

THE GALLEY

Summer 2020



The Galley

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Normally, we would write something about the large amount of time we have spent in P20 over the last few months- but like everyone else we have been stuck at home. However, that has not stopped us producing a magazine that we very much hope you will enjoy. Made up of articles written by pupils from Form I to VI, we hope that there is something for everyone in this edition of *The Galley*.

We have everything: analysis and information in News and Politics; fascinating stories in Features; Views on the controversial topics of the day; the latest coverage and issues in the world of Sport; cutting-edge (and extremely relevant) Science writing; reviews and opinion in Entertainment & Culture; and a sample of the excellent Creative Writing that goes on here at Dollar Academy.

Visit:

<http://da-thegallemagazine.blogspot.com>

Thank you very much to all our editors, writers and photographers.

Special thanks go to:

Eva Magdic Govedarica - she has once again provided us with a powerful image for our front cover design.

Ben Montgomery - without his hard work and dedication we would not have a blog.

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

The Galley Editorial Team

A note from Ms Abel:

I don't normally write anything in *The Galley* as this is a forum for pupil voices - where our many writers can explore their ideas, engage with the issues that they feel passionate about, and share their creativity with a wider audience. But, this time I'm breaking my silence to say how mightily impressed I am with the extraordinary determination and spirit of collaboration that have gone in to creating this edition of the magazine. At a time when the easy option would have been to accept that, with the country in lockdown and the school buildings closed, there would be no magazine this term, the Galley team just quadrupled their efforts and made it happen! I always feel honoured to work with such a great team of pupils; but this year I am in awe of their ability to pull together despite the many barriers (both geographical and technological) to produce such an engaging and professional magazine, of which they should be very proud.

This magazine was brought to you from: Culross, Kinross, Dunfermline, Kraków, Zagreb, Airth, Falkirk, Svit, and, of course, Dollar.

News and Politics

EDITORIAL

Although it has only been a few months since *The Galley* was last published it feels like several years have passed since then. The coronavirus pandemic has meant that we are no longer physically meeting up, but in some ways people are connecting more than ever with their families and local communities. Hopefully, this pandemic will lead to change for the better in the future- in tackling climate change, increasing support for essential workers across the country, and building upon the links that have been created in local communities all over the UK.

I hope that you will enjoy reading the articles that follow. There are many different topics covered, from a comparison of Trump's America and Atwood's Gilead to an article exploring the ever-growing global political divides. Our blog also has a number of interesting articles, in particular a post on the Black Lives Matter movement which contains a number of responses ranging from poems to thought-provoking pieces of writing. You can find all of our blog posts here: <http://da-thegallemagazine.blogspot.com>

I really hope you enjoy this addition of *The Galley* and that reading these articles may help you fill the long lockdown hours. Stay home (unlike Dominic Cummings), wash your hands, and stay safe!



Elliot Wortley
News & Politics Editor

'Under his Eye': Is Trump's America the new Gilead?

Camille Wallace (FV)

Margaret Atwood's 'The Handmaid's Tale' is undoubtedly one of the most disturbing and memorable dystopian novels written to date. It has recently become a worldwide phenomenon once again, due to the TV adaptation of the novel- ultimately proving that its themes are as relevant now as they were thirty four years ago when it was first published. Whilst the series, for the most part, has received much appraisal from critics, it has also unsurprisingly become a source of much debate, particularly the idea of 'Could this ever actually happen?/ Is it already happening right now?'

In the novel, The Handmaid's Tale takes place in the dystopian world of 'Gilead', which has replaced the former New England States where the US government has been overthrown. 'Gilead' is a theocratic, totalitarian regime where women have been deprived of their basic human rights and stripped of their identity. 'Handmaids' are ritually raped every month, and any child they bear is taken from them, to be raised by the elite. Now, perhaps in the UK the idea of returning to a theocratic state seems especially unlikely, as religion doesn't play much of a part in British political life. But, the same cannot be said for the USA, where the recent developments of disenfranchisement of reproductive rights, the normalisation of violence and the dismissal and demonisation of the media under President Trump have made America appear to be 'frighteningly similar' to 'The Handmaid's Tale' for some.



In the current political climate in the US, rights over women's bodies are constantly being argued over, predominantly by men. The Human Life Protection Act, also known as the Alabama abortion ban was enacted on the 15th May this year; which was set to impose a near total ban on abortion in Alabama by this November. It is important to note that Alabama's 35-seat Senate is dominated by men, and that none of its four female senators backed the ban. This archaic law includes a ban on abortion even in cases of rape or incest, meaning that women who have possibly faced a huge amount of trauma would have to be constantly reminded of that for nine

months, preventing them from being able to move on with their lives or try to recover from it.



Alarmingly, sixteen other states are also seeking to put further restrictions on abortion, with it being predicted by some that in 18 months abortion will be illegal in twenty states. In the long term, supporters' main objective is to get the Supreme Court to overturn Roe v Wade, with the consequence being, that in effect, abortion will be banned across all of the United States. What is most worrying about this is that it is clear that there is a popular movement/shared train of thought in the US that believes that women, for whatever reason do not deserve the right to control their own bodies and that men are perfectly justified in making those decisions for them, resulting in harsh and restrictive laws that will prohibit women's rights. This easily parallels to the patriarchs of 'Gilead', who want to control women's bodies, their sex lives, and their reproductive rights. The bodies of slain abortionists on the Wall in chapter six of the novel hammer home the point: feminists believe that women must have abortion rights in order to control their own bodies, and in 'Gilead', giving women control of their bodies is a horrifying crime. Does that sound familiar?

Additionally, there have also been a number of controversies surrounding Associate Justice of the Supreme Court Brett Kavanaugh, who was appointed by Trump last year. Kavanaugh had openly stated that he would oppose Roe v Wade before he was sworn in last October, already making him somewhat of a villain in the eyes of liberals, however, once nominated, he faced multiple allegations of sexual misconduct and assault. Most notably, Christine Blasey Ford, a professor at Palo Alto University, claimed that Kavanaugh had assaulted her at a party whilst they were in high school. Ford's account was even verified with notes from her therapy sessions that included mentions of a "rape attempt" by students from an "elitist boys' school" who would become "highly respected and high-ranking



members of society in Washington."

A week after The Washington Post published Ford's account, The New Yorker published an article detailing an allegation from Deborah Ramirez, a former Yale University classmate of Kavanaugh's, that Kavanaugh exposed himself to her at a party during the 1983-84 school year. Ramirez stated that she was apprehensive at



first to come forward about the incident as she had been drinking, but she could still remember the key details, such as Kavanaugh exposing himself and trying to force himself on her, and another student close to the incident shouting and announcing to the party what had happened. The New Yorker said that it contacted several classmates but that many didn't respond, declined to comment, or said they didn't remember or attend the party. However, on September 24th a letter was published in support of Ramirez that had the signatures of 1,200 Yale alumni. Of course, Kavanaugh denied any and all allegations that were made against him, in an indignant and aggressive testimony to the Senate Judiciary Committee.

Once again, a link can be made to 'The Handmaid's Tale'- when the 'Commander' suggests that feminism and the sexual revolution left men without a purpose in life. With their former roles as women's protectors taken away, and with women suddenly behaving as equals, men were set adrift. By making themselves the soldiers, providers, and caretakers of society again, men now have meaning restored to their lives. To some, this may sound noble, except that in order to give meaning to men's lives, both



men and women have lost all freedom.

Trump's declaration that America's 'biggest enemy' was the media is the last confirmation that is needed to make the eerie similarities between the USA and 'The Handmaid's Tale' a case in point. The Trump Administration has an antagonistic relationship with the free press to say the least, constantly dismissing any negative press on them as 'fake news'. However, it seems that some people are guilty of neglecting any thought of people actually believing this propaganda, or being motivated to commit acts of violence based upon what has clearly been fabricated. Fortunately, it has been revealed that the motives behind the mass shooting at Maryland's Capital Gazette Newspaper were not related to Trump's ongoing war with the media: however, there was a lot of praise from Trump supporters on social media stating that the shooter was completely justified in killing four people and injuring twenty, with one tweet even stating that: "dead journalists can't spread leftist propaganda". A striking scene from the TV adaptation of 'The Handmaid's Tale' depicts 'Offred', the protagonist, happening upon what remains of The Boston Globe newsroom, where a group of reporters were executed by a far-right regime. Does that sound familiar? The normalisation of violence and identification of a common enemy puts America in the position that a totalitarian regime like Atwood's vision could occur much more easily than one would like to admit.



Frighteningly, 'The Handmaid's Tale' certainly mirrors Trump's America in a myriad of ways, namely the restrictions on women's reproductive rights, putting men into positions of power when it is obvious that they are not appropriate for the job and the normalisation of violence against a common enemy of the people. This is a key example in which art imitates life; however, all hope is not lost. It must be said that America is not yet a totalitarian wasteland, and that something of that magnitude would not happen overnight. Nevertheless, the novel and TV series should be used as a cautionary tale for what could happen in the very near future.

The Divide

Lewis Vincent (FVI)

The divide between the left and right in recent years only seems to have increased in size. The rise of populism in Western politics, an increase in focus on identity politics, and fringe social issues hardly make me optimistic. I'm beyond bored with the endless namecalling and poor argumentation in politics, to the point that politics is becoming a parody of itself. The existence of Donald Trump's political career is the only evidence necessary to demonstrate how far we've fallen.



It seems to me that after the 2008 recession politics has become far more dependant on social issues than the economic debate that was the core of historical Western politics. I can only assume that the shifting nature of modern politics is linked with the presence of online groups and forums that have promulgated progressively more extreme views all over the political spectrum. It's a whole lot easier to believe that your views are correct when everyone you talk to agrees with them. The internet has only made this sensation even more apparent, there are sinkholes of extreme politics everywhere. The extreme right-wing 4chan board, for instance, is well known for its content, beyond explicit in its views, an endless stream of racist, overtly fascist images and opinions. The violence of Antifa is also by no means a secret. These groups and others like them have certainly increased the divide, the extremist elements of both sides have tarnished the opinions of one another. The left cannot see the right without its dingy toxic underbelly, likewise, the right struggles to see the left without the extremist actions of Antifa.

Even in more neutral politics, the debate is so preoccupied with heated issues that there is rarely common ground. The issues surrounding the gender debate, free speech, and other hot topics have become so fiercely contested that it is hard to imagine any kind of satisfactory compromise. The new social values of the left have sparked much opposition, Canada's Bill C-16, which added "gender identity or expression" to the list of prohibited grounds of discrimination, but many on the right feared that the bill may compromise crucial free speech values. Jordan Peterson, who gained a reputation for his outspoken views on many cultural and political issues after the bill, said that the bill was "compelled speech". There is a fundamental misunderstanding in the debate surrounding the free speech issue, perhaps the most important topic in all of current politics. The left and right are however debating two fundamentally different issues. The left aims to protect the rights of trans people, whereas, for the right,

the free speech issue has nothing to do with the gender debate, it is black and white for both sides. Ultimately free speech is a pivotal right, but like any human right, has the potential to be misused, however, the potential for misuse, abuse, hate speech, etc. must be tolerated to preserve true freedom of speech, argue the right. For the left, however, the issue is one of protecting a vulnerable minority.

As far as US politics are concerned, the fact that Donald Trump, a total rookie to politics was able to make his way to the presidency in 2016 is a true testament of the weaknesses of both the Democrats and Republicans, it is hard to believe that Trump could have won the election against any other candidate than Hillary Clinton, who motivated Republicans to vote for Trump as the "lesser of two evils". What is truly frightening is that it appears now that a second term is almost inevitable with only Joe Biden standing in Trump's way. Trump's method seems to capitalise on the entertainment value of his debate style and public persona, it is far more entertaining to watch Trump berate his opponents than it is to watch debates on nuanced policy. Trump and his team were well aware of the frustration of the system that had come to the fore during the Obama administration. The fact that he wasn't a politician was seen as a plus by his supporters, he had nothing to do with the system.

It is no secret that Trump's debate style has little to do with polished rhetoric, policy, or logic, but his results are truly impressive. His oppressive style choked out the other Republican candidates with comparative ease. Since Trump's win, the Democratic candidates only seem to have one central concern, getting Trump out of office, however, they have ultimately left themselves with an almost completely befuddled Biden to try and get the job done. It seems to me that recent campaign methods have had a whole lot less to do with genuine policy and far more to do with trashing one's opponents.

In the UK at least, the issue is not the same, as the US two-party system has exacerbated many current issues, with the "vote blue no matter who" mentality and similar views leading to an increased reliance on negative campaigning. In the UK, the situation seems far less polarised, however, the issues brought up during the Brexit campaign and the continuous bubbling of the potential second Scottish independence referendum do not exactly fill me with hope. Populism is certainly present in Britain and much like the US, we have no idea how to stop it.

Overall the political landscape of the future does not inspire optimism, the toxic politics on both sides that have come to the fore in recent years appear to be sticking around. The free speech issue will continue to be the most important and most controversial fronts that will be fought in the years to come.



2019 UK Election Timeline

Elliot Wortley (FV)

In December 2019, the UK went to the polls after Boris Johnson called a snap election to 'get Brexit done'. By the end of the night the Conservatives had won an MP for every day of the year, 365, and Labour were left with 202 MPs. Here is my 'live' commentary of election night (which, believe it or not, was only six months ago):

22:00- Huw Edwards announces the exit poll (the prediction of how many seats the parties will win). The Conservatives look set to win 368 seats and the Labour party only 191. This result for Labour would be even worse than Michael Foot achieved in 1983 and their lowest number of seats since 1935. The SNP also are predicted to nearly sweep the board in Scotland, with 55 of 59 seats.

23:26- After what feels like forever the first result of the night comes in- *Newcastle-upon-Tyne Central*. The Labour vote share has fallen by around 7%, the first indication that the exit poll may prove to be accurate.

23:31- The Conservative party gain *Blyth Valley* from Labour, a seat where 61% of the electorate voted to leave the EU. This seat had been held by Labour since its creation in 1950 but now has a Conservative majority of 712 votes.

23:43- Scottish Labour MP Ian Murray becomes one of the first Labour MPs to publicly attack Jeremy Corbyn after tweeting: "Every door I knocked on, and my team and I spoke to 11,000 people, mentioned Corbyn. Not Brexit but Corbyn. I've been saying this for years. The outcome is that we've let the country down and we must change course and fast."

1:20- The Conservatives win the seat of *Workington* (which voted by 60% to leave the EU) with a 4,000 majority. The seat had been Labour since 1918, apart from three years in the 1970s. Before the election started a think-tank told the Conservatives that they needed to target 'Workington man' to win the election (a northern Leave voter who traditionally voted for Labour).



1:26- The first Scottish result of the night comes in (and I'm already beginning to feel tired...). The SNP gain *Rutherglen and Hamilton West* from Labour with a 7% increase in their vote share. However, this result is not as good for the SNP as the exit poll would suggest so perhaps they won't get above 50 seats (which may be a

good thing for Ruth Davidson who said she would swim in Loch Ness on Hogmanay if they did).

2:33- Former Conservative party leader Ian Duncan Smith holds onto his seat (*Chingford and Woodford Green*). His seat had been a target for the Labour party as only 50% of the constituents voted to leave the European Union, but he managed to hang on albeit with a halved majority.

3:15- The Conservatives lose the Remain-backing London seat of *Richmond Park* to the Liberal Democrats. Environment minister Zac Goldsmith got 41% of the vote compared to the Lib Dem candidate Sarah Olney who won 34,500 votes or 53%.

3:39- The Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab retains his Surrey seat of *Esher and Walton* where 59% of people voted to Remain. Raab had won a 23,000 majority in 2017 but thanks to a strong challenge on the part of Monica Harding, the Lib Dem candidate, his majority is now under 3,000.

3:46- The first big scalp of the night comes in the form of Liberal Democrat leader Jo Swinson losing her seat of *East Dunbartonshire* to the SNP by only a majority of 149 votes. Although the Liberal Democrat vote share has increased across Scotland it decreased here, perhaps because Swinson didn't spend enough time in the constituency- instead prioritising the leadership of her party.

4:20- The only Green Party MP Caroline Lucas wins her seat of *Brighton Pavilion* with an increased majority of 20,000 votes (35%) and 57% of all the votes cast in the constituency. This is the safest non-Conservative or Labour seat in the country.

5:06- The Conservatives are officially able to form a majority government after holding the London seat of *Finchley and Golders Green*, despite a 25% increase in the Liberal Democrat vote share. Luciana Berger (former Labour MP) had tried to win the seat as the Liberal Democrat candidate but despite this large swing to the Lib Dems the Conservatives still have a 6,500 vote majority. This is the 327th seat they've won and 326 seats are needed for a majority.

6:02- The final Scottish seat comes in and its *Orkney and Shetland* which is held by the Liberal Democrats and Alistair Carmichael. The SNP have won 48 of 59 Scottish seats (an increase of 13) while the Conservatives have six seats, down seven, the Lib Dems have four, no change, and the Labour party are only left with one Scottish MP (Ian Murray in Edinburgh South). Despite the Lib Dems losing Jo Swinson's seat they managed to gain North East Fife and break even in Scotland. Ruth will be breathing a sigh of relief that she doesn't have to swim in freezing Loch Ness!

19:00- I managed to (barely) stay awake all day and now all the UK results have come in. The English seat of *St. Ives*, a Conservative hold, was the last to declare because a storm meant the ballot papers could not be lifted from an island which forms part of the constituency. Now I desperately need some sleep...

Cummings and Goings

Elliot Wortley (FV)

Since Boris Johnson became Prime Minister in July 2019 he has relied heavily on Dominic Cummings for support and advice. The former head of the Vote Leave campaign during the EU referendum is also credited with the Conservative party's win in the 2019 election and has been a very powerful figure in Downing Street ever since (his influence resulted in the departure of Sajid Javid as Chancellor of the Exchequer earlier this year). Cummings also played a key role in shaping policy during the coronavirus pandemic; including attending SAGE, a committee of scientists, where he reportedly pressed for a quick lockdown. You would think that someone keen to lock down the country in order to protect us from the threat of COVID-19 would be equally as eager to abide by these rules so that we could come out of this lockdown sooner. You would think.

On 22nd May, the *Daily Mirror* and *The Guardian* published a joint report which suggested that Cummings had breached lockdown rules by travelling to Durham, where his parents live, in March. After initially suggesting that he had only broken these rules once it was soon alleged by the newspapers that Cummings had broken lockdown on more than one occasion. It would be bad enough if Cummings was simply breaking the rules, but he did so while both he and his wife had COVID-19 symptoms. The whole point of limiting our contact with other people was to stop the spread of the virus. Surely travelling across the country, to an area which did not have a high number of COVID patients at the time, would be unthinkable to most of us. Public outcry followed this revelation about Cummings, and he was eventually forced to give a statement, defending his behaviour, in the rose garden at Downing Street.



Arriving 30 minutes late to this briefing, Cummings' defence was not off to a good start. What followed was an hour of rambling anecdotes and uncertain details. After learning his wife was unwell (and returning to work-against government guidance) Cummings decided it was best to travel closer to his family in Durham in case he became similarly unwell and was unable to look after his four-year-old son. Once in Durham, Cummings stayed at a property on his parent's estate. It is worth mentioning

at this point that the Scottish Chief Medical Officer, Dr Catherine Calderwood, had to resign for visiting a second home- and she didn't even have any symptoms of the virus. While in Durham his son was taken to the hospital, with a suspected case of COVID-19, and stayed overnight. Although he tested negative for coronavirus, the family put extra pressure on the health service by travelling across the country at a time when we were all trying to take pressure off the NHS. Do not worry though, Cummings did find time to enjoy himself while in Durham and was reportedly seen by neighbours dancing to ABBA's *Dancing Queen*. On his wife's birthday, Cummings was able to take a trip to the beauty spot of Barnard Castle (a 30-mile drive away, and local slang word for 'pathetic excuse')- even though at the moment in Scotland we are still encouraged to stay within a five-mile radius of our homes. Although, apparently, he was testing his eyesight for the drive home to London (the Highway Code clearly states that you should not drive with impaired vision). If this convoluted story was not enough, Mary Wakefield (Cummings' wife) had written an article about their self-isolation 'experience' for *The Spectator* which failed to mention that the couple were staying in Durham. If they had nothing to hide, why would she omit this detail from her article? This statement seemed to do little to alleviate the growing pressure being put on Cummings to resign- not just from opposition supporters but also from conservative commentators (like Tim Montgomerie and Iain Dale) and politicians.

Despite the demands from the public for Cummings to resign or be fired, Johnson refused to lose his chief advisor. At the press briefings that followed he refused to answer questions about Cummings and Johnson even prevented medical officials like Chris Whitty and Patrick Vallance from commenting on Cummings' behaviour. On 12th June, it was alleged that Chief Nursing Officer, Ruth May, was forbidden from giving the government's press briefing on 1st June after failing to back Cummings. It cannot be right for the government to try and silence medical officials from speaking on such an important matter. Johnson has obviously adopted Alastair Campbell's strategy of weathering a crisis rather than immediately sacking a minister or advisor, but this case is much more important than the normal political scandal. People have made sacrifices for weeks and are rightly angry at the thought that it's one rule for the elite and another for everyone else. Johnson's approval ratings have dropped rapidly, and a poll for *The Observer* suggests that as many as 81% of the public believe that Cummings broke the rules. In recent opinion polls the gap between the Conservatives and Labour has also decreased by up to 15%. It seems like Johnson needs the support of Cummings so much that he is willing to suffer all of these consequences as long as he can still have his right-hand man beside him.

Johnson famously models himself after Winston Churchill, but when it comes to his reaction to one of the biggest crises to face Britain in generations his response has been far from Churchillian. Cummings may remain in post but it's never good news when an advisor becomes a story, and the events of the past month may damage Boris Johnson and the Conservative party for years to come.

From the Editor

Greetings one and all, and welcome to the Summer 2020 edition of the Galley!

A lot has changed since the last edition. We now have a new way of living, a new crisis seemingly every month, and, of course, a new Views editor of the Galley.

In the views section, our work can be summarised in one word: *diverse*.

A diverse range of perspectives, from an excellent group of writers, on a wide array of different subjects, all brought together to provide a thoroughly thought-provoking and interesting collection of writing.

For those of you who want a break from the constant doom and gloom of every day life, David Clayton's treatise on why the world is better than ever will prove a most fascinating and uplifting read. If you want to hear about an under-reported crisis going on in our military, and why it needs solving, Clara McHardy's deep dive into sexual assault in the British Army will be both shocking and moving. For a perspective on the decline of the status quo, Tom Spiers' predictions about the fall of religion may prove to be just the article for you. Jubair Ahmed's article on the same topic is also very interesting and asks some interesting questions about religion in society. I have also provided some thoughts of my own at the end, about COVID-19 and why it is a bigger problem for humanity than you can already imagine.

Whatever peaks your interest, we hope you enjoy reading this year's views section as much as we have writing it.

As society begins to reopen and we begin to embrace the new normal, please remember to social distance, and stay safe everyone.



Daniel Ferguson (FIV)
Views Editor

Uniform Standards

Clara McHardy (FVI)

It is now over 2,000 years since Boadicea valiantly rode her chariot into battle against the Roman Empire, in revenge for crimes against her daughters. 840 years since Tomeo Gozen trained as a master Samurai and fought as an honoured warrior during the Genpei War, and over one hundred years since Petra Herrera disguised herself as a man to bravely fight on the frontline in the Mexican Revolution after being rejected by the Armed Forces. And, appallingly, only as of October 25th 2018 have all aspects of the British Army become open to women.

Military organisations demand an automatic obedience to superior officers who, unsurprisingly, are overwhelmingly men, thus reinforcing again and again the 'inferior' place of women in this discriminatory society. From the very beginning of time, women in the army have been exposed to countless acts of sexual prejudice and become part of a culture which constantly devalues the role of a woman. With changing times this issue is becoming more and more prominent and is being brought into the public eye as new generations begin to shape and change the traditional values and roles within the British Army. This is not happening instantly but is a slow process which requires the undoing of century long male dominated command and regulations formed in times when housewives and seamstresses were the only things women were 'useful' for. The point is women don't want to be accepted into the army through their more 'touchy feely', 'emotional' appeals which play off the typical stereotype of a 'weak girl', they want equality and to be encouraged to fit the role of the soldier they aspire to be, with no exceptions and no labels.



'Acceptable Behaviour'. As quoted on the British Army's website, 'acceptable behaviour' is one of the nine values and standards they hold. Why then are many women still subject to abuse and harassment whilst serving time fighting for their country? Last year, 'one in ten servicewomen reported being

sexually assaulted' according to the Armed Forces' own records and, again from the records, women were significantly more likely to experience one of three forms of harassment: generalised sexualised behaviours, targeted sexualised behaviours and particularly aggravated behaviours such as sexual assault. Countless records of abuse are documented each year and yet these crimes are seemingly swept under the carpet and covered up, leaving the rapists and abusers protected by military bureaucracy and the scarred victim fearful of repeat offences, military persecution on her part, and the fear of exile by her fellow comrades. In an investigation by Channel 4 News it was found that 'the conviction rate for rape investigations in the military justice system is less than half that of the civilian system' posing the question, why is there a pardon in society which allows military organisations not to pursue prosecution when an offence has clearly been committed?

'Courage'. In the same investigation one victim described how "It would have been better not to have said anything about it" a common response reflecting the emotional pain she has been subjected to. This highlights a failure in the system, no woman, nor man, should be afraid of speaking out about sexual assault out of fear that they will be ignored, accused of lying or bullied into dropping the allegations. Linking once again to the standards of the British Army; to be 'Lawful', irony intended. Is the political system failing military victims through the poor management and infrequent sanctioning of criminals, due to the fact that it is a male dominated organisation and in doing so are they only trying to protect their reputation? When encouraging your soldiers to have 'courage' in the face of war and to have 'courage' when standing up for your country, why is it that a soldier should feel discouraged from reporting the trauma they have been through?

In an anonymous survey one woman disturbingly expressed, "You feel that if you complain, someone won't believe you, or tell you that you're not tough enough for the Army." Continuing on to describe how her abuser had told her to 'man up'. Surely women should not feel afraid to speak up but should be encouraged to speak out to superior officers and commanders. This may be where the bigger problem begins: if the chain of command is predominately male, then women may not feel comfortable expressing their feelings. Furthermore, this may also be due to the abuse being carried out by a senior staff member. So, the fault may be as much in the system of command as in the body of troops.

'Respect'. Another key value of the British army, which often seems to find itself understated. So, what do women in the military think? In an interview one woman described; "The biggest challenge the majority of women will face in the Armed Forces is equality, and unless every physical test and standard is gender free, this will always be the case." This indicates a recurring theme: masculinity. 'Masculinity' is

commonly associated not only with the physical image of a man but with the stereotypically strong, proud leader condemning the female sex to a weak, sensitive, ornamental image, like eye candy, features defined by our bodies and hormones. The raging testosterone in younger men being a key factor in this and, scientifically, this is what makes men stronger; but not all men. The idea of constant comparison between male and female fitness acts as a definitive split in the progression to equality, many women questioning whether this sets the bar for the respect they gain by their commanding officers and fellow soldiers, one saying she felt that she 'constantly had to reprove her reason for being in the senior ranks of the Army' and when reporting a specific issue, felt pressured into moving office to avoid tensions and bullying in the workplace, all of which failed to stamp out the burning flame at the centre of the issue.

This is all connected to the rank system, where the lower down the more discrimination you endure, which is to be expected, however cases in women are still significantly higher than in men with unjust standards set and lower expectations for women. Upon passing training they are subjected to jokes and bias, some belittling what they have to do because men are pushed harder. So, does fitness mean respect?



