



TERM

MAGAZINE

TARPORLEY SIXTH FORM

THREE SEASONS

PERSEPHONE



By Luke Wilson

EDITORS NOTES

Beth Hardman

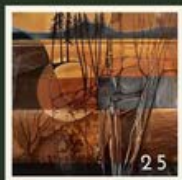


Throughout our years in high school, and now in sixth form, we as a group of young people have experienced more than most. We have overseen once in a century events, and they have arguably made us all the more aware of the world around us.

Our generation has taken up the mantle of avocation for what is right; something this magazine has served in doing. From protesting against injustice, to opening up previously taboo discussions, it is now our opportunity to voice and amplify our opinions and beliefs on the issues most important to us.

After our incredible achievements at the London Shine Awards, the Term team has once again faced and brought light to current societal challenges with a mature, satirical and analytical reflection. From a discussion of socio-political issues to dialogues of underdiscussed mental health issues and critiques of the effects of the ever-present and ever-controversial social media, our generation has loudly begun to elicit the changes others have backed away from.

ART



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A Critical Look at the Tory Government's Policies in 2023

In 2023, the United Kingdom is grappling with a deepening crisis concerning asylum seekers, and consequently the policies of the Tory government have come under intense scrutiny. The issue of asylum seekers is not just a question of immigration; it is also a question on human rights, compassion, and the very fabric of a democratic society. In this article, we will explore the challenges and controversies surrounding the UK's treatment of asylum seekers in 2023 and critique the policies of the Conservative government in power.

The Global Context:

To understand the situation of asylum seekers in the UK we must first examine the global context. Wars and conflicts in regions such as Syria, Afghanistan and Ukraine have forcibly displaced millions of people, leading them to seek refuge in countries such as the UK. Additionally, the ongoing impacts of climate change have created environmental refugees, who are forced to flee their homes due to rising sea levels, extreme weather conditions and resource scarcity. The convergence of these factors has placed enormous pressure on the international community to address the needs of displaced individuals.

The Humanitarian Crisis:

The United Kingdom, as a signatory to international conventions and treaties, has a legal and moral obligation to protect and support asylum seekers fleeing persecution, violence, and conflict. However, in recent years, the Tory government's approach to asylum seekers has been heavily criticised for falling short of these obligations. The controversial "Hostile Environment" policies introduced by the conservative government in 2012 has created a climate of fear and hostility not only among undocumented immigrants, but also amongst those seeking asylum. These policies encompass harsh enforcement measures and make daily life for asylum seekers a daunting challenge.



The Rwanda Asylum Plan:

In April 2022, the Tory government announced that they had formed a Migration and Economic Development Partnership with Rwanda. This is a policy that deports people identified by the UK as being "illegal immigrants" or asylum seekers to Rwanda for processing, asylum, and resettlement. This policy would run as a trial for five years to see how it would go. The policy rightly caused an uproar in the UK due to it being amoral, in addition to Rwanda's terrible human rights record. This set the policy back and in June 2023 the Supreme Court ruled that the policy was unlawful and that there were so many problems with Rwanda's asylum system that a fear that asylum seekers could be sent back to the countries that they originally fled from emerged. The policy also went against the ECHR (European Convention on Human Rights). The Tory government were, however, unhappy with this verdict. They appealed and threatened to leave the ECHR if they won the next election in 2024. If the UK did leave the ECHR, that would mean that the human rights of British Citizens would no longer be put into law and the those who are under a protected characteristics would be at a greater risk of their human rights being taken away.

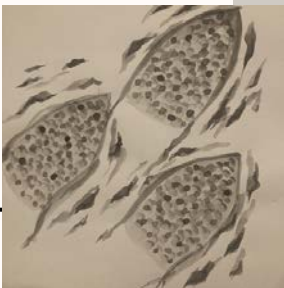
Inadequate Support:

Asylum Seekers are often subjected to inhumane living conditions in overcrowded accommodation centres. This has been made even more apparent recently. As a response to their Rwanda Plan being denied the Tories chartered a 222 room 3 storey barge named the "Bibby Stockholm" to house asylum seekers as they wait for their applications to be approved. A three-page letter was sent to the Home Secretary, Suella Braverman, which sets out the asylum seekers fear and despair at being trapped on a barge. They describe the barge as "an unsafe, frightening and isolated place." They also describe the barge as "a place of exile." The terrible living conditions of the Bibby Stockholm were soon to be proven as after three days of asylum seekers living on the boat, they had to be evacuated amid fears over Legionella bacteria in the water, which can cause a serious type of lung infection known as Legionnaires' disease. This is something you would think would be checked before they decided to house people in it, but it just goes to show how little the Conservative government worry about the safety of asylum seekers.

The allowance provided to asylum seekers is minimal at £6.77 per person in your household a day. With the rise of inflation this makes it even harder to maintain an even basic standard of living. Many face food insecurity and lack access to essential healthcare services.

Integration Challenges:

Integration into UK society remains a significant challenge for asylum seekers. Language barriers, discrimination, and limited access



Art work By

to education and employment opportunities can hinder their ability to build a new life in the country. In September 2023 British Home Secretary, Suella Braverman, claimed that multiculturalism had failed in the UK. This caused confusion among the British public due to herself as a child of immigrants who came from India and Kenya now having the second highest powered job in the country and her boss and the Prime Minister of the country being Hindu and of Indian, Punjabi descent. Also, the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan being of Pakistani descent. It can definitely be argued that they are the product of multiculturalism succeeding.

Changing Policies and Attitudes:

The UK government is actively reviewing and revising its policies related to asylum seekers, aiming to streamline the asylum process and address the challenges faced by those seeking refuge. In 2023, there is a growing emphasis on establishing regional processing centres to address the issue of irregular migration, along with exploring alternatives to detention and improving the legal framework for asylum seekers.

