

THE COLUMNS

by pupils; for pupils

HSD's Newsletter: Issue 92

We want to recognise and remember the tragedy of the suffering and the terrible loss of life in the ongoing Israel/Palestine conflict. Last week, the Columns was remembrance themed, sharing the stories of historic wars. This week, thanks to the contribution of Sara Okhai, we have an article that highlights the human cost of war. While remembering past conflict is always important, trying to help and alleviate current human suffering should always take priority.



Editor, Ruby

Lebanon; From my Perspective

Sara Okhai

With the current climate we're living in with the Gaza, Israel situation it got me thinking and reminiscing on my charity aid trip to Lebanon last year. This came about as a result of my parents having been before and thinking it would be beneficial for my siblings and I to go and see what life is really like, up close, for people who live in those conditions. My mum and dad are very charitable people and throughout our lives growing up, have ensured that their children have stayed humble and are self aware enough to know what a lucky position we're in.

Seeing poverty through a screen is just not the same thing as in person. I anticipated it would be, having seen some pretty horrific videos online and other similar media but nothing, and I mean nothing, can prepare you for actually meeting people who are suffering in the way they are in Lebanon. Whether it's intentional or not, when hearing about war and death tolls you look at people like they're numbers. It's possible that you can often forget that each number is an individual person that had a whole life and future ahead of them that didn't get to play out. However, being on the scene in refugee camps and coming across people who had survived war, each number becomes real.



What I think most affected me about seeing these people is that they're just like us. Of course, some of the refugees in the camps were born as refugees; however, I think a common misconception is that the people in camps have always been poor and their lives are never going to change. In actual fact, the majority of the refugees that we met were people who came from wealth. There is specifically one young woman I remember who said she grew up in an extremely large house and her family was generationally wealthy. She had gone through school and university and was a lawyer still in practice until her house was bombed and her entire family eradicated. She had to flee her country, and take refuge in Lebanon where she has been for now seven years. She never thought something like that would happen to her but there she was. A refugee, with nothing but the clothes on her back. My main point being is that nobody ever thinks it's going to be them next. You see it on the news and think that it's never going to happen to you but in actual fact most of the refugees in the camps, in the situations they're in, did not think it would happen to them either.

Despite what they've been through and who they've lost on the way, I can honestly say the people living in the camps have the kindest hearts I've ever come across. Even the children, are just happy with what they have and are smiling and playing outside like any children you see around in Dundee.

What I really respect about the charity that I went on this trip with is that they don't just throw money at the people living in the camps and expect them to just be ok. They genuinely care about them and, instead of just giving them money, they give them the facilities to start their own thing so that they can build a steady income to support their families. For example, one man used to be an incredible hairdresser when he lived in his hometown, so the charity I was with set him up with his own hairdressing shop and thereafter he was able to employ other refugees so that they too could start gaining a stable income.

I don't think any amount of years could pass where I'll forget the faces of the orphaned children I met. Or their names. Or the fact that they tell you how much they love you when all you did was give them something to eat. A trip like this doesn't just make you realise how lucky you are but also just makes you re-evaluate what you view as being "unbearable" or "too tough" because our "too tough" can't even compare to what they've been through. They won't even utter a complaint. Not one time during my whole trip, did I hear any of the adults or children I met even say how hard it had been for them. They were just grateful they were alive and accepted their situations as they were. It's impossible to even imagine what kind of pain they're in, but they still keep smiles on their faces. I can say I found it one of the hardest things to see in my life, but they're the ones actually living it and the people in Lebanon and refugees around the world are (or should be) an inspiration to us all.



J. Chalmers

Jack Mitchell

RSM Chalmers: My Great-Great Grandfather's Story

Born in Aberdeen to a Blacksmith, John Chalmers, like most men his age, fought in World War 1. In fact, he was a career soldier, and had been a soldier in the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) since the age of 18. Prior to his military career, Chalmers had briefly held an office job as a clerk in Glasgow for a few months, before deciding he wanted something more exciting. He first saw service abroad in South Africa, and was rapidly promoted. There he was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal, an award for gallantry in the field. A lover of animals, he could not bear seeing them abused and whilst in South Africa, he came across an officer far outranking him mistreating a horse. John hit the officer to help the horse. This act of aggression was entered onto a 'defaulter sheet' which would have been a significant obstacle to further promotion, but this entry was removed after an appeal by a colonel who agreed with my great-great grandfather.

