

WG6 JOURNAL

By students, for students.



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2024 General Election, Potential Tory Wipeout?

An opinion piece by George W Y12

Scandal after scandal has hit the current conservative government, from party gate to lettuces, the future of the conservative party looks grim. But how did it get there, and can the Tories still make a comeback?

The Tory turmoil really kicked off in November 2021 when the Daily Mirror reported on a gathering of Downing Street staff in 2020, whilst lockdown measures were in place. Although not the first scandal of the Johnson government, which included the proroguing of parliament and the Dominic Cummings scandal, the breaking of party gate, as it would later be known, hit the British public personally and it soon became clear that Boris would be unable to recover from it. Matters were made worse when reports came out that Boris Johnson had thrown a 'bring your own booze' party at Downing Street on the eve of Prince Philip's funeral, in which we can all remember the images of our late Queen sitting alone. This sparked outrage at the former prime minister and his cabinet, of which multiple ministers had received fines for breaking their own laws, but the scandals didn't end here.

In July of 2022 it was reported that a government whip had been reported for sexual assault and had previous allegations made against him of which Mr Johnson was aware when he appointed him, even being reported that he made the joke "pincher by name, pincher by nature" which he hasn't denied. The Pincher scandal was the nail in the coffin for the Johnson administration sparking a wave of resignations making Johnson's position untenable leading to his resignation on the 6th of September 2022. Boris Johnson was replaced as leader of the conservative party and Prime minister by Liz Truss, who would resign 49 days later, after the disastrous mini-budget and sacking of her chancellor Kwasi Kwarteng. Rishi Sunak became Prime minister in October of 2022, facing a shattered party, a divided nation and a failing economy with many polls predicting a tory wipe-out in 2024, can Rishi turn it around within a year or is the dawn of a labour government on the horizon? Although, as it stands polling looks grim with the Labour party leading by 28 points but with the general election being 1 year away there is still some time for Rishi Sunak to turn the tide. If the government can get to grips with the issues at hand, solving inflation, bringing down the energy bills etc then they do stand a good chance of retaining a large chunk of their current majority.



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However, some have criticised the government's fiscal policies for being too careful and perhaps not bold enough, and some have even criticized Jermey Hunt with Andrew Marr stating "Jermey Hunt may leave it to a future Labour government to impose swingeing spending cuts" suggesting that chief ministers in the cabinet have given up on the idea of a conservative victory in 2024 and are instead focused on damage control. Some Tory MPs are now looking at the disgraced former prime minister Boris Johnson as they feel he is an election winner. When I went to parliament in January of this year, I had the opportunity to ask Gareth Johnson, the hon. Member for Dartford, 'if he was confident, he could win his seat under the leadership of Rishi Sunak'. Gareth Johnson spoke about the ousting of Johnson stating "Some of my colleagues were scared that we were 5 points behind in the polls, now of course we wish we were still 5 points behind" which implies there is a large percentage of the parliamentary party which wants the return of Boris. Although Mr Johnson first must survive the investigation of the Privileges Committee on whether he lied to parliament about party gate and so that may not be an option.



There are talks currently about a back bench revolt against the prime minister over the Windsor Framework, highlighting the division within the conservative parliamentary party, with Boris Johnson stating "divided parties don't win elections". Therefore, considering the sleaze, division and omissions of the current conservative government I believe that we could potentially see a conservative minority government in 2024, although if the polls are to be believed and a general election were to be called today the conservative party would be wiped out.

ULEZ expansion affecting Dartford Residents

by George W Year 12



The Ultra Low Emission Zone is set to expand across all London Boroughs on the 29th of August 2023 which will inevitably affect the Dartford constituents who cross the London border on a day-to-day basis. If your car doesn't meet ULEZ standards you will have to pay £12.50 per day, which has sparked outrage amongst Dartfordians who rely on their car to travel to work, to drop their children off to school, to meet family and friends etc. The year 12 politics class at WG6 went to parliament in January of this year and had the opportunity to ask Gareth Johnson MP about the ULEZ expansion where he described it as “a form of taxation without representation” as Dartford residents who will have to pay the charge when travelling into Bexley, are unable to vote the present mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, out of office. The mayor has defended his policy, believing it to expand cleaner air within London in order to reduce respiratory issues caused by the high levels of pollution.