In 2023, there is a growing emphasis on establishing regional processing centres to address the issue of irregular migration, along with exploring alternatives to detention and improving the legal framework for asylum seekers. In addition to policy changes, public attitudes towards asylum seekers are evolving. Grassroots organisations, charities and communities are playing a pivotal role in advocating for the rights and well-being of asylum seekers. There is a growing recognition of the importance of empathy and solidarity, as people across the UK work to create a more inclusive and welcoming environment for those who seek refuge. The issue of asylum seekers in the UK is multi-faceted and dynamic. The country holds a critical responsibility to uphold its humanitarian values and international commitments while addressing the complexities of the asylum process. It is crucial for the UK to continue working towards a fair and efficient and compassionate system for asylum seekers. By doing so the nation can provide refuge to those in need and in turn enrich its own society through diversity and resilience.



By Lucy Badger

Imposter syndrome: a cursed cycle

This may be the first time that you are discovering a name for a feeling that you may even experience yourself. Imposter syndrome is a reoccurring psychological fear and doubt of one's persona. A persistent fear of not being good enough for one's role or responsibility, a fear of being exposed as a fraud. Sometimes it can be generalised as overthinking, and is not often remarked as a specific disorder. Few people have an ability to define the term as they bury this feeling deep down, thinking that they could be the only one.

Certain traits and past experiences can trigger imposter syndrome: how people are nurtured, what they have experienced and their quality of upbringing. As people age, they may experience high pressures in certain tasks and may have even been faced with comparison. Whether it is to their siblings, colleagues or even friends; comparison to others (especially from an early age) can promote imposter syndrome and some enigmas. Am I doing well at this? Is everyone else struggling, or is it just me? These are common feelings which highlight the recurring presence of imposter syndrome, and how anyone can suffer from it, it all its varieties and all scenarios. Comparison from an early age can lead to a persistent need for perfectionism, which is not always achievable, drawing to an illusion of not being able or suited for a task, a feeling of displacement, just because it is not 100%. Circling back to the greatest factor of imposter syndrome, nurture. It is confirmed that parents' beliefs influence their children the most. From stereotypes, to parenting structure: how children are treated is how they behave. High pressures from upbringings evoke a high self-expectancy. When these expectations are not met, it is easy to brew emotions of self-loathing and doubt



FREYA HOWARTH

Linking to the idea of nurture and the way which people are raised, their values can vary. For example, it is clear that women are more open with emotions and express imposter syndrome more than males can. This follows an influenced stereo type that "men shouldn't convey emotions," showing reasons for a lack of acknowledgement and discussion.

The reasons for a lack of acknowledgment towards imposter syndrome, is the key idea that it causes people to lessen its worth compared to other disorders (like anxiety and depression) and therefore avoid seeking help towards it. It is easy to create an idea that it is only a concept and not as relevant as more spoken about syndromes. This leads to a general lack of awareness and therefore recognition, leading to some even feeling worse and increasingly isolated. It is proven that 70% of people will suffer from imposter syndrome in their lives, but only 20% of people are able to define it as a syndrome. It is result of a lack of confidence can create this.

The disorder is quite prominent in the lifestyle of a student. With components of exam stress, grades, and friendships, students go through more varied emotions than anyone else. Unfortunately, it is easy to stop recognising accomplishments and only point out the flaws that 'tarnish' their success', as though it is never good enough. Competition can cause great discomfort to those with imposter syndrome and can foster feelings like they do not deserve any reward or approbation. It promotes fluctuating emotions: was that good enough? Am I good enough? How did everyone else find it? These enigmas can link to social components as friendships can vary in sociolects. Everybody is different.

Imposter syndrome is also maximised for those in the work force. As people begin to age and gain their first job, there is a building amount of responsibility as a role is assigned. It is common for workers to feel as though their work is not respectable. That someone is going to tell them that they are inept at their role, that they do not deserve to be there. Ten times out of ten this is completely psychological, and quite draining. Imposter syndrome is a constant battle with your body and mind as people can create fictional scenarios through fear. Even when achieving things, like a promotion, those that suffer with imposter syndrome repeatedly fear being outed as "undeserving of it" and that they are not worthy of any sort of accomplishment or recognition.

Imposter syndrome can however have some positive aspects, once recognised, you start to find comfort in yourself and learn ways to work with it and begin a journey to find a sense of peace. Those that do not battle imposter syndrome struggle to form challenges for themselves, as they do not question their role, nor what they are doing. Diagnosis is the first step. Then its learning to live with imposter syndrome, it is not curable or extinguishable, but it is manageable. You may even suffer from it. But how do you help it? Where do you start? You can start this journey by attempting to let go of perfectionism. Not everything that you do will be top notch; nothing anybody ever does is. Finding comfort in yourself if the first step, you can find this by sharing your feelings and compassions with others. Closure and realisation subtly help! Celebrating your successes also sometimes avoids the imposter feelings. It is hard to realise how far you have come when you just blend it into a done list. Start treating yourself, with outings, meals, holidays or even just a sweet treat.

CAN WAR BRING PEACE?

By Ellie Urry

War and Peace

Two utterly juxtaposing words, yet always mentioned in the same vein. Some may say no single period of history has been without war; violence has been ever-present within our species. But can war truly bring peace?

War has been used to bring peace to tensions. The end of World War One brought peace to the West, strengthening ties between countries through the Paris Peace Conference, agreeing the terms of peace between the fighting nations. Pretty straightforward, right? Well, no. On the surface yes, war brought a form of peace... to the West. In the interim, fighting continued in numerous regions, as armed groups pursued nationalist, revolutionary, or counter-revolutionary claims. Russia was torn apart by a civil war, which claimed more Russian lives than the world war had. Peace is ever dependent on your perspective; on the side of the war you find yourself on - it doesn't look identical for everybody.

Yet, the peace established in the West lasted under 20 years before World War Two began. In my opinion, 'peace' is temporary and contestable - waiting for the next disagreement to spiral into a conflict. How can something so destructive, destroying countries, people, nature bring tranquillity? War is not the only solution to a difference in opinion. There are alternatives, such as negotiating terms which are reasonable for both countries - resolving the problem. There should always be a win-win situation, without millions of people being slaughtered in the process.