'Integrity'. Although women experience this inequality all the time, they do not let it hold them back, "My gender has never caused me any concerns and that's because I don't allow it to," showing how despite discrimination women still continue to climb the ranks and prove these stereotypes wrong. Although these stereotypes are built into the foundations of the Army, with changing times they are seen much less and are now in a minority of small-minded individuals who lack power, and this may be attributed to jealousy and a feeling of being inferior. However it is also clear, it's not just what happens in the regular army, it also stems from youngsters too and, with constant setbacks, it is not surprising that more and more girls are being discouraged from pursuing a career in the Army due to male prejudice. Unless there is a change in leadership ideals at the cadet level it is difficult to envisage how things can improve. There is a long way to go to change the perception of narrow-minded individuals leading such a valued organisation.

It must be said, however, that these setbacks are not experienced by all women in the British Army. Many climb to high ranks and there are many men supporting the movement for a safer workplace for all soldiers, creating equality amongst troops. On the BBC website, this is reiterated through the words of the former highest-ranking woman in the British Army Brigadier Nicky Moffat as she says 'The armed forces must "redouble" their efforts to stop sexual harassment', when describing how some leaders articulate the right and appropriate messages to troops with others simply saying but not doing, or not believing and acting on what they say.

So, what is the cost of all of this on the army as a whole? Whilst facing steadily decreasing numbers of willing recruits, both male and female, and with already numerous disillusioned personnel feeling resentment, judgement and a loss of respect for their colleagues, how will the army survive? With recorded mental health issues in the military increasing by a staggering 78% in the last 8 years it is proof that many feel unfit to do their job or are uncomfortable in their workplace, contributing to the weakening of our first call of defence. In 2019 the MOD recorded that only 12.2% of the annual intake of new recruits were women, but can this also be attributed to poorly managed campaigning methods, or a lack of encouragement? With advertising such as the infamous 'Snowflakes' campaign and the 'Phone Zombies/ Selfie addicts we need you' posters primarily featuring homosexual, minority, or female soldiers, it is no wonder that the army is under so much scrutiny for its neglect of minorities, and therefore it is not surprising that women are discouraged from applying all together.

The role played by gender and the conflict in standards should not be a contributing factor to the injustice women face in the army, and equality will not be attainable until a middle ground has been established. It is not the 1900s, times have changed and old-fashioned biases which still overarchingly rule the Army should be revisited, sexual assault crimes should be obliterated, and women should not fear persecution and repercussion for speaking out. Although many improvements have been set in place to combat the discrimination against women in the army, there is overwhelming evidence that it still occurs through acts of sexual violence and hate, the dismal reality of which continues to shock the country. Much of the Army's ethos centres around the idea of uniformity: the dress, the marching, the haircut, but what about uniform standards? Women don't want exceptions they want equality, and whilst fighting for their country should not be subject to bullying and harassment as well as injustice because of their gender.

Our World Today

David Clayton (FIV)

Would you prefer to live as the average Briton today or 200 years ago? You are going to answer today, if you have a gram of sense. You answer this way because you know that you are living in the best period of human history. When a person says they want to return to “the good old days” be it 20, 50, or 100 years ago or more, they are only thinking of a tiny bubble of human society. Usually with only one country and one topic in mind; be it an overly decadent society, an unjust economic system, an overstepping government or just too many cars on the road. Such people are deliberately ignoring the great achievements human society has made since their “good old days”. Breakthroughs in science and technology, along with reforms in social, political, and economic affairs have revolutionised the world, and will bring us into the true good old days.

The world is richer today than at any other point in human history. Global GDP per capita has quintupled in the past 100 years. The industrialisation of national economies has brought new, higher-paying jobs to millions of people who otherwise would earn pittance on farms. Industrialisation has also allowed people to drastically increase individual productivity with the same amount of effort. Now, some will say “It doesn’t matter how rich the average person is if income inequality is massive”, and they’re right. However, income inequality has been going down in many countries over the decades. In the past 40 years, the global extreme poverty rate has fallen by three-quarters. By every metric, the average person is better off today than at any point in human history.

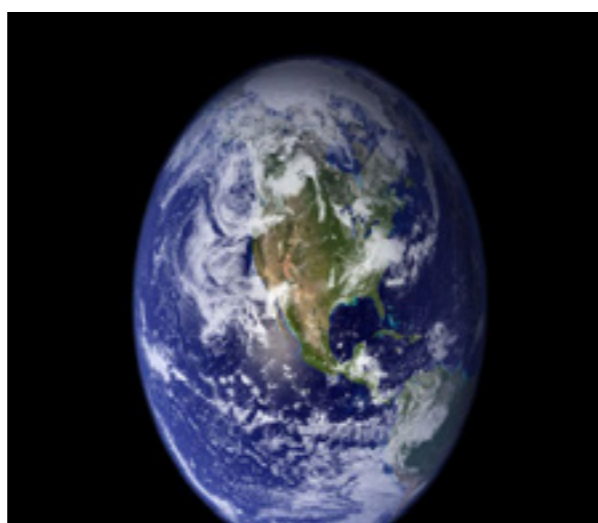
The average human is also better off in health and education, as well. Average global life expectancy has risen by almost twenty years in the past five decades. The infant mortality rate in Germany in 1900 was one in three. Today in Germany, it’s one in 250. Even in Somalia today, the country with the highest infant mortality rate, the figure is less than one in six: twice as good as even a heavily industrialised nation 120 years ago. Before the 20th century, there were no vaccines for diseases like polio, mumps, measles, meningitis and more. Therefore, these diseases infected and killed many more people than today.

Today, these diseases are only a fraction of their former prevalence, and are all but eradicated in some parts of the world. In fact, they are so long forgotten in some places, that people are actively opposing the means that made them so safe: vaccines, because they have never known the alternative. But, just because an anti-vaxxer doesn’t know how bad polio is, it doesn’t mean the world is becoming more stupid. On the contrary, we are becoming smarter. The proportion of people without any formal education is 14%, the lowest in history. The

percentage of adults who completed primary school is 15 percent higher today than in 1970. In 1900, the global literacy rate was less than 25%, today it’s over 80%. In 2014, one in three young adults was enrolled in higher education, in 1970, one in ten were. We as a species are becoming more educated, and this will fuel innovation, which will improve the average person’s quality of life even more.

Innovation. Science and technology. This is perhaps the underlying cause of the constantly improving state of the world. When James Watt invented the steam engine, it laid the path for the Industrial Revolution, which laid the path for the British public education system, and greatly improved the quality of life for so many workers. Developments in aerospace engineering since WWII have allowed us to travel to the Moon and have given us the vast satellite web we depend on for communications. Science and technology in itself have also never been better. The number of patents for new inventions in America has never been higher. Over 600,000 in 2019, a substantial rise from only 100,000 in 1969. Thanks to geniuses like Albert Einstein, Ernest Rutherford, Robert Oppenheimer, Tim Berners-Lee and countless more brilliant people building and experimenting on the knowledge of their predecessors, scientific research and development has risen exponentially. We know more about ourselves, our world, and our universe than we did at any other point in history.

In summary, I think it’s quite obvious that the world is better now than it was at any other point in human history. You can say otherwise. You can talk about the environment, obesity, increasing authoritarianism or whatever, but when looking at the big picture, at every single facet of global society, you will see that we’ve never been better.



The Future of Religion

Tom Spiers (FIV)

What does the future look like? This is the question that countless sci-fi books and films start with or revolve around. But the truth is that none of us know. We may at some point develop technology to eradicate world hunger, poverty, or even social inequality. Technology that could provide us with unlimited resources to fuel our unlimited desires. On the other hand, we may be the cause of our own demise. Artificial intelligence may reach a point where it is superior to man, and the product of our curiosity becomes the very thing that ends human existence. The point is that the possibilities for the future are endless, and the only way of knowing what coming societies entail is by living through them. However, there is one social construct that I doubt will see many more centuries. A set of ideologies that were made by humans thousands of years ago, and since interpreted in thousands more ways. A concept that creates more divide among society than any other topic. Religion.

Before we look at what is possible for the future, it is important that we delve into the past and see what has already been established. In 1953, two scientists named Stanley Miller and Harold Urey conducted an experiment to try and explain the origins of life on earth. They put together all of the molecules and compounds that were present at the start of the planet’s existence and shocked it with electricity to simulate lightning, and other naturally occurring energy bursts in what they called the ‘primordial soup’. This was a simulation, as accurate as possible, of what earth would have looked like before any life had emerged. After leaving the simulation to run for months on end, the scientists found traces of amino acid proteins – the building blocks for tissue and life. They had managed to produce something organic, with completely inorganic materials - and most importantly in conditions that minimize human interference.

This experiment was groundbreaking for the scientific community – making huge leaps in the exploration of the origins of life on earth. However, another discovery was made in 2008, when a group of students examined 11 of the left-over bottles from Miller and Urey’s experiment with more advanced scientific equipment. After over 50 years of being left alone, they found more complex organic compounds in the samples of the ‘primordial soup’. This further discovery raised many more questions among the scientific community. They wondered that if more complex amino acid compounds could be found after 50 years of the original experiment, then what could be made after 4 and a half billion.

I believe that with the rapid technological and scientific advancements in today’s world, it is inevitable that there will soon be another revelation – much like Darwin’s idea of evolution – that changes the way that we see things. Two hundred years ago, we hadn’t a clue how so much differentiation was present on our planet, but now virtually everyone accepts his theory of evolution. It is an observable and provable fact in nature. Another experiment like Miller and Urey’s, or theory like Darwin’s, that proves the origins of life on earth is inescapable. One that answers the most philosophical questions that we have – where did we come from and where are we going? But a discovery like this will undoubtedly have a severe impact on the religions of the world, more specifically the idea of ‘Genesis’. Should someone, somewhere, be able to challenge the origins of life on Earth that the Bible or Qur’an propose, then the very pillars that modern day religions are built on will crumble. People lose faith and science will reign king.

It is only logical that at some point we will discover our beginnings and ends, and I doubt that it will be by the hand of God. Humans are smarter than ever; scientific communities are making breakthroughs every day and the skeptical mindset of questioning everyone and everything is running rampant. There are shifts away from religious rule in every continent of the world – a staggering 91% of the Czech Republic identify as non-religious, and in 2017 Austria banned full face veils in public spaces. Religion is old fashioned, and its days are numbered.

None of us know exactly what the future will look like - it’s an impossible prediction to make. There are exciting technological advancements to be made, and areas of our existence to discover, but with modernization comes change. Change that many people may not be happy with. But change is essential for growth – and the human race is growing at a faster rate than ever. We must be prepared for such changes, and we must be prepared for the fall of religion.



The Importance of the Arts

Alison Jack (FIV)

What is life without the arts? The simple answer is that it would definitely not be nearly as interesting, stimulating or creative. The arts capture young minds at an early age and allow them to grow into something incredible. It is often said that children draw before they can write and sing before they can talk. By fostering this inherent urge to be creative and enjoy the arts, we enable brilliant musicians, actors and artists: people who change the world with their creativity. But more than that, the arts also improve the learning and achievement of those not studying and working in the creative worlds in a variety of ways. Even though there are some arguments about why the arts are no longer important in schools, there are stronger arguments about why they are important in today's society and education system. So why do we keep cutting them?

There is much evidence that proves that creative subjects like art, drama and music actually improve one's mental abilities and physical skills. Professionals such as surgeons say that studying the arts helps massively with their coordination; painters and artists need a steady hand and so do surgeons. The Royal College of Surgeons support many training courses that include artists, for example, surgical-art.com. Playing musical instruments, listening to and reading music helps to stimulate both sides of our brain. Indeed, children who learn and play musical instruments achieve better results in their school exams, and who wouldn't want that?

Current educational theory argues that young children learn better in a play-based environment where the majority of learning takes place through practical tasks. Again, participation in the arts is a fabulous way to integrate this type of practical activity into the learning environment. For example, in Scandinavian countries, which always score highly in international education and wellbeing tables, early years education takes place in a structure-free, child-centred environment with a strong emphasis on creative and imaginative play-based learning, both indoors and outdoors. This helps prove the



benefit of maintaining arts programmes.

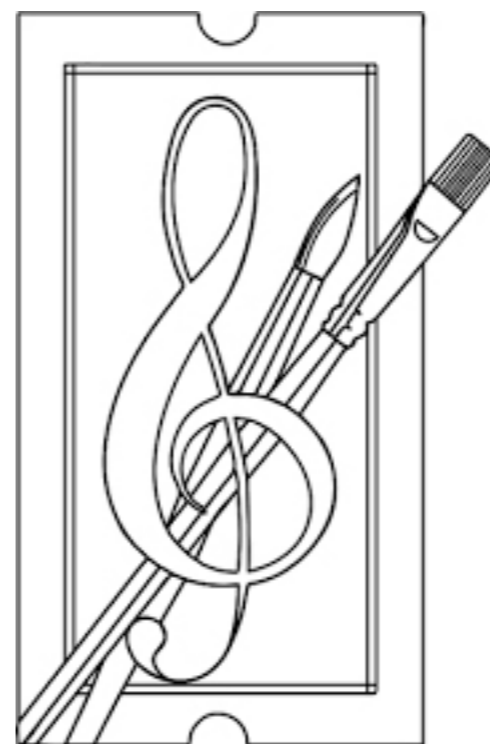
One reason why schools are cutting arts programmes is because they are expensive to start up and maintain. The initial costs of equipment and materials alone can be prohibitive. This belief is supported by many parents who may be naive to the benefits that the arts bring to their children's education and see paint, clay, musical instruments and sound and lighting systems as unnecessary luxuries. However, traditional STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) subjects can be equally expensive and, therefore, this reasoning holds little logic. The cost of equipment and materials does not outweigh the numerous positives seen with arts education.

The school system is also reducing and cutting arts programmes because they believe that they are no longer relevant in today's society, unlike STEM subjects. People argue that studying the arts is a waste of time and that jobs cannot be achieved through their study, in contrast to STEM subjects which lead to good, successful careers. However, studying the arts can not only lead to fulfilling careers within the arts industry it can also compliment the study of STEM subjects and in fact help people pursue careers within these industries. The workforce is changing faster than ever and because of developments in technology, humans no longer need to remember large amounts of information. We now need to be more creative thinkers, skills that are developed through the study of the arts. We need these inspirational people to come up with revolutions been proven to be a very successful way of combating stress and anxiety in today's high-tech world. Colouring and crafting, either alone or with others, lend themselves perfectly to this as they help to give individuals a great sense of calm and wellbeing. There is even research that shows that studying the arts, and the resulting positive impact on mental health, can also have major benefits to physical health. People find themselves sleeping better, more enthusiastic about life and therefore more willing to study, learn and better themselves. Some arts programmes even bring whole communities together, such as The Big Noise in the deprived Raploch area of Stirling. It is an orchestra for young people that has grown since 2008. It has been shown to have built confidence and happiness across the whole community.

The arts also help people, such as veterans, overcome Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. They have been used successfully as part of patients' recovery from injury and health problems in the form of Art, Music and Occupational Therapy. There is a great deal of evidence that shows how much the arts improve mental wellbeing, relieving patients of anxiety and minimising the perception of pain. An example of this is through the work of the charity Bravo 22 which, since 2011, has helped former soldiers through their recovery by getting them to produce, write and perform in plays and create sculptures and collages. In 2017 Creative Forces did a survey to see how much the arts have helped in the recovery of veterans in the

Walter Reed National Medical Center. The results showed that 85 percent of them benefitted from this art therapy.

In conclusion, the arts not only remain important in our education system but necessary. We should do everything in our power to keep them in our schools and society. Without these brilliant programmes across the world things we once did for entertainment will no longer exist and hundreds of our future musicians, artists, actors, authors and directors will not come forward and will instead stay in the shadows. Imagine a world where no new paintings were created. No new sculptures in our towns and cities. A world where no new pieces of music were played to be heard for the first time, no films, plays or TV shows were written. Or worse, imagine children never discovering the joy of finger painting, crashing cymbals together or the thrill of being in the spotlight whilst they take centre stage and give the performance of a lifetime, overjoyed by happiness that cannot be found elsewhere? The arts have changed so many lives for the better and it is true to say that every one of us can feel the impact of the arts in our lives.



On the Practice of Religion

Jubair Ahmed (FVI)

A dogma, a doctrine, a faith. Religion is a very human concept, practiced far and wide. Some may say it has existed since humans began to wonder why, others will say religion began as soon as the earth was created and humans were put upon it. Either way, religion has had a good run, but has it become obsolete in this modern age?

Looking at the practical effects of religion, morality would be the biggest impact made on us. Religion provided and shaped our current moral compass, so without it we'd still be lawless beasts. If morality is about helping others so that everyone can benefit and be happy then we have morality built-in. Altruistic behaviour makes people feel good, it's biological, and we are social creatures after all. Yet people still do bad things, we didn't break loose from the Stone Age with just some innate utilitarianism. What if doing harm to others, the community, had divine repercussions? Indeed, thinking there's a supernatural entity observing us was an evolved social behaviour. But that's all in the past, how can religion help us now? A study found that the number of those who believe in hell correlated to a decreased crime rate while the belief in heaven correlated to an increased crime rate. Seemingly, the thought of eternal punishment deterred people from crime whilst the thought of paradise encouraged it. Nothing ground-breaking but religion does have its wider effects. More curious is the result of an experiment that links those who attribute God as harsh – whether they believe in God or not – as less likely to 'cheat' (during a test for an experiment). Incredibly, religion was shown to affect the morality of even unaffiliated people.

The effects of religion here require a stern God, which calls the nature of God into question. Is God brutal enough to keep people in line? Looking at 'primitive' societies – a good reflection of the societies buried in the past – a trend was found. The deities didn't care about people. These deities had limited scope, seeing and controlling only what is within their borders, concerned about their land and natural resources. This sounds incomparable to the common religions of today but rather this cements an idea: small populations can keep themselves in check, dish out consequences for unruly behaviour; however, larger populations cannot personally maintain order. If people don't fear the consequences from their fellows then they can fear an all-seeing, wrathful being. Not to mention, the image of the God of Judaism can be traced back to being belligerent and apathetic before gradually becoming the almighty and caring God – later adopted by Christianity and Islam – that we all know and love. In the modern day, we have plenty

enough surveillance that God is not relied upon for order. God might make you think twice before littering, but it's the police that you're looking over your shoulder for.

Being lawful is the least we expect, religious or not. A bigger question is what religion bears on compassion. Surely the faithful, paragons of virtue who count their blessings along with their good deeds, are leaps and bounds more charitable than those who are godless. It was found that less or non-religious people actually had a stronger sense of compassion. Don't think the religious are heartless rather that they probably have a stronger sense of moral obligation in the place of compassion. Furthermore, without any religious stimulus, the devout were equally as benevolent as the undevout. It's almost as if everyone has principles. Even God has an earthly counterpart, the prompt of ideas such as a strong rule of law was so encouraging for trust and generosity that it was comparable to religious cues. In fact, there is little advantage that religiosity possesses at all in this day and age on the individual. Although a religious setting is more significant than a religious person in terms of generosity. It was found that religious people were more beneficent while in a place of worship than in a mundane location. So again, religion only provides a weak effect on how people act.



To look solely as to how the homogenous mass of the religious act in contrast to the entirety of the impartial would be missing the bigger picture. Rather, how religion can help an individual should be appraised. Religion is not simply a mechanism to aid productivity, how can that nurture genuine belief? No, it can more accurately be thought of as a coping mechanism, a source of purpose and an identity. Religion has been linked with better physical health, often times unhealthy activities such as smoking or alcohol must be sworn off or regulated. Resisting temptation is always useful and here it's a duty. But there's a catch: in a study, young adults who were regularly attending church services were predicted as more likely to be obese by middle age. That all could even be by-products from the psychological benefits that comes with devotion. There are many effects that religion has on the brain, from increased serotonin receptors that correlate to higher levels of spirituality to increased dopamine activity during divine experiences.

In actual fact, those who have had these spiritual experiences tend to be extremely religious to the point of harm; more likely to develop schizophrenia, mania, obsessive-compulsive disorder, all of which affect the same systems of the brain stimulated during a divine experience.

Extremes aside, a belief in hell was linked to a lower rate of happiness but, would you believe, belief in heaven was linked to a higher rate. Doubtlessly, the idea of an idyllic, celestial paradise waiting for the departed is comforting. Harsh realities, like sickness, calamity and death, may be easier to swallow. Even the ritual of a funeral bears a more optimistic outlook, as all is not lost even when there is nothing but ashes and dust. Truly religion can provide great comfort not found elsewhere, as found in a study that depressed people had an improved response to treatment if they believed that God cared about them. In some areas of the US, up to 90% of hospitalised people are religious and for half of them religion is their primary method of coping. Which is a good idea since stronger religiosity was associated with a quicker resolution of depressive symptoms.

On the other side of the coin, the pious are less likely to seek help when they're suffering from what they think is a punishment from God, like addiction; moreover, being under the assumption of having been forsaken greatly increases emotional stress. However, prayer with repeated phrases or movements have an effect similar to meditation, it can rouse emotion-regulating areas of the brain leading to heightened potential for calmness and stress relief. Another notable boon of religious coping is accessibility. In a study, caretakers who used religion to cope with stress were typically poorer, preferred to seek help from religious professionals, not to mention often had more severe burdens to deal with. Surprisingly, it was these troubled caretakers that reported a higher personal satisfaction and overall happiness. Purpose and faith are indubitably advantageous and could be the only source of comfort to be afforded to some people. God helps those who help themselves and others.

With so many elements that religion encompasses, for the better or worse, how many people actually subscribe to it? In the U.K. Christian populations have halved since 2008 but Muslims have doubled. There is a steady decline of believers altogether while the population of confident atheists rise from 18% to over a quarter in ten years. There is an inclination of children to uphold their parents' faith, simply as they are taught at a suggestable age. Keep in mind, religion is often ingrained in culture and creates strong communities; for some it's not a choice but a lifestyle. That isn't necessarily a bad thing, regularly attending community gatherings leads to increased levels of happiness. It is often more about identity than belief, in my experience, as a religious person.

Some may adopt a faith and some may abandon theirs, there are many allures and deterrents. Is

religion obsolete? I don't believe so. It has merits, even with alternatives in this day and age. Piety can be a godsend to some and a neat package of comfort and community, all in one place, to others. Of course, being religious isn't as simple as flipping a switch but whether God is real or not is a whole other question.

COVID-19 is More Dangerous Than You Think.

Daniel Ferguson (FIV)

COVID-19 is a watershed moment for the world.

It proves what academics have been saying for years. Not that we were unprepared for a pandemic, although that is certainly becoming apparent, but rather that a much larger issue which has been lurking in the shadows, is now rearing its ugly head, with disastrous consequences for all mankind: nationalism.

Nationalism and populism are not new ideologies, and neither is this the first time they are popular, but it has been meteorically resurgent in recent years, and Coronavirus proves that it has reached an entirely new apex. COVID-19 is a truly international problem, the first significant catastrophe since the financial crisis, and the first truly global one since World War Two. According to the Center for Systems Science and Engineering at Johns Hopkins University, which has become the gold standard for COVID-19 tracking, 188 countries currently have or have had cases of the virus. And yet what do we see? Instead of pulling our resources and co-ordinating a huge unified global response worthy of the enormous public health challenge we all face, countries have retreated. We have 188 different countries with cases, and just as many different ways of taking on the virus. This is undoubtedly alarming.

What's more, not only has each country taken its own route in responding to the virus, but countries with particularly nationalist, isolationist governments have been among those who have suffered the most.

The country with the most cases right now is the United States. As statistics change on a daily basis it will be difficult to provide exact numbers, but needless to say, the United States currently has more than 2 million confirmed cases, more than a quarter of all cases globally. They also have more than 115,000 deaths, a truly staggering number, especially considering that the next nearest nation has just over 42,000. As if the pure numbers themselves weren't enough, the United States has also completely abdicated its self-proclaimed status as 'leader of the free world'. What we see in the United States right

now is not just bad leadership, it is impotence. The United States has virtually imploded before our very eyes during this pandemic. A self-proclaimed nationalist, President Trump recently declared the fact that the US had the highest number of cases to be a 'badge of honour', all while thousands of people die every day, and the US economy begins to fall significantly in the wake of mass lockdowns. Indeed, it is most likely due to those mass lockdowns, and the fact that the Governors of individual states have stepped up, that the US death toll is not significantly higher. The federal government, that bastion of freedom and global leadership, has failed to step up.

As if the scenario occurring in the United States wasn't bad enough, the situation in Brazil has the potential to be even worse. The position of ardent nationalist President Jair Bolsonaro is not quite 'what virus?', but it's not far off. Bolsonaro has said that the risk of coronavirus has been exaggerated, or even invented by the media. He has been criticized for having a relaxed attitude and showing blatant ignorance towards his own government's rules. Brazil now has the second-highest number of cases in the world and it is only continuing to climb. The situation got so dire that the government stopped publishing case data, due to sheer embarrassment. Rather than focusing on the immense public-health crisis facing Brazil's dilapidated infrastructure, he has instead continued to focus on the continued effects of lockdown on the economy, which, while a legitimate concern and one that leaders need to be wary of, is surely no excuse to let thousands of his own countrymen die.



A final example of the dangerous effects of nationalism on coronavirus would be right here in the United Kingdom. The UK has, unlike the US and Brazil, been much more scientifically minded and decisive when dealing with coronavirus, but nevertheless there are glaring concerns with how the Conservative government has tackled the crisis. The government's policy seems to be much more about looking like they are tackling the virus, than actually doing so. The UK currently stands at 300,000 cases and 41,000 deaths, a staggering figure that puts us at the top of all nations in Europe. That includes Germany, a country with 16 million more people than the UK, and over 110,000 fewer cases and Turkey,

which has 15 million more and 120,000 fewer cases. These statistics don't lie- the government hasn't failed at stopping the virus, but they haven't succeeded either. The government has, through the Dominic Cummings debacle, effectively sanctioned complete ignorance of the rules, and adopted a herd immunity strategy with regards to controlling the virus. Neither of which will protect the NHS or save lives. So, while nationalism clearly has an impact on COVID-19 in different countries, what about those nations who reject nationalism and populism, in favour of a much more liberal and open society?

When discussing successful responses to coronavirus, the first place you have to look is New Zealand. New Zealand is led by Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern, who has become highly praised and idolized for her compassionate leadership, coolness under pressure and transparency, all of which have been abundantly clear during the pandemic. New Zealand currently has a total of zero active cases, thanks to an aggressive lockdown policy and the co-operation of New Zealanders. In a poll at the end of May 92% of New Zealanders said that they were satisfied with the response by the government, with a similar number believing that the lockdown, which was one of the strictest in the world, was the right thing to do. Ardern's tough response and the cooperation of her people has paid off, as they have managed to declare victory over the virus, and with the exception of international borders, almost everything else has opened up again. That's not to say that New Zealand didn't have certain advantages to begin with, such as being virtually isolated in the middle of the South Pacific, but nevertheless the Government's response not only worked, but was lauded by the people, an indication of what can happen if they take the right approach. The government's reliance on facts and data instead of gut and ideology, which is what other nations have taken to adopting, and treating it like an international public health emergency, rather than a national economic one has worked, and it has worked like a charm.



Another nation with a successful response is Germany. Germany is the centre of the EU and alongside its EU partners has created a successful base for other countries to build on, which has worked to differing degrees, but has nonetheless stopped the EU from turning into another America. As soon as COVID-19 began to ramp up, countries

across the Union began to close their borders, led by the predominant powers France and Germany. Germany has proven to be, if nothing else, more prepared than the rest of the world to face down a pandemic, with its plan being led to great effect by the Robert Koch Institute. It has been praised for its swift action, high testing and significant recovery rate. Germany's main reason to celebrate in this crisis is the response of the institution over which it has significant influence, the European Union. The EU's response to the coronavirus has been largely economical; however, it has proven a great relief to its members, but more on that later.

