a teacher?

Least favourite I think is Jean Brodie from *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*. I think she comes across as a very selfish individual who manipulates her girls and makes favourites. And I think that is one thing, for me, as a teacher, that you must never, ever do. I think she's a very interesting character, but she has this power of control, and her impact on those young girls in the novel is so huge that it affects them in their adult lives. I think a teacher should never underestimate the impact that they have on young people's lives. I really like Muriel Spark's writing. I love *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie* as a novel, but as a fictional representation of a teacher, what I would never want to be would be Miss Jean Brodie.

## As Assistant Rector, you have unimaginable powers, but if you had these powers outside of the school for a day, what would you do?

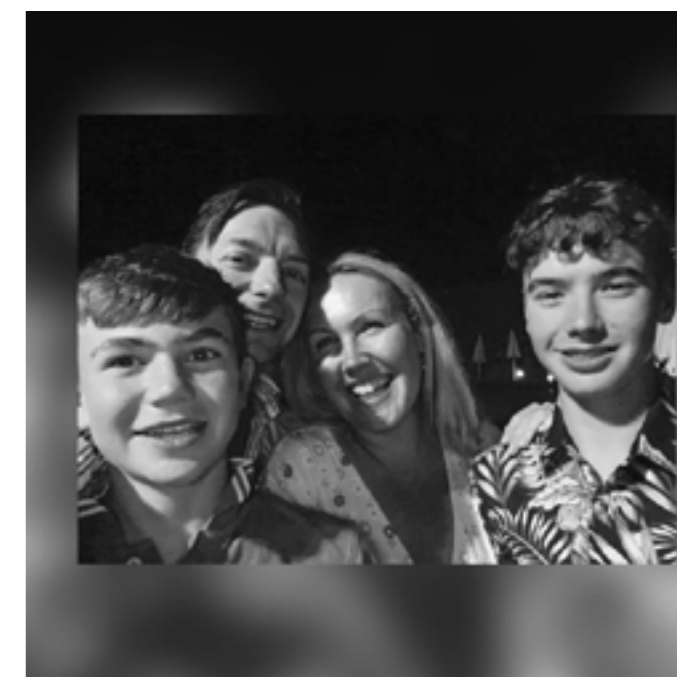
I would go around the whole country and I would make everybody pick up litter. I can't stand litter droppers, and people who chew gum and stick it on the roads and pavements or under desks or chairs. And the amount of money that it costs the local councils and school to clear up chewing gum! That's the one thing that makes my blood boil, so if I could go around and give detentions and gum scraping and punishments to members of the public, I would. It would be keeping the beautiful countryside clean and tidy and not polluting it with litter. Do I sound a bit Draconian?

## Finally, Miss Langley, do you have any personal examples of the power of literature?

When I was teaching in the aforementioned convent in Naples, the nuns were quite strict about my leisure time. Looking back now, I can understand their concerns: I was only 18 and I was also living in a very dangerous city where Mafia shootings on the street were a daily occurrence. But I was young, and I had just left school (another convent where most of my teachers were nuns), and I wanted to go and explore the city and do things with my new, fun Italian friends, and boyfriend, and the nuns did not like this more adventurous side of me. I remember the Mother Superior

not letting me go for an overnight at a party and I went to my room and, in a fit of rage, wrote down how much I hated her and wished that something terrible would happen to her. I had a dream that night that she fell down the stairs and broke her arm. I remember the dream being so vivid that I even wrote it down in my diary when I woke up. The next day when I got back from teaching classes in the evening, I was eating on my own in the refectory and one of the other nuns came to tell me that the Mother Superior wouldn't be joining me for supper because she was in hospital. She had tripped at the top of the stairs on her way to Evening Mass and had broken her wrist... When I went to visit her she said she'd heard a voice inside her head just before she fell saying "Madre Lecisso, you're going to fall". And then, she fell...is that an example of the power of literature?

Thank you, Ms Langley, Becky Sharp would have been proud...



# Dollar's Desert Island Discs

Interview by Charlie Robins (FVI)

Welcome to *The Galley's* second 'Dollar's Desert Island Discs', a Dollar twist on the iconic radio programme. Our castaway this edition is the new Assistant Rector Mrs Mason, who has moved from Head of Mathematics to this role at the start of this academic year. Here are the 8 tracks Mrs Mason would take on the Island.

**Charlie: Mrs Mason, thank you very much for agreeing to be our second castaway on Dollar's Desert Island Discs. Was it tough deciding your eight tracks?**

Mrs Mason: Really tough. I think I've changed them probably daily since you got in touch, because I drive in the morning and I'll hear something else and think, "Oh, yeah. I really like that tune." I have cemented them down now. We're not moving again.

**Are you a fan of Desert Island Discs?**

Yes, when I was little, my parents used to listen to the radio a lot. So, Desert Island Discs was a mainstay, along with a load of random radio quizzes. I don't listen very often as an adult, but occasionally I'll look at who it is and listen to it.

**Has music always been a big part of your life?**

Massive. My earliest childhood memory is our record player and my dad's stash of 45s, which were in the sideboard, none of them in cases. For some reason they were just stacked on top of each other. Me and my sister used to play with them, which probably meant that they were scratched like nothing on earth. But they're the tracks I remember hearing as a kid and I can still remember what was always top of the pile. It was MacArthur Park. So, music has always been part of me and then I played instruments when I was growing up and now music is always on in our house. I have always got the radio on. I've always got things downloaded and my kids hopefully, will listen to the same stuff. So, it's a big influence.

**So, what brought you to Dollar?**

A lot of my whole history of being here is a bit of an accident. When we moved back up from just outside London, where we'd been for five years after graduating, we knew we wanted to move back to Scotland, but didn't know where. We ended up in Stirling. I got a job in Edinburgh, so commuted to Edinburgh. I never really thought anything of it. I mean, it was a long way in the morning and it was very dark and miserable. And then, when I was on maternity leave having had child number one, my Head of Department at the school I was at in Edinburgh phoned up and said, "The Head of

Department is advertised at Dollar and you should apply for it." It hadn't been on my mind at all that while you're on maternity leave with a small child is a good time to apply for job, but these things happen and it came up and, yeah, the rest is history.

**Let's hear your first track.**

So, the first track is It's a Long Way to the Top (If You Want to Rock and Roll) by ACDC, because I love rock music. I love all music, but I really like rock music and ACDC is just a mainstay. One of my silly ambitions was always that, if I wasn't a teacher I'd like to be a roadie for a rock band, because I just think that they must see life and get to see the gigs from the side of the stage. And ACDC is one of the bands that's on my list, who I never saw live and would love to see live. I just love that track and it has bagpipes at the end of it. So, what's not to love about a rock track with bagpipes?



**What are the earliest memories you have here at Dollar, upon arriving?**

So, I think Dollar is a lovely place to arrive to. Every day when I drive to work, I am blown away by the scenery and the ever-changing landscape. I think it looks different every single day. And I think the building is very beautiful. I just think, "Gosh, we're so lucky to work in, not only this beautiful landscape, but this beautiful building as well."

**You've answered my next one there about how has it changed - it almost changes every day?**

It does. I think it will stand for another 200, 300 years, won't it? So, the structure I think, will not change. It's the people in it that change. But the one thing that I realised when I started working here, is that the ethos is really strong. I suspect if you found someone who was here 200 years ago, you would still find that the ethos of the school has not changed.



**Let's hear your second track.**

Red Lights Spells Danger, Billy Ocean, because it's my go-to karaoke track. That's a terrible admission. I really liked Billy Ocean. He just makes you sing and move. It's a bit of hilarity in our family that I don't know the words to any of these songs. I just make them up as I go along. So, I would do Red Lights Spell Danger as my karaoke track, but whether I stuck to the words or not, would remain to be seen. But it's a very positive, upbeat track. I just love it.

**What have been the highest points while working here?**

Any whole school event. I just think whole school events are great - from cross country, to the sponsored walk, to the Christmas concert - everything that we do when everybody comes together. That's the strength of the school too. Not a lot of schools do that, because schools now don't have the facilities to get the whole school together. I like the fact that we can get together and do things that involve everybody from prep one to seniors, and staff as well: staff involvement in Christmas concerts and staff involvement with the sponsored walk is massive. I've really missed that this year, the fact that we can't do that; we can do things in little pockets, but it's not the same.

**Let's hear your third track.**

Let's go for Harder Than You Think, Public Enemy. So, I don't run very often and I'm not a big runner, but when I run it's on my running tracks and it keeps me going. I just really like it. It's got drive behind it.



**Well, from Harder Than You Think, have there been any moments at Dollar that were harder than you expected?**

Lockdown. Oh, my goodness. Without a shadow of a doubt. It's been so extraordinary. You can't prepare for it, because you don't think it's ever going to happen. If someone said to you even 18 months ago, "Oh, by the way, next year, there's going to be this massive global pandemic and you can't go to school and you can't do your jobs and you can't go shopping and you can't meet your friends and family." Absolutely extraordinary. I think it was uplifting though because the school community reacted really well to it and were able to hold each other up and keep each other going. I think the things we lost, the personal contact we're still missing, is really hard to replace with a digital substitute. That period when the school was closed from the end of March 2020 onwards was tough. I don't think you could predict who was going to find it tough on any given day and that goes for pupils and staff. It could be just the slightest thing that meant you were having a bad day. People reacted to things very, very differently to how they would normally. So, whilst I think we did really well, we came through it relatively unscathed, but blooming heck it was hard work.

**Back to the music, what's your fourth track?**

Fleetwood Mac, Landslide. So, I love Fleetwood Mac and that probably stems from my parents, because they listened to a lot of Fleetwood Mac. We saw them live. We go to see a fair amount of live music when we can and saw Fleetwood Mac when they reunited a couple of years ago in Glasgow and Stevie Nicks was on the stage and she just blew me away. It was an awesome gig. There's been a few good covers of it as well, but just to hear it sung in its original... The way it was meant to be sung. It's an amazing track.



**So, you've moved between England and Scotland. Is there a big pull in Scotland that made you want to come back?**

No. Mr. Mason is Scottish and we stereotypically met at St Andrews. I'm from Yorkshire originally but then when we got married, we just thought we'd quite like to drift back north so we did. Nothing was ever planned and it was always a bit accidental, and ending up in Stirling was completely accidental. But we couldn't be in a better place, living right in the middle of this amazing country.



#### What's your fifth track?

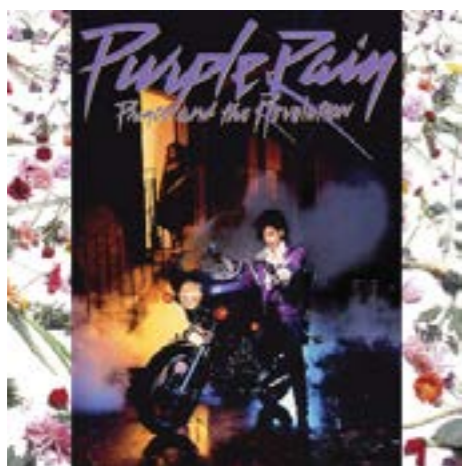
Lucky Man by The Verve. I'm a big Verve fan. So Urban Hymns is probably my go-to album if I'm going to put an album on from start to finish. I just think Lucky Man is the perfect track. It's got everything for me.

#### Brilliant. So, maths to management – why?

Good question, I think it was just time. So, I'd done what, seven, eight years in the maths department, which I absolutely loved. But I've always had a curiosity about the bigger picture and getting involved behind the scenes. Again, not particularly planned, because I think if you plan too hard then things get in the way, it leads to unnecessary upset, but it just worked out quite nicely.

#### Lovely. Sixth track?

Purple Rain, Prince, but the album version. I'm never allowed to play this in the house because Mr. Mason doesn't like Prince. I request the album version just to extend it by an extra four minutes. I think it's genius. I really like the premise of the track. I think it's also the last track that Prince ever performed live before he died. He performed it at nearly every live show he did. A lot of his tracks have got religious overtones and I think Purple Rain for me, is verging on that, but it's about humanity as well. So, I really like Purple Rain.

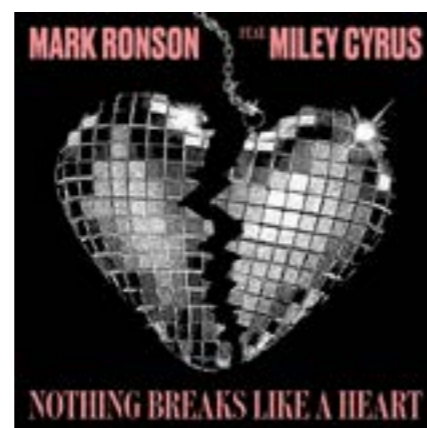


#### Outside of Dollar, perhaps during the lockdown, what do you do to take your mind off the world around us?

I did a lot of home decorating. I don't run but I swim and I missed swimming. So, I'm just starting that again. My kids, because they're little, they always take my mind off stuff very well. And craft - I'm quite a creative person for a mathematician and I like my hands to be busy. So, I design things and I make things.

#### What's your penultimate track?

Nothing Breaks Like a Heart, Mark Ronson, Miley Cyrus. So, I'm not particularly a Miley Cyrus fan, but I'm a huge Mark Ronson fan. This goes back to my fascination with the music business as a whole, in that Mark Ronson has involvement in so much in the music business and you'll hear a track and then you look at who wrote it and who was involved in the production of it and so often it's his name. I'm just fascinated by that multi-layered involvement and all that behind the scenes involvement. Music for me is more... It's not just about the big stars at the top, I really like to know who wrote it, where it was produced or which studio. So, yeah, I really like that. It's nice.

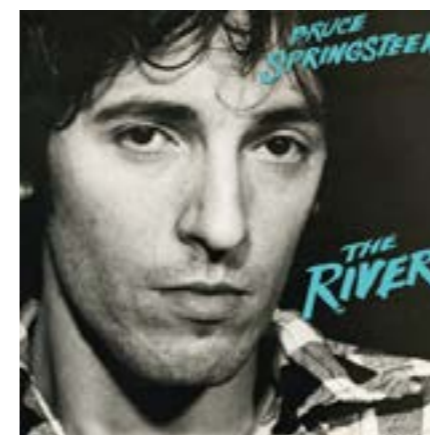


#### You said you enjoyed crafts. Is that how you will survive on the desert island?

Yes, I think it is. So, I was thinking about this. Firstly, when I'm cast away, I'll only be responsible for my own health and safety. I think this is a good thing, because I'm a little bit accident prone, so I'll just be responsible for myself. I am quite creative, so I think that is probably how I'll survive. And you'll see my luxury item is related to that as well. So, I think I'll be all right. As long as I don't get bored.

#### Let's hear your final track, Mrs Mason.

Final track, The River by Springsteen. I love Springsteen. Absolutely. I have a proper crush on him, despite the fact he's the age of my dad. I went to see him at Hampden and was just blown away by his presence on stage and the E Street band. I don't think there's a single Springsteen track that I don't like so that was a hard one to pick; but I like The River - it's got a good story behind it.