We might be divided by religion, sex, colour, and the boundaries between our countries but we all belong to the human race. Reflect on humanities' two World Wars. They have proved that wars cause major suffering and in fact, the only reason that World War I ended was due to the exhaustion of the leaders involved, with a ceasefire being begged for. Wars would be endless if it was not for humanity - if we had unlimited resources, would wars ever end?

In this generation, with the words 'nuclear weapons' being thrown about carelessly, future wars could potentially lead to the annihilation of whole countries, whole races, whole generations of families. Therefore, war in this modern age does not bring peace but in turn, causes more damage and pain. In my opinion, war will never be able to bring real, lengthy peace and prosperity. Countries will be damaged both economically and physically, leading to ideas that can span decades.

So, can peace bring war?

No, not truly. You cannot slaughter innocent people and call that peace.



By Martha Willetts





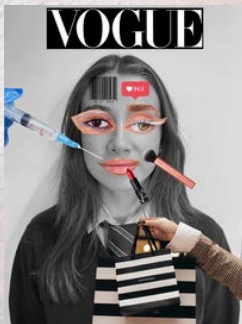
By Olivia Earle

MEDIA MAYHEM:

THE IMPACT OF CELEBRITY CULTURE ON STARS' LIVES AND MENTAL HEALTH

Media plays a huge role in shaping public perception of celebrities. It can bring fame and fortune, but also intense scrutiny and pressure. Media exposure can help celebrities raise awareness about important issues that they feel strongly about, but it also enables them to connect with supporters and build up their personal profile that is globally recognised. However, we need to dive deeper into the negative impact of this and how it has changed the world we live in today.

Celebrities often struggle to maintain a personal life because their every move is scrutinized and captured by the paparazzi. Let's take David Beckham as an example; recently, he released an eye-opening documentary demonstrating how he has manoeuvred through tremendous pressures and complexities both on, but mainly off the pitch.



The footballer was constantly hounded by the paparazzi and robbed of his personal life, which he still remembers today. Beckham's controversial red card during the 1990 Football World Cup caused him endless backlash from the media, that got so bad that it turned the whole country against him. In the documentary, we see examples of trolls, from threatening to kidnap his children, to traumatising death threats. Another eye-opening example was a life-size dummy of Beckham hanging outside a local pub with a rope around its neck. As a result of these media intrusions, Beckham still suffers massively to this day.

Everyone expects celebrities to be perfect, simply because of their status, but it's the media that constantly offers up this impression, rather than viewing them as real people. Allowing celebrities to make a difference is a powerful tool, not to scrutinise their every move and, even worse, their looks.

Let's talk about body image; the media tells us exactly how we should look from the moment we are born. From having the perfect nose, to being a size zero. This has detrimental effects on the people who constantly put themselves out in the eye of public scrutiny. Most recently, supermodel Bella Hadid revealed that she had a nose alteration at the age of 14 in order to look 'prettier'. She stated that she had always felt like the uglier sister and that these insecurities were what led her to get the appearance-altering surgery. Hadid was even told by the media that, at the age of only 13, her face was 'puffy'. This just goes to show that comments like this that are posted online and published on the front cover of newspapers aren't just light-hearted comments; they affect people negatively and are the reason that celebrities constantly feel the need to change their appearance to fit into societies' 'ideal' beauty standard.

The real message is that this ideology has completely changed the world we live in today, but we've got much more prevalent issues to deal with that deserve more representation in the media than they currently do. This requires less time wasted bullying people in the public eye and more focus on more important issues as this should not be the focus of our news. It needs to be changed and celebrities need to start being celebrated for their talent and not pressurised to act and look a certain way, which brings both psychological and physical damage.

WHY DOES SPORT MEAN SO MUCH?

“Only football can make you feel like this” – Martin Tyler

Why do we love sports? What is it about playing a game that captivates us so much; that gives us the best and worst days of our lives. Out there on the pitch, or the track, or the court we feel this emotion: the joy of victory, the agony of defeat and the multiple nerve wrecking, heart pumping, hair raising moments that happen from start to finish. It's the feeling of watching the impossible unfold before your eyes, moments that will never be forgotten. From Aguero's goal against QPR, to Verstappen's last lap championship winning overtake, and David Tyree's helmet catch in Superbowl 42. These moments created hero's, icons, legends and cemented their place in the history books forever. Maybe that's why we love sport so much; it's the chance to become something more than ourselves. To become someone who'll be remembered and looked up to, and who'll leave a legacy behind that will be there long after they're gone. But that's for the players. The ones actually out there performing. What about us regular people, the ones who weren't born with freakish natural talent, or those of us who were simply too lazy to put in the work to get to that level.

Why do we, the spectators, still feel that same emotion the athletes do when they win or lose?

I don't really remember starting to like football: I just did. I can't remember the first time I watched a game or kicked a ball and fell in love with it. There wasn't one moment that piqued my interest or made me a fan. In my mind I always had been. And from this interest in the sport came the inevitable emotional connection that is still there today. The excitement and nerves that come from watching your club, whether it was a regular league game a derby or a cup final. That's what it was when I was a kid. Excitement. Waiting all week for the thrill that came from watching football. That joy that came from football lead me to other sports, and now it'd be hard to find a sport I wouldn't be entertained by. Formula one, rugby, cricket, NFL, Basketball: you name it I'll watch it and probably get way too into it.

Sport is a way to connect with people you usually wouldn't and can be the catalyst for friendships that would never happen without it. This social element is the main factor for many people's involvement with sport whether it be as fans or playing the sport itself. Without my weekly 5 a side game on a Wednesday I'd be at home doing nothing, but instead I'm doing what I love; staying fit and having fun with great people that I would have never met without my love of the game

All these moments and experiences as fans or as players come from our love of sport and what it means to us. And so, it brings us back to the question in the title. Why does it mean so much? After all this talk and everything I mentioned you'd think that I would have an answer and trust me I've thought about it a lot. But to be honest with you, I have no idea. I don't know why we or I specifically love sport so much and why it makes me so excited and nervous; brings me to tears and gives me joy I couldn't describe. To non-sports fans it's baffling how eleven men kicking a ball into a goal can mean this much, and I get it, it does look pretty stupid when you say it like that. But it really is a feeling that you can't describe. It's a feeling that you can only really experience for yourself to be able to understand what it's all about. But when you do feel it for the first time, whether that be as a kid or young teen or even today, it's something that captivates you and never lets you go. You're in it for life after that. No turning back. You're not the same person you were before and no matter how many times you get people asking: 'Why you care so much?' And, how 'it's all just a game' and that 'it doesn't really matter', 'you don't care'. Because it does matter. More than you can imagine.

