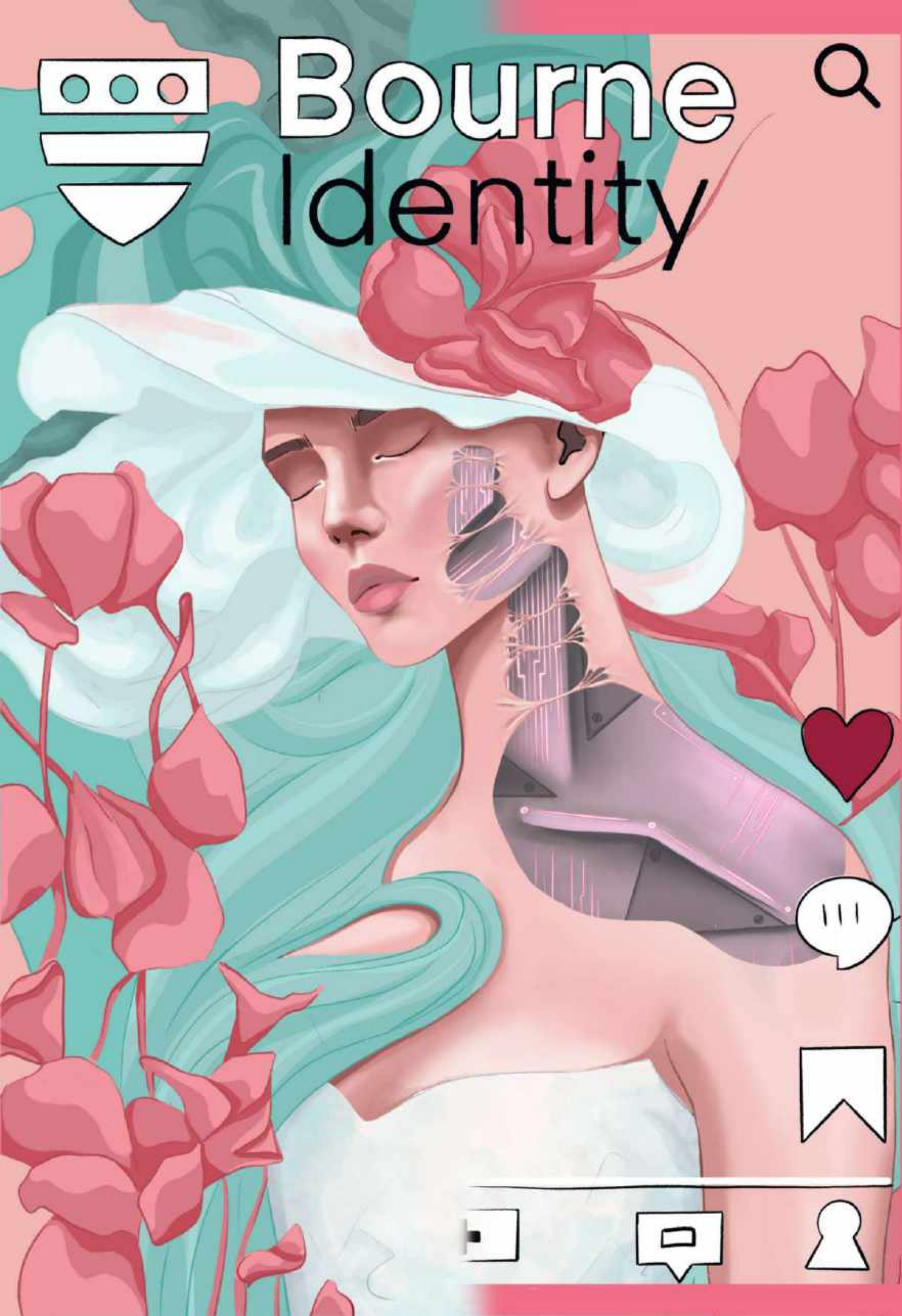


Bourne Identity



A Note From The Editors



Isabella Perna, Qais Raja, Atiksh Agnihotri, Vivienne Chen

Welcome to the 5th issue of Bourne Identity. As always, Bourne Identity seeks to become the avenue through which the voices of students can reach this vast school community. Alongside showcasing the work of established writers and artists in our studies, we must not forget to appreciate the passion and talent that lives in the corridors of our school every day.

It is the people that shape a school, as much as it is the school that shapes people.

With this edition of Bourne Identity, we have attempted to raise awareness, touch hearts, and get people thinking deeply about a variety of topics. Though it is easy to disregard, countless hours have gone into creating this year's edition. Many weekends, video calls and a laptop bursting into flames have helped to create our favourite release yet. We hope you enjoy pouring over these pages, as we have time and time again.

Teachers who go the extra mile make the school experience even more rewarding. And we couldn't have asked for a better one. A huge thanks to Mrs Clark for her dedication in orchestrating this project and making it the best it could be.

As we look ahead to next year's edition, we invite you to be a part of this journey. Your voice, your perspective, and your stories matter. Whether it's through poetry, prose, art, or photography, we encourage you to share your unique insights. Your story awaits its page...

With warm regards,
The Editorial Team

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CLASSROOM AND BEYOND

A message from the Head Students



Our message

In our last year at BGS, we've had the privilege of being Head Students, which has given us the opportunity to act as spokespeople for the students around us and inspire change within the School on issues that are at the heart of our student body. As we come to the end of our time here, it naturally gives us a chance to reflect on the journey that has led us to where we are today.

It would be easy to assume that as Head Students, we've breezed through School without so much as a behaviour point, but throughout our School career, we've experienced the same ups and downs, struggles and stresses as everyone else. With that in mind, we thought it would be fitting to share some of the lessons we've learned outside of the classroom over these past seven years - whether it's tips specific to the committees we run, or more general advice that we would've loved to have known sooner - before we leave this summer.

Committee Messages **Environmental Committee** *Catie Dawson*

In the Environmental Committee, we decided to share our favourite ways of reducing the impact our life has on the planet. It's easy to feel powerless in the face of the current climate crisis, but following these tips is an easy and cost-effective way to make sustainable choices and do your bit to help our society become greener:

1. Our first tip is to opt for a reusable water bottle and coffee cup rather than single-use options. Although buying these is an initial investment, in the long run it's not only a great way to cut out plastics and other single-use materials, but can also save you money as most cafés offer discounts for using your own cup (the Chill gives you 10p off!).
2. Another small change which can have a large and positive impact on both the planet and your wallet is switching from conventional bottled shampoo to shampoo bars. These highly-concentrated bars tend to last for 70-90 washes and are completely plastic free.

Alternatively, certain brands such as the Body Shop sell aluminum shampoo bottles which can be re-filled in store over and over again which is a great way to avoid plastic waste if bar soap isn't your thing.

3. As teenagers, our personal style is very important to us, and thankfully second-hand clothing sites such as Vinted and Depop mean this doesn't have to cost the earth. Fast-fashion brands are not only unethical in their treatment of employees, but also result in huge carbon emissions and landfill deposits. For example, according to the charity Barnardos, the average Brit wears any given item of clothing only 7 times before discarding it. By shopping second hand however, you aren't requiring any new resources or labour to be invested into your wardrobe, and you can get high-quality brands for a fraction of their original price, or find unique vintage pieces that aren't available at the local shopping centre.

The Equality and Diversity Committee

Hafsa Saghir

The Equality and Diversity Committee accomplished many things this year, one being the Children in Need fundraiser where we raised over £800!

This was the first time BGS had done an event like this and so a lot of time, planning, and effort went into it and we were so happy to see amazing participation. Championing equality for all, however, doesn't necessarily mean carrying out huge events. It may also mean ensuring disabled toilets are kept to a high standard, increasing availability of menstrual products or even just educating people about key issues and keeping an open mind. There are many small things that help other people's lives run a bit more smoothly.

Our next plan is to further develop Culture Day - we hope to spread our message of embracing and celebrating diversity.

Year 7 Committee

Sophia Leaton

If I were to repeat my time at Bourne Grammar, there isn't much that I would do differently. When it comes to friendships, patience is key, you may not make your closest friends immediately - finding mine took a long time, and you do not have to remain in one group all the way through school. Do not be scared to try new things (like auditioning for the school musical or joining a sports team), and put yourself out there, you never know unless you try. If you let the opportunities pass you by, you could miss out on finding something you did not know you had a talent for, or meeting people you would not otherwise have met. Making the most of any trips or opportunities is another important aspect of your school life. Whilst academic trips will enhance your understanding or interest in a subject, it is also just as important to take part in programs like the Duke of Edinburgh award (DofE) where you can create the most incredible memories and friendships. Experiences like DofE are also fantastic for developing independence and life skills like cooking - watching a member of my group attempting to cook 500g of spaghetti in one tiny pan on a Trangia, and having to pull and scrape burnt spaghetti coated in sriracha sauce from one of our few pans will forever remind me how to not cook pasta. A bad test result is not the end of the world, and it certainly does not define you. Instead, it is how you respond to, and tackle your adversities that will shape your achievements.

On that note, it is never too late to turn anything around, and with effort, resilience, and motivation, you will find that there is always a solution. Your teachers are there to help, and they will help if you ask them, so if there is something you have not understood in a lesson, never be scared to ask them to explain. As tempting as it may be to cram the night before for an end of topic test, try spaced repetition as you are in the process of learning the content. This means revising little and often, a technique which will be much more beneficial (and a lot less stressful) long term than sacrificing your sleep to cram a whole topic in the night before.

My best advice would be to always give everything you do 100%, whether that be in trying to connect with new people, in your studies, or in your hobbies, your life at this school is ultimately in your control, so create an unforgettable experience for yourself and have no regrets.

What I wish I'd known at the start of my BGS Journey

Hafsa Saghir

In terms of things I wish I knew before attending BGS, I wish I was more confident in branching out and making friends rather than staying with the same people from my primary school. It seemed really daunting at the time but now that I look back on it, I realise that everyone was in the same position. I still remember when my whole form showed up to a lesson 30 minutes late because we were all lost!

Another thing I wish I knew was that you needed to learn how to be organised through trial and error. Shortcuts do not work. I found out the hard way as I used to keep every single subject book in my bag and just take it to school. Though this helped me not forget books, it did not help my organisational skills nor my back...

One thing I'll never forget about BGS was the first Culture Day in 2023. We had never had anything like that before so everyone was somewhat nervous. However, the atmosphere when everyone was in school was incredible; strangers would compliment each other's cultural clothing and ask more about it, the mood was very light and comforting and everyone was relaxed and enjoying themselves. I was surprised with how quickly everyone relaxed and the many lovely interactions between people.

A tip I would like to give you all is to keep an open mind. Our school is incredibly diverse, there are so many different traditions, practices and religions here. Learning more about each other and embracing the traditions that are special to others will allow us to move forward and appreciate things and parts of one another that we once did not.