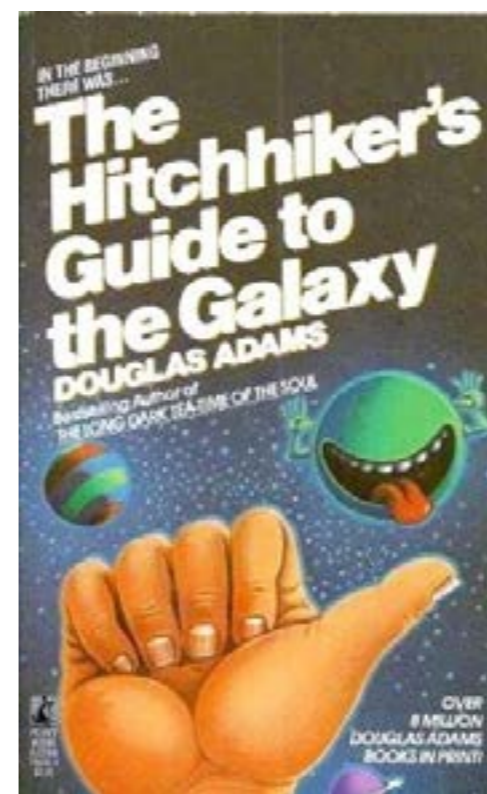


**On the island you will be given the Bible and The Complete Works of Shakespeare. Special for the Dollar edition, you'll also be given the Fortunas and The Galley delivered by pigeon to you.**

Excellent.

#### What would the other book of your choice be?

So, this was problematic as well, because I read a lot and I don't tend to read the same book twice ever. Although, I read quite fast and I know I skim read, I'm terrible for skim reading, so I could read something twice. But I thought, "I don't want to take a new book, because what if I don't like it?" So, I'm going to take the Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy, because I enjoyed it when I read it the first time, but it would probably be 20 years since I read it, if not more. So, I'm going to take it and re-read it.



#### Lovely. And the luxury item?

Yes, so because I need to be busy and I need to be occupied, I need to have something creative. I'm going to take a quilting kit, because a bit of joke in our house is that my first born has a quilt and my second doesn't, because I've just never got round to it. So, if I get off the island, she might get her quilt.

#### If the eight discs were all being threatened by the waves, which one would you save?

Oh, this is awful. This is really hard. It's tempting to go for Prince, because it's the longest. I think I would say The Verve. I would save Lucky Man, because every time it comes on the radio, it's my turn it up track. Both my kids like it as well and sing along a little bit. It's timeless. So I'd be all right.

#### Take a bit of luck on the island...

# The Importance of Stories

Elliot Wortley (FVI)

Stories are what hold us all together. They allow us to travel to another place and time, giving us the opportunity to experience something completely new. For generations, humans have shared stories with each other in order to bond, entertain, and connect. In Ireland, for example, the word *Seanchaí* means a storyteller or historian who keeps traditional Irish folk tales alive by orally sharing stories and continuing a long tradition of local legend. In a way, the telling of these stories is the only thing that allows some cultures to survive and thrive, providing a crucial link between one generation and the next. Of course, this tradition of storytelling is not just unique to Ireland; for centuries people have shared stories all over the world – connecting with their ancestors, family members, and each other. Arguably, this connection is what we get most from the stories we hear – real or fictional.

In the modern world we are constantly on the move. People are always rushing from place to place or job to job. We all need to make more time to listen. If you take the opportunity to hear what your parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, goldfish, and even strangers have to say then you will probably be surprised by how many stories they have to tell. These stories are not only vital parts of their lives, but they also play a role in ours. Listening to what others have to tell us gives us a newfound appreciation for them and enables us to forge connections that bring us closer together.

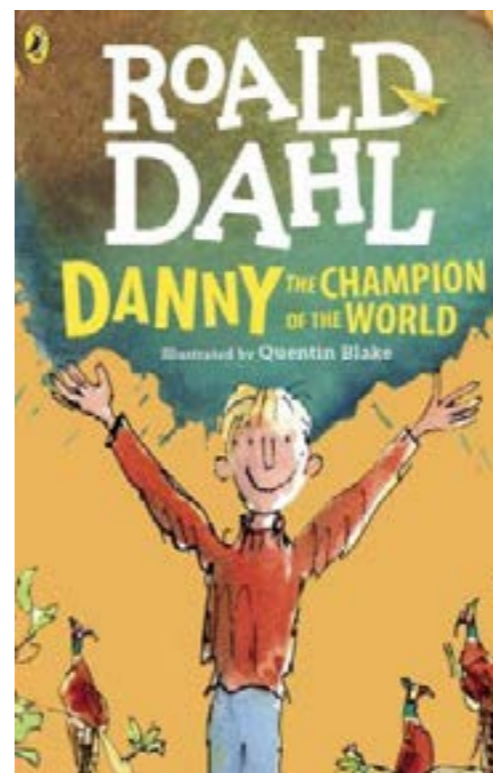
Family stories not only give us a window into the past but also help us to understand our own lives better. When we hear a funny, sad, or scary story it can help us to empathise with our own relatives – and it gives us our own fascinating stories to tell. Importantly, they can connect us to people we did not have the chance to meet, as well as giving us a deeper bond to the ones we already know. When I was learning about Scottish migration in the 20th century in History at school, I had a much greater appreciation for the topic after I found out about my own emigrant ancestors. Lorenzina Bamburgh, my first cousin four times removed (with an amazing name), left Scotland for America in the 1920s. Lorenzina was born one month after her father died and grew up with her mother and three siblings in Dundee – until she eventually moved to New Jersey. Suddenly, I both understood Lorenzina's decisions better and had a greater interest in what we were learning in class. When I started researching my own family tree, I knew very little about any ancestors I had beyond my great grandparents. Soon however I had opened the door to discover a whole host of new stories and people. What started as a name on a birth document grew into the full story of Lorenzina's life. In 1928, newly married, she travelled from Glasgow on *The Transylvania* (later converted into a military ship during the war) and arrived in New York City, ready to start a new life. She soon gave birth to a daughter in New Jersey and has three grandchildren who still live there today. After I found out about my own links to the migration topic I became more and more invested in what we were learning – and I was able to link my own family stories to the

facts I was taught. This is not just unique to history. When we have a personal connection with something, we grow increasingly interested in it, and by hearing stories about our own relatives our appreciation of both the past and the present grows.

Some of my favourite childhood memories are of spending time at my grandparents' house, listening to their own stories. My dad's family originally come from Dumfriesshire, and as we live in Falkirk it is hard to visit more than a few times a year. I believe that listening to the stories my gran tells – over the phone or in person – has brought us closer together. One of my favourite stories, and one that I love to tell other people, is about my grandparents going with 'Uncle Bob and Aunt Susie' to a safari park. I remember laughing uncontrollably hearing about Bob get increasingly frustrated with Susie, who was feeding the animals, before an elephant eventually pulled a windscreen wiper off their car. This story is one of many that my gran has told, and although all of her stories may be different, the common thread that runs between them all is laughter. Looking back on the mornings at my gran's house laughing at these ridiculous, and no doubt exaggerated, stories fills me with great joy. The fact that these memories still bring great happiness years after they were first shared shows us the real power of words. We have the unique ability to build a detailed picture in other people's heads and we all bring our own experiences to the stories that we hear. I would love to have seen Bob confronting the elephant in real life but maybe the picture I have built up in my own head (and that you're probably imagining in yours) is even better.

However, the most interesting thing about these personal stories is the added dimension they can bring to bigger issues. One of the stories that I most vividly remember my gran telling me is about the Lockerbie bombing. This tragic event took place at Christmas in 1988, when my dad was only 16. His sisters had gone to stay with their granny – my Granny Haggart – in Lockerbie when a plane crashed there leading to the deaths of 259 people. My great gran's house was near where the plane crashed, and the houses of some of her neighbours had been completely destroyed. Miraculously, her telephone line was the only one that worked in the surrounding area, as her husband had been a telecommunications engineer who had wired her up to a different line in case of emergency. This meant that the house soon became a base for the military and people who needed to use the phone line to communicate with the wider world. My gran proudly told me that she (characteristically) entered the house when prevented by the people using the line, after explaining that her mother and daughters were in there. If it were not for my own link to this story then I do not think it would be more than a passing headline when updates on the aftermath of the event are in the news. But it is more than just a story – it's a powerful reminder that events like this, that we can almost

become immune to, have a tangible impact on everyday people. This was no doubt one of the scariest experiences of my dad and his family's life – something that is hard for me to even comprehend – and that still affects many people (in different ways) even now. The close connection that we have to this tragedy, and that countless people have to tragedies all over the world, has shown to me that there is often so much more beyond a news headline. We have all become too desensitised to these tragic events we hear about in the media and I think it is vital that we remember the stories ordinary people have to tell. After all, one news headline is often made up of thousands of individual stories.



Fictional stories also help to bring us closer together. People are drawn together by books, and unlike films or television shows we can all build our own unique pictures of what we have read. Words have the power to activate our imaginations and the shared experience of reading a book can strengthen friendships and bonds. When I was little, my mum and dad used to read to me all the time and I still have fond memories of *Peter Rabbit*, *Charlie Bucket*, and one very hungry caterpillar. The fact that I remember reading these stories with my parents so vividly just shows how powerful they are. One of my fondest memories is being read *Danny the Champion of the World* by Roald Dahl – this was one of my mum's favourite books when she was little, and I remember her genuine joy and excitement when she would read it to me and my sister when we were younger. Hearing all of these stories from a young age not only helps stimulate our imagination, but it also gives us the gift of language as the more we read the better storytellers we become. Undoubtedly, the fact that so many people still fondly remember the stories they were told when they were young shows the enormous impact that literature can have on us.

However, it is not just important to read stories but also to share them with children too. We like shaping our own

lives into stories that we can share with other people and it is vital that we learn to share our stories as well as listen to others. We all have something unique to offer and it is this shared experience that helps to educate and bring communities together. The *Black Lives Matter* movement has given international attention to the stories of Black people worldwide and it is through these stories that we have all been able to learn about the inequality and injustices that still exist in our society today. Now more than ever it is important that we encourage everyone to share their stories so that we can all come together to help tackle the problems that face us. There is a reason why censorship is such a dangerous thing, because when we stop sharing stories we stop growing as a society and the opportunity to connect (and evolve) is taken away. Arguably, the greatest example of the power of language is the tradition of storytelling in the Caribbean. After slaves were brought over to the Caribbean islands to farm sugar and cotton in the 18th and 19th centuries one of the only ways that they were able to keep their cultures alive was through the tradition of storytelling. The lasting impact of African mythological figures and stories in the Caribbean, like *Papa Bois* (a combination of animal, man, and nature) known as the 'father of the forest', just shows that one of the only ways that people are able to preserve their own cultures is through stories. The fact that the legacy of this storytelling can still be found in the Caribbean today shows that telling stories is not just for entertainment, it helps to keep traditions and cultures alive even in the face of colonisation.



Stories are crucial to so many parts of our lives. They allow us to share, to educate, to grow, to learn, to connect, and to evolve. Whether you are talking to a family member over the phone or connecting with someone online, it is important that we all make more time to listen. Most importantly these stories allow cultures to survive and thrive in the face of adversity – written materials can easily be destroyed but it is so much harder to stop the spoken word from living on. Our lives are full of regrets – don't miss out on asking someone to share their story. Life is short, and the stories we tell can bring us all closer together.

## From the Editor...

Zuzana Hudacova (Form VI)

STEM is the backbone of the survival, as well as the progress, of the human race. Articles in this section reflect our technological advances, challenges in biology, but also the social struggles the world of science has faced through history. One might say our understanding of the world is still miniscule, while our ignorance overshadows our curiosity. Through educating ourselves and developing our scientific thinking, we are bound to outgrow our comfort zone and challenge our minds through critical thinking. I sincerely hope the articles in the Science section of The Galley will help you on this journey and inspire you to learn more.

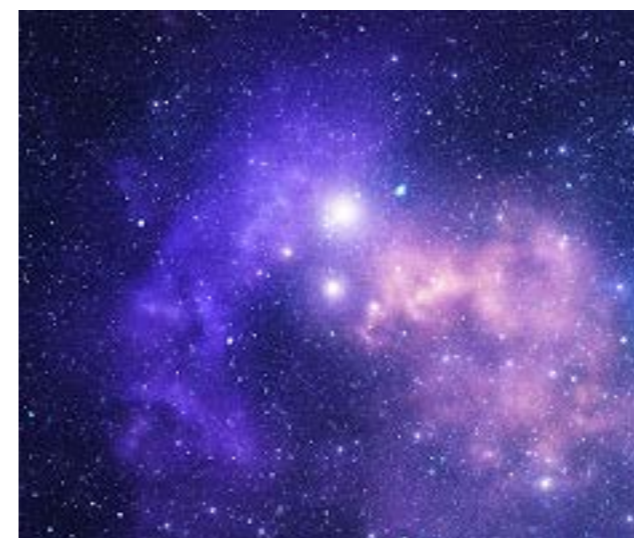


**Zuzana Hudacova (FVI)**  
*Science Editor*

## Forward to Fusion

Hugo Mackay (FV)

Electricity – the flow of electrons – is a simple, yet powerful tool which mankind has learned to harness and manipulate with astounding precision. This vital form of energy is deeply integrated into society, powering innumerable processes which run the modern world. Electricity can today be captured from a plethora of chemical and physical processes, such as the combustion of fossil fuels, nuclear fission, and the photovoltaic effect. Yet, with a rapidly increasing population and rising living standards, current energy generation methods are being stress-tested. Furthermore, society is grappling with the threats of an ever-worsening global climate, necessitating a power source which is clean, efficient, and sustainable. Fortunately, as has often been the case, nature, specifically astrophysics, may offer a solution, which has the potential to enable mankind's activity for millennia: nuclear fusion. As Athenian philosopher Plato once said, "Astronomy compels the soul to look upward, and leads us from this world to another." Attaining this utopia, however, would require immense investment, research, and time on a global scale.



The origins of such an ideal energy source lie in astrophysics. Nature's ultimate powerplants, stars, shine for millions of years, their energy permeating and illuminating the cosmos. In fact, virtually all of Earth's energy can be traced back to our parent star, the Sun. Within stellar cores, the intense environment constitutes a nuclear process known as fusion, in which atomic nuclei collide with force exceeding that of their mutual electrostatic repulsion, thus fusing into a single, heavier element; this process is accompanied by the release of subatomic particles and tremendous energy. Within stars, this provides the radiation pressure necessary to balance the inward force of gravity... for humanity, nuclear fusion may actually hold the solution to the global electricity challenge!

The promise of this energy source has led scientists and engineers to develop nuclear fusion reactors, which would fuse deuterium-tritium (hydrogen isotopes) fuel to efficiently generate electricity. However, emulating the precise environment of a stellar core requires the precise manipulation of plasma, a state of matter which, unfortunately, is notorious among physicists for its unstable



behaviour. To overcome this challenge, fusion reactors would utilise a powerful magnetic field, as in magnetic confinement fusion (MCF), or intense array of lasers, as in inertial confinement fusion (ICF), to contain, superheat, compress, and fuse the plasma.

In isolation, fusion power seems ideal, but it must be compared with its alternatives to determine its relative viability. Currently, every energy source on the grid has serious limitations and/or more threatening potentials: burning fossil fuels relies on depleting resources and pollutes the environment; nuclear fission plants produce toxic, radioactive waste and hold the slim, but nonetheless real potential of a catastrophic meltdown; hydroelectric dams damage aquatic ecosystems; and solar and wind power are weather-dependent and therefore not always reliable.

Remarkably, nuclear fusion power has the potential to deliver in what the aforementioned lack: providing safe, clean, and efficient energy. Firstly, the reactor fuel would be readily available, consisting of deuterium, an isotope of hydrogen abundant in sea water, and tritium, another isotope of hydrogen which can be synthesized during the reaction by lining the interior of the reactor with lithium. Secondly, the process of nuclear fusion releases millions of times the energy of burning fossil fuels and around four times the energy released by nuclear fission. Crucially, the cataclysmic meltdown of a fusion reactor would be physically impossible because if the confinement system were to fail, the plasma would merely expand and cool rapidly, and the reaction would terminate. Finally, the main by-product of hydrogen fusion would be helium, a non-toxic, inert gas, deeming fusion environmentally friendly as well.