So, what does all this analysis and data really tell us? Well, broadly speaking nationalist nations are not doing nearly as well at handling the pandemic as traditionally globalist ones, and the inward rather than unifying trajectory of nations' responses has had a detrimental effect on their ability to control the virus.

One of the major criticisms of globalist nations is that they are ignoring the economy, but this simply does not hold water. The United States has floundered in responding economically and is entering the first recession since the financial crisis of 2008, which was largely corrected by noted globalist Barack Obama. The UK economy has also receded, declining by more than 20% in a single quarter. Meanwhile, the European Union has responded to the worst economic crisis in its history by raising more than \$825 million or 750 million euros, to help members in their recovery from the virus. Two markedly different situations, one run by a nationalist inward-facing government content with kicking the can down the road, the other by a supranational union of 27 member states, joining together to face the ensuing economic crisis together. I know which one I'd rather be involved in.

Now you may ask, what can be learnt from exploring this great chasm of ideology? Not only can we discover which is better for solving a pandemic, but for overall purposes as well. The difference in response has been staggering. We see globalist nations, following the science, imposing lockdowns, and refusing to lift them until it has been proven that it is safe to do so, and nationalist nations, refusing to follow scientific advice, and working based on ego, instinct and popular opinion. What's more, lockdowns have largely been supported by the populations of relatively strict countries, where they are seen as a necessary evil, unlike in nationalist countries where they are seen as a nuisance to the economy.

If nothing else, hopefully we can learn some valuable lessons from this pandemic, so that when the next one hits, we'll be more prepared. We'll know that you have to listen to scientists, that you have trust data over instinct, and that the best option is for nations to band together to face down common threats, instead of retreating behind our own borders, and going it alone.

How do you Know if Someone is a Vegan? Don't Worry, They'll Tell you

Ellen Peden (FVI)

Have you ever met a vegan on the street? Maybe you have and don't even know it. As the typical image of a vegan has transitioned from a dread locked, non-deodorant-wearing hippie to a yoga going, Lululemon wearing Gemini vlogger, veganism has spiked in popularity. They are hiding among us, waiting to pounce and shove their views down your throat along with their tofu, quinoa and whatever gluten-free, wheat-free, air-free dust they have whilst they scream at you for causing the mass extinction of animals with that chicken wrap in your hand. In today's climate, it feels like we're just one year away from the McQuinoa replacing the Big Mac. According to a study of 1,300 scientists run by United Nations, there is a 95 per cent chance that human activity in the past 50 years has caused global warming and climate change, but is forcing the world to go vegan the best way to combat climate change? What about flying and driving less? What about buying fewer clothes? Or, better still, why don't we put pressure on large industrial companies that are emitting 52% of the world's emissions from retrieving fossil fuels, industrial processes and electrical power stations?



It is clear the world eats too much meat and the wrong types of food - not just from the visible environmental impact but also the health problems overeating has caused. The huge rise in the world's population in recent decades has meant that demands for efficient, cheap food sources has reached an all time high, putting excessive strain on our natural resources. Whether it is arable or pastoral farming there is always a cost - the biggest of which is on the

land. A source of land degradation that most people focus on is overgrazing, caused by having too many animals in a given space and strips the land of its nutrients. This is one of the reasons people are being 'encouraged' to go vegetarian or vegan as this would remove the substantial demand on animal products. However what these scientists are not telling you is that arable farming does significant damage to the land too. According to The Guardian, "The continual ploughing of fields, combined with heavy use of fertilisers, has degraded soils across the world, the research found, with erosion occurring at a pace of up to 100 times greater than the rate of soil formation. It takes around 500 years for just 2.5cm of topsoil to be created amid unimpeded ecological changes." and that, "The soils are silting up river systems - if you look at the huge brown stain in the ocean where the Amazon deposits soil, you realise how much we are accelerating that process." Clearly, as bad as pastoral farming can be for the environment, if the world were to go vegan and strip an entire food group from the diet of 7 million people, we would be putting immense pressure on other food groups and become even more reliant on fertilisers and pesticides which have even more detrimental effects on the land than having cows in a field.

Granted, farming cows have contributed a great deal to climate change between methane from their dodgy digestion and from the need to destroy areas of forests to make space for it. However, agricultural farming causes just as many problems to our climate: we still tear down trees for agriculture, the fertilisers cause eutrophication and emit other polluting substances, not to mention the environmental issues created by transporting these exotic goods. Take a moment to think about some of the most popular foods in our society today that have seen an increase from the 160% rise in vegans and hipsters in the last decade. Among some of the most in demand are avocados from Mexico, quinoa from the Andes, acai from South America, chia seeds from Central America and coconut products from Asia, Australia and basically anywhere exotic that is not near Britain. Every single one of these are shipped across the world in their millions every year because apparently plain British produce is not "exotic" enough for their trendy diet. This refusal to 'go local' with your food is causing far more damage to the world than not going vegan does; not only are you contributing hugely to carbon dioxide emissions from the transportation and packaging of these foods but you are stripping the countries that these foods come from of the ability to sell them to their own people. Kenya, Mexico and even Australia have been forced to take measures to stop the prices of their food rising: in 2018 Kenya introduced a ban on exporting avocados as the price of a 90kg bag cost 2560 Kenyan shillings, Australia have rationed avocados in Queensland as the price of a tray has doubled to A\$95 and Mexico, who supply 45% of the world's avocado cannot afford to give their natives their own produce and considered importing the

staple ingredient from elsewhere as the price per kilo rose to equal the daily minimum wage of eighty pesos. Absolute absurdity. Similar cases can be seen with other industries like with quinoa so the Andes' native population, who have consumed the grain for centuries, suddenly cannot gain access to something grown in their back garden. So the next time someone tries to "tempt" you with an Acai smoothie bowl for your breakfast instead of a good old, British-grown, fry-up, just show them a map.

Just as food transportation and packaging is producing a massive portion of the world's emissions, the fashion industry is taking the world by a similar storm (literally). The 'fast fashion' movement that started in the early 90s has allowed retailers like Zara, H&M and Forever 21 to make sickening profits by being able to rapidly turn over trends by creating designs that quickly go out of fashion but are cheap to make and cheap to sell so are welcomed by consumers with open arms. This means that you no longer have to wait for the beginning of a new season for new clothes to arrive in shops and it is beneficial for the economy as retailers can recover quickly if they have made any losses as they can just bring out a new line of clothes. However, most clothes are made by taking advantage of the ongoing industrialisation of developing countries like China and India and making use of the cheap workforce which allows company owners to make a larger profit and Western and developed countries to keep their emissions record squeaky clean because the pollution from the factories and sweatshops is thrust onto the country where the clothes are made. Not only does the transportation of these clothes give off unnecessary fumes that make up a significant proportion of the 13.2% of total greenhouse gases produced by transportation but the production of the clothes themselves creates 1.2 billion tonnes of CO₂ per year, 60% of which come from China and India. In addition, by buying your jumper from Topshop, you are exploiting people in Mauritius or Sri Lanka or India whose countries do not have the resources to safeguard the environmental and health hazards associated with fast fashion, leaving their citizens exposed to water pollution from dyeing the clothes which causes bioaccumulation (where



the toxins build up as the food chain progresses, leaving large predators with high amounts of toxins in their systems) from cotton fertilisers and polyester microfibrils, disrupts hormones and causes various forms of cancer. Reducing the amount of clothes we buy is not only about helping the environment... it is about being a decent human being.



Just when we thought the idea of fast fashion could not be more destructive, it gets worse. Have you ever opened a package that you ordered online - from ASOS, for example? The number of layers of plastic packaging you must rip open is so diabolical, you could play a game of pass the parcel with it! It is bad enough that polyester, the most popular fabric, is produced by crude oil and "in 2015, production of polyester for textile use results in more than 706 billion kg of CO₂" (nature.com), but in the EU (and yes, for now, that includes the UK too) the average person wasted 170kg of plastic packaging in 2016. Who really needs three individual layers of plastic to protect one jumper? What is going to happen to it? Since it has taken plastic 112 years to get as cheap and durable it is today since its invention in 1907, retailers and postal services are struggling to find incentives to reduce their use of plastic - because the death of 1 million marine animals per year is apparently not enough - therefore companies like Billabong and New Zealand designer, Maggie Marilyn, are unfortunately in the minority of companies who aim to replace plastic packaging with more innovative resources like "cassava-based compostable bags" and "bags made from recycled limestone quarry waste". Maybe if people stopped posting about how we have too much plastic in our oceans on social media and got out the bubble that is Instagram we would be closer to finding a sustainable and economic alternative to single use plastic.

It has been established that evangelical vegans try to meat-shame us and at many a Christmas dinner and harassing us to put down our beloved pigs-in-blankets in exchange for some nut roast (whatever that is) but do you honestly believe that they have given a second thought as to how many kilos of carbon dioxide are emitted from their flight to a yoga retreat in Bali? A flight from London to New York emits 986kg of

CO₂ per passenger - on an average commercial flight that is 216,920kg in total...for one flight! In order to match the emissions given off by that entire flight, you would have to be vegan for 220 years. The 986kg of emissions from that flight per passenger is more than the average person in 56 countries of the world, like Burundi and Paraguay, produce in an entire year. You might be thinking, "that's fine, I'm only going to Europe for my summer holidays", think again. A flight from London to Rome emits 234kg of carbon dioxide. As much as people do not want to believe it, it is much more environmentally friendly to take the train and spend a few more hours travelling than getting into a portable ozone heater but, like with packaging and eating locally, people like things that are convenient, cheaper and available all year round.



On the bright side, although there is a lot us individuals should be doing to combat climate change, there should be more getting done by large corporations and politicians who seem to still be sitting idly on their high horses, pretending nothing is happening because their pocket has a consistent stream of green and purple faces flowing into it. Our anger should be directed at them - the people who could truly change the course of our future but are reluctant to do so because of short term financial gain. There is no doubt that electricity, industrial processes and extracting fossil fuels have made up more than half of all emissions produced in the world but who is to blame? The countries that account for the most emissions are China, USA, India and Russia with a total of 57% of all emissions between them which would be expected as these are four of the biggest countries in the world as China and India make up a third of the global population alone. However, if you were to take a closer look, the country with the highest emissions per person is in fact Qatar, followed by Curaçao, Trinidad and Tobago and Kuwait. This is due to one of two reasons: either countries in the Middle East, especially, extract petroleum and export it to other countries which racks up their total emissions or countries in the Caribbean are popular tourist destinations so, usually, Western tourists show

up for a week or two and stay in energy draining hotels and resorts before they disappear back to where they came from, leaving a legacy of some nice photos and a hefty carbon footprint for the other country to clear up. The West are quick to blame other people for climate change but you do not have to look in very much depth to see that they are just as much at fault as the rest, if not more. They just industrialised a lot earlier and before climate changed existed - coincidence?

Every aspect of fossil fuels is horrendous for the environment but prosperous for the economy. The popular strip mining of coal and fracking for oil or natural gas destroy entire eco systems and cause a large amount of air and water pollution, and that is just from retrieving it...but still generates \$373 billion per year. It is apparently a tricky conundrum. Yet, with a bit of effort, "Recent research from the Global Commission on the Economy and Climate finds that bold climate action could deliver at least \$26 trillion in economic benefits through 2030." It is time to stop thinking about short term gains and take a step back to look at the many advantages of getting behind clean energy. What is not to love? Instead of subsidising fossil fuels, politicians need to change their policies and make investing in clean energy easier so we can reduce our reliance on fossil fuels. This is what is going to change climate change. This is the future, like it or not.

The world has been around for more than 4.5 billion years and we have managed to destroy it in less than 100. The time to act is now. Go to the climate strikes without shame. Scream out until your lungs collapse for greedy corporations to stop using fossil fuels. Pressure travel companies to find alternative fuel sources, making travelling greener. But never, ever feel guilty for eating the government recommended portions of meat. Do not let 'hangry', vitamin deficient vegans shame you into eating grass with them.



From the Editor...

“Who knows what this next decade will bring?” asked a dubious Amanda at the end of her previous editorial in last Winter’s edition of *The Galley*. But if she had to bet, she would have never imagined events even close to what has happened in this first 5% of the decade. It’s been a hefty six months, to say the absolute least.

One hot Nigerian winter’s afternoon, a mere few days into 2020, I recall lying in bed with the air con blasting. I was – not uncharacteristically – procrastinating over revising for my prelims by writing a list of everything I planned to do this year. I had high, high hopes for this year. So if, that day, you’d told me that over half of the goals on my list would be postponed or simply impossible to complete, that I’d spend the majority of my year having not even gone to the other side of Dunfermline, let alone abroad, that the summer exams that had defined the past two years of my school life would be cancelled, that I’d start my Higher courses in my bedroom with nothing but a screen and mute button, all whilst the world suffers from two fatal pandemics – Covid-19 and racism (though, the latter is unfortunately nothing new)... I would have refused to believe you. Yet here we are. This is our unflattering reality. Our supposed “2020 vision” did not see this coming.

I know I’m one of the fortunate ones. My family is healthy, and we’ve all been able to stay at home safely, whilst our country’s amazing keyworkers and carers have been fighting on the frontlines and keeping our country running. But it has still not been easy for anyone. Some days, I wake up excited by the prospect of being able to do something new, something that, under normal circumstances, I would never have had the time for. But other days, I’m angry. Angry at those disobeying lockdown measures, their reckless actions costing lives and adding to the time we all must stay confined. Angry at racist police brutality and the blatant, disgusting racism and ignorance that still tears apart families, communities, our world. I grieve over a loss of “the good old days” – it wasn’t perfect by any means, but still better than this mess we’re in right now. And I feel helpless, I feel like there’s not much I can do to make all this better.

However, there have been a few things that have helped me stay sane during these crazy times, one of them being reading. For the first time since childhood, I’ve had enough time to read, and not just read but actually experience such immense enjoyment from it. Reading provides an escape from daily life in a way that not much else can. So, I hope that the Features section, filled with a wide range of brilliant articles, allows you also to escape from your own daily life. Delve within these pages to explore the beautiful Scottish highlands, magical midsummer celebrations in Eastern Europe, the exotic climate of South Africa. Learn something new about topics which have not been headlining recent news – introverts, deafness, climate strikes, to name but a few. There’s even a special *Galley* edition of “Desert Island Discs” featuring Mr Daniel! And before heading back into *shudders* reality, finish off with some motivation from Sophie Robinson and myself. Without a doubt, I’m sure you’ll enjoy these wonderful articles as much as I enjoyed getting to read and edit them!

I wish I could tell you that we won’t be in this mess for much longer. I really do. But all I can say is, in times like these, in this scary and confusing planet we call home, we need to stick together and fight for the oppressed. And hopefully, we’ll be able to return from this storm, back to a shore of some kind as a stronger, kinder, and more connected global community.

Amanda Amaeshi (FIV)



The Music of Scotland

Freya Robins (FI)

2020 is the year of coasts and waters in Scotland. These important geographical features create 6,160 miles of stunning mainland coastline and 4,000 more miles of breathtaking individual islands with over 31,000 beautiful lochs.

These amazing natural features have been an inspiration for music for hundreds of years. Most famously perhaps is the orchestral work by Mendelssohn. In 1829 when he was twenty years old, Mendelssohn came to Scotland to visit a childhood friend. The two of them wandered around the natural lochs and forests of the Scottish Highlands. Mendelssohn was struck by the beauty and wildness of Scotland compared to his home in Berlin. He was entranced by all the sounds and views of Scotland. Whilst on a boat ride in western Scotland, Mendelssohn was so overwhelmed by the mist and the roar of the waves that a melody came upon him. The phrase was as powerful and strong as the waves that he experienced, and he used this theme as the beginning of his overture. It became known as the Hebrides Overture or ‘Fingal’s Cave’.

After listening to Mendelssohn’s Hebrides overture, you can almost imagine the waves crashing onto your boat as the piece becomes louder and stronger. Even as the music calms down, you still feel as if you are gently drifting on the water. Listening to the beginning motif develop helps bring strength and meaning to the piece and depicts the swell and ebb and flow of the sea.

Many traditional Scottish songs refer to the beauty of the waters of Scotland, from the sea to rivers and lochs. Often, traditional pieces of music were written to ease the loss of having to leave Scotland through emigration or war. For example:

- John Tait composed a piece in 1775 called ‘The Banks of the Dee’ when a friend left Scotland to join the British forces in America: ‘Flow on, lovely Dee, flow on, thou sweet river, Thy banks’ purest stream shall be dear to me ever..’
- A song written by Randal Alasdair Macdonald brought back fond memories of a childhood in Glasgow and the bridges which span the Clyde: ‘Silver Bridge across the Clyde Spread your wide arms over me. Dancing light upon the water Brings my boyhood back to me..’
- Robert Burns wrote a song while visiting the falls of Aberfeldy in Perthshire in 1787: ‘Now simmer blinks on flowery braes, And o’er the crystal streamlet plays; Come, let us spend the lightsome days, In the birks of Aberfeldie!’

Many of these traditional songs have become an inherent part of our culture and are passed down from generation

to generation. ‘The Skye Boat Song’, about the escape of Bonnie Prince Charlie over the sea to the Isle of Skye, has been forever sung as a lullaby. Similarly, the industries around the waters of Scotland have also been a source of music, in particular the fishing industry. The folk songs often described the hardships and the decline of industries. Perhaps most famous is the ‘Bonnie Banks of Loch Lomond’, whose original composer was unknown but continues to this day to be rearranged and recorded in many genres of music.

It is appropriate then that in the year of coasts and waters, Scottish Natural Heritage commissioned the traditional musician Ingrid Henderson to create a piece of music inspired by the seas around Scotland. Entitled ‘Message in a Bottle’, this composition uses the true story of a young boy from Armagh who in 2008 put a message in a bottle which was washed up on Canna ten years later. Cleverly, the multi-media composition combines the amazing journeys of marine wildlife and seabirds, our relationship with the seas, and the cultures related to the coastline of Scotland alongside the issue of climate change.



‘Message in a Bottle’ is a true, peaceful Scottish piece of music. It makes you feel as if you are watching the tide come onto the beach. It is gentle, joyful, and at times sad, but the mood lifts at the end of the piece of music. It is played predominantly on the harp with other string instruments in support.

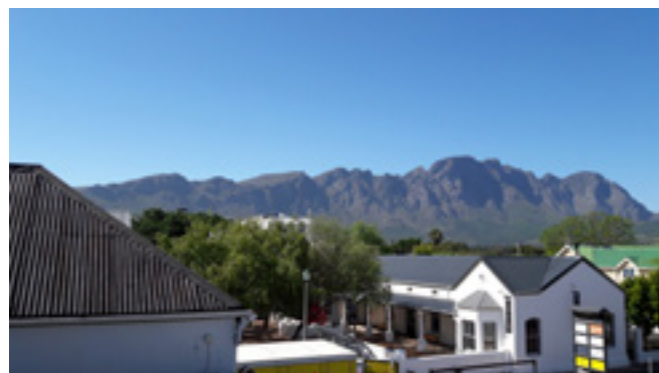
Scotland’s waters are a consistent element to our survival and a constant feature of its landscape, heritage, and industries. Just like the longevity of the music it has inspired, it is essential that we protect this rich resource for future generations.

Memories of a Happier Time

Honor Fletcher (FII)

I am writing this during lockdown. I find that when all of the news and uncertainty feels overwhelming, my mind wanders back to a happier time.

The sun raged, as though Helios himself was in his chariot, charging across the sky. Our garden resembled a jungle that had been tamed by man. At one end lay a hammock, slung in the shade beneath the luscious green trees, offering respite from the heat. At the other was a cerulean blue pool, which lured many species of birds that were as unfamiliar as the towering mountain ridge that stood tall against the azure sky as a picturesque backdrop.



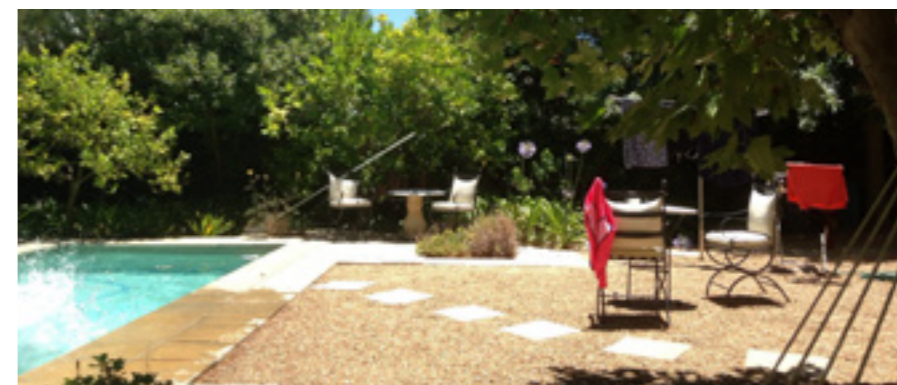
Tomorrow it would be Christmas Eve. It was quite unlike the December I had left behind in Scotland. I had travelled over 10,000 kilometres along with my parents and two younger sisters, chasing the sun like the swifts and swallows that now flew overhead in the garden. I had always longed to visit Africa, dreaming of the incredible animals, the landscape. The idea of exploring a new culture fuelled my curiosity and excitement. It would be the trip of a lifetime – and now we were finally here!



Inside, the cool, white-washed rooms offered relief from the foreign heat of the South African summer. We were still to acclimatise to the exotic climate, but my family and I were keen to explore the neighbourhood of Franschhoek.

I could feel the powerful sun beating down on us as we strolled down the street – it was not even noon yet! A repetitive, mechanical call could be heard – which we later discovered was made by guinea fowl and would become a familiar sound at dusk and dawn. I caught a glimpse of apricot hoopoes who added to the chorus with their rhythmic, offbeat cooing. An inquisitive Cape canary was resting in the branches above with the distinct saffron yellow pattern, as though someone had shone a buttercup onto the feathers, leaving a single patch of grey. It too whistled a sweet, harmonious tune adding to the metallic clatter of guinea fowl and the call of hoopoes. We wandered down the street, the harsh sunlight forcing me to fumble blindly into the pocket of my shorts for my sunglasses. The lenses added a rosy glow to the already beautiful town of Franschhoek. The Old Cape-Dutch design of each building made it seem as though I was in a fairy tale, exploring a part of the world I never knew existed.

As we wandered along the Main Street, an elderly gentleman greeted us like long lost friends and invited us to seek shade from the heat. After our long journey across the world, and stumbling along on the hot stone pavement, hot like volcanic rocks, it was our fortune that brought us to Taki's Bar. Inside was airy and a fortress from the blistering rays of sun. The owner, Taki, turned out to be Greek but had made his home in Franschhoek. After our refreshing drinks and conversation with Taki and his son, we walked to the town square. I still had the sweet but tangy flavour of lemonade on my lips, it lent me the short burst of



energy I needed. I looked around me, the vivacious birds continued to sing, the radiant sun still shone. I was happy. I had forgotten the gloomy grey skies of Scotland, the clouds shielding the stars at night, and the relentless winter storms.

This was different from home, but I gladly embraced the change.



When we reached the town square, my mother and I were instantly intrigued by one shop tucked away in a hidden corner – selling local gemstones of all shapes and sizes. I have been fascinated by the endless colours and beauty of gemstones since I was very young, and so has my mother. I felt I was at the entrance of the Cave of Wonders. The rich blue hues of lapis lazuli gleamed from the window; the miniature bottles of glistening gold looked like they were found in a pirate treasury. The pale pink rose quartz, the cornflower blue tanzanite, the coolness of polished carnelian beads against my hot hands.

I have many wonderful memories of our family trip to South Africa. Franschhoek was a magical place, somewhere that helped ease the pain of spending a second Christmas without my beloved gran. Traditionally we would have spent Christmas with her in Scotland. Hogmanay would also have been a difficult time for us but this year Franschhoek provided an evening that would become a lasting memory of mine.

The hour was late. In a sky full of stars, the constellation of Orion's Belt was directly above, reminding me of night skies at home. Earlier, we had gazed at the final sunset of 2016; streaks of twilight merged with the blood orange sky and the saffron yellow sunbeams shone one last time before the sun made its silent farewell until the New Year.

Now, the sky was dark and vast – I had never seen so many twinkling stars shining in my life. The moon cast a new light and atmosphere upon our garden. It was quiet, serene, peaceful. My dad and I decided to go for a swim. I was bathing in starlight, mesmerised by the natural beauty of the night sky. I could feel the occasional breeze splash the water upon my face. There I was, on Hogmanay, floating, at peace with the world.

We could hear the bells chime midnight and our neighbours singing Auld Lang Syne. The moment was perfect. We were outside to begin our New Year, when a shooting star blazed across the indigo sky. It gave us a sense of wonder and hope for the future.

Franschhoek truly was a magical place for me.



Summer Solstice: Slavic Tales Come to Life

Katerina Yakimova (FVI)

Being the longest day of the year, summer solstice may be the time for amateur astronomers to longer observe a closer to home star – the Sun. But, on this short night, Slavic people go out to appease the evil spirits and try to foresee the future which awaits them.

Jumping over the bonfire

Midsummer is an international observation with many countries celebrating the longest day of the year, good yield, and prophecies. For the Christian Church, June 24th is the day Saint John the Baptist was born, exactly half a year before Jesus. It is one of the few occasions on which the birth rather than the death of a saint is celebrated. This date does not change from year to year which is the reason why the holiday is not exactly held on the longest day of the year, which in 2020 is June 20th. Across the Slavic and other nations, the holiday yields numerous folklore traditions from pagan times, yet each



celebration is unique. From Ukraine to Bulgaria and Romania, this eve is commemorated in a variety of ways, ranging from young girls dancing around a fire to healing people with ‘silent water’.

In Ukraine and Romania, the celebration evening begins with the lighting of a bonfire right after sunset on June 23rd. Women and girls dress in white dresses, sewn with traditional strings, and dance barefoot around it. Brave young men jump over the fire to show their strength and faith. This is the time when good and evil spirits start competing and the sky opens to them. Evil spirits like witches, water spirits, werewolves, and Bulgarian samodivas (wildalones) are awakened and should be pleased

throughout the night with different rituals.

Once upon a time...

During the last few centuries, many customs related to the celebrations on Saint John’s Day have been modified. Nonetheless, the tales and legends about the origin of the customs and the evil spirits which are freed on the night have certainly contributed to the national identity and the integrity of these nations. For the most part, the traditions overlap. Still each country has added its special flavour to them. And, of course, each story begins with once upon a time...

Once upon a time, as the legend goes, in a village far away, there was a young boy, Enyo, with eyes blue like the sky, who fell for a girl called Stana. They were deeply in love, but Stana’s dad disapproved of him and married her off to another boy. On her wedding day, when the spouses were crossing the river bridge, the bride took off her veil and jumped into the river. Enyo was heartbroken. His shadow faded away and he got severely ill. No matter how hard healers tried, there was no cure for his illness – the grief for a loved one...

Or so goes the legend of the Bulgarian folklore holiday, Enyovden (Enyo’s Day), celebrated on June 24th. However, there is also a more mythical story. At the end of the day on the 23rd, the Sun stops to take a break before going on its long journey for the rest of the year. It washes itself with water which is then determined to be ‘alive’. On the eve, after the Sun has washed into the river waters, the water has curative and magical powers, also known as ‘silent water’. Girls go to collect some in small pots in complete silence; otherwise, the water may lose its magical powers if it has any contact with the good or the bad through human speech. The water in the pots is left outside their homes during the night to collect moon power.