The Battle of Neuve Chapelle (10-13 March 1915) was the first major attack to break through the German line, but it was also to relieve the pressure on Russia. Intense fighting took place with significant losses on both sides. Nearly 8,000 British soldiers were killed. In this operation, Chalmers was the linchpin that held the battalion together. His gallantry was recognised, and he was awarded both the Military Cross and the Russian Order of St George First Class. This honour is on par with the Victoria Cross in Britain.

On 24th of October 1916 – over 107 years ago, during the Battle of the Somme, Chalmers was killed by a sniper near Le Transloy. When he was killed, he was walking through his battalion's trench with a Colonel. It was thought he was targeted because he had more medals of significance than the senior officer.

He left behind a wife and two young children. His medals are now on display in the military section of Edinburgh Castle.



Auroras

Izzy Clark

If you look up at the sky at night and see weird colours, you might think that something's wrong with space, or that you're seeing spots, then you might want to think again. This far north you can occasionally catch sight of a rare and famous astrological phenomenon known as an Aurora. Known in the Northern Hemisphere as Aurora Borealis and the Southern Hemisphere as Aurora Australis, auroras are coloured lights that appear in the night sky. They can be green, blue, purple, pink and any other colour on the spectrum, and are truly a majestic and otherworldly sight to behold.

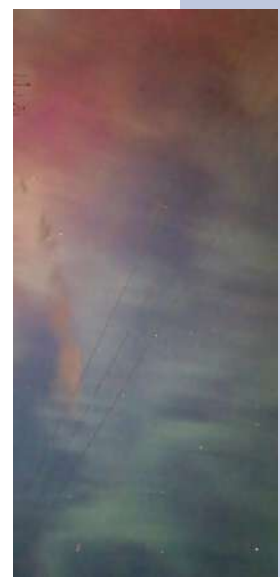
Usually, people go to see the Northern Lights in Lapland or Iceland, trekking out into the snow-covered landscapes in the freezing dead of night and praying that there aren't any clouds. But you can see them in Scotland, a much closer location, if you're lucky enough. For me and my mum, hiking out five minutes from out House at Sunday at 6pm was enough to get us some absolutely brilliant photos.

But how do they work? Unsurprisingly, it's pretty complicated, but thanks to several articles and a lot of stress on my behalf, I've got a relatively simple explanation to the best of my understanding. If there are any actual astrophysicists reading this (and if so, hello!), please don't nitpick me too much, I haven't even got a National 5 in Physics.

So - how do auroras work? Firstly, the sun sends out tiny particles - electrons - which travel at the speed of, well, light towards the earth. Once they reach the atmosphere, they hit the planet's magnetosphere, the shield of magnetic energy surround the earth. Because of the earth's gravity

Because of the earth's gravity from the core, the magnetic field extends beyond the surface, forming an extra layer around the planet. This serves to deflect charged solar radiation from the planet. However, at and around the poles the magnetic field is thinner, meaning that the electrons from the sun can get through. When the electrons hit the atmosphere, they heat up the gases there (such as CO₂, O₂ and H₂O), and when these molecules are heated, they release light of different colours at different temperatures, creating vivid colours visible from the earth's surface. Auroras are most prominent after solar flares, when massive amount of energy are released from the sun.

These photos were taken by my mum using a phone camera. How you take them is using night mode and a timer, where the device allows more light to hit the lens during the taking and development of the image. Because colour is simply visible light on a spectrum, more light hitting the camera will allow more colour to be visible in the photo.



Health Blog: Endometriosis

Maya McColgan

There is a condition that affects 1 in 10 women of reproductive age, worldwide. That's approximately 176 million women across the world. This condition is often overlooked. It is progressive, so it is important that it is diagnosed early.

Symptoms include severe pain during periods that has a detrimental impact on what you can and cannot do, pain during bowel movements and/or urination, chronic pelvic pain, abdominal bloating, nausea, fatigue, and sometimes depression and anxiety. Often the pain can be so bad it has a major impact on a woman's education, work life, social life, and overall quality of life.