Artwork by Annabel Hope

High School Musical



Photos by Mrs Pignatiello

By Tegan Haw

Are phones really ruining school experiences?

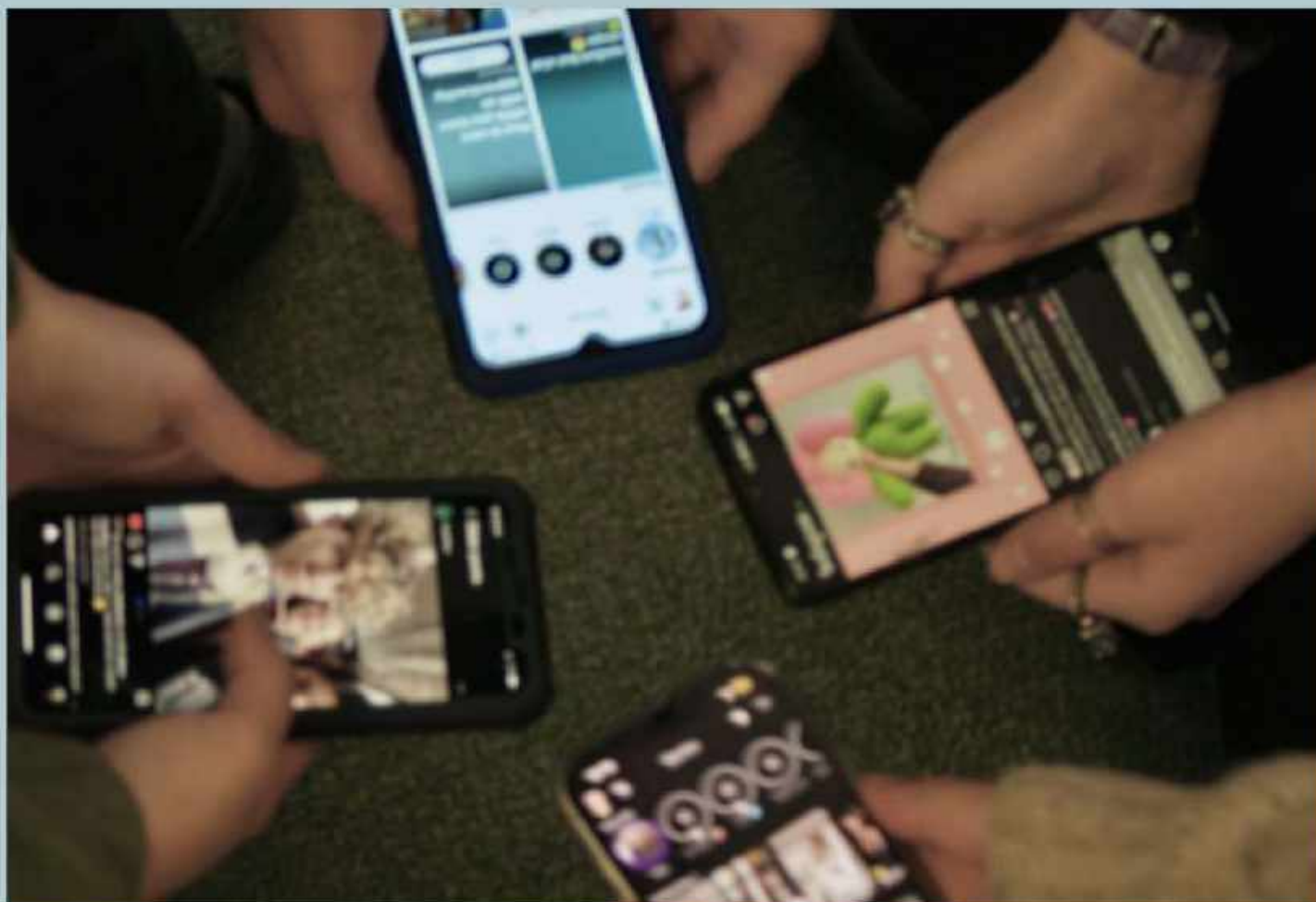


Photo by Maria Klatkiewicz

Can you imagine not being allowed to use your phone for the entire school day? Not even during breaks? For most students here at Bourne Grammar School, the idea of this probably seems crazy — it is 2023 after all! However, the Department for Education has announced that new guidance will recommend a ban on mobile phones, and a recent survey found 60% of schools in England and Wales already have one in place.

Walking around the school site at breaktimes, it would be unsurprising to see others on their phones and we never really stop to think twice about it. Socially, it is hard to define the impacts of phones as good or bad — like most things they have their downfalls along with their advantages. For example, at first glance, you may just see a group of people staring intensely at their phones (and a worrying lack of blinking) and it would be so easy to believe that

phones are encouraging antisocial behaviour — in some senses they do. Then, you see the group burst out laughing and chatting animatedly with their friends and you realise they are playing some game together or watch as they passionately share something they've seen with others — bonding in what is perhaps traditionally an unusual way but nowadays is becoming more and more common. Of course, there are those who don't use them in this way, who just choose to use their phones instead of talking to friends, but, similarly, there are those who don't even seem to touch their phones the whole school day.

Of course, you must also consider the impact banning phones in schools would have on our education. Unfortunately, the use of phones in lessons can put those without them at a distinct disadvantage — often forcing them to share with a (hopefully) willing partner. Furthermore, phones can admittedly be rather distracting (as I am sure everyone will have realised themselves after using them to delay doing homework at least once or twice) so it is undeniable that in some cases they can contribute to a lack of focus in lessons. But it is also difficult to argue that they do have numerous advantages in education as well. Phones allow an opportunity to develop independent research skills more without using one of the limited classrooms with computers — research skills that, in an age of technology where it seems you can find an answer to very question if you just know where to search, are undisputedly more

valuable than just being able to read something from a specific textbook page. On top of this, it can help save resources when teachers can simply scan pages of a textbook and send them to pupils rather than printing 30 copies of them, wasting ink instead of just using a device.

To me, phones seem like such a fundamental part of our experience here — whether it is when you research a topic that interests you in lessons, or when you realise a week into the school year you have already lost the paper copy of your timetable and scramble to check your next lesson on Satchel One. Personally, I struggle to imagine Bourne Grammar School without phones.



Photo by Maria Klatkiewicz

Tendency to fail or doomed since birth?



Photo via University of Leeds

While private schools are plentiful, working-class students struggle to access a lasting, fulfilling education.

As someone who has gone through the UK school system, I have seen first-hand the inequalities prevalent in education, and it strikes me that there are two overwhelming factors which contribute to working class students in the UK being placed at a systematic disadvantage. According to the UK Government's Widening Participation Report, just 29% of students eligible for free school meals progressed to Higher Education in 2022.

Linguistic discrimination

One significant factor is linguistic discrimination. Working class accents in the UK have throughout time been heavily stigmatised which has led to a plethora of stereotypes seeping their way into education. An example would be northern accents having connotations of low intelligence, while southern accents are thought to be both successful and capable due to their association with wealth.

These stereotypes have dire consequences. Dr Robert McKenzie, who researches prejudice against northern accents at Northumbria University, found children with stigmatised accents were less likely to get higher marks in school, which consequently leads to poorer results, unemployment and finally the fatal blow of poverty, since societal factors have led to stereotypes impacting their access to education. How would you feel to be judged on your abilities on the mere factor of how you speak?



Photo via pixabay.com

Material deprivation

We know that without a balanced diet we would cease to have the material needed for us to perform to our best abilities. You may be thinking, but as a country we provide free school meals so why do I have to care? Free schools are often the only nutritional food many disadvantaged children receive a day. Is it any surprise they are additionally deprived of educational recourses and even heating, creating conditions virtually impossible to succeed in?

According to Deane Raey, Professor of Education at Cambridge University, not only do state schools have a higher staff turnover than the independent sector thus reducing educational quality, but also the students were 27% less likely to achieve five or more GCSEs putting them already at a disadvantage aged 16. These are purely shocking statistics, since it shows that an inferior education can cause long lasting suffering for a whole social group.



Photo via pexels.com

These students are the future of our society, so we need to do more to reduce the gap between the rich and the poor, as well as tackling prejudice and ignorance.

By Akshaya Tirchunapallinaveen

Mastering Your Exams

Picture this: you confidently enter the exam hall, your pencil case in your hand, and take your designated seat. This time, you're not just hoping to get through; you're prepared, armed with knowledge, and ready to ace this exam. If this wasn't you in your last exam, don't worry – this could be your new norm.

Exams are the inevitable hurdles that punctuate our academic journey, often evoking fear and anxiety. However, fear not my fellow students! With a carefully devised plan, you can thrive in your next exam.



Photo from University of Cape Town

How to do it?

The first steps to success lie in meticulous planning. Make a note of your goals and break your study schedule into manageable segments, incorporating both learning information and reviewing it. However, ensure these goals are realistic. Without this, your plan will overwhelm you and the heavy study periods will lead to burn out in the long run. To avoid this, make sure to allocate time for breaks. A way in which you can implement this throughout your routine is through the Pomodoro technique, a technique many readers will be familiar with.

The idea is to split your study schedule into 20-25 mins of deeply focused studying, followed by a 5-minute break. You should repeat this until you have covered your content for the day. When you use this technique, it is recommended to take a longer break of around 10-15 mins after a total of 1-1.5 hours of study time. A well-organised plan ensures comprehensive coverage of all your topics and eliminates the need for last-minute cramming – something I know we've all done.



Photo from pixabay.com



Photo from pexels.com

The Forgetting Curve

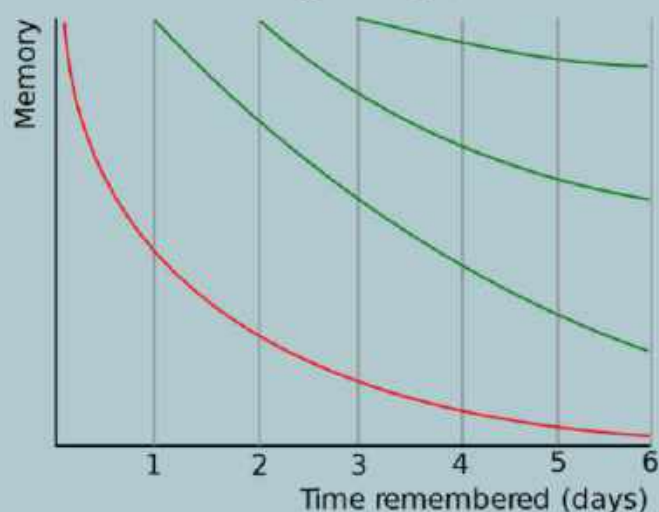


Photo from wikimedia.org

Repetition

We should all be aware of the Forgetting Curve conceptualised by psychologist Hermann Ebbinghaus. It teaches us that our memory fades over time. But fear not; by spacing out your reviews, you not only strengthen your study routine but also boost your own memory. So, ditch cramming and embrace spaced repetition. For instance, if you learn about enzymes today, recap it in 2 days, then 3 days, and finally a week later. This thoughtful planning extends beyond mere exam preparation; it's a clever strategy to overcome the curve entirely.

