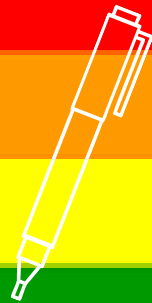




THE COLUMNS



Pride Edition : Issue 83

by pupils; for pupils

After an action packed actives week (or work experience) I hope everyone is ready to get stuck into their new timetables. Much how subject timetables have changed, so too has the Columns team. The new editing team consists of India, Aoife, Izzy and myself. While we may never live up to Sahars's formatting capability, or Zara's editing skills we will certainly attempt to bring you new editions of The Columns, with help from our regular (and less regular) contributors. On that note, a sincere thanks to Jack and Maisey for their fantastic and timely weekly articles. Equally, a huge thanks from all of us to Mrs Tevendale , for making The Columns possible. Good luck to all the leavers on their future plans: from gap years to freshers I'm sure you will all do well. Good luck should also be said to those participating (or volunteering) in sports day or the house debate. Go Wallace!

Editor, Ruby McIntee



THE CANADIAN WILDFIRES; A STARK REMINDER

Megan Beckham

The Canadian wildfires of 2023 serve to remind us how serious the climate crisis really is. The fires, beginning in March and reaching their worst this June, have been burning in all Canadian provinces with the exception of Prince Edward Island, and Nunavut, a region where it is difficult for trees to survive due to the landscape.

Over 150 of these fires, (around a third of the total amount) have been burning in Quebec, an eastern region in Canada where this level of wildfires and destruction is very rare, and has not been dealt with many times before. These fires of 2023 have not only destroyed huge amounts of Canadian landscape, but has drastically affected the air quality in parts of Canada and the United States, showing many people how bad the effects of the climate crisis really are.

Described as a dystopian world, a real life instagram filter, the smoke from these fires being pushed by the wind has settled all over the east coast of North America, making the skies an eerie orange colour for days. The smoke from the fires, deteriorating the air quality in many parts of Canada, including big cities like Ottawa and Toronto, only gained huge amounts of media attention when it blew in it many major U.S. cities on the east coast, causing places like New York, Boston, and Washington to look like scenes out of a film. The difference between these photos of the George Washington bridge joining New York and New Jersey is almost hard to believe.

The smoke has caused the air quality of the affected areas to rapidly deteriorate, causing public events to be cancelled, outdoor spaces closed, and millions and millions of people to be under air quality warnings. In New York City, schools went remote, people were encouraged to stay indoors, and wear masks when outside, bringing back memories of the pandemic for many.

The wildfire season Canada has had so far this year has no doubt been a drastic one, and is opening the eyes of people to how serious it is. Both the devastation of the fires and the smoke from them has shown through first hand experiences of many that this cannot be ignored.

HAPPY PRIDE!

Izzy Clark

Happy Pride Month! Seeing as June is LGBT Pride Month, I thought I'd tell you all about some celebrities - British and otherwise - who you've probably heard of, but whom you might not (or might) know are actually LGBTQ+.

1 - Jacqueline Wilson. Children's author Jacqueline Wilson came out in 2020, saying she'd been in a relationship with her partner Trish for almost two decades. Most known for her characters like Tracy Beaker and Hetty Feather, interviews for Wilson's 2020 novel "Love, Frankie" saw the author's identity come to public light, and the book itself featured young LGBT characters, allowing young people to see themselves depicted in fiction.

2 - Susan Calman. Scottish comedian and TV presenter Susan Calman came out as a lesbian in 1993. She has presented shows such as "Great British Menu" and "Armchair Detectives" and has also been involved in other shows like "QI", "Strictly Come Dancing" and "The News Quiz". Calman has spoken publicly about her own mental health issues, and has been vocal in her support of LGBT issues.

3 - Tom Daley. English diver Tom Daley has won four Olympic medals and six World Championship medals in his extensive career, and came out in 2013. He and his husband have 2 children, and he has spoken extensively about his pro-equality beliefs, including campaigning for countries where being LGBT is illegal to be banned from the Olympic games. He's also been public about his love for knitting and crocheting.