The mayor has warned of ‘4000 Londoners dying prematurely’ caused by pollution annually within the capital, however some have argued that the scheme is more cynical and instead focuses on the increase of revenue for the London Assembly through a ‘pay as you drive’ fee. Researchers from the Imperial College London suggest that only ‘marginal’ changes in air quality have taken place since the introduction of the ULEZ zone, leading many to believe that the cost outweighs any benefits. Nevertheless, 30,000 Dartford residents, which makes up 25% of Dartford's population, have already signed the ULEZ petition, set up by the Dartford Conservatives, to scrap the expansion, highlighting the growing discontent towards Sadiq Khans controversial climate scheme throughout Dartford, leaving the question, is the expansion of the ULEZ zone a morale policy, taking into consideration its supposed environmental benefits and its financial cost during a cost of living crisis





Controversial Environmental Protests:

by Grace Year 12

The topic of the environment and what we can do to be more eco-friendly, has led to a substantial rise in activism.

As of late, there has been a prominent group of environmental activists, who are in support of the 'Just stop oil' campaign. On their website they demand "that the UK government makes a statement that it will immediately halt all future licensing and consents for the exploration, development and production of fossil fuels in the UK." They propose that the funding should instead go towards investing into renewable energy resources and better insulation in buildings to reduce energy waste. Just stop oil activists have a "radical" approach to their protests which has led to them being subjected to criticism from the public. They use disruptive tactics to make a point including, blocking motorways, gluing themselves to the road, climbing bridges that run over major roads, and pouring paint on buildings -ranging from luxury car dealerships to the sign outside Scotland yard. In October of this year, two protesters by the names of Phoebe Plummer and Anna Holland went to room 43 of the National Gallery in London, and they threw a can of soup over Vincent Van Gogh's 'sunflowers' painting.

People viewed this as an outrage and blatant vandalism that was protected under the laws of protesting. During their protest, 21-year-old Phoebe Plummer, stated "what is worth more, art or life?" She questioned both the people in room 43 and people all over the world why we value objects of materialistic value higher than the protection of people and our planet. Despite the fact they both faced an extreme amount of disapproval from the general public, it all worked in their favour as it gained attraction and people were talking about the cause. The people who were opposed to their actions would have been very vocal and covered by the media, but alternatively this would have caused supporters of just stop oils policies being exposed to the environmental activists. Which would lead to donations and increased support. 'Just stop oil's' protests lead to a lot of delays and disruption for people in the UK, but this gets people talking about the environment and even encourages people to support the campaign in the hopes of preventing these protests in the future.



Mental health

by Yousef Year 12



Another day and yet another case. When will the government act? Will they act? A 19 Year old boy from South-end-on-sea died on the 8th of July and it was successful suicide. Chris Nota, like many people his age, was suffering from severe depression and, due to lack of government funding and awareness from his school and people around him, it went completely unnoticed. Lack of awareness causes higher risk in people with autism. Miss Junior Hopper claims more people will die due to this same issue as she claimed “my son meant everything to me” and that “she couldn’t live without him”. She criticised the lack of communication between Essex NHS Foundation Trust who were in-charge of his case. His treatment was heavily underfunded causing his case to be less cared for. His mother has come together with other mothers who have autistic children in order to start a campaign dedicated to autistic teens. She claims she was oblivious to the issues her son was facing and blames his passing on her mistakes. Hopper also blames the trust ignored her claims that her son was going to resort to suicide.

He had already made two suicide attempts which his mother only became aware of after his death. She said the trust “treated her as an enemy”. Hopper had been cut off by the trust to the point where she had no idea about her son’s behavioural issues, leaving her illuded that he was being treated. She said it made her “believe things were going to go very badly from day one”. Hopper said she believes other vulnerable people will die if changes are not made. The mental health unit released her son despite her raising concerns and his clear issues. During the three months he was under the supervision of mental health services, Ms Hopper said she felt like she “had to leave a paper trail” in case the worst happened. “I didn’t ever want to believe I would be look to happen is terrifying.” Overall, Miss hopper sends all creditability to the trust for her son’s death due to their lack of communication, care and attention despite her raises for concern He said there had been a “lack of autism-focused approach” to risk assessments and care planning and that safety concerns had not been shared by medical staff.