By Fynn Williamson



Pets And Their People

Nothing quite beats the subtle tap of padded paws bounding jubilantly across the floor. Nothing quite beats the incomparable feel of soft tendrils of fur gliding through your hand. Nothing quite beats a wagging tail and brightened eyes greeting you as you return home. Nothing quite beats our pets. But what if I told you those pets bring a myriad more than just boundless bundles of happiness?

Decrease in blood and cholesterol levels, ease of loneliness, reduction in anxious and depressive emotions are only a fraction of the multitude of perks of simply owning a furry friend. Not to mention the inevitable exercise involved which ameliorates our lives immensely. Nevertheless, these physical and mental benefits are miniscule in comparison to the lifelong confidant you are sure to gain. Within a matter of days, you'll almost undoubtedly become the irritating fountain of "look what my perfect pet did!" and "just one more photo, I swear!". Their furry face will swarm your thoughts like bees to honey as you count the seconds until you see them again. Your glum mood will be instantaneously lit up by their inquisitive snout tracing back the smells which had clung to you throughout the day. Primarily, you'll never look back to the dull drivel of your days prior to pets, instead only forward to your ineluctably brighter, beaming, and brilliant pet-filled days ahead.

Lamentably, love that feels like a comfortable, cosy fire is an unattainable fantasy for many animals who instead are enveloped by the icy claws of abandonment and rejection. Their eyes fail to light up and their tail stays down, perhaps rarely wagging with exhaustion for a morsel of mouldy, inedible food.

Rain relentlessly drenches not only their scraggy, deteriorating coat but their spirits too, the longing for love dying slowly as the days drag on. Salvation from their personal hell drifts further and further away with each second, with each nonchalant person walking by without a single care, with each potential saviour rejecting them yet again. Perhaps a slither of sadness will swell occasionally in a passers-by heart, but it is negligible in comparison to the melancholic grip of desertion these animals persistently face. Is this how we re-pay the faultless pets that devote their love and lives to us?

However, this grim, dismal reality can be eradicated with one simple decision we are all capable of: adopt don't shop. Opening your heart and home to a slightly more rugged, yet definitely exceptional and doting four-legged friend, rather than buying a pedigree purebred and overpriced substitute will transform both you and your new friend's life immensely. Replace the cold shivers of dejection with the warm embrace of love and acceptance. Show these poor, neglected creatures that life is so much more than desperation and longing. Shows these creatures that life is worth living.

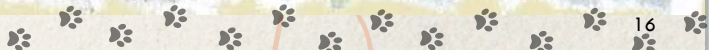
After all, nothing quite beats our pets.

By Tilly Green





By Becca Chang





Vive la Vida con alegría

1967
Eva Maria



BY CALLUM SMITH

5 REASONS WHY YOU SHOULD HELP SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL FOOTBALL TEAM THIS SEASON.

Local football is one of the most important building blocks of the game in England. Non-league can be defined as any football league underneath the top four divisions of Premier League, Championship, League One and League Two, but it is a lot more than that. It is a vital cog in the machine of English Football where future talents are first recognized, creating pathways that go on to become distinguished careers in the game. Big names such as Jamie Vardy, Troy Deeney, and Joe Hart, have all gone on to have famous careers at the top level domestically and internationally. Vardy, starting out at Sheffield based team Stocksbridge Park Steels, has reached the heights of the Premier League, and famously won it with Leicester City back in 2016. Deeney first cut his teeth at West Midlands side Chelmsley Town and went on to score one of the most iconic Championship goals of all time in a play-off semi final in 2013, with Joe Hart also winning two Premier League

titles at Manchester City after beginning at the National League side Shrewsbury.

Non-league football is also unique. This starts right from where games are played. The grounds that are called home by teams such as Ramsbottom United, Stourbridge and Newcastle Town all possess their own individual qualities and traditions that make them so different to top level stadiums. Lancashire based Ramsbottom have a system where hot drinks are served in mugs like you might find at home, Stourbridge's War Memorial Athletic Ground backs on to a Cricket pitch, and Newcastle Town's ground is set around a velodrome. These grounds are all staffed on matchdays by volunteers who give up their Saturdays for the love of the club and help keep clubs running from one weekend to the next. The importance of their role cannot be overstated, and non-league would not be able to run without them.

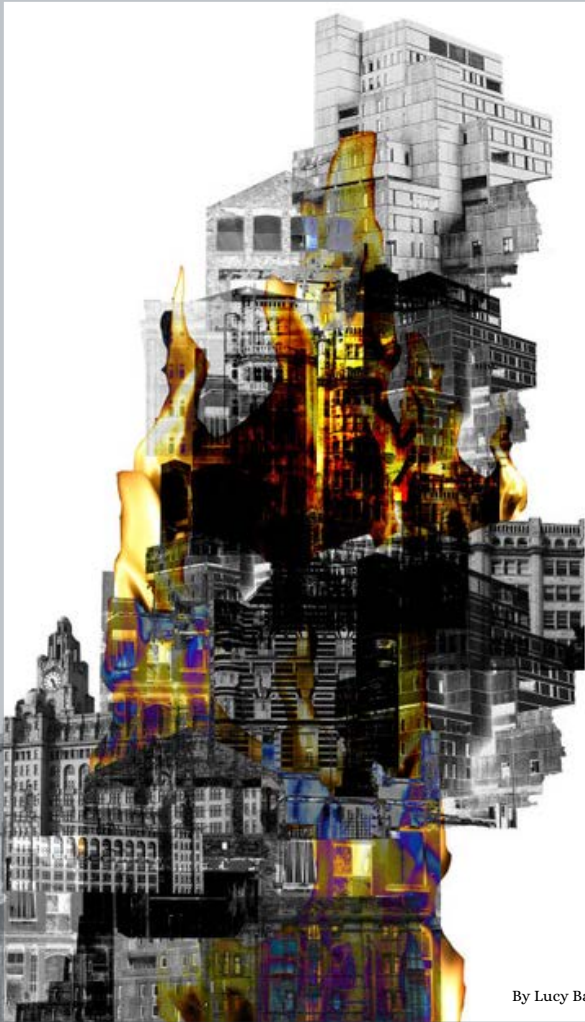
Another aspect of non-league football that sets it apart so much from other areas of the game is the price. Contrasting to the sometimes-huge prices involved in supporting top level teams, non-league football is a lot more affordable. Firstly, the admission prices are normally around the £10 mark for adults, and even less for under 18s. Other aspects of a matchday experience such as food are also a lot cheaper in the lower divisions and teams also often run matchday draws and raffles, which are certainly a large part of the experience and help to raise more funding for the club.

