



THE COLUMNS

HSD's Newsletter: Issue 70

by pupils; for pupils

Another fabulous HSD Anti-Bullying Week is coming to a close, having promoted a very important message: Reach Out and Listen Up. The anti-bullying ambassadors have worked very hard, alongside Mrs Baxter, to organise an array of events, taking place each day this week. Hopefully everyone has enjoyed taking part, as well as having learnt something new! As always, you should always speak out if you hear/witness something concerning.

Editor-in-Chief, Sahar Jafferbhoy



COP27: MORE EFFECTIVE THAN THE LAST?



Jack Mitchell

The 2022 United Nations Climate Change Conference started on the 6th of November. It draws to a close today. Also known as COP (Conference of the Parties), the conference is being held in Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt. The Egyptian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sameh Shoukry, has been appointed president of the environmental talks. Over 190 representatives and, in many cases, heads of state of countries have come together in Egypt to attempt to reduce the effects of Climate Change. Well known Heads of State in attendance are US President Joe Biden, French President Emmanuel Macron, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, Indian PM Narendra Modi, First Minister of Scotland Nicola Sturgeon, Former British PM Boris Johnson and newly elected Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva. After announcing he would not attend the event, British PM Rishi Sunak will also be discussing Climate Change along with his counterparts. European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and UN Secretary-General António Guterres have both travelled to the Egyptian City in seek of a better future. However, many have announced that they will not be attending, Among these people are Chinese leader Xi Jinping, Australian PM Anthony Albanese, Russian President Vladimir Putin and, slightly surprisingly, Swedish activist Greta Thunberg. Beyond Monday, COP27 appeared to have been washed away in the media by the G20 summit in Bali, Indonesia which took nearly all of the leaders mentioned above from their environmental duties. Most leaders left behind are from much smaller countries who don't have the ability to bring about change as most of the G20 members can. The timing of the Indonesian talks has ruined COP. To make it even worse, the BBC has estimated that over 300 private jets were used in the transportation process of getting leading officials from their countries to Egypt. A private jet emits, on average, 2 tons of carbon dioxide per hour. To put that into perspective, if you were to drive around the circumference of the earth, it would only release half of that! Drinks giant Coca-Cola is sponsoring the event but it has been suggested by critics that this is 'greenwashing' (a form of advertising where green marketing is used to persuade the public that a company or their product is environmentally friendly). The UN Secretary-General Guterres has told world leaders they must 'cooperate or perish' and many poorer countries are demanding compensation from richer countries who have been responsible for most historical emissions. This comes after a year in which humanity has had to handle heatwaves, incredible levels of flooding in Pakistan and Hurricane Ian in Florida. All of these devastating events have taken place since the last COP (COP26) which was held in Glasgow. COP26 has been seen as a huge failure as countries simply were not willing to commit to keeping global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius. Most countries have failed to bring forward any ideas and so far, our future is looking as bleak as ever. As humanity handles its fate, the question everyone is asking is 'will the few commitments made be enough?'

HSD Debating Success!

On Saturday 29th October, at the St Andrew's University Student Union, two debating teams for the High School of Dundee (HSD 1: Ruby McIntee and Aoife Stewart, HSD 2: Scott Xu and Finlay Thomas) took part in the St Andrew's University Schools Debating Competition.

More than 20 teams attended, representing a range of state and private schools from around the country. The pupils were up against teams from St Leonards School, Dollar Academy, George Watson's College, Wellington School, Mearns Castle High School, and Broxburn Academy, among other daunting opponents.

The teams took part in 3 debates and were ranked at the end of each as to whether their arguments convinced the judges. The debaters were also ranked individually on points.

Our 2 teams acquitted themselves superbly and Team 1 (Ruby McIntee and Aoife Stewart) won 2 out of 3 debates which meant that they qualified in 2nd place out of the four finalists. Ruby is an experienced debater, while Aoife has never debated before, so they were absolutely delighted to make the final but would have been content with that prestigious achievement, especially considering they were competing against strong, experienced adversaries.

The final motion was: 'This house, as the Scottish Conservative Party, would completely rebrand itself and cut all ties with the UK Conservative Party.' The girls were tasked with proposing the motion, and were disappointed to be in that position. They were looking forward to rebutting other arguments so they saw it as a disadvantage to have to introduce and define the motion. They made excellent arguments though, and, after a long wait for the judges' deliberations, the HSD team emerged victorious with 6 out of 8 judges ruling in their favour.

