

THE COLUMNS

by pupils; for pupils HSD's Newsletter: Issue 129



Once again I find myself with nothing to write about for the introduction of this fine...magaziney, newspaperly thing. To prevent this becoming a weekly problem, i've decided right now to use this in future to share quotes from films that really stuck with me when i'm starved of inspiration. Thankfully for the sake of this...paper, our writers have gone above and beyond in the volume of articles delivered this week. I was almost worried they wouldn't all fit! So enjoy.

"I've seen things you people wouldn't believe. Attack ships on fire off the shoulder of Orion. I watched c-beams glitter in the dark near the Tannhauser gate. All those moments will be lost in time, like tears in rain. Time to die" -

Blade Runner
Co Editor, Charlie Grewar

RRS Discovery sails up the Tay Tom Johnson

On Monday the 8th of September, the RRS Discovery sailed into Dundee. Although it may not be the Discovery you are thinking of! The RRS Discovery is a research vessel built in 2012 in Spain, named after the sailing ship in Dundee (There have also been 3 other ships named after it, what a legacy!). This state of the art ship has spent its time doing marine science research around the world and contributing to our knowledge of what goes on beneath the waves, but now it has come to Dundee to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the original RRS Discovery becoming a royal research ship, the first of its kind.

There will be 2 ships in Dundee from the 12th to the 16th and, although tickets to go onboard the newer vessel are sold out, there will be many fun activities and exhibitions taking place for that period, along with free entry to discovery point so you can all go and share in the celebration!

If you want to try and see the ship but don't have a ticket, you can view it from the end of the dock, on Gourlay Yard (although the view is sub optimal)

I think that it speaks volumes about the influence of the original ship, that it is still being celebrated over 100 years later and has had 4 subsequent vessels named after it. I think it also represents how highly we view the importance of understanding the incredible world we live in, and the history of that understanding



GOVERNMENT DEBT CRISIS AND BOND YIELDS

Nhat Nguyen

Imagine you got a car insurance. At first, you drive safely, your premium stays low because the insurer trusts you. But then you start racking up speeding tickets, your insurance skyrockets - the insurer considers you to be too risky.

Government bonds work in a similar way. When countries need money, they sell government bonds, which are like an IOU note - the government borrows the money now and pay it back with interest. If investors trust the government, borrowing stays cheap. But if they lose confidence, rates surge up like the insurer raising your car premium.

The challenge right now:

- Many countries like the US, UK, Italy, Japan are running large budget deficits
- Inflation is high therefore central banks are raising interest rates, pushing bond yields even higher

The 2022 UK “Mini-Budget” Crisis

In September 2022, Prime Minister Liz Truss announced £45 billion of unfunded tax cuts. Investors didn't like the idea of the government borrowing even more without a clear plan to pay for it. So they started selling UK government bonds hard. Yields spiked to their highest levels in years, the pound sank to near record lows, and mortgage rates jumped for ordinary families. Facing market chaos and losing support, the government quickly reversed its plans, and Truss resigned after just 44 days in office.

- Currently, UK 30 year bond yields are at their highest level around 5.5% since 1998. This means investors see bigger risks but also make them more attractive as a long term investment option.

- Rising bond yields affect everyone. They push up the cost of mortgages, car loans, and credit card debt. But for savers, higher yields can also mean better returns on savings and bonds.

Why does it matter now:



Government bonds may look boring, but they are essential to the global economy. When investors lose trust, the ripple effects can topple prime ministers, shake currencies, and raise the cost of borrowing for everyone

THE 39 STEPS

Maisey Lafollette

This summer, as I was walking along Peebles High Street, I stumbled upon a tiny museum dedicated to the author John Buchan. He is regarded as the 'father' of the spy thriller genre due to his most famous book 'The 39 Steps.'

Buchan was a student at Hutchesons' Grammar School, where he thrived in academics. In 1892, he won a bursary to study Classics at Glasgow University, then later, a scholarship to Oxford. Buchan went on to have an illustrious career dabbling in writing, law, politics, and working for the Intelligence Corp.