Where can you watch non-league football in our local area? Well, in West and East Cheshire, we are lucky to have several amazing clubs on our doorstep, in fact there are four in Northwich alone. Northwich Victoria, Witton Albion, Barnton and my team, Northern Premier League West side 1874 Northwich are all located in the town. Barton Stadium based Winsford United are just a few miles away with recently re-formed Macclesfield FC providing the local football for East Cheshire. This is not to mention the likes of Nantwich Town, Middlewich and Chester. Further afield, the likes of Southport and Altrincham are great days out,

with the latter providing some amazing food options, and are all well served by trains from Chester.

So, next time your Premier League club aren't in action, or if you fancy watching football in a unique ground with reduced prices and minimal travel, visit your local non-league club this season: they may need you more than ever.





THE ADVANCED SYSTEM OF SECRETS: *THE STASI*

Throughout history, governing bodies have used many tactics for control from simple propaganda to physical restriction of travel and autonomy. The German Democratic Republic established what became arguably the most successful system of ensuring public conformity: the Stasi.

The GDR had unstable foundations from its creation post World War II, when Germany was divided into four sectors by the allies: UK, USA, France, and the USSR. After the Western allies united, forming the FRG in May 1949, the USSR reacted in an attempt to match the power of the West by forming the GDR in the following October which consisted of the Eastern side of Germany as well as East Berlin which was situated on the Western controlled side of what is now Germany. Due to the destruction of war, Germany was in ruins which the West reacted to faster as the USSR favoured Germany's debt to the East in reparations over ensuring a thriving East Germany. This caused huge disparity in the living conditions of the West and East which triggered an emigration crisis, known as the 'brain drain' of mostly young intelligent people fleeing the GDR for the more economically promising FRG.

The Socialist Unity Party (SED), under pressure from the Soviet Union, realised after losing 3.5 million East Germans to the West, that they would have to be more restrictive towards the public in order to rebuild a stronger nation. The Berlin Wall was slowly constructed initially, from barbed wire in August 1961. As a violation of the people's human right of travel, the wall catalysed the Governments need to understand the social opinion of the country.

The Stasi, colloquially known as 'The Firm', was initially set up in 1950 to protect the GDR's borders and socialist achievements. Stasi recruitment rapidly increased to counteract discontent at critical points such as the negative effects of Ostpolitik in the 1970s, and the Prague Spring in 1968. From the many informers who made up one sixth of GDR citizens, there was many motives for spying including supporting the path to a socialist utopia, as well as material rewards and in some cases blackmail. Some were coerced as a last resort where threats of social exposure would be used in return for co-operation.

A variety of immoral methods were used under the justification of 'Operational decomposition' whereby a threat could be diminished through a series of infiltrations of privacy. This included myriad of recording equipment hidden in ties, cigarette boxes and briefcases as well as bugging houses; over a thousand were bugged a day in Leipzig alone.

More refined tactics to root out enemies of socialism in everyday life emerged, such as when the Stasi went so far as to open brothels under the Abgrenzung policy.

This created a society which under a veneer of peace and conformity, was in reality a population of families reporting on themselves. Parent reported on child. Friend reported on friend. This broke down in 1989, when the 6 million East Germans who had been unknowingly reported on were allowed access to their files to discover the closest people in their lives had been betraying them for up to 40 years. The Stasi became so infiltrated into everyday society, from the church to families themselves, that its success was undeniable in measuring discontent and picking out individuals who threatened the SED's regime. However, the relationships destroyed in the process by forming a self-destructive society with normalised suspicious and egotistical interests are immeasurable.

BY ANNABEL THORP



Examples of a door which was bugged by the Stasi. The family whose door it was had a relative in the West they often innocently contacted.

Consequently, they were made them victims of Stasi surveillance. The hidden recording device was not discovered until the 1990's, after the wall had fallen and Germany had reunited.



To the left are more items, such as a garden, watering can, and a tie; all which were bugged and used to spy on unsuspecting citizens.

Tik Tok, The Beauty and The Beast:

The magnificence and madness of how distinctly this platform impacts our day-to-day.

The social sensation, and a platform that accurately reflects the trials and tribulations of our generation. How serious information is making its way into the wrong hands and people are being strung along by it.

Tik Tok is a complicated app, with many strings attached. Some positive and some negative. Just like most things, it's "good in moderation", as I'm sure the adults have repeatedly regurgitated. They're not wrong, and I think it's pretty evident that we have overindulged in its entity; and its repercussions are now starting to show.

The app is an eruption of self-proclaimed "relationship gurus" and "health coaches" all of which are spewing conflicting messages and information with little factual or scientific backup. Leaving its consumers more curious and bewildered than they were before they came across the video. Subsequently leading to further investigation, fuelled from false bums they never even intended to see in the first place. No wonder us teens are always exhausted. Determining fact from fiction can be hard enough, but throw in a convincingly persuasive opinion, and it's a recipe for disaster. Back to square one. I'll admit to it: I've done it myself. So have my friends and even parents.

