

BGS BUZZ



SPRING EDITION 2023



Message from the Editor

Welcome to the Spring 2023 edition of the BGS Buzz! I am particularly proud of this edition, containing some incredibly well researched and thought provoking articles in the current affairs section, and showcasing some wonderful work and achievements from our students, past and present. This is also a bittersweet edition, as we say goodbye to Mr Elphick and thank him for all of his support over the years, and wish him an amazing retirement!

Wishing you all a lovely Spring term break, and a Happy Easter and Ramadan!

School Magazine Editor: Ms Contini

Reporters: Scarlett Barber, Sophie Spigno, Lydia Walker, Harry Watts, Jessica Hine, Kay Whalley, Tahlellah Townsend, Aleksia Gjoka, Jesse Oshogwe, Daniel Vani, Rayaan Siddiqui, Joseph Petros.

Apologies if I have missed out anybody!!

Message from the Headteacher

Welcome to the Spring edition of the BGS magazine!

This is my last introduction to the BGS magazine and therefore my farewell to all our readers.

In last year's Spring edition, I wrote that most Covid restrictions in England were being removed, free Covid testing was ending and isolation rules were being dropped. Only about a dozen students were still isolating and we had just had our first 'post-covid' Spring Concert and House Showcase event.

The prospect of retirement encourages reflection on years gone by and, as we get older, time seems to speed up as we look back. Each term seems to fly by faster than the last. Covid has played further tricks with time so that this time last year seems much longer ago than it was. However, the anchors that hold time in place for me are all the extra-curricular activities that punctuate our progress through the annual life of the school.

As the first half term flew by after New Year we had House Drama and Dance, year 8 First Give and then at the half term holiday we re-established our annual ski trip by the PE department and our Business/Economics trip to New York. After the break, we held the inaugural Afro-Caribbean Society Gala (with alumni Tobi of Sidemen fame as guest speaker), House sport competitions, our Spring Concert - 'Out of this World' and, at the time of writing with a week left, we are about to have our final event of the House year, our House Showcase, at which the winning House for 22-23 will be announced.

Participating in extracurricular activities continues to bring out the very best in our students, celebrates our exceptional student leadership and exemplifies the three elements of our school ethos: intellect, empathy and courage.

So, as I look back over the years, I would like to formally thank every member of staff for your sustained commitment to our students in which you give of your time with remarkable generosity. You have been wonderful colleagues with which to work.

Parents/Carers - thank you for your support as governors, as members of the Parents' Association and as parent/carers working with us to support your children to achieve their potential. Thank you for entrusting your children to our care. And to students - thank you for giving so much back to the school through your extracurricular activities, in addition to your daily studies where you work so productively under the guidance of your teachers.

I feel very blessed to have enjoyed all these years with you all.

Finally, thank you to Miss Contini and her magazine team for editing this substantial publication. Long may it continue!

All best wishes for Easter and for Ramadan. Thank you all. Farewell.

Mr Elphick

GLASS HALF FULL: THE POWER OF OPTIMISM

AN INTERVIEW WITH OUR RETIRING HEADTEACHER - MR ELPHICK

As his last half term at BGS draws to an end, the staff and students here at Bexley Grammar School are preparing to bid farewell to a figure who has played a pivotal role in shaping the school. After being at BGS for 17 years, with 9 of them as headteacher, Mr Elphick is retiring, leaving behind a legacy of excellence, unwavering dedication and compassion. During his tenure as headteacher, Mr. Elphick has overseen a period of significant growth and transformation at the school, including transitioning BGS into a fully IB sixth form, dealing with Covid 19, as well as securing an 'Outstanding' Ofsted rating. Recently, we were given the opportunity to ask Mr Elphick some questions in person before he leaves, where we took a closer look at his tenure as headteacher, his impact on the school community, and the lessons that can be learned from his remarkable career.

Do you miss teaching English or do you enjoy your role as headteacher more?

I think I prefer the role of head - I think it's the best job in the world and potentially the worst job in the world when things are going wrong, but I love that buzz.

Did you always want to be a teacher?

No, I went to the states after completing my O-Levels (GCSE equivalents) for four years, and long story short, I couldn't get back into an English university for doing maths, or science or anything like that, but they would take me for English and Philosophy, so that's what I did because I wanted to study back in England.

After completing my course, I drifted into a PGCE year (the teacher training course) without much thought. I seemed to suit the job quite well and I didn't have a burning desire to do anything else, so here I am 35 years later!

Looking back on your career, what are some of your proudest accomplishments as headteacher?

Every year, the results, particularly since being fully IB. I know it's a bit of a sad thing, but I look at you guys waving your papers on GCSE day and IB day and I think it's fantastic. I oversaw the transition to becoming fully IB, so I'm really proud of that too - it looks easy from the outside, but I had some real problems with recruitment and things like that. I think keeping all the various house events too - there's a real pressure on schools to scrap things like house events and although I'm not directly involved, I am proud to have preserved the time and support for all the extra-curricular activities despite curriculum and financial constraints.

I suppose in terms of the physical space of the school, K1 and K10 was built under my watch and I'm really proud of having a theatre there.

The sixth form's always been an obsession of mine - it's a third of the school, and it's what makes this school different from so many others, there's a real buzz in the sixth form, particularly with the IB. So to have more space for the sixth form, where they can study and so on was a really proud moment for me too. I think I'm pretty proud of getting through Covid - I know individual people really suffered, but I think that as a school all together we made some really good decisions during that.

You said that one of your proudest achievements was how you dealt with Covid, but would you also say it was one of your biggest challenges?

It was a massive logistical challenge, but I have to say that bigger challenges for me were things like student tragedies - things like that have been really tough.

If you had to write a book about your teaching career, what would you title it?

I would probably say, since I've been talking about it a lot in assemblies 'Glass half full - the power of optimism' or 'Clean slate' and I like 'clean slate' because we used to write on slates at school so it's a bit of an educational nod, but also everyday, you can wipe away all the rubbish from yesterday and come out optimistic, knowing that it's a new day, new things will happen and not to dwell on things, that's really important.



What's your favourite school event or tradition that you'll always remember fondly?

I was at one the other night - the school concert. I think the House events, particularly house drama, music and dance really get to me because of how all the students come together and create. I love watching the concerts, school plays and the school musical - it blows my mind every time and can move me to tears.

Do you think, with the benefit of hindsight, there is anything you would have done differently as headteacher?

I think I've been fortunate to get most of the big decisions right in hindsight. I think I should have found more practical ways to thank staff more regularly for the amazing job they do.

In terms of the school building, I would have liked to have found the money to renovate the PE changing rooms and some of the toilet facilities around the school and as I talk to you, we are waiting to hear the outcome of our 3rd attempt to secure funding to fix a number of leaky roofs around the site. Oh, and air conditioning in the school hall. I really wanted to raise the money to do that - the school productions in the summer would be so much more comfortable!

What do you hope people remember about you as a headteacher?

I really believe in our slogan - 'developing compassionate leaders' - I hope they remember me as a compassionate headteacher who followed his values in all his dealings with people. During the headship training programme that you go through, one of the things they talk about are your core values, and they kept asking 'what are your core values?' And I would sit in meetings and lectures thinking : what has being headteacher got to do with my core values? But it does matter - they're shown in the ways that you run things and I think you've got to be strong enough to believe in what those are and to act on those things, so I hope people remember me as being a compassionate and empathetic leader.

What's the funniest excuse you've ever heard from a student for not doing their homework?

I had a student who came in with a half-chewed up bit of paper, who actually had a note in his planner from her parent saying 'Honestly, the dog ate his homework' and I believed him. That's the one that jumps into my head.

What do you hope your legacy will be, as you retire from your position as headteacher?

I've seen my role as a sort of caretaker position in which I have sought to protect what is special about BGS. I worked most of my tenure under an inherited 'Outstanding' judgement from way back in 2007 so, in a way, my legacy, at least in the short term, is an Ofsted vindication of our 15-year outstanding status with a renewed confidence that we are never complacent and that we know how to remain outstanding. A physical legacy is the K10 theatre and K1 for sixth form study.

What are you most looking forward to about retirement?

I don't have any set plans yet but reading more, listening to music, things I just don't get a chance to do. My wife is probably going to scuff all my plans - she's got a long list of DIYs for me to do. I've been taking up cycling recently - I used to cycle as a kid, but I've run since then, however I think I'm going to go back to cycling. I will travel more - travel in term time, I can take a term time holiday for the first time ever!

What kind of music will you be listening to?

A real mix! I'm a Bowie fan, I love Queen and then I just love a range of classical music. I'll probably be blasting some symphonies in the garden while I'm doing my wife's DIY work!

Do you think, with the benefit of hindsight, there is anything you would have done differently as headteacher?

I think I've been fortunate to get most of the big decisions right in hindsight. I think I should have found more practical ways to thank staff more regularly for the amazing job they do.

In terms of the school building, I would have liked to have found the money to renovate the PE changing rooms and some of the toilet facilities around the school and as I talk to you, we are waiting to hear the outcome of our 3rd attempt to secure funding to fix a number of leaky roofs around the site. Oh, and air conditioning in the school hall. I really wanted to raise the money to do that - the school productions in the summer would be so much more comfortable!

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What message would you like to leave with your colleagues and students as you retire from your role as headteacher?

Keep up the amazing work you do. Look for the good in people, stay optimistic, because you can get quite cynical in this job, sometimes it's easy to just look for the bad things when there are so many good things, and start each day with a clean slate as best you can.

I think I speak for everyone that you've had such a significant impact on the students around here. When I've heard students in the corridors talking about you leaving, they all say how they will miss you waving goodbye at the school gates.

That's really sweet. And that's why I do it - because I like it . That's the great thing about this job, you get to choose what you do. I think it's important, so I do it.



Do you have anything else you'd like to say?

I'll miss this place. I'll miss all the colleagues, I'll miss the students. I think students keep you young and keep you optimistic. I keep using the word optimistic, but I think it's because deep inside I'm a pessimist and I need to be kept optimistic, and everyday walking into school or seeing them leave through the gates I see students going 'Hi, Sir' and you just see what students are doing and you think, yeah, there's so much sadness in the news and in the world, but the future is you lot, and that keeps you going. And I worry a little bit about being stuck in the garden DIYing that I won't have that. I'll really miss that. It's the people you miss.



On behalf of everyone here at BGS, as you embark on this new chapter of your life, we wish you all the happiness and fulfilment that retirement can bring. Please know that you will be deeply missed, and your contributions to our school community will never be forgotten. Thank you!

House News

FINAL RESULTS
HOUSE YEAR 2022-23

Congratulations Wellman!



1ST WELLMAN

352 POINTS



2ND PROTHERO

328 POINTS



3RD JOHNSON

327 POINTS



4TH COLLINS

309 POINTS



5TH KIRKMAN

274 POINTS



6TH MABBS

270 POINTS

MRS SNELLING
HOUSE LEADER



Current affairs and issues

EARTHQUAKES IN TURKEY AND SYRIA

COULD THE EXTENT OF THIS TRAGEDY HAVE BEEN AVOIDED?



BY SCARLETT BARBER, YEAR 12

On February 6th 2023, an earthquake with a magnitude of 7.8 occurred in Southern Turkey near the northern border of Syria. Approximately nine hours later, another earthquake occurred roughly 95 km to the southwest, this time with a magnitude of 7.5 as well as multiple other aftershocks. This earthquake is said to be the “most devastating hit to Turkey in more than 20 years” and considering how earthquake-prone Turkey is, this shows the significance of the damage which occurred. It was also as strong as the earthquake recorded in 1939 which was the most powerful recorded earthquake in Turkey.

The earthquake was centred near Gaziantep in south-central Turkey which is also home to thousands of Syrian refugees as well as many humanitarian aid organisations. At the time of publication, over 3,400 people had been reported dead, with many more to follow. Sadly, it didn't stop there for the people of Turkey. On February 20th, a 6.4 magnitude earthquake hit southern Turkey killing 3 and injuring a further 213 people before another 5.6 magnitude earthquake hit southern Turkey again on February 27th, killing at least 1 person. As of March 1st, Turkey's Disaster and Emergency Management Authority (AFAD) reported more than 11,000 aftershocks have occurred since the earthquake and this figure is expected to rise.

Over 50,000 people have been killed as a result of this disaster and many, many more have been injured to varying degrees. 214,000 buildings have been destroyed or damaged, leaving people homeless. And a further 18 million people in the affected area are in urgent need of shelter, food and medical aid.

But why was this earthquake so disastrous for Turkey and what has been done to help the victims?

First, to understand why this earthquake was so disastrous for Turkey and Syria, we must first understand its geography. To put simply, Turkey is an earthquake hotspot. This is because most of it sits on the Anatolian tectonic plate - tectonic plates are segments of the earth's crust which are moved by convection currents in the mantle below it. For a better understanding, they are often compared to puzzle pieces which fit together, but the issue with this is that when the plates move, they can sometimes rub against each other (due to their shape and any faults) which creates a build-up of tension. When this tension has increased too much, it can cause the plates to slip past each other suddenly, creating an earthquake as a result. The plate that most of Turkey is located on - the Anatolian plate - is a small plate in the middle of 4 bigger plates; the Eurasian plate, the Aegean plate, the African plate and the Arabian plate. This earthquake occurred along the East Anatolian fault which is the boundary between the Anatolian plate and the Arabian Plate.



Other factors likely worked against Turkey in making the effects of the earthquake more disastrous. The initial earthquake happened at night, meaning a lot of people were asleep and therefore were left with little chance to escape their house. The winter cold also made it harder to survive for those trapped under the rubble. Furthermore, Southern Turkey and Northern Syria lack resistant infrastructure meaning buildings were helpless against the impact of the earthquake. The Turkish government reported that more than 6,000 buildings collapsed in the wake of the tremors.

Thousands of buildings were subject to what is known as a 'pancake collapse', which is where the bottom of the building collapses which caused the rest of the building to come down too. Buildings in these areas were also weakened by the prolonged civil war and neglected by the government. Soft story structures are large buildings which have multiple floors and an open plan on the bottom which can serve as space for parking, small businesses



or more homes. These buildings are therefore very common in many LICs and NEEs as they offer a solution to overcrowding in busy areas. Due to the structure of it - with weaker materials and less support - the bottom floors are often the weakest and unable to support the structure above it. This type of collapse traps people underneath the rubble and makes it much harder to save them.

In 1999, an earthquake with a magnitude of 7.6 hit Izmit and caused over 17,000 deaths and this was exacerbated by a statistic of nearly 90% of buildings being soft story buildings. This disaster pushed the government to enforce new regulations emphasising earthquake safety in buildings but due to corruption, many of these regulations were not enforced. Structures like this can be reinforced by materials such as steel and adding more support like extra columns etc. However this is unobtainable due to the huge price it could cost that the country simply cannot afford. Surprisingly, countries like the US also still have soft story buildings and yet they also cannot afford to reinforce them which shows just how expensive it really is. Another issue is the fact that contractors often cut corners and ignore building codes which results in unsafe buildings.

Another reason this earthquake has been so deadly is the fact that the affected area of Syria is so complicated. The earthquake has only exacerbated the complex humanitarian emergency already occurring in Syria and the people are already vulnerable - over 4.1 million people in Northwest Syria depend on humanitarian assistance and getting aid to them is difficult. This is because Northwest Syria - the area hit hardest by the earthquake - is not controlled only by one government, so aid has to be coordinated between the UN as well as the rest of the government. On February 12th, Martin Griffiths (the UN's top aid official) said "We have so far failed the people in north-west Syria. They rightly feel abandoned. Looking for international help that hasn't arrived." As of March 7th, 617 trucks loaded with aid has been provided to Northwest Syria, crossing through borders created by the UN. Despite this, hostility in the region has remained since the disaster, prompting accusations that "life saving" was being politicised.



As a result of this catastrophe, countries around the world have banded together in order to support humanitarian support for Turkey and Syria. The UK sent 76 search and rescue specialists with equipment and dogs as well as an emergency medical team. The US dispatched two 79 person search and rescue teams as well as nearly 100 firefighters, structural engineers and specially trained dogs. Italy sent a firefighting team from Pisa as well as using transport flights for health equipment and personnel. France also sent rescue workers and firefighters as well as providing a high capacity field hospital and 50,000 diphtheria and tetanus vaccines. Other countries such as Greece, Serbia, Germany, Czech Republic, Switzerland, South Africa, India, Israel and Pakistan have all also provided search and rescue teams in order to support efforts in finding victims stuck under rubble and debris.

An incredible £100 million has been raised so far for the victims of the earthquake through the Turkey-Syria Earthquake Appeal and this number continues to grow. If you wish to help, there are many charities and trusts that have been set up for donating money to the affected areas : this money helps buy supplies for victims as well as setting up aid points and helping the country build itself back up. Charities include White Helmets, Global Giving, Save the Children, CARE Türkiye, Project Hope, Doctors without borders and Syrian American Medical Society. These are just a few of the charities helping with earthquake relief in affected areas but there are many more out there. If you can't donate, simply educating yourself and others about the situation in order to provide awareness is also helpful. If anyone is affected by this event, there is also support available inside and outside of school. Doing whatever you can to help is appreciated.

AWARDS SEASON

A TRIUMPH FOR REPRESENTATION



BY JESSICA HINE, YEAR 12

Fortunately for the film and television community, 2023 has kicked off spectacularly with its already multiple award ceremonies, including the DGA, BAFTA, Annie, PGA, SAG, Film Independent Spirits, and the Oscars award ceremonies that have praised all those involved with creating cinematic masterpieces for the big screen. This article describes the highlights of the BAFTA event, as well as the more recent Oscars ceremony, which can be re-watched on BBC iPlayer and Sky channels.

The BAFTAS

On the 19th February 2023, the 76th BAFTA award ceremony was held at the Royal Festival Hall in London's Southbank centre - a night that honoured the best of 2022's national and foreign films. Spanning two hours, the ceremony was full of stunningly attired A-listers, heart warming speeches, musical interludes, and for the first time ever, announced the winners live on air rather than being pre recorded. TV personality Alison Hammond and swazi actor Richard E Grant hosted the BAFTAs, with Hammond detailing how she would "have a lot of fun bringing the glitz and glam of backstage to everyone watching at home", and Grant feeling "hugely privileged" after being given the amazing opportunity to take part in such a huge event: they presented in such a down to earth, enjoyable fashion that many describe the two work together as a "dream team".

Prior to the selection of the winners, members of the academy itself spent time deciding who to nominate for 25 different film-related categories, including best film, leading actor, supporting actor, special effects, hair and makeup, etcetera. The list of nominees for the EE Rising Star award was released on the 18th January, whilst the rest of the categories' nominees were released the next day. The highest accolade ever to be received at the BAFTAs is the Academy Fellowship award, given to those who have presented outstanding work and achievements in their film career. This year, Sandy Powell made history as the first costume designer to ever receive the award - with a portfolio spanning over three decades, Powell can be recognised for her costume design in *Cinderella* (2015), *Shutter Island* (2010), *Wolf of Wall Street* (2013), as well as many other famously admired films that have gained international attention. Previous winners of this award include auteurs Steven Spielberg, Stanley Kubrick, Alfred Hitchcock, as well as actor Sir Charles Chaplin, which in itself, presents just how highly respected the Fellowship award is.