Active Study

So, how do you revise for an exam? Beyond passive reading and highlighting your notes, engage in active learning. Active learning or active recall is the secret ingredient that converts your study routine from passive to powerful. Instead of just reading and re-reading, actively engage with the material to boost comprehension and retention. One effective technique is summarising information in your own words. Flashcards are another dynamic tool; condense key points onto these portable study aids for quick, on-the-go review. When you're on the bus, instead of mindlessly staring out the window, you can whip out your flashcards and have a quick review. Quizlet allows you to achieve the exact goal but digital flashcards may be more convenient for some. Or take it a step further and explain a complex concept to a friend or study group. This not only reinforces your understanding of the topic, but also enhances your ability to articulate ideas. The key is to make your study sessions interactive, ensuring you're not just a passive recipient of information but an active participant in your own learning journey. Grab those flashcards, get learning and turn your study sessions into new and engaging experiences!



Photo from pexels.com

What Do Top Students Do Differently?

Recently, I watched a Ted Ed speech entitled “What do top students do differently?” by Douglas Barton. Douglas Barton unravels the secrets of academic success, emphasising the significance of practice questions over the traditional measures like IQ. Barton argues that the intelligence of a person is not the sole predictor of achievement; rather, that achievement is fuelled by constant practice of challenging oneself through applying knowledge into questions, another example of active learning.

Barton states that 11% of students in the UK do practice exams a week before their real ones, which is similar to their counterparts in other countries. He argues that this is what propels students to the top. For optimal exam preparation, make sure that you plan prior and cover your content early and thoroughly, however make sure to spread it evenly, and dedicate that last week before your exams solely to practice questions and exams. That way, you are able to critically analyse the information, apply it in real questions and understand the time constraints during the exam – something overlooked by many students.

Finally, make sure that you leave time for yourself to avoid burnout and falling ill. Give time to yourself to do some physical activity each day, or any activity you like, whether it's playing a sport or simply listening to music. It goes without saying that you need to eat a balanced diet to have the energy to perform well. Remember, the Roman poet Juvenal's advice, “You should pray for a healthy mind in a healthy body”.



Photo from pexels.com.

As we venture into the realm of academic excellence, let us remember: in every challenge lies an opportunity for growth, and every stumble is a step forward to a brighter future. Strive for excellence, embrace resilience, and let every obstacle be a stepping stone to our collective success.

Channel Trophy 2023



Photo by Gareth Birdsall

Have you ever wondered what it would be like to compete for your country? To represent the nation in an international tournament alongside teammates and coaches?

In December 2023, I had such an opportunity - I represented the England "B" team U26 Women's bridge team in the Channel Trophy held in Utrecht, Netherlands.

Many of you are probably wondering what bridge actually is. Contract bridge, more commonly known as bridge, is a trick-taking card game (also a mind-sport) which uses a standard 52-card deck. In basic terms, it is played by four players in two competing partnerships.

How is it scored?

Each player is given 13 cards (these cards are pre-dealt) and with your partner, you have to try and get as many points as possible for each board. Each player is assigned a direction: north, east, south, and west - each direction gets given the same cards- in team matches one pair of the team 'sit' NS and the other EW.

There are eight players, sitting at two or more tables, the boards (pre-dealt cards) from each table are played and passed to the next table to the other table of players. At the end of a session, the scores for each board are compared, and the points are given to the team that has the highest net points on each deal. These points are now converted into IMPs (international match points) using a set scale- up to 24 per board. In this particular event, there were 18 boards a match.

After this, the IMPs are converted in VPs (victory points)- up to 20 a match. VPs from all the matches are added up and ranked resulting in a team's final ranking. However, in medal matches VPs are not used; the team with the highest IMPs in that match alone win the match. 6 players are often in a team in multi-day events which means that 2 players are not playing at all times - my team was on a rota with everyone playing the same number of rounds. The 2 players not playing are on sit-out.

I met up with the England U21s and both England U26W teams, at a café just outside St Pancras International at 6:45 am, to get on the Eurostar to Amsterdam at 8:15 am.

4 hours, 2 stops and 1 time zone change later we arrived in Amsterdam. Upon arriving at Amsterdam Centraal station, we successfully regrouped and gained a teammate who had flown to Amsterdam the previous night. After another train to Utrecht and arriving at the venue, after the initial team meeting at 3 pm we were free to do whatever we wanted to do onsite for the remainder of the afternoon.

Round 1 started at 7:30 pm, and finished at 10:15 pm against England "A" who had won 88-29(IMP). The first half of round 2, which was against the Netherlands

This started at 10:30 pm and finished at 11:45pm- we won this half of the match 41-24(IMP). After the excitement of the match, all the teams headed back to the hotel.

Channel Trophy



December 15 – 17, 2023

NDC den Hommel, Utrecht



Photo by Harriet Cork

Day 2: At 9:45 am as a team we headed to the venue- at 10 am the second half of round 2 commenced and finished 41-49(IMP). The first half of round 3 started at 11:30 against France- which we lost 26-41. Round 3 finished with a score of 39-94(IMP). Round 4 started at 3:15 pm, and ended at 6 pm against England "A", which ended in a draw! 47-47(IMP). At 6:15 pm dinner was served. Round 5 started at 7 pm against France which finished 26-51. Now excited about the potential bronze podium position, we headed back to the hotel.

Day 3: At 9:45 am as a team for the final time we headed to the venue. This time we had been placed in a bronze place match. At 10 am round 6 vs Netherlands had begun. As the players returned to the team table, the team added up the score of the first half of round 6. The result was 23-19(IMP) and it looked like we could finish 3rd.

All of the other England teams were guaranteed 1st or 2nd place due to their excellent performances across the event. England "A" in the U26W category had a silver medal guaranteed.

In the U21 and U26 categories, England were both playing 2nd place - France. The second half of the final round started at 11:30. The England vs France U26 match was streamed live onto BBO (a bridge website) which meant that all of the England teams, coaches and players on sitout were sat around a table watching the live match on laptops.

Unfortunately, the English U26 team had lost the match narrowly by 3 IMPs and had as a result finished 2nd. The English U21 team had beaten France and had defended their title. As the final English team to come out, U26W England "B" did not look happy when they came out of the playing room (I was on sit-out for the second half of the last round).

As we scored up our placement had been confirmed. The final score came out as 24-37(IMP) and unfortunately England "B" had missed out on a medal.

In the hopes of keeping our spirits up, we were reminded that despite having an average team age of 17 in a U26 competition, we had in fact done much better than we thought we were going to. At 1 pm the closing ceremony was upon us.

As the closing ceremony came to an end, we began to realise that the trip had not quite ended as we still had 8 hours of travelling ahead of us. After leaving the venue and a 20-minute walk later we arrived at Utrecht Centraal station and headed on a train to Amsterdam.

After 2 hours of free time in Amsterdam, we regrouped and said goodbye to those opting to fly home instead. At 6:45 pm (CET) we boarded our train back to London.

4 hours 2 stops and 1 time zone change later we arrived back in London at 10 pm (GMT). After regrouping one final time we said our goodbyes and headed home to our respective areas of the country.

As a bridge player, I believe that certainly more people should play the game. However, there are many other benefits of playing the game, such as a statistically significant positive effect on wellbeing, aids to numeracy and team building.

If you would like to find out more about junior English bridge, or more about this particular event, please visit:

<https://www.ebu.co.uk/article/channel-trophy-2023-results>

<https://www.ebu.co.uk/youth/youth-squads>

Rang	Viertal	Totaal	15-dec	15-dec	16-dec	16-dec	16-dec	17-dec
1	France J	79,07	17,31	5,04	14,96	12,42	18,48	10,86
2	England J	77,76	18,25	14,96	9,14	19,16	7,11	9,14
3	Netherlands J	72,18	2,69	18,16	10,86	7,58	12,89	20,00
4	Belgium J	10,99	1,75	1,84	5,04	0,84	1,52	0,00

a = afwezig, c = combipaar, i = invallers, m = minder spellen gespeeld, h = hogere lijn, l = lagere lijn, r = arbitrale wijziging, n = score telt niet mee, b = geblokkeerde score * = opmerking

Lijn B: Girls								
Rang	Viertal	Totaal	15-dec	15-dec	16-dec	16-dec	16-dec	17-dec
1	France G	90,17	20,00	14,39	19,34	16,61	15,67	4,16
2	England G-A	80,61	19,66	5,61	12,89	10,00	16,61	15,84
3	Netherlands G	39,4	0,00	12,17	7,11	3,39	3,39	13,34
4	England G-B	29,82	0,34	7,83	0,66	10,00	4,33	6,66

a = afwezig, c = combipaar, i = invallers, m = minder spellen gespeeld, h = hogere lijn, l = lagere lijn, r = arbitrale wijziging, n = score telt niet mee, b = geblokkeerde score * = opmerking

Photo by Harriet Cork

By Harriet Cork

Representation in Mind Sports

As someone born in the 2000s, I had not been exposed to mind sports in the same way generations before me had been.

Children who attend private schools are often given more opportunities to play mind sports from a younger age.

Why does this matter you might ask? Can you name a top female chess player? How about a female bridge player? Chances are, you're struggling.

What is a mind sport? According to Collins Dictionary, it is "any [sport] of various competitive games based on intellectual capability, such as chess or bridge". Surely that means that mind sports would be played by all types of people? Unfortunately, this is not the case.

Many mind sports are split into 'open' or female categories - some even have mixed categories. Often the open categories are dominated by men. Why is this the case? The lack of representation of women in mind sports has contributed to women commonly being subject to sexism and harassment. Why would anyone want to play in an alienating environment? This contributes to women achieving less or leaving mind sports early, which exacerbates the problem.

One main reason is the lack of female confidence in their abilities against male opponents.

In a 2007 study at the University of Padua, male and female chess players of similar ability were matched up with each other on online games. When players were unaware of their opponent's sex, female players won slightly under half of their games. When female players were told their opponent was male, they played less aggressively, and they only won about 1 in 4 games.



Photo by Merve Nur Türker

However, when female players were told their opponent was female, although they were actually male, they were as aggressive as the male players and won about 1 in 2 games. The researchers argued that gender stereotypes may have led female players to lower their self-esteem when they knew they were playing male players, causing them to play defensively which worsened their performance. This isn't exclusive to chess and these issues are only beginning to be addressed.



Photo by Jessica Burton

Since January 2023, the Women's European Bridge Committee has started running a monthly online training programme. It has allowed women to train without the fear of being criticised. I was fortunate enough to have the opportunity to attend in March, April and November 2023.