There is no cure for the disease and it cannot be prevented. Symptoms can be treated with medication and surgery. Left untreated, this condition can cause infertility and affect other organs in the body. This condition is ENDOMETRIOSIS. It causes pain, suffering, loss of education and work at a cost of £8.2 billion a year.

In endometriosis, cells similar to the ones in the lining of the womb grow elsewhere in the body. These cells react to the normal menstrual cycle each month and also bleed. However, there is no way for this blood to leave the body. This causes inflammation, pain and the formation of scar tissue and adhesions.

Because pelvic pain can be attributed to many different diseases, such as irritable bowel syndrome and other inflammatory diseases, the symptoms of endometriosis are often misdiagnosed. Furthermore, the condition is commonly overlooked or downplayed as "normal" period cramps among young women. As a result it can take approximately 8-10 years to be diagnosed accurately with Endometriosis.

Because Endometriosis is a progressive disease, if caught early, it can be stopped from spreading and causing scarring and adhesions. It is vital, therefore, that women are aware of the symptoms. Often the condition will start during teenage years. The pain experienced with menstruation in any young woman with Endometriosis will be much worse than normal "period pain." Seeing a healthcare professional and getting a proper diagnosis can make a huge difference to the quality of a woman who has Endometriosis' life.

This disease is very difficult to detect from a scan and often can only be diagnosed through surgery itself. Yale University, however, have made great strides in creating a blood test that can detect Endometriosis. According to Dr. Taylor of Yale University, to aid quicker diagnosis, women should be aware of the symptoms, pay attention to pain that is progressive and "cyclical," or always comes at the time of their menstrual period. "If it varies with your menstrual cycle and you have painful menstruation and cramps and bowel pain, it will likely be endometriosis," he says. "But if you've had horrible periods since you were 12 and it has never changed, not necessarily."

To paraphrase Dr. Taylor, no young woman should be stopped from reaching their true potential because of the burden of Endometriosis. Know the symptoms. Share with your friends and if necessary seek help.

KIRKTON RIOTS

Matthew Jamieson

Bonfire Night and Halloween are usually seen as time to celebrate, times to have fun and times to enjoy events that have been happening for centuries. It's part of our culture and tradition.

However, in the more recent years, groups of teens and young adults have caused distress across Scotland and the rest of the UK. Riots. Here, only a few minutes' drive from the High School of Dundee, the Kirkton Riots occurred last year on Halloween, with some tabloids calling it 'like a scene from the Purge'. This year, Bonfire Night was the time of rioting again, in Edinburgh this time. So, what causes this, and how could it be avoided for a 3rd year running?

So, what causes this exactly? Well last year in Kirkton, where cars were set alight and houses damaged, it started when there was the death of a young man, named Grant Hutchinson, who died suddenly at the age of 28. Ever since his sudden death, there had been unrest with youths in Kirkton, which was to the disappointment of the closest family of Grant Hutchinson. As Halloween came around however, youths set bins alight and threw bricks at cars and houses, damaging schools and houses and some of the damaged remains can be seen on the tarmac to this day. In Edinburgh, in an area called Niddrie, this year petrol bombs were thrown at riot police, and the year before, Molotov cocktails were thrown at police vehicles. This was just another event which added to the concern for the youths of these areas, as innocent celebration and entertainment turned into violent scenes in some of the most deprived areas of these cities. Kirkton also faced another riot this year, although on a smaller scale.

So, how do we stop this? Should we stop everyone's fun and enjoyment on these days, or remove the purchasing of fireworks nationwide? Or should we increase police presence in these areas on these nights? Well, preventing the sale of fireworks altogether would end up with perhaps even more violent methods of attack used by youths, and even a setting up of the black market to supply the rioters to cause further disturbances, as seen with the Niddrie riots, which have been seen to be set up by adults, though orchestrated mainly by youths. The riots have been participated in by those as young as 10 years old, showing how adults have managed to manipulate youths into taking part in these crimes. Could a larger police presence protect those who fear for their life as these attacks occur? Well, police always seem to be the main targets of these attacks and to position them in these areas could lead to attacks on the police members patrolling, could risk the police officers' lives, and they could be vastly outnumbered, as those who attend these riots are in the hundreds. Well, even with these blockades, residents of Kirkton and Niddrie must hope that in future years these catastrophic nights will not occur again, and that finally, their suffering will end, and that peace will finally return to these areas on Halloween Night and Bonfire Night.