The contrast between the potential of nuclear fusion and its current implementation raises the question, "Why isn't fusion already on the grid?" This is because



supplying the world with fusion power would be a project of unprecedented scale. Although this new technology is superior to its alternatives in nearly every way, there remains one major drawback: the enormous investment needed to make this young, largely unproven technology commercially viable within the already populated field of energy generation.

Implementing fusion worldwide is estimated to cost tens of billions of dollars. Furthermore, the research necessary to refine the technology of reactors is proportionally large, and this can inevitably only come with time, estimated at decades. Thus, some people are skeptical about investing so much into a still theoretical technology: “the history of fusion doesn’t give you a lot of confidence... we’ve been at it for 50 years and there’s always been a problem,” as Stephen Dean of Fusion Power Associates makes apparent. In fact, there is a running joke within the scientific community that fusion power will always lie a decade away. Nevertheless, the technology has raised significant capital, both through public funding and private sector investment, exceeding fifty billion USD to date. Strides in research and technology are also being made, largely due to research projects, most notably France-based ITER (International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor), along with a multitude of private sector start-ups joining the race to fusion; the incentive of being ‘the first to crack fusion’ and the money that would surely accompany such an accomplishment crucially drives the development of the technology.



Fusion, the immensely powerful nuclear process that sustains stars, which has “compel(led) the soul to look upward” for ages, if achieved and adopted globally, would revolutionise our species and home planet. This technology would surpass its counterparts in practically every way, generating electricity at an immense rate while remaining environmentally friendly. However, transitioning the ideal technology from its conceptualization on paper to the power grid will be a formidable challenge... but, if the necessary funding, research, and time are available, the long-term payoffs to mankind and the environment would more than compensate for the upfront cost of this global investment. So, perhaps mankind should embrace this risk and give fusion power the chance it needs to “leads(d) us from this world to another.”

## Matilda Effect

*Julia Betkova (FV)*

‘I have a bias against women in science,’ said the opening line of Nature article written by Jennifer Raymond. The American neurobiologist wrote this statement as a reaction to the Implicit Association Test (IAT) which she had taken.

IAT is used in social psychology to measure unconscious associations between concepts. A person being tested has to rapidly categorise two target concepts (e.g. “male” and “female”) with an attribute (e.g. “assertive”). The quicker the response, the stronger the association.

In Raymond’s case it found out that she still links men more with a career and science, and women with arts, even though it is the last thing one would expect from a scientist, mentor, and advocate for women in science.

Her bias was also confirmed by the public. From hundreds of thousands of citizens from 34 countries who had been asked to take the IAT, 70% associated science more with men than women. This result should be no surprise. A slightly chaotic looking male, wearing glasses and a lab coat, stirring some bubbly green liquid in a beaker or writing complicated equations on a blackboard is the first association of the word scientist for most people, even though that hasn’t been an accurate representation of the scientific community as a whole for a long time.

Women have been active in science for some time now. However, can you name at least five world-famous female scientists? Now compare it to your list of well-known male scientists. Why is it that we can generally name many more men than women in this field? Have women made no contributions worth remembering or are they simply overlooked? The latter is usually the case.

Although a number of females across various fields of science has been increasing, small quantities of published articles, citations, collaboration opportunities or prestigious awards for some reason do not match demographic data. Their work does not seem to be adequately acknowledged and appreciated.

Numerous research studies have been conducted and their results demonstrate that sexism and implicit bias against women in science are still alive. It’s proven that both men and women editors are more likely to give better peer reviews to scientific articles written by a male lead author. Correspondingly, both are more probable to hire men and pay them more. Male scientists are also more likely to be asked by mass media to contribute to shows.

The definite proof is the story of transgender neurobiologist Ben Barres, before his sex-reassignment known as Barbara. This very accomplished scientist actively advocated for gender equality in science, sharing his personal experiences of being treated differently as a female vs male scientist. One of the often quoted stories is that he overheard his colleague saying his work was much better than the work of his sister, Barbara. Since Ben and Barbara were the same person, it seems unlikely the real

problem was the quality of science, but the female name underneath it.

Every year the capital city of Sweden welcomes some of the most accomplished scientists to present them with what can be considered the Holy Grail of Science, i.e. the Nobel Prize. So far 212 men have been awarded the Nobel Prize in Physics while only 4 women have received the same recognition. Sadly, it doesn’t get much better in the other two scientific categories either: 210 vs. 12 in Medicine, and 179 to 7 in Chemistry.

After presenting the above figures I feel the need to list at least a few women who have contributed to some of the most significant scientific discoveries in the last decades. Rosalind Franklin discovered the structure of DNA. Marie Curie pioneered research in radioactivity. Vera Rubin found evidence for the existence of dark matter. Lisa Meitner developed the theory of nuclear fission (which is the physics behind the atomic bomb). Jocelyn Bell Burnell discovered pulsars. Françoise Barré-Sinoussi discovered HIV. Jennifer Doudna developed CRISPR, the genetic-engineering method that can potentially treat diseases such as cancer or AIDS.

More than a half of these women were excluded from the Nobel Prizes other members of their teams received. We can only speculate about Rosalind Franklin’s award as her coworkers were recognized after her death and the Nobel Prize can not be awarded post mortem. Vera Rubin missed this honour as well, even though the physics community seemed keen on the idea until the very last moment of her life. Lisa Meitner’s cousin Otto Robert Frisch, with whom she cooperated, was awarded the Nobel Prize for



their discovery. Jocelyn Bell Burnell was not included in the Nobel Prize awarded to her supervisor Antony Hewish and colleague Martin Ryle. Sure, there are many other scientists, both female and male, whose work deserves recognition they have never received. However, the issue here is that women were simply forgotten about, while their male colleagues were being celebrated and often also credited with work they had hardly done.

Lower wages, ignorance of women’s work, the Nobel Prizes that haven’t been awarded, the story of Ben, and all other injustices mentioned above can be summed up as the Matilda Effect, a theory that addresses sexist discrimination in the world of science. It tries to explain why scientific achievements and discoveries of women are often downgraded or attributed to their male colleagues.

The older brother of this theory is the Robert K. Merton’s Matthew Effect, whereby a well-known scientist often gets more credit than a comparatively unknown researcher, even if their work is similar or even shared. It’s named after Matthew the Apostle and refers to Gospel According to Matthew, 13:12.

Matilda Joslyn Gage (1826-1898) was the first to describe this inequity in her essay “Woman as Inventor”. She was an activist, suffragist and abolitionist, author, pioneer in American sociology and fight for equal rights. She supported Victoria Woodhull, one of the first women to run for president, she called for equal opportunities and published many works about the lack of freedom, which resulted in her becoming the president of the National Woman Suffrage Association. It comes as no surprise that science historian Margaret W. Rossiter named this theory after her in 1993.

Voicing that there is a problem and naming it is the first step towards solving it. Until 1993 the problem did not have any name, which made it nearly impossible to address. Today, almost three decades later, there is no excuse if we do not actively work towards the solution. There is no excuse if we keep denying women’s capabilities and contributions. We cannot keep erasing women from history and thus feeding into the misconception that science of the 21st century is masculine. Instead, it’s time to acknowledge that better science happens when diversity is present and start working towards overcoming the unconscious bias present, to some extent, in all of us.



# To What Extent is Human Behaviour Genetically Determined?

Andreja Živković (FV)

The complexity of human behaviour has, for a long time, puzzled many great minds. Biologists, psychologists and philosophers alike have attempted numerous times to get to the bottom of the question: "Is what makes us human in the hands of 4 simple bases or are we slaves of our environments?". However, there is still no robust evidence to support either of the claims. Research suggests that the riddle's answer is not in "which one", but rather in "how much of each one".



People differ in their intelligence, personality, and behaviour, and a century of research in behavioural genetics has left little doubt that some of this variation is caused by differences in their genomes. Contrary to a common misconception, genes do not cause behavioural or personality traits but rather only influence them. Most traits are polygenetic, meaning it is increasingly hard to understand their many genetic origins. Prosperous methods such as genome-wide association studies and biometrical studies, as well as the genomic-relatedness-matrix restricted maximum likelihood technique have been used in the quest of finding these origins. Still, no sturdy conclusions have been made, as many of the results have been falsely positive or exaggerated.

One of the fundamental studies in behavioural genetics is the twin study. This classical study aims to show that there ought to be more similarity with monozygotic twins, which share 100% of their genes and all of their environment, than dizygotic twins, which share half of their genes and the same environment. According to Plomin and colleagues' twin research, all the difference in monozygotic twins' behaviour is due to the non-shared

environment (occurrence and environment one twin has experienced but the other one has not). A non-shared environment that has caught the researchers' eyes is the prenatal environment (environment in the uterus, where the fetus is growing). Structural variables such as birth order and spacing between twins, as well as relationship variables, such as sibling and peer influences, are all potential sources of non-shared environmental influence that have yet to be explored fully.

Other examples of twin study findings are Rushton's studies indicating the vital contribution of genes to pro-social behaviour - behaviour which benefits other people as well as society. Heritability ranging from 56%-72% was measured in adult twin pairs. Self-reporting was used to quantify altruism, empathy, and nurturance. The factor of the shared environment was considered negligible. Criticism of this study lies in the fact that it used self-reported answers prone to exaggeration and various other biases. However, more recent studies have examined similar patterns in heritability of pro-social traits and empathy in children across a wider age range. A consistent pattern of results has emerged, in which genetics and non-shared environment effects become increasingly important, and shared environment effects decrease in importance as children move from early childhood to middle childhood.

The relatively young field of behavioural genetics has encountered many problems and contradicting results, ranging from the difficulty of randomising sample groups to overlooking the importance of certain conditions. Even though genes seem like a reasonable answer to the behaviour question, the evidence fails to be provided, while the potential abuse of it, such as eugenics, stands still. On the other hand, the environment is often assumed to be constant and easy to provide control for. The missing puzzle piece might as well be hidden in nurture's hands, making the quest for cracking the code challenging, yet rewarding.



# NASA's Lunar Exploration Program: Artemis

Alexander Trace (FII)

Humanity is taking its first steps towards otherworldly colonization; Artemis is NASA's plan to settle astronauts on the moon by 2024. With global support Artemis is said to be the first steps towards a Martian colony.

The Artemis plan has been split into 7 main stages in order to successfully land the next man and first woman on the moon. The first of these steps is "The First CLPS Mission". This Mission, scheduled for 2021 will see the first of the Commercial Lunar Payload Services delivered to the moon. They will deliver a total of 16 Lunar Payloads to hopefully pave the way for human explorers.

The second stage of the Artemis plan is called VIPER; VIPER is a golf-cart sized rover with the intended purpose to measure Polar Lunar Soil samples to characterize the distribution of water across a large area of the moon. This will allow NASA to choose a location where they can create a colony with a supply of water.

The next stage of the Artemis plan is known as the CAPSTONE CubeSat. This is a key stage of the Artemis plan as it will greatly benefit lunar navigation on both the surface and orbit. This will reduce uncertainties and validate predictive models to make Lunar Travel both easier and safer.

The first rocket launch of The Artemis will happen fourth, when an uncrewed Artemis rocket will verify the spacecraft's performance and test Orion's heat shield during the high-speed re-entry of over 5,000 degrees Fahrenheit (2760 degrees Celsius).

The next and most important stage is the PPE (The Power Propulsion Element) and HALO (Habitation and logistics outpost) these are the first pieces of the gateway, NASA's lunar orbiting Space dock. On-Board science investigations from NASA and the European Space Agency will conduct early experiments in a deep space environment.



Next the first crewed mission will be launcher, Artemis II, on this 10-day crewed flight NASA Astronauts will set the record for the furthest human travel from earth. They will test deep space communication and navigation systems and ensure that the life support systems keep them safe.

Then in 2024, with confidence gained from both Artemis I and Artemis II, Orion and its crew will once again travel to the moon by boarding the Human Landing System (The Gateway) to bring the first woman and next man to the Lunar Surface.

Once the Astronauts arrive on the moon they will embark on several missions to help prepare for the sort of missions needed on Mars. These missions will establish an infrastructure to sustain a lunar presence. To do this they will have to expand the gateway's capabilities and establish the Artemis Base Camp located at the South Pole.

The Artemis Base Camp will consist of three main mission elements: the Lunar Terrain vehicle, the habitable mobility platform and the Foundation Surface Habitat.

The additional infrastructure will allow the Base Camp to do one or two month expeditions across the lunar surface and to develop new technologies that will advance our national industry, while also developing new resources that will help grow the lunar economy.

As our sustained presence grows on the moon, opportunities to harvest lunar resources could lead to safer and more self-sustained operations. With future chemical and thermal advances, it is likely that these lunar resources could be converted into human consumables or propellant.

Other long-term applications could lead to extra-terrestrial metal processing and construction of habitats or other lunar surface structures using resources found on the moon. Many of these technologies could be advanced on the moon and be used on Mars.



## From the Editor...

It is a pleasure to introduce the Creative Section of the Galley 2020-21.

It is clear from this collection of inspiring pieces that lockdown has, in fact, fertilised the ground for creativity. From atmospheric photography, to reflective short stories, to poetry glimmering with hope, I believe everyone will find escapism and enjoyment in these pages.

With talent from Form II to Form VI, this sections offers a snapshot of the current thoughts, moods, and states of mind being experienced by individuals. Each one offers a unique perspective.

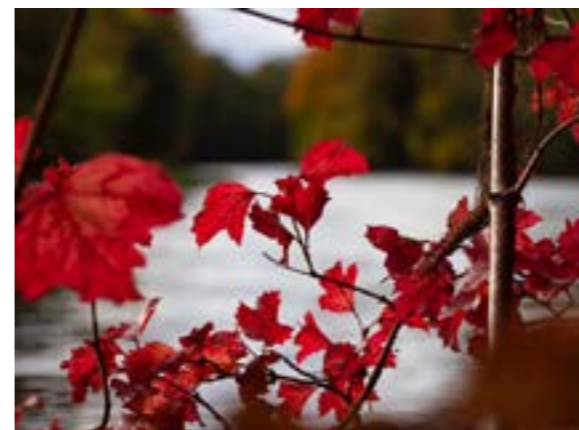
I would like to congratulate our writers and photographers on their varied and thoughtful contributions. It was a delight to gather and engage with them.

As the days and times grow brighter, I hope you enjoy these fantastic works.

*Katie Ainge (FV)*

## Photography

*Jessica Kitchen (Form V)*



## Photography

Rachel Warden (Form III)



## Childhood

Rosa Thur (FIV)

The flames crackle wild orange-red in the fire place. He sits in the heavy swing chair, where his beloved grandmother used to sit and knit, when he was younger.

His eyes are fixed on the fire; it reminds him of his peaceful childhood, the infinite plum green mountain grassland, where he loved to play for hours as a child, until the sun set behind the rocky snow-capped mountain peaks.

The wild flames reflect all the expeditions with his brother in the mountains. The orange fire reminds him of his mother coming to his grandparent's holiday house in the mountains straight after a hard week of work. He sees her in the elegant orange flames, getting out of the black coal train, down there in the valley. She came out of the train, laughed and lifted him up in the air and softly kissed him on the red cheeks.