The Russia-Ukraine War

by Luke Year 12

The war between Russia and Ukraine has been ongoing since the 24th February 2022. Throughout this whole period we have seen almost 13.4million people forced out of the country. The UK have provided housing for many of these people. Households in the UK have the great opportunity to register as named sponsors for Ukrainian refugees wishing to come to the UK. Sponsors provide their home for up to 6 months for free accommodation to a family or individual from Ukraine. These sponsors receive a £350 payment from the government monthly. Over the last year many people around Wilmington have housed Ukrainians. I have asked a friend of mine whose family offered their home, about his personal experience having 6 refugees in his home for 6 months.

Interview with Gabriel:

How did your family receive this opportunity?

“We put up a post on Facebook for those seeking refuge and several families reached out to us. We prioritised the family that was in the most dire situation. They travelled to us using their family car all the way from Ukraine. When they arrived they were a seemingly nice family with three children one being a boy and two being girls.”

Did this experience teach you anything?

“With the heart-breaking situations millions of Ukrainians had been plunged into it felt like the right thing to do to provide shelter and care to a family in need. However, after months this family were rude, distasteful, regularly disrespected us and neglected their own children leaving them to starve at times. Additionally it was found out that the family was wealthy and were using this opportunity to move to the UK as economic migrants after already escaping the war. This taught me that although you should always act with kindness you need to be aware and careful when housing strangers and research thoroughly beforehand and as they may take advantage of you.”

What are your favourite memories from taking part in this?

Giving the young boy the nurture that he had been neglected off for the most part of his life.”

Has this opportunity helped open your eyes to the struggles in Ukraine?

“I am in full understanding of the devastating impacts that the Ukrainian war has had and my heart goes out to all of those effected, it is a shame that a family that actually needed our help was not accommodated. In no way do I want this interview to incite violence and hate towards Ukrainian refugees and I hope they get the support they deserve I am just telling my story. ”

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Unfortunately many people in Ukraine are still not safe. Although many are returning to towns such as Lyman which is close to the front line, the threat of strikes is still there. "I still find it stressful to stay outside, in the open, for long," says Ira, a 41-year-old. Ira was one of the few who stayed in their home town back in 2022 when people were escaping. During this period it was normal to see about 60 people squeezed into the same cellar on Railway Street. In the last few months, electricity in Lyman has been restored by the mayor to most of the town and some surrounding villages. People are being paid their pensions, on time, and some shops have reopened. During the war the UK have been a helpful ally to Ukraine. In 2022 the trained 10,000 Ukrainian soldiers in basic combat and this year intend to train up to 20,000 more.

British colonialism

by David Year 13

British colonialisation has to be viewed as ethically wrong. The notion that destroying cultures and introducing a European system as rule was a form of 'civilisation' is designed to provide apologists with a way to assign a positive moral objective to the economic plundering of foreign nations. Yet such people exist within our government.

Jacob Rees-Mogg has been much criticised for the way the British Empire was construed in his book *The Victoria*. Defence of colonists and invaders is typical of this sort of nationalist, who take it upon themselves to assign the value of Britain's history to the impact on the wealth of the United Kingdom itself, rather than analysing the impacts on the native populations. When the British colonised the Māori lands of Aoteroa, named New Zealand by the Dutch explorer Abel Tasman, the extent to which 'civilisation' occurred can be argued from the perspective of the natives or that of the British missionaries and settlers (pākehā).

What the west defined and still in many ways defines as civil society is one that adheres to the European system of government and law. The missionaries that were sent around the "new world" are a telling example of this. The west felt a need to impose their own Christianity in place of the existing animist and fetishist religions of Africa and Oceania. Such differences in religion and culture lead in turn to violence, which is subsequently attributed to the savagery of the natives.