His most famous book 'The 39 Steps,' was first published in 1915, and is still popular today. The story is about Richard Hannay, an ordinary man bored with his mundane life, who is caught up in a plan to prevent British military secrets from leaving the country. However, he has to not only evade the criminals who want to sell the secrets, but also the police as he has been framed for murder. In 1935, Alfred Hitchcock adapted the story into a film. Today, Pitlochry Theatre is showing the stage production adaptation of the story. The play had varied reactions from the audience; some were in hysterics over the slapstick humour, some were confused as it had many differences from the book, while others were indifferent, just happy to be in the theatre. It was a show with only four actors, leading to many scenes where they played many different characters at once. I thought the show was clever in how they used the limited number of actors, but it disappointed me as some of my favourite moments from the traditional book were missing from the stage. I'll not spoil it for you, as to what the 39 Steps are, but I highly recommend reading the book, it's a quick, easy, and enjoyable spy thriller, for all reading abilities.



Labour Deputy Leadership Race

Jack Mitchell

Only last week, after days of facing calls to resign, Deputy Prime Minister Angela Rayner did just that. Many thought she would only resign her post of Housing Secretary as the tax scandal which started all of this concerned her house and would undermine her position, but she went further by also resigning the post of Deputy Prime Minister. While this role isn't really that important compared to someone like the Vice President of the United States, it still serves an important symbolic purpose of being the PM's right-hand man – or woman as has been the case twice. To add to the complexity of it all, she also resigned as Deputy Leader of the Labour Party, another position separate from Deputy Prime Minister. While the other two positions of Housing Secretary and Deputy Prime Minister were filled in a large cabinet reshuffle, the deputy leader has to be elected by the party, not chosen by the Prime Minister.

The deputy leader of the Labour Party often serves as a hook for more left wing voters, as with John Prescott under Tony Blair. This was also the case with Angela Rayner, who unlike the Prime Minister was appealing to the party more than the country, keeping the more left wing members happy with representation. Although she was slightly growing away from that role after a spat with trade unions earlier in the year, she was in the leadership of Unison prior to going into politics.

It is for this reason that it is difficult to predict who will become the new deputy leader, but we can try. It's likely that in order to satisfy the traditional role, the party will want someone very different to Prime Minister Keir Starmer, to cover as many bases as they can. Therefore, it seems that a woman from the North or at least not London would be the front runner, ruling out former shadow Attorney General under Starmer, shadow Foreign Secretary under Corbyn and current Chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee Dame Emily Thornberry, who is from Surrey and represents a constituency that borders the Prime Minister's.

The apparent two leaders in the race so far are Education Secretary Bridget Phillipson and former Leader of the Commons Lucy Powell, who lost the role in last week's major reshuffle. Both represent northern constituencies and have significant parliamentary experience with Phillipson first being elected as an MP in 2010, and Powell 2012. They also now have a good amount of government experience after over a year in the posts of their aforementioned cabinet roles. Powell's sacking in the recent reshuffle was mildly surprising, but the recency of this move and the fact many people lost cabinet positions means it likely won't change the result.

The first candidate to announce their bid for deputy leader was Bell Ribeiro-Addy, an ally of Diane Abbott who has more left-wing support. The difference between her and Starmer could entice more voters to the party, particularly from those now voting for Jeremy Corbyn's new Your Party, but it could also create real tension that doesn't help Labour. I must admit that as someone who follows politics fairly closely, I had never heard of her, and I assume many others are in the same boat therefore, which could go against her, but she seems to have the support of multiple MPs, who ultimately are the only people who matter in the election process.

Former trade unionist and former shadow devolution minister Paula Barker who quit her post over the party's stance on Gaza is also running.

All in all, the race should be an interesting one, with a threshold of 80 MPs required for a candidate to progress to the next round. We'll wait and see what happens in the days and weeks to come.