He visited the cows every day on the lush green meadows high up in the mountains. And when he came back with his grandfather, he saw his mother and grandmother sitting in front of the simple mountain hut. They produced cheese, milk and cream, both laughed happily and had fun with their work. Then he sat on the table and ate the freshly baked bread from his grandmother. He tasted the fresh grass from the meadows in the cheese and tried the cream with raspberries from the garden. This made him happy as a little boy.

It was a simple life up there in the mountain hut, where he spent the most beautiful time in the year, where he was free and watched the birds up in the cloudy sky. Where he milked the tall cows with his older brother then drank the fresh milk, before his grandfather allowed it. He observed the brown rabbits and played hide and seek behind the massive cows. The rocks, where he enjoyed the fresh mountain air, and dressed too cold and got in trouble. When he was on the paths and scraped his knee and blooded it, because he ran too fast and cracked it on the stones.

He and his brother sometimes fought by the river when they disagreed, but then swam in the ice-cold clear water. The hayloft was the place where he cried in the night sometimes, when his mother wasn't there. But the valley was the place where he smiled, when he picked up his mother from the train and finally saw her again.

And when he and his brother rushed out of the city and took the train, they visited their grandparents house in the mountains during the summer holidays. Then they arrived in the valley and hiked up the mountain in simple shoes and with heavy backpacks. When they saw their grandparents waving from their terrace, both boys dropped off their heavy luggage and ran free as the wind into their wide-open arms, laughed and explored the fresh meadows, where the cows spend their summers. He always knew, when he crossed the burnside to the hayloft and looked down into the peaceful valley with the small houses and the surrounding mountains, that the summer had begun, no matter how old he was.

And now he is an old man with grey curled hair, who sits in the heavy swing chair and looks out of the simple mountain hut down into the green valley and reminds himself of when he was a little boy and ran up the mountains into his grandparents' open arms.

## Up to the Crow's Nest

Jenny O'Gorman (FV)

Each night my quill curves across the pages  
 like a moon-silvered line, scattering  
 the hush of pebbles in commas.  
 Here the side door is open to the wind and  
 sealight wanders from room to room, revealing  
  
 the Admiral Benbow Inn with men like tugboats drifting in,  
 unfolding maps with creases  
 burgeoning in their hands like nuns over ancient orisons,  
 and Billy Bones's black spot stains the underside of clouds  
 In the gloaming.  
  
 Onboard as John Silver plots to murder and steal,  
 breathless pirate voices will call 'You're Out!'  
 like rounders played at dusk, and a dark spinning ball of death  
 is tossed upon the growing gloom. The adventure has begun.  
  
 In my lonely room I see the drab curtains as Hispaniola's  
 shy white sail, amber with light and green with  
 straggled tapes of kelp.  
 The pail of water on the wrought iron grate filled  
 half with stars is the tempest  
 that smashes the ship's wooden teeth on slates.  
  
 And all the while I climb to the crow's nest;  
 a rickety ladder up my neck to the brain.  
 Far away I see the wet window shutters of hills  
 dripping in the mirrored sea;  
 looks like Treasure Island to me.

## Mr DeLoitte

Sophie Robinson (FV)

Mr DeLoitte was 50, balding, portly. His face bore the permanently rosy cheeks and deep lines of a much older man. He played the violin badly, and the piano well. He had never married, and lived alone in a small house, with a small bulldog.

He was just sitting down to his customary Wednesday night dinner, shepherd's pie, when there was a knock at the door.

She was tall, pale and thin. She wore an austere business-suit, or perhaps a funeral-suit, Mr DeLoitte thought, and a long, black, hooded coat- it almost looked like a cloak, as she stood there, casting a deep dark shadow on Mr DeLoitte's doorstep.

### Did Elaine send you?

Elaine was always sending her people 'round at funny times, for example, just when a man was sitting down to his dinner, they would arrive, unsmiling to take away a cabinet, or bureau that a person had no use for anymore. They were always dressed in such odd clothing, Mr DeLoitte would remark, but that was just young people's way, he would suppose.

### No, Elaine didn't send me.

When she spoke, her voice was smooth and measured, with the quality not unlike that possessed by salespeople, the persuasive tone without urgency, as if she had all the time in the world, and only those five words to say in it.

### May I come in, Mr DeLoitte?

Mr DeLoitte was taken aback by her forwardness, so much so that he failed to notice that she had not previously asked for his name, and would have no way of knowing.

### Have we met before?

He enquired.

### I am... you could say, an old family friend.

### You look a little young to be an old family friend, if you don't mind me saying.

She smiled with only her eyes.

### Merely a figure of speech, Mr DeLoitte. Though I am told I look younger than my years.

Again, that smile. Something inside him, a nagging voice in his head, an itch upon his tongue, was telling him- urging him- to trust her.

### Come- come inside...

He hesitated, on his tiptoes, waiting for her name. She noticed, of course, his hesitation, but gave no indication. Instead, she stepped over the threshold, past Mr DeLoitte and into his modest kitchen. She stood for a second, the top of her head brushing the low ceiling rafters, her gaze rippling over the small room- the oven with its once-colourful tea towels, the scuffed wooden table (which often rocked upon the uneven flagstone floor), the tartan dog-bed and ceramic water bowl nestled in the crook of the wall's bend. The clock, passed down from DeLoitte fathers to DeLoitte sons for many years, and now here, on the mantle of this particular, childless Mr DeLoitte- the heirloom that Elaine would never persuade Mr DeLoitte to part with, no matter how hard she tried.

### You have a lovely home.

She sounded as if she was reciting a script; there was no warm or genuine nature to her words, only the shell of that salesman lilt. Now she was inside, Mr DeLoitte was unsure of why he had invited her in in the first place. But nevertheless, there she stood.

Tea?

*Please.*

They sat across from each other, as if conducting a meeting; a setting appropriate for her attire, and less so for Mr DeLoitte's woollen, elbow-patched jumper. He had only boiled the water for the tea mere minutes ago, but the minute her hands wrapped around it, the steam- issuing from just below the wide brim of the ceramic cup- stopped. She must have noticed Mr DeLoitte's confusion as it tracked across his face.

*Mr DeLoitte, I will waste your time no longer. I have come to take you with me.*

With you?

Mr DeLoitte couldn't be leaving, not at this time of the evening- he had to feed his dog.

*I go by many names, my friend. Some call me Ankou, Thanatos, Yama Raja. I believe you would call me Death.*

Mr DeLoitte was sure she must be lying. Perhaps, he thought, she was a conwoman, come to swindle him out of his life savings- though he dismissed this inkling before it spread (for what could she gain by guising as the Grim Reaper itself? Traditionally, not a figure that inspires trust). The woman, as Mr DeLoitte could not think of her as Death itself, held his gaze, and he felt he could not look away.

*Occupational hazard, I'm afraid.*

She stirred her cold tea with a slender finger, an expression- which could almost be described as human sadness- lingering upon her face. Mr DeLoitte thought for a second, of the difficulties of living without hot tea- but once again dismissed himself, as of course, this woman could not be Death. He drew a breath, catching her attention.

You say you have come to... take me. I presume you mean I am to die?

She nodded.

Do you do this often? Make... house calls?

A wordless 'no'.

Why me?

She too, drew breath. Preparing herself, Mr DeLoitte thought. He felt a sickly doubt, a fear inching its way over his skin- what in the world (and beyond it) could worry Death itself?

*I have tried, Mr DeLoitte, to take you before. Several times, in fact.*

He swallowed hard, wishing she would stop using his name- every time sent a shiver running up and down his spine. But the news of his brushes with the woman who now sat opposite him, with her cold tea, and long coat, who had tried to steal him away- and failed- gripped him with a steely, ice-cold certainty, as he was sure now that she was not lying. And to Mr DeLoitte, this thought was more terrifying than anything.

*Do you remember, my friend, your long winter of pneumonia? Or the fire? The bridge collapsed? I have been following you all your life, in pursuit, always so close, but never quite catching the proverbial cigar?*

Mr DeLoitte did. Of course. He remembered the childhood winter, when the fever clung to him like ice on a lamp-post, he struggled for every breath and spent sleepless nights staring at his ceiling, seeing colour that wasn't there. The way the flames had ripped through the cramped tenement, filled his lungs with smoke and heat, the way his eyes had streamed and he had cried out for no one. The bricks and twisted metal coming down around him, as if the world was collapsing into itself. The certainty each time that Death would, at any second, take his hand and drag him kicking and screaming into non-life.

Mr DeLoitte felt... nothing. He met Death's gaze and felt no fear.

*So, Mr DeLoitte. Do you understand now why I am here?*

Yes. Yes, I do.

*And will you come?*

Mr DeLoitte paused.

Will she be there?

He thought now of his sister. She was not so lucky as to escape the shadowy figure of Death who lurked among the flames that day. The shadowy figure who sat now at his dinner-table, with a mug of cold tea.

Yes.

She reached out her hand.

You know what you have to do, my friend. Willingly.

Mr DeLoitte looked into her pale, pale eyes. She was, he realised, pleading with him. He chuckled. He would miss his dog, he supposed. The shapes that the clouds make in the sky. The tick of the mantle-clock. The familiar rocking of the dinner-table on the flagstones. Willingly, he thought.

Willingly.

Willingly.



# The Fermi Paradox

Sibel Marec-Kara (FVI)

*(Extraterrestrial life is rare or non-existent.)  
(Extraterrestrial intelligence is rare or non-existent.)*

There is a light outside your window.  
It flickers and dies, the memory of it a question in the folds of your brain,  
in the gaps between your curtain -- snatches of a glow,  
an unsurety, a confusion and frustration so familiar, a stain,  
that buzzes beneath your skin.

*(It is the nature of intelligent life to destroy others.)  
(It is the nature of intelligent life to destroy itself.)*

Memory like mist; cold and thin and wet,  
a haze that hums and hisses beneath your skull.  
Everything that you can't forget  
Forgotten. Dissipated, a blank space, null,  
The taste of it tucked tight between your teeth.

*(Human beings have not existed long enough.)  
(Human beings are not listening properly.)*

And knowing it's there is feeding ground  
for guilt, a lie than you pray isn't one.  
The darkness between you and the ceiling twists like a wet wrung towel,  
fear: dripping,  
into the corners of your eyes.

*(Everyone is listening but no one is transmitting.)  
(It is dangerous to communicate.)*

There is an eggshell-thin reality  
that diffuses beyond orbit, void skin pinched and stretched so far,  
To become the most dense material in the Universe; a singularity  
Condensed from a lonely collapsing star,  
Nothingness a pulsing mass of overlapped sinew.

*(No other intelligent species have arisen.)  
(They are too alien.)*

Skin rippling cells extending distending hull peeling and stretching  
like the non-fabric of vacuum, before falling back,  
knuckles white -- bone shifting and pushing,  
movement a shimmer of light, that expands, abstract,  
into nothing.

*(Earth is deliberately not contacted.)  
(Earth is purposely isolated.)*

There is a pinprick solitude that swells and bloats,  
And you wake with a hollow tucked beneath your diaphragm,  
but the hollow is a hole, a burgeoning void,  
and it is infinitely bigger than yourself.

*(They are here undetected.)  
(They are here unacknowledged.)*

You do not remember the dream.

# Crossword

Mia Gillies (FV)

The morning light exploded through the window. I was sitting, as I always do, in my armchair with my crossword, struggling with the clues. It is the last horizontal word and it is 6 letters long. The clue is "Pay heed to advice", and I just cannot seem to crack it. Unsatisfied by my mind's pace of working, I picked up my cup of tea which sloshed out over the sides. My daily tea breaks give me some time to think. I now spend every day quietly. It is a peaceful and happy way of living but I feel the existence of a quiet darkness behind me *all* of the time. It's a feeling I cannot escape from. Trust me I have tried. Slowly but surely everyone will experience its touch. As one person goes, it leads to another disappearing, much like a crossword. Once a word is discovered, it leads to the clues, (some new letters), for the next word to be deciphered.

My days are spent in my boxy room that looks no different from any of the other bedrooms in the building. I have tried my best to make it a personal space by making a large display of black and white photographs, each one capturing a special time in my life. My eyesight and memory may be fading but these pictures remind me of happier times.

When I am not cross wording or tea breaking I sit and listen to the sounds that surround me, my sense of hearing is my strongest sense. I can hear my heart beating so loud it echoes in my ears. Steady and keeping rhythm. Other sounds fade in and out becoming heard and then forgotten. The homely sounds of the dishwasher whirring away and the cars passing outside on the road at a fast pace surface and then sink. The melodious notes of birds singing in trees, and the chatter and shouting from the street would bring a smile to my face. I guess the people who have gone to that place of dark haunting can never again hear these sounds.

I returned to the last horizontal row in the crossword. Six letters long. First letter L. Second Letter I. Third letter S. Fourth Letter T. Fifth letter E. Sixth letter N. *Listen*. The word spoke to me. I took a minute to focus on the sounds that filled the background. My heart beat was echoing inside my ear drums. Steady and keeping rhythm. The gentle whirring of the washing machine grew louder and the fast-paced noise of the cars on the road grew sharper as they surfaced. Faded from my awareness were the melodious notes of birds singing in trees and the chatter and shouting from the street that would usually bring a smile to my face. After a minute or so, I got on with the crossword, now starting the vertical columns. Six letters, spelling the word *Sounds*. This again caught my attention and left me listening to the noises around. My heart beat was echoing inside my ear drums. Steady and keeping rhythm. The gentle whirring of the washing machine grew louder; the sounds of the fast-paced driving of the cars on the road weirdly no longer surfaced, and the melodious notes of birds singing in trees and the chatter and shouting from the street that would usually bring a smile to my face had faded from my awareness.

After a second or so, I again returned to the crossword. The next word was six letters long, spelling *Noises*. Just like magic, suddenly the background sounds were absent. My heart beat was echoing inside my ear drums. Steady and keeping rhythm. The sounds of the fast-paced driving of the cars weirdly no longer surfaced, and the melodious notes of birds singing in trees and the chatter and shouting from the street that would usually bring a smile to my face had faded from my awareness. Also the whirring noises coming from the washing machine had grown quiet. It was a bit unusual.

After another minute or so, I once again returned to the crossword with just one more word to fill in. The clue is "Without sound" for a word that is six letters long. Eventually I got it. The word was *Silent*. Once more I returned to the comfort of the sounds that were playing in the background. The sounds of the fast-paced driving of the cars weirdly no longer surfaced, and the melodious notes of birds singing in trees and the chatter and shouting from the street that would usually bring a smile to my face had faded from my awareness. The whirring noises coming from the washing machine had grown quiet. It was a bit unusual. Last but not least I could no longer hear...

The quiet darkness has stepped out of the shadows, putting a spotlight on its invisible existence. The feeling has now consumed me. Slowly but surely everyone will experience its touch, just like I have. It has taken me by the hand and escorted me to a place where I can only be found in black and white photographs, living as a memory. I have gone like everyone will until there is nothing to *Listen* to, no *Sounds* or *Noises*; instead the world will just be unusually *Silent*.



## Dearest View

*Elfie Haszeldine (FVI)*

“It’s getting rather cold. I do wish there weren’t such a draft.”

He sniffs, and dabs at his moustache with a folded napkin. “It builds character,” he says.

The woman takes a sip of her wine, swilling the glass. “I have plenty of character, thank you. I just wish it wasn’t so chilly.”

“They can see us from down below, you know. We are rather eye-catching.”

“Well, yes,” she agrees, taking another sip of her wine. “And I suppose we ought to make it worth the money.”

He nods solemnly. “This castle was designed by a brilliant architect, you know. I practically sold my arm for you to have it.”