Along with the fact that both Aoife and Ruby were ranked in the top 10 speakers of the whole competition, the cherry on the cake was that Finlay, a member of our 2nd team, who unfortunately didn't reach the final, also won a prize for improvising a convincing argument in the floor debate that followed the final.

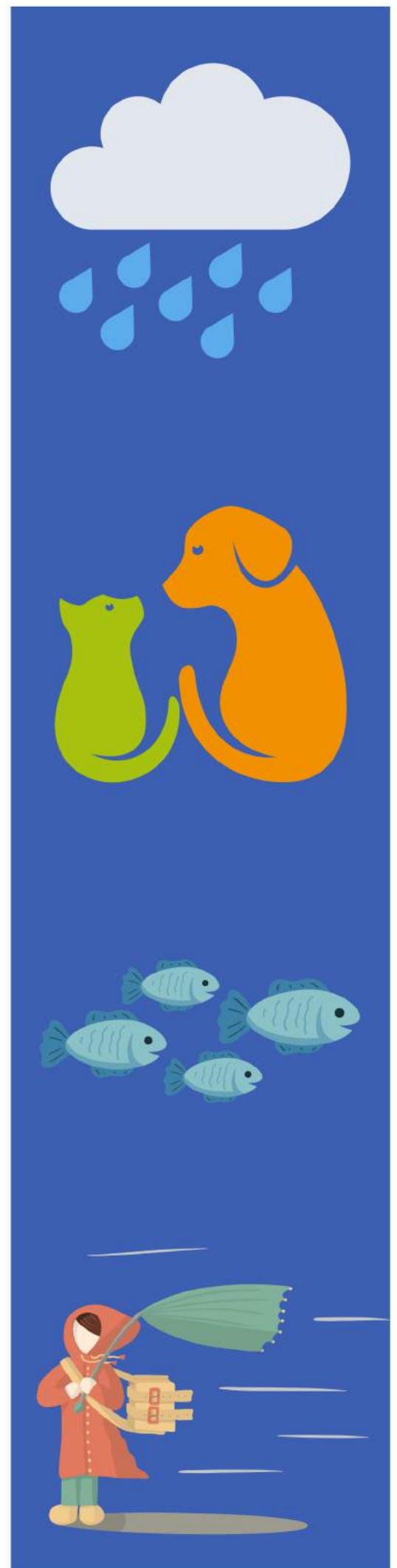
Overall, both teams had a great day and should be proud of their excellent performance and I'm sure the school will be equally proud that the debating team brought home the silver salver for the first time since HSD won it back in 2015.



FISH RAIN

Co-Deputy Editor, Isla Watson

As a result of living in Scotland, we are all used to looking out of the window and seeing it raining cats and dogs. But what if there were animals raining down from the sky? There have been many reported incidents of animals raining throughout history, mainly fish or frogs. One of the first scientists to take this meteorological phenomenon seriously was French physicist André-Marie Ampère, who theorised that strong winds were picking up the creatures and carrying them great distances. Another suggestion came from French naturalist Francis de Laporte de Castelnau, who suggested that it could be caused by walking catfish hopping from one puddle to another, making their way inland. Now, the most widely accepted theory is that waterspouts, a type of tornado that forms over bodies of water, suck the animals up and transport them over high altitudes, for them to fall away from the shore in a puzzling storm.



EVERYTHING WRONG WITH GOOGLE TRANSLATE

Izzy Clark

Google Translate is the world's most commonly-used translation service, launched in 2006 by Google. Over half a billion people globally use the site, across over 150 countries and territories, and the system offers 133 languages, with an additional nine currently in testing and 94 further planned to be added at a later date. However, as with all machines designed to work with words, Google Translate is rife with problems.

Not every language can be directly translated into English. Ukrainian, a language spoken by over 45 million people as their native tongue, cannot be translated straight into English. No, you have to translate via a middleman language - Russian - between the two in order to get an accurate answer. Korean, spoken by 50 million, has a similar problem, requiring a translation into Japanese between itself and English. And Urdu, spoken by over 300 million people, requires translation to and from Hindi before English.