Sandy Powell with her BAFTA award

The Best Film award was given to Malte Grunert, the producer of *All Quiet On The Western Front* (available to watch on Netflix), which received a total of 7 BAFTA awards for film not in the English language, director, adapted screenplay, original score, cinematography, and sound. The film received huge attention after displaying the harrowing reality of war from the perspective of the Germans rather than the Allies, which has allowed for the elimination of false ideas surrounding the brainwashed, tortured German soldiers. The film received a rating of 7.8/10 from IMDb, with the Oscar award displaying the importance of celebrating foreign films and filmmakers.



On the left, Malte Grunert with his BAFTA award. On the right, *All Quiet on the Western Front* (2022)

Although the Fellowship award is the most distinguished award to be received, the best leading actor award and of course, the best film award, may be more highly recognised and appreciated by the general public. This year, American actor Austin Butler won best leading actor for his role as Elvis Presley in the musical biopic *Elvis*, directed by Baz Luhrmann (available to watch on Amazon Prime). The nominees for this award included Brendan Fraser in *The Whale*, Colin Farrell in *The Banshees of Inisherin*, Daryl McCormack in *Good Luck to You*, Leo Grande, Paul Mescal in *Aftersun*, and Bill Nighy in *Living*, however Austin deservedly took first place after his incredible performance in both the acting and singing involved with honouring the "King of Rock & Roll".



Austin Butler and Emma Mackey with their BAFTA awards

Another award that deserves acknowledgement is the "EE rising star award", which is the only award voted by the public, recognising new talents in the acting industry, particularly young actors who have recently presented phenomenal ambition and vigour, and have captured the favour of the British public. The winner of the EE Rising Star award was French-British actor Emma Mackey, who was chosen for her first professional role as Maeve Wiley in the British comedy-drama TV series *Sex Education* (available on Netflix) with a third season that had been streamed by over 55 million viewers within one month of its release. Mackey received her award after only four years of professional acting, and is now admired for winning such a reputable award.

The Oscars

The Oscars, a night of bestowing international recognition and prestige - held at the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles on 13th March 2023, the 95th Oscars ceremony awarded a total of 24 different categories. The event was hosted by American TV host Jimmy Kimmel, who "parachuted" onto the stage as part of a Top Gun skit, and supplied a fair amount of humour slash digs at former Oscars events such as the Will Smith - Chris Rock controversy.

After only being a nominee for best leading actor at the BAFTAs, Brendan Fraser was delighted when he won the same category of award at the Oscars instead, specifically for his outstanding performance of his leading role in *The Whale*. After becoming absent from the screen for the most part of this decade, the release of *The Whale* allowed for Brendan to receive the international attention he deserves, leaving him emotional but forever grateful, surrounded by the same nominees he was in the company of at the BAFTAs.

The winner of the best leading actress award was Michelle Yeoh after her role as Evelyn Wang in the film *Everything Everywhere All At Once* (available to stream on Amazon Prime), which also won the awards for best picture, film editing, writing, and actor and actress in supporting roles. Michelle Yeoh is the first Asian-American to ever win an Oscar, taking great pride in representing the Asian community, and addressing the world that no matter the cultural background, anything can be achieved if worked hard enough for. Michelle rose to fame in the 1990s for her acting in a series of Hong Kong action films, however she can be more recently recognised for starring in many internationally acclaimed films such as *Crazy Rich Asians*, *Avatar: The Way Of Water*, *Shang-chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings*, *Last Christmas*, and many others.

Unfortunately, the Oscars, as well as a number of other award ceremonies, has had a past of being non-representational of races other than white - in 1939, Hattie McDaniel became the first black actor to win an Oscar, however was refused entry to the "whites only" after party, and was segregated during the ceremony by being put on a table at the back of the show. In 2016, the #OscarsSoWhite protest movement gained global attention after the Oscars was criticised for having yet again another set of all-white nominees, leading to the Academy announcing that they must increase the number of nominees that are women and people of colour by 2020.



Brendan Fraser with his Oscar award



Michelle Yeoh with her Oscar award

This movement has led to a rise in the inclusivity of the Oscars, allowing for people of any ethnic background, gender, sexual orientation, etc, to win the awards they so truly deserve. Award ceremonies such as the Oscars allow for everyone involved in the filmmaking process to receive well-earned recognition that increases their chances of a successful future in the film industry, where actors are more likely to get booked, and box office earnings are significantly expanded. However, most movie-enjoyers can agree that there is something incredibly satisfactory about seeing the films, and those involved with creating them, get praised for the spectacular ways they impact the lives of so many - after all, winning such a prestige award can take years of perseverance and knock backs to be finally achieved.

MATT HANCOCK

WHY ARE HIS LEAKED WHATSAPP CONVERSATIONS
SO PROBLEMATIC?



BY ALEKSIA GJOKA, YEAR 12

Beginning March, journalist Isabel Oakeshott leaked over 100,000 WhatsApp messages to The Daily Telegraph from the former health secretary, Matt Hancock. These included conversations between many high end officials, such as the then Prime Minister Boris Johnson, on how the pandemic should be dealt with in 2020 at the height of the COVID-19 quarantines.

Throughout the pandemic, schools were struggling on whether to open or not- introducing online learning in the meantime to be a plan B for any quarantine plans. Yet Hancock did not appreciate their efforts. On 10 May 2020, when the government was getting ready to open schools again, Sir Gavin Williamson messaged Mr Hancock asking to provide personal protective equipment in schools to further prevent any more disruptions to learning or closures. To this, he responds with, "All of them will [open] but some will just want to say they can't so they have an excuse to avoid having to teach, what joys!!!!": clear indication that Matt Hancock was becoming frustrated with the pandemic and school closures, therefore leading him to try to quicken the reopening of schools with force- even insulting teaching unions with offensive language due to their increasing concerns.

The next year, on February 16, 2021, Matt Hancock mocked those forced into quarantine hotels in a conversation with Simon Case. To the question, "how many people we locked up in hotels yesterday", from Mr Case, Matt Hancock responds: "None. But 149 chose to enter the country and are now in quarantine hotels due to their own free will!". The policy itself was very unpopular (and still currently is) due to the fact those stuck in the hotels felt burdened and as if locked in a prison from their lack of freedom to leave. This, however, was mocked by the two government officials, With Mr Case insinuating he finds the poor quality of the hotels and the struggle of living there amusing by messaging: "I just want to see some of the faces of people coming out of first class into a Premier Inn shoe box."

In an interview with the BBC radio 4 host, Nick Robinson, Isabel Oakeshott reveals she had broken an NDA (non-disclosure agreement) with the former health secretary- which was agreed upon in an attempt to prevent her from disclosing the messages while publishing Mr Hancock's book, *Pandemic Diaries*. Detailing why Mrs Oakeshott had published the messages to *The Daily Telegraph*, she states, "anyone that thinks I did this for money must be utterly insane", advocating that her intentions were to update the millions of people in the UK who were affected by the pandemic and show them the truth. Furthermore, the journalist in question also states she never confirmed with Matt Hancock that she was ready to publish the messages, letting him find out himself once the news became public. This led to an apparent argument with each other, where Matt Hancock was accused of threatening Isabel, which he refutes entirely. Overall, there has been controversy on the ethics of breaking the NDA due to increasing public inquiries on the actions of the government not just during the pandemic, but their overall façade; as well as the worrying idea that government activities may be too easily accessible and could endanger the UK.



Despite the breach of contract, most citizens are supportive of the leak in concern of Matt Hancock's mockery of his integral position in the government. Criticisms of Hancock are mainly the fact he seems to be "drunk on power" from his overwhelmingly ignorant state of mind: speaking of low paid workers such as teachers in a way that belittles them only further pushes them down a peg in society- especially with Mr. Hancock residing in such a high position, emphasising his words could be highly influential to whoever listening. This creates an incredibly dangerous stereotype of the lower class and further separates the British citizens, only creating further turmoil following the aftermath of COVID-19 and a rift between the different socio-economic classes.



A STUDY OF THE USES AND MISUSES OF CAPSAICIN.



BY KAY WHALLEY, YEAR 12

What is Capsaicin?

Capsaicin is a chemical compound that is most commonly found in chilli peppers. This substance is created as a defence mechanism for the chilli plant against predators who would try to eat it. It caused a burning sensation in the moist inner lining of organs and body cavities like the nose, mouth and lungs. Despite Capsaicin being created by chillis to defend themselves, we tend to consume capsaicin for recreational purposes.

You can find chilli oil and hot sauces in almost every shopping centre in the UK, you can even watch YouTubers undergo 'spice challenges' where they will eat peppers of increasing hotness. This market is so popular that new 'extreme' hot sauces and even genetically modified peppers like Pepper X are being created and released to the public.

Capsaicin however is also very useful as a general anaesthetic and in relieving pain. Researchers have also discovered that capsaicin may also be able to be developed into a way to beat cancer.

It can be used as a cream or balm to soothe and numb sports sprains and injuries especially in the form of 'deep heat' cream and heat patches which you may have seen in many pharmacies. Those with joint pain and arthritis can have stronger prescriptions of the compound to relieve their pain.

Capsaicin if used in the long term can reduce how much pain we are able to feel and can block inflammation of our muscles or joints. Due to this, capsaicin has been found to inhibit and kill human prostate cancer cells, causing tumours to remain at almost one fifth of the size of an untreated tumour.

Despite all of the benefits of using capsaicin, why is the normalised use of capsaicin a controversial topic?

The risks of Capsaicin

As we already know, capsaicin can cause a burning or stinging sensation in your mouth if you eat it. However, capsaicin can pose a much larger risk to our health if it is used improperly and excessively.

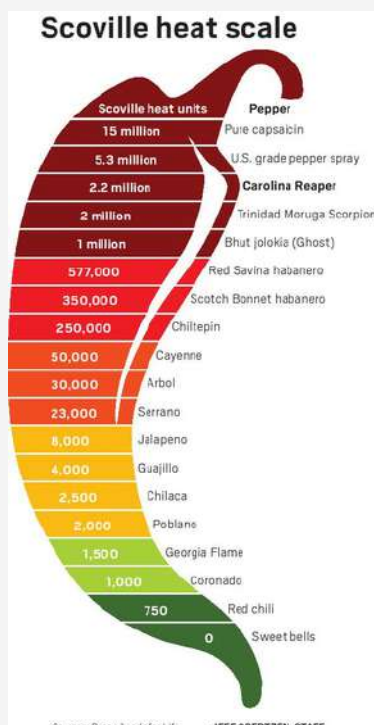
Consuming too much of the substance can produce effects like nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain and diarrhoea. You may have experienced some of these effects yourself if you have ever eaten an excessive amount of hot food in one sitting. Another effect you may have experienced yourself is when you touch your eye after handling a fresh chilli pepper. If capsaicin gets into your eyes, the same burning sensation will occur, irritating your eye and causing it to water. If too much capsaicin comes into contact with your eye it can cause temporary blindness as well as searing pain.

The best way to treat Capsaicin is to flush out the afflicted area with water as soon as possible and gently pat the area dry with clean hands. Carefully wash any clothes and items which have also come in contact with the substance to ensure that it does not spread to any other area of skin.

Pepper Spray

This effect is the desired result of the product 'pepper spray'. Pepper spray is a concentrated aerosol spray that contains the oil form of capsaicin - capsicum oil. Pepper spray can contain up to 5 million scovilles worth of capsaicin.

Scovilles - or Scoville heat units - are a measure of the number of times that capsaicin has to be diluted by sugar water to be rid of its 'heat'. In other words, it is the measurement of the 'spiciness' or 'hotness' of a pepper, the higher the scoville rating, the hotter the pepper or the substance is.



For reference, the scoville rating in pepper spray is over double the scoville rating of the famed Carolina reaper pepper which has been used in many extreme heat challenges worldwide. This means that pepper spray can cause serious damage to the eyes and even lungs of an individual who gets sprayed with it.

Pepper spray is most commonly used for personal defence, especially in America. It is widely available in small sprays and is used to stun and temporarily incapacitate an attacker, giving the victim time to escape the situation.

It is also used in much larger quantities by American law enforcement. Since the 1980s, US police have used pepper spray for crowd control, apprehending criminals and suppressing protests and public demonstrations. However, there are many cases of the use of pepper spray being exploited especially when it was used to control protests. In the 2020 BLM protests, pepper spray and tear gas were used so frequently that stations had to be set up for treating burns from exposure to the sprays.

Another instance of the abuse of pepper spray occurred in 2011 during the UC Davis incident. In this case, students were conducting a demonstration in front of the University of California in Davis. One officer doused a group of seated students with pepper spray after they refused to leave. His actions caused so much uproar that he was subsequently fired.

In response to the BLM protests in 2020, over eight states have passed laws to restrict similar protests from taking place. These laws act in a similar fashion to a law passed last year in the UK called the 'policing act', which officially came into effect in April 2022. In this act, much like the new laws and bills in America, protesters can be apprehended and protests can be dispersed for obstructing any access to public services or government buildings. Police in the UK are also authorised under this bill to take whatever action they deem necessary to disperse protesters. This is incredibly problematic for future protests as it means that in both America and the UK protesters are more vulnerable to violent dispersals from police, like dispersals using pepper spray.

The question that has been repeatedly asked is if Capsaicin should be weaponised through substances like pepper spray and if such products should be widely available. Many agree that the normalised use of pepper spray should be greatly reduced and safer alternatives should be more actively used.

What alternatives to pepper spray are available?

Pepper spray is currently illegal to use and possess in the UK but is still legal to use by the public and police in America.

In the UK, safer alternatives are available such as personal safety alarms and gel dye sprays to mark attackers for later identification. These alarms can make an ear-piercing 130 decibel noise for up to an hour when it is triggered, sending an alert to surrounding people who could help.

HAS MODERN FEMINISM CREATED ANDREW TATE?

BY TAHLELLAH TOWNSEND, YEAR 12

I WOULD LIKE TO PREFACE THIS ARTICLE WITH A TRIGGER WARNING AS SENSITIVE TOPICS REGARDING GENDER IDENTITY, MISOGYNY, MASCULINITY AND HATE SPEECH, WILL BE EXPLORED. FURTHERMORE, I DO NOT ENDORSE OR PROMOTE ANY HATEFUL STATEMENTS MADE BY ANYONE QUOTED IN THIS ARTICLE.

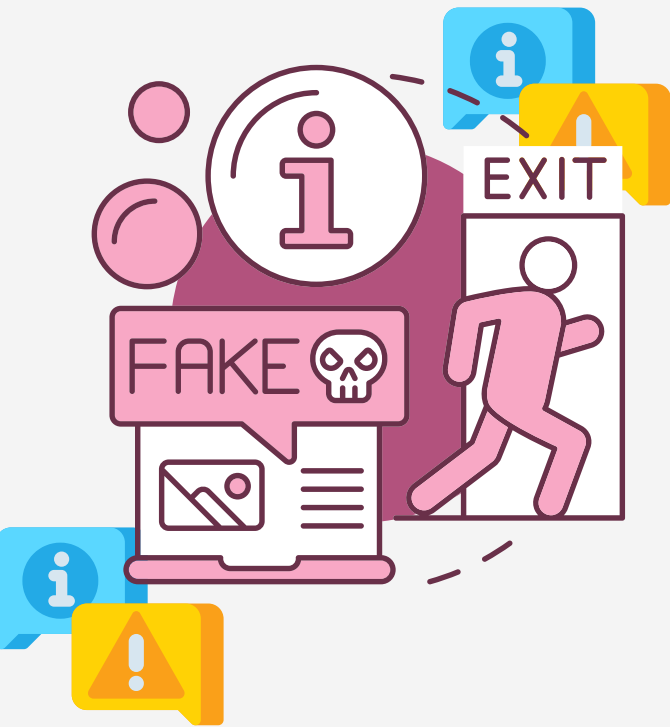


The world, for the better part of a year, has been fascinated with one man, Andrew Tate. Podcasts, news channels, TV shows and social media have been bombarded by his presence. Thirty-six year old, British-American kickboxer Emory Andrew Tate III has risen in popularity for his misogynistic, homophobic, xenophobic and racist views. His opinions and 'teachings' have found his place among incel and woman-hating spaces. He and Tommy Robinson, British far-right Islamophobe, have spent a significant amount of time together sharing their ideas and sympathizing with one another. Robinson described Tate as a 'A voice against the Matrix'. In turn, Tate returned this praise in a later interview saying, 'If you look at Tommy Robinson, he's doing his very best to protect England from Islamification'. I could continue to rant and rave about all the outlandish claims he has made throughout his career, as it approaches its very much timely demise following his arrest in Romania. But that isn't my job as a writer. My job isn't to report on the abundance of radical claims that he has put forward because any Google search or scroll through TikTok or Twitter will yield that gratification. My job is to ask why. To question the possibility of one person possessing such an incredulous, unfathomable amount of hatred and anger for the female experience, an experience with which he will never be privy to. Why has one person spearheaded and become the mouthpiece of disenfranchised young men, deprived of their right to be themselves under a patriarchal system? Who or what is to blame for the creation of such a spiteful man who proudly adorns the 'King of Toxic Masculinity' tiara. Is modern feminism to blame? Or is it all just a show?



How is it that some like Andrew Tate can rise to popularity in a time where the fight for diversity, inclusion, equality, equity and acceptance across all areas of life are being navigated with more care and respect than anytime in history. Generation Z (Gen Z) which will pass on the baton to Generation Alpha (Gen Alpha) are actively advocating for gender equality, racial equality, trans rights, speaking out against mental health stigmas and redefining what it means to be open-minded and sympathetic to others' situations. However, in all Gen Z's success, how has Tate's hate speech penetrated the barrier of an unstoppable young force. How have his outdated patriarchal, male, while supremacist views gotten to the young impressionable men of Gen Z and resonated with the directionless 'masculine' millennial men, for them to reinforce it? While Gen Z has benefited from creating movements via social media to combat damage done by previous generations, social media has also opened the door for any speech to come through for anyone to access. Many people may be discrediting Tate's content by flooding it with messages to counter his folly, however in counteracting his nonsense, he also gained worldwide viewership and exposure. Algorithms that tailor your social media feed, see his content rise in popularity, it picks it up and transports it to millions and millions of Popular and Trending Now pages of their social media.

Reactive content is then made from his content further promoting Tate's content (irrespective of response videos condemning him or not) and the cycle continues; making him one of the most talked about men of 2022. Gen Z, though strong and outspoken 11-26 year olds, are also still quite impressionable sometimes in some cases lack of real world experience or exposure to childhood trauma. Therefore, this increases the possibility of our more vulnerable young men and women latching onto Tate's 'teachings'.

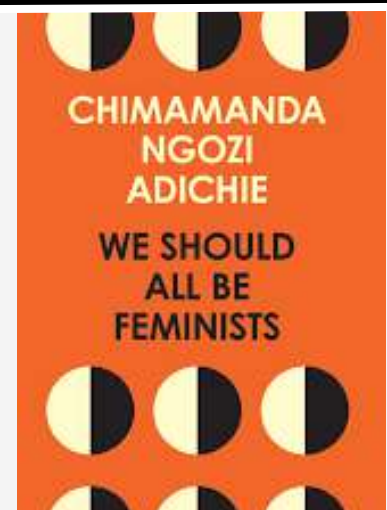


I'm sure you might be thinking, 'Wait, why are women wrapped up in this too?'. Well, when I first encountered Andrew Tate's horrendous remarks on how "The masculine perspective is [that] you have to understand that life is war. It's a war for the female you want. It's a war for the car you want..." or "If you're a man who doesn't view life as war is going to lose...", aside from the fact that he thinks using money to buy a car and courting a woman is the same 'fight', I thought well I'm glad this has nothing to do with me. But upon further reflection, I realised that women also are confronted with radical views of what it means to be feminine. Women also face misinformation on what it means to be feminists. Men that follow Tate, like to use 'modern feminism' as a calling card for why they must uphold patriarchal values and masculinity. Their definition of modern feminism is female supremacy, to do away with all man-made items, burn the bras and to use the #MeToo movement to eradicate all men whether or not they are guilty. Therefore, we, as men, must protect and assert our masculine dominance over women so as to avoid a dysfunctional society!