“Well, yes, but I’m not sure I want it.”

He lowers his napkin, creasing the folds and settling it back on his knee. “My dear, you told me you wanted greatness.” “Well, now I’m not so sure I do. It is rather cold, and I daren’t put on a jacket. Mother never did like those things.”

“She was quite right. They are cumbersome, and lack form. No finesse. No elegance.”

A breeze tickles at the flames on the candelabra. She shivers, doing her best to cut the salmon with the knife held in too-cold fingers that seem only to shake.

“When did you say the builders were coming?”

“Next Thursday,” he says. “Three o’clock sharp. I must say, I’m looking forward to the end of the blasted dripping.”

The house creaks ominously. The candelabra slides a few inches along the table, and comes to rest just north of the flower vase. The orchids shiver.

Her hand shakes, and the fork drops with a clang. She turns to watch it slide, scrape, tip, grating across the stone—and fall.

“There goes Mother’s best silver.”

“Not to worry, dear. There are plenty more downstairs.”

“Maybe I wouldn’t have lost it if we weren’t sitting at such an angle.”

“Now, now, dear. Composure.”

“I am perfectly composed. But I think my goosebumps have goosebumps.”

A raven lands on the head of the centre chair, and ruffles its feathers.

“That’s bad luck, see? Maybe I’m right. Maybe you shouldn’t have bought this castle.”

“I’m sure everything is perfectly fine. It’s just a bird, dear.”

The bird eyes her with a beady stare, silent. Its feathers flutter in a gust of wind.

The house creaks insistently, and a wine glass shatters on the floor.

“There go Mother’s best wine glasses.”

“Not to worry, dear. I can send someone into town tomorrow to collect some more. I’m on good terms with the company owner, you see.”

“You mean how you promised to pay him double as long as he doesn’t tell anyone about—”

“We needn’t speak of such things.” The man takes a sip of his wine, eyeing her over the rim.

“...Did the crack in your wall go away?”

“Not as such. But I’m sure the builders can fix it.”

“I hope so, but I think maybe Thursday is too long. There’s one in my wall, too. There’s a puddle in the corner.”

The raven hops onto the table, and nips at the orchids. Something crashes distantly from the east wing, stone crumbling. The raven fixes her with a beady stare, and retreats.

“It’s gone.”

“And good riddance. Bad luck, those things.”

“I thought you didn’t believe in luck.”

“Of course not. Our good fortunes are self-made, through our own hard work and perseverance. ‘Luck’ is what the unfortunates tell themselves to feel better.”

A snail begins to scale the table leg. She plucks it off, and tosses it gently behind her.

“What was that?”

“A snail. Safer for it out there, I think.”

“But far more exhilarating for us to be seen in this magnificent dining room, wouldn’t you agree? The view is simply splendid.”

She regards the view, and frowns. “I suppose. But it is rather cold.”

The house creaks hopefully, and a fine dust decorates her salmon. She pushes the plate away.

“Can’t we leave?”

“Of course not, dear. I paid good money for this castle, you know. It’s famous for its scenery.”

“Won’t be for long,” she says. “There shan’t be much left,” she says.

“Now, now, dear,” says the man. “Be thankful for what we have. We are very fortunate to be able to afford such a place, you know.”

“Well, yes. And I do suppose Mother would approve.”



## Good Girl, Evil Heart

Ava Woods (FIII)

As she woke up softly in her once light pink pyjamas, Elisabeth reached for her cold tea from the night before. As she got up from her so-called bed, she slipped on her worn out bunny slippers. She felt content. Elisabeth had gone on a date with an extremely handsome young man the night before; William is a quiet man that keeps to himself. But once Elisabeth bribed him to go on the Ferris wheel and got him talking about his favourite books and interests, William had plenty to talk about. After walking around the theme-park and reciting the lines of Shakespeare's finest plays, William's lips lightly touched hers. She felt as if she was floating, like there were tiny specs of fairy dust all around them. It was the best kiss Elisabeth had ever had...

As she hurried to the coffee shop for her afternoon shift wearing her sky-blue dress and polished white heels, she looked east to the city that never sleeps. The sound of the train's horn brought a smile to her face as the children going past waved to her. Elisabeth was just beautiful. Her smile lit up the whole city, her dark brown hair and crystal blue eyes were always shining. Her slightly flushed but glowing skin was flawless. Elisabeth was kind, considerate and extremely smart. She holds the record of reading the most books in her town for the last seven years!

The bell sang as Elisabeth walked into the small coffee shop. She took off her cardigan and hung it on the broken wooden coat hanger. As she walked towards the back of the store to put on her dirty green apron, she cleared up left over coffee cups that were sitting on the table tops. She sang to herself waiting for the first customer of the day to arrive.

After a busy day of serving hot coffee and cakes, Elisabeth got ready to close the cafe when suddenly the bell on the door rang.

"I am terribly sorry, but the cafe is now closing," Elisabeth shouted as she came from behind the counter.

She came to a sudden stop as the man came into her vision. He was tall, had shiny brown hair and beautiful, brown eyes. There was an instant attraction. "I am sorry, my lady. I'm a very busy man. May you please make the exception?"

"Yes, sir," Elisabeth took his black cloak from him and hung it on the hanger, ignoring the fact the hanger fell over. Elisabeth hurried behind the counter to make his coffee.

"Your coffee, sir."

"No need to call me sir. I'm Rafael. And you are?"

"Rafael? Sounds Italian. Oh, I'm Elisabeth." There was a sudden stop in the conversation, he looked deeply into her eyes and embraced her. She felt light; like she was doing something she wasn't meant to, but she couldn't help but stare at his mysterious brown eyes. He got up and kissed her hand.

"Lovely to meet you. I shall be back," he said with confidence. Her mind went to William, her sweet William.

That night, William stopped by Elisabeth's house. He brought the finest vegetables from the store that he worked at. Elisabeth was always very grateful for the food William would bring her as she could never afford such good quality vegetables. She and William stayed up until sunrise giggling and having discussions about who has the best hair. William won. The night was filled with joy, but something did not seem quite right. She slowly entered a daydream thinking about every feature Rafael had. She found herself obsessing over him, but as soon as she came back to reality she found William staring into her eyes with a passion.

Every day for the next four weeks Rafael stopped by at the coffee shop. The more he came, the more Elisabeth fell for him, as she learnt about his past, his family and even his money. Rafael was rich, oh so very rich. Sometimes, Elisabeth would create scenarios in her head about dropping their future children off at school and being able to finally pay rent, but she knew these thoughts were only a fantasy. She then sprung back into reality and was surrounded by dirty mattresses and broken walls in her small apartment. She would still have thoughts about William and want to see him, but as the days went by, she realised she may be in love with both of them.

She arranged to meet William two weeks later for a romantic Saturday night dinner. She wore her favourite lavender dress detailed with white and light purple flowers. She wore her mother's pearls, and her hair was effortlessly tied up with bobby pins she had from when she was a little girl. After a beautiful roof top dinner, William asked her to dance and he turned on her favourite song and they danced elegantly in the light from the rose scented candles and the full moon. It was perfect.

When the song was over, William got down on one knee and started to express the love he felt for her. She felt uneasy and, it was at this time, she realised she had to pick one of them...

## From the Editor...

When we put together the last Sports Section of the Galley in June 2020, we were in the midst of the first Covid-19 Pandemic. Here we are in the same position again almost 1 year on. At the moment only elite athletes are allowed to train. Hopefully, stadiums, pitches, pools and gyms will open for the wider population soon. While sport is still at a halt for many, we can look forward to the Olympics, Paralympics, Wimbledon and the Euros that will hopefully take place later in 2021.

We have had many contributions to this edition of the Galley, with sport articles varying from the 'Rising Phoenix' documentary to boxing to mountain biking.

We welcome any contributions, opinions and experiences in sport, whether from your own activities or your passions related to sport. We regularly update the sports section of the Galley blog which you can find at: <http://da-thegalleymagazine.blogspot.com>

We hope you enjoy this terms edition of The Galley.



Grace Stirling (FVI)

## 'Rising Phoenix' - A Celebration of Diversity

Grace Stirling (FVI)

*'We wanted to change the way people saw people with a disability.'*

On 26th August 2020, exactly one year before the postponed 2020 Paralympic Games would begin, Netflix released the documentary 'Rising Phoenix.' 'Rising Phoenix' explains the origins of the Paralympic Games, the problems and difficulties that the movement has faced but most importantly the success stories of athletes from all across the world. From a collective narrative of athletes from multiple sports we see the impact sport has had on their life and their triumphs that they have achieved throughout their sporting career. But most importantly it shows disabilities in a new light.

Throughout the documentary we meet Paralympic athletes Bebe Vio, Tatyana McFadden, Jean-Baptiste Alaize, Jonnie Peacock, Matt Stutzman, Ntando Mahlangu, Cui Zhe, Ryley Batt and Ellie Cole. These athletes participate in a variety of sports including fencing, athletics, archery, wheelchair rugby, swimming and powerlifting. Most of these athletes were either born with their disability or had an illness or accident that resulted in their disability. However, perhaps the most tragic and compelling story in the documentary is of Jean Baptiste Alaize who is a runner and long-jumper. He lost his lower limbs as a result of a machete during the Burundi Civil War. The documentary demonstrates how sport helped him cope with the trauma of losing his limbs and witnessing the murder of his mother. Despite the tragedies that Alaize and many other Paralympic athletes have faced, they have gone on to achieve outstanding things. The Paralympic movement has given these athletes an opportunity to show what they can achieve and has profoundly changed their lives.



The idea for the Paralympic Games came from neurologist Sir Ludwig Guttmann. While treating injured soldiers at the National Spinal Injuries Centre in Stoke Mandeville in the 1940s, he realised the potential for sport to be used as rehabilitation. He decided to organise a sporting event at the hospital for the veterans. In 1960, Guttmann founded the British Sports Association of the Disabled.

Throughout his life, Guttman was determined to change the perceptions of disability in society.



The first Paralympic Games took place in 1948 at Guttman's hospital with just 16 competitors. Four years later the participation of the Dutch made it an international event. Finally, in 1960, the Paralympics became an official event when 400 athletes from 23 different countries competed in Rome. Fifty-six years later, over 4,000 athletes competed at the 2016 Paralympic Games in Rio. As the years go on the Paralympic movement continues growing across the world as more and more people with disabilities get involved in sport.

While the documentary features the success of the Paralympic movement through the athletes' victorious sporting careers, it does not miss out the setbacks and struggles they experience as it recalls how inaccessible the current world is. It makes sure to highlight the many adversities the Games has experienced. From Moscow refusing to host the 1980 Paralympic Games because the Soviet Union believed there were not any disabled people in the country, to the under promotion of the Games in Athens resulting in empty stadiums, to the scandal just four years ago where the Rio Paralympics funding was used by the Brazilian Government for the Olympics instead; these are just a few of the difficulties which illustrate the continuous inequalities between the Paralympics and the Olympics. The battle against the social barriers of inequality in the world are ongoing as Paralympic athletes still struggle to receive the attention that they deserve.

'Rising Phoenix' tries not to focus of the obstacles or tragedies the athletes have faced but rather on their determination and ambitions that have driven them to where they are today. It demonstrates how sport became their freedom and allowed them to escape the realities of a world dominant with able-bodied people. Prince Harry said in the documentary, "There isn't anything else in the world that can bring you back from the darkest places than sport." Sport allowed the athletes to see and believe that anything was possible. It turned the difficulties of life that were a result of their disability into something they could be proud of. The documentary represents disabilities not as tragedy or weakness but parades them as a superpower.

Athletes all over the world have come together to inspire and provoke change in the perception of disabilities in society. The film conveys a powerful message about the importance of inclusion and equality within society.

As Andrew Parsons, President of the International Paralympic Committee, said:

"There is absolutely no doubt that this film will transform every single person who watches it. This is a film that will empower so many people around the world and further bring to life the vision of the Paralympic Movement's founder Sir Ludwig Guttman."

'Rising Phoenix' can be viewed on Netflix – Challenge the way you see disabilities.



## Fort William Final - Mountain Biking

Louis Kirkwood (FV)

3,2,1... One pedal stroke, two pedal strokes. I'm up to speed, racing down the track, the bike soaking up the rocks and drops, on the edge trying to push myself. The course tape blowing in the wind. People cheering, whistles and horns blaring. All I needed to do was stay on the bike.

December 18th, 2020: I qualified for the Fort William mountain bike race, something at the start of the year I thought would never happen, as I needed to place top 3 in 5 races across the previous year to qualify. I had a mixture of feelings I was overwhelmed with excitement as I got the privilege of racing in one of the biggest races in Scotland, if not the UK but at the same time I was extremely anxious as I knew the pressure that I would feel to perform and do well in the race.

The race was on 15th February; it was exactly 59 days away. I had a lot of preparation to do physically and to my not-race-ready bike. Part of me wanted to just pull out and not do the race as I knew how hard it was going to be to train so I was fit enough to complete a whole run of the course. Three weeks before the race the heat list came out for my age category. I recognised a lot of the names as you get to know most of the guys as they start placing well or winning races. Most of the other guys had sponsors and mechanics and then there was me, my own mechanic and not a sponsor in sight. I personally saw this as a disadvantage as, some would say, my mechanic skills aren't up to scratch. Most of the other guys had sponsors and mechanics and then there was me, my own mechanic and not a sponsor in sight. I personally saw this as a disadvantage as my mechanic skills some would say aren't up to scratch.

Two days till the race, we set off Fort William bound. The Nevis range car park filled with bike tents and vans; this is when I realised that everyone else here was taking this as seriously if not more seriously than me. I pitched my tent away from everyone to try to take some of the nerves off being surrounded by all the other racers. Practice day: I was up early to get ready for a big day of trying to memorise the track top to bottom finding the fastest lines to cut fractions of a second off my race time. I got the chair lift up, music on, trying not to think about the one section of the track I was worried about "the world cup woods" - a rocky, rooty room section of the track that claims bikes and riders. From the chair you could see the woods with the bright orange stretcher and the paramedics on standby.

I cruised down the top of the track with relative ease, but the woods were in the back of my mind the whole way down. I saw the queue of people at the top of it all looking for the best lines down. I stopped and had a look; I had ridden the woods a handful of times before so I was relatively confident that I could make it through without being rag dolled by the rocks and roots. I pushed up a bit to get some speed to attempt it. This was the most pressure I had felt yet, all my opponents watching me hit this section. I knew I needed to do it flawlessly and fast so that I didn't get judged by all the other riders.



I set off for the section faster than I had ever attempted it I knew this was stupid as there was a high chance I would mess it up and crash, putting me out of the race tomorrow. I didn't slow down as I entered the section; I was merely a passenger on my bike. Everyone was cheering and shouting as they knew I had entered faster than I should have; I wasn't in control - I was like a pinball bouncing through the rocks, but I made it through to everyone's surprise. I had done the section without crashing or breaking the bike - it was somewhat of a miracle in my eyes.

That evening I prepped the bike, I slept about an hour being kept up with nerves, thinking about every bad scenario that could ruin my run or cause me to have a bad time. Checking the time constantly, thinking it is time to get up, it was a long sleepless night.

Race day: I was up early to eat and double check all my prior preparations. I pedalled over to the lift for my race run. It was the longest lift journey in the world looking at the track from above seeing all the spectators cheering and blowing horns as racers went past. I just closed my eyes, music playing, picturing every inch of the track in my head. I was calm and relaxed. I felt good, ready for my run. I pushed to the start gate where there was one rider to go then it was me, my turn. All the preparations, all the stressing, for this run. It had to be flawless. All the bad thoughts bad scenarios started coming back to me. I had to shut them all out and focus on the run.