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The massacre of the crew of the British merchant ship Boyd in 1809 is the most famous example of this. Around 70 Europeans were killed in revenge for ill-treatment of a high-ranking Māori on board. This was because of a misunderstanding in Māori social hierarchy, but led to revenge attacks by whalers even after the Scottish merchant Alexander Berry had made peace with the tribe (iwi). The most hypocritical point from the western perspective is, however, the assertion that the Māori are by nature, warmongers. Despite this, the Europeans seemed intent on trading gunpowder and muskets to them in return for flax and timber. Far from civilisation, which from a modern perspective should suggest a society striving for progress rather than war, these Europeans were extending the range of warfare in New Zealand. This led to the Musket Wars of 1807-1837, with the introduction of firearms and European food stock allowing much greater distance for territorial expansion. European intervention allowed leaders like Hongi Hika to wage war with iwi much further away than ever before and he set upon expanding his tribe (Ngāpuhi) into the South. This also does not take into account that Europe was embroiled in the Napoleonic Wars at the same time, a far more destructive and international campaign than the constant sparring of Māori tribes.

One of the most common examples to prove brutality of the Māori that is put forward is the massacre of the Moriori from 1835. The cause of this was the displacement of Māori from the North Island of New Zealand by British settlers and overzealous purchasing of land. They then travelled to the Chatham Islands in the Pacific and enslaved the native population, killing many. But the desperate actions of a small proportion of iwi cannot be taken as representative of the total Māori culture. Their practices of cannibalism and vengeful warfare are often dismissed as barbaric and inhumane. Even if they are, the west cannot claim moral superiority because in many of the cases they use to defend 'civilisation' of the Māori, it was their introduction of firearms into society that exacerbated these issues into national rather than regional conflicts. Just like the majority of European colonies, the opportunistic settlers exploited the land and its economy in order to make a fortune. Creating a civilised society was often a secondary objective to the west and is used by apologists to explain away cultural destruction motivated by profiteering. There is no moral position from which Europe can claim righteousness in subjugating an independent people by purchasing the majority of their land and driving together iwi with deep internal differences.

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Removing the urge to make war is generally a positive objective. Yet if this requires abandonment of the peaceful or even beautiful cultural traditions of a people, then this becomes negative.

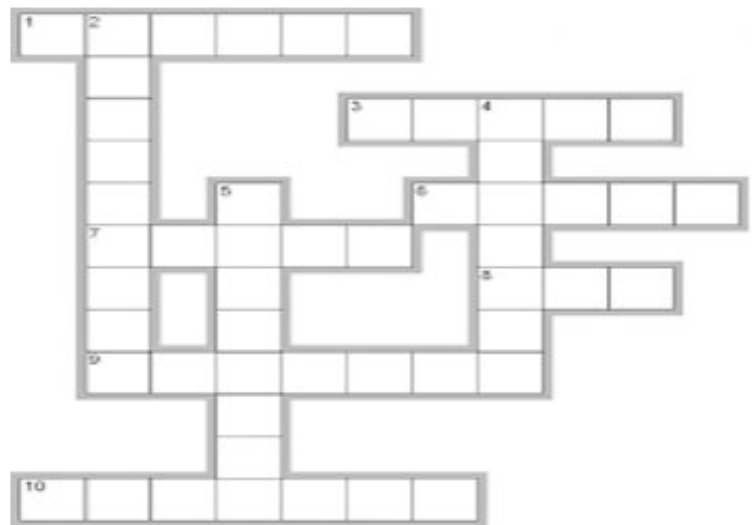
Because European military culture possessed the superior technology, it was European culture that was imposed. Declaring that a culture is 'uncivilised' because it does not adhere to European perceptions of society leans towards beliefs in white supremacy and the inherent inferiority of nations less technologically advanced. We should look to embrace the beauty of other cultures and respect them as separate to our own rather than getting hung up on presenting differences as dangerous and assuming that our own is better. This is the point that people like Jacob Rees-Mogg neglect to take into account.

Popular A-levels and how to succeed in them

by Kay Year 12

We all think we know what the most chosen A-level is. But are your guesses correct? We sent out a survey to the whole of the sixth form and over 130 people replied!