Maybe we need to look more deeply into what 'modern feminism' may mean to many women; starting with my own personal experience and relationship with the word as a young woman coming from Jamaica. I took sociology as part of a CAPE level (equivalent to A-level) course for one year before moving to London, and in that course, we very briefly covered feminism. However, I managed to bring up Feminism in class discussions and other theories like Functionalism and Symbolic Interactionism, to which my teacher gave me the title 'Feminist of the Class'. I reacted defensively claiming that I'm not a feminist but as a young woman I was curious and concerned. Where I come from, calling someone a feminist is the same as insulting their mother; it's just something you don't do or wear proudly. Similarly author Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, writes in her book, *We Should All Be Feminists* (2014), that feminism was 'un-African' as she read western feminist teachings. When she called herself 'A Happy African Feminist', a 'dear friend' told her 'that calling myself a feminist meant that I hated men'. And this is the connotation that feminism carries, that I have been faced with and forced to confront.



Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie



FEMINISM IN 1960'S AMERICA?

ANGELA DAVIS



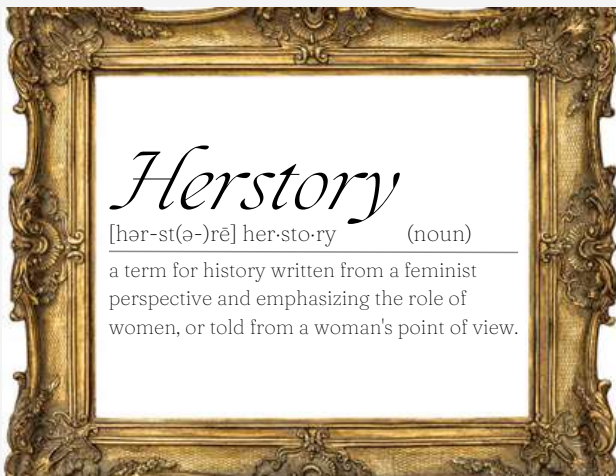
"I rarely talk about feminism in the singular. I talk about feminisms. And, even when I myself refused to identify with feminism, I realised that it was a certain kind of feminism... It was a feminism of those women who weren't really concerned with equality for all women..."

So what is feminism? While everyone's definition is different and based on their own experiences, we agree that feminism is not female supremacy, not a weapon, not strictly for women, not limited to sex or gender expression; in the UK, US and Asia, it was the Women's Liberation Movement/Women's Rights Movement. It is equality, but maybe not for all?

Feminism doesn't exactly have a squeaky clean historical record. It was American white women who in the 1960's/1970's, led the second wave feminist movement and intentionally excluded black women and ignored the experiences of black women and all the "-ism we faced in society". Black Feminism can be traced back as early as the 1830's, yet it wasn't widely put on display and celebrated as the same momentous occasion as white women marching in the streets for their equality, so no feminism wasn't all that it's cracked up to be as a black woman or any woman of colour for that matter

Now, let's look back at Andrew Tate with 1960's feminism in mind. Tate makes horrendous statements about how "You can't be responsible for something that doesn't listen to you. You can't be responsible for a dog that doesn't obey you, or a child if it doesn't obey you or a woman that doesn't obey you" and "Women belong to men". Given the sudden rise in feminism in the 1960's, these quotes sound like combative statements from an emasculated man trying to defend his 'position in society'; viewing himself as the superior, masculine provider coming to swoop in and rescue the dainty damsel in distress. It's more understandable for a man to feel threatened in the 60's and become a defensive, bumbling mess.

FEMINISM VS. MODERN FEMINISM?



So... modern feminism, what's the difference? Many men and women today think that it's the same man-hating, bra-burning, white-washed, female-only society that is being promoted. While the white-washing of the feminist movement has been true in the past, modern feminism is definitely not the same. I don't doubt that some women still hold this view, but modern feminism is on the journey of inclusivity for all races and sexes and gender expressions. It is actively combating the erasure of **Herstory**. It is demolishing outdated patriarchal values that were written into our culture for generations and freeing people from the shackles of toxic masculinity providing a space for people to be fluid in their gender expression.

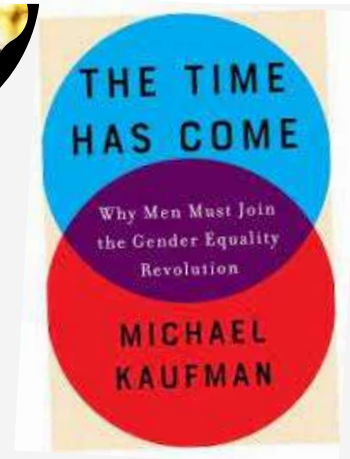
MEN & FEMINISM?

Many people might raise an eyebrow to how feminism helps men. Isn't female kind of in the name? The patriarchy was made by heterosexual men for heterosexual men which puts a strain on women to conform with what a man's standard of a woman is. Also, we can't forget that the patriarchy also puts everyone in a binary of stereotypical characteristics and behaviour that either a woman or a man must have. I can only go so far in relaying the male experience within modern feminism. I'm not a man and would not be able to properly capture the restrictions and anger that men carry; it wouldn't be a fair depiction. However, Micheal Kauffman, Canadian author, theorist and educator involved in the promotion of gender equality in men and boys, can.

His book, *The Time Has Come: Why Men Must Join the Gender Equality Revolution*, explores the importance of having men educated under a feminist society and taking a stand for gender equality. Some things he mentions include re-educating young boys and men so that society (men, women, non-binary people and children) may benefit. In 2019, Kauffman took to Twitter in response to SaftyChat's question of the transformation of manhood and ending binary definitions of manhood. He said "The ways we construct men's power at a personal level creates expectations that are impossible for men/boys to attain. Some men compensate by using physical/emo/sexual". In a subsequent question following the same thread, he answers the question of how men will benefit from gender equality under a feminist society. He says, "Men benefit from ditching patriarchal ideas of what a "real man" should do and be. We benefit by rejecting homophobia & transphobia & fear of other men. We benefit by embracing equality".



Micheal Kauffman



PHUMZILE
MLAMBO-NGCUKA



"For too long the struggle for the rights of women and girls was seen as women's business. Of course, it's equally men's business and stops being such a struggle when it's seen that way. This reframing gives us a chance to understand violence against women as deeply toxic for us all."

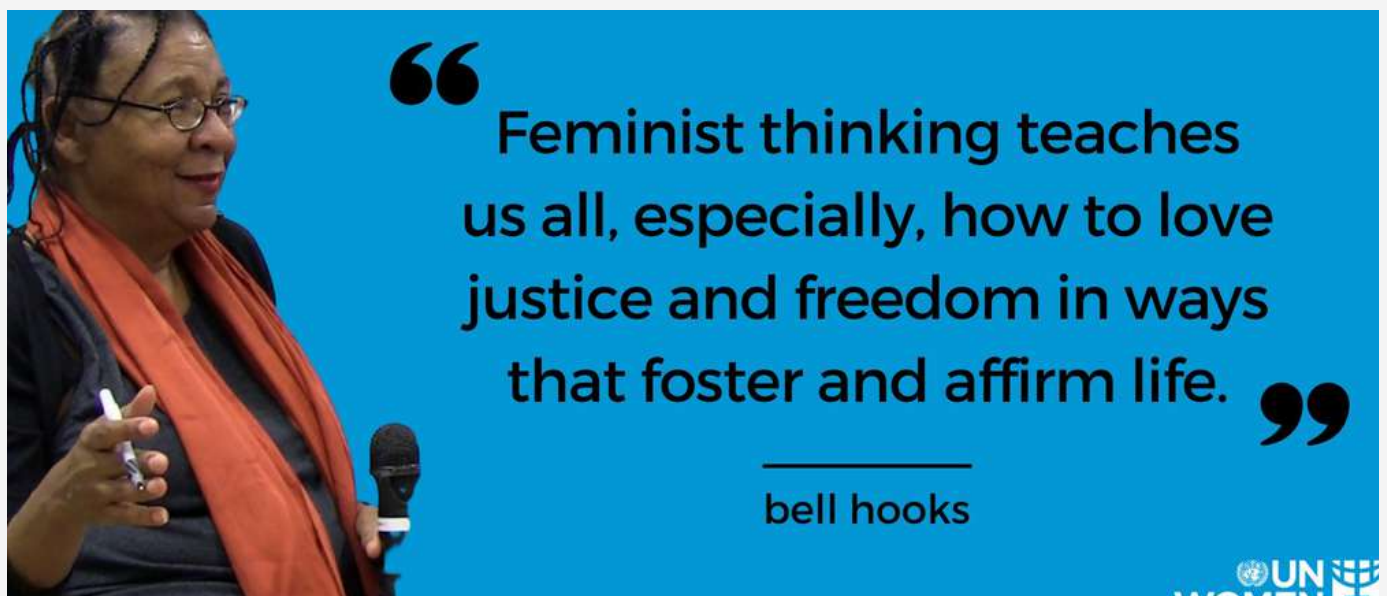
UN Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN Women.

Now, I ask you the biggest question, 'Did modern feminism create Andrew Tate?' In my opinion, it is a combination of his overwhelming misconceptions of what modern feminism is and who it helps/affect that creates such a character, as well as his combative nature and fighter showmanship that he gets from boxing, makes him so eager to push out liberal, leftist views to garner attention.

"So yes, I do think that modern feminism created Andrew Tate, in that his desire to drum up a character that rejects, what should be considered, a mainstream viewpoint to gain attention. Yes, the pressure of equal rights for everyone made a power-hungry, attention seeking young man with a platform. Yes, modern feminism has made a man so emasculated and fragile that he turns against all reason. So that's why men are such a threat to society." Is what I might say if I were a radical feminist, believing that women and only women are the most important parts of society and forgetting about other people (men, women and non-binary people) that make differences in society, but are also held back by patriarchal values and gender roles.

However radical and modern feminism are not the same thing. It is outlandish views and claims that are broadcasted under the pretence of modern feminism that make the most noise and as my grandmother would say, *'Empty barrels make the most noise'*. This broadcasting will aid in the misinterpretation and miseducation of young men contributing to a feeling of isolation which can brew and turn into anger and hatred. Therefore, men like Andrew Tate can find their voice in the sea of young men with that same hatred and spring into a leadership role using his sordid fame from his social media platforms and meagre following from his boxing career.

Modern feminism by itself isn't to blame for Andrew Tate's views, in my opinion. What is to blame is his misunderstanding of his place in the world under society moving away from 'traditional' values that he was raised in. This might cause great discomfort for him, so much so that he doubles down forcing him to go to extremes. It is possible that some of the views he has expressed may not be what he really feels, but are a product of a few claims he can't walk back from forcing him into a particular lifestyle. I'm not sympathising with him but exploring possibilities for why a human being seems to hold so much hatred. Finally, given everything I've written and all the avenues I've explored, I ask you readers, did modern feminism create Andrew Tate or was it all the misconceptions of the nature of modern feminism that did?



THE CASEY REPORT

A DAMNING REVIEW OF THE MET POLICE



BY SOPHIE SPIGNO, YEAR 12

An official report carried out by Louise Casey has concluded that the MET police are institutionally racist, sexist and homophobic. This damning report was requested following the horrific abduction, rape and murder of Sarah Everard by the police officer Wayne Couzens. The 363 page report details the institutional failings within the police system; revealing disturbing experiences suffered by women, and marginalised groups in the force. It also focuses on the lack of confidence the public has in the police force stating that just 50% of the public express confidence in the police, even before revelations about the force's worst recent scandals.

The diagnosis of institutional racism within the police system is not a new one; in fact, following the Stephen Lawrence case, the same label was given. Stephen Lawrence was an 18 year old, stabbed to death by a group of racists in April of 1993. Upon the arrival of the police following his stabbing, Lawrence was still alive, however the police officers refrained from touching or performing any medical assistance or CPR on him and quizzed his friend Brooks and made assumptions that he and Lawrence had gotten into a fight, allowing the attackers to flee. Various malpractices took place within this case, from allowing the suspects to leave to pronouncing them innocent following their identification in a lineup by Brooks. A report was issued following the failure of this case by Macpherson, which stated that the charging of the suspects was "marred by a combination of professional incompetence, institutional racism, and a failure of leadership". This resulted in various actions being implemented by the Met Police, which many considered superficial. For example, a 2.4% increase in the number of BAME officers in the last decade) and imposing a 'zero tolerance' stance on racism within the system.



However, despite this revelation, it is evident that institutional racism is still very much prevalent in the police force. The definition of institutional racism is "the collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviours which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping which disadvantage minority ethnic people." Macpherson, W. The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry, 1999. Thus, there is embedded racism within the police force, which means that black and ethnic minority groups receive inadequate protection and are disproportionately suspected. Racial stereotyping has proven to be prominent within the police force. For example, when considering stop and search and use of force, it was excessive against black people. Between April 2018 and March 2019, for every 4 white people stopped out of 1000, 38 black people were stopped, according to government data.

Furthermore, there is a bullying culture within the police force that involves cruel and harmful initiations as well as disturbing acts; for example, a Muslim officer was targeted by someone putting bacon in his shoes, and a female officer was shown graphic sexual imagery during her break whilst male officers laughed. This bullying culture leads to junior officers being too scared to confront and report misconduct by their superiors. Other abuses of power within the police force have included women being forced to eat until they are sick, being urinated on in the showers, and even sexual assault. The Casey report further revealed troubling stories of sexual assaults that were typically concealed or invalidated; it also revealed the shocking statistics that 12% of women in the Met said they had been harassed or attacked at work, with one-third experiencing sexism.

Following the horrific murder of Sarah Everard, attention has been brought to the institutional sexism within the police force. Extreme problems in the police system enabled Sarah Everard's killer, Wayne Couzens, to become a police officer; the widespread tolerance of misogyny within the force meant that various misogynistic warning signs committed by Couzens were not addressed. It was revealed that months before the murder of Everard, Couzens had shared offensive material on a WhatsApp group chat that included three police officers. Couzens had been accused of indecent exposure as early as 2015, as well as incidents of this nature days before Everard was killed. Not only this, Couzens was troublingly nicknamed "the rapist" by his male co-workers and was known for making his female co-workers uncomfortable. Couzens was not given enhanced vetting when he joined the Met in February of 2020; vetting includes background checks, credit reference checks, social media checks, and more. However, it is thought that due to the Paris terror attacks of 2017, the process of recruitment was hurried as there was a rush to get more officers into the force.

Unfortunately, incidents like this have not been isolated. David Carrick was found guilty of a series of rapes while a Met officer. Carrick admitted to 85 serious offences during his 17-year assault on women. Carrick abused his position of power for years in his belief that he was untouchable. Carrick's atrocities were revealed after one of his victims reported the attack in October of 2021, almost immediately after Couzens' arrest.

Carrick is another example of police failings in that he esteemed such a high position of power despite the fact that during his position a series of women had made complaints against him. Prior to the exposure of Carrick's offences, the police had been made aware of his predatory nature. Carrick had a history of numerous reports of domestic abuse. Carrick was allowed to join the Met Police force the year after it had investigated him for harassing his former partner, and following this, he was not re-vetted for 16 years, during which he passed the vetting process again. The failure to identify and address the numerous warning signs associated with Carrick not only ensured he kept his position but also enabled him to abuse it. This culture of ignoring and permitting dangerous people to serve as officers puts the public in danger and perpetuates abuse of power within the police force.

There is a fundamental problem with the vetting process of the Metropolitan Police Department, and it has continuously allowed for the wrong people to assume positions of power. A watchdog carried out a report in which it stated that "domestic abusers, alleged rapists, and men who posed a risk to the public had been allowed to join forces, and to transfer between them even when there was a history of complaints and misconduct allegations."

The report, alongside various scandals within the Met, has led to an undoubtedly low level of confidence in the police among the public. Over the last two years, public confidence in the police has been facing a downward trend; however, it is currently at an all-time low. The murder of Sarah Everard by Wayne Couzens, the serial rapes of David Carrick, the Stephen Port murders - a former Met police officer who was found guilty of multiple rapes - and the murder of four men in 2015 have all led to plummeting police confidence. This, along with the surge of the Black Lives Matter movement, has caused public confidence in the police to fall from 62% in 2017 to 55% in 2020, which is undoubtedly most likely even lower now.

The responses of the Met Police have been those of disgust and remorse for such findings; however, the Met Police chief admits to being embarrassed by the report but will not accept the terms "institutionally racist, sexist, and homophobic." Sir Mark Rowley accepts Casey's findings within the report; he admits to there being racist, sexist, and homophobic individuals within the force which he states is "very worrying." However, these individuals are being investigated and removed. He argues that the terms "institutionally racist, homophobic, and sexist" are ambiguous and political and could lead to the public believing most officers are racist, homophobic, and sexist, which is not the case. Casey suggests that the police force needs a complete "overhaul", Rishi Sunak has given his words on the concern, stating that across London and the country changes are being made on guidance for police forces and the vetting of new officers. He also stated that forces are checking all officers again against the police database, which is being overseen by an independent inspector.

The proposed reforms include aiming to increase public confidence, more recruitment of minority groups both in terms of BAME groups and LGBT+ individuals, the identification and removal of corrupt officers, more effective vetting procedures, support for whistleblowers, and an increase in morale. In January 2023, Commissioner Sir Mark Rowley published his "Turnaround Plan," which aims to increase trust, reduce crime, and bring about higher standards. These expectations aim to be achieved by establishing a new anti-corruption and abuse command; increasing the ability to identify corruption, abuse, and misconduct in the met through data and evidence-based delivery; strengthening neighbourhood policing - more local neighbourhood officers; doing more work to protect children; and targeting men who perpetuate violence against women and girls.

The conclusion of the report is that the marginalisation of certain groups is perpetuated and abused by the police, and that the very institution designed to protect the public is corrupt and flawed. The revelation of these atrocities is a tragic reminder of the injustices within society; however, the proposed reforms do give some hope for a more trustworthy and honest police force.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 2023

BY LYDIA WALKER , YEAR 12

International Women's Day is a globally celebrated day on 8th March to commemorate the achievements of women. It also marks a call to action for accelerating gender equality, and sees significant rallies for this cause. This year, the campaign theme is #EmbraceEquity - to embrace equity means to believe, value, and seek out difference as a necessary and positive element of life. To embrace equity means to understand the journey required to achieve women's equality. In order to honour International Women's Day 2023, we have decided to ask some female members of staff what International Women's Day means to them, and to nominate a woman who inspires them. Thank you very much to all the teachers that participated!

Ms Orchard:

What does International Women's Day mean to you?