4 - Dr Ranj Singh. Television personality and paediatric doctor Dr Ranj Singh has been a regular face on British television for ten years now. He came out as gay in 2009. Since 2013, Singh has appeared on several celebrity quiz shows, as well as "Strictly Come Dancing", "Would I Lie To You" and "Richard Osman's House of Games".

5 - Lena Raine. Though you might not know her name, you'll almost certainly have heard her music, as Raine, an American-Canadian composer, is responsible for the music of popular video games such as Minecraft (which she's worked on since 2020) and Celeste, for which she was nominated for a BAFTA award. She's also transgender. As well as her work on Minecraft and Celeste, Raine also composed music for Deltarune and Moonglow Bay, and has released several albums.

Happy Pride Month!



DUNDEE YOUTH PRIDE



Gracie Eve (Form Five), displayed her musical talents by singing and playing guitar in Dundee's Slessor Gardens. Her live music was part of the the Dundee Youth Pride event. The performance was fantastic, and undoubtedly brought good vibes to the event. Those who attended can attest to the skill and dedication that Gracie brought to the stage. While my favourite song was her original song 'When the Night Falls', the entirety of Gracie's set was full of fantastic songs.

Ardèche 2023

A selection of Form 4s and 5s flew out to a campsite on the Ardèche river in the South of France. I think everyone involved would agree that it was an excellent trip. Each day was filled to the brim with outdoor activities like kayaking, rock jumping, floating down rapids, high ropes courses, and paddle boardin among others. It was a great experience for all, and I would certainly recommend it for anyone interested.





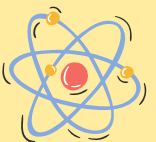
PARTICLES OF THE 3 STATES OF MATTER



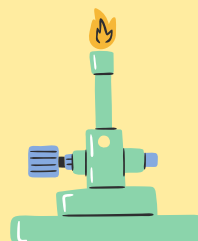
Every solid's particles
Are all close together.
They keep a fixed shape,
Though some let solids break.
Their strength of attraction is very strong
And if you think they can flow, you
are very wrong
When they're part of a solid they
always vibrate
And these make the solid and
won't separate.



Every liquid's particles
Are kind of spread out
They can easily flow
But will shake about
They have a fixed volume
But take a container's shape
The particles are fairly strongly
attracted
And these make a liquid and won't
make a cape



Every gas's particles
Are very far apart
They have no fixed volume
And will crash into different parts
They're very energetic and can
easily flow
They fill their container and never
go slow
Their strength of attraction isn't
very strong
But the time gases will be there for
is very long



By Ansh Pavan

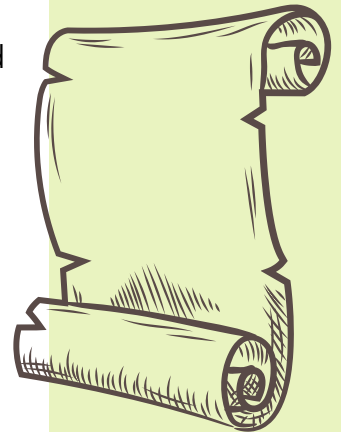
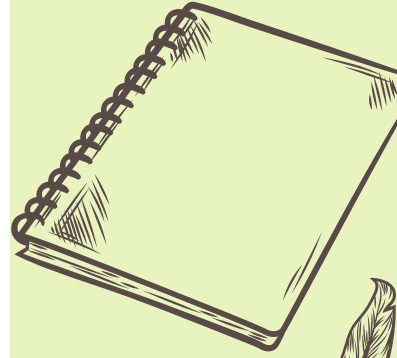
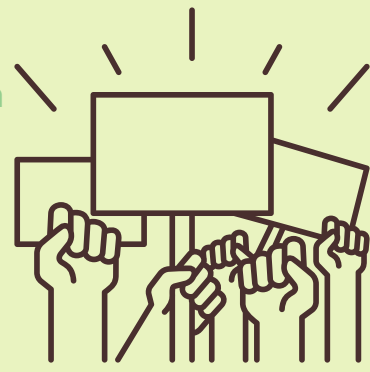