Another initiative is an organisation called BAMSA (Bridge: A Mind Sport for All): an academic, research-led project that explores the social world of bridge and the benefits of mind sports. If you would like to know more about their work, visit: <https://bridgemindsport.org/>

Although steps have been taken in the right direction towards equal representation, as seen in our own House Chess event in November 2023, we still have a lot of work to do.



Photo by Vlada Karpovich





EXPLORING NEW HORIZONS

By Delicia Johnson

Interview: Mr Perez on Travel

The benefits of travel are often overlooked by much of society; those of us who are fortunate enough to travel afar purely desire a retreat from the confines of our shut-in lives, merely appreciating the large swimming pool in our fancy hotel in some exotic country, thousands of miles away from the worries of school. In this insightful interview with Mr Perez, we will find a deeply intriguing alternative perspective on the value of his experiences from his recent travels.

What would you say is the most conflicting situation you experienced whilst travelling?

In a town called Los Cristianos I spent the night in the most filthy establishment I have ever been. I have endured quite a few nights sleeping rough in my life and would much prefer to do that again rather than spend another night in this place. But as I laid on the stained mattress feeling sorry for myself (I had removed the dirty sheets) I looked across at the North African immigrant in the bunk next to me. He spoke fluent English, was well aware his surroundings were below any acceptable standard but had had to sleep there for 4 months due to the rise in rental prices. He missed his family. However, he had made the most of the situation erecting a blanket over his bed for privacy, which he drew back throughout the night whenever any new drunk came into the room to make sure nobody was stealing his stuff. I remember thinking soak this scene up Mr Perez. The difference between you and this man is luck. Nothing more. Whenever you feel hard done by try and remember this man and his resilience. You will probably never need to match it; be grateful for that.



What is your most cherished memory of those you conversed with whilst travelling?

I went climbing for 7 days in the Canary Islands with Mr Brooker. On the last day we were both exhausted and at lunch time almost falling asleep in a café. Despite this, we dragged ourselves back up the mountain one last time. I could only manage two climbs that afternoon and the only reason I did that was because Mr Brooker climbed up first and attached the safety rope for me. Mr Brooker never complained. I had a whole year off work, and he only had one week. However, he had obviously said to himself, "This is my opportunity, and I am grabbing it with both hands". Who you choose to spend your time with has a big influence on what your life is like. I watched my friend that afternoon and thought, "wise choice Mr Perez".

When travelling did you find that the people made up your experience more than the location itself?

I met a lot of interesting people. I would definitely say that a big advantage of solo travelling is you interact a lot more with locals and fellow travellers than if you go with friends. However, sometimes I found myself up on a mountain pass or in a crowded square watching the native residents and thought to myself, turn off your Whatsapp, don't try and talk to anybody, just soak this up on your own for a while. Life is full of contradictions there are no set rules which fit every situation. I suspect that's a good thing.

Were there any people you encountered who particularly inspired you?

I was taught how to cross-country ski in Norway by a very impressive Dutch Lady (she reminded me of Ms Bowtell). She had been doing her job for 30 years but still obviously gained a great deal of joy from it. When I compare her to the English man who ran a winter mountaineering course I went on, it was obvious she expected to have to work for her contentment and he didn't. She kept us out practising late and organised extra warm-down sessions, videos, and quizzes for the evenings. The winter training man seemed to think enjoyment was something which is either there or not and isn't something you had any responsibility to generate. As a result, he didn't like his job.



Were there any surprises of people you met in different countries that differed to your experience of people in England?

I was travelling in the Americas and Europe. I think due to the nature of European colonialism if you really want to experience a very different culture you need to go to Asia. Take South America. The language, religion and architecture are all mainly European in origin. Asia is much less like this. When I was in Nepal seeing heterosexual men holding hands in the street was a surprise. But that's how male friends behave there.

Did you come across any vulnerable people and how did this impact you as a person?

I was trekking in Majorca and came across a Belgian man in his late 60s. His legs were all cut up by thorns and he was in a state as he had become lost the day before and was scared he didn't have the map reading skills to finish the hike. I told him I would get him to the end of the trail and was very amused to hear him say to his wife that night: "I will be okay, I am with an English man". A German man my age who I had been walking with decided not to continue with us the next day. He pulled me to one side and advised me to leave the Belgian man, as I had to "think about my own enjoyment". I thought then and still do now that he was a fool. People may have vulnerabilities (I am sure we all do to some degree) but none I have come across are purely vulnerable. The Belgian man was very funny, knowledgeable, and possibly the most convivial person I met. By the time we had made it to the end of the trail I had received as much from him as he had from me.



Finally, do you have any advice to those wishing to experience travelling the world?

I would say try and do activities which will make you have shared experience with other people. If you come across somebody on a hiking trail you always have a question to ask them. What's the trail like ahead? They will be only too happy to tell you their morning story. People on the whole like talking about themselves. I had Spanish classes, went hiking and climbing, took cookery classes and went to a horse-riding school for the first time in 35 years. All great ways to meet people. Also, learn a foreign language.

By Bee Green

The Warrior Queen of Jhansi

Rani Laxmibai's reputation precedes her in many ways and stories of her victories still echo throughout modern India as an icon of British resistance. Yet in Britain most people have never heard the name Rani Laxmibai. This begs the question, why is she important?

Before the conflict

Manikarnika Tambe (or as nicknamed by her parents: Manu) was born in the town of Benares on November 19th, 1828. Since an early age she was admired for her intelligence, high-spirit, and beauty. These traits allowed her to grow up in the peshwa's court; a traditionally a male-only space ran by the peshwa (a high-ranking government official). Here she learned to read and write, gained proficiency in shooting, horsemanship and fencing and continued to defy the gender roles of her time.

At 14 she was married to Gangadhar Rao, the Maharaja (Prince) of Jhansi. Most notably Manu was renamed to Laxmibai, after Devi Laxmi the goddess of power, beauty and prosperity.

Soon after the marriage and the adoption of her son, her husband died on November 21st 1853. He left a letter proclaiming that she was to govern Jhansi for her lifetime, granting her the title of the Rani of Jhansi (Queen of Jhansi).



Jhansi Fort, via: Wikimedia Commons

The siege of Jhansi

Soon after she became the Rani of Jhansi, the Doctrine of Lapse came into effect, enacted in the same November by the British East India Company (BEIC). It annexed Jhansi, along with other states, into its territory. While initially Jhansi remained peaceful, that would soon change.

After months of culminating violence, the most serious threat to Jhansi would arrive in March 1858 with the British themselves. They noted how well defended the Star Fort was, with heavy guns and high walls, then shortly sent a message threatening the destruction of the fort unless Laxmibai surrendered. In response, she proclaimed:

We will if we are victorious, enjoy the fruits of victory, if defeated and killed on the field of battle, we shall surely earn eternal glory and salvation."

Thus, the siege of Jhansi began on March 24th and held strong until April 2nd when the British launched a focused assault and breached the wall. They began to slaughter men, women, and children alike. After this Laxmibai decided that trying to defend the city was a lost cause. As depicted in many monuments dedicated to her, she tied her baby to herself and leapt from the fort's walls on horseback escaping into the night with her bodyguards.

Her final days

As the night continued, it became clear Laxmibai's band of guards were outnumbered; they were being pursued by 60,000 British soldiers. While some men fell ill due to harsh weather, one of Laxmibai's key allies left before the battle. Due to these factors, Laxmibai was forced to retreat yet again. Her forces arrived at Gwalior, joined rebel forces and planned to take back control. However, Laxmibai failed to convince her allies to defend against a likely attack. This misjudgement would prove to be fatal.

British forces would launch a successful attack on June 16th and she died in combat the next day. Accounts of the circumstances vary; one source says she was "dispatched by a young man's carbine". According to folklore however, it's said Laxmibai came to a hermit while badly wounded and asked him to burn her remains to prevent the British from capturing her.

Cultural impact

This article inevitably removes many nuances from her life and the greater movement she dedicated her life towards. It remains clear however that she had a huge cultural impact which has persevered to this day, whether through statues, ballads, literature or paintings.

From Agra to her birthplace in Varanasi, there are many statues which depict her heroism and courage across the country. Perhaps the most famous of which can be found in Solapur. It features the famous depiction of her upon horseback with her baby, brandishing a talwar.

Another example of her influence would be in cinema. "Manikarnika: The Queen of Jhansi" was released in 2019 across 50+ countries. The film holds the record for highest opening weekend collections for a female driven film in India specifically and it featured the renowned Kangana Ranaut who went on to win the National Film Award in 2021.



Statue of Laxmibai in Solapur, via. Wikimedia Commons

These two examples demonstrate how significant her legacy remains, beyond 1857. She is an icon for many who helped unify and strengthen India's independence movement. Despite this, women of colour are often neglected in history; the fact such an extraordinary Indian woman from the her time isn't well known solidifies this unfortunate reality. Within the Indian Revolution alone many more women could be credited as ground-breaking.

This shows that by teaching people about these role models we can give these women the recognition they deserve and break down the biases of current historical study.

By Annabel Hope

Student Artwork





'LUCY'
2023, Film Photography

By Isabella Perna

Student Photography



By Abira Suyaraj

Singapore: A Travel Guide

Singapore has it all. From its thrilling attractions to the tranquillity of its nature, the city-state offers a wide range of experiences to suit all preferences, meaning that whether you enjoy simply relaxing and unwinding, or to exploring the vibrant city-state and taking part in its festivities, there is something for everyone here.



Singapore street view via Adobe Stock

Singapore's culture embraces a rich variety of ethnicities, predominantly Chinese, Malay, and Indian. It is a fusion of these unique cultural elements that successfully unites its residents. Singapore is where a large diversity of cultures coexist and intersect, and so cultural heritage is considered to be integral to the Singaporean identity.

Singapore is a tropical city-state island located in Southeast Asia and situated between Indonesia and Malaysia. It is the 3rd smallest country in Asia, around 719km squared, and it is about 339 times smaller than the UK!



Dishes in a Singaporean food court via Adobe Stock



Sentosa Island via Adobe Stock

As it is known for being a multicultural paradise in Southeast Asia, Singapore takes pride in its delicious and diverse cuisine which is a blend of many different flavours from all around the world. Chinatown, Little India, and Kampong Glam are perfect places to expand your taste palette by trying new and exotic flavours.



Marina Bay, Adobe Stock

Changi Airport

The ever-so-famous Changi airport has been voted the best airport in the world for a number of reasons and is a destination in and of itself. As you are welcomed into Singapore, you are instantly greeted with the vibrant beauty of the country and the several places to admire in the airport: the indoor butterfly garden with a waterfall to create an atmosphere of peace for exhausted travellers, the movie theatre, the swimming pool, and the shopping areas, to name a few. The Jewel Changi is a nature-theme and retail complex linked to the airport terminal which is perfect for avid shoppers.