A night in the woods

The Bulgarian samodivas (wildalones) are mythical women living in the woods of the southern mountain ranges in Bulgaria. They are the most beautiful women one can see (only if they decide to show themselves), yet cruel if you do not satisfy their wishes. After collecting ‘silent water’, at midnight, women and girls, regardless whether a village girl, a fortune teller, a healer, or a witch, gather to go up in the mountains to collect herbs and flowers. It is believed that all plants and herbs have their biggest

curative potential on that night as the sun was at its peak in energy activity. Witches and healers need to gather 77 and a half different herbs, for all illnesses, according to the folk beliefs, and for the one without a name. It is essential to pick up gallium and primroses as then they have the strongest power to cure illnesses for the rest of the year. Each can pick up as many as they find, but nobody can leave the forest before they have ‘bought them off’ the samodivas. Women leave their baskets in a circle on a green lawn in the dark and dance around them hand in hand in silence. Afterwards, listening to the whispering sound of the tree leaves, they go back home. Before going to bed, each girl places a few of the herbs she collected underneath her pillow in order to have prophecy dreams while the rest of the herbs are soaked into the pot with ‘silent water’.

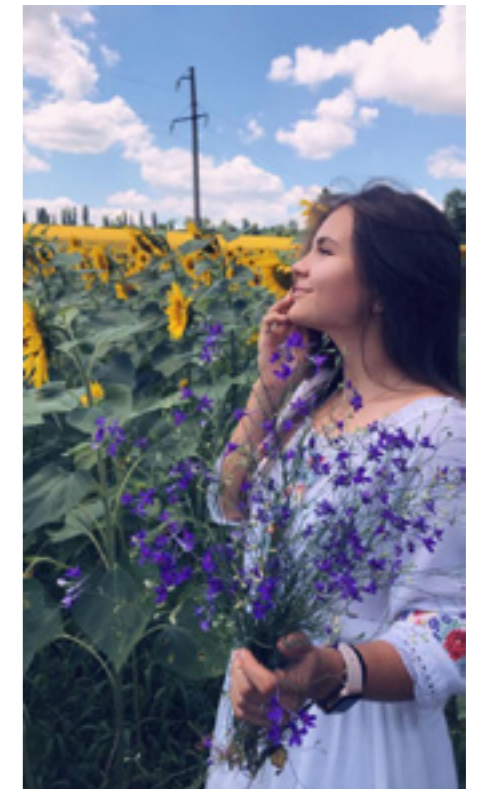
At cockcrow, everyone wakes up to watch the sunrise and see whether their shadow resembles Enyo’s shadow – are they going to be ill if it does not appear, or are they going to be healthy? While the sky is still marigold, girls make wreaths with the flowers they picked at night, place them on their heads and sprinkle each other with ‘silent water’, having absorbed the power of the moon, for good health and high yield. If something unfortunate is to happen to anybody for the remainder of the year, witches and healers will have miraculous herbs to heal them with.

The Sun smiles back

In the country beyond the Danube river, Romania, the worship of pagan folklore beliefs is conducted in a similar manner. And, indubitably, the legend about the flower with immense magical power on this night also starts with:

Once upon a time, in a village at the edge of a forest, lived a beautiful but poor orphan girl with light blue eyes and slender figure. The villagers, however, looked at her with disdain because of her origin. Sanziene was good at heart and always prayed to God not only to give her a better life, but to heal the souls of the vile villagers. She loved playing with the forest animals and running outside on the vast green lawns. One day, she got severely ill, but nobody was there for her. Only an old kind woman, Saint Friday, visited her house and leaned over her, saying, “You are beautiful and gentle like a flower, and, from now on, you will be a flower with healing powers.” In the next moment, Sanziene’s face turned into a yellow flower.

The beautiful story of Sanziene is the foundation for the summer solstice celebrations in Romania. Andrea (Form V) from Moldova, with relatives in Romania, shares that she is part of them every year. Dressed up in long white dresses and with wreaths around their heads, she goes with other girls from her local village early in the morning on the 24th to pick up herbs and, above all, the sanzienne yellow flower (commonly known as Lady’s bedstraw). The ritual is all about the sanziennele – gracious fairies with magical powers, which are always good and kind to humans. They are said to bless animals and cure ill people. The girls dance in circles to honour a day of love and happiness when the real and the magical realms turn into one. On the following day, they throw their wreaths in the river waters and wish to meet their future love partner.



The stories from these distant lands are captivating, yet Scotland is a place where the fires of midsummer are also not a rare occasion. In Orkney, every summer, there are celebrations with bonfires and flower gatherings which commemorate Saint John’s Eve as well.

From Ukraine to Bulgaria and Romania, midsummer is a major annual celebration of magic and ancient folklore traditions. It has been kept alive for centuries and passed on to the younger generations which engage in fairy-tale rituals to welcome magical spirits and send the Sun on its long journey towards the winter. It is a time which brings people together and makes Slavic tales come to life.

Relish the Quiet

Katie Ainge (FIV)

Think back to the last time you scrolled through Netflix (considering the current circumstances, I am sure it will not be difficult to recall). There is a common storyline that seems to occur with mind-numbing consistency. It starts with a girl, who has only a few friends, and she meets a boy. He slowly morphs her to become popular and more outgoing – thank goodness, she’s fixed! I bet every person here can think of at least 5 films, books or TV shows that follow this kind of pattern. Now imagine a young, introverted child observing the way media portrays their personality type: a problem, a broken part, a flaw. And this issue does not manifest in just the media. We need to alter our view of introverts entirely.

To understand the extent of the problem, we need to understand introverts. Shockingly, around 1 or 2 in 3 of us are introverted. That means that if you, yourself, are not an introvert, the person next to you probably is. The dictionary definition of an introvert is “a shy, reticent person”. This is a common misconception. Shyness and introversion are different.

Introverts feel their most alert, creative, and switched on in low stimulus environments (often alone or in quiet places). Each of our brains vary in their sensitivity towards dopamine. Dopamine is like a rush of energy to our brains triggered when we take risks. More introverted people have a higher sensitivity to dopamine than more extroverted people. This means, for introverts, high stimulus environments, that trigger a lot of dopamine, are not very enjoyable. Acetylcholine is the pleasure chemical that introverts enjoy. It is less strong and is triggered when concentrating, reading, or thinking deeply. Introverted people also often take longer to consider things as most decisions pass through their long-term memory, explaining why working under pressure is often not introverts’ forte. Like anything, this all lies on a spectrum. Few of us are simply an introvert or an extrovert. Most of us fall somewhere in-between the two. This is sometimes referred to as ambiversion.

The belittling of introverts can start at the very foundations of a child’s life, as often, introverts can be forced to become more outgoing when they are young. For example, in schools, children can be marked down for not continually contributing in class discussions and are constantly forced to work in groups rather than alone, which is how the introvert works best. Teachers consistently describe their ideal student as an extrovert, despite the fact that introverts on average get better grades. And even worse, children that enjoy spending time alone can be seen as “problem cases”.

It does not stop in schools. Workplaces are often open-plan, leaving few quiet spaces. Almost all projects are done collaboratively meaning they are at risk of becoming competitive. It is clear to see how all of this presents as a

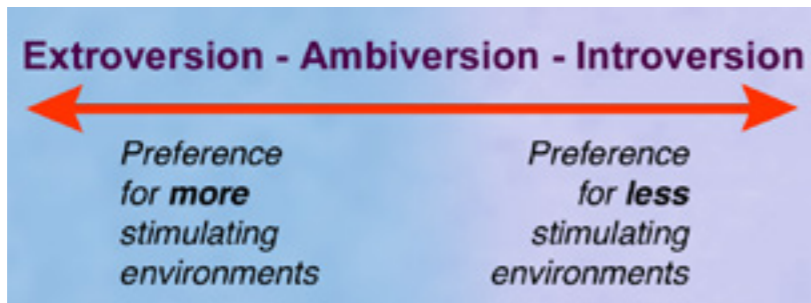
nightmare for the introvert. By organising our institutions in this way, we are telling introverts to change, morph, and alter themselves. We are also forcing 1 to 2 out of 3 of us to underperform by making work environments so high stimulus.

Where does our society’s belittlement of introverts begin? One answer can be found in our history. Previously, we used to live in a “culture of character”. This is what scientists call societies where we value people for their qualities as a person and who they are. But as we approached the 20th century, we transitioned into a “culture of personality” – meaning we value people for being loud, enthusiastic, and charismatic. This was due to the industrial revolution. People moved into cities and suddenly had to work with people they did not know. This meant they had to prove themselves to a room full of strangers, being judged by others very quickly. As a result, an outgoing personality became very attractive. And so, with time, we lost our appreciation of brilliant, modest people.

It is essential that we begin to appreciate introverts once again. This is because they possess qualities extroverts tend to lack. Introverts make good listeners because they will pay attention, contemplate, and offer well thought out, useful advice, whereas extroverts might jump in and interrupt. Introverts also are more observant, tend to make deeper connections and, contrary to popular opinion, make great leaders because they are more compassionate, listen to others, and tend not to take decisions lightly. Introverts are also said to see the world in a more creative and nuanced way.

Think of Dr Seuss: he was a self-identified introvert and even feared meeting his young fans as he was worried his introverted persona would disappoint them considering the loud jolliness of his stories (once again highlighting our society’s attitude towards introverted people). Think of Steve Wozniacki who said he never would have become such an expert in his field had he not been too introverted to leave his house, think of Eleanor Roosevelt, think of Bill Gates, think of J.K. Rowling... all of them are introverted.

I, myself, have never identified as an introvert – I love the company of others. But lockdown has made me become more in touch with the quieter side of my personality and has allowed me to empathise with introverted people better. We need to stop tolerating this terrible message that introverts need to change; being an introvert is not a character flaw. In fact, I think all of us could benefit from getting inside our heads a little more often – they can be interesting places to be. And what better time in our lives is there, than now, to spend a little time alone with ourselves to explore the transcendent power of solitude. For once, the endless clattering of the world is finally hushing; relish the quiet, relish the solitude, and relish the calm.



My Experience at a Climate Strike

Izzy Braid (FII)

I can’t pinpoint the exact age that I became aware of climate change. Of course, the facts have been present my entire life, but I feel the world, along with myself, has only come to terms with the monstrosity that is global warming in recent years. Greta Thunberg and other young activists have undoubtedly made a huge impact on everybody’s views on global warming and have brought climate change to the forefront of many people’s minds. Inspired by these activists, along with my hope for a bright future, I decided it was in my best interest, and everyone’s around me, to try to do everything possible to stop global warming.

It was February 15th, 2019 when I first heard of climate strikes in Scotland. I was immediately drawn to the idea of marching with thousands of like-minded people all with the same hopes and goals. I began to research the different organisations that run climate protests, like Extinction Rebellion and Youth Climate Strikes. Although the strikes were on every Friday, I decided to attend the next national strike, held on May 24th.

On the day of the 24th, I woke up and grabbed the sign I had made a couple nights before, then rushed to the train station in order to catch the train for Edinburgh. I met a few of my friends who were also passionate about striking for climate change, and we began to walk the 20 minutes from Edinburgh Waverley to The Meadows, where the protesters would gather before the march. With our signs in hand as we walked to The Meadows, we witnessed many people staring at us, asking to take photographs, and one man even chased after us in order to see what we were protesting about. To me this was quite shocking, as global warming and climate change had recently been talked about all over the news. As well as that, climate change was such a common subject of discussion between me and my friends that the idea of striking for climate was no longer seen as out of the ordinary to us. But apparently for many Edinburgh citizens this was not the case.



Once we had arrived at The Meadows we were met by an exceedingly large amount of other kids and adults holding different homemade banners and signs. Amongst the sea of people, you could hear music being played and people chanting and shouting, and see all different kinds of people dancing and smiling. It seemed to be a cheerful gathering – which was not something I had previously expected. This

was until YCS (Youth Climate Strikes) began the march and thousands of people ran to the streets to express the need for change and to make their voices heard. Despite the fact I could not see it, I heard a sort of marching band, where drums and other instruments kept the beat to the various chants we were all shouting and screaming. An example of the various chants sung is “No more coal, no more oil, keep the carbon in the soil!”, but this is only one of the many chants made to get our point across. My other friends and I also managed to start a few chants ourselves, but I eventually had to stop doing so because I had lost my voice.



Once we had arrived at the Scottish Parliament, the destination of the march, the thousands of us gathered to hear the speeches being presented by kids, scientists, and politicians. It was incredibly enlightening to hear everyone’s different opinions and views on what should be done to tackle global warming. Despite the various different opinions people had on the matter, the overall message was the same: that global warming needs to be treated as a crisis and acted upon urgently, and that the issue needs to be at the forefront of everybody’s minds and not continuously pushed to the side.

Overall, it was exceedingly reassuring to see so many other kids who are passionate about putting a stop to global warming and being at the strike gave me hope that in the future we can really change and put an end to the climate crisis. The strike itself made me more educated on the matter of climate change and the science behind it due to having so many scientists as well as other highly educated people there as well. The march only continued to inspire me to do what I can to contribute to the stopping of global warming by recycling, reusing, educating myself on the subject, and continuing to be vegetarian. I truly hope that our voices will be heard and listened to by everyone including the government, so we can start to take the drastic measures required to end the climate crisis.

None So Deaf As Those Who Will Not Hear

Elfie Haszeldine (FV)

Are you sitting comfortably, dear Reader? Then I'll begin. But of course, one group in society can never benefit from hearing a story told.

Deaf and hard of hearing people have always been a part of our society, and yet they are so often forgotten. As far back as the ancient Greeks and Romans, references have been made to sign language, proving the existence of the hearing impaired. So why are these people still so often overlooked?

Sign languages are recognised as languages in their own right, in just the same way as spoken and written languages like English, Polish, and Chinese. But it is not as simple as learning one sign language and gaining fluency just like that – there is no one universal sign language. It is not simple to translate spoken language directly into a signed form. British Sign Language (BSL) has its own independent form which is different from spoken English, differing in sentence structure, developing dialects, and regional differences just as any spoken language does – and you can imagine how much of a challenge this poses for people who need to learn both just to get by.

Today, nearly 500 million people worldwide suffer from disabling hearing loss, a staggering 34 million of this total are children. In the UK alone, there are over 10 million deaf or hard of hearing people, yet less than one percent of these people have been given the means to understand and make use of BSL in their day-to-day lives. An even smaller percentage of hearing people can use BSL, leading to a daily struggle to communicate for those who cannot or find it difficult to communicate orally – and this has to change. Especially as it is estimated that by 2050, almost 1 billion people worldwide will be hearing impaired.

Clearly, something needs to be done to remedy this societal blunder.

Although it may come as a shock to our rather monolingual country, the truth is that over 75% of the world's population is multilingual, meaning they regularly understand and produce two or more languages. Shockingly, the UK holds the top spot as the least language diverse country in Europe, which, I would argue, is not the category we should be gunning for top place in. This failure not only prevents us from communicating with other countries and cultures, but also isolates us from a proportion of our own population.

Sign language being taught in schools as a modern language, in the same way French, German and Spanish are now, would utterly transform the lives of millions of people in a heartbeat, breaking down the barriers we have thoughtlessly allowed to grow within our society and allowing so many a chance to thrive.

On top of that, teaching BSL in schools would help to

normalise it as a regular aspect of life. This would help decrease the stigma around hearing impaired children, paving the way for a more accepting, inclusive, and welcoming society. This in itself would lead to a decrease in bullying of hearing impaired children, and a less ethnocentric view of the world, something we should always be striving towards.

Better still, learning a new language – especially one that can be seen and used in an everyday setting – allows for a decentralisation of children's perspective of the world, urging them forward to becoming more empathetic and adaptable individuals who are able to see from others' viewpoints and consider alternative solutions. Language immersion would be so much easier than for foreign languages, because where school trips must be organised to travel to the country in which the language is predominantly spoken, BSL is spoken in the UK and by people who children see and interact with every day. Children would learn early that not everyone necessarily has the same viewpoints or knowledge as they do, which would improve communication and interpersonal skills and the willingness to explain and share knowledge rather than mock the differences in it, as sadly seems to so often be the case.

And sign language would be beneficial not only to the hearing impaired – it could also help children and people who have difficulty communicating orally for various other reasons. For children with physical or developmental disorders, it allows them another means of communication besides speech, enabling a plethora of new opportunities.

Diving deeper, learning a second language comes with benefits even outside the realm of communication, both neurologically and socially. A second language increases the ease of proceeding to learn a third, fourth, fifth language. Each new language learnt allows for further growth and a wider breadth of understanding in language rules and regulations, which would of course allow the children of the future to go forth and learn more languages, breaking



down more barriers and allowing communication between an even wider variety of groups and an even more diverse range of people.

Of course, all this talk of 'doing' without any action won't drive us forward. We as a society need to actively seek out the ways forward and follow the path to a brighter and fairer future.

Disregarding even these obvious developmental benefits of learning sign language, a deeper understanding of sign language and culture paves the way for a more progressive society, and one where more children are given the best we can offer to let them flourish.



Namely, it will allow for hearing impaired people to find work where they are currently turned away with concerning frequency. Deaf and hard of hearing people can work with families and children who are hearing impaired, helping them overcome the challenges they endure with a friendly face who understands the issues and challenges from the perspective of empathy and understanding, rather than just another faceless professional with a clipboard. They can work as interpreters in courtrooms, schools, and media positions such as television, pushing forward the knowledge of sign language and helping to make everything most of us take for granted accessible to a wider audience. Crucially, people with a knowledge of sign language are sought after as emergency response workers, because if someone cannot speak orally or understand spoken language and therefore is unable to communicate with the emergency service workers, it can be life threatening. The knowledge of sign language we can help to instill could be the difference between life or death.

Increased normality of people who sign subsequently would also allow hearing impaired people to find work doing things they love. For example, Charlotte Arrowsmith is the Royal Shakespeare Company's first deaf BSL actor to be cast in a large production. Marlee Matlin is the first and only deaf performer to have won a Golden Globe award for her role in the 1986 movie Children of a Lesser God, and Millie Bobby Brown, famous for her role as Eleven in the Netflix series Stranger Things, is deaf in one ear and yet is among the most famous faces to the youth of today. Just imagine what sort of wonderful world we could create where roles like these were available to all of the children wishing to pursue them, allowing them to follow their dreams just like any hearing child can.

90% of deaf children are born to hearing parents who overwhelmingly have no knowledge of sign language, and are forced to rush to spend hundreds of pounds and hours of time in lessons and classes just to be able to communicate with their children. Teaching sign language in schools would not only allow communication between parents of the future and their children, but would also be between hearing children and deaf parents – something families should never have to fight for.

Despite all of this, despite the fact that BSL is recognised as a language and children being far more likely to find use speaking BSL in their day-to-day lives than a foreign language, despite schools being functionally allowed to teach BSL and the millions of people who could benefit so greatly from such a change, so very few schools actually do offer BSL as an option, whether that be through a language class in the same way as French, German and Spanish are taught now, or through extra-curricular activities. Children could be taught sign language through finger-spelling, simultaneously learning to spell and learning a new language, and even if this technique is only the very tip of the iceberg when it comes to learning to sign, it would at the very least accommodate that first step forward.

If schools are free to teach sign language, if with such a simple thing we could make such a radical and transformative difference to so many lives – the question is: why haven't we?



Are books really “loaded guns”?

Katie Ainge (FIV)

“A book is a loaded gun”. Ray Bradbury wrote this in *Fahrenheit 451*. Ironically, in terms of censorship, his novel has been one of the most challenged books of all time. It is not alone. Troublingly, 11,300 books have been banned since 1982. In an age where the average American apparently buys just one book per year, why is it that book banning is so common? The banning of books is driven irrationally by fear: fear of knowledge and its immense power. However, a lack of knowledge is far more dangerous. Without it, we are blinded as to important truths. Books are surely the key to the preservation of society – its culture, its values, its history, and, most importantly, its future.

Of course, one of the commonly invoked justifications for novel censorship is centred around the supposed protection of children in schools. As every parent will have different views on what their child should be exposed to, it is ensured class texts do not contain inappropriate material. However, this often leads to excessive parental interference. And of course, communication between teachers and parents is important, but when this becomes excessive it can undermine teachers’ professionalism; teachers can find themselves feeling they must make the “safe” choice. This then affects the children’s education.

Reading challenging literature has limitless societal as well as individual benefits for children. This is because their brains, especially, are at a key development stage. Children can become more empathetic, give more to charity, and be more likely to vote in the future because of books. From a young age, books teach us to form opinions, build morality, and see the world with a refocused, wider scope. Studies published in 2006 and 2009 by neuroscientists showed that “individuals who frequently read fiction seem to be better able to understand other people, empathize with them and see the world from their perspective” (New York Times). Furthermore, Shakespeare and Wordsworth’s works have been described as “rocket-boosters” to the brain. These few studies are only a snapshot of the benefits literature can gift the brain. Worryingly, there is also a real concern that with no exposure to books that explore complex topics, children will grow up with a false sense of reality. It is clear to see that books are undeniably one of our greatest teachers.

However, books have also been blamed for a range of negative behaviours. Salinger’s *The Catcher in the Rye* was found in the hotel room of John Hinckley who attempted to murder Ronald Reagan. Other cases have also been linked to this classic, such as Mark David Chapman, who killed John Lennon and said he identified with the narrator and read a section for defence at his trial. This may seem worrying, but the link is, at best, speculative. Most likely, this book was one of millions of factors which influenced these peoples’ decisions. In reality, the number of murders which have been linked to literature is insignificant.

It is much more important to remember that books inspire good in people and our world. For example, *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* by Harriet Beecher Stowe caused the public to recognise how inhumane slavery was and helped advance the abolition campaign. Even enlightened legislation has stemmed from books. *The Grapes of Wrath* by John Steinbeck directly led to laws being passed by Congress to protect farm workers. Furthermore, books allow for the preservation and spread of important information. For example, *Origin of Species* by Charles Darwin, is one of the most significant books relating to scientific understanding, and *Charlotte’s Web* by E.B. White is recognised for its strength in

helping young people understand death. It is true to say that the collective knowledge of the entire world is held in literature.

Today, a memorial is sited in Berlin where massive funeral pyres of some 20,000 volumes of “offensive books” were burned. This memorial takes the form of an endless well, falling into the ground, walled with empty bookshelves. Here, lies the grave of thousands of books. With this in mind, consider the history of book banning (or burning). Mussolini, Mao, and Hitler all censored literature. Why is it that these governments, in particular, ban books? They are afraid. Dictatorships tend to be obsessed with taking away power that exists outside of their control. Books, especially classics, are transformative. They catalyse change in our society and governments fear this. These are the same governments that fear vision, imagination, and dreaming. Take warning from history, censorship leads to a dark end.

My final point is a simple one. If we ban books, we lose great works. Censorship takes these works away from those who want to read them. All significant decisions about which books should be banned are based merely on opinion – not fact. Crucially, many previously condemned books are now celebrated classics. *Call of the Wind*, *Grapes of Wrath*, *Animal Farm*, *The Catcher in the Rye*, and *The Great Gatsby* have all been banned. Society is constantly changing and so are people’s tastes. From the past, we can see that society often does not always recognise great writing.

In conclusion, books have immense power. They bring escapism, new connections, individuality, empathy, happiness and new insight into our lives. Initially, censorship seems to present an opportunity to protect people but, in reality, it presents an opportunity for control. This is evident as, disturbingly, many of the most commonly banned books show us alternative realities where censorship domineers. The future of censorship relies on us asking the question of whether we are too afraid to let art and expression prevail. When Ray Bradbury compares books to loaded guns, he successfully conveys their power, in that both guns and books can cause immense destruction, but not their value or effect on people. Guns will only result in sadness. But books will always result in enlightenment. And that is where the difference lies.



Should We Let Gaelic Die?

Jenny O’Gorman (FIV)

As I walk the breathtaking breadth of sand and sea, *Eriskay Beach* seems an inadequate name. But it has another name: *Coilleag a’ Phrionnsa* or ‘The Prince’s Cockleshell Strand.’ And, scattered among the machair is Sea Bindweed – a flower found nowhere else in the Hebrides. Legend has it that the seeds tumbled from Bonnie Prince Charlie’s pocket as he stepped ashore. But, without the Gaelic translation, I would never have known the beach’s connection to one of Scotland’s most iconic figures.



Gaelic is endangered. It joins over three thousand imperilled languages, all of which are predicted to become extinct within a century. Before the Young Pretender made his valiant attempt to reclaim the crown, Gaelic was spoken by roughly 1.2 million people in Scotland. Then came the Battle of Culloden, after which the language was banned and scorned, along with the tattered remnants of the Jacobite army. Later, the Highland Clearances uprooted it further.

Today, some speakers are rushing to rescue languages on the brink, but these efforts are too few and far between. Just as our biodiversity is threatened, so are the colourful, distinct species of language that we may end up killing. The biggest predator currently endangering Gaelic is intergenerational breakdown, meaning speakers are not passing down their cradle tongues. With only 60,000 speakers worldwide, the language is on its last legs.

By preserving Gaelic, we are given insight into the past and present. We can better understand the landscape around us, where each rock, field, bay, and headland has an insightful name – such as our ancestors’ connection to nature. We can identify with the people of this ancient land: the crofters, peat cutters, fishermen, weavers, and waulkers. Crucially, our great-grandchildren will thank us for our commitment to the language.

Languages have always died, of course. But when they die, whole cultures can be lost, too. The Rosetta Stone is one of the most significant historical artefacts in existence, and holds the key to a vanished world. The stone slab is inscribed with Hieroglyphic, Demotic, and Ancient Greek script. French scholar Jean-François Champollion made the incredible discovery that a band of cryptic pictures was in fact Ancient Egyptian writing. This realisation gave the stone a new meaning in terms of our understanding of Egyptology, unlocking a secret door into the past – and all because of a lost language. So, is it just words we’re losing when a language breathes its last breath?

Gaelic has little economic benefit, and in the world of business and commerce it is useless. Unlike Mandarin, a language useful

for all these, which is rapidly marching across the globe, with an astounding one fifth of the world speaking it every day. Other languages are far more attractive to employers than Gaelic, and even in the Outer Hebrides, speakers are bilingual.

However, with skyscraper skylines dominating an increasingly homogenous world, Gaelic culture is more important than ever, and could intrigue tourists seeking something different. Once heard, a Gaelic song is etched in the mind forever, like a haunting pibroch lament. Through our native tongue, our ancestors’ songs, stories, and traditions echo down the generations; the death of this living poetry would dull a sparkle in Scotland’s eye.

Moving forward as a country, we should aim to bring back local colour, not letting Gaelic fall into the ditch of oblivion and rot alongside thousands of other languages. We know from Ireland that introducing legislative learning backfires; making Irish compulsory for schoolchildren across the water has not resulted in significant revival, and was met instead with hostility. Instead, we can present Gaelic as a thriving, vibrant community which children are excited to be part of. Through optional Gaelic-medium education we will pass the baton on, introducing children to a school system where they will experience increased self-esteem and thinking benefits such as creativity and communication. Perhaps most importantly, our pupils will have access to two ‘language worlds’ and greater tolerance for other cultures. In addition, using media such as radio, television, and social media will prick up children’s antennae and make them more receptive.

There is hope for the revival of Gaelic. A growing knowledge about the benefits of bilingualism ensures the education system will continue to expand. Glasgow City Council has even vowed to open a second Gaelic-medium primary school in the city, and combining media and medium will undoubtedly give the language something to dance about. In the 19th century, there was a resurrection of Hebrew, now Israel’s national language. Eliezer Ben-Yehuda decided to only talk in Hebrew with his friends. He also got Jewish teachers in Palestine onboard; they shared his vision of deeper enculturation in the classroom. This resulted in a resurgence of the language, which is now widely spoken.