THE WRITER'S STRIKE

India Simpson

The news recently (or at the least the news I seem to come across) has been covering the Writer's Guild of America (WGA) Strike, or as it is more often referred to as: The Writers Strike. On April 18th, the WGA voted to go on strike if a suitable agreement with the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers (AMPTP) was not met by May 1st. The first WGA strike in 15 years began on May 2nd, 2023. The first media impacted by the strike were late-night shows. Shows including 'The Tonight Show starring Jimmy Fallon' and 'Jimmy Kimmel Live!' immediately stopped airing when the strike began. 'Saturday Night Live' also had to put a pause on their show, and instead are airing reruns for the foreseeable future. Whilst this may last for a short while, eventually viewers will find the lack of new material in the industry increasingly prominent. Other TV shows, including 'Stranger Things' season 5 have halted in production, and the writers of this show, known as 'The Duffer Brothers' sent out a tweet explaining how filming is not possible during the strike as, in their own words, "writing does not stop when filming begins". Filming of this show and many others (including Cobra Kai, Hacks and Abbott Elementary) will resume when a fair deal is reached and the strike ends. Depending on the individual shows and locations, some international shows are impacted by the strike. 'Game of Thrones' spinoff 'House of the Dragon' began filming in the UK in April, and will continue to do so, however, creator George R. R. Martin did show his support for the strike and the writers' involved, along with many international writing guilds including the Writers' Guilds of Great Britain, Canada and New Zealand.

The last WGA strike happened in 2007-08 and lasted 100 days. It cost the Californian economy \$2 billion, and affected the entirety of LA. There was also a backlash of reality TV shows and the introduction of many unoriginal, receptive shows. This is likely to occur again, but more disconcertingly, the corporate side of the industry have another solution to the lack of writers. AI. Shows written by AI are guaranteed to be unoriginal and repetitive, and if it catches on, it could be the downfall of the TV and Film industry. Some people already think that late-night shows will never recover not only due to the strike, but presenters leaving and shows ending. This could be the beginning of the end for late-night shows. Whilst TV productions and late-night shows seem to be the primary media impacted by the strike, it is also influencing the film industry. Writers on set is essential in order to revise scripts during production, and experience has shown that the writer being cut out or absent during productions almost always inevitably has an impact on the quality of the film. Many Marvel films and the next three Avatar films have been delayed.



There were questions of the Directors' Guild (DGA) going on strike alongside the writers, but they have reached a deal. This eliminates a three-guild (WGA, DGA, SAG-AFTRA) strike which would stop the whole industry from functioning. SAG-AFTRA is the guild of Screen Actors. Members of the guild have voted 97.9% in favour of strike authorisation. This strike could potentially help the writers too, as more than one aspect of the industry will be shut down. Neither of the strikes, however, have an impact on reality TV shows, and there is a threat of a boom in that area of the industry which could potentially result in fewer opportunities for actors and writers if it catches on, much like the use of AI.

The Writers Guild of America is not going to back down from this fight. The issue, however, is that the big corporates are unlikely to do so either. The future of the film and television industry hangs in the balance.



The Other Merlin' Review

Meagan Daily

In 'The Other Merlin', Robyn Schneider adapts the famous and commonly retold tale of Arthur Pendragon in order to appeal to the current reader. The book follows the story of Emry Merlin - the teenage daughter of the famous wizard Merlin - whose twin brother is invited to study magic and become the court wizard of Camelot. Desperate to study magic, and knowing that she would never be permitted to do so as a woman, Emry cuts her hair, impersonates her brother and heads off to Castle Camelot. Once she's started her training, she befriends Prince Arthur and Lance (a castle guard) who seem to get into all sorts of trouble.