As we all guessed, the most chosen A-level is maths, with 35.3% of replies taking it as one of their subjects. The next popular was psychology, which only had 28.7% of replies taking it as an option. In third place, is economics with 24.3% taking it as an option. We also want to know the losers too, right? The lowest subscribed A-level was Finance with only 1.5% of replies taking it as an option. However, the data may be biased as it is not an option for year 12 this year. The next lowest are PCP and PE with only 2.9% of students taking them. This is then followed by both Photography and Further Maths with only 5.9% taking it for A-Level.



Across

1. Human Beings
3. Healthy Lunch Option
6. Can't See
7. To Destroy
8. Lock/Unlock
9. To Leave/ Desert
10. To Gain Something

Down

2. Head of State (USA)
4. Head of State (UK)
5. By Mistake

Everything Everywhere All at Once.

by Jamie Year 12

10/10 - Directed by Daniel Kwan and Daniel Scheinert.



'Everything Everywhere All at Once' is the perfect multiverse movie out there! Actors such as Michelle Yeoh, Ke Huy Quan, Stephanie Hsu and Jamie Lee Curtis, star in this wildly creative A24 movie, about the universe, broken families, and the consequences to every decision you make. The costume and score, by the American band 'Son Lux', is breath-taking and only adds to the eye-catching nature of this film. Daniel Kwan and Daniel Scheinert's directing style gives this film a unique feel, making it incomparable to any other. The film runs for 2 hours and 19 minutes and bring all sorts of odd and alluring things to your screen, as well as bringing a tear or two to your eye. This film is a must-watch visual feast, and with Larkin Seiple's beautiful cinematography, you will be amazed the minute you start watching.

Many critics claim that this film is 'too much' but a true watch and understanding of the film will ensure that you are aware of the message and purpose of this beautiful piece of work. You can find this film on Amazon Prime, only, so hurry, grab a blanket and food, and put 2 1/2 hours aside to experience this ultimate display of tear- provoking creativity.



Don't Worry Darling.

First of all, many have started an uproar after watching the famous cast filled, Don't Worry Darling. The protagonists, Harry Styles and Florence Pugh, worked well together over the months of filming. However, it is argued that the off-screen relationship doesn't support this on-screen connection. Harry Styles' acting has been mocked by fans, claiming it was "middling at his best". With the script given, Styles' performance was average, being overshadowed by his upcoming co-star, star of the 2019 thriller, Midsomer. Styles is originally known for his singing career, therefore it is unfair to compare him to the actress, as she began her career at the age of 18, rather than Styles at 27.

REVIEWS

Critically acclaimed Fleabag: perfect wit or just another boring comedy?

Despite the slightly inappropriate comedic storyline of the hit TV show, *Fleabag*, it cleverly follows the plot of a woman's thoughts in regard to not only romance or relationships, but herself too. After going from a simple one-woman-show to a big hit at the Critics' Choice Awards, Phoebe Wallers-Bridge executes a dry-witted character that women can relate to on TV, making it the perfect comfort show. The grief-riddled, dry-witted, hilariously honest woman tells the audience her thoughts as she goes along with her day, making it incredibly personal. In an interview, Phoebe revealed the origin of the name of the show, explaining it's a family nickname. The lexical choice of "Fleabag" is said to juxtapose the perfect makeup, hair, and clothes of the protagonist: analysing a personal messiness within her life. The camerawork is the thing that makes the show so brilliant. Throughout the first season, Wallers-Bridge's character constantly breaks the fourth wall, with perfect timing to prove a sly and funny personality, and it goes unnoticed. It not only gives the audience an insight to her brain but helps us to follow along with the storyline. The audience was then hit with a plot twist in season two, when Fleabag's love interest questions her with, "What was that?" and "Where did you just go?" when she speaks with the audience. Fleabag responds as if she doesn't know what he is talking about; this evokes a connection between the two, almost as if her love interest had a slight insight to her mind too: as if he was part of the audience. Similarly, the raw emotion presented by the protagonist engages the audience, forcing empathy towards her.