For the most part it's a highly influential app, and a place where people share light-hearted content that the rest of the world can relate to. Who's not going to go back for more? After discovering that their once obscure and private thoughts are actually more common than they initially thought. Such issues relate from: parents and their noisy habits, to us teens and our wild adolescent thoughts that we might otherwise feel too ashamed to share. With most 'shameful' thoughts, they usually end up being unspoken familiarities between everyone, that they just never felt necessary or comfortable bringing up.

Half the time words are not needed, actions alone can tell that one friend that, yes, you've seen the viral video. You get the reference. And yes, it's now a habit that will grow old and annoyingly repetitive in two weeks' time.

The dreaded FYP. A place of dark and mysterious content. No. Light-hearted cooking videos. No. Random British memes of Boris and Ronny Pickering etc. No. Cringe-worthy thirst traps of guys with spider tattoos on their forearms. You get the gist. Humour presents itself in various forms, shape shifting and warping your ideals. Some better than others. Some more uncanny than others. Some - not at all. Everyone's FYP is different. But there is one that upholds a more, questionable side, with some heated opinions. For example, "Medical consultants", who are just influencers posing as knowledgeable individuals. Its annoyingly conflicting, having "medical professionals", correct "medical professionals" with further misconstrued information.

These so-called facts are spiralling further away from the truth; sending us into a social pit of dissolution and disparity. Medical information on TikTok is desperate for reform.

One of the more prominent medical debates I quarrel with, is the female contraceptive side of TikTok.

Don't get me wrong, I think women sharing their contraceptive stories online is invaluable and can be encouraging for many women new to the topic. It can often help women to share their experiences, and in more recent cases has helped uncover mistreatment or lack of information that should have been provided before they were prescribed contraception. As a result, they would later experience mental and/or physical changes which they were unfamiliar with and didn't know how to deal with. Outside of the impact on women, a study from early 2023 showed that 33% of Gen Z trusted TikTok for medical advice and information more than their own GP. A key reason for this was because of the difficult medical jargon patients were receiving during GP consultations.

This jargon wasn't elaborated upon, leading to a lack of understanding. Consequently, patients became less and less trusting in the NHS; a large chunk of these being women. In addition, young people are finding their waiting lists for NHS appointments too long and are consequently turning to TikTok, for the masses of information that is at their disposal, and it's significantly easier to understand. Primarily, because it is explained using common language that is easier to interpretate. This is effective, as on TikTok people are at least receiving some form of advice - the only issue is that it's not always accurate - and it's becoming too generalised to the people consuming it. This has often lead to some serious medical needs not being addressed by real GPs, as people feel they have solved or dealt with it on their own, through the help of a concerningly convincing, non-GP. This needs to be rectified.

A recent documentary by Davina McCall shed a rather necessary light on the severity of the situation. She addressed how women are turning to non-hormonal methods of contraception. This is pinnacle, as the side effects related to hormonal contraceptives have proven severe for a concerning number of women. Some are mild, like headaches and nausea, yet some are more severe, such as depression and increased blood pressure. However, these more natural methods were causing issues for some women in terms of unexpected pregnancies. Proving not sustainable, nor effective as a continuous contraceptive method.

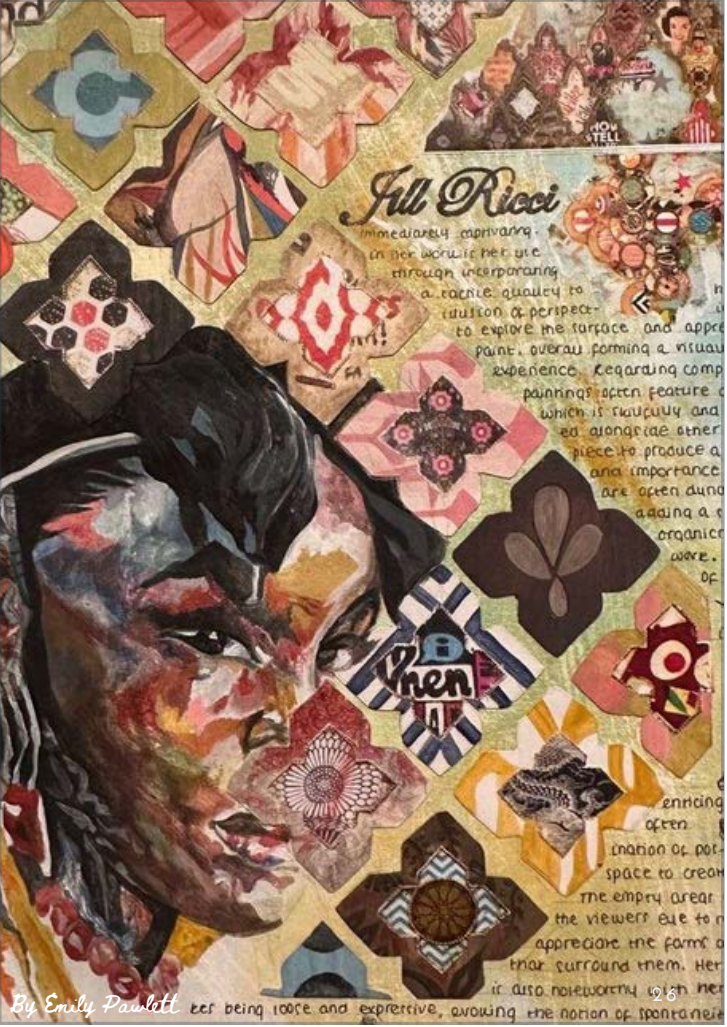
These women are not naïve, or just following the lead of contraceptive trends like sheep. These women are trying to educate themselves in the best ways they can, and that can mean reading and listening to various forms of content and information. As a female, I believe its undisputedly fundamental to explore your options including the pros and cons of every avenue, to come to an informed decision that's right for you. We shouldn't be afraid to ask and do so persistently if that is what is necessary to feel more at ease about our mental and physical choices. At the end of the day, it's your best interests that should be paramount.