"Whenever I think of International Women's Day, I am reminded of the celebrations I saw in my town while I lived in Spain. In England we're not very big on National or International Days, so growing up in the UK, I never saw or heard much fuss made of IWD when I was younger. But while I lived in Spain, IWD was, and continues to be, a big event. Banners around town, talks from prominent female speakers, marches, time and space given to women's rights and issues... it was enlightening to see such thought and importance given to the day. Now, I ensure I take some time on International Women's Day to think of the important women in my life. I think of family, of friends, of colleagues, of role models and take a moment to appreciate them and the struggles they have overcome."

Which woman inspires you and why?

"It is hard to choose just one, but in the spirit of International Women's Day, I am deliberately choosing a role model from abroad: Dolores Huerta. Born to a Mexican immigrant family in New Mexico in 1930, Dolores Huerta had very little as she was growing up. She experienced marginalisation at school due to her ethnicity and was driven by this to go to College to become a teacher. After some time teaching, she left her job and began a crusade to tackle economic injustice, stating "I couldn't tolerate seeing kids come to class hungry and needing shoes. I thought I could do more by organizing farm workers than by trying to teach their hungry children."

Huerta became a prominent social activist in her community, using her bilingualism to her advantage. She co-founded the now United Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee. She oversaw active negotiations with big businesses and ensured that challenges facing specifically migrant women workers were heard and understood. She has spent three decades fighting for safer working conditions for farm workers - particularly the harmful effects of pesticides on pregnant women.



For her causes, she has been arrested and suffered extreme police brutality during peaceful protests. She travelled across the USA to encourage Latina women to run for office and founded a charity foundation in her name to encourage civic engagement and develop grassroots leaders. She has received many awards and honours and continues to work tirelessly even today, aged 89, to promote her causes and fight for equality.”



Miss Rendle

What does International Women’s Day mean to you?

“To me, International Women's Day represents a global call to action for the advancement of gender equality and the recognition of the invaluable contributions that women make to society. On this day, we celebrate the achievements of women past and present, and recommit ourselves to creating a world where all individuals, regardless of gender, are able to live and thrive without discrimination or prejudice. It inspires me to work towards a world in which every woman has the opportunity to realise her dreams and reach her full potential, and also reminds me of the privileges I have that are not shared by so many women internationally.”

Which woman inspires you and why?

Kate Abdo inspires me for many reasons. As a sports journalist, she has broken through gender barriers in a traditionally male-dominated industry and has established herself as a respected and knowledgeable commentator, working for different networks such as Sky Sports, CNN, and Fox Sports. She is fluent in multiple languages, including French, Spanish, and German, as well as English, which has allowed her to cover events around the world, including the Football World Cup and the Olympics. She has also hosted three Ballon d’Or ceremonies.



Furthermore, Kate is a vocal advocate for women's sports and gender equality, using her platform to raise awareness and promote diversity and inclusion. Her hard work, dedication, and commitment to excellence make her an excellent role model.



Miss Aggrey

What does International Women's Day mean to you?

"To me it means celebrating and recognising the achievements of women around the world"

Which woman inspires you and why?

"Taraji Penda Henson. She is an extremely successful actress and singer. She founded the Boris Lawrence Henson Foundation, named in honour of her father who served in the Vietnam War. The foundation is working to bring more mental health support to schools in Black communities as well as to increase the number of Black therapists. She is Oscar nominated and my favourite film of hers is 'Hidden Figures'"



Miss Mani

What does International Women's Day mean to you?

"For me, International women's day is a day to celebrate us and our contributions towards society."

Which woman inspires you and why?

"One of my role models is a Australian gymnast/fitness model called Morgan Rose Moroney. I don't know her personally, but I follow her on social media and she is someone I look up to - despite her being younger than me!"

Morgan Rose Moroney is a fitness model and gymnast from Australia. She's become famous after uploading videos of her acrobatics skills and tricks online. From here on, Morgan's success began growing rapidly, as she gained sponsorship with high-profile sports agencies to grow her name even further.

Morgan's beginnings in gymnastics date back to when she was a child. Her parents noticed her love for tumbling in her garden, and soon signed her up at a local gymnastics centre. Throughout the years, Morgan's passion for gymnastics grew even further as she became a National gymnastics medalist in Australia. Later on, she expanded her career to become a calisthenic expert and fitness model. Morgan Rose Moroney has since become a name familiar to many sports and fitness enthusiasts around the world.



Mrs Spencer

What does International Women's Day mean to you?

It is an important opportunity to think about the valuable contributions from women around the world in all aspects of life - eg politics, science, the Arts, business - and raise the profile of the important examples and leadership provided by women in the world today.

Which woman inspires you and why?

For this, I am going to offer two individuals - in true History teacher style, both are figures from the past. The first is Queen Elizabeth II - for her commitment to her role and service to her people through the span of 70 years. As a young woman, she came to the throne in an age where all leadership roles were filled by men. Not to be cowed by this, she worked hard & remained true to her own values throughout her reign. She was at ease in engaging with people from all walks of life - greeting visiting dignitaries and members of the public alike with her renowned smile, she always remained abreast of the issues facing the country, and was an impartial 'sounding board' to the 12 male (and 3 female) Prime Ministers during her time as Queen.



My second figure is drawn from the world of espionage in WW2 - Noor Inayat Khan - who may be familiar to those in Year 7 from my Remembrance Assembly. Noor was of Indian descent - born in Russia in 1914, but spent her childhood in Paris. In 1940, as Hitler's regime expanded across Europe, Noor volunteered to serve in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force in Britain, even though she was a pacifist. Her fluency in French led her to be selected to train as a secret agent for SOE (Special Operations Executive), and Noor was dropped into enemy-occupied France in 1942 as a radio operator, to send coded messages back to the UK. This was a most dangerous role, especially for a woman in occupied territory, as the German authorities were monitoring and tracking down those transmitting messages. Noor was captured after 4 months in France - betrayed for a reward offered on enemy agents.

My high regard for Noor stems from her courage in volunteering for such a dangerous role in wartime - to what would most definitely have been regarded as a 'man's role'. But also for her high moral standards - she refused to reveal any information about other secret agents or the spy network, despite being brutally tortured. Indeed, during her training she had refused to tell lies, seeing this as against her moral values. She remained steadfast in these values through her time in prison, even trying to help others where she could. She believed in the cause of peace, and sacrificed her life to try to make a difference to bring the war to an end.



Ms Adeaga

What does International Women's Day mean to you?

International Women's Day is a powerful celebration of women who have inspired others in varying ways. In many cases, such women have defied social expectations and fought against narratives intended to keep their/our voices muffled. It is important to celebrate this day as it is a day where women's voices are again amplified.

Which woman inspires you and why?

"I started reading Buchi Emecheta's autobiography 'Head Above Water', whilst working full time and studying for a Masters! I thought I had a really hard challenge, until reading about the many barriers Emecheta had to overcome in order to keep her 'head above water'. Amongst working multiple jobs to keep herself afloat, she manages to pursue her dream of becoming an acclaimed writer and even completes a degree 'on the side' (all as a single parent of five children)! All of these achievements are no small feat, especially being in the UK during a time that was increasingly racially hostile towards black people.

It was hard not to connect with her story as she grappled with racism and discrimination with such determination and hope. As someone of Nigerian origin, she straddles the lines between Nigerian customs and traditions and assimilation into her new British homeland; a struggle many people from the diaspora will share even up until today. These are just some of the reasons why I am so inspired by her!"



Miss Thurlow

What does International Women's Day mean to you?

International women's day is really important to highlight and celebrate women's achievements, Inspiring young women that they can achieve anything they set their heart and mind to.

Which woman inspires you and why?

Ellen MacArthur became a successful solo long-distance sailor - one of the most challenging and gruelling endurance sports long dominated by men.

In 2001, Ellen single-handedly sailed around the globe in 94 days, without stopping at 24 years old. She had to arrange her own funding and enter a race which many men told her she was not capable of. Overcame inequality to compete in the same event alongside these men and succeeded. She came 2nd in the race that many thought she was not even capable of entering.

Her resilience, determination and desire to succeed in such challenging environments as crossing oceans was inspirational. On 7 February 2005 she broke the world record for the fastest solo circumnavigation of the globe. Since her personal sailing success, she has focussed on improving the quality of life of young people by setting up a charity specifically to support those living through cancer. The Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust inspires young people aged 8-24 to believe in a brighter future living through and beyond cancer.



Miss Contini

What does International Women's Day mean to you?

IWD for me is about reflecting on the fact that despite the progress made towards a more gender equal world, the road is still very long and progress is not linear - there have been major setbacks all around the world, including in "Western" countries.

Which woman inspires you and why?

This is a very difficult question, as there are so many women who are such a source of inspiration! One of my favourite examples is Josephine Baker - original name Freda Josephine McDonald, (born June 3, 1906, St. Louis, Missouri, U.S.—died April 12, 1975, Paris, France); she was an American-born French dancer and singer who symbolised the beauty and vitality of Black American culture and took Paris by storm in the 1920s - she was as big as Beyoncé is nowadays!

She grew up in poverty and missed out on her education as from the ages of 8 and 10 she was working to support her family. Growing up, she developed a taste for the flamboyant which later made her famous. She became a dancer as an adolescent, and joined a dance troupe, rising to fame in the New York scene. Stung by racial discrimination in Jim Crow's America, in 1925, she moved to Paris and quickly rose to fame there too. She sang professionally for the first time in 1930, made her screen debut as a singer four years later in Zouzou, and made several more films before WW2 curtailed her career.



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Josephine Baker (right) pictured in her military uniform as a member of the Fighting French Women's Corps in North Africa.

But my favourite thing about her, is that during the war and the German occupation of France she worked as a spy to help the French Resistance against the Nazis! She used her fame as cover: Baker started her espionage career by attending diplomatic parties at the Italian and Japanese embassies and gathering intelligence about the Axis powers possibly joining the war. Showing no fear of getting caught, she wrote notes of what she overheard on the palms of her hand and on her arms under her sleeves.

Even after German forces occupied France, she continued to perform, sang to soldiers on the warfront over the radio and comforted refugees in homeless shelters. When the Germans closed in on Paris in June 1940, she was strongly recommended to leave, so she moved in a chateau 300 miles away, where she hid refugees and French Resistance members.

This iconic woman was a symbol of beauty, freedom, and defiance against oppression - and this is why I love her!



*Awesome current
and past students*

Bexley Schools University Challenge



By Harry Watts, Year 12

On Thursday 23rd March, four intrepid Bexley Grammar students (and an entourage of supporting friends and family) travelled to Beths Grammar School to take on three other schools in a version of the BBC quiz programme 'University Challenge'. This is the second time the event has been put on, held last year at Chis & Sid, where Beths took the winning prize.

The game involves any number of teams of four aiming to score points in questions about anything from Jane Austen to Walker's crisps. Starter questions are answered individually and are worth ten points, after which the team answering a starter correctly gets a set of three bonus questions worth a potential fifteen points, for which they can confer. Sets of bonus questions are thematically linked to the starter question



- Team (left to right)**
- **Ross Thomson**
 - **Harry Watts (Captain)**
 - **Pamela Fernandes**
 - **Akeel Majeed**

In the weeks leading up to the event, students met up after school to play a few practice rounds of the game against each other, lead by Year 13 students.

However, no amount of practice could have prepared us for the intimidating and exciting feeling of walking onto the Beths stage and meeting our fellow competitors (who were all Year 13!). Despite our nerves, we knew we could rely on each other for support



After a strong head-to-head start against Chis & Sid, Bexley took the lead. Beths and Townley were slower getting off the mark, but soon it was anyone's race, with Chis & Sid pulling ahead a couple of times. As the final five minutes approached, the Bexley Grammar team put our heads together and steamed ahead, finishing triumphantly in first place after answering a particularly strange question about radishes (Thank you, Pamela!). In the end, we cheered for all the schools competing as their scores were read out, and graciously accepted our certificates awarded by the Mayor of Bexley. We also received the winner's plaque which will soon be engraved with 'Bexley Grammar - 2023'.

Even though I was named team captain, I certainly feel this victory couldn't have been done without my teammates, and the support of Mr Martin and the Year 13s who coached us. A massive thank you to all of you!



The final scores!

As the current champions, Bexley Grammar now has the honour of hosting the competition next year, so to any of our students planning to return for Sixth Form, brush up on your obscure knowledge, and bring us another victory!

JOSEPH PETROS

A CAR RACING LEGEND IN THE MAKING?



MY JOURNEY SO FAR.

I'm sure most of you reading this partake in a sport: whether it's football, rugby, dance or swimming. In my case, I have a passion for speed, danger and pushing limits beyond what is usually deemed safe: I'm a racing driver.

At the moment, I'm racing in the Club 100 championship which is where Lewis Hamilton started his career. In the championship, I race at tracks all over the UK driving close to 100 mph in go karts with no seat belt against some of the best talents in the UK and Europe. In addition, I race in a professional eSports championship called World Online Racing in which real life F1 teams and F1 Esports drivers such as Jarno Opmeer compete.



About a month ago, I competed for a scholarship to race in the biggest junior car racing series in the UK: the JSCC. I competed in a fitness test, hotlap test, media interview, car control test and team building activity. Unfortunately, I missed out on the scholarship by a few points but one of the largest teams in the JSCC: Orex Competition, noticed my talent and potential and have taken me under their wing to learn and grow my experience.



I In addition, the championship has asked me to be a spokesperson for Junior Racing in the UK and want me to go to events with them, do public speaking and encourage children from underprivileged backgrounds to get involved with racing and show that racing is not just a 'money sport'.

I'm also racing in the JSCC esports series and got a podium in my debut race.

I'm incredibly grateful for the opportunity the JSCC are giving me as I'm able to pursue my dreams of racing professionally. Additionally I've had the chance to meet incredible drivers who race Lamborghinis and Porches professionally and got 1 to 1 coaching with them and I hope to be able to follow in their footsteps in the future.



BGS Homegrown talent.

SAM DAVIES:
FROM BGS TO JOURNALISM



EX-BGS MEMBER RETURNS TO DELIVER INSPIRING TALK.

BY SCARLETT BARBER

On Monday the 23rd of January, myself and a group of other students from across the school had the opportunity to listen to a talk delivered by Sam Davies on an introduction to Journalism. Sam Davies is a freelance culture journalist and writer, who has written for a wide range of publication companies from the BBC to the Guardian and more, focusing on topics such as music, film, travel, LGBTQ culture and the internet. Not only has Sam interviewed many famous celebrities, such as Kano (Top Boy actor and British rapper) and even the voice of Bart Simpson, but he was also a student at Bexley Grammar - taught by Mr Griffin himself! Sam's talk focused heavily on the different pathways you can take into becoming a writer, that isn't just the conventional University route, as well as how important it is to practise writing whether that's as simple as a diary entry or a short story. One of the main takeaways from the talk was that regardless of what you choose to write, it should be something you're passionate about so it's enjoyable and much easier to write about.

Sam kindly answered some of our questions in the talk, alongside a few I emailed him:

Q: What inspired you to go into journalism?

A: I actually decided to try and get into music journalism after graduating from uni, following years of not knowing what I wanted to do, because I wanted to write about the Frank Ocean album 'Blonde'. I was really obsessed with it and felt like I had to write something about it, so started a blog purely for that reason. Then I wrote about Aphex Twin, Kanye West and so on, until eventually I landed a commission with Mixmag, and then the Guardian.

Q: Which publication companies have you written for and which topics do you typically enjoy writing about?

A: I've written for lots of publications in the last six years, including the BBC, Guardian, Financial Times, Dazed, the Face, Bandcamp, Crack, DJ Mag, Readers Digest, Vice, Pitchfork and loads of others

Q: Was English always your favourite subject at school?

A: English was my favourite subject, yes, but I also liked French, Spanish, drama, politics and history. I was always terrible at science.

Q:What career path did you follow, and if you had to do it again would you change anything?

A: I did work experience at NME when I was 15, but didn't actually know I wanted to be a journalist until after I left university. I was working part-time jobs in both a nursery and a pub, and I started pitching ideas to editors in my spare time. Eventually I was able to generate enough income to support myself and work full-time as a freelance journalist, while also taking copywriting jobs on the side for a range of different brands. If I had to do it again I actually think I probably wouldn't have gone to university -- I loved uni, but I'm still in debt from the tuition fees, and I could have started a career in journalism much earlier if I'd started pitching ideas when I was 18. That said, I wouldn't advise anyone to forgo university unless they were 100% sure they wanted to be a journalist and had a clear plan of how to get there

Q:What do your days typically look like?

A: My days vary a lot, which is nice. Most often I'll spend my mornings sending out ideas or checking the usual places -- Facebook, my email inbox, online jobs boards -- for freelance writing gigs, and sending out any ideas I have for stories or trying to arrange interviews with artists/actors/interesting people. Afternoons I'll often spend writing. I also have to interview people all the time, either in person or over the phone

Q:What's the one piece of advice you would give to someone interested in journalism?

A: In terms of advice, I'd probably just say: find something you want to write about, something you care about, and just start writing. If you're really passionate about something and convinced that other people should know about it, that will come through in your writing and make it worth reading.

Finally, I think it's important to remember that there are also many opportunities in and around school to put pen to paper and get creative. For example, creative writing runs on a Wednesday after school for years 7-11, giving students a chance to think creatively and produce a variety of different types of writing, as well as entering competitions externally and internally led. Many departments are also often looking for articles to be written to represent them in the school newsletter, and as Sam pointed out, you're never too young to start building your portfolio of work and presenting ideas to publishers





Empowering young people; igniting a spark of social conscience.

Year 8 Charity Success!!!

A round-up of an amazing project undertaken by our Year 8 students.



By Miss Milbank - Senior Academic Mentor - Year 8

As part of the PSHCE programme for Year 8, our students took part in a project run by a charitable organisation called First Give. Over the past eight years they have empowered over 160,000 young people to make a difference to thousands of charities across England and Wales. The project started in the autumn term and ran up until the grand final, which took place in February. All students had to work in groups of four to research local social issues that they felt were important to raise awareness on. They then decided on these charities that work for change within their chosen social issue and with the help of their form tutors, arranged meetings with charity representatives, so that they could learn more about the important work they do.



First Give Fair!

Once the students understood more about their chosen charity, it was time to decide how they were going to raise awareness and funds to help them further the work they do. Each form decided to start with organising a mini fair where they each had their own stall with a selection of games, prizes to win and treats to buy. They even organised a Beat the Goalie contest! The event was attended by all year groups at break time and was a fantastic display of their commitment to organising an event which had a real impact!



More Fundraising and raising awareness!

In their individual forms, the students also came up with a variety of fun and engaging ways to raise further awareness and funds for their chosen charities.



Mini food bank - ERE



Sponsored basketball shootout - JMP



Movie Nights - CED and STA

Raffle - FTM

Volunteering at the local food bank - CED

Selling ribbons and newsletters - MPM





As part of Year 8s First Give Project, 8BMP have decided to team up with Cancer Research UK to help combat the global problem of Cancer. As a class, we decided this an extremely worthy charity of our time, as we established that well over half of the members of our class know or knew of a person who influenced their life that had cancer in some form. Sometimes these people fortunately survived, however, in many situations (including mine), they sadly passed away. My grandfather unfortunately had prostate cancer and passed away in 2005 at the age of 58.