If a group of friends can single-handedly save a language then so can we, and in a true Gaelic fashion – we can make it a celebration.

I refuse to wave farewell and say “*beannachd leibh*” to Gaelic. Together we will stand on the beach – scattering the seeds, not the ashes.



Dollar's Desert Island Discs

Interview by Charlie Robins (FV)

Welcome to *The Galley's* first ever 'Dollar's Desert Island Discs', a Dollar twist on the iconic radio programme. Our castaway this edition is the school's Deputy Rector, Mr Daniel, who has helped steer the Dollar ship for the last 20 years. He will be retiring this summer, but before he disembarks, he has taken time to share with us the 8 tracks he would take to his island.

Charlie: Thank you very much for agreeing to be Dollar's first ever Desert Island Castaway! Are you a fan of the radio programme?

Mr Daniel: I listen to it from time to time; I have listened to it for many decades.

So, let's go back in time... what brought you to Dollar?

Well I'd travelled a fair bit; I'd been in Africa and ended up in England in the South East. It was all a bit claustrophobic, so I felt it was time to get back to Scotland again: fresh air, space and a good place to bring up children. Time to come back to what had been a sort of home for me.

Let's hear your first track!

My first track is Bob Dylan's "Girl from the North Country". I have always been a Dylan fan since the age of 15. I've always loved Dylan and I was delighted that my children became fans as well. So round about this time I'd be hearing it in the house as the children were revising, listening to the same songs I'd listened to half a century ago.



So, has music always played a big role in your life?

Music has always been there. It was the defining feature of who you were, what clothes you wore, what you supported, it was just part of life.

What are your earliest memories of working at Dollar?

The earliest memory was a bit of shock to the system actually. I'd come from a small boys boarding school and I found myself in a huge co-ed school in Scotland under the

hills, and within (I think) two days of arriving the Rector announced that he was going off on a 10-day rugby tour to Japan and I was going to be in charge of the school. So suddenly I found myself at the helm of a 1,000 plus children and staff after only a few days. Early memories were of mild panic combined with a great sense of what a wonderful place it was, a great place to live. It was a fun challenge and that's the thing about Dollar it keeps throwing challenges, like the challenge now with Coronavirus. There's always something.

What is your next track?

My next track is The Dollar Academy Pipe Band playing Air Force One. I remember seeing them back in the early days before health and safety got as important as it is; they were on the rooftop of the Playfair Building playing it, and I have always found the Pipe Band to be very inspiring and that particular tune has always been a favourite of mine.

What have been your highest points or happiest memories at Dollar?

Well, it will be hard to pick a happiest memory when there are so many different ones: seeing a Four Tunas angler catching his first trout, seeing the look on someone's face when an unconditional place comes in for medicine, counting the last person in on the sponsored walk, finishing a pile of English marking, hearing my poem being recited at St. Giles Cathedral by 4 pupils. There are many; Dollar is full of them.

What's your third disc?

My third track is The Lumineers' "Ho Hey". A great track. What's important about this track is I didn't know anything about it until one of my Sixth Form personal tutees recommended it when we were discussing music, and she recommended The Lumineers so I just followed that and I have liked them ever since. And it's an example of how for teachers, as well as pupils, the school can be a place of learning; that we learn from the pupils, and that's just one example of something I picked up.



Outside of your work at Dollar, what hobbies do you enjoy, which take you away from your job?

People may know I fish quite a lot - trout fly fishing. But before I came to Dollar I took up the flute. I was 40 plus by then when I started and I quite like the challenge of playing a musical instrument. About 3 years ago I started cycling because round about here is really good for getting out, so I got my first road bike about 3 years ago and I cycle every day now. I get out whenever I can, so anything from cycling to music.

Back to school - what have been the toughest moments working at Dollar?

Every job has its ups and downs and probably I guess the worst parts are actually the tragedies, and over 20 years there have been deaths. Pupil deaths, former pupil deaths, staff as well, people I have grown up with. Strangely enough when the worst things happen that's when the community comes together and you see the best side of people, so there's another side to it; but there have been some grim times as well.

Time for your 4th track.

This is Runrig with a track called "May Morning". This is an antidote for the bad times. There's a line from it which goes: "I'm alive again on a May morning". Now May is always a lovely time at Dollar and May happens to also be a lovely time in the Outer Hebrides, especially North Uist, where my wife comes from. As it happens she used to sing with Runrig because the two lead singers and founding members are her cousins. So Runrig the band reminds me of this island where we have a home; when I'm feeling a bit down here I can think of the beaches of North Uist - of the lochs, of the hills - and it takes me away there as well. So it's somewhere to go physically, but also mentally, and that line "I'm alive again on a May morning" kind of sums up the optimism which is a balance to the negatives.

Over your time at Dollar, what have been the biggest changes you have witnessed?

Well I suppose there's the obvious changes: in 20 years the school has changed in its size, in the number of pupils, the buildings that have come up - Westwater, Maguire - and there used to be some old squash courts where PE is. So physically it's changed; some people would say that mentally, emotionally, culturally, spiritually the people themselves have changed, but I don't think they have. I think Dollar's very much the way it was when I came in terms of feeling and thinking. In terms of values we didn't talk about be kind, work hard and get involved, we just did it in the early days. So maybe people talk more about their feelings, but the essentials are still the same.

I suppose that's a reflection of the world, in that times are changing and people are becoming more comfortable with talking about how they feel.

I think so. People are more emotionally able to talk about things, more open, less inhibited; but the essentials are again still the same.

Now that you're leaving, what will you miss most about being at Dollar?

I did think about this. I guess probably because I'm retiring so I'm leaving the world of work, I think I will miss the busyness of pupils and colleagues and loads of stuff happening and things coming across my desk and the variety of things - I suspect I will miss that. The job I have is quite an interesting job: trying to fix things, make things happen. I think I will miss the doing and the fun of being with colleagues and pupils all of whom are very different and present a whole world of variety.

So, when you leave will you enjoy the calm and peace?

There'll be peace, but I'll be looking for other activities. I have got other jobs lined up; there's one particular job I do which is working with the law. I'm a magistrate in Perth so I hope not to meet too many Dollar pupils in my court. So I'll be doing a bit of Law; I'll travel a bit; and my children live down south in England, so I will probably go spend some time with them; but there are fish with my name on them and hills that need to be cycled up. I'm also planning to learn to cook. For my birthday, I got a token for a day's cooking course in an Indian cookery school in Perth so that's one of the tasks I'll set myself: I'm going to go and become a cook.

Let's hear your 5th track.

My 5th is going to be a flute Sonata - it's Bach. I've always liked Bach. I've been working on this particular flute Sonata for the last 18 years and I hope one day to get it right. I'm an early riser and, when I'm in school, I listen to Radio 3. School's a good quiet place at sort of 6 or 7 o'clock in the morning, so I listen to classical music early in the morning and this is just one example of it.



Has there ever been a point whilst working at Dollar before now when you thought it might be time to move on and seek other work? Or has Dollar always provided the opportunity to achieve?

I've looked around - I thought about other jobs, I have thought about other places; but I always come back to Dollar though. It has the perfect combination for me: of the place and the people, and it's 5 to 18, it's co-ed, it's got boarding. Why would you go anywhere else?

Resilience in the Face of Adversity

What is your 6th piece?

My sixth track takes me back to the days when I had long hair and was a teenager. This song came out in 1970, so it is 50 years old this song, called "Lay Down (Candles in the Rain)" by a folk singer called Melanie. She was kind of "hippy-ish" back in the 70s, in the days when I was kind of a moody, rebellious... revolting teenager. I kind of remember what it was like to be 15 and against the system. I sort of remember that it wasn't easy then and I don't think it's easy now, so I can remember and sympathise. My last track was sort of quiet music, early in the morning. It's when people have gone away from the school at the end of the day and I'm still here, I put something like this on and turn up the volume and I'm 15 again.

You've mentioned your travelling before coming to Dollar – has that shaped how you teach today?

Yes, I guess so. I've lived in Africa, I lived in Borneo and the Far East as a child and as an adult, and I've seen many different schools, different places. I've taught in Glasgow in state schools in Maryhill as well, so I've been to different places, and I guess that's made me possibly more open to change, to doing things differently, to listening to other ways of doing things

What's your penultimate track?

Since I've mentioned Africa, my 7th track is an African song - it's Ladysmith Black Mambazo and it's "Homeless". It's a very distinctive sound, and having lived as a child and as an adult in Africa, I've got to love the harmonies and the rhythms, and so this one in particular just takes me back to when I was last in Africa. I used to have an old trail bike and the school was out in the bush, and I had this old motorbike and I'd just head out in the bush. Total freedom: no tax, no insurance, no helmet or whatever - just get out there and the sound of Africa, the smell of Africa. I think everybody, if they get the chance to travel and get a Cameron Travel Scholarship, everybody should get out there. Everybody should travel.



You're about to be cast away from the Dollar Ship, how will you survive on your own?

That's a bit tricky that one because I think you're so surrounded by people at Dollar there's always people to help you. But I think after 20 years I've built up enough skills of resilience and humour and whatever else you're going to need, so I think I'll get by.

Mr Daniel, what is your final disc?

We're back in time again... 1973 Elton John's track called "Daniel" and it's all about Daniel saying goodbye and Daniel leaving. I've always liked Elton John, takes me back to 1973 the first year I ever came to Scotland. I went to University in St Andrews to read English and I'd never been to Scotland before. I turned up as an 18 year old in St Andrews and that's where it all began, that's where my link with Scotland started and I guess I've never looked back.



You'll be given the Complete Works of Shakespeare and the Bible and, in addition, for this special Dollar edition you are air-dropped a copy of the latest Fortunas and The Galley twice a year.

Fantastic, what more do you want?

You'll also be given a book of your choice.

I'm currently just reading "A History of the World in 100 Objects", which is 100 objects from the British Museum and the whole history of two million years of human civilization. It's a fascinating book so I definitely want that just to remind me of what the world was like once upon a time and what I was missing.

What luxury item would you like to take with you?

It's not so much a luxury as a necessity: it would have to be a small black notebook and a pen. Couldn't be without it.

Finally, if your discs were threatened to be swept away with the waves, which one would you save?

The killer question. I think Runrig's "May Morning". Optimism – you've always got to finish on optimism.



Sophie Robinson (FIV)

Adversity is universal. It is the equaliser among humankind, faced by kings and clowns alike. It is utterly, utterly inescapable. A fact of life, of which we are all too painfully aware. So, I do not look to talk to you about adversity. Instead, I speak to you about refusing to walk away. Of staggering up every time life delivers another blow, and relentlessly raising your fists. Of resilience.

Resilience is a breed of strength. It is an ability to look at a situation, and stare it down without rose-coloured glasses. It is refusing to lie to yourself or hide behind excuses or fear. But do not misunderstand me – fear is not something to be ashamed of. Fear itself is an evolutionary gift – it is there for a reason. It bolsters us when we need it to, it grants us adrenaline, and floods our body with blood. Our hearts beat faster, and we choose. Fight or flight? This is the kind of fear that rises in us when we are faced with immediate danger, either real or perceived. The other kind can be much scarier. The kind that comes hand in hand with grief. With bereavement. Illness. War. Famine. Disaster. Feeling your hope ripped from your chest, the claws of a very different kind of fear wrap around your heart and crush it. Seeing the days stretch out in front of you, dampened by the dread's black fog, and wanting nothing more than to let it envelop you, choke you, and let the claws around your heart break it. To finally gain some peace. It is times like these when resilience could save your life.

We can choose to treat dread like the fear ingrained into our brains through thousands of years of evolution. And we can choose to fight. To stare it down, and not give up. To refuse to be beaten. It is the greatest strength a person can possess – it is an attainable superpower that will save you, time and time again. To keep trying, when every time before you have failed is a beautiful exhibition of humanity, not insanity. That is resilience in the face of suffering. Strength comes in all sizes, rising up to meet all challenges. Resilience is the rejection of 'why me?', and the acceptance of 'why not me?'. It is the knowledge that we may not all be 'in the same boat', but we all sail on the same ocean. The resilience of a country at war, of a village destroyed by floods, or an individual struck down by grief. We are all levelled by loss. Of our country, our home, our family or friends, our health. If there is some great force that takes from us, and of that I cannot be certain, I can say for sure that it does not discriminate.

The Japanese art of 'kintsugi' is beautifully poetic to me. When a plate is broken, it is mended with gold or silver, making it even more beautiful than before. The scars are still there, but they become an elegant reminder of the past. People are more complicated. Our scars, both physical and mental, cannot always be 'fixed', they may not be elegant. But we can choose to make them into more than scars. To learn from them, to remember that we are so much stronger than we ever give ourselves credit

for. That we have survived one hundred percent of our worst days, and we will survive again. An important thing to remember, however – which is easier said than done in this age of motivational quotes and cat posters – is that you do not have to emerge 'stronger' from your hardship. It is strong enough to simply survive.

My mother was ill with cancer in 2012, my sister was born disabled. I come from a Dutch-Irish immigrant family, for which I was bullied as a child. I was threatened by a drunk who got away with it. These are things I keep quiet because they are mine. I have known loss, and illness, and pain. I have known what it is like to be seen as the sum of my parts, and nothing more. I have known let-down and disappointment by those who had a duty to protect me. But I have also known kindness. And love. I have known what it feels like to watch the sun rise, and feel the rain fall around you, to swim in the deep blue sea, and I can tell you: it is glorious. Life is not fair. Life is not unfair. Life is an amalgamation, a tally, of everything that happens to you: the good and the bad. They don't outweigh each other, they don't cancel each other out; they add colour. They add colour, and when you die, your life will be a tapestry, a heavenly painting of your experiences. But until then, remember that tomorrow is promised, and the sun will rise again.

So, when all is said and done, what is resilience? Resilience is dissenting to back down. Resilience is harnessing your fear and using it as fuel. It is refusal to go down with the ship. It is allowing yourself to learn from your scars. It is allowing yourself to see life in full colour, and not deny the shade.

It is understanding that life is not kind, but it is worth fighting for.



You can't succeed before you pre-succeed

Amanda Amaeshi (FIV)

I love failing. Ha, don't we all!

You might think that's an unusual thing for me to say. After all, how could anyone say that they find happiness in messing up big time? Well, I'm not saying that I'll scream out in joy when I fail an exam or that the words "Unfortunately, you've not been chosen..." cause me to grin from ear to ear when they headline my email inbox. Failed relationships, failed challenges, failed dreams. It sucks, I can't lie. It can cut deep like a razor, slicing one to the core. So why do I say that I love to fail?

Well, I don't necessarily enjoy the actual failure – rather, it's what comes next. As a certain chaotic Floridian said on an all-time favourite TV show of mine, "I wasn't a failed DJ, I was pre-successful". Whilst Jason Mendoza is easily the dumbest character on *The Good Place*, what he says here is actually pretty smart and insightful – even if he doesn't know it. Like Jason, we should see failure as pre-success. Failure's inevitable, but if we switched up our thinking, we could view it more positively: not as a roadblock, but as a speed bump. As speed bumps do, they'll slow us down a bit and cause us to re-evaluate our thinking or our actions or even the path we're on – but ultimately they're there for our own good and they won't stop us from getting to where we want to, if we try hard enough. Failure is an essential ingredient in life. And when following a recipe, you should do it in order: Step 1, Step 2, Step 3, and so on. You can't do Step 3 before Step 1. Seems obvious. The same applies for all of life. As implied by Jason, you can't succeed before you pre-succeed. You can't succeed before you fail.

When I got 38% in my Form 3 French Listening exam, I was agonisingly ashamed of myself. I'm known at school for excelling at pretty much everything I do, and I didn't want to change how people perceived me... so I kept this failure to myself. But it was a much-needed warning bell, painfully loud and unavoidable. I needed to focus so much more on my French studies before, not just Listening, but also Reading, Writing, and Speaking all spiralled out of control. Now, sometimes I do quite well, other times not so much, but that's all part of the process. And, if not for all the failures, perhaps in my Form 4 prelim, I wouldn't have got 99% overall, gaining 100% in Listening (*update: oh and I also found out, a few weeks after writing this, that I'm this year's Form 4 French prize winner!*). It could, of course, have been a fluke, a stroke of luck, but I'd like to think anyway that it was due to hard work and not giving up at the encounter of nasty speed bumps.

I couldn't succeed in French before I failed. And I'm still on that linguistic journey: I'll continue to mess up and I'll continue to pick myself up. But it'll be so worth it in the end.

When I was much younger, my dream was to be a children's author. Every year I would work for ages and ages creating what I thought was a magnificent, award-winning, 500-word masterpiece. And every year, the *500 Words* judges would not think that my piece, out of hundreds of thousands of entries, was the most magnificent, award-winning, 500-word masterpiece. Or perhaps my certificate got lost in the mail, as I would reassure my deflated self every year. But I never stopped writing, though I did veer away from children's fiction.

Halfway through summer 2016, the summer before I started high school, I stumbled across Young Reporters Scotland, an environmental journalism competition. I'd never considered writing factual, investigative pieces before – so I decided,

why not? I had a lot of time to kill before starting at Dollar. I discovered that I really enjoyed researching, and I even got to interview local supermarket managers – I'm sure they were surprised to be grilled by an 11-year-old about their store's policies concerning food waste! I managed to put together something that I thought was really good. And this time, I wasn't alone in that thought. My piece had been shortlisted, so I was invited to go along to the finalists' awards ceremony in Stirling the following March. And I won. Out of a myriad of entries across Scotland, my article, *The Food Waste Crisis*, had won. It then proceeded to the international stage – and out of 35 countries, it won. I couldn't believe it. I had failed countless times in competitions throughout my childhood, and now my dream of winning was a dream no more.



I couldn't succeed in writing before I failed. And I'm still on that writing journey: I'll continue to mess up and I'll continue to pick myself up. But it'll be so worth it in the end. And in this case, the evidence of that is already clear. I've written for every edition of *The Galley* in my time at Dollar so far. I became a Section Editor in Form 4, and single-handedly coordinated the Features section. I was invited in 2018, as a student journalist, to the exclusive, invite-only opening night of a youth photography exhibition at the Scottish Parliament. My Features editorial led to me giving a speech at the Form 1 and Form 2 assembly in February about healthy mobile phone usage. And, most excitingly, this April, I was commissioned to write a blog piece for the Scottish BAME Writers Network about my experiences living as a British Nigerian in Scotland.

To think that my writing, a hobby I began the day I knew what words were, has been a journey that's gone from failing short story competitions to being commissioned for my work, is insane. Of course, my writing style has changed, but those many speed bumps that I encountered all those years ago shaped me, shaped my writing, shaped my life. They will continue to do so. I couldn't be more grateful for those speed bumps.

Nobody's perfect. I'm sure not. I still fail at a whole lot of things, and as I grow up, journeying through the whirlwind of life, inevitably I'll continue to mess up – and hopefully I'll continue to pick myself up. Failure is life's invaluable teacher: it strips down egos and moulds us into better people. And the most successful people in life are those who have failed but persisted regardless. If you try to go through life without failing at anything, then you're not really living a life at all. And isn't that the biggest failure of all?

You can't succeed before you pre-succeed. You can't succeed before you fail.

EDITORIAL

Zuzana Hudacova (Form V)

Covid-19 affected our population immensely and it will take a long time for us to recover from the consequences of this pandemic. In the Science section of *The Galley*, we not only took a look at the biology behind the SARS-CoV-2, but we also explored different current scientific and technological topics that might shape not only our present times but especially our future.

What for a long time seemed like mere science fiction is now becoming a reality. We entered a war, but it is not a war between nations, but a war between humanity, nature, and technology.

Articles in the Science section might hopefully help you make up your mind about who is to become a winner.

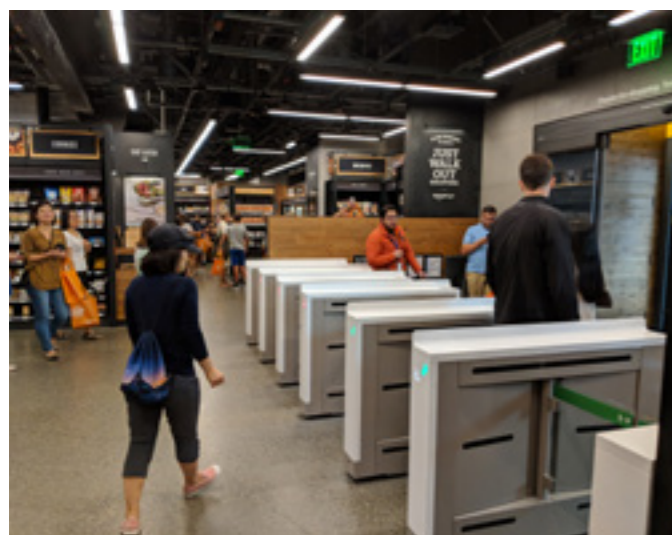


Zuzana Hudacova (FV)
Science Editor

Amazon Go: The Bright Future of Shopping

Codrin Iftode (Form V)

Retail shops have been around ever since the Ancient Greeks invented the concept in 800 BC and we have grown used to them and accepted their classical methods as rules: waiting in queues, paying to a human merchant with a physical currency. Lately, the well-known, online retail company Amazon realised that there is no need to stick to the old ways if we have a sufficiently advanced technology, which we nowadays do. Consequently, they engineered the idea of Amazon Go – a store in which customers simply take what they need and leave. As they promote it: “No lines. No checkout.”, payment being done automatically through an Amazon account. The first Go store was opened to the public in 2018, and as of 2020, 26 shops have been spread across the US, in cities like New York, Seattle, Chicago and San Francisco. But how can this idea even work in practice? And what other technology miracles could we maybe see in the retail of 20 years’ time from now?



Okay, but how does it actually work?

The way these Go shops work might seem very complicated at a first glance, which is because they actually are. However, their technology can be, if properly explained, understood. Once you step into a store, you use the Amazon Go app from your phone, which shows your personal barcode to an entrance scanner and lets the system identify who it is that it is seen on the cameras. The system will then use computer vision to track your position as you move through the store.

Then, the system simply waits for you to pick up a product. Using machine learning algorithms, it builds a virtual skeleton from camera information for each person, to identify what everyone is doing with their arms. Once you, the customer, decide to take something off a shelf, the act of picking it up is detected using a technique called sensor fusion, which is only a fancy term for the idea of using multiple sensors together. Go stores have weight sensors for each product to know when one item



is lifted up or put back on the shelf, and the system combines the information coming from these sensors with what the cameras indicate – which skeleton in the store picked which item. Once the system is sure, it places the selected item into your virtual online basket. If you change your mind and decide to return the item to its original spot, the system can understand the fairly understandable human act – it simply reverses the process and removes the item from the basket.

When you feel it is time to leave, you only have to walk out – hence, the phrase coined by Amazon, “Just Walk Out Technology”. The cameras will see you leave the store and the system will issue a receipt to your Amazon account in a couple of minutes time (side note: it cannot do this instantaneously because it still has to keep monitoring what all the other people are doing in the shop).

It is worth noting and fascinating at the same time that the technology used is also mostly found in self-driving cars as well. All the computer vision, person and object recognition are based on well-trained deep learning networks, which is a topic that extends way beyond the scope of this humble article. In a few words though, these networks are designed to work in the same way we, as humans, learn: they receive some data and then they are told which patterns are there. By repeating the process enough times, the network learns, starts acting like a human brain and begins to recognise patterns when the input data alone is provided. Take, for instance, the English language – or any language, for that matter. Young children are showed a bunch of letters tied together and they are told that one specific pattern is the word “hello”. Repeat this enough times and the students will learn to identify the word “hello” for themselves (and by doing this with all words, they effectively learn how to read). Amazon Go trained its networks with a variety of different simulations including people with different looks and products in various lighting and shadow conditions. Henceforth, their networks are able to recognise people and products fairly accurately, just like a confident reader can recognise a word at a first glance after they had seen it written down before in a myriad of different colours and fonts.

The Real Question: Can you steal from Amazon Go?

Ever since Amazon Go has been launched as a marketing idea, the evil side of our human nature has been persuading us into trying to take advantage of this technology. As a result, many videos on YouTube have been produced

by enthusiastic people who claimed that they managed to steal products and cheat the Go systems, through various methods.

It is true that these shoplifts are sometimes successful, but it happens ever so rarely that Amazon did not even build a specific safeguard against them. Many reporters and journalists tried to trick the sensors through different smart (or so they thought) tricks, such as hiding the purchase bag under their arm or quickly swiping a soda off a shelf, but they were still charged for the items. However, the internet seems to have recorded a certain peculiar accidental incident, when the CNBC reporter Deirdre Bosa posted on Twitter that she left the Go store and did not get charged for her Siggis yogurt. Amazon’s only response: “enjoy the yogurt on us” – their profits were too large for them to be worried by singular incidents like that one.

The True Problems

So shoplifting is not really an issue with Amazon Go, as their sensors are simply calibrated too well. However, there are still worse problems to consider. Many people have expressed a view of this technology that was not as supportive as the others, saying that Amazon does not celebrate the way technology can make shopping easier for everybody, they only celebrate not waiting in line. People still have to get through heavy traffic and crowded cities to reach the store and then return in the same way, and yet the idea is they should be totally excited as they are not wasting time in a queue anymore. It is a mere marketing trick, as they pretend they are using technology innovations to make our normal lives even easier – but then if that were true, why did Amazon not focus its funds on creating an automatic delivery system, instead of a very complicated store which required huge amounts of funding for the cameras, sensors and building process? Time is not wasted in queues, but what about the time it takes to reach the store, which was much longer from the very start?

A Peek into The Future

It is, though, indubitable that Amazon Go brought about a whole range of ideas regarding different ways to use technology hand-in-hand with shopping, which lets the rest of us only dream and wonder... where to from now on? The future of retail will certainly be filled with e-commerce and other technologies which are currently developing rapidly, like the Internet of Things – the idea of connecting all sorts of electronic devices to a single network so that they com-



municate between them and take collective decisions – and also sensor-driven packaging systems – creating packages for multiple products automatically. Some people even thought of using drones to deliver products to peoples’ houses directly, but the idea was put aside promptly as a mere unachievable dream because of all the complications that it would bring, when we could most probably come up with better and more efficient delivery methods. Payment will probably become completely invisible, as a large chunk of it is even today – whether you are entering an Amazon Go and paying through your phone or using Uber and an online banking account, it is the same: physical currency has vanished, letting the money transfer happen behind our backs, without us having to worry about it (which is both a good and a bad idea).

Will our beloved “normal” stores that we got used to for



decades still be around after the next 20 years? Or will they be replaced by completely digitalised retail shops, that use Amazon Go technology (or maybe something else), exceeding anything we could have ever imagined? Nobody knows for certain, but we’re humans after all – if there is something we are all good at it is making guesses. The most probable future is the one where, as Emilie Colker, Executive Director at IDEO, puts in to words, “retail is moving from transactional to relational”, meaning most products will be bought online, and yet offline spaces will be used to create client-customer relationships – like a mattress company which lets its customers take a 45-minute nap in the shop to try out their products.

One thing is certain in the end, though. Amazon Go introduced a way of doing retail that will be marked in history as an essential technology innovation. If their system will fail in the long run (very improbable) or be surpassed by new concepts, they will, at the very least, become a delightful chapter in the history books of the 22nd century – if books will still be around by then!