Sentosa Island

Sentosa Island is home to a wide variety of popular attractions: Universal Studios Singapore, Mega Adventure Park, Adventure Cove Water park, and the S.E.A. Aquarium, all of which are perfect for visitors of all ages. Rides in Universal Studios and Mega Adventure Park are especially known for being exhilarating and thrilling – perfect for risk-takers and adrenaline junkies. Sentosa Island is also home to many pristine beaches where many choose to relax by the calm waters and sunbathe.

Gardens by the Bay

This is a futuristic nature park with towering yet gorgeous tree-like gardens called Supertrees, 12 of which are located on Supertree Grove. The Supertrees are captivating in person, with their structure beautifully blending greenery and nature with a unique and urban design. The Cloud Forest dome mimics a misty and cool mountain setting and spotlights a dazzling waterfall. The Flower Dome replicates the dry climate of Mediterranean regions and exhibits a wide variety of different flora. There are also many special events, exhibitions, and impressive light shows to admire at the park. Gardens by the Bay is just one of a myriad of places to see and sights to be in awe of in Singapore.



Supertree Grove, Adobe Stock

Chinatown & Little India

To immerse yourself in Singapore's vibrant culture, Chinatown and Little India are must-visits. Explore Chinatown by visiting its historical temples, tasting its delicious street food, and visiting its shop houses, which sell the most beautiful handmade trinkets and jewelry. Walk through the colourful neighbourhood of Little India by indulging in authentic Indian cuisine, admiring the street art and the intricacy of the temple designs, and shopping for traditional garments and spices.





MEDIA AND ENTERTAINMENT

By Qais Raja

Why does Reneé Rapp never seem to fall short of perfect?

Reneé Rapp's career can be summarised as a story of perpetual success.

By 19 years old, she had already starred as Regina George in Broadway's Mean Girls musical adaptation, returning to the role in the movie rendition in 2024, while also launching her music career in the form of her extended play "Everything to Everyone", and later, her album "Snow Angel". It almost seems as though her uprising is never-ending, but why is this?



Photo by Nick Riley Bentham



Photo by Katia Temkin via katiatemkin.com

Snow Angel (2023)

The title track from her debut album "Snow Angel" provides an excellent example as to why so many are attracted to her work. With impactful production and powerful vocals, she delivers a surreal experience of a song. Lyrics such as "I'll angel in the snow until I'm worthy; but if it kills me I tried" devastatingly compliment the production, creating a cohesive project that many can be drawn to.

Mean Girls (2024)

As for her work on screen, Reneé has proven her stage capability through her welcome appearance in the otherwise widely criticised movie musical adaptation of Mean Girls. While many detested the lack of personality of the new soundtrack (more specifically, the seemingly lukewarm effort from co-star Angourie Rice), Reneé Rapp was rightfully praised for her impressive performance on the track "World Burn". Despite the production leaving much to be desired for listeners, the track serves as an excellent piece in Reneé's portfolio, featuring astonishing showcases of her vocal ability alongside an atmosphere of pure rage - truly becoming the epitome of Regina George's betrayal-induced meltdown.



Photo by Paramount Pictures



Photo by Katia Temkin via katiatemkin.com

To Conclude...

It's fair to say that Reneé Rapp is deserving of her untouchable new-found status as a modern day pop culture icon and an incredible performer. With her impressive discography and consistent delivery, there is no doubt that we can expect greatness from her in her future projects!

By Adelina Zagorodniuc & Abby Guracha

Finding Meaning in La La Land

Set in the lively streets of Los Angeles, *La La Land* hooks the audience into a musical romance unlike any other. Directed by Damien Chazelle, this musical illustrates the pursuit of dreams through Sebastian (Ryan Gosling), a struggling jazz pianist, and Mia (Emma Stone), an aspiring actress. As they embark on their journeys to follow their passion, they are drawn together by this shared desire and support for each other. But as this success grows they are forced to make decisions that potentially tear their relationship apart, forcing them to choose between their careers and their love for one another. In this review, we will discuss the movie's music, cinematography, and unique visuals that form this captivating story.

Sound & Music

La La Land's soundtrack is primarily composed of diegetic music (music that is knowingly performed or heard by the characters) which enhances the mood of the scene. For instance, the opening song "Another day of sun" is loud and energetic featuring different styles of dance and instruments. This reaches a large demographic right from the start while also projecting how each person leads different lives despite being in the same world.

The soundtrack can also be a powerful tool to show aspects of Mia and Seb's relationship which perhaps isn't acknowledged by the characters themselves. Take "Mia and Sebastian's theme": whenever it is played, Seb and Mia always find their way to each other. This song is the reason Mia first truly sees Seb, when he plays it they share a moment where he has the spotlight and she can't help but admire.

Cinematography

Cinematography is used to convey the emotions of the main characters and link them together by portraying their situation in the same scene. The cinematographer Linus Sandgren aimed to add rhythm to camera movements, especially during a musical number: "The camera would be more [noticeable] to the audience, so when it punched in on a character, we feel it emotionally telling the story," said Sandgren. To add to the physicality of the camera, shots were not cut short but kept long and uninterrupted, enhancing the film's songs and visuals.



Photograph from Wikimedia Commons

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Entertainment LLC

Colour subtly plays a key part in this musical. It tells its own story and the creators behind the film were meticulous about where and why certain colours were used. Within the film there are numerous different takes on colour: for example, the pool party due to their contrasting outfits (Seb's being red and Mia's being yellow) we can infer they're not on the same page, but in the tap scene Mia is wearing a red bag, symbolising they are getting to know each other better. An alternative view is that yellow represents change, like Mia's audition, or when Seb buys his jazz club reflecting a change in their relationship. However some believe Mia's colour is blue and if Seb's is red then their relationship is represented by purple which is almost always in view when their relationship is thriving; featured in lighting, background or clothes. There are many bold displays of colour in this film, all conveying different messages and as a result adding to the cinematic experience when watching.

Elements such as composition add subtle changes to a scene conveying a deeper message to the audience. This is demonstrated when Mia is filmed driving in a constant direction and only when there is a subtle change of direction in the next scene do we as an audience take that as an indicator that her mentality may be changing and she is not in the same state of mind as she was before. Another use is through parallels and flashbacks: The parallel of Mia working as a barista at the beginning interacting with famous stars and serving them contrasts with her going to a coffee shop as one of those stars, reflecting her progression through her career.



Artwork by Abby Guracha

Overall Ratings

La La Land's dissatisfying ending may cause the audience to have mixed opinions on the film; it's realistic yet heart-breaking closing emphasises that all dreams have a cost and sacrifices must be made. While their love for one another remains, they partly in support of each other's passions and a few years later they reunite at Seb's jazz club, Mia being a successful, married actress and Seb owning his club. Their last glance at each other paired with their theme playing in the background shatters this film's fantasy realm, reminding the characters and audience of the true reality between love and dreams. The smile they share reflects acceptance and happiness for one another, them both knowing it had to be this way. The flashback scene of their potential lives together reminds us we cannot always get what we wish for making this bittersweet ending despairing yet impactful. Though realised in 2016, La La Land is a timeless piece of cinema that consists of some of the best visuals, acting and messages to this date. It is an absolutely enchanting watch which we heartily recommend.

By Qais Raja & Grace Goodchild

What makes Phoebe Bridgers so captivating?



Photo by Olof Grind via olofgrind.com

It almost seems like Phoebe Bridgers has developed into a microcultural icon overnight.

Whether through her past releases or this year's release of the album "the record" from "boygenius", her joint band with Lucy Dacus and Julien Baker, and the resulting nominations for six Grammys (including album and record of the year), it is undeniable that the 2020s have seen significant milestones in her career. This begs the question, what makes Phoebe Bridgers so captivating? After all, no one gains 10.5 million monthly listeners on Spotify alone without good reason.



Photo by Angela Deane via angeladeane.com

Stranger in the Alps (2017)

One of Bridgers' most well-known songs comes from her debut album, 2017's *Stranger in The Alps*. *Scott Street* is a song that many can relate to - most significantly from the overarching feeling of nostalgia that is cleverly weaved into the track in details such as the ringing of bike bells and train horns that remind you of childhood. It's about reconnecting and reconciling with people from the past, and reflecting on your shared experience with fondness.

Punisher (2020)

Deceptive and heart-breaking are the only words that can truly summarise *Savior Complex* from Bridgers' latest album, *Punisher*. The track is much more emotional than the instrumental lets on - delving into the dynamics of conflict in relationships by picturing herself as a "bad liar with a savior complex" to "a vampire" who "wants blood", a clear expression of her unwillingness to displease others, a partner in this case. Whether through a common experience of conflict in romantic relationships, friendships, or family, this track can be appreciated by many.

Chinese Satellite is a devastating track which explores the struggle of managing grief as an atheist. Bridgers expresses her desire to turn to religion in order to experience the comforts of faith, such as the concept of an afterlife. Ultimately, she feels unable to change her beliefs. She describes her futile attempt to look to the stars in search of a higher power, and how instead she found herself wishing "on a Chinese satellite" perhaps, controversially, a statement on her perspective towards the Divine - a product of humanity.



Photo by Olof Grind via olofgrind.com

All of this highlights that Phoebe Bridgers is an exceptional songwriter who has earned herself a solid reputation in the music industry and pop culture. Many listeners, including us, are eagerly waiting to hear more of her projects in the future!

By Vivienne Chen

Frozen: A Powerful Commentary on Love

A whistle-stop journey through the critically acclaimed animated film of 2013 through a fresh lens. Expect spoilers.

Everybody knows Frozen. I first saw it as a child, and loved it for its seemingly mindless fun. However, after seeing the musical version of it recently, my perspective has deepened. Many write Frozen off as a meaningless kids' film, but I would argue that it is a powerful commentary on love.

Love as Escape

On the day of Elsa's coronation, her sister Anna is excited about the prospect of finding "true love". From a young age, she has experienced separation from the primary figures in her life, resulting in loneliness and confusion.

Consequently, she jumps into a relationship and engagement with Prince Hans in the span of a song, in which they "say goodbye to the pain of the past. We don't have to feel it anymore!" Arguably, Anna is subconsciously trying to patch up her childhood wounds with the promise of romantic love as an escape from pain. This belief that romantic relationships will absolve one from pain is not a rare one – especially with the media's idealisation of romance.



Artwork by Courtney Pudney

Although a relationship can be fulfilling, work needs to be put into it as well as oneself in order to let it thrive, and avoid unhealthy attachment. Too many people sit around waiting for "the one" to fix their unhappiness. This is an impossible expectation, and only causes further disappointment. The delusion that romance is the only thing that could save you is just that: delusion.

Love as a Strong Force

Later on, Anna's visit to Elsa's cosy new abode on the North Mountain goes astray as she is struck in the heart by a blast of ice. Kristoff takes her to his family, who can advise her – but not without a musical tangent first. In the song "Fixer Upper", Kristoff's surface level flaws are pointed out endearingly by his family. Anna sees everything that is human about Kristoff, which contrasts the pedestal that she has put Hans on. In the bridge, it is clarified that "we're not sayin' you can change him...love's a force that's powerful and strange. People make bad choices if they're stressed; throw a little love their way and you'll bring out their best". In other words, nobody needs to be fixed, but rather loved with nurture, so that the rest and best of them feels safe enough to emerge.