Here is my summary to you.

These natural methods are being promoted online by some female influencers on platforms such as TikTok. Despite it being significantly less demanding on the body, it's not proving a successful method for many women trying this natural method.

BY LUCY RATHBONE





Jill Ricci

immediately capturing

in her work is her use

through incorporating

a tactile quality to

illusion of perspective

to explore the surface and appear

point, overall forming a visual

experience. Regarding comp

paintings often feature

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space to creat

The empty area

the viewers eye to

appreciate the form

that surround them. Her

is also noteworthy with her

her being loose and expressive, allowing the notion of spontaneity

The Remote and Removed Rishi Sunak

“It also shouldn’t be controversial for parents, to know what their children are being taught in school about relationships...a man is a man a women is a women that’s just common sense.”

This quote Rishi Sunak said at the conservative party conference is clever. He says something knowing that it will distract our nation and get everyone talking. This is because it leads to thoughts surrounding a much deeper issue of the rights of the LGBTQ+ community, specifically trans people, and so it is extremely important we consider and discuss these problems. This feels unsettlingly familiar to Margaret Thatcher’s speech “children who need to be taught to respect traditional moral values, are being taught that they have an inalienable right to be gay.” Now that was in 1987. However, Sunak is distracting us from the real issue. Poverty. It is growing larger, and everyone is noticing. Whether that is from a first world problem such as driving lessons going up from £50 to £60 or a serious problem such as water bills going up by 7.5%. You know it is getting bad when someone like me who doesn’t have an interest in politics feel it noticing the drastic change.

Rishi Sunak has the power to start the long journey to stop poverty. But he’s not going to. Because quite frankly he doesn’t get it, he is too out of touch. Now I understand if he has been brought up in a wealthy household and hasn’t been exposed to different elements of life. But I would like you think about the hours of PR training he will get before every interview and that could contribute to these out of touch things he says. whatever the cause, it shows his lack of empathy. The first striking example we watched was when he went to a homeless shelter, and asked Steve, a homeless man do you work in business?” in which Steve replied “No I’m homeless. I’m actually a homeless person”. They continued to have a conversation discussing business and finance and Sunak asks “is that something you would like to get in to?”

to which Steve replies “erm...I wouldn’t mind but I don’t know, I’d like to get through Christmas though. “Sunak then agrees knowing that he will be going to his house: “the Georgian mansion” which is thought to cost around £1.5million. Last Christmas (when this was filmed) over 230,000 households were homeless and one in one hundred children in England were homeless last Christmas. Enough is enough, he is running our country but somehow is totally disconnected from our issues.

Sunak has also outlined his vision for all students up to the age of 18 in the UK to do maths. “We’ve got to change this anti-maths mindset. We’ve got to start prizing numeracy for what it is – a key skill every bit as essential as reading.” He is correct, there shouldn’t be an anti-maths mindset. But, this anti-maths mindset is only going to grow if you continue to force these students who struggled to get through GCSE maths to continue to do a subject they have no passion for. An estimated 5% to 10% of the UK population have dyscalculia, and there is a likely chance that a large number of the UK is undiagnosed. As dyscalculia is around 30 years behind the research of dyslexia. It isn’t fair. Or is it so we can learn to budget better?

Mr moneybags himself invests in an oil company in which the product will lead to rising carbon emissions which will have devastating consequences for ecosystems, sea-level rising and freshwater depletion. I wonder why...his wife, Murty is a shareholder in the company and she has collected an estimated £1.5 million through this investment. Clever. We may not benefit from it but he sure will.

By Florence Bowers

WHY ARE STEM SUBJECTS RESPECTED MORE THAN THE ARTS?

Always An Angel, Never A God

The humanities and the arts. They're common sense. They're an easy A. And there definitely not worth any respect.

Why is it that when discussing the differences between the humanities and the sciences, it always and forever seems that the latter are second to none. The inherently superior of the two. Whilst sciences have allowed us to articulate and discover the past, look at our existence in logical way, does that mean that they come out on top. Do sciences offer more money and success; is that the attraction? Is that what makes the stem sector of education highly funded, highly encouraged and highly popular.

Whilst the sciences have somewhat decoded the enigma that is the history of humanity, does that give license to discount the arts. Whilst science looks to the art with logic and reason, the other analyses the meaning and the beauty of the art itself. Whether looking at the biology behind something, or the beauty and complexity of the work itself, why must one be superior

In a modern society of reason, is it that stem subjects simply align more with an evolving period of scientific discovery. As less and less of our existence becomes a mystery, are the humanities one more illogical issue to dissolve and to overcome with reason. Perhaps this evokes the question as to whether a new wave of reason is emerging. Romanticism pushed down once again in order to canonise science and rationality. In my own opinion, whilst science seems to rather lean towards dissecting the covert logic behind this, humanities offer a way of learning of new histories, cultures and the beauty of our modern society.

The division between the two sides of education seems to be becoming increasingly spicing. Beginning at year 9, choosing between different subjects, and preparing to drop old ones. It was not lost on me, even at the age of 13, the judgment inflicted onto those who opted for art, for history, for RE, food technology, textiles or any other creative subject. It remains significant to me that my lower grades in science were the focus of my teacher's attention, rather than my success in English or art or languages. Why is someone who accomplishes an A* in maths intellectually superior to someone who achieves the same in textiles?

An example of this clear national support of the sciences is apparent in the gcse options offered to year 9's. You may choose a humanity, a language. However, if you want to do more than two creative subjects, you're going to be disappointed. It should be no surprise that a prime minister who pushes for maths to be studied until your 18 will simultaneously and eternally underfund art. The UK government announced plans in May to cut funding for art and design courses by 50% across higher education institutions in England; additionally calling for the implementation of limitations of numbers of students applying for creative (also described by the education minister as courses with low quality outcomes) courses.

Even though within the first decade of work, creative or arts degrees have equal career progression to those in STEM professions, it seems there is always a reason to repress the place of creative subjects. With a government that perceives taking creative arts as limiting your future, and opting for the stem centred subjects is opening it up, it is no wonder stem subjects are so often favoured.