But this process goes beyond just English to target language translations. In 2019, it was proven that Google Translate uses English as a pivot language - a hidden third-party language - when translating between two non-English languages. For example, when translating from Ukrainian to Korean, the code will translate the Ukrainian into English, then the English into Korean, which it will display. In reality, translating from Ukrainian to Korean is a four-step process - Ukrainian to Russian, Russian to English, English to Japanese, and Japanese to Korean. Clearly this is inefficient and over-complicated, made even more so by English's linguistic complexities.

Google Translate's pivot-based translation also leads to errors. Translating translations means that inane inaccuracies rapidly become major miscommunications. Anyone who's ever seen the hilarious product of putting text through and back through Google Translate knows that severe errors in translation can seriously change the meanings of phrases.

Whilst Google Translate may offer 133 languages (plus 9 in beta), it is still missing some key ones. Cantonese, spoken by almost 80 million people across Southern China, Hong Kong, Macau and South-East Asia, is not available, despite being a lingua franca (common language) in South-East Asia. Sicilian is spoken by 4.5 million people in Southern Italy, composing a significant linguistic population. Edo, a Nigerian language, has 3.2 million native speakers and no translator.

Digital translation software will never be able to replicate authentic human speech. A computer cannot understand sarcasm, subjunctives, or even idioms. For example, a delightful phrase in Mandarin, pronounced Mǎmǎhǔhǔ, means "careless" but directly means "horse horse tiger tiger". Human languages - all 7151 of them - are impossibly complex, containing nuances impossible for a computer system to understand.

Then what is the best way to understand other languages? Well, the obvious solution is to encourage a passion for language learning in children, who can pick up foreign languages much more quicker and easier than adults. The second solution is to encourage linguistic diversity. Aforementioned lingua francas provide bridges between distinct global cultures and communities, allowing people who speak completely different languages to have something in common. The UN has designated six official world languages - English, French, Spanish, Russian, Chinese and Arabic - with sub-world languages Portuguese, Urdu, Swahili and Hindi also having significant global prominence. So if you want to learn an additional language, why not try one of those? It might allow to communicate with someone all the way across the world, without the need for the potential errors of an online translator with no connection to the human world...

“You never look good trying to make someone else look bad.”

Maisey Lafollette

“Bullying is the use of force, coercion, hurtful teasing or threat, to abuse, aggressively dominate, or intimidate. The behaviour is often repeated and habitual one essential prerequisite is the perception of an imbalance of physical or social power. This imbalance distinguishes bullying from conflict.”

Does any of this sound familiar? Have you ever been on the receiving end or the bully yourself? Bullying comes in many different forms, with the end goal of the bully feeling a sense of power and enjoyment over their target.

The most obvious form of bullying is Physical Bullying- which involves physical contact of some kind between the parties. Some examples are vandalising someone else's belongings, tripping, hitting, blocking and touching in unwanted and inappropriate ways. Often we can spot the signs of physical bullying with unexplained cuts, scratches or bruises, missing or damaged clothes.

Words can be equally as hurtful - Verbal Bullying is when people use cruel words, ongoing name calling, threatening and making disrespectful stereotypical comments about someone's appearance, religion, ethnicity, disability or sexual orientation.

Bullies may think they have anonymity online - this is called Cyberbullying. People can spread mean words and false rumours, and send inappropriate photos easily through emails, text messages and social media, and feel they can hide behind usernames and emojis and gifs as an anonymous way to send sexist, racist, homophobic messages, and general hurtful comments.

Have you ever felt left out of a sleepover? Are you continually picked last at sports? Do classmates ever tell you there's no room at their lunch table? Do friends share joke texts and leave you off the group chat? Then you have been a victim of Relational Bullying. This is where you are deliberately excluded from a social situation through no fault of your own.

Shocking But True Bullying Stats

- The number-one reason people are bullied is because of their appearance.
- People who identify in the LGBTQ+ community are more likely to experience some form of bullying.
- Girls are twice as likely as boys to be bullied online.
- Students from affluent families are more likely to be bullied online due to their easy access to phones and iPads.
- In 2018, the UK was the second worst country in Europe for bullying .
- In 2021, 30% of students reported being bullied and, of those, 47% were about their appearance

- 39% of students who are bullied keep quiet due to the embarrassment, and 38% didn't report it as they were afraid it'd get worse.
- 69% of students admit to being abusive online.
- 35% of people have sent a picture of a friend in a group chat for a laugh. -