Love as a Verb

Upon hearing that her heart can only be mended by an "act of true love", Anna scrambles back to Arendelle to be saved by Hans. It isn't clear exactly what she believes this act entails, but she expects it to be delivered by somebody else. She is betrayed by Hans, and looks for Kristoff instead.

However, as she and Kristoff finally spot each other, her attention is diverted – Elsa is on the ground, and Hans wields a sword and stalks up to the degraded ice queen. It's the hour of need for both Elsa and Anna and what does, what can Anna do? She's rushing between Hans and Elsa, and she's throwing out her hand, and she's –

She's an ice pop.

But not for long. Her act of true love is the one that saves both her and her sister. The fact that it came from Anna herself is immensely empowering for both children and adults to see. Rather than longing for the idea of love, or to be loved, one should love.

**Rather than longing
for the idea of love, or
to be loved, one
should love.**

I believe that the reason many do not dare to love openly is because they are fearful of confirming their deep-seated belief that they are fundamentally unlovable. Why love, and risk the sting of rejection? Why love, when you could deny yourself instead?

Nothing is for certain. The only way forward is to take a leap of faith.



Artwork by Adelina Zagorodniuc

Written by Mayra Narang and Courtney Pudney

Illustrated by Courtney Pudney

Bourne's Top Picks in Gaming for 2024

Kirby And The Forgotten Land



Made by: Nintendo
Released in: 2022
Genre: Adventure, Fighting
Age rating: PEGI 7+
Platforms: Nintendo Switch
Multiplayer: Yes
Cross platform play: No

Kirby, our beloved hungry pink puffball, is on a new adventure. In KatFL, we explore a breathtaking digital landscape, every corner bursting with distinct stylisation and an irresistible charm, embodying the essence of games past in every pixel.

With KatFL, Kirby possesses his usual skill of eating his enemies, alongside a few new creative ones, such as becoming a safety cone to punch holes, and more engaging new mechanisms.

The game operates on a seamless level system, with a total of 8 worlds, as every biome integrates their unique level theme into their digital landscaping.

While some consider KatFL on the shorter side, requiring about 26 hours of gameplay to get to 100% completion, the game retains all the charm of OG Kirby within a visually stunning 3D manner, making it a short, yet sweet addition to the Kirby titles.

If you're looking for your next challenge, take on KatFL!

Mario Kart 8 Deluxe



Made by: Nintendo
Released in: 2017
Genre: Racing, Action
Age rating: PEGI 3+
Platforms: Nintendo Switch
Multiplayer: Yes
Cross platform play: No

The game's release in 2017 reinstated the series as the party go-to, the split-screen races being a staple at meetups. Tense races until the break of dawn would come to form some of my fondest (and most competitive!) bonds.

The game features 36 characters; every classic Mario character, such as Luigi, Rosalina and Princess Peach, joined by returning characters such as King Boo, Dry Bones and Bowser. Jr. MKD8 features 48 courses, and further downloadables inspired by games within the Nintendo ecosystem, such as The Legend Of Zelda and Animal Crossing, creating exciting crossovers full of rich digital landscaping.

Overall, there has never been a better time to install Mario Kart Deluxe 8 on your Nintendo Switch, for one of the most critically acclaimed and popular party games of the century.

Stardew Valley



Made by: ConcernedApe
Released in: 2016
Genre: Farming Sims, RPG
Age rating: PEGI 12
Platforms: Xbox One, PS4
iOS, MacOS, Linux, PS Vita,
Nintendo Switch, Windows
Multiplayer: Yes
Cross platform play: No

For me, playing Stardew Valley has always been a beautifully stimulating combination of stunning, simplistic graphics and an addictive, capitalistic gameplay style.

The game involves a blend of farming, mining, and creating relations with villagers, crafting a rich world in which it's difficult to get bored. The town, a close-knit, personal space, grows on you, and each character you encounter has an individual backstory that tugs at your heartstrings.

The endgame is definitely one that needs more effort, as to complete the main story, most players spend roughly 100 hours on their first farm. However, one of my favourite things about this game is you can go entirely at your own pace.

There is no time pressure to complete any element, as if players miss a crop one spring, the next spring will always come around, serving as a parable to me that I can take games (and life!) as slowly as I need to.

All in all, this game will satisfy both the fiendish mobile gamer and an avid Animal Crossing fan. If you're looking for an escape from reality, this is the place to go!

Overcooked! 2



Made by: Team17
Released in: 2018
Genre: Action, Indie
Age rating: PEGI 3+
Platforms: Xbox One, PS4,
PS5, Windows, MacOS,
Linux, Nintendo Switch
Multiplayer: Yes
Cross platform play: No

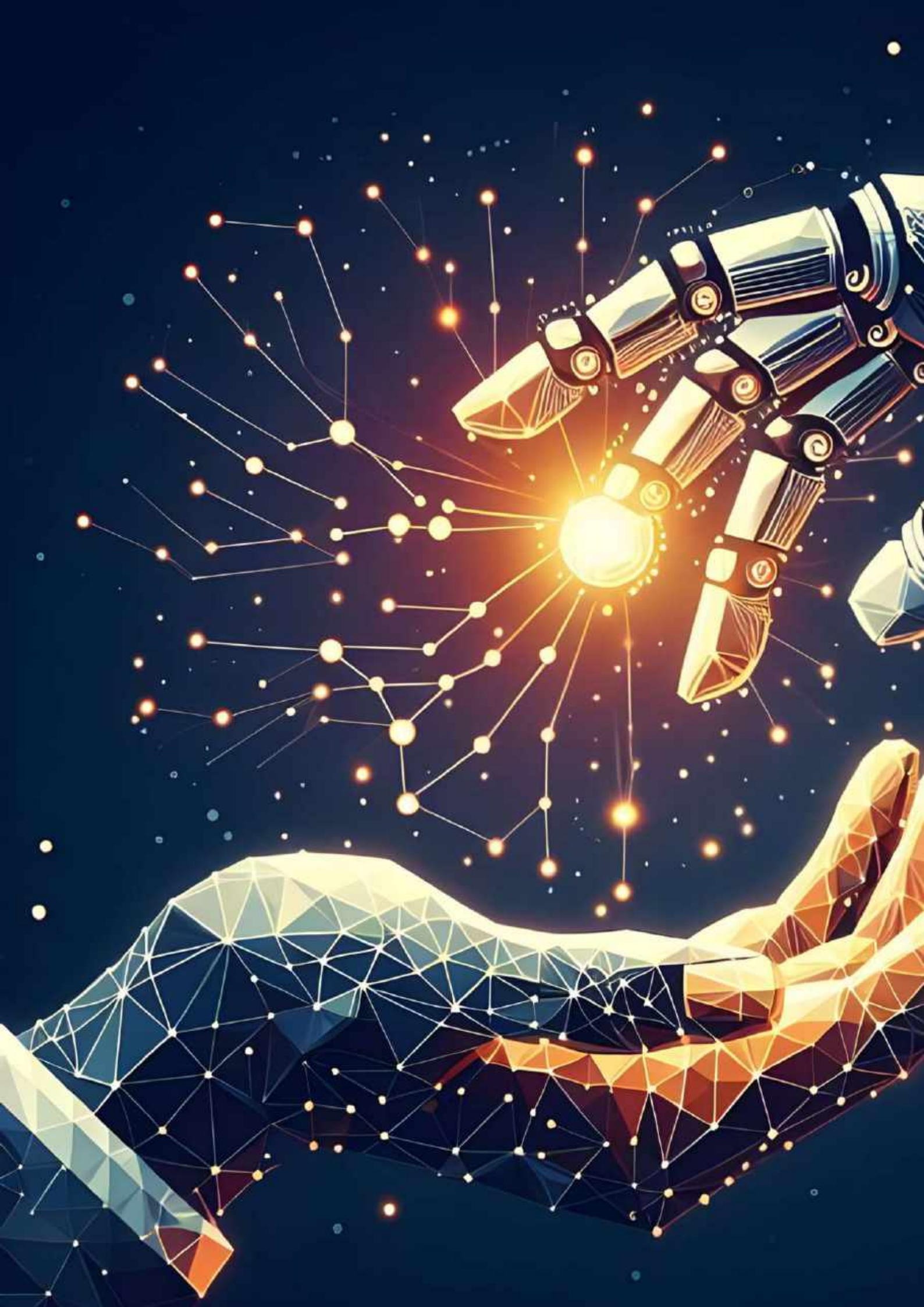
Overcooked 2 is the ultimate relationship litmus test. Having won The Game Award in 2018 for "Best Family Game", if you dare to play this with your loved ones, you will delve into a game that is as delectably engaging as it is wonderfully chaotic.

Players must battle shifting landscapes, portals, conveyor belts, spot fires and giant holes in the ground as they prepare and cook meals. Thankfully Overcooked 2's menu has been overhauled, with a number of new recipes for players to cook (and burn!).

The graphics of the game are a visual feast, but Overcooked 2's highlight for me is within multiplayer mode. When playing, it's not just about cooking - it's about communication, coordination, and a whole lot of laughter. The game truly tests your teamwork skills, turning the kitchen into a dynamic and entertaining battlefield.

Sometimes through effective communication, albeit rare, you can just about orchestrate a semblance of order, and other times, you just want to call all your friends idiots in a dramatic argument over who botched the sushi.