The Biology of Covid-19

Zuzana Hudacova (Form V)

Coronavirus on TV at breakfast, coronavirus on the cover of each magazine, sold out hospital examinations, health checks at airports... Almost everyone nowadays knows the name, but how many people take interest in what it actually constitutes? Many nations are now undergoing a period of panic and fear caused by disinforming content on media, which leads to actions that cause more harm than good. Since education is the strongest antidote against fear, this article seeks to introduce the biological basis of this phenomenon.



About viruses generally

Coronavirus, or, to be more specific, SARS-CoV-2, is one of the many examples of a parasitical particle, which survives thanks to attacking a host cell and using it for making new replicates of itself. These kinds of parasitical particles are called viruses. Your body might have been attacked by a virus, when the doctor sent you home without any medication, just with the advice to sleep a lot and take some paracetamol.

However, some specific viruses might be lethal, such as Ebola virus, HIV, or Marburg virus. Therefore, there are several types of viruses, as well as factors that influence their impact on individual organisms.

Viruses are very small (standardly between approximately 20 and 300 nanometres) and structurally relatively simple. One viral particle, called a virion, constitutes of a protein coating (capsid) which protects the genetic information (in the form of DNA or RNA), while some viruses, in addition to all of this, have a lipid membrane made of lipids from the host cells.

The life of a virus is boring and stereotypical. The viral particle finds a host cell to which it attaches and then infiltrates, which is followed by the use of the complex cellular apparatus of the host to replicate its own genetic information. As soon as the replicates become independent units, they penetrate out of the host cell and it depends on the type of virus how much damage is caused during this

process.

SARS-CoV-2, its name and its relatives

Viruses are given names based on the structure of their genomes. The International Committee on Taxonomy of Viruses (ICTV) in February 2020 announced the name of a new virus: severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2).

This name was chosen due to its genetical similarity with known SARS-CoV virus that erupted in 2003. SARS-CoV-2 is already the third pathogenic coronavirus that has broken out during recent decades. Predecessors are the already mentioned SARS-CoV and MERS-CoV.

The reason for this group of viruses being called coronaviruses is their appearance: spikes of glykoproteins (proteins with sacharides) that cause the crown-like looks of these viruses.

The diseases caused by viruses are named to simplify the processes of discussion regarding spreading of infection, prevention and seeking the cure. In February 2020, the World Health Organisation (WHO) announced the name of the disease caused by virus SARS-CoV-2: COVID-2019.

From animals to humans

What makes SARS-CoV-2 so fascinating, is the fact that it does not only spread from person to person, but it belongs to as special group of viruses called zoonosis. Zoonosis are viruses with the ability to jump between animal species and humans. MERS-CoV and SARS-CoV also belong to this group of viruses.

MERS-CoV and SARS-CoV are originally viruses that affected bats. They were spread to people through an intermediate animal species, very likely camels. Genetical analysis of SARS-CoV-2 pointed out genetical similarity in this virus with a bat coronavirus, while the suspected intermediate species is hypothesised to be pangolin, which is an endangered specimen transported in China because of its scales and meat.

Thanks to glycoproteins, as mentioned in previous paragraphs, the coronaviruses are able to attach to specific receptors on the human epithelial layer, even though they do not originate from humans.

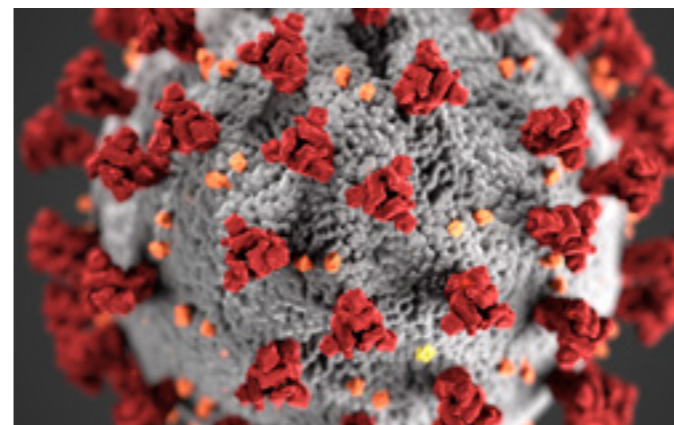
However, glycoproteins are not a single factor that influen-



ces whether a virus is a zoonosis or not. Scientists speculate that intermediate species that spread the infection might play a key role. However, this hypothesis is not confirmed yet and more research is needed.

Symptoms and prevention

Symptoms of COVID-19 are observed relatively late after the infection. It is approximately fourteen days and the infection is very often asymptomatic, which means that the symptoms might not be observed at all, while the disease is still being spread.



Similarly to fever, in case of COVID-19 infection a human organism tries to fight the intruder by increasing the activity, which results in higher body temperature. Further symptoms include shortness of breath, cough, or weakness. Without medical help, the symptoms may evolve to symptoms of pneumonia, organ failure, or even death. However, the truth is that people prone to catching COVID-19 are usually people with weaker immune systems, or people that already have a predisposition to respiratory problems.

Prevention in the form of, for example, washing hands properly, avoiding overcrowded spaces, or not coughing or sneezing in other people's faces, is very important. Panic has never solved anything and, as any other issue, COVID-19 should be approached rationally.



Engineering Biology and Life

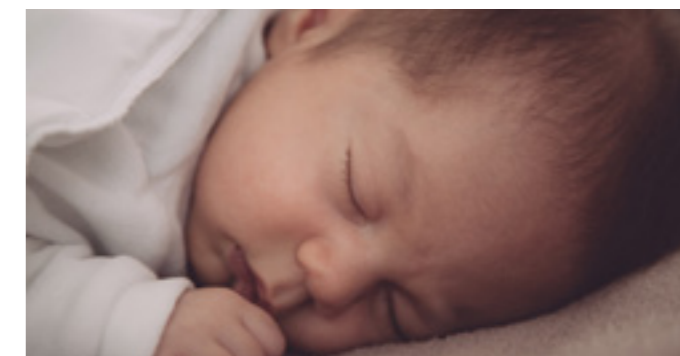
Zuzana Hudacova (Form V)

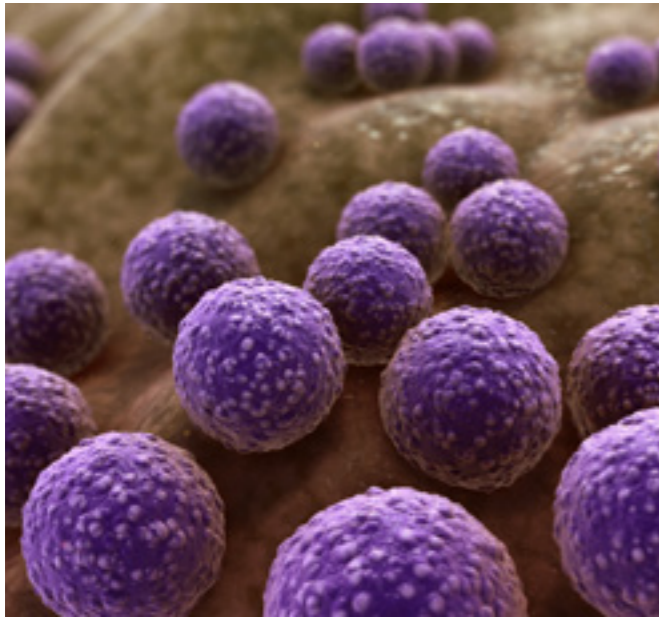
The world nowadays faces many debates that may not ever result in a unified answer. Nature versus nurture, pro-life versus pro-choice, etc. To add another unsolvable question to the list, society discusses the ethical aspect of gene editing. Gene editing is undeniably a miracle in science and medicine. However, this miracle is being held in the irresponsible hands of humanity. It can cure diseases and increase life span, yet it may also be used for selfish human purposes, such as making kids smarter, or even creating a perfect human being, which resembles Adolf Hitler's dream to create a perfect race. That is the reason why the act of first human genetic editing received rather negative follow up from scientists. This article seeks to provide a deeper insight into the method of gene editing and the background behind the recent controversy.



Editing human babies

More than a year ago two couples visited the University of Science and Technology (SUSTech) in China to find out more about the opportunity to participate in an experiment led by (at that time) respected Chinese biophysicist and entrepreneur He Jiankui. Both couples had one interest in common: to protect their babies from the hereditary HIV virus that both of the husbands suffered from. What made these cases so special is the method He Jiankui decided to use to drastically reduce the risk of the babies suffering from HIV: CRISPR, the





controversial tool that revolutionises biology and that had never before been used on human beings.

Bacteria are smarter than you think

Clustered Regularly Interspaced Short Palindromic Repeats (CRISPR) is a revolutionary tool for gene editing, or altering our DNA code, that was discovered in 1987 by Japanese scientists. They were studying the famous E.coli bacteria, when they noticed something unusual: strange repeating sequences in the bacteria's DNA.

It was in 2007, when we finally found out that these repeating sequences present in several bacteria constitute their immune system. Since bacteria are leading a war with viruses, they were forced to develop a system of defence, which are enzymes that destroy the invading virus, while other enzymes pick up remnants of the virus's genetic code, cut it into pieces and store it in CRISPR regions of the bacteria's own genome. Pretty smart, right?

Now the even smarter part comes: CRISPR regions allow bacteria to fend off future attacks. When a viral infection occurs, bacteria send attacking enzymes Cas9 that carry stored bits of viral genetic code. When they encounter a virus whose genetic sequences matches the one they carry, they chop the virus to protect the bacteria.



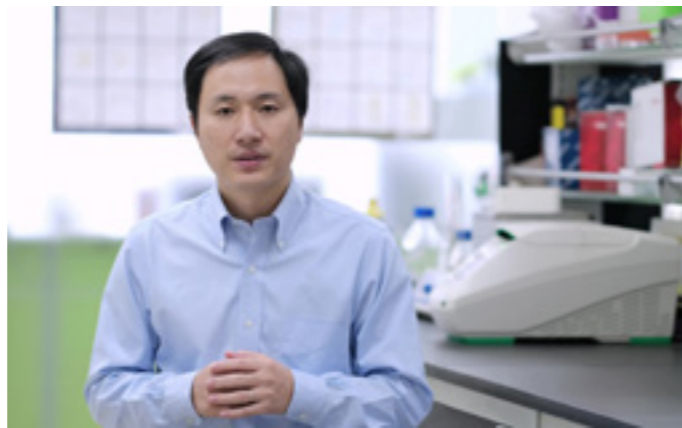
How we learned from bacteria

It was just a few years ago, when scientists found out how to fool Cas9 proteins so that they could be used for our own interest. This may be done by artificially feeding an enzyme with the desired RNA sequence and consequently it will seek anything that would match the code of the sequence.

This system, called CRISPR/Cas9 system, is not only able to delete undesired sequences in genetic code, it is even able to substitute them with the so-called *good* genes.

Doctor He Jiankui versus the world

As amazing as it sounds, being the first one to use gene editing on human beings brought Doctor He Jiankui nothing more than fame resulting from hatred. The procedure was reported to be successful; however, his approach had several flaws that society could not cope with and that throws a shadow on his breakthrough act. He not only acted behind the back of his colleagues, he acted behind the back of the whole humanity. His act was not a result of his generosity, since this experiment could have been conducted by any other skilled scientist, it was rather a result of his own selfish ambitions, which cost him his position, as well as reputation.



Gene editing could allow us to treat a vast number of dangerous illnesses that root in genetics, such as Huntington's disease, anaemia, or even cancer. However, it also raises an important question: What will be the result of human beings playing the role of gods?

From the editor...

With immense (and personally unearned) pride, I present the creative talent of some of Dollar's finest writers. All plaudits should go directly to the individuals who, despite the absolutely bizarre state of the world, have produced this varied catalogue of beautiful, introspective work. Multiple are politically-charged where others are gentle and personal pieces. I believe both categories of work are vitally important in the modern age, where more can be done by the individual than ever before to combat injustice; so too do the pressures of the world weigh heavier than ever, and thus art is a necessity, providing an escape from reality for awhile, allowing us to instead inhabit another place and another mind. In my humble opinion, this edition's pieces round off the first active year of the Galley Creative section wonderfully, and I can't thank its contributors enough. Whether you find yourself in need of soothing or invigoration, I hope you find both here.

Rachel Lyndon (FVI)



A Pathway Through The Natural World

Andrew Rorke (FIV)

Trees shiver and rustle in the cool, westward breeze
Leaves fall slowly to the trodden-on ground
The subtle, soft sound of laborious honeybees
A lonely pathway lost, now newly found

Wildflowers radiant in the sunlight mist
Sweet dew on grass blades, drooping down
Sunrays filtering through leaves; sun kissed
Songbirds in treetops greet me and fly down

Trees arch over me as I descend through the wood
Underfoot, the archaic path crumbles
And for a moment, all is still, all is good
A stray leaf through the air tosses and tumbles

To my left, a fresh stack of birch
To my right, trampled bluebells
Birds from all around watch me and perch
And still, all is well

Further and further, I walk and wander
All around me is overgrown, like a jungle
Through the trees, I see a clearing, yonder
The trees seem rotten and fungal

Long I have walked on this forest trail
The sky darkens and birds find their nest
The moon like a medallion in the sky; pale
I find a pond, in lilies dressed

As the path ends, I enter reality
The village before me and the trees behind
Again, I am amongst mortality
I leave nature, and join mankind



Smile (Upside Down)

Eva Magdić Govedarica (VI)

Two days ago
you drew
a smiley face on my arm.
I forgot I had it
(But really not)
The showers I took
hadn't washed it away.
(But in truth,
I avoided the spot)
I went for a swim today
And afterwards the ink was gone
'About time' I thought
(But then the smile on my face
vanished along.
And every time I look back
I wish I could still see the mark
you left
two days ago.)



This is why, I keep my needles drawn out

Eva Magdić Govedarica (VI)

Colons and an opening bracket
that's how your last text made me feel.
I held Shift + 8
until a message appeared:
"You have reached
the character limit."
(I guess I have.
Said all I could have.)
I never replied.
Like a hedgehog,
I drew my pins out,
rolled into a ball
and waited for the blue cat
to leave my side.



In Lockstep

Jenny O’Gorman (IV)

She met me at the fence,
mouthed the sugar on my palm,
told me of last summer
a recalled taste of bucket milk, inched from her tongue.

How water had magnified the surfaces of leaves
or skittered off when her hooves clattered down

past rivers nosing in somnolent troughs
and what a relief they were on heaving flanks

as her rider rose and
dipped to her quickening trot the water splashed up and

light thickened from gold to green; the feeling
of steaming coat under

lifting skies was magic as her legs picked up a canter on
damp ground, wet as black butter.

Then her nose dropped in the groove
of my palm, true as a keystone

and she told me how she had never, as I did,

just listened.



A Journey You Can't Forget

Ellen Peden (VI)

It starts with a choice
to change, to act, to die.
And then the chaos surges.
It starts with the packing - if you have time -
running, crying, fearing.
And then the voyage, packed.
And then the cold hits, death.
And then grey is all around you
nothing but dull silence
except the cries, the cries rise
the cries will fall, your boat may sink
you may be taken, may return
to the land you came from
where houses burn.
Days rocking on the waves
clothes sodden, salt cracking your face
more than your tears can ever do.
As your fate nears and your pain sears
Until you reach it...
Paradise.

But even if you reach paradise
the guards are waiting at the doors
ready to read the papers you've
created, ready to reject
and eject you. And if you get
that far then it's a long walk for you
to a place that transforms you from
doctor to builder, success
to a place where you're looked at weird,
where they judge you on the length of your
beard
or why you talk funny or why you
dress that way.
Are you a terrorist?

And what if your child has no friends?
What if he misses home? What's home?
He goes to school so eager, keen,
yet doesn't know that there are men
that shout and point to the TV
'Close our borders! We are not safe!
Every immigrant should be put in their place!'

Those men could ruin all his dreams.
Through all that he goes to school, keen
and grateful for the chance he has
because you told him so and
Don't give them a reason to hate
Because they'd take that stupid bait
And twist it, manipulate it
until they have a reason to
send you back to where you came from.
Yet this is where he comes from.
He knows nothing else, no place, no one -
no parks, no toys, no places known.
Except Park Street and Tedstone Road.
This is everything he has.
This is his home.

We try to think we understand;
We think we know their story.
But in the end, what do I really know?
I just watch, from scene to scene:
my passport is red, not blue, black or
green.
I live on the right side of the TV screen.



Lone Rangers in Blue

Olivia Smart (IV)

Despite my strategically placed barricades, the Beast had returned. The base had been under attack for thirty-six hours. I could not abandon my post; my commander had entrusted the safety of two-hundred and fifty men to my hands. Using makeshift weapons, warning signs and booby-traps have not so far been successful in deterring the Lone Rangers in blue. They all want to drag knowledge from my sealed lips. I hesitate for a moment as goosebumps riddle my being; opening the door would mean facing the glory on their faces.

Two hundred and fifty men bear their load on my shoulders as I plan. Only I could be entrusted with a role so critical to the fate of mankind - a proud lieutenant colonel who has been defending Her Majesty from 1965- whatever year this is. I begin to consider holding hostages, yet the idea of trapping myself amongst such toxic opposition is unbearable and sends shivers down my spine. Immersing myself in the environment would be like surrendering myself as prey in the lion's lair. But that is the risk I must take for my country.

The hinges of my door screech from lack of use: contrasting the sounds of nothingness in the base. Careful not to attract any unwanted attention, I hobble along the corridors that are so carefully decorated with welcoming posters and potted plants, only to mask the true identity of their wretchedness.

Silence deadens my mind. I must remain focused; I have a task to do. The adversaries mimic wax dummies, motionless as they are together but still alone. The only explanation is that they are planning an attack upon my side telepathically. The base they occupy reflects the far-gone era their soldiers primed, designed rather as a haven for the elderly than the war field I know it is.

Many sergeants approach me with the same fake cheeriness and look, that could not be distinguished without those ghastly name badges on their chests. One attempts to support my frame and guide me to a form of planned torture. The Chair. At this point, it becomes obvious my incognito form has failed, as alongside half a dozen enemies I am forced down and told to nap. I risk glances at the obscurities I am surrounded by, that rely on Zimmer frames and wheelchairs; my God what have they done to them? Flustered from guessing what's in store for me, a woman in the corner catches my eye. Her head is in constant motion as if agreeing with sentiments inaudible to hear. Occasional murmurs escape her mouth uttered in what sounds like gibberish.

My analysis is halted by a female commander. She has a nose that suggests she was bred by an alien source. Now I know why they lock that "cleaning cupboard". She wakes the dummies from a comatose state by screeching "It's visiting hour!" loud enough to deafen any passer-by, though it seems to be inaudible to most of the base.

Here we go again. In a sea of faces bearing gifts, I see Lieutenant Michael approach me with a complacent grin. Although I have raised her from the new-born stage back in the barracks, even I still don't understand why she acts the way she does.

"I'm glad you have finally left that room of yours, father." Father? What fancies have caused her to believe such madness?

"You must leave, I have not yet detracted the information I need for the siege." Her idleness transforms into a state of annoyance.

"You're not well." Utter lunatic. I must send a note of this to base command. A bell signals the end of torture time; marking the end of any signs of life shown by these mummies.

I missed out on tea and biscuits at noon after ambushing a circle of knitters in the common room. Their shrill cries caught the attention of "Mary", who has now banished me to my dorm with just as little information as before.

Buried down in the depths of my dresser, beneath numerable dust-ridden copies of "The Bashstreet Kids"-oh what was life like before all this? There it is my one true lifeline: communication with base command. With soft spokes for detangling hair, this fine-combed piece of technology provides one-way communication with the base. Calling into what looks like a hairbrush I utter updates on the Lone Rangers and weaknesses in their defense, jubilant about the effect my work will be having on the homeland. My mind is still perplexed as to why Lieutenant Michael insists on entering enemy territory daily at the potential cost of her life.

Attempts to attain insider information at mealtime are blocked by a suspicious Ranger that claimed I was worrying other inmates.

At dusk, a sudden chime rang through my room- mimicking the noise of an alarm clock. My mind entered a state of overdrive, this can only mean two things: invasion or communication from the general to leave post and retreat. Trained to react in this situation I burst through the doors at a deteriorating pace. I was immediately faced by a line of feigned generals surrounding my being like a pride of lions pouncing on the young zebra. Cryptic messages like Carol, Susan and Mary were displayed across their uniforms - messages I constantly failed to decode. They seized me and halted my movements until I was trapped in what seemed like an interrogation room. "Susan" spoke into a pocket-sized device garnished with numbered buttons, reciting personal details I had been so careful to disguise.

Send all defenses to "Carrondale Care Home".

A Sonnet for the Sea

Gracie Shearer (VI)

“So here we go.” You grin and start to walk
towards that lapping happy mass of sea.
It kisses us with utter freeze, the shock
fills us with ice and gasp and glee.

This sea will last forever once we’re gone.
We shake and put our clothes back on. It goes.
We stop. It goes. That flow goes on and on -
eternity is lapping at our toes.

“Goodbye” you say and start to walk towards
that seething future folding out beyond
my line of sight. And yet, somewhere past words
it goes, still goes. Unflinching, ever-dawned.

So in some quiet place there’s you and me,
still, cold and happy by that singing sea.

Just Go Outside

Gracie Shearer (VI)

The glass pane is not smashed.
But it cuts me anyway,
Crushing into my circuitry -
Revolving away from my heart and then
Back to it
An endless loop of mild discomfort that
might kill me.
If I’m not careful.

Painfully separated from
The breathtaking and the breath
I long to feel the rain on my skin.

Oppressed by heat:
A dial spun glutinous,
A radiator belching out heat - a foul
pretence.
You are not the sun.

Trapped. I wait for the bomb to detonate.
If I do not move now I will be
Nothing
But chunks on the carpet or...

Bored.

There is a twitch running through me.
My skin is caressed by revulsion.
I long to feel the rain.

“Oh Christ”
My mother sees the melodrama:
“Just go outside.”

And so I do!

A Tale As Old As Time

Rowan Muirhead (II)

I have travelled the world and lived a thousand lives. I have fallen down rabbit
holes and shrunk to the size of a pin. I have been read by old and young, and I
have seen the impact that I have on people.

To you I may not be alive. I may not breathe air or eat like you. But I feel the
emotions, like you. I see the joy in your eyes, I can see it and I create it. I can
come in many forms: paperback, hardback, leather bound and digital. All for
your preferred taste. I say the same words over and over, for the time I am in your
possession. I have had many owners over the years. Each treated me in a different
way. For years I was hidden away on a shelf and now I am proudly on display.

I have met with the Queen and spoken to the rabbit. I have been fooled by the cat
and have watched the roses be painted red. But each brings with it a new light, a
new view on the situation at hand. I can make a difference on a life, all with the
flick of a page.

I remember a small girl, once upon a time. She took in all of the experiences that
I had to share and the story that went along with it. She read with a newfound
ability, from the thoughts that I gave to her. Her view on the world has changed
since then. She questions what truths are. I made an inquisitive individual, all
from the wording on a page.

I am not like others of my kind, who only tell of a simple story. I have added notes
and secret meanings, hidden beneath my words. I have been used to carry secret
messages and decode a fair few too. I have lived a life of mystery, that many never
knew.

I come across as a boring children’s story. Bland and as old as can be. But come for
a closer look and I will prove that to be untrue. I have been to the corners of the
globe and helped steal tarts from the Queen. I am not ordinary, but not entirely
unique.

You have probably seen me somewhere. Maybe in the dusty collection in your
room. But have a closer look next time, I may be exactly what you need.



He Smells Like A Girl

Eva Magdić Govedarica (VI)

I've always had a very sensitive nose. Hay fever, dust, school toilets, you name it. Oh, and cold weather. Especially the cold weather. You know the feeling when you sleep with your window open during a cold winter night because you left the radiator on to do its magic for too long over the course of that day, and then the following morning your nose is paralyzed as it was the only fully exposed part of your body during that Arctic night? No? Maybe just me then...

I'm experiencing the nose paralysis right now. Out of my bed this time. Seattle winters are severely unfriendly. The only "folk" who have it worse than us are those cows in the Highlands and they've got much more than a flannel shirt and corduroy jacket to keep them warm. But, as I was saying – my nose is incapable of keeping grandma's specs in place. They keep sliding off and I'm finding them of little use for what I'm about to execute. My partner in crime waits for me to inspect the area with the previously mentioned prop. I say partner in crime, and I mean it – we're about to engage in vandalism.

Shocking isn't it – coming from a girl. I hand the specs over to him; I intend to go first. My target – the newly opened Teenage Pregnancy Centre, otherwise known as (to the ones lucky enough to own two brain cells and above): a front for the right-wing operation telling teenage girls they'd go to hell if they had an abortion. I reach into the inner pocket of my jacket to ensure that the weapon I carry in it hasn't made an escape. I take one final sip of that cheap Canadian club whisky before I sprint for the holy institution. The back wall is freshly coated in plain white. It craves colour. As I reach for a can of spray paint which is still in its rightful place, I can't deny the signs of paranoia that are creeping in. I blame it on the adrenaline. It didn't take me long to express my dissatisfaction on the poor wall. I leave the "Fake abortion clinic" behind me and return to my post handing the baton over to my only team-mate. Soon the six-foot high red letters outshone my own contribution to public service – "God is gay".

*

I lied – that was not the final sip of the cheap whisky that night. We had another three bottles safely stowed away in my backpack for the after-party. His apartment is one you'd expect from a struggling artist. Twelve-foot decaying ceiling and no furniture! Only a mattress in the left-hand corner where the sheets haven't been changed for three months (best case scenario). No judgement on my part. I haven't got the strength for that anyway. My limbs lack coordination and my cheeks are burning hot. Did someone turn the heating on? He's a struggling artist remember? He ain't got the money for things like heating. Is Toby certain he isn't gay? Feminist guys are either gay or suffering from the Oedipus complex – it's one or the other. I don't believe in exceptions. He even smells feminine. It's that horrible deodorant he uses. I'm gonna tell him that. No, I'm not gonna say it. I'll write it. I'll write and then I'm going to smash something.

I feel like smashing something.

**

Nose paralysis. Again. Only this time my nose isn't the only thing that seems to be

paralyzed. The idea of moving a single part of my body is distant and absolutely out of the question. It goes against biological consequences of a hangover. I open my eyes, resentfully. I tilt my head to the right to gain a better perspective of the state this room is currently in. Did we kill someone last night? Am I to find a dead corpse in the room next door? Closing your eyes is always easier than opening them.

I don't think anyone could ever truly understand how much I appreciate summer. Contrary to the popular belief, it doesn't always rain in Seattle – only 226 days a year. I don't think this Snow White tan of mine has anything to do with the given stat; I blame my choice of hair colour. When I said I appreciate summer, what I meant was: I appreciate it behind closed doors. I suspect I might become a victim of spontaneous human combustion otherwise. However, on a day as rare as this one I contemplate stepping outside. The door is closer than ever before.

My contemplation is abruptly interrupted by a phone call. Kathi said she'd ring me up today to confirm about the gig. I make my way downstairs only to discover that it isn't Kathi's lovely voice on the other side of the phone line.

It's the struggling artist making a comeback.

He's mumbling something about the thing I wrote on his wall six months ago. This is not a flashback I've signed up to experience or a phone call I am willing to extend any longer than necessary. I give him my permission to use my meaningless phrase for a song he's working on. I really don't know why he would even think that titling a song like that is a good idea and it just goes to show he is still oblivious to the fact that 'Kurt smells like Teen Spirit' was my polite way of saying that he did (and still does, even over the phone line) smell like a girl.