It was my turn. The beeper went. 3-2-1 beep. I was off - a couple pedal strokes and I was up to speed. The crowd was always big at the top for the one jump out the start gate, the jump was 10 times more daunting with spectators. I hit it perfectly, like I knew I could. I had a word with myself; I told myself not to stress and ride like I normally would. I couldn't. The pressure was too much, all the stress and the fear of the 'woods' was still in the back of my mind. As I approached the woods, I could hear the spectators before I could see the section. 50 meters until I was feeling the full force of the woods and its forbidding rocks and roots. The people were going crazy, I had never had this many people watch me at anything I had done before. It egged me on and encouraged me. I thought let's go for it flat out, who cares if I crash it will put on a good show for these people and I will make it to the highlights. Best case scenario I go for it and don't crash and it still gets videoed; the crowd love it and it gets me a better time; I couldn't see a flaw in this plan. My inner I can't get hurt 16-year-old boy started kicking in. I went for it I was merely a passenger at the mercy of the woods; the crowd was going mental I had almost absolutely aced the hardest part of the track like it was nothing. I was buzzing. It was amazing all these people in disbelief that I had done it, I flew down the last part of the track flawlessly, I used every ounce of energy putting in every last pedal stroke on the final straight before the finish line.

That was it I had made it down; the best run I could have put down.

At this point I didn't mind where I had placed, I was just happy for myself I had a sense of achievement like I had never felt before it was great; the other bikers gave me a pat on the back and a well done as I went past. I was sitting in 10th with three riders to go; a part of me wanted to stay in the top 10 as it would be a big achievement. I was knocked down to 11th by the last rider who ended up placing first.

After the race, I was thinking about why I had put so much pressure on myself I had no need to, I had nobody to impress, no sponsors relying on me to place well, only me that's the only person that was judging me and my riding. My parents always say I'm my hardest critic and shouldn't beat myself up and stress out so much. This is something I will try and work on in future challenges I am faced with.





# Brutal or Beneficial Boxing?

Alex Tilsley (FV)

Boxing is a popular but highly controversial combat sport. Due to its sheer brutality, it is infamously dangerous, and can lead to serious injuries like concussion, long-term brain damage, neurological diseases, and even sudden death. That is not surprising given it entails two athletes aiming to knock their opponent unconscious. Yet despite the risks, boxing is also a sport which can positively change lives and communities in dramatic ways: it can help to reshape the futures of troubled youths and turn them into physically fit, disciplined young people, and improve physical and mental health outcomes for children and adults. Throughout this essay I will compare the risks and benefits of boxing, and draw a conclusion as to whether the measurable advantages of the sport outweigh its well documented perils.



The force of a professional boxer's fist is equivalent to being hit with a bowling ball travelling at 20 miles per hour. This illustrates exactly why boxing carries such high risk of head injury – causing both short-term and life-lasting conditions. According to research in the 'Journal of Combative Sport', detailed by the American Association of Neurological Surgeons, from January 1960 to August of 2011 there were 488 boxing-related deaths. Of those, 66% were from head, brain or neck injuries, and one from a fractured skull. This not only demonstrates the brutality of the sport, but also the reason why many do not wish to partake, or even watch it. Moreover, death is not the most prevalent issue: the broader concern is chronic brain injury, with 15-40 percent of ex-boxers suffering long-term 'punch drunk' affects. Medical professionals also now link debilitating conditions like Alzheimer's with a long career in boxing. As cited within the 'Journal of Combative Sport', the longer the ring time throughout a boxer's career, the more likely they will suffer a chronic brain injury. So for those who survive the immediate dangers of the fight, there's still a significant risk of them falling ill from long-term damage later in life.

With such peril involved, the crucial question is: can this be outweighed by the opportunities that boxing delivers? Studies suggest the positive social impacts are significant. In Australia, for example, the Redfern Police Force collaborated with an Aboriginal organisation, Tribal Warriors, to organise a boxing programme targeted at giving troubled youths a better chance in life. It reduced youth crime by 80%, and was deemed an incredible

success. Schemes like these have also been implemented worldwide to keep underprivileged youths away from crime and drugs, and find a sense of purpose – with similar positive results. Without this sport, these youths would have remained directionless, falling into unproductive lives – and crime. Boxing also teaches important life skills, such as discipline and respect. An incredible example of what boxing can do for troubled youths closer to home can be seen through the case study of Antony Joshua, who was in 2011 found guilty of intending to distribute drugs, then just year later became super heavyweight Olympic champion, and later the heavyweight boxing champion of the world. Boxing provided him with a focus and a future, and completely altered his path in life. And the same positive pattern has been repeated across other boxing group programmes.

Social benefits are therefore a proven outcome of boxing. However, health benefits are equally – if not more – important. With rising obesity rates a concerning issue amongst UK adults and children, it is now critical to encourage exercise and healthy eating. According to NHS Health Scotland, in 2016, 29% of Scotland's children were at risk of becoming overweight, including 14% at risk of becoming obese. Furthermore, 65% of adults were overweight, including 29% of whom were obese. Obesity also accounts for 87% of type 2 diabetes cases in Scotland. These statistics are shocking, and current trends indicate things continue to worsen. Boxing clubs provide a focussed environment, support and encouragement to combat this slide. They can keep people active and in shape, giving a high-level fitness regime and complementary dietary advice. Livestrong, a not-for-profit organisation that conducts extensive research into health and fitness, supports this positive stance. It describes boxing as a high-intensity sport which is very effective in reducing and maintaining a healthy weight. When participating in boxing training, for example, women can expect to burn around 400 calories per hour and men around 500. A sport which delivers such a high-intensity all-body workout, improving fitness, strength and balance, is surely a vital weapon in the battle against the obesity and diabetes epidemic sweeping the UK. Boxing is one solution that addresses this. Whilst it carries risk of serious injury, risk from obesity is arguably a far greater threat to health on a mass scale.



Poor mental health rates, according to the Scottish Government, are also rising and need to be addressed just as urgently. One in three people in Scotland are currently estimated to be affected by mental illness. Boxing can improve mental as well as physical wellbeing – giving a 'double positive' impact. A 2014 study published in the 'Japan Journal of Physical Education, Health and Sport Sciences', as highlighted by Livestrong, found that boxing

exercise promotes relaxation and improves mood, rapidly releasing endorphins into the body due to its high level of cardiovascular exercise. Moreover, boxing can deliver this positive mental health boost within a lesser timespan than activities like running. With the incidence of mental health conditions rising – particularly amongst the young – boxing can provide part of the solution, playing a role in prevention and even recovery.

Although boxing can be a dangerous sport, the positive impact it can have is compelling – from improved physical and mental health; to increased life chances amongst socio-economically disadvantaged youths. The sport has for many years helped young people find a disciplined, active way to a better life, diverting them from negative pathways and giving them a sense of purpose. And through boxing, they can also have a controlled way of releasing anger – something hugely important in an era when teen knife crime is so prevalent. All this in turn helps disadvantaged communities in a dramatic way. Moreover, with a diabetes rates rising, an increasingly obese population, and a growing mental health crisis, engaging cardiovascular sports like boxing – which particularly appeal to the younger population – are essential. Yes, boxing carries real, quantifiable danger, but then so does cycling, water and winter sports, rugby and horse riding – to name just a few. If carried out in a controlled, regulated environment, then the combined advantages of boxing far outweigh the potential perils.



# Tackling the COVID Crisis in Sport

Olivia Smart (FV)

Through many of the most testing times in history, one thing has always brought us together: a good old game of football. Known as the people's sport due to its undeniable ability to captivate and unite people of all ages, the sheer simplicity of 11 people try to kick a ball through some metal posts has changed so many people's lives forever, in a way far beyond any other sport. For instance: 25th of December 1914, marshlands, covered in the scent of agony and loss in a haze of darkness and explosions; in no man's land, where no one was safe. Yet, on this day no gunshots were heard; instead only the calls of men scrambling and laughing through a football game filled the land – ceasefire as football united enemies. Nowadays, football often causes as many fights as moments of celebration, so in a time of modern-day hardship over COVID-19 should football be allowed to continue?



As the whole world came to a grinding halt last March over a highly contagious virus, all professional sports seasons were cancelled. In such a troubling time of uncertainty over job security, education, and financial survival the UK government provided the go-ahead for men's top league football to resume behind closed doors. Although many saw this as a moment of celebration others were more doubtful over the fact sport was being prioritised over education. Considering the fact most professional footballers are in their 20s so at low risk of suffering from the virus surely nothing could go wrong?

Soon, positive tests filled the media as players were being criticised over attending illegal house parties and blatantly ignoring the guidelines. It even went as far as Celtic managers deciding to fly the whole team out to their winter camp in Dubai at the beginning of January despite it being recommended to avoid travelling. The result? A string of positive COVID tests resulting in many top players being scored off the team sheet. So, no wonder the go-ahead for football to resume has caused so many debates; the general public cannot attend their workplace or see friends, yet many footballers continue to abuse the privilege being handed to them.

But it is not just the players, many fans have struck out perhaps due to boredom or just sheer ignorance. Rather than enjoying the game on the TV with a few friends over zoom, time and time again, they have made attempts to

calculate the logistics of crossing borders or counties to watch the game in a packed pub. But not every fan should be discriminated against under these claims as the vast majority have stuck to the rules. Only a small few, or perhaps hundreds, decided it was acceptable to take part in celebrations over Rangers league win, in a crowd setting of fireworks shooting away any concerns of the ongoing pandemic into the sky with them. Even, some of the players ventured into the crowds despite the moral duties they should hold.

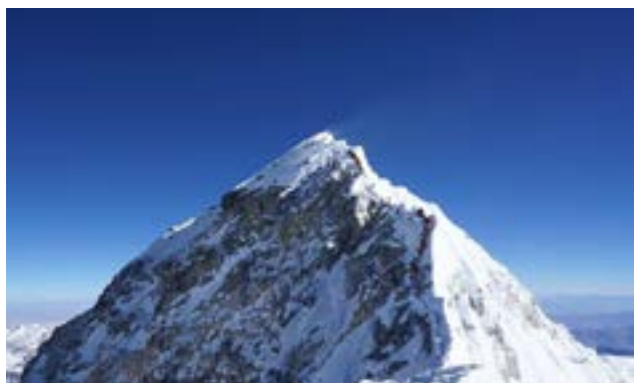
So, as the general public reach a year of testing restrictions in the new norm shouldn't football makes some changes too? It goes without saying that education should be prioritised over football and that those in the sport ignoring the guidance should face more stringent measures to get back to packed stadiums and life as we once knew it as soon as possible.



## Everest

*Bruce Shearer (FV)*

David Sharp reassured his mother before leaving for his third attempt at the 8,848m Wonder of the World, that whilst on the mountain 'You are never on your own. There are climbers everywhere,' these words could not be further from the truth. On May 13th 2006 Sharp attempted a daring solo summit. People are uncertain whether Sharp reached the summit that day; one thing is for sure, his



body has never left the mountain. David Sharp rested in a cave for two days, with a total of forty climbers walking past him - with no interest in saving a dying man. The passing mountaineers were accused of being overcome by summit fever; the obsessive drive to reach the peak. Their collective disregard caused the preventable death of David Sharp.



This death represented the terrible attitudes of Everest climbers. Completely self-centered. Professionals note, if David had received supplemental oxygen or drugs, then there was a chance he would have made it down the mountain safely. But the key word, 'chance' was all the climbers needed, claiming that Everest is every man for themselves. Yet, Sir Edmund Hillary, the first person to scale Everest said "on my expedition, there was no way that you would have left a man under a rock to die." The contrast between the climbers' attitude now and 67 years ago is causing a record breaking death tally.



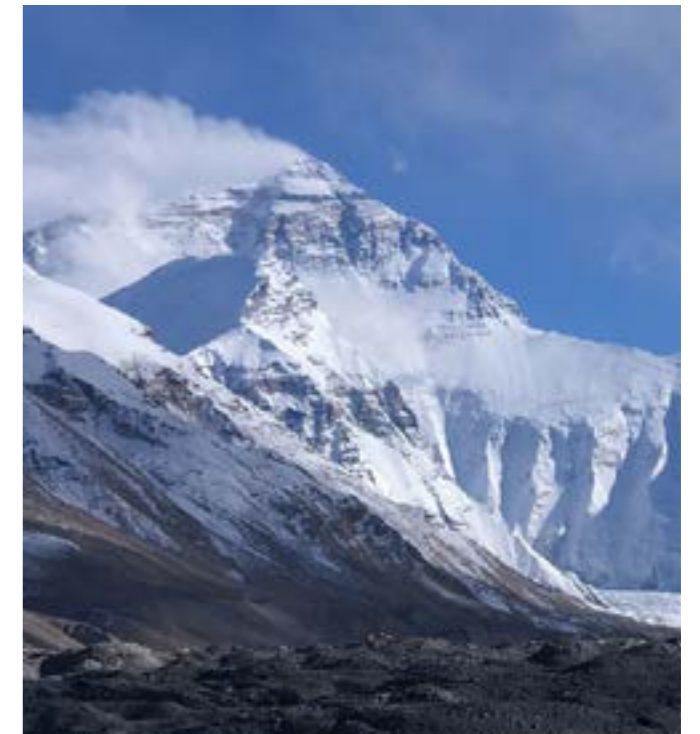
A critical threshold of the mountain is the 8000m mark, any ascent above this, climbers' enter 'The Death Zone'. In this area it supposedly feels like "running on a treadmill and breathing through a straw." 37% of oxygen is lost in the Death Zone. When climbing at this height a person's body is effectively dying. The disaster of 1996 witnessed the highest loss of 12 lives on Everest in one year. In 2019, the mountain experienced 11 deaths in total. The 1996 disaster was caused by a unforeseen freak storm. In 2019

the weather was average for Everest. Instead, crowding and inexperienced climbers caused a fatal descent for 11 mountaineers. The Nepali government issued a record high of 381 permits to climbers in 2019. In the previous year, 2018, Everest saw 5 deaths, yet none occurred during descent from the summit.

There is a viral photo in which the summit of Everest is shown with hundreds of people piled on top of each other shuffling along like a crowd of penguins. This evidence shows the mass of crowds atop of the mountain, forcing people into spending more time in the death zone than they should be. More deaths recorded on the descent track has a direct correlation with climbers spending more time on the peak than necessary. These crowds are caused by the increase in climbers on the mountains but also inexperienced climbers. Those unable to reach the summit or submitting to summit fever in the vain attempt of expending all their energy to reach it, effectively end up unable to get off the peak. The day after the viral photo was taken another expedition set out to reach the summit, this group met a queue of 50 people in the death zone, all slowed down by 2 compromised people. The inexperienced and unfit climbers refused to move out the way, slowing the pace and risking the health of the majority in the extreme climate. Adding extra hours due to overcrowding above 8000 meters is a potential death sentence to climbers.

Decision making is a key concern for the companies in charge of running the Everest excursions. People with 'summit fever' end up sacrificing others lives for their own gain. Climbers taking selfies 'on top of the world', resting at the top, oxygen deprived and reckless over the fragile state of their bodies. This is an equal cause for concern to the people further behind; who cannot persist through those added hours. Their whole expeditions are ruined and are forced to turn back rather than risking their own life.