The show is very dry-humoured, including little-to-no special effects, revealing the naked truths within her life. It perfectly un-glamorises life, with the audience seeing her as a normal woman, opening up about typically taboo subjects, such as her period or sex-life. The show is laced with everyday topics, such as the handling of grief. Wallers-Bridge intelligently ties in tough subjects such as the death of her mum and best friend, whilst revealing the truth of loss. Gladly, it is different to other forms of media that express this emotion too: *Fleabag* doesn't glamorise grief, it presents it exactly how it is. It allows people to realise everyone has their own way of dealing with these events: no two people are the same, wittingly shown by Fleabag and Claire, two sisters with an awkward but real relationship. This being said, many disagree with the show's wit, arguing there's better UK comedy than this. Due to the comedy being based on overly British-humoured events, it depends on the type of person you are watching and how you would interact with the character. For some, it's a perfectly brilliant way of revealing the laugh-out-loud performance of Wallers-Bridge. For others, it is simply dry and unnecessarily unfunny, lacking the explanations of her life. It truly depends on how you interpret it: after all, the audience are part of the show too.



How to manage school life.

by Annabelle, Jamie and Evie Year 12

As you know, school is a full-time commitment; with eight hours of work during the day, then more once you get home. It is relentless and repetitive, with the constant longing for more time off and for exams to be clear from your mind. Unfortunately, this section will not cure you of these feelings, but it will provide some tips to manage your everyday life, while navigating your way through school.

Managing your tasks:

This is obviously a very generic piece of advice, but it is extremely helpful. Often creating either a timetable or a checklist of set tasks, helps you to envision and identify what you have to do. These can be daily or weekly schedules, depending on the time you are willing to spend on curating these resources. You can allocate timings and focus on priority tasks with this method which can make your time more efficient. Having your tasks and deadlines in order can reduce stress, as you are no longer panicking about upcoming tests, and increase your levels of productivity. Mapping out and scheduling your time and tasks, will also allow you to set aside time for your own personal interests, which will then lead to a decrease in stress, making school life more tolerable.

Don't ignore personal interests

This also sounds like another obvious piece of advice, but it is commonly disregarded. It is easy to lose sight of your personal hobbies when struggling through academics 5 days a week, not forgetting hours of homework. But increasing time spent for yourself can increase productivity, motivation and general satisfaction with life. This is because it partly helps to rebalance the personal and academic aspects of our lives. Now, this does seem like a simple thing, but hard to carry out in practise. Now, this can be achieved most simply, by using our previous advice; managing your tasks. You should try to incorporate your interests daily, or you could set aside the time for the weekend. This time could be used for reading, writing, cooking or painting. This is extremely important as giving yourself breaks can refresh your mindset, for upcoming academic events, like a test, or a new topic.

Get some sleep

Sleep is a very important part of everyone's day to day life, and can impact your mood, concentration, and memory along with many other things. So, it is very important, especially in school weeks, to go to bed reasonably early. The recommended time asleep is around eight hours per night, so you should try to make sure you go to sleep early enough to wake up for school.

Research has shown that sleep has been linked to improved concentration, along with higher productivity. This can lead to an increase in your motivation, productivity and performance at school. Without enough sleep, you would be left feeling, groggy, unmotivated and wanting to be anywhere else than school. This can lead to you not understanding work and can cause you to fall behind in class. A good night's sleep also improves your everyday life, even when you are not at school. It lifts your mood, patience and overall attitude in life.

Protect your peace:

School is a blur of academics, needing a break, friends, and unfortunately rumours and negativity. This negativity can come in the form of people, or things, but either way it can interfere with your daily life. This can impact on your mindset and happiness, which in turn, obviously, means you do not feel your best. So, it is important that you limit your interaction with this negativity as much as possible. This could mean, removing yourself from situations where people are gossiping, or it could mean turning off your phone, and giving your mind a rest. Removing yourself from situations you don't want to be in, is an easy way to improve your life and wellbeing, because why would you put yourself through something you don't really want to do?

If you stay in your lane and keep out of things you don't want to be in, then you'll surely find school days, a lot easier, and less stressful.

Hopefully, after reading through this advice, you may have gathered some sort of idea on how to make school days, easier to get through. It is very hard, and unfortunately, there is no way to avoid school. But just remember to manage your tasks, don't forget about your personal interests, get some sleep, and protect your peace!