CHARACTER DEATHS

Maisey Lafollette

“After all, to the well-organised mind, death is but the next great adventure.” (Albus Dumbledore)

So, I was reading Harry Potter for the umpteenth time and I was at the part where Sirius Black died. This got me thinking about how his death affected the story. Losing Sirius meant there would be one less person to fight Voldemort and Harry lost his godfather. Harry realised Voldemort used his connection with Sirius against him, this causes Harry to think he'll put his friends in danger. Just imagine if he lived? I imagine he would clear his name as a traitor and go with Harry to destroy horcruxes he wouldn't let him go alone and I think Sirius would have fought in the final battle and save Remus Lupin. This got me wondering about other fictional deaths and how they may or may not have affected the story.

Luke Castellan from the Percy Jackson series was barely a man when he sacrificed himself to save the world he wanted to end. His death affected the story so much as he left so much impact on Percy Jackson the main character. Before Luke took his final breath he made Percy promise to make sure no demigod goes unclaimed, this means that their Greek god parent tells them who they are. Was Luke's death actually beneficial for the characters? If Luke didn't sacrifice himself Kronos would have won and killed the demigods who didn't side with him. There'd be no more Percy Jackson.

In One Of Us Is Lying, the Gossip King of Bayview High Simon Kelleher's death started the story with the classic 'whodunit.' With his death died his secrets, or so they thought! I can only think of the carnage and pain he would have caused with his classmates had he lived, causing broken hearts, arrests or school expulsion.

As much as I hate it when authors kill off popular characters, sometimes it's necessary to take the story to the next level, or to be the story or to help other characters develop. The next time I'm reading and my favourite character has an untimely death, I will let my imagination and author see where they take me. (However Shanon Messenger, please don't kill off Keefe Sencen!)



Unbeaten In the Premire League No More

Eilidh Acford

On Monday the 6th of November, teams Tottenham Hotspur and Chelsea clashed at Tottenham Hotspur stadium. In the lead up to the game Tottenham Hotspur were the only unbeaten team in the premier league with 8 wins and 2 draws. Little to their knowledge, Tottenham were about to be knocked off their invincible pedestal.

Only 6 minutes in, Tottenham scored, with Kulusevski firing a screamer past keeper Sánchez. The stadium erupted into cheers and screams of joy as it seemed that Tottenham were going to keep their unbeaten record. However, around 30 minutes in a panicked rush of actions, it was found that Tottenham defender, Christian Romero, put a red-card worthy challenge on centre midfielder, Enzo Fernandez resulting in Romero being sent off and Palmer putting Chelsea back on equal ground.

In a high-tension match, in the 55th minute, Spurs player Udogie also faced the red card after a yellow card in the first half and another in the second for a rough tackle on Sterling. With Tottenham down to nine players, the game was gripping. In the 75th minute, Nicolas Jackson fired another goal into the Spurs goal.

Spurs desperately tried to claw back a victory in the last fifteen minutes, twenty with injury time, but sadly were unable to score. Chelsea had a very different game though with Nicolas Jackson scoring yet another two goals in the 94th and 97th minutes to make the final overall score 4-1 to Chelsea.

So now there are no teams left in the premier league unbeaten, it's all to play for this season. Coming up to Christmas Man City are at the top of the table, not a position unfamiliar to them, with Tottenham Hotspur only one point behind following their loss. In third and fourth joint are Liverpool and Arsenal with 24 points each and in a very respectable fifth, Aston Villa, the potential underdogs of the season. So the UK can look forward to a very exciting season of English football this Christmas and everything has the potential to change.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN WHEN FOSSIL FUELS RUN OUT?

How will this affect our planet and the way we live our life

Amelie Alessi

INTRODUCTION

Fossil fuels are a huge part of our daily life. They have been powering our economy for many years. About 80% of the world's energy is supplied by coal, oil and natural gas. Fossil fuels aren't forever though. So, what will happen when we no longer have them? How will this affect our daily life? What is going to happen to the environment and the economy?

When will fossil fuels run out?