Eva's creative writing is inspired by the real events that led to the title of Nirvana's famous song "Smells Like Teen Spirit". She takes on the narrative perspective of Kathleen Hanna, lead singer of the feminist punk band Bikini Kill.



Editorial

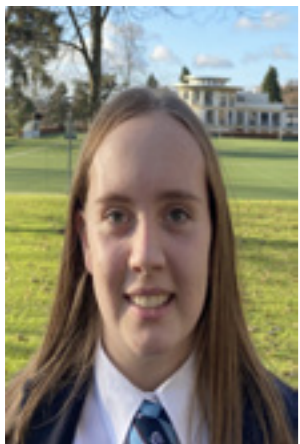
Covid-19 has disrupted many aspects of sport, including the Olympics and Paralympics, the end of multiple sporting seasons and Dollar's tennis and cricket seasons. Throughout lockdown, we've had time to look back on the last year in sport. From Tyson Fury's comeback fight to a rugby match in Dollar, writers have written about important sporting moments, experiences in sport at school, the introduction of a new sport at the Olympics, as well as some controversial topics. While sport is at a halt at the moment, we look forward to the sporting year ahead as no doubt history will be made at the Olympics and Paralympics in 2021.

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-thegallemagazine.blogspot.com>

We hope you enjoy this terms edition of the Galley.

Editors:

Grace Stirling and Charlie Robins



Grace Stirling (FV)



Charlie Robins (FV)

The Spirit of Sport

Charlie Robins (FV)

Nothing embodies sport more than 'team spirit'. Of course there is personal endeavour and achievement, but the comradeship and shared passion of team-working has a special place in sport.

We can all remember great teams: the All Blacks, Leicester City Football Club winning the Premier League with odds against them of 5000/1, and Team GB Women's Hockey team achieving Gold in Rio 2016.

In his autobiography Clive Woodward outlined the importance of a 'One Team Culture', which he describes amusingly as 'everyone's noses pointing in the same direction'. Of course this includes the principles of: leadership, coaching, fitness, nutrition, psychology, medical support, recovery, analysis and management. But if everyone isn't facing the same direction and with the same shared values and aims, teamwork will not succeed. There is a rather overused saying that there is no 'I' in team, normally referring to the fact there is no place for people to work separately or not as part of the team. However, it can also be viewed as the importance of inclusion and involving everyone in the team approach and not segregating within a team.

It's not always about the winning: many great moments amongst teams are experienced in tough times and in defeat. Something Dollar is used to bouncing back from. A recent sporting fixture epitomised the spirit of team sports for me. On the 29th of January a touring team from Argentina, Belgrano Athletic Club, visited the school to play rugby against the 1st and 2nd XV teams. Under any other circumstances the match would have been cancelled as the weather was unbelievably bad. After a lot of rain, the pitches were already waterlogged but the ground staff had worked hard to improve them. The Argentinian boys looked less than impressed with the Scottish weather but both sides were up for the game no matter what. As the match progressed the rain got heavier and heavier and we were running through pools of mud, the toughest conditions any of us had ever faced.



But the shared spirit we felt between the teams, as we combated all that Scotland could throw at us, was euphoric. I think both Dollar teams lost but there was no feeling of disappointment. It didn't matter. We stopped counting points and most poignantly the 2nd XV team kept going to the end to ensure that one of the Argentinian team who experienced considerable learning difficulties was able to score a try and enjoy the mud and

the fun with everyone. I think Dollar cheered the loudest for that try, running after him to celebrate alongside their team.

In embracing Dollar's ethos, we all got involved despite the weather, we all worked hard to make the game as special as it was, and we were all kind and respectful to each other in victory and defeat, embracing the spirit of sport.

Should Rock Climbing be in the Olympics?

Izzy Braid (FII)

Why would so many people not want Rock Climbing in the Olympics? The Olympics - a competition that hundreds of countries participate in, that would bring massive amounts of publicity to the sport - why wouldn't people who do the sport want it to be included? The simple answer is that climbing isn't just a sport; it's considered a lifestyle and one that is not about winning, but about being encompassed by nature, accomplishing personal goals, and achieving the seemingly unachievable. Many feel that by Rock Climbing being in the Olympics it diminishes the climbing philosophy that means so much to so many who participate in the sport.

Rock Climbing was added to the Olympics along with four other sports: surfing, skateboarding, karate and baseball. The International Olympics Committee said that the sports being added was "a historic step in bringing the Games to young people." The committee seems indifferent to the fact that the Games may not correlate with many of the sport's ideals. In addition, Rock Climbing has three different disciplines: lead, speed and bouldering, which will all be weighed equally in the Olympic scoring. This is problematic for many climbers, as many often only specialise or practise one discipline, creating yet another issue with Rock Climbing being added to the Olympics. This means that many of the world's best climbers will only be good at a portion of the event, like Chris Sharma who states it is "a big shame" that Olympic Climbing will be done this way. Contradicting this idea, by including all three disciplines it also creates an exciting and new opportunity for numerous climbers to further master their sport and challenge themselves in a way not done before.

Although an abundance of people who practise the sport were ambivalent about the inclusion of climbing, many were also thrilled that they get to show their skill on a world stage and test their limits against the best. One of these people is Britain's most successful ever competitive climber, Shauna Coxsey, who states that "I would watch the Olympics as a kid and be inspired but also quite disconnected too, you felt as a climber that

you'd never get to that level. To get that chance now is incredible." Coxsey is confident that this is the right move for the sport and will help climbing grow to its full potential, as well as that the audience will be enamoured once they witness the sport in action. After winning two Bouldering World Championship titles, training in two other disciplines will clearly be challenging for the young athlete, but she considers it all to be worth it.

On the opposite side of belief is Lynn Hill, a Rock Climbing pioneer who changed the definition of the sport; she states that "I'm happy that climbing has finally made the Olympics! I am not in support of the format that imposes that all climbers must compete in speed climbing. That is like asking a middle distance runner to compete in the sprint." The fact that the legendary climber Lynn Hill, who so many people admire, and many other inspirational climbers are not backing the inclusion of climbing in the Olympics or the format it's in, will definitely have a negative impact on how aspiring climbers view competing in the Olympics. Another legendary rock climber, Alex Honnold (who was famed for his thought impossible ascent of El Capitan in Yosemite, a nearly 4,000 metre piece of sheer granite, without rope, where one mistake could have cost him his life) will not be competing in the Olympic Games. This is because as he explained "Competitive climbing is basically a whole different sub-sport."



At the Edinburgh International Climbing Arena in Ratho, I asked a climbing instructor, Ian, about his thoughts on whether Climbing should be in the Olympics. Ian explained how climbing used to be a very unaffordable sport, due to the money needed to buy or rent equipment and pay for coaching and to climb on walls, and by being in the Olympics it has allowed for climbing to be a sport for everyone. He speaks of how more and more people are getting involved in Climbing due to it being in the Olympics and how it is extremely good for the Edinburgh Climbing Arena. Ian states how "We have seen the membership (for the climbing arena) constantly rise in the last year, or two, and it has constantly been going up since climbing became a part of the Olympics". He also adds how climbing had become an everyday thing, due to its obvious physical and mental health benefits, and the fact it really makes a difference in people's lives for these reasons. Ian concluded by saying "I totally promote the Olympics" and that he hopes by climbing being in the Olympics it will allow the sport to give back to its community.

Overall, many climbers are beyond excited to be competing or watching the Olympic games and witnessing

an incredibly historic moment for the sport, while other climbers will no doubt be hundreds of metres high on a climbing ascent with no intent to watch the Games. Perhaps the sudden divide of the climbing community will be detrimental for the sport, or perhaps it will simply allow for sport climbing and outdoor climbing to come into their own and establish their differences.

Running

Grace Stirling (FV)

The sport that some love and some hate. Personally, I hate running. I always have. I was born with arthrogryposis, a condition that means most joints in my body are restricted. This means running is quite difficult for me. However, running has had a big impact on my life. It taught me one of the most important aspects of life: taking part. In today's competitive world people are more interested in winning the race. Second place is never good enough. But in my case, I've always come in last when it comes to running and, to be honest, I've never really cared.

My primary 1 sports day is an event that really sticks out in my memory. It was my first competitive event and my first-time racing in a running race. Five-year-old me was very excited. My race was one of the first. I can remember stepping up to the line with butterflies in my stomach. There were 5 of us. The track wasn't very big but, in my eyes, it went on forever. The teacher said, "On your marks! Get set! GO! I ran as fast as my little legs could go.

Everyone else had finished but I was still running.



As I crossed the line, I ran through the ribbon which the teachers had put back up just for me, with a triumphant grin on my face. When I spoke to my mum she said, "It's not about winning; it's about taking part." It was the first of many races in my life where I came in last, but I could not care less. I was happy and I was proud. I had crossed the line just like everyone else. But there was something about that phrase. Something that stuck with me. Something that I remembered various times in my life.

The next race was an egg and spoon race. I dropped the egg a number of times and I came last yet again. But I

with a smile on my face and I know I am one of the only athletes that crossed the line smiling. I was happy because I got to take part. I got to be like everyone else and, for one day, I forgot I had a disability.

Eight years on, March 2017, the day of cross-country. I had signed up to take part in the cross-country race at school with my friend. I had never run that far in my life. I suppose it was either I do cross-country or spend 2 hours stuck in a stuffy classroom. During the race, as I approached the hill, a phrase came into my head. That phrase. "It's not about winning; it's about taking part." I was reminded that it didn't matter that I was going to come last. I had taken part. Every so often bursts of speed and ambition would take over me, just like the other runners. Eventually, the finish line was in my sight. All I knew was that I had to keep running. I finally crossed the line, with a smile on face. I had done it. What was a tiny hill for the other pupils was a gigantic mountain for me, but I pushed myself to do my best and I crossed that line, just like everybody else. I had achieved something that I never thought I would. I finished with a smile on my face.

I have never actually thought much about the impact running has had on my life until now. To this day running is still an activity that I find hard and do not overly enjoy. However, I have always been very competitive, and it gave me the freedom and opportunity to show myself and everyone else what I was capable of achieving. That first race taught me a very important lesson: "It's not about winning; it's about taking part." From my first sports day race at 5 years old to swimming for Scotland at the British Para Champs to PE lessons, the words of my mum have always stuck with me. For many people they can hardly remember their primary 1 sports day, and it will not have any relevance to their everyday life; but for me it played a big role in creating the person I am today. For some running is a chance for them to clear their mind, to think about their day, to get their heart pumping. But for me running made me determined. It made me push myself to the limits. It made me realise I am capable of doing anything I want to do. It is taking part which counts.



How is racism being tackled in football?

Gregor Lumsden (FIV)

"€222 million for Brazilian star!". "£72 million for forward from Ivory Coast!". "£45 million for Ghanaian defensive midfielder!" Today's football heroes come from all around the world and are paid ridiculous amounts of money for kicking a ball around a park for ninety minutes.

Whatever you may think about the exorbitant salaries and transfer fees, I am sure we can all agree on one thing: racism has no place in football. Supporters do not care about the colour of the skin of their own players, but they seem to care a great deal about the opposition's. Coupled with this, there has been a perceived rise in populism - on both sides of the Atlantic. Extreme views are being aired more commonly than they were a decade ago - is racism in football on the rise?

All football fans know that the game can provoke very strong emotions, which can be directed in a negative way toward players in the other team - disturbingly these comments are often targeted at BAME (Black Asian Minority Ethnic) players. As the number of players from ethnic backgrounds has increased, so too has the number of incidents of racial abuse. An early example was in 1988 when a banana was thrown at John Barnes in a Merseyside derby, the implication being that the fan thought he was like a monkey. When this happened, Barnes didn't let it get to him and calmly backheeled the banana off the pitch. More recently, in a match between England and Bulgaria, at least fifty fans were involved in racially abusing the BAME English players. The Bulgarians made monkey noises whenever a black player touched the ball and throughout the game were making Nazi salutes, with obvious connotations of intolerance and persecution toward minority groups. In the same month, a match was abandoned between Yeovil Town and Haringey Borough as a result of abuse directed at Cameroonian goalkeeper Douglas Pajetat - when a penalty was scored against him, the jubilant Yeovil fans spat at the player and one man threw his beer at him. Pajetat was visibly upset and both teams decided to walk off, with the respect of the match officials. The Yeovil manager described the scenes as "soul destroying". These recent events show that the attitude of fans towards BAME players hasn't changed; they are as old as the 'beautiful game' itself.

All players that have experienced this terrible abuse have been affected by it, and have handled it in different ways. In October 2007, the Coventry player, South African Stephen Mokone was outraged when his manager said, "We brought you over here and you are not satisfied. That's the trouble with you people". These harsh words were because the colour of his skin, and Mokone voted with his feet, signing for a Dutch side soon afterwards. In the match between England and Bulgaria previously mentioned, a particular target was defender and debutant Tyrone Mings, who said he could hear the abuse "clear as day" and attracted the attention of a linesman "Hey! Did you hear that". Mings was obviously disgusted by the behaviour from



the opposition fans, but carried on, finishing the game, and was awarded 'Player of the Match'. He wasn't the only player who suffered abuse in the game - almost all the England players and Back-Room staff were clearly upset.

New tactics (however long overdue) for dealing with racial incidents were introduced by FIFA in October 2019. Games can now be paused or even abandoned in the case of racially abusive behaviour. In the England/Bulgaria fixture, the game was paused for the announcer to make the crowd aware that racially abusive language was being heard and if it continued, the game would be abandoned. A few minutes later the game stopped again, and another announcement told the fans that this was the final stoppage before players would walk off for good. Amazingly, at this point, twenty stewards joined in with the group of racist fans - they simply removed their hi-vis jackets. If the stewards, who are employed to ensure public safety in the ground, are joining the abusers, then clearly the problem is deep-rooted. In the end, they were all escorted out of the stadium, with sixteen later arrested. The new guidelines had been enforced, but only in part. Since then, there has been a big step forward, when racial abuse resulted in the abandonment of the game between Yeovil and Haringey. As a result of increased incidents of racism, some stands in stadiums have been closed in subsequent matches, decreasing revenue for clubs, hitting them where it hurts when they need to pay huge salaries.

Now in the age of the smartphone, people can record evidence of racial abuse first-hand, and clubs have invested heavily in CCTV with facial recognition software, which aids in the identification of offenders. In another step, respectable fans are asked not to be bystanders, and to step in and report abuse. With the aid of television footage, four of the sixteen men who were arrested in Bulgaria have now been banned from all sporting events for two years. After this clash between Bulgaria and England, the Bulgarian FA were fined only 1000 Lev (£443); in contrast, in 2012 Nicholas Bendtner was fined £80,000 for showing a sponsor's logo on his underwear.

Clearly, there is much still to be done. FIFA need to issue more substantial fines, or dock points from nations and clubs, for racial abuse, and this needs to be addressed immediately. There must be no place for racism in football. The charity "Show Racism the Red Card" was founded in 1996 and has achieved much in

but now in 2019, internationally, there must be a more concerted effort to cut racism out of football, for good. It is on the agenda for governing bodies of the game, and they are speaking more openly about it - Greg Clarke, Chair of the FA recently condemned the "abhorrent racist chanting" at matches, and finally, games are being stopped, clubs are being fined, and people are being arrested for this cyclical crime. This should have been resolved twenty years ago by FIFA. They are moving in the right direction, but whether the problems will be solved is yet to be seen.



Tyson Fury

Olivia Smart (FIV)

WBA, WBO, and IBO titles all gone. After being raised to conceal his true emotions and act like a man, Tyson Fury was driven to the verge of suicide until a voice in his head thankfully told him to turn back. It was an explosion of feelings that sparked Fury's addiction and depression, as the heavyweight world champion was forced to give up a boxing career to carry the burden of his emotions. A return to boxing seemed impossible for the Gypsy King as he reached a staggering 27 stone.

After reaching the highest highs and the lowest lows, the Gypsy King showed the world once again why he's the World Champion. In 2015 he was unstoppable after beating Wladimir Klitschko to claim the world title and had possibly reached the peak of his career, but all his glory was short lived. 2 years later and 10 stone lighter his comeback fight was billed as the 'Return of the Mack', and he used the very song for his entrance music when he faced Sefer Seferi in his hometown of Manchester. Fans flocked to see Fury who was making his first appearance in the ring for 32 months. He beat Seferi before rattling off another victory against Francesco Pianeta to earn a shot at WBC champion Deontay Wilder.

Fury's bid for redemption came full circle in Los Angeles as he won the hearts of fans around the world following his gutsy show against Wilder. He controversially drew with the American in a fight many felt he won despite hitting the ground in the final round. Fury's 12th round comeback was emblematic of the remarkable comeback in his own life. He produced a physical representation of

his recovery from the breakdown that nearly took his life.

With all the controversy surrounding Deontay vs Fury, round 2 was inevitable, and it had caught the attention of fans worldwide as almost 1.5 million viewers tuned in to watch the showdown of the century. Tyson's greatly anticipated fight was followed in a recent documentary "The Gypsy King", which covered Fury's physical preparations and how he was mentally coming to terms with being diagnosed with Bi-polar Syndrome alongside depression. His brother Shane revealed that Tyson's character differs greatly from the one sports fan see on TV. He said: "When he says depression doesn't leave you, he means it. He can be happy one minute and sad the next. That's the real Tyson." American opponent, Wilder was determined to push these buttons in a pre-match trash talk ruckus as he ridiculed the boxer's mental battle, "Don't you ever forget that when I found you, you were strung out on coke. You were like a big house, contemplating killing yourself. Don't you ever forget who brought you to big-time boxing."

This only added fuel to the fire for Tyson; no one was going to stand in his way. From the outset, Fury proved himself to be the better boxer as he touched Wilder with a string of power shots and jabs. In the seventh round, Wilder's corner threw in the towel after their fighter retreated and ate two hard shots from Fury. After a series of blows in round 3, Wilder had nothing more to offer, and he simply couldn't find the energy or the range to throw his infamous right hand. When the stoppage took place in the seventh, Wilder was in a bad way and at risk of being injured even more. His corner did him a favour as his chances to win were slim to none. Fury landed 58 power punches to just 18 for Wilder, and he looked to be the bigger, and much stronger fighter for every second of the fight.

Clearly, there was a method to what looked like madness at one point. Fury came in heavier than he had in his previous fights, but it wasn't fat, and the extra muscle proved to be beneficial. By scoring a win over Wilder, Fury has established himself as the better fighter after getting the short end of the stick in a controversial decision in their first fight. Fury has now proved himself amongst the greats and should be considered as one of the best in the history of boxing.



Is it really an unfair advantage? Should performance enhancing drugs be legalised in sport?

Grace Stirling (FV)

Lance Armstrong, Diego Maradona and Maria Sharapova. Have you heard of these athletes? Do you know what they have in common? They have all been caught using performance enhancing drugs that have destroyed their careers. Repeatedly it is debated whether performance enhancing drugs should be legalised in sport. It is thought that drug use gives an unfair advantage. Yet there are both positive and negative long-term health effects. Personally, I believe that performance enhancing drugs should not be legalised in sport.



Firstly, the main argument for drugs being illegal in sport is the negative long-term health effects. The use of steroids and drugs can be potentially dangerous and life-threatening, with there being scientific proof that the use of performance enhancing drugs can cause heart attacks due to the expansion of the cardiac muscle. Men can be faced with a higher risk of prostate cancer due to the use of steroids in sport and women can suffer from menstrual problems. Permanent balding and hair loss are too common as a result of the use of steroids in both males and females. Too often the negative long-term health effects are overlooked as athletes focus on the short-term benefits of stronger bones, muscles and tendons, which will benefit their performance in their sport.

Baseball player Ken Caminiti is a prime example of an athlete whose death was due to his use of



performance enhancing steroids during his baseball career. In 1996 he was at the peak of his sporting career, but it later emerged that he had been using anabolic steroids, which acted like the male hormone testosterone to strengthen his muscle tissue and increase his body mass. In 2004 aged 41 Caminiti died of a heart attack, which an autopsy showed was linked to his previous use of steroids during his baseball career. This is just one of many examples of a young man who lost his life due to the use of performance enhancing drugs and therefore shows if we were to legalise them then we would probably see the lives of many other young athletes lost. Would you really risk your life to artificially improve your performance in sport?

Likewise, the use of performance enhancing drugs is contradictory to the ethos of sport. Fair play, teamwork, honesty and respect for rules, yourself and others, are just a few of the characteristics that make sport what it is today. By taking a performance enhancing drug, you immediately lose self-respect. You are endangering your life for momentary gains and success. The spirit of sport means playing fairly and honestly. Taking steroids to improve your performance is the opposite of playing fairly. It encourages cheating and doesn't give a true representation of the natural physical capabilities of the athlete. The idea of sportsmanship is destroyed if performance enhancing drugs are legalised as it takes away the trust and honesty between athletes. It would be false competition between them; they wouldn't be naturally performing to their best and it would all be down to the drugs and steroids in their bodies. Dedication, commitment, respect are all gone. What happens to the spirit of sport?

Furthermore, many people argue that performance enhancing drugs give an unfair advantage to the doping athletes. There is scientific proof that athletes who take performance enhancing drugs perform better in sport than those who don't. Famous cyclist Lance Armstrong admitted to using substances to improve his performance in his

incredible cycling career during which he won seven Tour de France titles. This included the use of the human growth hormone, erythropoietin and blood doping, which shows the extent that Armstrong went to just to improve his physical performance to win the Tour de France. As Richard Pound, former President of the World Anti-Doping Agency once said, "The use of performance-enhancing drugs is not accidental; it is planned and deliberate with the sole objective of getting an unfair advantage." How would you feel if you lost due to an unfair advantage because an athlete had been taking performance enhancing drugs?



On the other hand, it can be argued that performance enhancing drugs do not eliminate the skill required to perform a specific sport. In swimming, you still need to be able to swim whether you take performance enhancing drugs or not. The same for baseball: players must be able to hit the ball to get a homerun. At the centre of the baseball steroids scandal is player Mark McGwire, who is often criticised as he can hit the ball further than many other players and many believe that it is because he took performance enhancing drugs during his sporting career. Even though the performance enhancing drugs don't affect the skill needed to perform, it does improve the strength and stamina of the athlete, therefore giving the athlete



an advantage. This supports the argument of how performance enhancing steroids give doping athletes an unfair advantage and therefore shows that drugs should not be legalised.

Besides, there are health benefits for athletes who break the rules. As previously mentioned, steroids strengthen bones, muscles and tendons, which lowers the risk of injury during their intense training regimes. Steroids also reduce inflammation which is caused from illness and allergies allowing athletes to return to training quicker after illness. Steroids build muscles quicker than eating lots of protein does and this benefits a lot of athletes in physically demanding sports. But saying that, I believe that the health benefits do not outweigh the negatives and that steroids should not be legalised.

Shockingly, 50% of Olympic athletes say they would use performance enhancing drugs even if it resulted in their premature death, just for the momentary success of winning a medal at international level. This shows the extent athletes would go to, to be the best in their sport. If athletes are willing to take such a risk, should we legalise them? The argument over whether these drugs should be legalised or not splits the sporting community, but personally I think that they should not be legalised. I think that the negative health effects exceed the benefits and believe that athletes should not risk their life for the short-term success in their sporting careers. The characteristics of sport should not be compromised for cheating and the excellent sportsmanship we see at the Olympics and Paralympics needs to be maintained and the use of performance enhancing steroids could prevent this. Yes, the skill needed to perform at sport is not affected by steroids, but the performance of the athlete is and therefore there is an unfair advantage for the doping athletes against the other competitors. For these reasons I have concluded that performance enhancing drugs should not be legalised. What type of role model would we be setting for future generations if the medal winning athletes were cheating?

Entertainment

As we navigate our way through these difficult times and the many challenges that our world is facing: coronavirus, the great problem of racism and discrimination in our society and climate change to name a few, entertainment and culture remain vital tools in shaping the world today.

I have found that the perfect temporary escape from the realities of a global pandemic is to finally sit down and tackle the ever growing pile of books that have been glaring at me disappointedly for as long as I can remember. When reading doesn't fit my mood I often choose to listen to music or watch a film that I haven't seen before; luckily for me my co-editor is an expert in that area and always has a recommendation to hand - thanks Jack!

These last few months have merely been an excuse for Jack to spend three days straight watching as many films as he can and taking notes for his own future career as a film-maker, while not replying to messages for fear it might distract from his screen for a split second and he would miss a crucial detail. However, this does always make for interesting conversations afterwards and a trusted review of any film before the rest of us have even heard of it!

So whether Poppy's new album review is your thing; or you're interested in our views on films from Star Wars to Honeyland; or perhaps you simply want a film or book recommendation as you find yourselves with more time on your hands, we're sure you'll find something to peak your interest in the Entertainment and Culture section. Hope you enjoy!

Your Entertainment & Culture editors, Jack and Kirsty



I Disagree- Poppy Album Review

Matthew Al Jafaari (Form I)

I Disagree is the third studio album from artist, songwriter and cryptic YouTuber, Poppy. With this album Poppy has made her boldest artistic statement yet, as it is much heavier than most of her other material. She is embracing the sounds of alternative metal, nu-metal and industrial, while also keeping her pop influence to make something truly special and unheard of until now, taking much inspiration from groups like BABYMETAL. There have, of course, been other pop/metal crossovers but this seems to be the most successful blend of the two genres yet. To fully understand how far Poppy has come since her beginnings you should listen to her other records and watch her YouTube videos, because this album means much more in context.

The album starts off with Concrete, which begins promisingly but takes us through a rollercoaster of different styles and dynamics which just feels like it's trying too hard to be random. Not to mention that the song is split into what feels like a dozen parts that don't really fit in with each other. On their own, these different parts aren't bad, but they all stick out in a not-so-good way. Poppy probably could have turned any given one of them into full length songs, but she didn't. However, I can tell that Poppy and her producers had fun making this song, and I can respect that.

The next song, which is also the title track, is much more enjoyable and straightforward. We see Poppy's persona evolve into a more destructive character in this song (and album). She now has a sort of appetite for destruction (We'll be safe and sound / When it all burns down); a desire to take everything apart, to start again from scratch. This could also be a result of her recent departure from her frequent collaborator, Titanic Sinclair. Musically it is also catchy, heavy and just an overall good track. What stands out the most to me is the chorus, which is very satisfying when it comes around.

The Nine Inch Nails-inspired BLOODMONEY kicks in and takes everything to eleven; a barrage of rigid electronics hits you in the face from the start. The lyrics are questioning the integrity of people's beliefs (When everyone/nobody is watching, what do you believe? And Keep telling yourself that you've been playing nice and beg for forgiveness from Jesus the Christ). These lyrics take the song to a whole new level of greatness, aside from the already-amazing instrumentals. It's also an aggressive push against the industry she works in and the press (Never forget the excess of man / Because the grabbing hands always grab what they can).

The tone cools down a bit when we get to Nothing I Need, a slow song with a sweet synth line at the chorus. We never really get close to the intensity of the first half after this point, but this change of dynamics is nice and almost necessary... just kidding.

Two tracks later we get Bite Your Teeth, something that's borderline thrash metal with a metalcore-style breakdown and a jarring tempo change at the end, reminiscent of some heavier doom metal and drone bands. Basically, it's what Concrete should have been, but wasn't. The lyrics aren't necessarily deep or meaningful - it's just "Bite your own teeth" and "Don't cry, keep on trying" ad nauseam. Now that I think about it, it would have been an amazing workout song without the speed and style changes...