This fresh take on Prince Arthur's story provides many of different topics stemming from their society's pressure and beliefs being forced onto the young people in Prince Arthur's his up-and- coming court. We read about Camelot's court - where there pressure to have excellent swordplay but good knowledge of politics and social issues (which is essential for leading a country) is deemed useless.

There is also historical accuracy with the prominent presence of the church and the archaic prejudices that go hand in hand with a heavily religious state. Discrimination against members of the LGBTQ+ community is heavily explored. We see the lengths some characters go to hide their homosexuality and the consequences they will face if they are discovered. Several characters are shunned and stripped of titles and reputation, some keep their orientation hidden and others are open about their identity and ignored.

This book is a great read, and the start of an amazing series for 12+ readers.

The Isle of Canna
Maisey LaFollette

Maisey Lafollette

Puffins, dolphins, deer, whales, seals, buzzards, crabs and plenty of midges! I was lucky enough to go on the school's recent trip to the Isles of Canna and Rum in the Inner Hebrides, off the west coast of Scotland. We were blessed with the most glorious sunshine - which made our sunsets on the beach all the more magical.

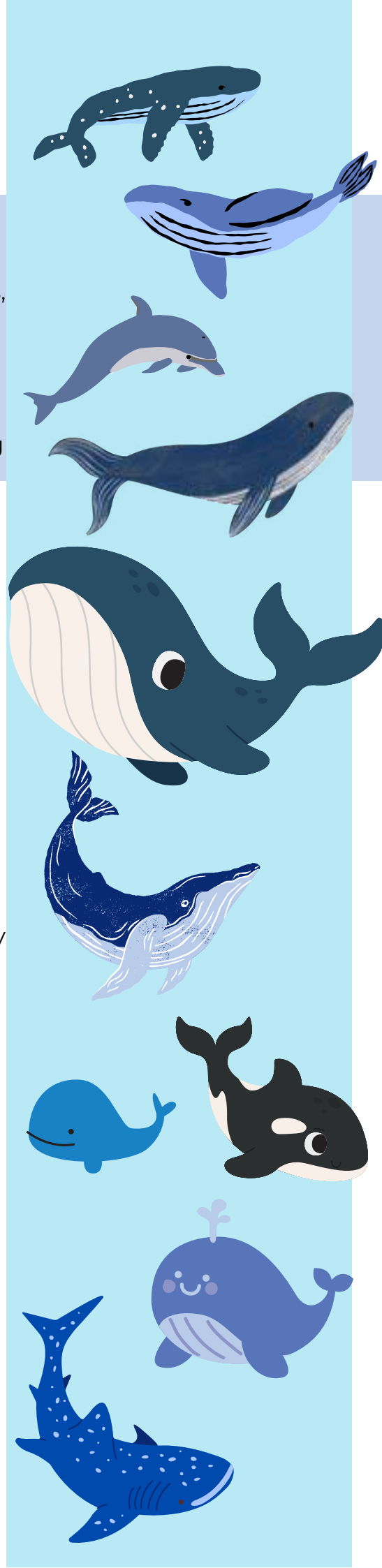
We set off from school, getting to know each other on the long bus journey. Never before have I pitched a tent, cooked for 12 on a camping stove, gone hillwalking or mastered the art of stuffing a puffy sleeping bag back into its tiny bag!

My highlight was seeing puffins in their natural habitat. They were busy hunting for food - almost looking like they were taking turns as when some left their burrow to fly to the water another group came back. I could have sat there all day watching their different facial expressions and characteristics through my binoculars - each one of these amusing and beautiful birds had their own personalities.