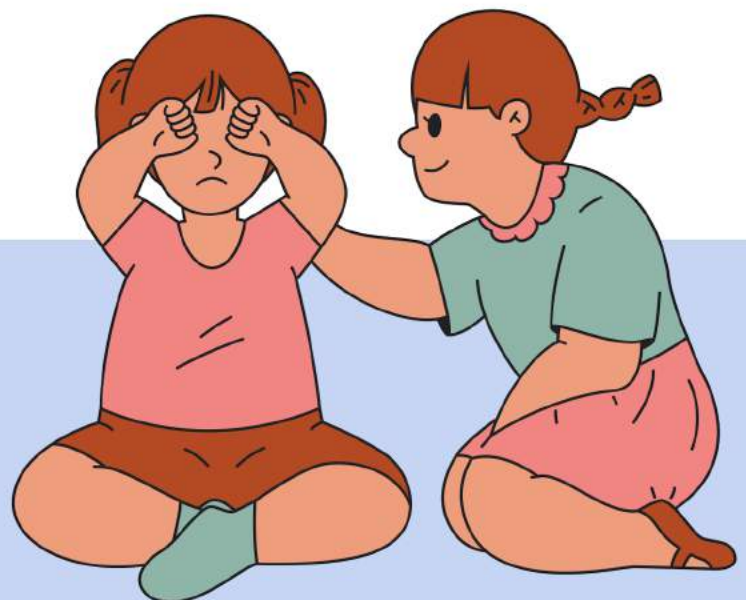
Some Effects of Bullying

- Depression and anxiety
- Feeling of loneliness
- Loss of interest in activities
- Health complaints
- Decreased academic achievement - Afraid to go to school
- Low self esteem
- Suicidal thoughts

If you see something, say something- don't be part of the problem, be part of the solution! Everyone has a duty and responsibility to intervene if they see harm occurring or about to occur. A bystander is in a valuable position, sometimes they can stop the behaviour, they can be a witness to report the behaviour, but sometimes they're afraid of being bullied themselves, but most importantly they can acknowledge the behaviour and role model a positive interaction instead of the negative bullying that was occurring.

If we're honest with ourselves we have at some point said something nasty, posted or shared something we shouldn't have or excluded a friend. It should be everyone's responsibility to simply be kind to each other! Here at the High School we are lucky enough to have outstanding Guidance teachers who are always available and willing to lend their support, always reach out to a teacher or valued friend and never suffer in silence- there's always someone out there who could help. "You can't be against bullying without actually doing something about it."- Randi Weingarten (President of the American Federation of Teachers.)

BE KIND
TO ALL
KIND



Multicultural Day

Nigeria, Bangladesh, China, Scotland. All countries rich in culture working perfectly in harmony to create the fusion of today. Whether there be Irish Dancers or “Puff puffs” for us all to taste, HSD are sure to give all cultures a delivery of justice. It is no secret that the High School community have a vast number of pupils from diverse backgrounds, which is exactly why we bring you an array of activities sure to educate you on many different cultures on our multi culture day. In my own personal life I know that I have been heavily influenced by culture.

With a set of grandparents from India and a set of grandparents that migrated from Malawi, Africa to Scotland at a very young age, I love to be able to share my heritage with people I care for. So why is it important that we are educated about other people’s cultures?

Empathy plays a large part in this. In order to truly understand that girl in your class who has Irish parents or that boy who talks about his Polish roots, we have to understand where they come from. By learning other cultures we understand what the people of that culture struggle with as a community and what their traditions are. Learning about someone else’s traditions and beliefs

can also allows us to break barriers and break stereotypes which allow us to relate to people and comprehend that as a whole, we may have different celebrations but actually, we are not all that different to each other. Naturally, breaking these barriers allows us to built respect among ourselves and our peers strengthening our bond as a High School community.

Have a culture you’d like to share? Please do make an appearance at our culture day whether you would like to run a stall about your culture or showcase a particular outfit from your culture, any contribution is welcome. Be sure to mark your calendars for the ninth of December.

We hope to see you all there!