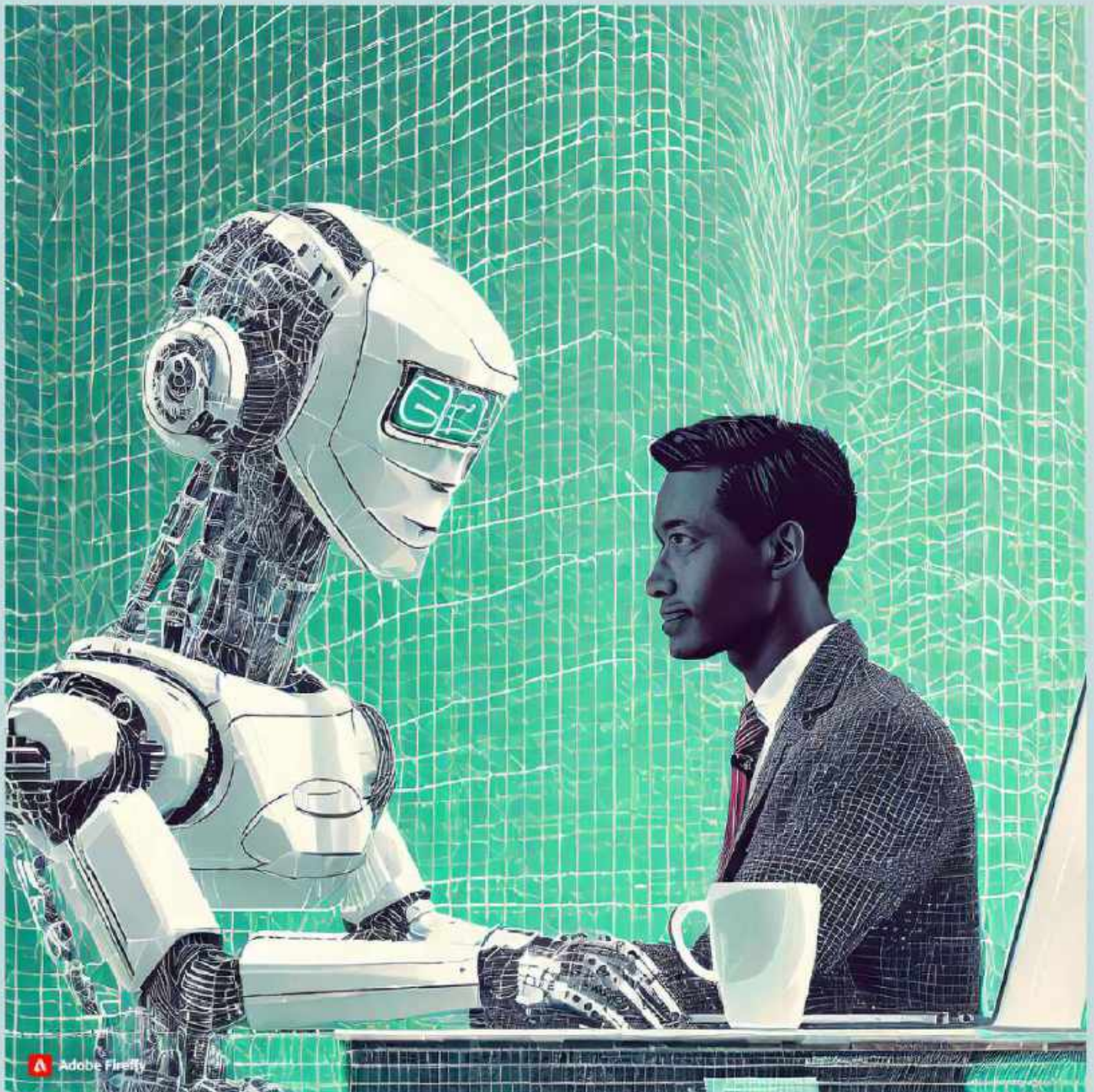
If you're looking for an activity for you and your loved ones, I couldn't recommend Overcooked 2 more if I tried!





INNOVATION AND THE FUTURE

The Future of Work: How AI is Transforming Employment



Generated using Adobe Firefly

Artificial Intelligence (AI). It's been all everyone has been talking about lately. We have started to witness a major shift in attitudes toward artificial intelligence. Recently, at the Bletchley Park AI Summit (a major international event) 28 countries came together to talk about and listen to experts on what AI could mean for the world of work. Furthermore, Goldman Sachs, a global investment bank, predicted the loss of 300 million jobs despite stating there would be a 7% increase to the global economy over a decade, due to artificial intelligence.

Companies like Google, Meta and Microsoft are pumping billions of dollars into making or acquiring their own AI models and governments across the world are rushing to make policies on how to regulate this sui generis technology. There's no doubt, AI has entered the workplace. What will this mean for students? Will our dream job look the same? Is all the hype about AI justified?

Artificial intelligence is the development of computer systems able to perform tasks normally requiring human intelligence such as visual perception and speech recognition among others. While it is assumed that AI may help cheat on college essays with over 50% of American college students admitting to the practice in one survey, the challenges and opportunities it presents are immense. Schools and colleges are still unsure about how AI technology can be used in education. Institutions the world over are trying to come up with policy guidelines on how students may use AI in their assignments and assessments. Some pro-technology institutions such as Arizona State University are collaborating with AI research organisations to help students learn more quickly and understand subjects thoroughly.

We are also seeing employees embrace AI tools at an alarming rate. It is estimated that 56% of employees use AI daily in their work, with the majority employed by multinational corporations in the technology and finance sectors. According to research by Harvard Business School, emerging trends suggest some patterns in how people are using AI. Some workers act as "centaurs", which means splitting activities between themselves and the AI, and others act as "cyborgs", seamlessly integrating their work with AI. Noticeably, some tasks are easily done by AI, while others, though seemingly similar in difficulty level, are outside the current capability of AI. The range of tasks that AI can support is unexpected, leading to ambiguity over which jobs can benefit the most from AI integration. The jobs that will benefit range from consultants to carpenters, highlighting the potential of AI.

We can argue that the next major shift in how people will work is here and it is starting to affect everyone, not just major technology corporations. Companies such as Landing AI, have launched machine learning (ML) technologies which are specifically aimed at helping smaller companies. Landing Lens is an AI tool that can be trained on images provided to recognise things like tears in clothes or food which has spoiled. This creates a simple and cost-effective way of managing an inventory for local businesses, which otherwise may have to hire and train employees to do the same.

We are just beginning to see the capabilities of what AI technology may be able to achieve, but it is safe to say that we may see a future where robots do the heavy lifting, and humans do the coffee sipping!

By Rhys Evans

Shifting Gears: The Environmental Reality of Electric Cars

When attempting to reform transportation to make it more environmentally sustainable, electric cars have emerged as the 'golden child' of transportation, promising to reduce carbon emissions and combat climate change. However, what many often forget to take into account when fully considering the adverse effects of electric vehicles (EVs), is that it seems clear that EVs are not fit for purpose. Rather than placing all our bets on EVs, the real solution to reform our unsustainable transportation sector is through the expansion of our cities' public transportation systems and an increase in population density within our urban environments.

Bourne is a town that has an incredibly high amount of traffic. Every day, every person that has the displeasure of driving through rush hour is consistently faced with the eventuality of arduous traffic jams, sitting idle while waiting to get in and out of the town. This isn't just the case for Bourne: in many areas, both rural and urban, the average person waits 8 months of their life in traffic according to Global Travel Media. It begs the question: instead of purely focusing on the environment when reforming the way we get round, shouldn't we also focus on our own mobility as well when considering alternatives to our current modes of transit?

One of the key drawbacks of EVs is the hidden environmental cost of their production. The manufacture of electric vehicles demands a substantial number of resources which can only be obtained using unsustainable practices. Rare earth metals such as lithium and cobalt require an immense amount of carbon-emitting practices such as mining, terrain levelling, and deforestation. Furthermore, it's also important to address the various human rights abuses surrounding rare earth metal mining, like in countries such as Myanmar, where according to [globalwitness.org](https://www.globalwitness.org) in 2023, a resident near one such mine said to an interviewer: "People are afraid of speaking out against the mining because they fear retribution. "No one wants to give up their ancestors' lands, but if they [resist] they can be killed."

*Adobe Stock Images*

Currently, the average charge for an EV is 225 miles which is around the distance from Bourne to Swansea, Wales. This may sound like a lot, but when you compare this to petrol cars, where the average person fills their car up 3 times a month, in a country where, according to SME News, the median commute is 23 miles, the average person would have to recharge at least every 10 days. This isn't even taking into account that according to gov.uk, in 2021 business and education only made up for 27% of all commutes, meaning that the average person would have to charge their car at least once every 3 days. Especially when considering the energy crisis, we are currently facing, can we really afford to keep charging them every 3 days?



Row houses of Philadelphia, Adobe Stock Images

In contrast, greater urban density and expanded public transportation networks in cities have proven to be the more holistic and effective approach to mitigating unsustainability in transportation. One way that dense urban environments reduce our climate impact is by the fact that the construction and maintenance of these types of areas inherently waste less resources.

Think about it – if there are more houses per square mile, it would mean that less roads would need to be constructed and maintained. Taking a perhaps more empirical approach to this, a study in 2023 by Queen's University states that urban neighbourhoods have a road length per resident of less than 7.5 metres, whereas low-density exurban neighbourhoods have values above 10 metres per resident. If we were to have a shorter road length, transportation options such as walking and cycling would naturally increase in popularity, as it is less demanding on pedestrians.

Though people use a car for many other long-distance journeys, the reason why I mention short-distance journeys is because according to the National Travel Survey in 2020, over 80% of trips under 1 mile were made on foot. If we were to increase the number of places within a 1-mile distance from one's house, then we would naturally increase the number of walks as well, reducing our overall transportation carbon footprint.

The same applies to dense cities. If we have highly dense population centres in our cities, that also means many people would have to get around every day to get to work with cars, exacerbating the situation.

What do we do instead?

Thus, the utility of public transportation arises, as it is a space-efficient way to transport people. It is also important to note that dense cities do not necessarily mean the skyscrapers of New York, nor does it mean the densely-packed apartments of Tokyo: things as simple as row housing, or even in some cases semi-detached housing can constitute a dense environment.

In conclusion, while electric cars may seem like a 'silver bullet' in the fight against climate change, a more comprehensive strategy involves rethinking the way we plan and commute in our cities, placing emphasis on urban density and investing in efficient, accessible public transportation. At a local level, Delaine Buses isn't the only answer to this solution – we need to create a holistic system of transit-oriented environments.

By prioritising these elements, we can create not only environmentally friendly transportation systems but also more equitable and liveable urban spaces for generations to come. It's time to steer away from the narrow focus on electric cars and pave the way for a more sustainable and interconnected future through the greater use of public transit.

By Catrinel Acasandri

Does Social Media Impact Your Individuality?

Our society is made up of many different types of people and ideologies. However, could it be argued that we are impacted by our surroundings more than we impact them? Or do we give more than we take away? If you ask your family members, colleagues or friends, they may say that they choose to act upon their own impulses and they are in control of their decisions. I think that social media probably plays a bigger role in how we think and feel than we give it credit for.



Image by Leila Abboud

Today's society is immersed in the world of technology and social media, which have allowed us to share every inch of our private lives, thoughts and careers. Although it is beneficial, in recent years the downsides of communicating opinions have become more apparent. A survey conducted by the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (AACAP) on 'Social Media and Teens' highlights that 90% of teens aged 13-17 have used social media and 51% report visiting social media sites daily.



Image by Cristian Dina

These statistics emphasise how large the coverage of social media is and the vast amount of information that can be found. Therefore, it is likely that for most of us, social media is a habit which probably impacts our thought processes. Social media creates somewhat of a herd mentality where large numbers of users agree on a certain view and continually push it out into the world until others are swayed into accepting that this opinion is the only correct view. This is often referred to as an echo chamber, in which people find beliefs that amplify and reinforce their own pre-existing ones through communication and repetition inside such closed systems. Therefore, these opinions remain unchallenged and develop a tunnel vision mindset. An example of a similar concept would be flat earth theorists who, even when supplied with substantial scientific evidence, reject the notion of inaccuracy within an idea that they enforce to be true, spreading misinformation.