Some reasons why we decided that cancer is an extremely deserving cause include the following facts: cancer is the second-leading cause of death worldwide; 10 million people die from cancer every single year; 50% of cancer patients die because of the illness - with your help, they are trying to lower the rate to 25%; and finally, more than 40% of cancer-related deaths could be preventable as they are linked to modifiable risk factors such as smoking, alcohol use, poor diets and physical inactivity. With you knowing this, you can prevent this happening to yourself and the people you know. Cancer Research UK is the world's leading charity attempting to improve these statistics.

Since we teamed up with the charity, we have been studying all the fantastic work the charity does for the cause. It has events such as The Race for Life (its biggest fundraiser), Cycle Races, The Big Hike, Bubble Runs, etc., or if you're not into anything sporty, you can join your local bingo or quiz evening! We were fortunate enough to be able to have a charity representative, the wonderful Joan Preston, visit us and aid us in coming up with ideas of different social actions to help raise money and awareness for her charity - something that is very close to her heart as she, like many of you, knew close relatives that passed away because of cancer. If you happen to see one of 8BMPs fundraisers at the indoor fair, or around the school, please feel free to contribute!



First Give Presentation Evening

The final part of the First Give programme was centred around the all important 'Presentation Evening' whereby the winning form had a chance to win £1000 to donate to their partner charity. We were honoured to welcome a very special panel of judges including Mr Elphick, Mrs Belton-Owen, our Head Girl Christabelle and First Give's local borough engagement officer, Martin Cuthbert. Those of you who attended may remember the buzzing and almost tense atmosphere of the evening. We were entertained by each form who used all methods of persuasion to impress and inform the judges of their fantastic work. It was incredibly hard to judge, especially after numerous videos, poems, quizzes with audience participation but 8MPM secured the cheque, the crown and a huge cheer from the audience! Special awards on the night went to George Barnes, Vidhya Bhat and Reggie Cyril-Osunde. A huge well done to all of Year 8 and their amazing form tutors who supported them tirelessly throughout the project.



TEENAGE PROBLEMS

by Jesse Oshogwe, Year 10

As we all know, being a teenager is pretty hard in this day and age. With constant pressure from exams and the lack of likes we get on our posts, a lot is bothering us. On a more serious note, young people often have their worries, fears and problems ignored - or even worse - infantilised. Adults often write articles about the problems teenagers go through, which leaves their advice unrelatable. But have no fear - because now you have me to expose these common and severely undermined issues.

Welcome to Issue 2 of Teenage Problems (by Jesse Oshogwe), and thank you for reading this section once again! This term's topic is - Procrastination and "Staying On Top of It". So I will be talking about procrastination, particularly in academic instances.

**Procrastination
and "Staying
On Top of It"**





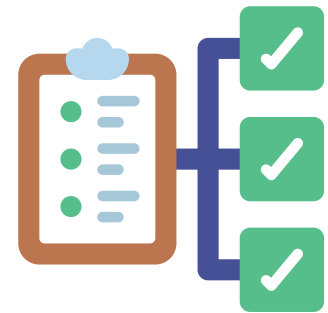
As a student, we always have a lot on our plates. Juggling school, our extracurricular, and healthy social lives often leads us down the road of procrastination. When we procrastinate, we delay tasks - often until the very last minute. When we procrastinate, it feels like we are doing ourselves good, but it leads to higher stress levels, poor performance in school and overall a worse outcome. It often feels overwhelming to keep up with everything we have to do, but staying “on top of it” is key for a successful and happy life.

We often start procrastinating as we feel overwhelmed by the task we have to complete - such as revision for a French speaking mock. The task often seems way too difficult, too boring and just too long. This often leads to us just avoiding the task and facing hefty repercussions when we check the mark we got for it... We also can procrastinate because we are distracted by outside stimulus. Many of us can testify to scrolling through social media for hours on end, and forgetting to study or do some homework. We also engage in more entertaining activities - like going out with friends, instead of doing what we should.



Now that we've covered the **WHY**, it's time to cover **HOW** we can prevent / lessen our procrastination and stay in control of all our responsibilities.

When you're facing a daunting task, it can be helpful to break it down into smaller, more manageable pieces. For example, if you have a research paper due in a few weeks, you might break it down into smaller tasks like choosing a topic, conducting research, creating an outline, and writing a rough draft. By breaking the task down into smaller pieces, you can make the task feel less overwhelming. Identify the different parts of the task and tackle them one at a time, crossing them off your to-do list as you go.



After breaking down your tasks, it's important to prioritise your tasks and focus on the most important ones first. Identify the tasks that have the closest deadlines or are the most critical, and focus your energy on completing those first. This will help you avoid procrastination and ensure that you're meeting your obligations in a timely manner.



Creating a schedule is very useful in staying on track and avoiding procrastination. You might use a planner, a calendar, or a to-do list to keep track of your tasks and deadlines. Make sure to set realistic goals and deadlines for yourself, and try to stick to them as much as possible. You might also consider scheduling specific times of the day for certain tasks, such as homework or studying. Make sure to write down everything you need to do and check it regularly to ensure you're not missing anything.

A good tip for schedule making is to make it flexible; creating a rigid and fixed timetable to begin with can often put you off using it.

When you're trying to focus on a task, it's important to remove distractions. This might mean turning off your phone or putting it on silent, closing unnecessary tabs on your computer, or finding a quiet place to work. If you find yourself getting distracted by social media or other websites, you might consider using a website blocker to help you stay focused.

Staying motivated can be difficult, especially when you're facing a task that you don't enjoy. One way to stay motivated is to set a goal for yourself and reward yourself when you achieve it. For example, if you finish your maths homework early, you might reward yourself by watching your favourite TV show or going for a walk with a friend. You might also consider finding a study partner or joining a study group to help keep you motivated.

Finally, it's important to take care of yourself when you're facing a lot of stress and pressure. Make sure to eat and sleep well, and exercise regularly. You might also consider practising mindfulness or meditation to help you stay calm and focused. It's important to take care of yourself while you're juggling your responsibilities. Make sure to take breaks throughout the day to rest your mind and recharge your energy, keeping you motivated and full of energy throughout the day.





Also, don't be afraid to ask for help when you need it. Whether it's from a form tutor, teacher, parent, or friend, asking for assistance can help you stay on top of your responsibilities and ensure that you're meeting your obligations.

Staying on top of all your responsibilities and beating procrastination can be a challenge, but it's a necessary part of growing up - and it's one that can be overcome with practice and perseverance. By following all these tips, you can beat procrastination and achieve your goals. Remember, it's never too late to start working on a task, and the sooner you start, the sooner you'll finish. *Good luck!*

TEENAGE PROBLEMS

BY

JESSE OSHOGWE





Ramadhan

by Rayaan Siddiqui and Daniel Vani

What is Ramadhan?

Ramadhan is the holy month of Islam in which Muslims all around the world fast from dawn until sunset for thirty days with no food and no water. It is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar - with a celebration of Eid at the end - where families gather together and reward each other with presents and gifts. The month is sacred because it marks when Allah gave the first chapters of the Qur'an to Prophet Muhammad and here, in Ramadhan families get together and appreciate the creation of Allah and thank him for the year that has just passed on us

Most people assume Ramadhan is a month only for fasting with huge feasting Iftar events and lavish gatherings. On the contrary, along with praying five times a day as prescribed by Allah and completing voluntary prayers, Muslims actually abstain from any indulgences and worship Allah to become more God-conscious of Him. By praying and keeping ourselves close to the Qur'an, we bring knowledge into our minds and remembrance into our hearts. Ramadhan should be a month where we put all our stresses and worries on hold and create healthy habits. Ramadhan is more than just fasting, it is a guest that we all welcome into our homes, even if we just put our trust in Allah. Along with this, we also learn self discipline, break unhealthy cycles, develop as a person, focus on spirituality, gain closeness to Allah and build our faith in Allah.

What does Ramadhan mean to us?

Rayaan:

To me, Ramadhan is a time to increase Sabr(patience) - waking up before sunrise every day is a challenge, but the spiritual benefits are indescribable. Not only that, the fact that 1.6 billion other people are all doing the same thing as us for one common cause puts our hearts at peace. A dedicated time to reconnect with our families just shows how a brotherhood and a sisterhood can really affect someone's life.

Fasting isn't and shouldn't be reduced to a food festival - rather a spiritual journey where we take a break from eleven months of worldly pursuits and cleanse our hearts. A time to help the needy, the orphans, the homeless, the refugees and most importantly ourselves. Rays of wisdom extend from each and every single Muslim to recite tones of Qur'an and to thank but also to never forget the source of peace that is Ramadhan.

Daniel:

For me ramadhan has several benefits. Firstly, fasting allows me to empathise with those facing hardships, leading me to give more to charity. This feeling of hunger is felt by millions who don't know when their next meal will be, so being conscious of people in need is very valuable. Secondly, it provides an opportunity for reflection and spiritual, mental and physical betterment through prayer and recitation of the quran. Thirdly it fosters togetherness by bringing my whole family together for meals and prayer, this means waking up at the same time to eat and pray together. This is sometimes difficult due to our differing schedules. Ramadhan is a wonderful month uniting 1.6 billion people around the world, praying five times a day facing the same direction during this prayers and reciting the same book. This should not be overlooked and reduced to just abstaining from food and drink: it's a time where we all leave our worldly desires and not do whatever we want but what god has ordained for us. Lastly ramadhan is a month to express gratitude for the blessings we have in our life, blessings that are often taken for granted during our daily worries and struggles. Truly making us value every second of the time we spend with family and friends, reciting quran and being able to afford basic necessities.

Abu Hurayrah (RadhiAllahu Anhu) reported that the Messenger of Allah (SallAllahu Alayhi Wa Sallam) said:

"Every action a son of Adam does shall be multiplied—a good action by ten times its value, up to 700 times. Allah says: With the exception of fasting, which belongs to Me, and I reward it accordingly. For, one abandons his desire and food for My sake."



News from departments



PE News: Ski Trip to Austria

This February half term saw the return of our school ski trip! It is wonderful to have these trips back up and running after a long break. This trip did not disappoint. 40 students travelled to Austria, most experiencing skiing on snow in the mountains for the first time.





This February half term saw the return of our school ski trip! It is wonderful to have these trips back up and running after a long break. This trip did not disappoint. 40 students travelled to Austria, most experiencing skiing on snow in the mountains for the first time. Five hours of lessons each day saw them progress quickly, with the more challenging blue and red runs becoming their playground by the end of the week.



Sunshine each day made for glorious views across the Austrian Alps with a real highlight of the trip being a journey in a cable car to the top of Salzburg, 3029 metres!

Numerous comments were made about the exceptional behaviour of the group.

A fantastic week!

Mrs Howard





OUR TRIP TO NYC!

Lydia Forsdyke Year 13

Over the February half term, over 40 excited students and 5, slightly terrified, teachers set off to visit the United States on a Business and Economics trip! We started our journey in Washington DC where we spent a day walking around the city and seeing its famous sights. We saw The White House, The Capitol, the Washington Monument, the Library of Congress, the Martin Luther King Memorial and the Abraham Lincoln Memorial - where we witnessed people protesting for women's rights in Iran. Whilst on our way to the 'Big Apple' we stopped in Philadelphia to see the legendary Liberty Bell (as well as to eat the legendary Philly Cheese Steak). Philadelphia were preparing to play in the SuperBowl later that evening so we spent our short amount of time there shouting "Go Birds" to as many people as possible. Additionally, we witnessed Mr Powell and Mr Dhir attempt to race up the Rocky Steps, arguably the best moment of the trip...

TRIP HIGHLIGHTS

We arrived in New York and immediately went to see Times Square as it was so close to our hotel. Throughout the week we managed to fit in as many activities as possible. We started with a walk of Manhattan, where we did 35,000 steps and did not hold back on complaining about how tired we were, however the sights we saw were worth the aching legs. Later in the afternoon we were lucky enough to receive a tour of Hershey's, we learnt about the history of the business and how they have grown into a multinational company. We then had a tour of the United Nations the next day where we were able to go into the General Assembly and witness a meeting in progress. We saw a Nobel Peace Prize and were given the time to ask as many questions as possible to our tour guide. We ended Valentines Day on the top of The Empire State Building where we even witnessed a proposal.



Our next day was our busiest yet. We took a ferry to see the magnificent Statue of Liberty and then to Ellis Island to learn more about the history of immigration in America. After we had visited the gift shop to buy an unnecessary amount of fridge magnets we travelled to the Financial District and were lucky enough to receive a guided tour. We saw The New York Stock Exchange, Wall Street and the heartbreaking 9/11 Memorial. As if that wasn't enough walking for the day we walked across the Brooklyn Bridge, which we would have gotten across in half the time if we did not take so many photos! The majority of us then caught the subway to the Brooklyn Nets vs Miami Heats Basketball game at the Barclays Centre, an amazing way to commemorate our final evening.



Before we got the coach back to the airport, we spent our final morning in the best way possible - shopping! My suitcase increased by 5 kg on the way home. Our plane journey home consisted of very exhausted but content students who did not want to go home. We needed to catch up on sleep after averaging 100,000 steps over the course of our trip! It was an absolutely incredible trip and we would like to thank Mr Joe for organising it and Mrs Harris, Mr Dhir, Mr Powell and Miss Mani for giving up their half-term to take us. Thank you for such amazing memories!



ART DEPARTMENT NEWS

IB Visual Arts Exhibition

by Miss Harrison, Head of Arts Department



THIS YEAR THE IB VISUAL ART STUDENTS PRODUCED A FANTASTIC VARIETY OF DIFFERENT STYLED PIECES RANGING FROM PAINTING, DRAWING, 3D AND TEXTILE WORK. THE WORK SHOWCASED MANY APPROACHES TO A SERIES OF THOUGHT PROVOKING THEMES. THESE WERE LINKED TO SOCIAL ISSUES OF TODAY, EXPLORING, STRESS, ISOLATION, PERSONAL SPACE AND A JOURNEY TO FINDING ONESELF. THE STUDENTS HAVE WORKED EXCEPTIONALLY HARD TO PRODUCE SOME OUTSTANDING ARTWORK AND I AM VERY PROUD OF WHAT THEY HAVE ACCOMPLISHED!!



QUOTES FROM STUDENTS ABOUT THEIR WORK;

MY ARTWORK IS CENTRED AROUND THE THEME OF THE UNKNOWN OR THE INVISIBLE. THIS HAS A FEW DIFFERENT MEANINGS TO ME, INCLUDING THE IDEA THAT ONLY A SMALL FRACTION OF OUR ENVIRONMENT IS VISIBLE DUE TO THE LIMITATIONS OF HUMAN PERCEPTION. THE 'UNKNOWN' CONSTITUTES THE EMPTY SPACE THAT EVERYTHING IS CONTAINED IN, WHICH IS USUALLY OVERLOOKED AND VIEWED AS UNIMPORTANT BY PEOPLE, GIVEN THAT IT ACTS AS THE BASE OF THE REALITY WE LIVE IN: THE BACKGROUND ACCOMPANYING PHYSICAL ENTITIES AND OBJECTS WITHIN. IT ALSO ALLUDES TO THE IDEA THAT ONLY A SMALL FRACTION OF OUR ENVIRONMENT IS VISIBLE TO US AND MOST OF THE FORCES THAT AFFECT OUR EXPERIENCE OF THE WORLD CANNOT BE FULLY IDENTIFIED OR UNDERSTOOD. NEGATIVE SPACE SURROUNDING THE THINGS WE CAN SEE AND THE WAY IT IS INTEGRATED IN EVERYTHING HAS A FUNDAMENTAL ROLE IN THE EXISTENCE OF EVERYTHING. (LAUREN REES, YEAR 13)

MY EXHIBITION EXPLORES THE THEME OF DISTANCE, WHETHER THAT BE PHYSICAL DISTANCE OR METAPHORICAL. THIS THEME INTERESTS ME AS I BELIEVE THE CONCEPT OF DISTANCE IS PREVALENT EVERYWHERE IN THE WORLD AROUND US: THE EMOTIONAL CONNECTION WE FEEL FROM OTHERS, THE DISTANCE THAT TIME PRESENTS WHEN WE LOOK INTO THE PAST OR FUTURE, THE DISTANCE WE TRAVEL WHEN VISITING DIFFERENT AREAS OR COUNTRIES AND EVEN THE DISTANCE IN PERSONALITY OR LIFESTYLE FROM PERSON TO PERSON. DISTANCE, DIFFERENCE AND DETACHMENT SHAPE OUR WORLD AND OUR UNDERSTANDING OF IT: SOMETHING I AIMED TO EXPLORE IN EACH PIECE I CREATED. (JEMMA CHALMERS, YEAR 13)



MY THEME IS SOURCED FROM MY INTEREST IN EXPRESSIONIST AND ABSTRACT ART, WHICH IS WHERE I STARTED MY PROJECT. I WANTED TO DELVE DEEPER INTO THE STYLES OF BOTH OF THESE ART STYLES AND BE ABLE TO CREATE ART OF A SIMILAR STYLE. I HAVE EXPLORED ISSUES SURROUNDING PERSONAL EMOTION AS WELL AS ISSUES WITH THE CURRENT WORLD. I WANTED TO TRAVERSE THROUGH THESE SORTS OF IDEAS AND BE ABLE TO MAKE ART THAT BOTH REFLECTS AND ENRICHES THEM. (THOMAS HIGGENS, YEAR 13)

MY FOCUS WAS TRYING TO DEPICT A SLIVER OF 'MYSELF'- AND IF NOT MYSELF, THEN THE ME THAT CAN BE UNDERSTOOD FROM HOW I VIEW MYSELF AND THE WORLD, AND HOW I SUPPOSED THE WORLD VIEWS ME- THIS I DID BY LOOKING THROUGH MY EXPERIENCES TO FIND PARTICULARLY PLEASANT/UNPLEASANT MEMORIES AND ANALYSE WHY, IN MY POINT OF VIEW, I WAS BEING MADE TO FEEL THAT WAY, CONNECTING THIS DISCOVERY THROUGH MY PERCEPTION OF THE WORLD TO HOW OTHERS MAY REGARD THESE PERSONAL STRUGGLES. (REGINA EJIONAMHEN, YEAR 13)



I INTENDED TO ARRANGE MY ARTWORK SO THAT THE AUDIENCE COULD FOLLOW A NARRATIVE ABOUT MY INDIVIDUAL REPRESENTATION OF NATURE AND BEAUTY WHILE SIMULTANEOUSLY FOLLOWING THE AZTEC MYTH OF THE AFTERLIFE AND THE DUALITY OF DAMAGING AND STRENGTHENING EFFECTS THESE MAY HAVE ON AN INDIVIDUAL'S SELF-IMAGE. INSTEAD, I URGE THOSE WHO VIEW MY EXHIBITION TO CELEBRATE THEIR DIFFERENCES AND IMPERFECTIONS. (ESTEFANIA DA SILVA REIS, YEAR 13)



FOR MY EXHIBITION I CHOSE THE THEME OF DREAMING. I CHOSE THIS AFTER LOOKING AT HOW PERSONALITIES ARE DIFFERENT TO US ALL AND HOW DREAMS ARE ALWAYS UNIQUE AND ARE A WAY OUR MIND CAN EXPRESS OUR PERSONALITIES, AND THE THINGS THAT AFFECT US SUCH AS WORRIES IN DAILY LIFE OR THE SUBCONSCIOUS. I LOOKED AT IDEAS SUCH AS FEARS AND HOW THESE MANIFEST THEMSELVES MORE INTO OUR DAILY LIFE, SUCH AS FEAR FOR THE FUTURE WHERE I LOOKED AT CLIMATE CHANGE. I FOUND SURREALISM A GOOD WAY TO EXPLORE THIS THEME AS IT IS OFTEN INSPIRED BY THE SUBCONSCIOUS MIND, LIKE DREAMING. (MARTHA NOBBS, YEAR 13)



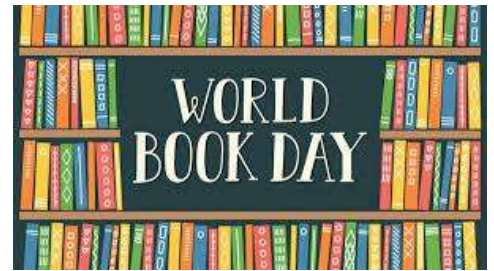
English Department News

By Grace Taylor - Year 12 English Prefect

It has been another busy and fun-filled term, with Book Clubs, lectures, theatre trips, visiting authors, creative writing workshops... and the annual World Book Day too!