It feels as through humanities students are doomed to inferiority: always the angels, but never the gods.

By Beth Hardman



THE NEW WAVE OF NICOTINE ADDICTION

By Alice Lazarus

The problem of vapes is a modern issue that possibly stems from the wider, global issue of smoking culture, but very possibly came about in their own right. They have found a way to infiltrate almost every corner of our society and despite attempts to put age limits and restrictions in place, vapes still end up in very young, impressionable hands. Hands of children that shouldn't be exposed to anything of the sort, especially when parents assume that their child is in a safe and monitored school environment. This assumption is critically incorrect when parental trust is broken daily. Children exposed or witness to the use of e-vapes, such as elf bars, or even peer pressure into using them themselves. Can we really allow this sort of situation to escalate further? Something drastic should be done to prevent this worsening situation spiralling out of control.

Some worry that it may already be too late and that this new proposed ban will solve nothing. However, surely, we cannot sit around and wait for the situation to improve without any governmental intervention.

According to our Health secretary, Steve Barclay the government was planning to "clamp down" on the sale of disposable vapes, in particular the "way they're being marketed to kids, presenting them like sweets". This tactical marketing strategy has resulted in one in five children currently using these products, unknowingly damaging their own health. Consequently, this has led to child respiratory doctors criticising the government for their failed warning surrounding the likely dangers of e-cigarettes. You may not know this, but these e-cigarettes contain 2% nicotine which is the highest legal concentration in the UK. Addictions so easily created, children are hooked on nicotine, what will become of such a young generation? 'We are sleepwalking into a public health catastrophe' according to Prof Andrew Bush, a consultant paediatric chest physician at Royal Brompton and Harefield hospitals. However, it is not so simple as to wipe out vapes all together, there are other factors that must be considered first.

In an article by the Financial Times, they suggest that the government accept and recognise the impact that these disposable vapes and e-cigarettes have on children, but that we must also consider how to "get the balance right". We should acknowledge that vaping can be helpful for adults who are trying to reduce or quit smoking. Vapes are believed to be less harmful than tobacco and so can help smokers to quit, therefore, we can infer that Councils are not against vaping altogether. Remember, less harmful doesn't mean risk free. As vapes are relatively new there hasn't been the opportunity to complete longitudinal research and so long-term consequences of vaping are virtually unknown. There was a time where smoking was thought to be beneficial to people's health. Will vaping end up having the same irreversible effects as smoking? There is no way of knowing and this is why there should be an air of caution surrounding vapes and e-cigarettes.

According to a repost by BBC news, nearly 300 million e-cigarettes (disposable and otherwise) were sold in the UK over the last year with Chinese-owned brands, Elf Bar and Lost Mary, accounting for more than two-thirds of the entire market. It is estimated that only 17% of vapers recycle their vapes in the correct recycling bins. These disposable vapes are toxic when disposed of incorrectly, not only contributing to the issue of littering, but they are a fire hazard. Additionally, they contain copper wires and lithium batteries that vapes contain are valuable materials. All the disposable vapes thrown away in a year contain enough lithium to provide batteries for 5,000 electric cars, as estimated by Material Focus. This proves that vapes not only have negative impacts on their users, but the environment surrounding them.

The biggest fear of bringing in a vaping ban is we could see "potentially deadly" black market products flood the UK. This is because if children want them, they will most likely find a way around the rules, perhaps asking older siblings or parents to purchase the vape for them. The anti-smoking charity ASH share similar worried saying it did not support a ban, as it would "turbo-charge" illegal sales.

The Dangers of Populism Within Europe

By Dan Willetts

Populism is becoming increasingly successful in Europe. Populism is defined as a range of political stances that emphasize the idea of "the people" and often seeks to create division between those within "the people" and those outside of it, often shadowy 'elites' or immigrants. We have even seen this in the UK with elected ministers such as Suella Braverman and Priti Patel pandering to populist views. But what does this mean for Europe, and should we be worried?

After a recent election in Slovakia, the SMER party: a popular left-wing party within Slovakia, emerged victorious with 24% of the vote. During their election campaign, SMER, appeared sympathetic to Putin and his war on Ukraine. Robert Fico, the leader of SMER, went as far as to say 'If SMER enter government, we will not send a single round of ammunition to Ukraine.' Despite this, Fico claims he is not 'pro-Russian.' Slovakia's apathy towards Ukraine could be a huge blow to EU support to Ukraine, with Slovakia previously providing substantial military aid to Ukraine. Furthermore, it shows the EU united stand against Russia is no longer as strong as it once was. This is worrying for the EU as it seems it can no longer rely on the solidarity on foreign policy. The election of Fico is also a cause for concern for the citizens of Slovakia, as his previous government collapsed after the discovery of connections with the mafia. This came after the assassination of journalist Jan Kuciak who had been investigating the Czech mafia prior to his death. The success of SMER in the recent election could therefore beckon a return to the same corruption rampant within the previous government.



Elsewhere in the EU, these trends have become more apparent. The current Prime minister of Italy, Georgia Meloni, is rarely far from controversy. A former member of a far right-wing party, Meloni has recently attempted to cut a more moderate figure. Despite Meloni's attempt at rebranding, she remains friendly with the right-wing president of Hungary, Viktor Orban. In addition to this, Italians have condemned her recent ban on same sex parenthood. It seems despite her recent appearances alongside Macron and Von der Leyen, she retains her right-wing approach. Even more concerning are her previous close relations with Putin. It seems Georgia Meloni could act as a blueprint for other populists on the continent such as Marie Le Pen.

Despite this, there have been signs of regression for the far right in Europe. In Poland the right wing 'Law and Justice' party lost the election, with a centrist coalition prevailing. However, populism and anti-immigration rhetoric remains a problem and one which won't go away quickly.

THREE SEASONS

KHIONE

A hand reaches from the left towards a winter-themed floral arrangement. The arrangement is composed of various dried and pressed botanical elements, including pinecones, small white flowers, and green leaves, all set against a dark background. The overall aesthetic is natural and textured.

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