This question doesn't have a right answer because there are certain factors that could affect this. A study shows that if we keep using them at the rate we are right now, coal will run out in about 139 years, oil in 54 and natural gas in just 49. This is just an estimate because its difficult to predict with all the changes happening in the world.

How will losing fossil fuels affect the environment?

Many people think that fossil fuels running out will be good for the environment because we will finally be done with them. This is actually not true because it will mean that we have already damaged the environment by burning all the fossil fuels we can. rather than not burning them all, therefore causing less damage to the environment. We need to start using more renewable energy sources instead of fossil fuels so that we never get to the point when they run out. If we don't, the consequences will be catastrophic, causing temperatures to rise and the ice caps to melt. Almost all the icebergs in Antarctica will melt leading to a rise in sea levels by around 200 feet, submerging entire cities and causing damage to life on earth.

How will it affect the economy?

Renewable energy is much more expensive than using fossil fuels meaning that prices of electricity would go up massively. Millions of people have jobs in the oil drilling industry or the mining industry so when fossil fuels run out that leaves millions without jobs. This will lead to an increase in poverty. It will also affect global transportation and international trade, as lots of foreign goods won't be available to us anymore, or very hard to get, which could mean shortages in basic necessities such as medicine. To expand on this, a major part of trade is food. Disruption to food supplies will make it harder for people to buy food, leading to starvation. Many restaurants will go out of business, leading to even more job losses. There also won't be enough energy to power factories, so many industries would suffer and decline. Taking all of this into consideration, the impact on the whole economy would be devastating.

Will there be any changes to everyday life?

One thing that most humans use every day is transportation, such as cars, planes, boats, trains and buses. Most of these are powered by petrol which comes from crude oil. We will still have electric vehicles, but will we have enough electricity to power them as much of it is generated from fossil fuels. Transportation like planes and boats can't be electric at this time because it takes too much electricity to power them. So, in the future we may not be able to travel great distances or go abroad on holiday. As mentioned above, the impact on food supplies would cause people to become ill or even starve.

Reduced electricity supplies would also impact greatly on other aspects of our lives. Most of what we do every day involves electricity, such as lights, phones, computers, heating, cooking and much more. Without these basic resources, our daily life would be hard. We would still have some electricity from renewable sources but without fossil fuels, supplies would likely be low. These are just a few examples of the many changes we would see in our daily lives if fossil fuels disappeared.

Which fossil fuels affect what?

Coal

The main use of coal is electricity. It supplies over a third of global electricity. So, when coal runs out (if we don't take into account other renewable options), the world would suffer a huge power failure. As mentioned before, we wouldn't have lighting, appliances and heating in our homes. Factories couldn't be powered which would result in food shortages. Food also couldn't be stored in fridges without electricity, giving very limited options of what we could eat. Hospitals also couldn't function properly, putting millions of lives at extreme risk.

Natural gas

Gas is also a major power source. It makes up a quarter of global electricity so the impact would be similar to that of coal above. Households also often use gas as their main source of energy, so we wouldn't have heating and hot water. It's also used for cooking, so we couldn't cook our food.

Crude oil

This is sometimes considered the most important fossil fuel because it has the most uses. It's used to fuel vehicles, generate electricity and heating, make plastics, clothes, chemicals, furniture and other household products. Without these, so many things that we need daily wouldn't be possible.

One of the main uses of oil is fueling vehicles. Life would be so much different without transportation. It would cause the economy to break down and affect our life because food and other goods couldn't be transported. In many countries there would also be a considerable risk of starvation.

Is there a solution?

The answer is yes. Fortunately, there are other options to make power that are not only renewable, but also much better for the environment. If we switch to using them now, we won't run out of fossil fuels and we can save the environment before it's too late. The result would be a better future for all of us.

Art Photos!



Haoqi Liu



Catherine Lauchlan



Elena Elassar



Mia Smith



Orlaith Hindmarsh



Freddie Milne

EDITORS' NOTE

I always have trouble writing the editor's note! It's a difficult piece of writing which never fails to challenge my capabilities; much like dissertations, or actually, most writing. If you also want to stretch your intellectual capabilities, please write article for the columns. For those who have written, congrats!

Editor Ruby

Have a fab weekend!

THE COLUMNS TEAM