The record ends with Sick of the Sun, a lo-fi shoegaze track about wanting to be alone and wanting to "float away", and then Don't Go Outside, which paints a picture of a dystopian world where everybody is the same, and the TV tells everyone what to do. A neat Nineteen Eighty-Four reference, and a nod to the undertones of identity that have been present through most of the album; only now are they blatantly obvious. This is a topic that is very relatable to Poppy, as she has been changing her image so much that she doesn't really know who she is anymore. The second half of the track works back through the album and uses lyrics from Concrete, I Disagree and Fill the Crown. Poppy sings "You can be anyone you want to be" and the album ends.

At thirty-five minutes this is a short album, but I feel like it ended where it needed to end. I don't want anything more from this album, but in a good way. The ebb and flow of I Disagree is very well planned out, and Poppy and her producers know when to turn up the energy and when to slow down. If she decides to continue on this path, then I'm very excited for her next release.

RATING: 8/10



Honeyland

Eva Magdic Govedarica (Form VI)

In the past year the Western world took it upon itself to start the conversation about climate change and raise the awareness of this issue. Being an Eastern-European myself, this made absolute sense to me - America and its capitalist buddies going back to their roots while the rest of us stood and watched, as we always have. Besides, countries of Eastern Europe couldn't afford to think about the world at large, with small scale problems embodied deep in the living organism of their society. Yet, the greatest lesson captured on film about the damage we inflict on the environment comes from as "Wild West" a place as you'll get in that part of the world - North Macedonia.

Honeyland began as an investigative documentary about the cultivation of wild bees and their keeper - Atidze Muratova. As soon as the filmmakers realized her simple philosophy of life - take half, leave half - they decided to keep the camera rolling and what soon followed evolved into an exploration of human nature and Mother Earth. In this lies the first of Honeyland's lessons - art owes as much to luck as it does to creative, hard work. Sometimes sheer coincidence will open new, exciting possibilities.

Indeed, the exciting arrival of "capitalism" to the mountain surrounded hamlet, where the harshness of summers and winters is equally unbearable, catches Atidze and her sick mother off guard. Hussein Sam, pater familias to his dysfunctional family of eight enters the protagonist's life and soon destroys the harmony she has built. The documentary is now split into two strands: two worlds which simply can't co-exist. The family of modern nomads is characterized by pure human greed and demonstrates once more why it is a bottomless pit - it will temporarily satisfy, but it will not last.

The language spoken by the film's main subjects is Turkish, but the visual language of Honeyland is so powerful that no subtitles are needed. Shot using only natural and candle light with wide, still shots prevailing throughout the film, it is made clear how small we are compared to the great outdoors. Despite this, humans prove to be determined to compete with the forces of nature. The film's protagonist, who has personality traits so rare it seems they could move mountains, stands powerless - not against the tide, but against human nature.

Whether you'd like to read into this story from an anti-capitalist standpoint or interpret it as an insight into the human condition, one thing is certain - "All things share the same breath - the beast, the tree, the man. The air shares its spirit with all the life it supports." (Chief Seattle)

Control

Eva Magdic Govedarica (Form VI)

Frontman, father, husband. And he lost control. Again.

Mystical figures of rock n' roll have provided a great source material and inspiration for screenwriters ever since the term "sex, drugs and rock n' roll" was coined. It encompasses the rise and fall of a great modern-day tragic hero, who future generations will gladly romanticise. But it also creates a trap. Creativity gets treated as a sickness and stories of success are formatted as show-biz fables. However, Corbijn's debut black and white biopic about Joy Division's troubled lead singer carefully watches its step.

The film is defined by a sense of measure. The director's background in fashion photography comes across in high contrast, monochrome cinematography that, paradoxically, does not seem to derive from stylized sentimentality, but rather the need to depict the protagonist's state of mind from a safe distance; it's realistic, straightforward and honest. Frequently, episodes from Curtis' life are left raw, untouched by the screen adaptation. They can slip unnoticed, but only on a surface level. Matt Greenhalgh's discrete lack of dramatization is the emotional spine of this story that leaves no need to seek for cause and effect within the screenplay. Create a sequence of shots and the viewers will attach meaning to it themselves - it's the basic principle of the Kuleshov effect.

Sam Riley's portrayal of the protagonist's eccentric, problematic and, at the same time, quiet personality is the focal point of Control. It's impossible to tell this was the actor's debut role as he convincingly embodies all aspects of Curtis' personal life and professional career. The portrait of a young man cloaked in shadows does not shy away from the cigarette smoking, poetry loving anarchist, but neither does it glamourize him. Ian Curtis was a difficult man, torn by his young marriage, newly found love and struggle with understanding of epilepsy. Eager to feel the pleasures of a normal man, he appears to be betrayed by his heart, mind and body.

Interestingly, the anchor in his life, the guide he wishes to come and take him by the hand was there since the start. His wife Deborah played by Samantha Morton, (on whose 1995 memoir the film was based), patiently waits by his side, guarding both his joy and sorrow. Unlike previous screen depictions of this punk legend's life, this film has the courage to go that extra mile and tackle what was going on behind the closed doors of his home. Married straight out of high school, I'm not sure Curtis gave himself a chance to come to terms with what love is. Or perhaps he just didn't expect to wish something more from his life in sleepy Manchester. Deborah, on the other hand (the more balanced of the two), craves for a stable family life - a husband and a father. When Ian engages in an affair with Annik Horore, Deborah does not hold this against him. She is hurt and betrayed, but never vengeful. Similar to The Theory of Everything, it shouldn't come as a surprise if the audience gets emotionally more invested in this character - her strength is admirable.

Ultimately, this film works both as a music biopic and a coming of age story. Unfortunately, it ends at age 22 - Curtis's life's spark burns out just like the half-smoked cigarette left on his kitchen table moments before he hung himself from the Sheila Maid. Whether you are a fan or not, this post-punk tale of dreams that (never) end speaks in a universal language that is refined in human dimensions.



Anti-Capitalism Wrapped

Eva Magdic Govedarica (Form VI)

"I don't question our existence,
I just question our modern needs"

The year 1990 brought a series of radical experiments and new directions in the music industry: Depeche Mode "Violator", Pixies "Bossanova" and Sonic Youth's infamous "Goo" to name a few.

It was the year punk broke.

It's wrong to say it died - punk merely adapted itself to 'the needs of a new generation'. 1990 gave birth to grunge, a style which had been brewing on the Seattle scene a couple of years prior to the round zero, with bands such as Mudhoney, Green River and The Melvins - relics unknown to an average alternative rock listener in this day and age. However, it was not until the most memorable member of 'The 27 Club' stepped onto the scene that Seattle became a place on the map and the six-letter term despised by everyone associated with it became a voice for thousands of misunderstood young people.

1991 is the year Pearl Jam's "Ten" was released and the lyrics of its 9th track provided a great cover-up for the

stain on my new pair of jeans. It seems that the tragic deaths of Nirvana, Alice in Chains and now Soundgarden's respective leads coincided with the first part of the powerful lyric. Meanwhile, Eddie Vedder was taking a stand against the improbable dream Reagan and G.H.W. Bush were promising. In his flannel shirt, a household symbol of anti-consumerism, he alone had to endure the irony of being "still alive".

Maybe it's because Pearl Jam wasn't a grunge band to start with- they simply met the qualifications to be one. Five long haired men under 30 living in Seattle; two of which descended from what was considered to be the first grunge band ever to exist. But a track such as "Garden" shows they owe their sound much more to classical rock, than they do to Cobain's stomach pain provoked screaming.

"We buy things we don't need with money we don't have." As with everything, Tyler Durden's definition of capitalism found its way into the realm of grunge music. Though unwillingly, some embraced it, and with it, descended further down the black pit. Others, however, were determined to fight it with all means necessary. 'Others' included Mike, Jeff, Stone, Matt and Eddie. They alone put themselves in the service of those who listened and appreciated them, never breaking under pressure of powerful distributors and corporations. They approached their craft with the punk righteousness, unafraid to assert their anger with resentment at political and social injustice. Revolt came with a price: records were no longer selling in millions worldwide and captured moments of raging anger on stage would never again appear on the cover of Time magazine. They've always walked a fine line between commercial success and opposition to the same; they were insiders and outsiders at the same time: internationally famous and rurally invisible.

And yet, they were not consumed by the darkness they sang about. The same darkness which built the walls of loneliness, doubt and self-hate around so many. Blackness which was to be found in the hearts of inexperienced lovers. The ones who analysed every move they made, only to later characterize it as naive, unaware that unless it involved less than total giving, it couldn't have been love in the first place.

So instead of firing a bullet, Pearl Jam exhaled the ever-growing darkness in a three decades long discography. To them, the essence of the human existence is carried by the sounds of waves crushing against the surfboards and flashes of city lights echoing the sirens in the distance. In every sold-out stadium, their bodies move with the understanding of their grunge legacy. Is it as relevant as it was in the year of 1991? I highly doubt it. We live in a different era- with the earth spinning faster than expected- there are new things to spark anger. Pearl Jam fans are aware of this; that their present meaning is drawn from the past, and yet one cannot help to think that it still makes the ground tremble with a reminder that "you can't buy what you want because it's free, you can't be what you want because I'm me".

Star Wars: Revenge of the Sith is not only the best film in the series but also the greatest cinematic feat of all time

"This is where the fun begins." - Anakin Skywalker

Lewis Vincent (Form VI)

The Star Wars prequel trilogy was seen as a disappointment by many fans as they exited the cinemas. They were wrong and stupid. Little did they know that the art of cinema had reached its all-time high. The prequels are simply superior, they deliver an unparalleled experience that is beyond genre, with timeless comedy and peerless drama. The prequels capture all the great parts of Star Wars and enhance these qualities. Music? Better. Action? Better. Effects? Better. Enough said.

The third and final prequel is the greatest of the bunch. Revenge of the Sith is the most entertaining film in the series and the most impactful to the wider story. The audience is blessed to experience Hayden Christensen, Ewan McGregor, and Ian McDiarmid all at the peak of their powers.

Some people have foolishly misunderstood the impeccable performances of Hayden Christensen in the latter 2 prequels, claiming that his acting was poor, dragging down the rest of the films. These people have only demonstrated their own artistic ineptitude, they simply cannot comprehend the subtleties of Christensen's masterful portrayal of Anakin. The performance perfectly connects the prequels to the original trilogy, giving us the Star Wars that George Lucas always wanted.

"Poor Hayden. His performance is great. They just don't like the character." - George Lucas

Lucas is right in saying this, and I am right in saying that those who "just don't like the character" are idiots. Hayden Christensen's acting in the prequels is not only some of the best Star Wars has to offer, but also some of the greatest performances the world has and will ever witness. The sheer quality defies description. I still cannot understand how he is without any real recognition for his achievements in the Star Wars films. This film has Ewan McGregor in it.

This makes it better than every film that doesn't have Ewan McGregor in it.

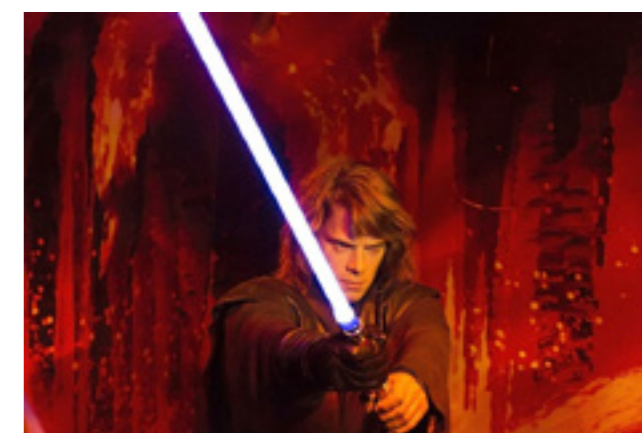
I think we can all agree that Ewan McGregor is a top-notch actor. We should also all agree that his role as Obi-Wan is amongst his best. Ewan is the perfect counterpart to Hayden throughout their shared time onscreen, Ewan delivers the 'grumpy dad' to Hayden's angst-ridden Anakin.

Ian McDiarmid gives the role of Palpatine all he has. The brutal camp that is ever present in McDiarmid's Palpatine is at its peak in Revenge of the Sith. The extravagance in the performance is greatly entertaining, from the subtle deception of the early film to the satanic bellowing of the third act. It is no secret that McDiarmid's performance is the backbone of the prequel trilogy, and Revenge of the Sith lets the audience know exactly why.

Revenge of the Sith is not bound by genre, it is simultaneously an epic tragedy, a romance, and perhaps the best comedy of its time (or all time). Lucas' conclusion to the Prequel trilogy is frankly an avant-garde modern masterpiece. There is no other film that can compare to its technical brilliance, the dialogue throughout the film never serves a singular purpose; the 'Tragedy of Darth Plagueis the Wise' monologue, for example, serves the tragic plot, sending Anakin only further away from the Jedi, but also delivers peak comedy at the same time. A random monologue about previously unknown characters is and will always be funny.

Lucas' scriptwriting is truly at its best in this film, he really displays the more subtle technicalities of his work, with lines with true depth such as, "Chancellor Palpatine is evil." "From my point of view the Jedi are evil." Wow. It's truly impressive work.

Revenge of the Sith delivers the best Star Wars experience available, and even the greatest movie experience. It is the best by any metric, it is that good. Some may think that I am wrong, and that I have no basis for these claims. I offer such people a challenge; If you can defeat me in lightsaber combat, I will gladly shut up. Until that day, however, Revenge of the Sith will rule supreme in my mind, just as it should in yours.



Love Actually is undoubtedly not only the worst Christmas movie but the worst movie ever

Kirsty Galloway (Form VI)

If you were to stop people in Britain on the street and ask them what their favourite Christmas movie was, a large number of them would say: "Love Actually, of course". It's a classic. A film that everyone loves and religiously watches each year to put them in the Christmas spirit. It's a story of the various ways in which love can manifest itself, the way the young and the old experience love and the inevitable pain and heartbreak that occur when love is unreciprocated or ceases to exist anymore. Actually no, it's not. Love Actually is not only THE WORST Christmas movie out there, but the worst movie to exist point-blank. And I'm going to explain why.

Firstly, let's get to the root of the film, that heart-breaking scene when Emma Thompson discovers that her husband is cheating on her. That look of deep-rooted pain in her eyes. I suppose this was the director trying to show us that despite love's power to overcome, people are still capable of doing terrible things and hurting other people. But I mean, really? Was that necessary in a Christmas movie? No-one wants to have to discover that at any point in their life, but on Christmas Eve with her children there? This is only made more painful to watch when, in order to spare her children the grief and a ruined Christmas, she puts on a brave face and acts like nothing has happened for the rest of the day. Nothing quite like a bit of soul crushing to get you in the Christmas spirit, is there?

Then there's the odd love triangle between Keira Knightley, Andrew Lincoln and Chiwetel Ejiofor. In fact, it isn't really a triangle at all. It's just Lincoln's character being unreasonable and a really crap friend. To begin with, the videos from the wedding that are focused solely on her are just stalkerish. It's her wedding, known by many as the most significant day of someone's life. A day where you're meant to have fun celebrating your love of the person you plan to spend the rest of your life with. Yet here he is, the best friend of the groom, trying to ruin it before it has even begun. GIVE THE POOR WOMAN A BREAK. He then proceeds to make her life miserable whenever they are forced to socialise by pretending he hates her. Seriously, stop acting like a 13 year old boy throwing a temper tantrum because they think they're in love for the first time and this person's 'really the one'. Grow up and get over it. Yes, you might

be in love with Keira Knightley, but I mean: who isn't? She just got married to your best friend and this is how you repay him.

I can't even begin to pretend to understand the Colin Firth love story side of the film. Love at first sight? This is just one of the most preposterous and antiquated concepts ever. In fact, it just almost represents everything that is wrong with socialising and the way we deal with emotions in our society. The fixation on appearances and inability to really delve beneath the surface. It could have been sweet at a push that the two of them formed some sort of unsaid mutual understanding or relationship of sorts. But a relationship? There is a literal language barrier between them, meaning they have never had an actual conversation with each other. Therefore, to think that they're 'in love' is just so absurd.

And then there's the little boy, played by Thomas Brodie-Sangster. Initially, I felt extremely sorry for him. His mum has recently died and he appears to have been left in the care of his step dad, an inexperienced and awkward father figure. But as the film progresses, he is so obviously more concerned with the girl he likes, which like all childhood feelings, will inevitably fade within a matter of days. They say distraction is a good cure for grief, temporarily of course, and it seems like this is just what he's doing. However, by the end of the film he doesn't even seem remotely bothered by it all. And logistically this just wouldn't be possible. Running through an airport in this way - has the director been to an airport recently? Clearly not. Not only was the security not enforced whatsoever but they also managed to run through the entire airport in a matter of minutes. I'm just saying, I've been to Heathrow airport and that just is not possible. But of course for love any sacrifices can be made.

Next we come to the old guy with the song. That sounds like a vague and detached description, but that's really all Bill Nighy's character is. Sometimes it really is just time to stop because, as much as no-one ever wants to admit it, you really are just too old for something. Let's face it his music is god awful; his producers tell him that and even he acknowledges it. He spends basically the whole film trying to re-make a perfectly good song and it just isn't working.

The Prime Minister. The only slightly okay part about this movie is the relatable nature of the idiotic Prime Minister to politics today. Portrayed by Hugh Grant he brings a sense of humour that makes this film almost bearable. Upon first watching this I rolled my eyes multiple times and it only further exacerbated my anger at the film and its ridiculousness. But in 2019, the year where Trump and Boris Johnson are elected leaders of two of the most powerful nations in the world, this seems quite fitting. His character is hopeless and slightly misguided at best and an incompetent, annoying and creepy man if I'm being one hundred percent honest. It would be one thing

if he were a regular clown character, but playing the Prime Minister? We're already too used to that in real life for it to be very funny at this point. And then there's his relationship with Martine McCutcheon. I know it's a movie but this isn't even vaguely realistic, especially the immediate jump in the car to see the Nativity with all her family. This is the height of ridiculousness in this movie. Not to mention how irritating her character is overall, mainly for her clumsiness. It isn't cute. Not even a little bit. And I mean how difficult can it really be to carry a tray without dropping it? I don't know what Hugh Grant sees in her and frankly vice versa. Maybe they are perfect for each other, but in a too cringey to be shown on screen kind of way.

The so called 'romantic' gesture made by Lincoln at the end is not romantic in any shape or form. It's nothing but stone cold creepy and weird. I think it's bad enough that he came to her door confessing his love (cue vomit). As you can tell I'm not one for grand romantic gestures in the first place. But the fact that she is already married, I repeat MARRIED, to his best friend clearly did not seem to bother him in the slightest. If this wasn't bad enough he gets her to lie about who's at the door and say it's carol singers. I mean who actually does that? There's no question about it. There is no way this could ever be perceived as romantic. Sure, love is messy and complicated, but this is not love any more than being the world's biggest creep. No-one can deny it. He really is just a completely terrible person.

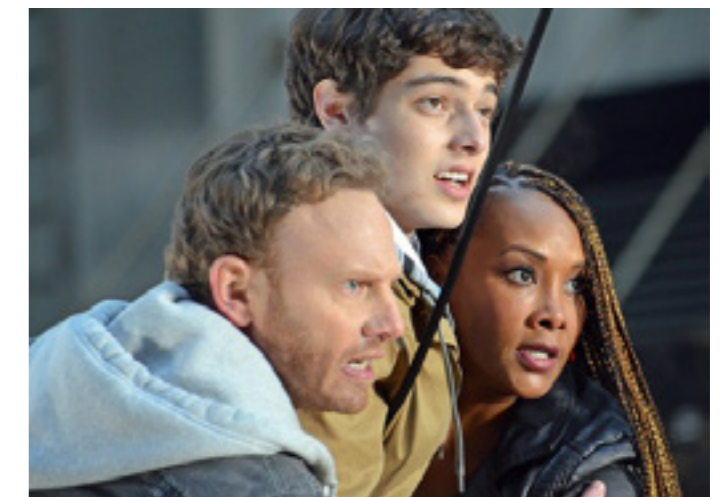
So unless heartbreak, bad humour and unrealistic storylines are your thing I recommend that you save your time and go and watch something worthwhile. Love Actually is certainly fun to mock for all its inconsistencies, but I have no doubts that you can spend 120 minutes of your life doing something much more productive and enjoyable than watching this shocker of a movie.



The B- Doesn't Stand for Bad

Jack Ireland (Form VI)

A teen runs down the hallway screaming, others look on with worry. Following the teen is a small robot with the paint scratching off. The 'robot' looks like it was made for £20. It shoots obviously fake lasers at the teen and one hits her head. Close up of a fake head suddenly exploding. Fake blood goes everywhere. The teens watching it all overreact. The robot looks to the camera and says "Have a nice day" cue cheesy 80s theme music. This is one of my favourite moments from a B-movie because of the sheer ludicrousness of it. B-movies have existed since early cinema and have had a huge impact on film as a whole.



Now let's be clear what is and isn't a B-movie. Sharknado IS a B-movie, Tall Girl ISN'T. The Room IS a B-movie, Jack and Jill ISN'T. B doesn't mean bad; there are plenty of A-movies which are poorly made. It was originally used during the Hollywood Golden Age to describe the second film of a double feature: the A film would be higher budget and more advertised, whereas the B movies would be low budget and quickly made. While a lot of B movies are bad, this is due to lack of resources and little effort, but a lot are ambitious with what they're trying to do which is very commendable.

What I love so much about B-movies is how fun they are. They're not trying to be anything more than they actually are. They're not pretentious, they're just entertaining. The worst thing a film can be is boring, because if a film is bad, you'll at least remember how bad it is and these films are certainly not boring. They're insane. One film you'll have a bunch of teenagers stuck in a mall taking on a bunch of killer robots, and in another you'll have 5 people being told 'scary' stories which (plot twist!!) turns out to be how they ended up in hell. These types of films are just enjoyable to watch and remind me why I love films so much. There's a certain charm to them you don't get from other films. You can tell that the people involved with making it are just having fun which radiates to the audience.

B-movies succeed at the most important thing a film should be: entertaining. Films are, first and foremost, entertainment. While some may argue they should push a social message or communicate a truth about human nature (and these are certainly important aspects of film), if a film is not entertaining first then the audience will not care or be impacted by what the artist is trying to say. Entertaining means a lot of things; it doesn't necessarily just mean funny or light-hearted. If a film engages the audience then it has succeeded. If an audience member feels tense or afraid or enraged, then a film has done its job. But if a film is constant talking which seemingly has no point then the film is a failure, no matter how profound the film is. B-movies are entertaining; they offer a chance to switch off the brain and just have fun. I think people should watch both types of films because in my experience it's improved the high-brow films as now I have something that's a very different beast which I can compare them to. It highlights the positive aspects of better films.



B-movies often start accomplished directors off: James Gunn, (writer/ director of Guardians of the Galaxy) started by writing Tromeo and Juliet, a B parody of the famous play. Oscar winner Peter Jackson (Lord of the Rings trilogy) started with Bad Taste, which is one of the silliest B movies I have ever seen (and that's saying a lot). James Cameron has made two of the most profitable films of all time (Avatar and Titanic) and his directorial debut was Piranha 2: The Swamping - you can imagine what that film is about. Often, it is the best way to start a film career because nobody really cares about the quality, which allows them to experiment and get to grips with film language and techniques, making their later films



more refined. It also means that younger directors with less money and resources are still able to make films since everyone expects props to be bad or the acting to not be very good; the expectations are low and thus there's less pressure which produces better films.



Sadly, B-movies are a dying breed; there are very few being produced nowadays due to an audience which is demanding higher quality entertainment. I think it's great that audiences prefer watching high-brow films, but B-movies really do add a lot to the film industry and without them we wouldn't get quotes like: "It's not you, Ferdie. I'm just not used to being chased around a mall in the middle of the night by killer robots" or "A: you smell like Pepperoni. B: Well if that's how you feel... A: Wait a minute. B: WHAT? A: I LIKE Pepperoni". They're very silly but very fun to watch and nobody can watch high brow films constantly. The closest comparison to modern day films is the bad Netflix originals, which are pumped out seemingly every month. But the problem with these films is they're competently made. I know it sounds weird to list that as a problem, but the beauty of B-movies is how everything feels like it's all held together by duct tape. Whereas the Netflix originals are so very bland in how they look, sound and feel that they often fall into the boring category. B-movies show a time in filmmaking when people didn't really care about the quality of the film, but rather just whether the audience would enjoy it, and they allowed filmmakers to experiment which pushed film forward as an artform.



A Decade on the Internet

Adam Murdoch (Form 1)

From social and political changes to scientific research and educational advancements across the world there has been one constant - the internet - warping and changing over the last 10 years. The widespread rollout of the internet can be shown as being the largest difference in this generation. Whilst the internet was started on large, heavy computers in the late 1980s you can track the rise of people joining, sharing and streaming in thousands of different ways across countries, languages and devices.

The rise of... Streaming services

A large part of the late 2010s was the abandonment of cable and satellite television. In 2019 it was shown that 20% of Americans live happily without cable television, and it's not hard to see why with streaming giants such as Amazon Prime, Netflix and Hulu, plus smaller internet-accessible channels like Shudder and YouTube Red. With streaming services, you have thousands of hours of content available for prices ranging from \$0-\$20 per month rather than the average of 50 pounds for satellite. Another large win for streaming is the success of original shows like The Grand Tour, Stranger Things and The Good Place which all have good ratings and viewing figures.



The rise of... Social Media

Nowadays the way we stay connected is through apps like Snapchat, WhatsApp or TikTok. Now while others may have different views on the dangers of the internet, the biggest source of entertainment is still YouTube for most millennials and Gen Zs. The video streaming website has thousands of hours of footage uploaded every minute, with notable influencers spanning the globe, including the undisputed king of the internet, Felix Kjälberg aka 'PewDiePie', even through all the change

and 'controversy' he has amassed over 105,000,000 subscribers. Video sharing has not been the only rising source of internet media: picture, link and recipe websites such as Instagram, Pinterest and the beloved and changeable Reddit have become some of the top apps on mobile and laptop for communicating.



The rise of... Memes

Would it really be an article on the internet without mentioning the newest way internet users express themselves? From the top-bottom text format to the most obscure and baffling, these pictures of pets, screenshots of films and games are everywhere. Memes are wildly versatile and ever more popular; editing software is cheap enough and easy to use. You only need to look at the front page of any social media to see how much people like them. There is one clear reason: how quotable they are. Lines like "you wouldn't get it", "criminals have standards" and "STONKS" can easily be slipped into conversation and never fail to get a laugh from people that understand it. Communities have been formed specially for memes and gifs. It has got to the point where entire film franchises and shows have been associated with memes, notable ones are Shrek, Rick and Morty, and Joker, which are known by many because of their internet buzz. It is something that is loved by some, hated by some and confuses most, but is definitely memorable.



“Mr Frost was constantly enthusiastic and always took the time to ensure that every pupil could succeed whether it be to do with sport or not. He was a prominent member of the Dollar Community and is dearly missed by everyone”



“Mr Frost was always so understanding and always strived to help me to improve on skills like batting and bowling in cricket, as well as ensuring our team integrity in Junior School rugby”.

Remembering Mr Frost



“The previous year we were struggling to win any games but with Mr Frost he managed to turn our season around and create a very fun and successful side”



“Mr Frost has taught me ever since I joined the school in P1. I will never forget what a kind, thoughtful and hardworking person he was and how special he has made my time at Dollar”.



“It was always an absolute privilege to be taught by him. An inspiration that will never be forgotten”.



Thank you

“I remember him encouraging me from the side-line on a wet muddy day at Newfield. It really brought my mind into the game and helped me focus more than I’ve ever done before. I went on to score the winning try in that game and I still to this day believe that it was Mr Frost that got us the win that game”.



“Mr Frost was not only a teacher at Dollar, but a great friend to anyone who knew him”.