The Trolly Problem

Al Forbes

Not gonna lie – as I sat in my bedroom and scrolled through TikTok's and came across the 'trolley problem' and other versions of it, I realised how dark this could get. And loving true crime / crime fiction, I realised something – this is a great idea for a Columns article. So as I sit, yet again, in my bedroom, with a throat that feels like it's being potato-peeled by the devil himself, eating crisps, and doing another of my long and boring intro paragraphs. But as you go through this article (which I'm sure you will till the very end cause you enjoy my articles... right?) think about what you would do... why? I'm curious...

Disclaimer (since I do actually have a soul): this article contains sensitive information, such as challenging concepts about death, and acts that involve deceased people.

Reader discretion and adult guidance is advised for those who, may need it.

Number 1: The Classic Problem

You're standing next to the lever that changes the track, and you're stuck to the ground. You see a train, unstoppable, heading towards 5 kidnapped people tied to the track. No one is there to help. But, if you push that lever, you can divert the train onto another track to where 1 kidnapped person is being held. What do you do?

People say 'don't push the lever, cause if you do, you will be responsible for killing someone' but some (me included) would say 'but if you do, you will save 5 people'. So what would you do. Well, could you live with the fact that on that day, 5 people died because of your inactions? You watched 5 people die cause you wouldn't do anything? But if you do, you would be guilty of murdering 1 person, but couldn't you live with it?

Because at the end of the day, you saved 5 people's lives.

Number 2: Boulder-Man

Now, you are on the bridge, stuck, watching the train whiz down the hill towards six people. The only way to save them, is pushing an obese man over the bridge, to derail the empty train. Would you be able to kill one man to save 6 people? Would you be able to live with killing the 1 man, or watching 6 people die instead?

Okay, it's everything is the same but it's 1950. say the Boulder-Man is actually Hitler in disguise. If you shove him, you save the six people stuck on the track. If you don't, they'll survive. Did you say shove him because he is Hitler (emphasis on because). Because the second you find out it's Hitler in Obese-Man cosplay, suddenly want to shove him. The point being, you didn't shove him for the six strangers, you shoved him because it's Hitler. Which means the choice isn't about saving lives, it's about your opinion of who's standing on the cliff edge.

And finally, what if that train is self-driving, and is carrying something so precious, that it can stop World War Three, a war, in this paragraph, has already killed millions, and is predicted to kill more. You're on the track, if you pull the lever, it would crash into you and explode, killing you but saving the 6 people on the track, or if you pull it the other way, it will head into the 6 people on the track but get to its destination safely. But, if you don't pull the lever, the train falls into a hole and explodes, with the equipment. Okay, stop for a second and come up with your answer.

Now think about it this way. In all of cases, you are responsible for lives. Kill yourself to save the six people on the track (but costing the war to go on). You don't press the lever, but the train derails and explodes, costing the war to go on. Or, pull it the opposite way to get the train to run over the 6 people on the track, but ending the war. Did you think about it this way?

Number 3: Doctors and Nurses

You're a doctor, and faced with a problem. You have five patients, each one of them needing a separate body part: a heart, kidney, intestine, spine, and lungs. You have one patient, a healthy person, outside. Would you harvest the body parts from the healthy patient to save the other 5, or would you let the five die to save the one? Now, what if the healthy patient was a child. Young, healthy, innocent. Would you kill that child to save the others? Does it make any difference? And finally, what if that healthy patient was 85. Would you (like some) say: 'kill him because he is going to die'. Again, does that make any difference? Would it make any difference if the 5 patients were old people or young people, and if so, why? Will your pity get in the way?

Number 4: The Good and the Great

You're back on the track, but this time, things have changed. You don't shove that lever, 5 of the most famous people in the world die (although you can switch out the last two for people you love most if you feel like being extra cruel). But, if you do pull that lever, the train gets diverted and rams its way into 5 innocent people, but they're nice. They donate, accept everyone, make people happy, volunteer, and do all the things that you think the nicest person in the world does. What would you do?