World Book Day

World Book Day took place on Thursday 2nd March 2023 and at BGS we celebrated it on Friday 3rd March. There were lots of activities for students from all year groups to take part in, creating an opportunity for everyone to get involved by encouraging students to read. Some of these activities included our 'Drop Everything and Read', as well as the Ultimate Reading Challenge and the Post it note story competition.



Year 7 and 8 students were given the opportunity to dress up as a character from their favourite book and it was incredible to see everyone dressed up in some fantastic costumes that truly demonstrated everyone's love for reading. The Year 12 English Prefects and the English Department also took part in the fun, where they showed off their favourite book characters too !

Year 7 and 8 students in their World Book Day Costumes !



Year 12 English Prefects - can you guess their costumes ?

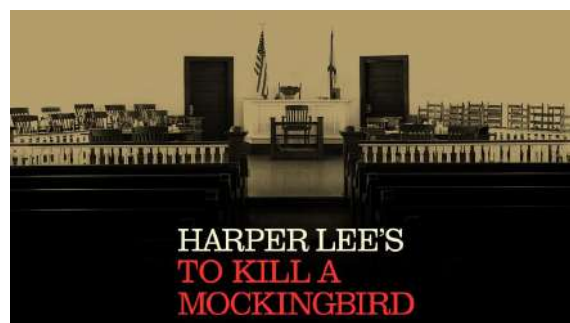


A group of eight people posing in a room decorated with literary posters. The posters include titles like 'Melneth', 'The Roots of Heaven', 'Under the Glacier', and 'Great Literature'. One person is wearing a blue penguin costume.

Once again, the English Prefects were astounded by the quality of writing displayed by the six finalists of our annual short story writing competition. Leon notes: 'I had fun judging the short story competition and reading each story, which were all amazing.' Ultimately there could only be one winner and after much deliberation 1st prize was awarded to Lawrence Macharia in 7ERR. Well done Lawrence! His story can be read in full in the BGS Newsletter, mid-March.

Every year, all of Year 8 plan, write and perform 2 min presentations to perform in front of their form. They can be on any subject, as long as they give the students the chance to practise articulating their thoughts in an engaging and well-crafted manner. This year, the 12 finalists (2 from each form) performed in front of their whole year group in an extended assembly in K10 (the theatre). English Prefect judges K and Claudia were impressed by them all, and, assisted by our resident Public Speaking expert Mr Husbands, eventually managed to choose a winner: well done Emily Chan of 8ERE!

In January, 50 Year 9s enjoyed a trip to a matinee performance of the award-winning West End stage production of Harper Lee's classic novel *To Kill a Mockingbird*. The students were gripped by the compelling storyline and world class acting. A big thank you to Mr Otley for organising the outing.



To give our Year 10s a chance to get involved in public speaking, they all took part in the Jack Petchey 'Speak Out' competition, where each student had to pick a title and topic and write a speech based upon this. This was an incredible opportunity for the students to become more confident with speaking in front of large crowds and get better at writing speeches that they could deliver to their friends and teachers. Having

completed their GCSE English Language Presentations before Christmas, 50 students put their names down for further training by visiting Public Speaking experts from the Jack Petchey foundation.

The winners of the school based competition that happened in these two workshops then went forward to a final and performed their speeches in front of their whole year group and several teachers. All of the judges were thoroughly impressed with all the speeches given and it was extremely hard to choose a winner. The head judge, Mr Husbands, spoke of how the standard was incredibly high this year, before announcing the winners: Aleksandra Valchanova (1st), Andy Whitmore (2nd) and Namir Anowar (3rd). They all gave terrific speeches. After this, Aleksandra and Namir went on to perform at the regional finals, which is an amazing achievement!

The Year 10 Jack Petchey assembly finalists with two of the English Prefect Judges, Hannah and Aleksia.



Jendella Benson - exciting new author return to BGS!

Back in November, BGS was very lucky to have a special visitor to the English Department - author of the debut novel 'Hope and Glory', Jendella Benson! Jendella is an amazing writer who was definitely inspirational when she came to visit. Even before her novel 'Hope and Glory' was released, Sunday Times Style Magazine listed Jendella as one of the '10 new faces to know for 2022' and her book made the 'most anticipated' lists at Marie Claire and Stylist. In addition to this, Jendella was also kind enough to attend a Senior Book Club meeting with organiser Mrs Quinton, Mr Griffin and the Year 12 and 13 students that attend. Senior Book club were actually studying 'Hope and Glory' as their first book of the year, so having the opportunity to meet the author behind the book was a truly amazing experience. Jendella and the members of the Senior Book club discussed the inspiration for her novel and the journey to getting it published and all who attended thoroughly enjoyed this experience.



We were very lucky to have her come and visit, and so happy that she could come back at the end of this term and arrange further creative writing workshops for Y11-13. These were again a great success, with one student commenting: 'I really enjoyed the session and learned so much about how to create a convincing character'.

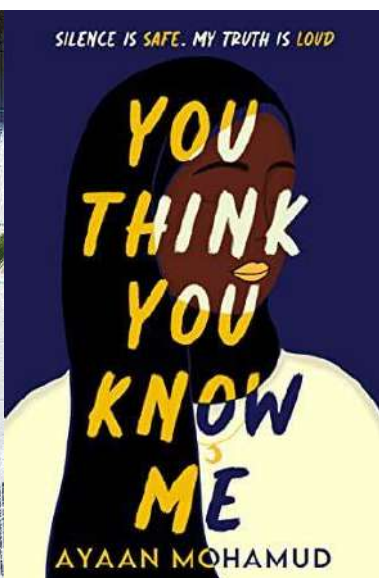
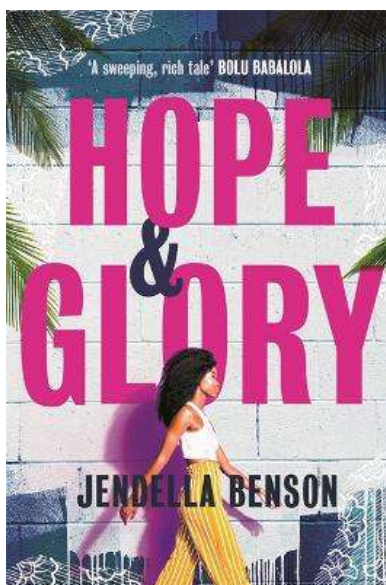
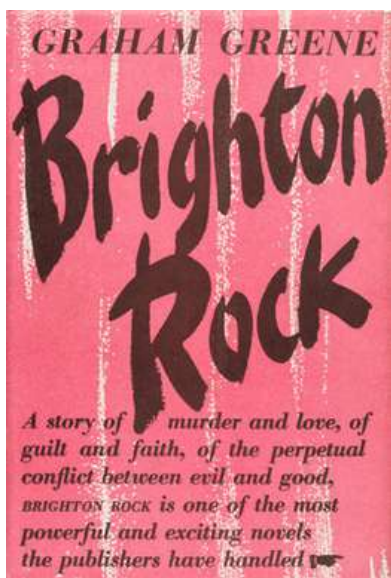
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We want to thank Jendella Benson for coming to visit BGS!

Jendella Benson and the Year 11-13 students at the creative writing workshop



Senior Book Club



Some keen readers from Years 12 and 13 have been attending Senior Book club with organiser Mrs Quinton and Mr Griffin to meet and discuss new books that they read together. It's lovely to see a group of people so passionate about reading meeting up to discuss new ideas and they have certainly enjoyed it. Above are the books that the club have read so far this year and they are looking forward to reading many more! New members are always welcome, so come and try it out. The next book is 'You Think you Know Me' by debut novelist Ayaan Mohamud, who is in fact booked to give a lecture and Q&A about her work in the Summer Term - look out for posters!

Guest Lecture - Sam Davies

On Monday 23rd January, a group of students from across the school had the opportunity to attend a lecture by Sam Davies on an introduction to Journalism. Sam Davies is a freelance culture journalist and writer, who has written for a wide range of publican companies from the BBC to the Guardian and more, focusing on topics such as music, film, travel, LGBTQ culture and the internet. He has also interviewed a range of famous celebrities.

Sam Davies and students at the lecture



The most amazing thing was that Sam was a student at Bexley Grammar, actually taught by Mr Griffin himself!

Sam's talk focused heavily on the different pathways you can take into becoming a writer, that isn't just the conventional University route, as well as how important it is to practise writing whether that's as simple as a diary entry or a short story. One of the main takeaways from the talk was that regardless of what you choose to write, it should be something you're passionate about so it's enjoyable and much easier to write about. All of the students really enjoyed it and found the lecture very interesting.

Easter English Wordsearch

Can you have a go at some of these Easter themed activities ?

F L O W E R S G N I R P S Z O
S K C I H C T E B P A R A D E
Y T P B Z E T M P M G E H Y S
D G X P N A R J B S P A A E S
N E Z N R U A S U B T S P D A
A K O O A E D N N T D T P I R
C B C E B T I A N E A E Y Y G
X E G T B A T E Y K F R G L P
D G E N I L I B U S F T G I S
S C I E T O O Y V A O W E L U
S K C U D C N L I B D O M V N
U I Y K R O F L S P I L U T D
O H Y G V H T E V A L X J F A
K X R A W C F J A H U N T J Y
Y L I M A F A S P E E P S E M

Basket
Bonnet
Bunny
Candy
Chicks
Chocolate
Daffodil
Decorate
Ducks

Dye
Easter
Egg Hunt
Eggs
Family
Flowers
Grass
Happy
Jellybeans

Lily
Parade
Peeps
Rabbit
Spring
Sunday
Tradition
Tulips



FBCS News

Philosophy

As we are still in Women's History month, March,, the philosophy department found it fitting to focus on influential women of the past. However, this year we're not focusing on the classics, Mary Wollstonecraft or Hypatia of Alexandria or Simone de Beauvoir. We're taking women from all over the world in vastly different periods in time, celebrating their contributions to literature and philosophy and highlighting some of the difficulties they faced in expressing their true messages

The Feminist Philosophy

Tahlellah Townsend- 12MCS

TYPICAL FEMALE THINKERS THAT COME TO MIND



G E M Anscombe
1919 - 2001
Modern Moral Philosophy

Hypatia of Alexandria
c. 355 CE - March 415
Math and Astronomy



Simone de Beauvoir
1908 - 1986
Existentialist and Feminist



WHAT DO YOU PICTURE WHEN YOU THINK 'PHILOSOPHY'?

When you think philosophy, you might think of bearded old men reduced to the confines of the same 4 walls, day in day out, sunrise to sunset, sitting in deep contemplation. Or perhaps in more modern times, men sitting around a large round table, in heated discussion, resembling a political debate. It might look as simple as picking up a book and looking at very influential philosophers and engaging in discussions about them; Kant, Fanon, Socrates, Confucius, Plato, Zeno of Citrium, Mills and the list goes on. But, I feel like I'm seeing a pattern here. Are you? In highly academic spaces, what we usually envision is men parading their knowledge of philosophical theories made by other men. This is emphasised by a published work that's supposed to be a sort of grand introduction to the subject. The Book of Philosophy, as the name suggests, is a large compilation of great thinkers in history, but flipping through it you see all the 'greats' among the lesser known thinkers. However, there is an astonishing lack of feminine presence. Unfortunately, while perusing through this book, I can't recall more than 4 female philosophers in it; not even Phillipa Foot (the one who made the widely known Trolley Problem) or even Elizabeth Anscombe (revered for her criticisms of moral language). Why is it that women are left out of the 'most influential thinkers of the century' category and left for the by the way's and honorary mentions. However, something that The Book of Philosophy does well is incorporate thinkers of different backgrounds, races and nationalities. So, in this article we're going to do just that. We'll be venturing all around the globe and exploring different times in history in search of great female philosophers who had inventive methods of getting their philosophical ideas heard.

JING JIANG



Her Message to Her Son

1

'Different parts of the loom represent different parts of the state, and running a state is like weaving in which everything rests on a warp. It must be strong'

A warp is essentially the foundation/basic component on which yarn is turned into fabric. This means that Jiang was trying to communicate that society needs a foundation so that it too can be turned from a simple string of yarn into a luxurious fabric. However, like any poorly sewn material, one loose thread could cause a great collapse. Hence, Jiang is advising him to concentrate on the basis on which their society was built. It's possible that she was telling him to rebuild Lu on a strong foundation by implanting strong virtues that align with the ideas of align with Confucian teachings of rituals, so that it can thrive in the future and become a virtuous society. Or she could be advising him to be that strong foundation for Lu in order for the state to thrive and grow in virtuousness.

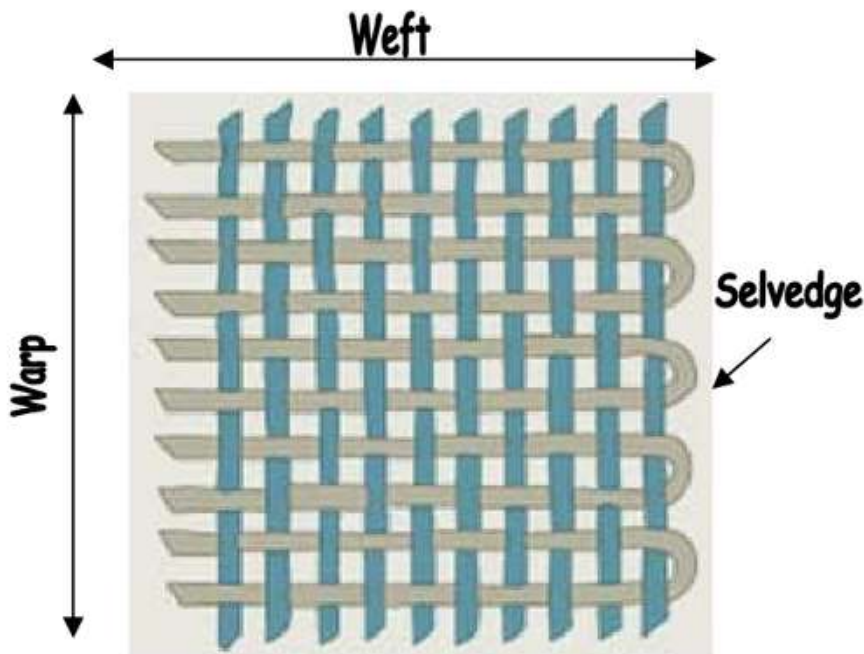
Starting in Ancient China, during the time of Confucius, with Jing Jiang (551-479 BCE). Firstly, to understand why Jiang's philosophy is set out the way that it is, we must get to know what it was like to be a woman with political views in Ancient China. Chinese women, unfortunately didn't share in the same luxuries of status both politically and socially. And therefore their opinions on matters regarding the state weren't valued and subject to harsh criticism from men. Criticism resembled 'mansplaining' and doubting a woman's capability to comprehend the intricacies and nuances within politics regardless of the validity of the point given. 'What do you know about politics? You couldn't possibly take all factors of a complex society into consideration. You're just a woman'. However, women did have their own expertise that men couldn't possibly criticise and that is the art of weaving. Hence, with this extensive knowledge of weaving Jiang found a way to impart her message.

Though Jiang doesn't have any published works she managed to get her political opinions out to her son Gongfu Wenbo. She raised her son alone and as any mother would, she tried her best to implant good Confucian values and wisdom about society to him. Before sending him off to become one of Confucius's apprentices and at the same time he was to serve as a minister in Lu, she left him some parting words, rather a parting analogy about government. Jiang knew that she couldn't simply tell him how society ought to work, because she was a woman; that would leave the door open for him to brush off his mother. Knowing this she used her knowledge of weaving.

2

She continues...

“The selvages. This is how the crooked is made straight. This is thought of as the general’



Selvages are the left and right edges of a loom (the device that is used for weaving) where yarn is weaved in and out and begins its journey to become fabric. Jiang might be saying that any existing problems can be rectified by tackling the issues surrounding the problem. Even now we see political figures trying desperately to tackle the most pressing issue head on, however sometimes it's simply the edges of the problem that need neatening. The surrounding issues that create a 'crooked' society can be rectified by tackling the maladies surrounding those problems is the means by which they are made 'straight'. She goes further by assigning this job to a general, someone thought of being the highest in command to unify nations (in Ancient China)

3

Reeds make the unruly uniform. This is the director.'

Reeds are the vertical metal teeth attached to the frame that help space and separate the warp threads to guide the shuttle across the loom. Since reeds are these structures that are guiding figures, they aim to bring uniformity and guidance to a piece of fabric so that one singular thread doesn't go astray.



Jiang was able to successfully help her son navigate an intricate and delicate system of government by simply sticking to what she knew, observing her surroundings and engaging in deep, meaningful thought about how she could eloquently express her opinions on the functioning of society, whilst avoiding a vociferous brushing aside. She was able to navigate an unfair society and Liu Xiang, Han Dynasty scholar, praised her, and many women like her, for it. He said in his Biographies of Exemplary Women c. 18 BCE, that she ‘ a knowledgeable and competent advisor in what was, in Ancient China, the traditionally male domain of politics.’ It really brings home the saying ‘Behind every great man is an even greater woman’.

She wasn't the only woman to use weaving to her advantage. With this we move on to Indian philosopher **Gargi Vachnavi**.

GARGI VACHNAVI

About Her & Her Philosophy

Gargi Vachnavi (c. 700 BCE) or गार्गी वाचक्नवी in sanskrit was a great sage, someone who was wise with a great deal of knowledge. She easily challenged many men with metaphysical and ethical questions. She was also proficient in all 4 Vedas which are highly complex texts written in Vedic Sanskrit. The Vedas were composed of hymns of mythology (Rig Veda), Hymns of religious practice (Sama Veda) , chants/instructions for religious practices (Yajur Veda) and sacred formulae/, spells against sorcerers, disease, etc. (Atharva Veda). With this she engaged in ideas of materialism, ‘If I were to possess the entire world filled with wealth, would it make me immortal?’ Though the idea of wealth is not a new concept, the question of possessing it in large quantities and linking it to immense privilege liken it to immortality might be ahead of this time. Today, we can see that wealth might be the key to some form of immortality in terms of technology to permit such a thing or grant immortality as metaphorical for leaving legacy and permanently existing through your wealth that was given to others/family.