The Prime Ministers

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

CHURCHILL	CAMERON
WILSON	SUNAK
THATCHER	TRUSS
BLAIR	CALLAGHAN
BROWN	EDEN
MAY	HEATH
JOHNSON	DISRAELI

Ai Art

by David Year 13

As early as 1988, the concept of image generation by computers to an advanced degree was being theorised. Anton Eliëns at MIT wrote a thought experiment on the future of ‘computational art’ and correctly predicted that on a ‘learning-by-example’ basis, computers could feasibly create works of art. I doubt that he could have known just how advanced this could get, with the creation of both beautiful and ridiculous works of art never having been easier to the layman. Yet his prediction remains in that the work that these AI do is for the most part ripped from previously existing visual art and as of yet, its creativeness is limited by the humans that have come before it.

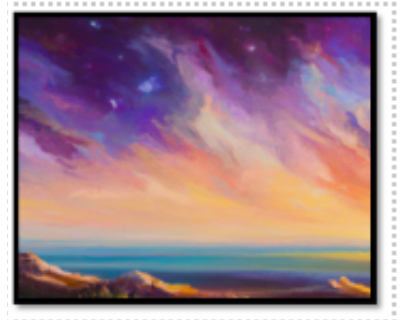
Even I, with my hit-and-miss ability in art, can produce beautiful works of art and choose to base them off of the works of other artists. My only input to the pictures in the bottom right were: “wonderful creative painting of a beautiful vista and the sky and the stars and stunning planetary scene realistic painting professional oil canvas”. With a few buzzwords and a general idea of what sort of image I want to create, I can produce and claim for my own a picture that looks seriously impressive. It’s cool.

I am looking forward to the ever-expanding list of tools that come from OpenAI – the system on which DALL-E 2 (that I used to produce these pictures) is run. For example, DreamBooth uses the same system as DALL-E, but allows you to upload your own images and stick them in whatever scenarios you want. I could superimpose my face onto Shrek or picture myself as Munch’s *Scream* without the hassle of Photoshop and extensive knowledge of image editing. The issue right now is that it requires a £1500 graphics card to be able to run because of the sheer computational power that AI image generation needs. But these things will become publicly available in the not-too-distant future, even for those without a behemoth of a computer system. For now, the sites available that run the programs themselves are still incredible. DALL-E 2 and Dream Studio are currently the easiest to access, but many companies have been working on AI products, with Google’s Imagen looking good. For those without the artistic flair this is amazing. No more are we suppressed by our innate lack of ability to create paintings and drawings that resemble what we imagine. Instead, we can rely on our algorithmic friend to manifest our ideas into tangible images. It appears in many ways that anything we find difficult to do may be achievable through the medium of computers. Animation appears to be in the works: how long before we see a feature film written, directed, animated and voiced with minimal human input? It isn’t perfect by any means and seriously struggles with text at the moment.

ARTS

These cartoon gentlemen were instructed to say “Hello, my name is Dan,” a task all of them struggled with: Artists (rightly) fear that businesses will begin replacing them with AI in order to reduce costs and have more agency in fine tuning results. But as Eliëns wrote, these AI do not operate on independent creativity like a human. It’s not as if we need corporate “art” to become any more soulless, but it seems inevitable that hiring AI on below minimum wage would only exacerbate the issue. The other and most obvious application is for concept art. Stick in an idea you have and instantly receive a result. Say, for example, that I want to create a video game based in a city made of cheese, where the main character is a mouse, whose ultimate goal is monopoly of the cheese industry. I can find what I want my city to look like and then find a nice idea for the protagonist. Before, I would have had to pay an actual human that makes their living off such work. Now, it is almost instantaneous and far cheaper. This is undeniably a problem, but until there are measures in place to prevent it, it will certainly be exploited by large companies. The issue isn’t for indie developers or you and I at home, because minimising the spending required to make an idea come to life is a great thing and inspires creativity. The problem is businesses that will begin to see artists as an unnecessary expenditure because they have DALL-E to paint the images for them.