There is no one solution to these many problems. The Nepali government issuing 381 permits to climbers is ridiculous. Climbing Everest has turned into a cash grab letting anyone who is anyone try and scale the mountain, as long as they pay the £45,000. It is immoral for the governing powers to make Everest a profitised business. The summit should not be a tourist attraction. When



the government realizes their abuse of power for profit isn't worth as much as a human life; then hopefully the crowding issue will be dealt with, and the annual death count of Everest cut dramatically. But until then the Death Zone will still be littered with ambitious lives ended by irresponsible management.

Once the actual numbers on the mountain are cut then the companies must move onto looking into the actual skill levels and fitness of the climbers attempting the mountain. To conquer the giant climbers must have scaled at least one mountain in Nepal above 6,500m high, the mountaineer must also submit proof that they are fit enough to climb the mountain with a Nepali trained guide confirming this and there is an age restriction of 16 years and over. These may sound strict, but clearly, they are not working. People on the mountain have constantly complained about inexperienced climbers slowing everyone down, not being up for the task. There is a mindset that people have, this mindset of being totally sold that they can 100% reach the peak, when their body says otherwise. The selected people need to be disciplined, do whatever the climbing instructor commands, get it out of their heads that Everest must be conquered; because no matter how well you trained or what equipment an individual has, all climbers must respect, 'The last word always belongs to the mountain'.

## From the Editor...

One year in and the smell of freshly popped popcorn and overpriced cinema tickets is beginning to become a fleeting memory. As the world has slowed down the entertainment industry has sped up. We rely on it more than ever to keep us on the edge of our seats, and it has delivered- whether that be through shock album releases or binge-worthy blockbusters on Netflix.

The last twelve months have reshaped the entertainment industry, perhaps forever. As many entertainment venues are shut due to the pandemic, it poses the question: will they ever reopen and, if they do, how? The pandemic has changed the way we live our lives, and even after it is gone, streaming sites power may continue to dominate over cinemas and theatres.

Whether you are looking for the latest hit movie to watch or album to listen to you have come to the right place. But this is more than just a reviews section. Perhaps Amanda's article on how Brooklyn 99 has come under crossfire is more up your steet?

So sit back and relax; the show is about to begin.

Your Entertainment editor, Olivia



Olivia Smart (FV)

## Airing in 3,2...

Olivia Smart (FV)

Lights, camera, halt the action! Jumbo-sized projector screens, the latest blockbuster paired with some overpriced popcorn and irritating chuckles from the back rows; all linger as distant memories of normality. As our lives edge closer to becoming a dystopian action film, I must not be the only one to think they have dragged this scene out for far too long. And I am sure many directors and cinema chains would agree.

As entertainment venues begin to reopen, offering the promise of countless safety measures, I cannot help but wonder is there really any point? After all, paying £20 to watch the "Breakfast Club" when you can do it from the comfort of your own home via Netflix is surely closer to a breath of fresh air (maybe not after the 6 months cycle of binge-watching). Especially without the invasive masks. The 10 million new subscribers to Netflix over lockdown certainly agree.

Now with the Netflix party feature, people do not even have to leave the comfort of their living rooms to enjoy an evening with friends. So, even after this corona coaster slows to a halt, we may find life will always be different, primarily due to the countless closures of entertainment venues. Within the last few weeks leading cinema chain, Cineworld announced the closure of all 128 UK chains after the latest Bond film release was delayed. This is no wonder considering film crews are being forced to put down their cameras or come up with a safer alternative to shoot blockbusters. Even the completed films that were set to hit the screen over the summer months were delayed due to the decreased demand and access to cinemas.

So, no cinema to watch the films that are not being released. Sounds like a case for 007 to solve. But I am not sure it would have the same effect if he had to go around with a two-metre pole to sway compulsive panic buyers away, squirting hand gel around every corner to be corona-safe. People go to the cinema to escape reality but at the moment our daily lives have transformed so much, it's a struggle to define the blurred line between fiction and reality.

With these limitations becoming more and more permanent many films that would have been topping the movie charts have been prematurely released onto streaming sites with a rental charge. For instance, Disney's "Mulan" was released over lockdown onto the brand-new movie site Disney+, allowing fans to access the eagerly anticipated remake while encouraging a surge in subscription numbers. So, in many ways the closure of cinemas has come as a blessing to sites such as Netflix, Amazon Prime and Disney+.

Nobody knows when or if things will go back to normal. Though if things continue to spiral the way they are even more jobs in the entertainment sector will be lost, presenting the risk of the tertiary sector becoming a distant memory eradicated by modern streaming sites. It was inevitable, but it is just not the same as a day at the cinema.

## Enola Holmes Movie Review

Finley Gray (FII)

Enola Holmes is a movie about Sherlock Holmes sister and shows her detective skills in helping locate her missing mother. I really liked the way she speaks to the camera, making the audience feel like you are in the movie.

I also like the actors; I found Millie Bobby Brown to be a perfect fit for Enola because she played the part of being quite mischievous very well. I also found Louis Partridge for Viscount Tewksbury being spoiled yet educated a good fit.

The detail that was put into the sets made it look like they were exactly from 1890s London which was effective in engaging the audience as it seemed more related to the time period of the events.

I think it was a good time for this movie to be released since everybody is indoors, and movie streaming sites are experiencing a massive boom in popularity, so it has really benefited from these factors.

I really hope this movie becomes popular since it has such a great story and actors. "Enola Holmes" has already reached the top 10 movies in Britain and has received a range of positive ratings.



## clipping. – Visions of Bodies Being Burned album review

Matthew Al Jaafari (FII)

Clipping. has been one of the most exciting and intriguing hip hop acts of the past decade. Since their debut mixtape, *Midcity*, in 2013 the group has been releasing the most cutting-edge and forward-thinking hip hop on the market. From their critically acclaimed first self-titled album with many incredible tracks such as *Summertime*, *Get Up* and *Story 2* (which is nothing short of a masterpiece) to their more conceptually ambitious sophomore effort, *Splendor and Misery*, Clipping. have proven themselves to be a group to keep your eye on.

However, they took a darker turn with their 2019 album, *There Existed an Addiction to Blood*. This album is the musical equivalent of a slasher horror movie, with stories of murder, torture and fright. And it's a very good Halloween album! As I'm writing this it is currently their most popular album among fans and critics alike.

*Visions of Bodies Being Burned* seems to be a continuation of their last record thematically, with Clipping. still taking on the genre of horrorcore. Even the cover art is strikingly similar. But stylistically this record is so much more aggressive and abrasive than the last. As with the rest of their work, the production is top-notch. Clipping love to weave tiny little details into their music that make each listen as rewarding as the last. To this day I often find some small new things in old songs, and a lot of the time they change the way I look at the song forever. All this combined with influence from noise music and harsher types of industrial hip hop, *Visions of Bodies Being Burned* is not only Clipping's best work, but probably my favourite album from this year so far as well.

Check the Lock, Say the Name and '96 Neve Campbell are the tamest tracks on this record, which isn't necessarily a bad thing. They all have a distinct vocal hook and a memorable structure that keeps you engaged for the whole listen. '96 Neve Campbell in particular has an interesting structure, using sounds such as knives, bottles clinking and knocking on the door to construct a beat, and the instrumental slowly building on itself as the track progresses.

*Make Them Dead* is a ruthless, aggressive monster that sets out to harm from the opening seconds. It honestly astonished me how Daveed can rap over this instrumental. It's noisy, it's abstract and it's amazing. This is another thing that *VOBBB* does differently than their other albums. The use of noise and atmospherics is much more prevalent here than on previous releases, and it works to their benefit. It's dense and brutal, but it's still catchy and I still remember every second of it. *Looking Like Meat* and *Body for the Pile* take similar approaches, but use more rhythm and melody. However, even those songs are mainly new ground for Clipping., and

the execution of these ideas is incredible nonetheless.

One of Clipping.'s biggest strengths has always been their storytelling ability, and this is showcased here yet again. On *She Bad* and *Eaten Alive* especially, the lyrics paint astonishingly intricate and vivid images in your mind, and you can even picture the scene being described exactly as it's happening. "Spirits in the weeping willows heavyweight/Spirits out the bathtub for the every day/Heavy mists got vision cloudy anyway" and "Bathwater babies creep up out the bayou magically/And leave your brains behind the outhouse in the grass for cats to eat" are two of the best lyrics in this group's entire discography.

The interludes here are surprisingly captivating for being just interludes. From excerpts from a horror movie (*Wytchboard*) to haunting field recordings (*Drove*), Clipping. have managed to create a gripping atmosphere and a well-needed break from the brutality of the bulk of the record. They also amplify and even set the mood for the next track, the biggest example of this being the transition from *Wytchboard* to '96 Neve Campbell.

The last stretch of the record is phenomenal, even more so than the rest of the record. *Eaten Alive*, a song that I already talked about a bit, is barely even hip hop. With a feature from Jeff Parker of post-rock band *Tortoise*, the track is the single weirdest thing Clipping. have ever recorded. The instrumental consists of pots and pans clanging and banjo twangs – a chaotic yet memorable mess that comes out of nowhere and leaves an impression. The lyrics set the scene of a haunted swamp, and this paired with the off-putting instrumental creates an unsettling atmosphere.

*Enlacing* is my personal favourite song from the record. Featuring a sample from the *Infinite Body* song of the same name, *Enlacing* is a five minute long mind trip of cosmic horror, as opposed to the serial murder slasher stories of the other forty-odd minutes of the record.

*"It's that, geeked up, it's that sky, it's deeper / Than that pool you swim in, you inside the speaker / It's your song, sling that tightrope, walk the skin inside your teeth / Call that floss and bleeding diamonds, fine if you could only reach / Ones up in the sky is smiling, they so fine and they so far / And you so small and so you find that you've been wishing on a star"*

Taking cues from outsider genres like witch house and vaporwave, both structurally and atmospherically, it's yet another new and unique idea presented on this album that I'd love to see Clipping. take further.

For seven years we've seen this trio evolve and grow, flesh out their sound and experiment with different styles and ideas. And after three albums, an EP and a mixtape, they've finally delivered the perfect ten I knew they had in them. Their 2019 output was great, and there's no knowing where they go from here. But wherever they take this project, I'm sure it'll be good.

**RATING:** 10/10

**FOR FANS OF:** JPEGMAFIA, Death Grips, Backwash, Dälek

## I love Brooklyn Nine-Nine. But is it time for the show to be cancelled?

Amanda Amaeshi (FV)

If you ever ask me what my favourite TV shows are, without a doubt one of the first shows I'll mention is *Brooklyn Nine-Nine*.

Set in the hilariously haphazard fictional 99th precinct of the New York Police Department, the show revolves around immature but talented detective, Jake Peralta (Andy Samberg), and his colleagues. In the pilot episode, viewers learn that a new captain will be taking over the 99th precinct, namely Captain Raymond Holt (Andre Braugher): serious, deadpan, and completely the opposite of Peralta. The show is a workplace sitcom, not too dissimilar to *The Office* (2005-13) or *Parks and Recreation* (2009-15) – all three of these shows incidentally were either created or co-created by Michael Schur. But *Brooklyn Nine-Nine* is not just another workplace comedy. Yes, it was very much built using the same mould, but arguably it found its own voice much more quickly than either of its predecessors.

The way the show is crafted makes it so difficult to stop watching after you start. With its clever writing, each episode tackles multiple storylines well, encompassing police work as well as character- and relationship-building. Each cast member, through the character they play, brings their unique flavour to the show. Through sight gags, running jokes, and slapstick humour, the show is sweet, heartfelt, and funny – in a seemingly-effortless way.

I know this show like the back of my hand. If I were to be told a really random reference from the show, there is a 99% chance (see what I did there?) that I would know exactly where that reference comes from, and the full context behind it. If I'm not in the mood for watching something new or if I'm feeling down, this show is one of my go-tos for rewatching; it's my comfort show.

However, with the re-emergence of the Black Lives Matter movement this year in the wake of the murders of Black Americans like Breonna Taylor and George Floyd at the hands of the police, many fans and critics of the show are calling for it to be cancelled. (Some other popular police programmes, such as *Cops* and *Live P.D.*, have already been cancelled in light of recent events.) Why? Because, even though the main cast members collectively donated \$100,000 to the National Bail Fund Network; even though they acknowledged their privilege and highlighted the importance of them donating to organisations that fight for social justice since they play police officers on-screen; even though the show's writers have abandoned early drafts of the upcoming 8th season in order to focus more on police brutality... the show is, at the end of the day, copaganda.

Copaganda (n): a portmanteau of cop and propaganda, the phenomenon in which news media and other social institutions promote celebratory portrayals of police officers with the intent of swaying public opinion for the benefit of police departments and law enforcement. (from Wikipedia)

At the utterance of this word, some fans get very defensive; they're quick to justify why their beloved show does not fit the definition. "But it's not like *Cops*/*Live P.D.*/[insert cop show here]!" they cry. Well, yes, there are other shows that unashamedly glorify the militarisation and oppressive ideals within today's law enforcement far more explicitly than *Brooklyn Nine-Nine*. But here's the uncomfortable truth: this light-hearted comedy, with a diverse ensemble and seemingly progressive views, is undoubtedly still copaganda. Let me explain.

*Brooklyn Nine-Nine* portrays the main police characters as the heroes, the good guys. "That's how we do it in the Nine-Nine, sir. Catch bad guys and look good doing it," says Peralta to Holt in the closing scenes of the pilot episode, as the squad makes an arrest. But this rose-tinted narrative that paints cops as the good guys – even though cops are part of an institution that systemically oppresses marginalised groups such as non-white people and queer people – is harmful. Many viewers, particularly those who have never had a personal experience with the police, experience the show's depiction of the criminal justice system as realistic, meaning that their understanding of the system is distorted, which could consequently turn them against police reform, reform that is so necessary and so overdue. Society needs to challenge the notion that the police are these "knights in shining armour", and a good place to start is dismantling the pop culture that upholds this belief.

But *Brooklyn Nine-Nine* doesn't always show the police characters or the system in which they work as perfect! you might be thinking now. That's true – but often when this is the case, it comes alongside limited, if any, accountability.

*Brooklyn Nine-Nine*, and police shows generally, rarely portrays criminals with any nuance. Suspects tend to be automatically assumed guilty – which is literally the opposite of how the justice system says it's supposed to work. This type of plot element is prominent across the series – so much so that it is rarely, if ever, remarked upon or criticised. It reinforces the expectation of unquestioned subservience to law enforcement. Also, the show has a big problem regarding how it frames defence attorneys, who are there to ensure the accused has legal representation at their trial, and Internal Affairs, which is supposed to hold the police accountable when they violate people's civil liberties. The show frames them badly, and even the so-called "good guys" dislike them – which, if they were truly good cops who believe in a fair system, they shouldn't have any reason to. But again this isn't really criticised; instead it's often the punchline of a joke.

Like most other police shows, *Brooklyn Nine-Nine* will also often showcase the military-grade weaponry that is often given to cops. For example, in Season 1 Episode 19, the Nine-Nine visits the tactical village, a place where police officers get to test new equipment that will be distributed across precincts. One such weapon is a portable ultrasonic speaker,

a sonic weapon capable of destroying the eardrums of those that are being targeted by it – this device has been used by police officers to assault and harm those attending peaceful protests, such as BLM protests. This episode shows Detective Rosa Diaz (Stephanie Beatriz) using this on Detective Charles Boyle (Joe Lo Truglio) because he didn't invite her to his wedding – and this moment is played for laughs. "Why is this happening?! I can taste my thoughts!" a distressed Boyle screams out. Admittedly, I never really gave this scene much thought upon first watching it; but now I'm left wondering how it's supposed to be funny that police have access to weapons that can cause extreme pain and how that's somehow acceptable. Diaz does get ordered to stop, but she's not really held accountable.