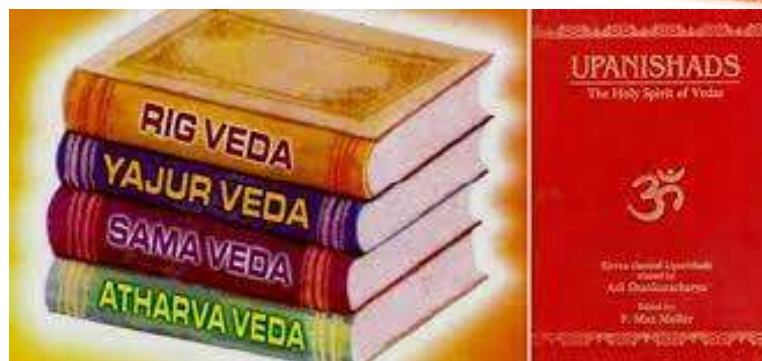
However in 700 BCE, this idea of technological advancement to immortality might have been unfathomable therefore she might have meant legacy as a means of immortality. However, this does beg the question of ‘What about the significance of the less privileged who were probable stepping stones in a person's wealth?’ Gargi was able to contemplate these existential, ethical questions with a high degree of wisdom and care. She asserted that it is woman who launches discussion on the importance of oneself (atman) and to gain knowledge of this world.

Her Legacy

Vedic Scriptures in original
Sanskrit



Conversation between Sage Vachknavi and
Sage Yajnavalkya



Vedic Scriptures
and Upshidad

In engaging with these topics with great male philosophers of her time such as Yajnavalkya, you might wonder how she even got a chance to do this sort of thing when it was believed that women were the lesser than species of men? Well, in Ancient India, gender inequality wasn't a thing and men and women were treated and seen as equals. They enjoyed the same freedoms of men; education, remarriage after being widowed, having their own autonomy and pleasures. In fact, the Vedic Samhitas refer to women as taking part in agriculture and other activities (leatherwork, weaving mats, etc.), The Sama Veda (hymns) instructed that men and women are to be the joint owners of any family property. The Rig Veda said that a daughter is to earn the inheritance.

Ultimately, Gargi was hailed for her many contributions to philosophical debate and later included in an Upshidad (roughly translates to Connection) and a Veda (roughly translates to Knowledge) that detailed her conversations with Yajnavalkya and how she challenged him. Therefore, great women like Gargi Vachknavi, in ancient Indian society were not forgotten about or cast away simply because they were women and should have never been forgotten in the wider world of philosophical debate.

To continue with the philosophical ideas of Eastern Women, we travel all the way from India to Korea.

IM YUNJIDANG



Her Philosophy

As an extension of her understanding of Confucianism, she lived during a new era of Confucianism; Neo Confucianism that spread like wildfire across Koreans of the Joseon Dynasty. This is like Confucianism but the most popular strains of the theory that were preserved to create a new faction as a revival of the original discipline. Much of her work was focused on Gi (energy) over I (reason), the Seven Emotions (joy, anger, grief, terror, love, hate and desire) and the Four Beginnings (benevolence, etiquette, wisdom and righteousness). She was revered as the 'Confucian feminist' (which at the time was paradoxical, as the rituals proposed in Confucianism chose men as their bearers). In fact, Yunjidang was a firm believer in equality between men and women taking step to become sage or people with a plethora of wisdom and knowledge to bestow on others in need.

About Her

Im Yunjidang (임윤지당) Hanja: 任允摯堂) was a Korean writer and philosopher living under Chinese imperialist rule from the Chosŏn 朝鮮 (Joseon) dynasty (1721-1793), hence her name being written in Hanja (Chinese characters meant to adapt to the sound of the Korean speech before Korea adopted a formal alphabet/system of writing). Yunjidang was focused on Neo Confucianism and feminism within ethics and metaphysics; reformulating Confucianism to fit a feminist narrative, in favour of women and everyone as equals. She insisted that women should be able to become Confucian masters and maintained the belief that the interpretations of moral values cultivation and human nature should not differ between men and women.

During this time in Korean history, the society was deeply rooted in Confucianism, which, like many other societies at the time, didn't allow women to voice their true knowledge and intelligence. Yunjidang, among a few other women, were able to break through male dominance. After the death of her father Im Jeok (임적), she moved to Cheongju where her second oldest brother taught her about Confucianism. And it was there that she began her journey, when her brother gave her her pen name Yunjidang (modelled after two highly respected women of the Zhou dynasty, in China).

She questioned the Confucians and, in turn, questioned her society, by highlighting a key concept in Confucianism, benevolence, that continues to be absent in people as 'people's minds are servants to their physical bodies that settle that they settle into doing violence to themselves and throwing themselves away'. Her point for highlighting this, I believe, is to have no separation between men and women in that we are all morally corrupt and in need of a sage for guidance. The important takeaway from this, however, is that a sage should be a beacon of guidance no matter the gender of that person. In her statement, she continues by sharing the same sentiments as any man; to become a great sage and share in the ability to collate her thoughts to go on to publish works and obtain great influence on the minds of the lost.

About Her

With this we move to 18th century Nigeria in an area named Sokoto Caliphate to explore the works of Nana Asma'u, female poet and who was thought to be the first feminist in Nigeria (c. 1456-1517). Her work focused on the divine truth through Islam and placed strong emphasis on the rights of women, female leadership in Nigeria within community ideals and Islamic law. She was a highly accomplished woman speaking 4 different languages and writing in 3 of those languages. Unlike the rest of the world at this time, where women's literary contributions could only be called contributions if they were published under male pseudonyms, the women of Sokoto Caliphate were expected to be highly educated in teaching and poetry and were great contributors to literary spaces. However, this literary freedom women were granted came with drawbacks; misogyny. Throughout Northern Nigeria, apocryphal teachings (teachings that are widespread, accepted and commonly thought to be true but are false) about Muslim women such as 'devalued beings coerced to silence and domestic duty.' Now, as who is documented to be the first feminist in Africa, she obviously did not agree with this. In fact, she spoke out against this in her poems and writing.

With this we move to 18th century Nigeria in an area named Sokoto Caliphate to explore the works of Nana Asma'u, female poet and who was thought to be the first feminist in Nigeria (c. 1456-1517)

NANA ASMA'U



Her Philosophy & Legacy

While her contributions to rewriting philosophy from a feminist point of view is not as explicit as the other women listed in this article, Asma'u is my last special mention because we don't hear of many women out of Africa, especially during the 1700's and 1800's. However, similarly to other women on this list, a man supported her work and spoke out against the obvious misogyny of the time. Famous Fulani scholar, Usman Fodio, wrote, "Muslim women! Do not listen to the speech of those who are misguided and who sow the seed of error in the heart of another; they deceive you when they stress obedience to your husbands without telling you of obedience to God and His Messenger..." he goes on to say more about how men have reduced you (women) to "foodstuffs, the washing of clothes, and other duties" in order for men to keep freedoms to themselves and bask in the glory of learning about the real teachings of God with respect to in their role in society. Fodio is echoing what Asma'u is saying, in that men in the society were ascribing roles to women rather than teaching them their true purposes. Neglecting a woman's right to explore the divine truth of their role in society gifted to them by God and the Prophet Mohammed, was for the sole purpose of furthering men's satisfaction.

IN CONCLUSION...

To conclude that, these women were just stepping stones in a movement towards including more women in the long line of philosophical history would be an understatement. These women have overcome some insurmountable obstacles of their times, managed to have their voices heard and have their names written in history as representatives of a collective of like-minded women who might not have been able to shout their ideas as loudly. Finally, I hope that the picture you paint of a philosopher might have broadened; including men and women in all corners of the world.

Geography news.



What's hot in Geography?

Once again Geography is all around us in some of the latest programmes that are out this spring on the BBC and Netflix. So if you have a spare moment in the Easter break why not indulge in some awe and wonder.

Race across the World, BBC One

The new series of the fabulous show started on Wednesday 22 March. This time it sees the teams take part in an epic race across Canada. The scenery is out of this world and as the viewer, you get to see all the places in Canada that are not typically visited. The race uses old fashioned navigation skills which means that the teams can not use phones to plan routes or find out information on their race to win. I love this wanderlust programme, a real family watch.



Wild Isles, BBC One

David Attenborough takes us once again on a journey of discovery, looking closely at the wildlife that inhabits the British Isles. The use of heat seeking cameras is spectacular when the programmer looks at a Starling rookery on the edge of Bodmin Moor in Cornwall. It makes the trees look like they are covered in fairy lights as there are so many birds within them each night. Watch out for the Barn Owl that causes havoc too! The filming of the murmuration that birds perform each evening is incredible as it shows the movement of the flock en masse. The series visits the key ecosystems that are found across the British Isles, including woodland, grasslands and marine. Once again an enjoyable and engaging watch.



The Volcano, Netflix

This film is at times a challenging watch as it is based on survivor accounts of the volcanic eruption of White Island, New Zealand, in 2019. However, it is engaging and a true story of human courage and spirit.

It does end up posing a number of questions that remain under answered.



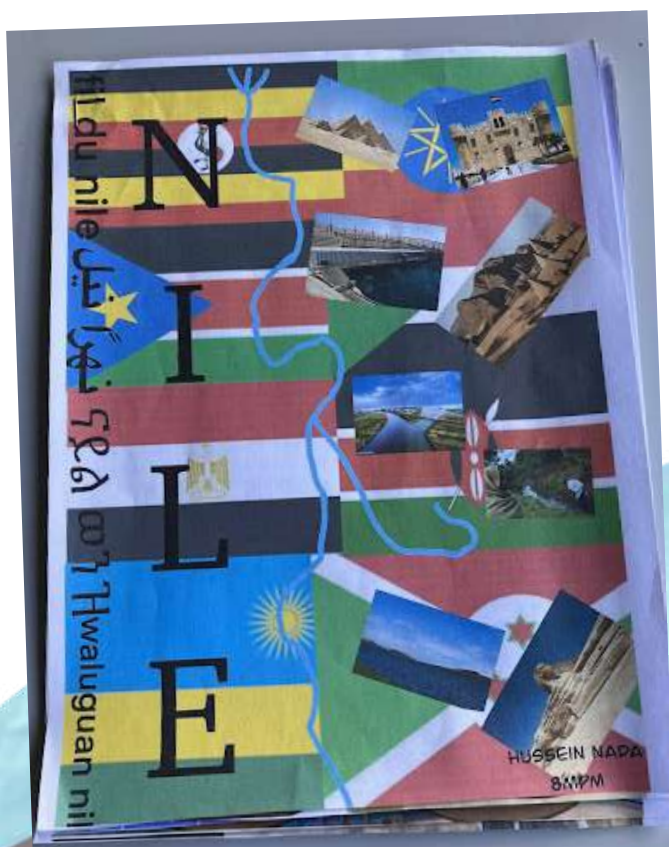
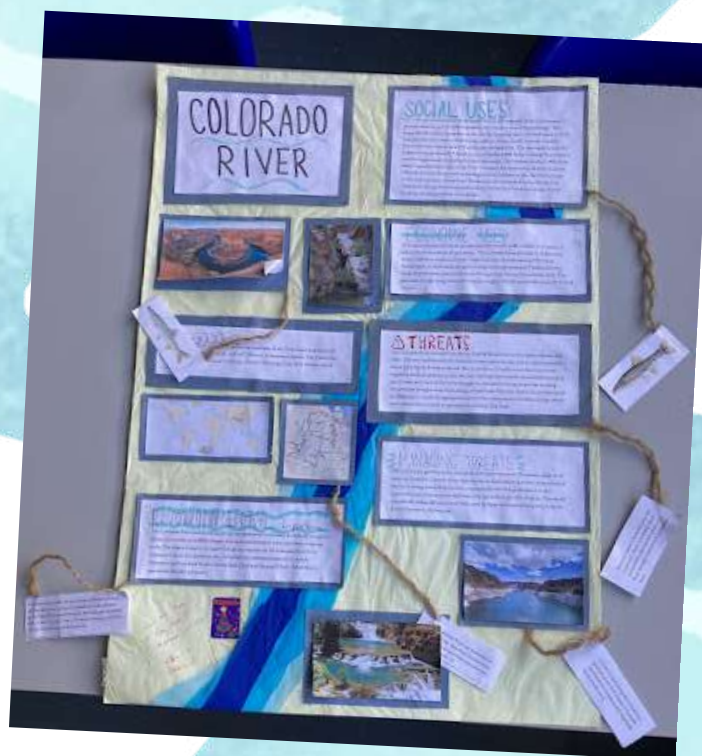
Year 8 River project success!

The Spring term has seen year 8 complete a Rivers project. Students were required to complete independent research on one of the 4 following rivers, Colorado, Ganges, Yangtze and the Nile, before completing creative and geographical final project. Once again this year the Geography department has been impressed with the efforts of students. Below is just a small section of the work that students have completed. Well done year 8 for all of your efforts and hard work.

8MPM

I loved this piece of work by Yasmin Mofakham, as she had included facts on the back of hanging fish... super creative, well done!

Mrs Belton Owen



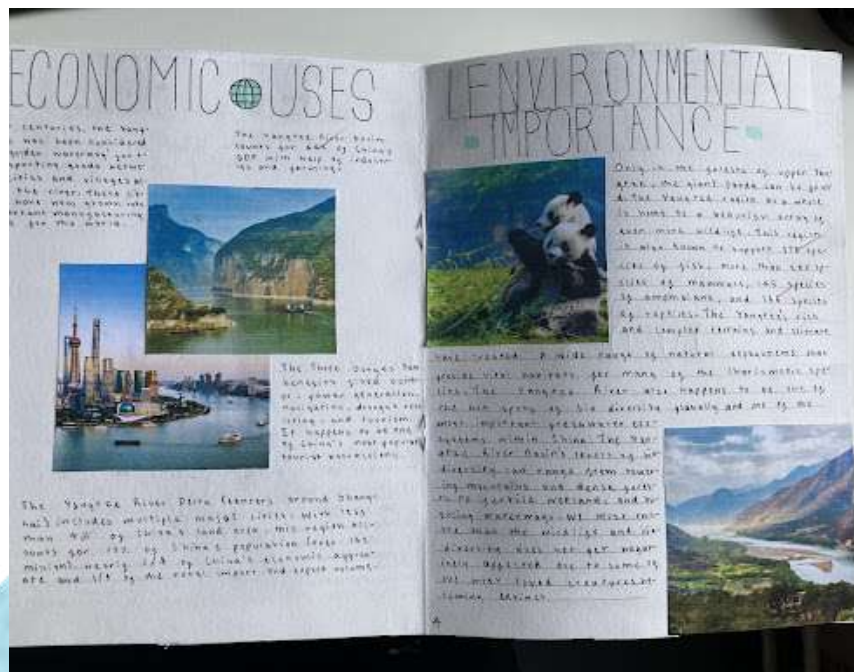
Hussein Nada presented his work in this super colourful booklet. I really liked the use of the flags on the front cover to represent each of the countries that the River Nile travels through. A great effort.

Mrs Belton Owen

8CED

Josh Harris has researched the River Nile and he created a huge A3 poster that clearly displays his research. He has made good use of the space and used both text and images to show his ideas. A good effort Josh.

Mrs Belton Owen



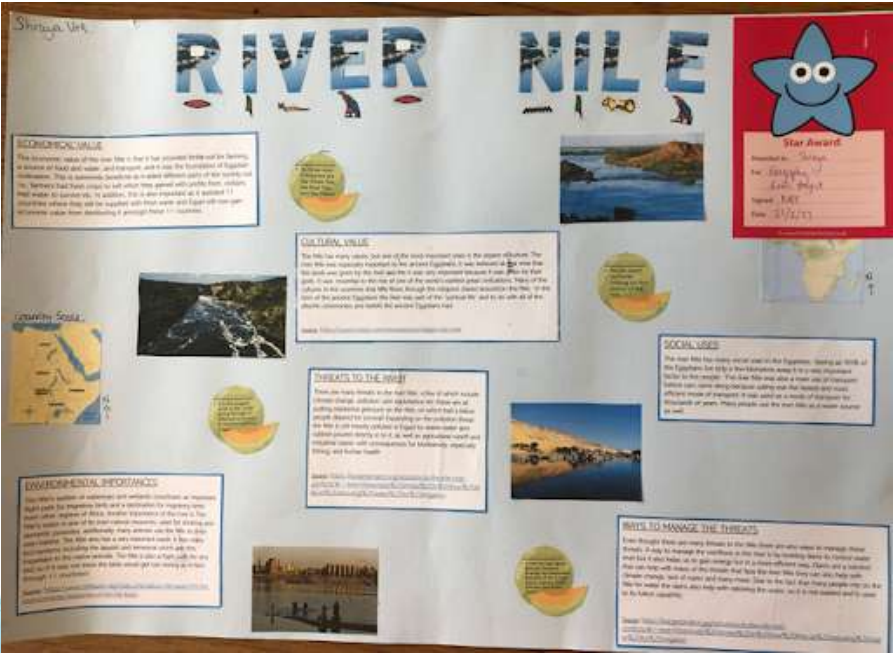
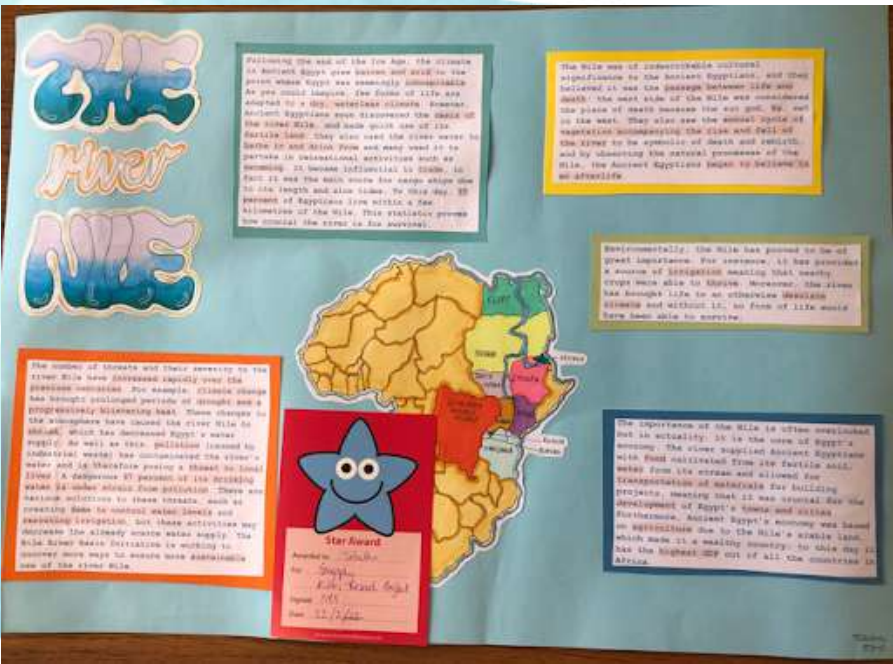
Neewa Subba. A very detailed booklet about the River Yangtze in China. I liked the detailed written account that was included for each of the project success criteria, along with the use of images. An excellent effort.