I love reading about this new technology and love using it even more. It should be exciting and is a testament to how far computing has come in the last 40 years. But I do worry about artists and how this will affect them and hope (although it is probably in vain) that AI art will not become the normal for the game and film industry for creating concept art in place of actual talent and the human touch. I expect to see more outcry from the artistic community, and this will certainly be a big point of discussion going forward, as image and text creation AI become more and more impressive and assimilate more and more art into their own works.



Musicals! by Annie Year 12

Going up to London is always a great experience, but I think the best trips are those ending in a fun and vibrant musical for all the family to enjoy. Getting a chance to dress up all fancy, stuff your face with all kinds of snacks and experience the arts community.

ARTS

Right now, in London there are fantastic musicals filling theatres to the brim and I would like to recommend a few for you to visit with friends, family or all by yourself.

The first musical I would like to get into would be the classic 'Dirty Dancing'. The 1987 film was first adapted for stage in 2004, written by Eleanor Bergstein, and is still running today after almost 20 years! If you are a fan of the film, you'll 100% love the musical as it follows the original story very closely while incorporating common panto humour. As the musical is not recommended for children under the age of 14, I would suggest this type of musical for older teenagers to older woman. It could be part of a fun girl's day out, a birthday gift or a Mother's Day gift.

Another amazing musical I would like to recommend is 'SIX the musical'. This musical is (as you probably guessed) about six women, six wives, the very six wives that were married to King Henry VIII. But it's not just a repeat of the stupid rhyme that everyone is taught at school for one exam, it's a live, energetic girl band that tells you all about the REAL story. This musical is a newer show first coming to stage in 2017 premiering at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe.

This musical would be a great day out with friends of all ages however it is also a great educational show as it does use historical accuracy to portray these women and their lives.

These are only a few of the vast amount of beautiful and fun musicals that are in theatres right now. If you get a chance to see either of these musicals or any others tell all your friends and family to share the passion of the arts industry. I hope these recommendations were helpful and will open your eyes to some fantastic shows.



The Rolling Stones – History, Career and Success. by Annie Year 12

Everyone has heard of the Rolling Stones, if not willingly then certainly on the radio or from your dad when he's mid-barbecue. What you may not know is that the formation of the world-renowned rock group wouldn't have been formed without Dartford. Yes, you read right, our very own Dartford.



Frontman Mick Jagger and Electric guitarist Keith Richards both went to the same primary school and later re-met at Dartford train station. On platform 2 to be precise! The pair began talking about the records under Mick's arms and ended up going on to form one of the world's most successful rock bands of all time!

The pair eventually joined forces with guitarist Brian Jones, drummer Charlie Watts, and bassist Bill Wyman, to resultantly form the legendary group 'The Rolling Stones'. On 7th June 1963, the band released their debut single, a cover of Chuck Berry's "Come On." However, as time progressed, the band began to dip their toes into the vast ocean of songwriting and eventually produced their first original single in their 'bluesy' "The Last Time". Yet by 1965, the Stones had begun to develop their own distinct 'rocky' sound, evident through their chart topping sensation "(I Can't Get No) Satisfaction", opened by an iconic riff by Richards on guitar.



"Satisfaction" is an early example of the Stones' rejection of 'middle class pretensions', and 1960s conservative values, due to the lyrics exploring sexual frustration and commercialism. This caused such a stir in the UK that the song was initially only shared on pirate radio stations due to its sexual nature! This was a catalyst in causing the Stones' rebellious reputation, contrasting already established stars such as Eric Clapton's. Perhaps representations of the Rolling Stones in traditional, conservative 1960s media helped in forming many of the stereotypes surrounding rockstars in today's day and age... Deep.

Anyway, the band's success snowballed from there and the rest is history! Between tours, fallouts, concerts, tours, new band members (it would be a crime to not talk about Ronnie Wood at least once), and even more tours, the Stones' successes only grew, gracing our ears with tunes such as "Paint it, Black", "Start Me Up", "Get Off My Cloud" and, of course, "Ruby Tuesday." It goes without saying that the Rolling Stones paved the way and set a mold for many later bands including The Who, Led Zeppelin and even Oasis, without which our dads would be miserable!

So next time you're on your way to Charing Cross from Dartford Station, look out for the plaque!!!!

Thank you for reading.

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