Speaking of Diaz, I recently watched a compilation video on her best moments in Season 1... and quite frankly it's a bit unsettling. She's presented as a character who enjoys her manifestations of violence and watching others suffer – which isn't in itself a bad character for a TV show, until you consider what her job is. As I watched her in one episode destroying the office equipment as a gag, it became so much more disturbing as I wondered if she, someone who has authority over many others, would ever have similar reactions when dealing with unruly people. Obviously, characters aren't meant to be perfect, but it is worth noting that the show could make a point about the harms that this type of character could, and does, bring in real police forces – but instead it's just played off as a joke. In later seasons we see that her character gets softened a bit, perhaps due to the favour of copaganda.



Even when the show tries to make statements against the different problems that face our world today, the characters' position of authority as police officers often undermine these messages. For example, in the opening episode of Season 5, we see Peralta meeting with the warden of the prison that he's currently staying in. At some point during their conversation, Jake says, "No no no, the only people less popular in here than cops are snitches," to which the warden replies, "Well, let's be honest – it's not great in here for trans people." Jake agrees with this, acknowledging that this is a problem. It is great that the show tries to use its platform to say something about this issue, but voicing it through the warden, the person who has the power to enact certain policies that would be incredibly helpful towards the eradication of systemic transphobia within the justice system, undermines the overall message. All throughout this show, Jake and other characters remark about the different problems within the world, but in a way they act ignorant of the power and agency that they have when it comes to structurally addressing these issues.

There's one other particular episode that I can't not mention, the most famous example of the show trying to

tackle police-related issues, the episode which defensive fans cite as evidence of their beloved show not being copaganda – Season 4, Episode 16: "Moo Moo". In this episode, Sergeant Terry Jeffords (Terry Crews) is stopped by a police officer whilst searching for his daughter's toy, named Moo Moo, in his own neighbourhood. This officer doesn't see Jeffords as a cop, but as a "dangerous Black man", and it is only when Jeffords proves that he too is a cop that he gets released. The remainder of the episode explores the consequences of confronting and reporting instances of racial profiling within the police.

Holt, who is also Black, is initially reluctant to submit the complaint to City Hall because of the very real result of police who report misconduct being denied future opportunities by police unions and city governments – which actually is what happens by the end of this episode when the report does get made and consequently Jeffords' promotion application gets denied by City Hall. But, upon closer inspection, what did this episode really solve? It could be assumed that the racist officer gets arrested or fired or disciplined for his actions, but really, nothing much happens to him – except that perhaps he "will think twice before making another bad stop like that again", according to Holt. It makes me wonder just how effective this episode really was. The most egregious thing a police officer does is almost arrest a Black man on the basis of his skin colour, and the most radical solution to this offered is submitting a complaint, instead of firing or arresting the police officer. And, the episode is ultimately inconsequential, since none of the other characters seem to change because of this and since there is no mention of this incident or its effect on Jeffords' career after this episode. It's a bit underwhelming, really.

Now I couldn't possibly go on to list every single instance of copaganda in this 143-episode-long series, but I think the main point is clear. In moments where the show could really make a big, groundbreaking statement that causes us all to really stop and think about the systems in place in our society, it falls a bit flat.

So now you might be wondering why I've stuck by this show for so long, with all that I've highlighted. In all honesty, I knew the police aspects of it would be exaggerated and glorified, but I decided to give the show a chance anyway. I started watching back in 2017 when Season 5 came out because I knew that it was a pretty popular show but, if you've also watched the show, I'm sure you can agree with me when I say that what makes this show so loveable is not the police plotlines, but the comedy, storytelling, and character-building that don't revolve around policing. The show has brought its viewers so many wonderful things – Rosa's coming out story and the nuanced exploration of bisexuality; Amy Santiago (Melissa Fumero) and Jake's wholesome, healthy relationship; the chaotic and exhilarating annual Halloween Heists, to name but a few examples. All of which could easily have still happened in a non-police workplace setting.

I'm beginning to think, even with all this justification, one can't fully enjoy this show guilt-free... and frankly it's quite disappointing for it to have gotten to the current level of social unrest in the world for a lot of people, me included, to fully realise this. This show is one of my go-tos for rewatching, it's a comfort show – but how can I find such comfort in a

show that I'm fully aware is intrinsically problematic by its very setting?

But, at least at time of writing, Brooklyn Nine-Nine is still going ahead. Of course, when the next season actually comes out is still uncertain because of Covid-19. But, I'm extremely curious to see what the masterminds behind the show manage to pull off. For sure, this new season will be no easy task. It could very easily go wrong.

Initially, during the period of speculation of whether Brooklyn Nine-Nine would be cancelled, many fans suggested that if Season 8 were to go ahead, the main characters should all quit the force and, with no explanation, become postal workers or firefighters or some other profession that isn't police. I think it's unlikely that that would happen, but – and whilst I agree with the intent behind these suggestions – I don't think the show should go down that route. Doing that is basically the show running away from the real issues it has helped to perpetuate. It's only right that the show is a part of the solution to a complex issue which it didn't cause but definitely extended through the copaganda in the show. (And, of course, there can always also be a new workplace comedy centred around postal workers, firefighters etc. I know I'd be interested in watching both of those.)

Instead, I think that Season 8 should show the 99th precinct in-line with the Defund the Police movement. Having the characters not really using weapons and instead using more de-escalation techniques, and incorporating mental health and social work techniques, for example, would be useful in showing viewers how a reformed system could work. The progressive remarks that the show has made need to be more integral to the story, with a longer-lasting effect that makes it meaningful and impactful. An example of an extended plotline like this could be one of the main police characters losing their job because they fought the system.

The show will need to achieve all this, whilst still balancing the non-policing comedy, storytelling, and character-building that originally enticed and drew people in – all with grace and dignity and respect.

In its new season, Brooklyn Nine-Nine needs to actively engage with what cops are, instead of mindlessly glorifying them. The show needs to voice really loudly that the status quo is not good, and that this new season is therefore not representative of the status quo but instead a vision of how things can be better going forward. If the show fails to do this, its new season would be highly misleading and irresponsible and dangerous even.

Speaking to Variety, Andre Braugher says that "It could be a really groundbreaking season that we're all going to be very, very proud of, or we're going to fall flat on our face." I agree. For now, I'm sitting anxiously at the edge of my sofa, waiting to see what happens...

## Opening the Cinemas: Mission Impossible?

Karolina Pavlikova (FV)

The advantages of home-stream cinemas or in other words, streaming services are endless yet they were often overlooked before the pandemic. Sitting at home and having the option to choose from thousands of movies and series at any time for 10 pounds a month sounds better than paying 7 pounds for one movie ticket to sit in a big room surrounded by strangers. When streaming services were introduced, people thought that the popularity of cinemas would slowly fall. That did not happen, perhaps because there is just something magical about going with friends, buying popcorn and a fizzy drink and sitting for two hours and staring at a gigantic screen.

After the invention of the Kinetoscope in the 19th century, a technology which enabled people to view moving pictures, the film industry started to grow. Short movies were shown in music halls in front of audiences. Over the years colour and sounds were added and in the mid-1930s the Golden era of the film industry arose, attracting big crowds to watch films in auditoriums. From then on in, cinemas grew all over the United States and England, soon to reach all corners of the globe.

When was the last time you went to the cinema? The answer would most likely be pre-pandemic. As the first lockdown started, our entertainment moved online to streaming services and social media. To escape from the news, people baked banana bread, worked out or tweeted about watching Tiger King. While we stayed at home, the cinemas were left abandoned. All things live and die, so is this the start of an end of cinemas as we know them?

Last autumn, some of the cinemas opened in the United Kingdom, but they did not attract as many audiences as they would have pre-pandemic. It could be due to a fear of becoming infected. The risk of infection in the cinema is quite high as the audience is allowed to bring drinks and popcorn to the showing, some taking it as an excuse for not wearing a mask.

Producers and distributors realized the loss they would make premiering their movies during the pandemic in the cinemas. Most of the blockbusters were postponed to a later release date, the smaller-budget ones were streamed on streaming services. Streaming the premiere is unprofitable for the creators as the movie can be lost in the range of thousands of movies and, for the streaming service, there is no real extra profit made as the audience pays the same monthly subscription. Premiering a movie on a popular streaming service is neither profitable to the streaming service or to the distributor. Another idea is to create a platform for each movie which would have high initial costs. There was an attempt to premiere

Wonder Woman 1984 (do not be confused, it is a film from 2020) on HBO Max, in December last year, and although it became the most watched title of 2020, it received mixed reviews. Overall, it may seem that the cinema is still the best option to show a new movie to audiences.

What is the future of cinemas? The big-budget movies are waiting until the pandemic is over, acting as a profitable lifeline for these cinemas slipping off the edge of their seats. The question is: 'is this too late?'

As all the events were cancelled, postponed or moved online, this included the film festivals. This may not seem a problem, but there are actually around 3000 movie festivals happening each year all over the globe. They are not only for audiences, but also for producers and movie makers. Making an online film festival is not profitable, but not making anything at all is even less profitable.



It is not only actors and directors who are losing their money, but everyone in the film industry. During the first few months of the first wave, the filming of new movies halted which we will eventually feel as a gap of new movies coming out.

As the film industry personnel do what they can, this struggling industry must adapt to the current situation. There is a possibility that new films and tv shows about living in the pandemic world will be made which will make us remember these unusual times even in the future.

Life must go on and currently new movies are being made following the government's guidelines. Headlines were made when actor Tom Cruise shouted at the film crew at the set of new Mission Impossible movie for not following suggested guidelines.

Although the future of cinemas does not look bright, the vaccination brings hope, so it may be possible to open the doors only for vaccinated people. Until people in their teens, twenties and thirties are vaccinated, it will cost the industry many more billions of pounds. After this all ends, I do not know about you, but I will go to the cinema with my friends and watch all the long-awaited movies.

## A Tale of Distaste

*Olivia Smart (FV)*

Once upon a time, in a land not so far away, lay a girl - edging on the shorter side, with violet, round frames circling 2 grey dull eyes, paired with a mixture of rubber bands and metal brackets filling her mouth-sat in a pebble-dashed house among rows of identical structures in the centre of an unmemorable street in a forgettable town where nothing ever happens. And she lived (more or less.... more less) happily ever after.

It's hardly a tale we will read our children for centuries to come is it? But then again, every fairy-tale has a message to tell, and this one may be better than most. Firstly, it is not a fairy tale. In this story, nothing really happens. And that is life. Unlike in fairy tales, there are no knights in shining armour (or very rarely at least) or epic showdowns against ferocious dragons (hardly an everyday struggle). This tale does not offer narratives of women's lives and experiences that are unachievable and undesirable; it acknowledges, in a sense, that girls should be taught from a young age that the world is their oyster and that anything is possible. Whereas the tales we grow up being so fond of often bear a much darker message: they are often highly damaging to young girls due to the aged stereotypes that they revolve around: marriage, shockingly good looks and life in a castle. They make us believe that there will always be a happy ending. We have all heard someone say at least once "I just want my fairy-tale".

Fairy tales are the root of society, they are and always have been. Everyone from politicians at the peak of society to the old lady that works in your local post office began their pathway of development and knowledge wrapped up at night being read one of these oh so famous tales. Summarised by Goddard Blythe: "Fairy tales are important not because they show children how life is, but because they give form to deep fears and dreams about life through fantasy". They pave the basic foundations of empathy and ethics by portraying good vs bad in such a black and white simple manner, while each homing in more precisely on a certain moral; for instance, take Thumbelina, "Don't ever wish to be anything but what you are." We grew up to these tales, so did the people that campaign against them, and did it damage their confidence or self-belief?

For centuries youngsters have been drip-fed life lessons through fairy tales, full of the fantasy of castles, dragons and knights in shining armour saving their damsel in distress. But nowadays fairy tales act as less of an escape and more a topic of great controversy. Ruth Bottigheimer writes of the "apparent inner drive to incriminate females," fairy tales encourage the integration of offensive stereotypes on not just girls from a shockingly early age, but also influence boy's ideology into having to be a fearless machine of a man". So, it is no wonder 1 in 4 parents alter fairy tales while reading them to their children. Many women are beginning to revoke these tales that suggest their daughter is no more than a submissive object dependent on Prince Charming saving the day. After all in a generation of diversity and equal rights, few young women are willing to wait for their beer-

guzzling, football-watching men to transform into strapping heroic figures. Because we all know it is not always as simple as a kiss upon a frog. Happily ever after for many millennials is the continual promotion and the financial security that allows them to live in the comfort of a 5-bedroom house with a flash car parked in the garage. Marriage is not even necessarily something that they actively look for. Despite this new reality, many modern films and stories still cling to this idea of marriage being the be-all and end-all. Yet these entertainment franchises still do not understand that these unrealistic ideals should not be injected as readily as lip fillers are to the image of what a "woman" is.

Porcelain white skin, silky long locks and an artificially slim figure sewn into a satin flowing ball gown: more often than not this is the signature look many template Disney princesses flout. Society has acknowledged beauty takes many shapes, colours and sizes, so why are we not witnessing a drastic revamp on these classic tales? In light of the recent drive for equality through BLM protests, we must recognise that changing the world's ideology starts with our future generations. Add this lack of racial diversity to the disappearance of physical and sexual diversity, voilà a charm sure to spark all kinds of insecurities in young girls, whether they are struggling with their weight, sexual orientation or simply just the skin they were born in. But wait! It is not all anorexia and reliance on men that make these stories, Disney productions often feature plus-size "role models" such as The Little Mermaid's Ursula, teaching all young girls not just to be comfortable no matter what size they are, but most importantly how to run a sea autocracy detaining all free-spirited young mermaids. Or another "perfect" example of diversity comes in the form of a teapot: Mrs Potts, the maternal caring figure in Beauty and the Beast. It is hard to distinguish this as a positive factor or just another propaganda method to support the importance of the motherhood agenda.

Or is everything just being blown out of proportion? Especially considering the average target audience is under 12 years old. After all in an everchanging society, tales as old as centuries are never going to fit our modern views. We must bear in mind these tales were written to portray girls



of that period's dreams. Think about it, a girl locked up in a castle protected by a ferocious dragon (often believed to represent the father) that must be slain to reach the girl's heart and free her of rags into a life of riches, any 17th-century adolescent's main ambition. These stories gave voice to views that were often lost in the blabber of domineering male characters. So, if nothing else, it shows how far we have come. "Fairy tales do not tell children the dragons exist. Children already know that dragons exist. Fairy tales tell children the dragons can be killed." Fairy tale girls were always strong-willed and survivors, even if it was not as obvious as the knight's role; take Snow White, no man swooped in to save her from the evil reign of her stepmother, yet she remained level-headed and sane in the face of adversity. The only difference now is that these characters do not have to wait around for someone to save them because life is not always fairy-tale.

Fairy tales are an essential part of our lives. Even the people that have paved the way in scientific advancement relied on fairy tales at some point: "When I examine myself and my methods of thought, I come to the conclusion that the gift of fantasy has meant more to me than any talent for abstract, positive thinking." (Albert Einstein). Therefore, it is about time we rewrite fairy tales, to give our future equal opportunity. Abie Longstaff has already begun this process by publishing a series of old tales with a modern twist (in other words, minus the many examples of prejudice and damaging stereotypes) or there are even other well-known tales such as the "The Gruffalo" that take on the role of a light-hearted escape without hidden meanings. What our children read should be as carefully selected as the meals they eat or the games they play, so we must all take a stand for an equal future, where girls are not mere objects or damsels in distress.