Furthermore, it amplifies dislike and hatred for less commonly agreed upon topics that are innocent in their own right, but are viewed as 'cringy' and 'undesirable' reinforcing and thereby perpetuating certain norms and values. This is evident on platforms such as YouTube where hatred quickly spreads in the form of comments from people whose objective is to voice their own personal opinion of a video game for example, in the hopes that others would conform to their belief and validate their view. This monochromatic outlook leads to many people hiding certain aspects of themselves, whether it's their interests or physicality, and in doing so, lying about their 'true self'. Interestingly, as human beings, we portray and reflect excessively what is held in high regard in society. In turn, we pick and choose what we let others use to construct a perspective of us (even if this is subconsciously or consciously) in the fear of the ultimate verdict: judgement.

Marcus Aurelius, a Roman emperor and stoic philosopher, once said: "It never ceases to amaze me: we all love ourselves more than other people but care more about their opinions than our own." Humans are social beings who seek approval in many aspects of our lives, even if we do so subconsciously. However, the advances in technology and use of social media have exacerbated our need to fit in with standards, created by faceless blog posts and opinions of people hundreds of thousands of miles away.

In doing so, are we lying to ourselves? Is our own personal individuality lost in the process of conforming to an overarching consumption of 'brain-rotting' media? The simple answer is that we can never know fully as we believe that this version of ourselves is who we are rather than who we were shaped to become, and it is terrifying to think that a simple scroll on social media can impact our actions to this extent.



Image by Ron Lach



Image by Ketut Subiyanto

Nevertheless, social media has its benefits and consists of many different groups that help others communicate, share hobbies, tips and tricks that create a wholesome atmosphere. Therefore, we mustn't perceive it as completely harmful but, instead, keep an open mind to the other less conscious effects it can have on our lives and way of thinking about the world: embracing a healthy balance in our consumption of media influence.

By Holly Potts



Photo via Bloomberg/Getty Images

What's the Human Cost of Your Wardrobe?

A closer look at Shein's environmental and ethical impact

The fast fashion global phenomenon has become one of the largest industries in the world. Its enticement lies in the ability to quickly produce and distribute trendy clothing at affordable prices. Among the major players in this industry is Shein, a brand that has garnered widespread attention across the world.

Shein vs Zara

To visualise the enormity of Shein's operations, we can compare it with another fast fashion giant, Zara. Zara reports that the process of creating a product from scratch takes approximately three weeks, with an additional two weeks for manufacturing. In contrast, Shein manages to design, manufacture, and make a product available for sale merely within three days. But how is such a significant time difference possible?

Shein: A Giant in Fast Fashion

If you've spent any time online recently, chances are you've come across an advertisement for Shein, showcasing its vast catalogue of trendy and inexpensive clothing. The impressive effectiveness of Shein's marketing prompts a crucial question: what is Shein, and what kind of impact does fast fashion have on the world today?

You may be wondering how this affects the BGS community and if it's applicable to our school. I completed a survey of my English class and found that 67% of people had shopped at Shein at least once - a staggering statistic. This raises an important question: how many of us researched this seemingly opaque company before making a purchase?



Photo by Antonio Cossio via Getty Images

The answer lies in the heart of Shein's operations: the use of forced labour. A 2022 Channel 4 documentary revealed that the rapid turnaround of Shein's products is fuelled by exploitation, low wages and dangerous working conditions. Shein firmly denies any wrongdoing, but its lack of transparency does little to reassure us. This striking contrast between the lives of these workers and the immense wealth of Shein's CEO, Chris Xu, with a net worth of \$10.5 billion, raises ethical concerns that cannot be ignored.

Plagiarism and Lawsuits

Shein's rapid production extends beyond manufacturing; it also involves listing 500-2,000 new items on its website every day. This staggering flow of products is aimed at enticing consumers - just like you - who seek the thrill of purchasing affordable clothing. However, it is difficult for Shein to ignore allegations of plagiarism given that the company faces over 50 copyright lawsuits. Small businesses suffer as their designs are stolen and reproduced in Shein's catalogue, leading to a dire effect on creativity and innovation, which has been proven to negatively impact the economy as many shops are having to close down as result.

Shein's actions set a dangerous precedent for other companies in the fast fashion industry, encouraging them to follow their underhand ways. The normalisation of exploitative practices in pursuit of profit poses a threat to ethical standards and workers' rights globally, and this domino effect is evident with other companies adopting similar structures to maximise their profits at the expense of ethical considerations.

Accountability and Hope

Despite these alarming accusations surrounding Shein there is a glimmer of hope. The brand has recently faced legal action through a RICO (Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act) lawsuit, allowing multiple entities owned by Shein to be sued simultaneously. This legal challenge signifies a step towards accountability, shedding light on the questionable practices within the company. However, this RICO lawsuit will only start to take real effect in around 5 years, which may be too late to stop the fashion giant.

As awareness grows, consumers are increasingly turning to sustainable alternatives. Platforms like Vinted, eBay, and Depop are gaining popularity - I'm sure many of you have shopped from these websites - which provide a marketplace for second-hand clothing. These programs offer a way to reduce the environmental impact of fast fashion and counter the throwaway culture intensified by brands like Shein which is becoming more common every year.

By Holly Potts

Goosey Chocolate Marshmallow Brownies

This brownie recipe is sure to entice your taste buds with its tremendous mix of heavenly chocolate goo and marshmallow paradise: perfect for parties. Super simple and ready in under an hour!

Ingredients

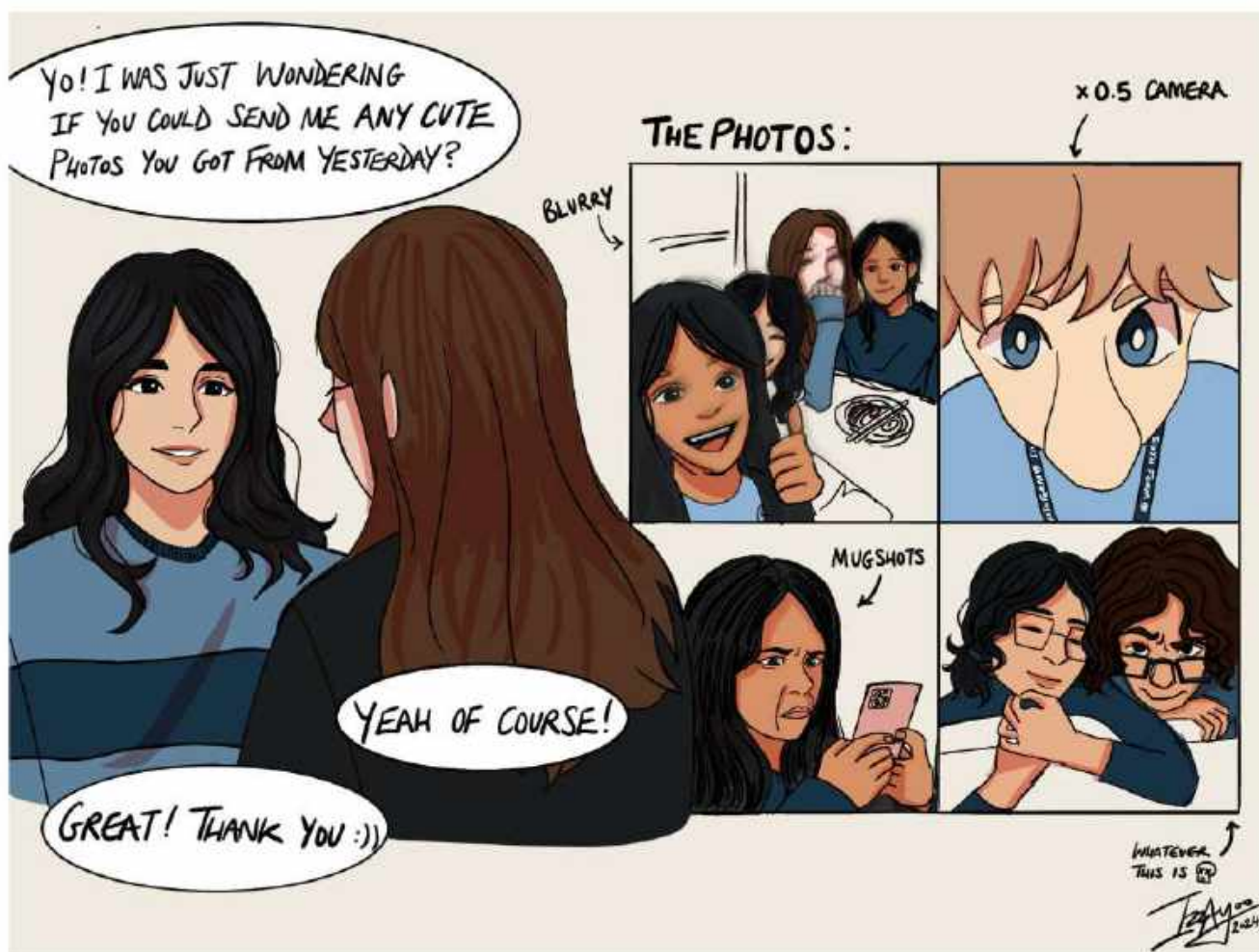
275g unsalted butter,
softened
375g caster sugar
4 eggs
100g self-raising flour
12 large marshmallows
75g cocoa powder



Photo via swirlsofflavor.com

Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C/Fan 160°C/gas 4.
 2. Grease and line a 20cm square cake tin with non-stick baking parchment.
 3. Measure all of the ingredients into a large bowl and mix with a hand-held electric mixer until evenly blended.
 4. Spoon the mixture into the prepared tin, scraping the sides of the bowl with a spatula. Spread the mixture gently to the corners of the tin and level the surface with the back of the spatula.
 5. Bake for 30–35 minutes.
 6. Place 12 giant marshmallows on top of the brownie in rows
 7. Bake for a further 15 minutes or until you have goosey marshmallows on top.
- Leave to cool, cut into squares and enjoy!



'Slice of Life Comic' By Isabella Perna
2024, Digital Art

Artists and Photographers



Abby Guracha, Adelina Zagorodniuc, Maria Klatkiewicz,
Courtney Pudney, Isabella Perna

Thank you to all the photographers and artists who have dedicated their time in contributing to this plethora of creativity. This edition would not exist without you. Special thanks to MJ Thompson-Collins, who created the stunning front cover. They are a great example of the exceptional skill with which this school is brimming.

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Brought to you by:

Standing from left to right: Alyssa Mascot, Isabella Perna, Bee Green, Bella Livingston, Atiksh Agnihotri, Rhys Evans, Vivienne Chen, Catrinel Acasandri, Adelina Zagorodniuc, Holly Potts, Qais Raja, Delicia Johnson

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