If you would like more info/want to be involved, contact Maishah Mason & Sahar Jafferbhoy (F6) or Mrs Jack



Taylor Swift on Tour; the great Ticketmaster fiasco of 2022

Co-deputy Editor, Zara Taylor

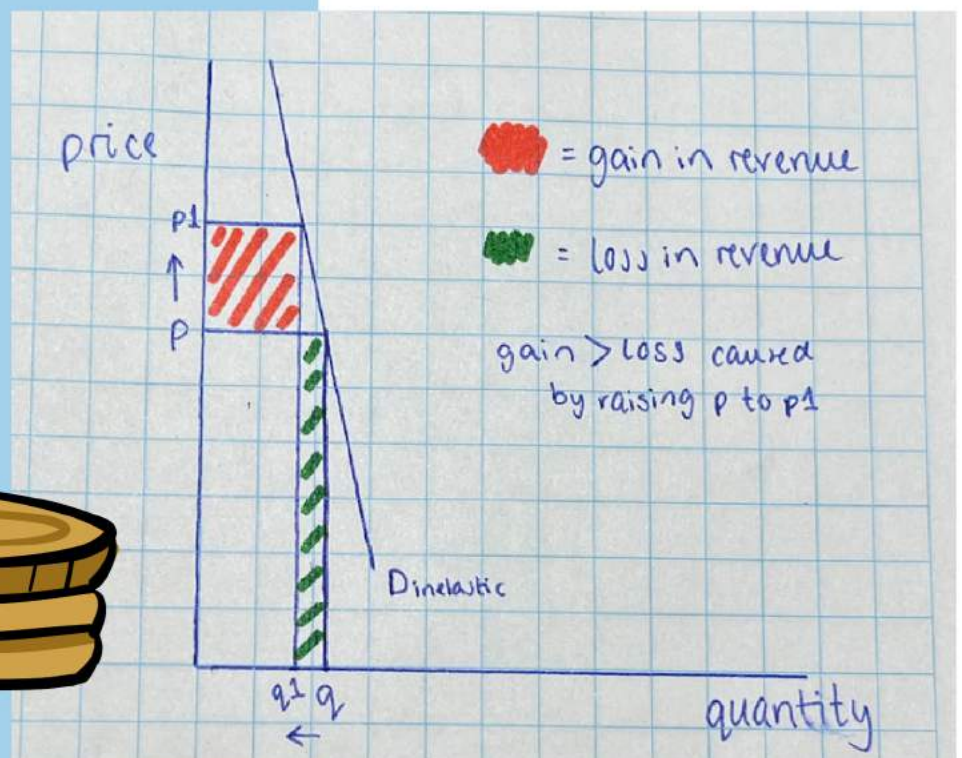
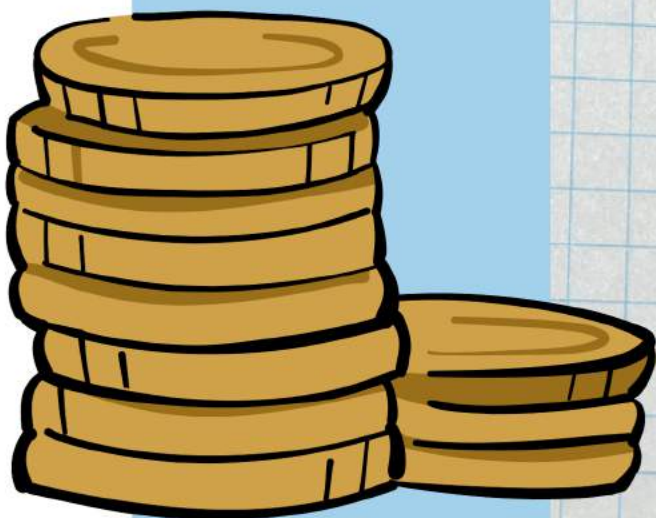
Pandemonium is what has ensued this week as desperate Taylor Swift fans calamitously tried to buy tickets for the American leg of her 2023 tour. The bloodbath began on Tuesday as millions raced to Ticketmaster. The subsequent mess of site crashes and queues lasting up to 8-hours left many ticketless and unhappy. Furthermore, although a preventative verification system was put in place to stop resellers from snatching up tickets, in no time at all tickets were being listed for over £19,000 on websites like StubHub. But why has this chaos occurred and who is at fault?

Firstly, it's pretty clear Swift has some devoted fans (I myself will be preparing for the European ticket battle to come), couple that with the fact that she hasn't toured in 5 years and it's safe to say demand was high, and inelastic. This means that even as prices skyrocket there will still be eager fans willing to pay extortionate prices. Harking back to Higher Economics, the proportionate gain in revenue is greater than the proportionate loss in quantity demanded due to the price increase.

But the fans aren't to blame, many directing their wrath at Ticketmaster itself.