Mrs Belton Owen

8JMP

Tabitha created a beautiful display and map for the location of the Nile. The level of detailed included in research dn write up shows excellent understanding - well done Tabitha

Miss Thurlow



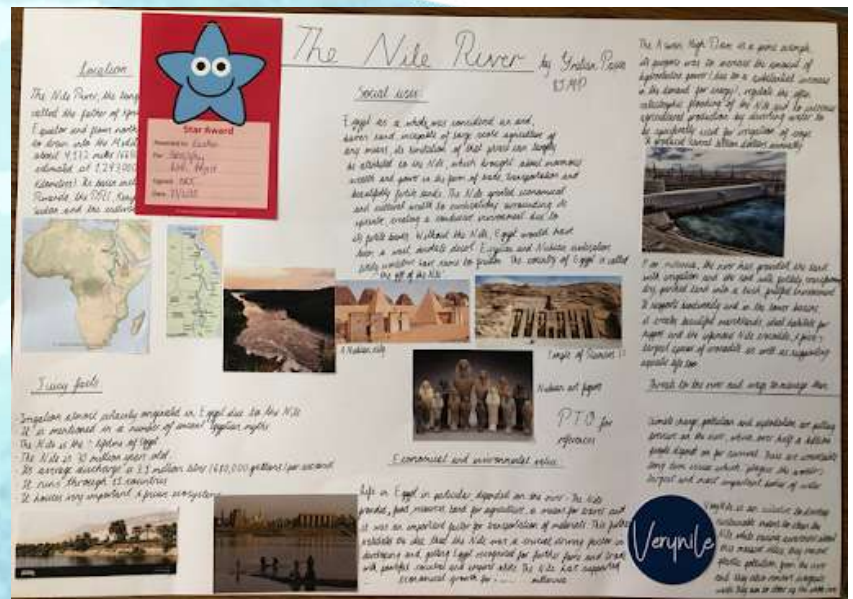
Shraya's impressive piece of work included excellent independent research and sourcing of the information included. I was particularly impressed with her write up on threats to the River Nile and ways to manage these. Fantastic work, well done.

Miss Thurlow

8JMP

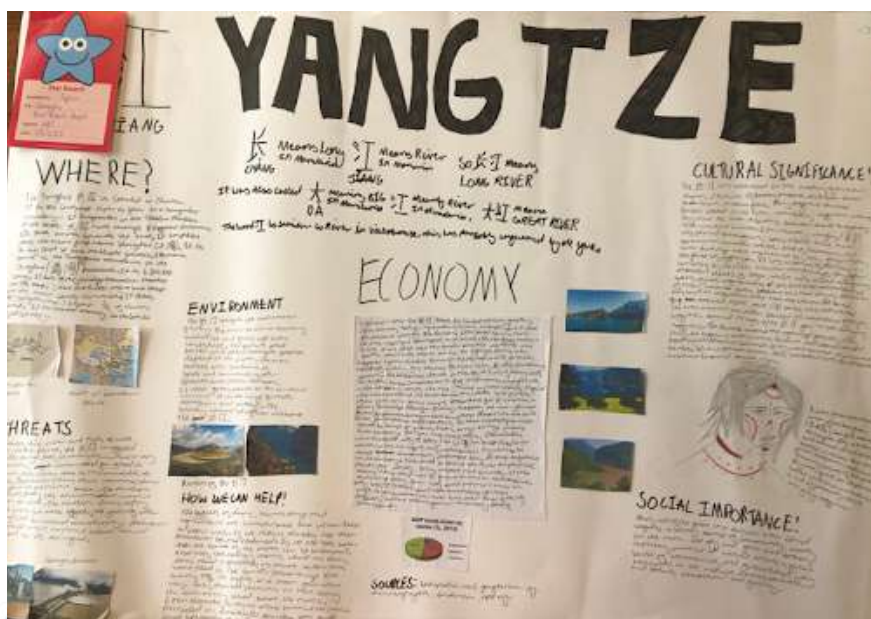
Gratian includes a write up on the Aswan High Dam and the impact this has on the countries downstream on the Nile. Great research was completed to look at the Nubian figures and city as well as the physical geography of the Nile. Well Done Gratian.

Miss Thurlow



Sophia's creativity shines through with her use of Mandarin Chinese for part of her research into the Yangtze River, known as Cháng Jiāng (长江; 長江). The cultural significance section also showed excellent research and a detailed write up. Well done, excellent work.

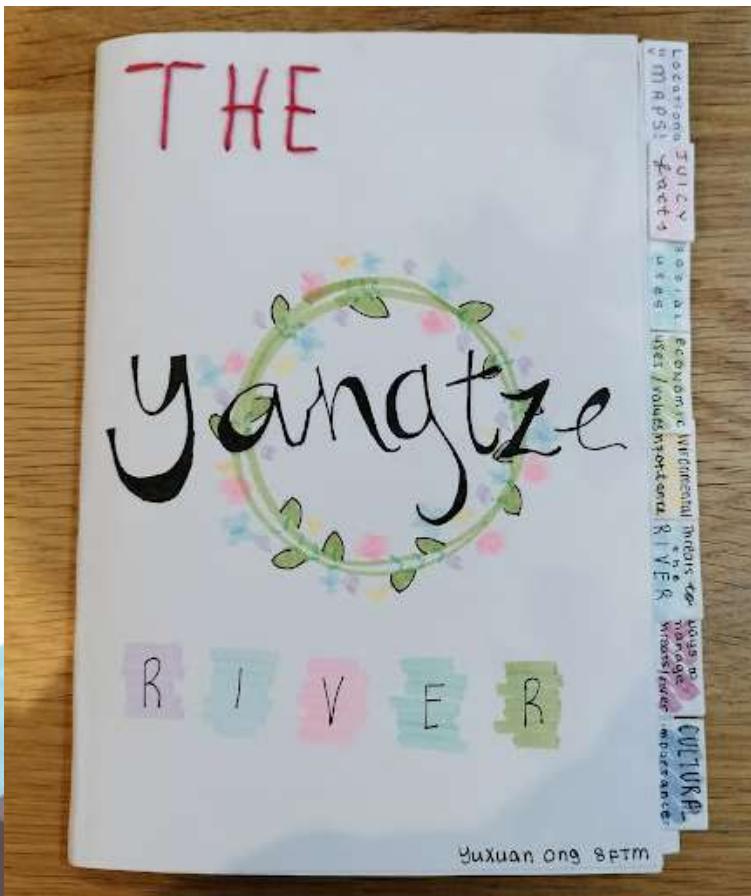
Miss Thurlow



8FTM

This mega-sized effort from Nihal impressed me in many ways. Not only was the presentation amazing but the detail and range of pictures showed that he had put a lot of effort into researching The Ganges River. I loved the images showing the different ways it was used by people and the wildlife that could be found there.

Miss Surplus



YuXuan has demonstrated her excellent knowledge of the Yangtze River in this beautifully presented booklet. Each page is crammed with information and relevant images. I also love the stitching and style of writing that has been used for the front cover.

Miss Surplus

8STA

A unique project by Avaneesh on the Colorado river which maps each of the USA states that the river travels through in the background, whilst the information is layered on top. I especially like the US flag border - it makes the whole project pop!

Miss Ashman



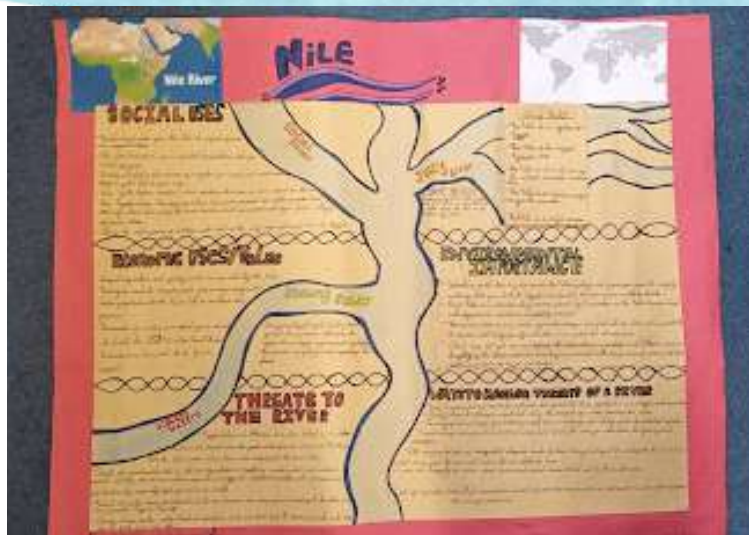
A well presented and colourful project by Adebola which has pop up graphs and a fan of animals found in the Yangtze river - another example of high level research and excellent presentation.

Miss Ashman

8ERE

A detailed illustration of all points, made to look like a foldaway leaflet, excellent presentation, creative and informative, Well done Emily!

Mrs. Miotti



Neatly and creatively presented illustration by Cedric of issues and facts about the Nile.
Mrs. Miotti

A very creative piece with lots of foldaway pages that prompted readers to explore the poster and find out more. An excellent, well-informed piece of research, coupled with great design. Mrs. Miotti



MFL NEWS

MFL Inter Schools Debate Contest



By Daamin Azad and Taiga Tsuchiya, year 12

On Wednesday 22nd March, BGS hosted the 2023 Key Stage 5 Inter Schools Debate Contest. 50 students from Bexley Grammar School, Dartford Grammar School and Beths Grammar School went head to head, with teams in French, Spanish, German, Japanese and Chinese. We must say, the MFL debate competition was definitely really well organised and we certainly had a lot more fun than we expected to.

The proposition that we were debating on, "There should be limits to the freedom of speech", was really interesting to argue for. Before the competition, students studying a variety of languages went to the weekly debate club which was held by Dr. Symons to practise and refine our argumentation techniques. We would also love to give a huge thanks to Dr. Symons and the MFL department for not only running the debate club, but also setting up and running the actual competition as well.

Presenting our arguments in Japanese was a challenge: however, it allowed us to learn a variety of new vocabulary and skills that we would not normally have learnt within lessons. We had a great opportunity to show off our Japanese linguistic skills to non-BGS students, which we never really had a chance to do, and we have learnt a lot, both language-wise and through ourselves realising that we know a lot more Japanese than we thought we did! It was incredibly surprising to find out that our team of two had beaten a team of four in the debate, and we feel proud to be representing BGS alongside each other in front of DGS and Beths in the competition by winning the Japanese debate.

Congratulations to the winning team!

BGS MUSIC

Spring Concert 2023: 'Out of the World'



On Monday, we had our annual spring music concert, 'Out of This World', which was unique to say the least. This year's theme was space, and it certainly lived up to its name. First up was the Symphony Orchestra, which played the memorable 'Also Sprach Zarathustra' from 2001 Space Odyssey, followed by the Avatar soundtrack by James Horner. The lighting here really helped set the scene - there was even a smoke machine! This was followed by Mrs Eacott's string orchestra, which played the classic E.T theme. After that was Clarinet Choir, performing a series of soundtracks from Super Mario - Overture, Chasing the bunnies, Luma, Attack of the Airships and Finale). This was especially fun as the actual game scenes were displayed along with the music. Then the Chamber Choir performed two songs, 'Bach' and 'Rocket Man', which were definitely a contrast to the previous instrumental groups. Next, the Flute Choir played Fly me to the Moon and Junior Choir then performed Spaceman to continue on the space theme. Penultimately, it was Junior Jazz playing Moon Dance by Van Morrison, featuring many solos from the saxophone, drums, piano and more. Finally, to conclude the first half, the Senior Choir sang Don't Stop me now - a classic hit by Queen. This was followed by a quick break where the audience could buy refreshments from stores run by the PTA. Next time, why don't you come along too?

By Diep Anh Nguyen, Y9



Last Monday, on the 20th, the Music Department's spring concert took place. The theme was 'Out of This World' and it was an amazing event. I am going to speak about the second half: It was kicked off with the amazing KS3 orchestra who played Star Wars and The Final Countdown on a range of instruments from a double bass to timpanis! To follow this up, the brilliant samba group performed Samba Reggae Ile Aye. After this the Brass group performed Space oddity. This was completely student run and coincidentally, it was Will's birthday (the conductor and organiser). Then the rock group took the stage with Heart - Barracuda. Nearing the end of the show, The Big Band played two songs and a singing solo. The penultimate group was the improv group performing Solar - Miles Davis. The final performance was the massed piece of Earth where people from all different groups and instrument types, even choirs, to perform Earth by Hans Zimmer. It felt absolutely amazing to be part of such a beautiful ensemble. Massive thank you to all Music teachers that contributed to the concert!!!!

By Louis Luckman Y9

STEM NEWS



HIGHLIGHTS

EDUCATION IN ACTION

CHEMISTRY IN ACTION

BIOLOGY IN ACTION

Students in Years 10- 13 attended a series of lectures delivered by cutting edge scientists in a number of different fields. Nabi Amlani tells us more about one of the conferences:

Education in Action - by Nabi Amlani.

Whether it's learning about potential life on other planets within and beyond our solar system, or exploring the fascinating world of fusion energy, the Physics In Action lectures allowed many of our Year 12 physicists to discover the variety of ways physics is applied and utilised in our modern world - and how physics is constantly pushing the boundaries of human innovation. World-leading researchers and professors from universities across the UK helped shed light to students about groundbreaking discoveries that are taking place, and also highlighted the importance of a new generation of scientists and engineers: Michael de Podesta noting that issues such as global warming will require our generation to come up with genius solutions to mitigate against the dangers of a climate catastrophe. Dr Anna Ploszajski also revealed to students the intriguing world of Material Science - a lesser known field in STEM - and the careers and research it leads prospective students towards. All in all, many Year 12s found the talks useful and inter

Education
in ACTION

Biology in Action - what did our students experience?

A small group of Year 12 Biologists and Mr Booth attended Biology in Action, which was an interesting trip located in the Emmanuel Centre, Westminster. Speakers from various areas of biology spoke about their background and shared some interesting ideas and projects they're working on. This included a talk about genetics and how gene editing is used. I found it interesting how genetics can be changed to benefit an organism. Another speaker spoke about astrobiology and the search for organisms beyond our planet. There was a talk about healthcare and the journey of a GP which was very inspirational. A speaker spoke about plants and how food production can be maximised for a growing population. Lastly we learnt about de-extinction looking at how DNA can be extracted from extinct species and potentially bringing them back. All of these speakers were very interesting and it was a great way to celebrate science week.

Ross Thomson, Year 12



On Monday 13th March we went to the Emmanuel Centre to see several speakers discuss their own scientific fields including Astrophysics, Cryogenics, Conservationism and Chemistry. Personally, I found it very interesting to hear what actual scientists are doing in each of their scientific niches. I particularly liked the session about Jupiter's aurora in x-rays! I also liked the interactive parts where we could submit answers to a poll and see if we were correct, I guess because it felt fun to make an educated guess and then get it right. Overall, I enjoyed the trip!

Andy Yu, IILC

The speeches on Monday were varied in what they focused on, yet I enjoyed how each scientist spoke so passionately about their field making any of the sciences seem more approachable. I really liked the session discussing how every organism is deeply interconnected and to tackle climate change we cannot just try to separately fix problems by focusing on just one animal or place to restore at a time. This speaker also spoke about being unsure which career to go into which is very current for some of us. The event truly illustrated the wide and diverse range of topics that can be explored when following a career in science. Thank you to all the speakers for a really nice event!

Ursule Goraviciute, IJIR

Chemistry in Action - what did our students experience?

by: Siona Canaj, Laurel Broughton and Matthew Linane - Year 12

On Thursday 15th of March, the BGS Chemistry department attended a sixth form, Chemistry in Action conference, at the Emmanuel Centre, where five prestigious speakers from some of the country's top universities lectured on fascinating chemistry topics.

Five sessions from leading chemists in academia and industry, gave a well-rounded perspective on not only the widespread variety of jobs related to chemistry, but also the many vital uses it has all around the world, ranging from nanoscience to forensic analysis to synthetics.



Andrea Sella

Comedian Steve Cross chaired the extremely interactive event, including polls, quizzes and chances to win prizes, and a lecture on examination success was given by Peter Hoare.

Andrea Sella, Chemist and broadcaster of University College London gave a lecture on “Terra Rara- The Unknown Elemental Sea”, exploring these 17 elements, the reason behind their name and their endless potential. These elements have recently been in the news for price inflation. Their uses in electronics, car engine manufacturing and renewable energy sources make them indispensable to the market. Their name Terra Rara (i.e Rare Earth), was given to these elements when the first three were found in a mine in Ytterby, Sweden, in 1788. Often, these elements are very hard to extract because they are never found in very high concentrations and are often combined with radioactive elements, such as uranium and thorium, and once separated leave behind radioactive residue. And yet the effort is essential to future technological advancements.



Jess Wade

Jess Wade, Materials Scientist of Imperial College London gave a lecture on “How chiral materials will change the world”. In this lecture, Jess Wade spoke and explained to us about how the handedness of fundamental particles such as photons and electrons could be altered to harness their energy more efficiently. She explained that OLED screens in TVs and smartphones utilise chiral materials to enhance picture quality and preserve battery life by making glare filters 100% efficient. Additionally, she spoke about benzene, and novel applications as semiconductors in electronics. Scientists are unable to explain how it's able to manipulate spin and handedness, and as such, it's causing a scientific storm between physicists and chemists!

Alex Baker of the University of Warwick explored “When Medicines become Drugs – How Small Chemical Changes Change the World”. In this talk, Alex Baker gave us a fascinating insight on how big of an impact chemistry can have on the world. Linking to Jess Wade’s talk on chiral materials earlier in the day, he talked about how right-handed and left-handed forms of chemicals can have huge impacts on whether the chemical is safe, or whether it harms its users. He also discussed how addiction works neurologically, as well as ethical considerations of making certain drugs illegal: if users are already addicted to the drug, it is unlikely they will stop using it when it has been made illegal which forces them into the hands of drug dealers, who frequently add other substances such as fentanyl to make the drugs they sell even more addictive, but also extremely dangerous.



Alex Baker

Kit Chapman, author and chemist, gave a lecture on Chemistry in conflict, exploring all the ways in which chemistry has changed the course of military history. In his lecture, fascinating histories of war were explored: the war between Chile and Bolivia, fought over bird poo, and its fertilising properties; fighter jets looking for new elements in nuclear mushroom clouds; and how aircraft carriers were successfully built from ice and sawdust, yet never used in war. Kit also explored how people who had experienced the horrific effects of the chemical warfare agent, mustard gas, in WW1 couldn’t get cancer, because the mustard gas had essentially worked as a chemotherapy agent. Additionally, he explained that renewable energy was advanced through war: nuclear fusion research is built on principles discovered in the Manhattan project!



Kit Chapman

Rachel Bolton-King, Staffordshire University, gave a lecture on “Making the invisible visible”, discussing crime scene ballistics analysis. This interactive talk was a favourite of many, focussing on the use of chemistry in forensic science, using it to help crime scene investigators understand what happened if there are no witnesses willing to give information. She used a real life example of a gunshot wound from a shotgun, then explained the components of a shotgun shell and the chemical makeup of it to help us piece together information from the crime scene, including how to know how far away someone had been shot from based on the spreading out of the shot from within the shell - something which forensic scientists typically use to differentiate between homicides and suicides.



Rachel Bolton-King

Overall, the day proved to be an enlightening and thoroughly enjoyable experience, witnessing the great breadth of topics Chemistry has to offer and discovering their recent breakthroughs.

HAPPY
Easter



Rāmāḍān
★ Kāreem