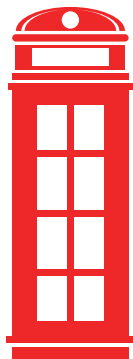
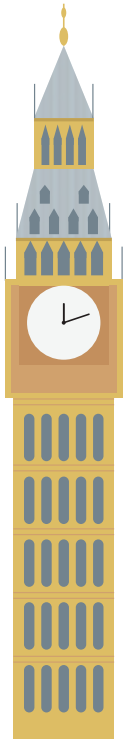
The dolphins were jumping in and out the water almost as if showing off for the crowd on the ferry. The seals were less energetic, but they played hide and seek with us and occasionally popped their heads out of the water with a cheeky smile. On the Isle of Rum we encountered several deer who stopped in their tracks to have a good look at us.

On the Isle of Canna, I was thrilled to have a lesson from the local Archivist, who told us some of the local history. One story that appealed to me was about an American who came to Canna to learn Gaelic for her songs, and ended up living there. Canna also has a history with cats and, as a nod to their many mischievous activities, you can find 12 statues of different cats throughout the island.

This trip was part of the John Muir Award, but I learned so much more than I had thought I would - the new life skills but also how cold the Atlantic Ocean is, how precious and magnificent the Scottish wildlife is, and how stunning Scottish scenery is. In addition, I made memories with new friends along the way. A huge thank you to Mr.Ross, Mr.Vicat-Brown and Iona (our sixth year volunteer) for giving me a trip of a lifetime. I was honoured to be a part of it.



LONDON 2023!!!



BRITAIN'S UNCONCIOUS BIAS; A CASE STUDY OF COMPLACENCY

The world suffers a lot. Not because of the violence of bad people, But because of the silence of good people.

-Napoleon Bonaparte (1769-1821)

Unconscious biases and implicit stereotypes play a deciding role in our lives. From day-to-day interactions and government policy to international relations, unacknowledged and unnoticed biases are often entrenched and can eventually become structural, given time and complacency. We consistently make decisions and judgements on the basis of personal thought patterns, assumptions and prior experience without realising it. Often the decisions made when influenced by unconscious bias are antithetical to positive outcomes, and disproportionately harm minority groups. While there are many causes that contribute to unconscious bias, perhaps the most unnoticed but insidious is geographical location, or a 'Western'/similarity bias. Nowhere is this better displayed, than in the United Kingdom.

A Western centric focus permeates British foreign policy. The reaction to Russia's invasion of Ukraine was tremendous and immediate. Sanctions were placed on Russia and Belarus; over £2.3 billion worth of military aid was provided to Ukraine and Specific immigration schemes were instrumentalized. The public came out in droves to support Ukraine. The aid was crucial and commendable. It also showed the clear double standard, or bias that Britain employs when dealing with foreign powers. Where was this outrage when taking about Palestine? Afghanistan? Iraq? Why have the Uk not condemned the USA for the Cuban embargo, treatment of prisoners or the overseas territories the USA tyrannically controls? How have we not condemned ourselves, for our actions?

You can argue that this is not reflective of the bias of the British public, rather of politicians and lawmakers. But who votes for such policy? The British public. Equally, in everyday life Eurocentrism permeates individuals' actions. From the treatment of immigrants to the cost-of-living crisis, a person's viewpoint can be entirely defined by where they are from. Naturally, this is not always a negative. In the case of Ukraine and Kosovo, this quite literally saved lives. In other cases, it ended them. It's not usually a malicious stance, but it's still deadly. Perhaps, all we need to do is think.



Q+ CLUB QUOTES

Everyone here is very accepting, we all get along and care for each other. I think everyone here is really sweet, especially Dr Lazani for organising it and letting us use her room

I like how Q+ is accepting of everyone, whether you're gay, straight or trans. It always make me feel welcome and there's so many opportunities to build new relationships whilst working on meaningful projects

Q+ meets every Friday at lunchtime in Dr. Lazani's room! Feel free to pop in!



EDITOR'S NOTE

Ruby McIntee

Happy Pride month! For those of you in Form 6, good luck for the future, and look out for next week's edition of The Columns (I believe you are featured). A special thanks from the new editors to Sahar for running The Columns diligently for over two years - the new editing team now understands the frustrations of Canva!!

*have a
wonderful
weekend!*

THE COLUMNS TEAM