Many are validly criticising the monopolistic nature of the business. In theory, monopolies have no competition within the market as insurmountable barriers to entry, which could be high start-up costs or patents, for example, mean other firms are unable to join and start producing goods within that market. This means they have no incentive to provide the best possible service at the lowest cost as they will retain their consumers, and thus their profit, regardless of whether they are efficient or provide a quality product. Generally, businesses that have a >25% market share are considered a monopoly. In the context of Ticketmaster, they have consistently had around or above 50% market share for the past couple of years. There are some other semi-big firms in the market, so it could be argued to be an oligopoly, however, it is significantly bigger than its competitors; thanks largely to a 2010 merger between the company and Live Nation. But what does this mean? Are we, the innocent Taylor Swift fans, doomed for long-waiting times and high fees; disappointingly inefficient and lacklustre services?

Not all is bleak! Some economists, famously Joseph Schumpeter, argued that because monopolists make abnormal profits they have the funds to invest and innovate, leading to technological advancements and a better use of resources in the long run. Admittedly, as a consumer, I'm yet to feel that effect through Ticketmaster - although that is definitely a biased viewpoint made from a fan who really wants to see Taylor Swift live.



AI Art

Izzy Clark



In the 1900s, the media claimed that humans would never fly. In the 1950s, the media claimed that humans would never set foot on the moon. In the 2000s, the media claimed that robots would never replace humans.

Where we stand now in the 2020s, AI is the furthest it has ever been. Computers can fly our planes, operate our spaceships, and do our jobs. People who once worked in gruelling industrial manufacturing now find employment elsewhere - in sweatshops and fields. In the 1800s, as the industrial revolution swept the globe, many people held fears that their jobs would be taken by newfangled machines. And now in the modern day, as artificial intelligence enters into the spotlight and the workplace, it is not just our jobs at stake anymore.

The jobs that machines take have always been the same - rote processes, dangerous work, disgusting and dull tasks. But in the last few years, a new kind of AI has entered the field - the artist. Now, computer programs can generate music and artwork indistinguishable from those made by their human counterparts. And you can do it easily - the press of a button, the click of a key, all of it packaged up into a neat, little app-shaped box. It's free to download, and once it's installed, you can generate hundreds, thousands, millions of entirely-unique pieces of art.

Human beings are the only species to create art for art's sake. Bower birds create beautifully-organised collections of shiny objects to attract mates, and elephants can be taught to hold a paintbrush, but no other animal makes art for the singular purpose of creativity. Whilst for some art is a profession, many artists do not do their work for the purpose of monetary gain - they do it for fun. But if an AI can in a second do what a human can do in ten hours, and if an AI can create something just as "good" as a human, then what is the value of human creativity?

Can art even be "good"? They say that beauty is in the eye of the beholder, but there are definitely some forms of objective qualifications which can categorise art as either "good" or "bad". Some people scorn recent movements in modern art and favour more traditional media, whilst for others, it's the opposite. But we as humans have some limits - we like colours that fit well together, we like balanced compositions, and most of all, we like a strong emotional impact.

AI can do all of this. But whilst an algorithm can tell a program what colours go best together and what good composition looks like, it cannot predict human emotions. When we see a truly good piece of artwork, we can experience complex emotions - joy, discomfort, awe, misery - in a way that surely cannot be replicated. But as the line between human art and AI art begins to blur, it becomes even more difficult - nigh on impossible - to distinguish between the blood, sweat and tears of a human artist and the running of a program...

To be continued.

Mrs Watson's 'Precipitation - Themed' Jokes

Why do sailors eat shellfish when
rain is forecast?

Because it's the clam before the storm.

Why shouldn't you fight with a rain
cloud?

Because he'll storm out on you.

Why were the rain and the lightning
bolt in the news?

*Are you sure you want to know ... it's
shocking!*

Why did the young rain cloud always
get into trouble?

It never took anything cirrus-ly.

Why didn't the light rain hit the
target?

It just mists.

EDITOR'S NOTE

Sahar Jafferbhoy

*With a yellow
weather
warning for rain
and wind, I think
I'm preparing for
a cosy weekend
in front of the TV!
After a thought-
provoking
antibullying
week, the
weekend will be
a great
opportunity to
reflect on your
own, and other's
actions and
behaviours.
Everyone at The
Columns wishes
you a fab
weekend!*

happy friday!

THE COLUMNS TEAM