Number 5: The Train Track Problem

Hang on a sec as I make this, not just cruel, but mind-challenging. You're the one on the train now, with 5 passengers and no brakes. You're heading downhill, into 6 people. You're on the phone to the person who switches the lever. He is a mile away, so he can't do anything. You can hang up, causing you to plow through the six victims tied to the track. Or, you can tell him to change the track, but that will end up with you killing the 5 passengers (but you will survive). What will you do? Can you live with any of this? This is the end of my, now rather dark, article. I hope this has gotten you thinking about yourself and your morals. I hope your thinking 'what would I do', and why. Shoutout to my friend, whom I've spent countless hours arguing over this last year in Enterprise.

Stay safe, and watch out for crazy writers that write about a world where brakes don't exist

What a Sweet Treat Can Teach Us About Success

Ayanah Adam

In the late 1960s, psychologist Walter Mischel carried out one of the most famous psychology experiments—currently known as the Marshmallow Experiment. The idea was simple but genius: a child sat alone in a room with one marshmallow on the table. The researcher told them that they could eat the marshmallow right away or wait for 15 minutes. If they waited, they would be rewarded with a second marshmallow.

A few of the kids wolfed the marshmallow down quickly. Others squirmed, trilled songs, or even covered their eyes—but waited.

Years later, scientists located these child subjects and discovered something amazing: kids who were able to

wait for the second marshmallow did better in school, scored higher on achievement tests, and had a healthier relationship with money and stress as adults. Moreover, the study suggested that self-regulation and delayed gratification—the ability to wait for something better instead of taking immediate pleasure—may be a vital skill for achieving success over the long term.

But wait, where things get most interesting: more recent studies have shown that context matters. Kids who had less stable or more unpredictable home environments were more likely to gobble down the marshmallow right away—not because they were less self-regulated, but because their brains were wired to grab opportunity. This suggests that behaviour is shaped both by psychology and by environment. So what do we students learn? Building self-discipline is like building muscle—you get more powerful the more you exercise it. Whether it's not scrolling through TikTok when you need to edit or choosing to save your allowance in the bank instead of spending it, each time you practice delayed gratification, you are training your brain for long-term benefit

Toilet Trouble

Al Forbes

Okay, hands up, I admit it, school is the 100% best. Apart from some homework. And tests. And early starts. And uncomfortable grey jumpers. And seven emails per day - in fact I love writing and reading long emails (ask anyone) what am I talking about...

Okay, hands up, I admit it, school is 90% the best. Welcome back to another boring article (this is where you say it's not... thank you) about how HSD has problems like any other school. The lunch hall (admittedly) is getting a bit better. The playground – okay I can write another article about this: please don't fight on the climbing frames, it's not a pirate ship!!!

I walked out of HFT at 3:30pm on Friday, thinking, 'What should I write for The Columns'?! I went to the bathroom, looked around, and said Nope. Or yes. Nope to the smell and look of things, yes to the idea of a new Columns article! Welcome to me ranting on about the bathrooms like the dramatic writer I am.

You see, you search up 'toilet', and most of the images are of clean, pristine, beautiful toilets. Shining, glowing, not a stain in sight. One will talk into the boys' toilet of the High School of Dundee, thinking that they can kiss the toilet seat. Then they see it.

Correction: they smell it. And, no, I am not going to describe the smell. Just pretend you're in the Overgate toilets. That's what it smells like. You walk in, and it's grey, stained, disgusting. Although, you're probably a boy, so you've seen worse. You carry on.

You walk over to the urinal. There is a... cookie wrapper?! Never mind. You move onto the next one. It's plugged with toilet paper. The next one: it's blocked. Then the next one: it has what looks to be a wig stuffed in there. Then paper, then slime, then a pencil, then spit, then your friend's noodles they lost.

'Okay' you'd think, 'I'ma use the cubical's'. You go into the first one - and the door has come off. The second one - it's blocked. Third one - it's abundant to toilet paper. The third one – there is a suspicious brown stain from the ceiling to the toilet that you neither want to smell, touch, or look at for any longer than needed.

So you finally do your stuff and go over to the taps. As you will think by now, the sink is dripping with water, blocked with something you don't want to touch, or looks like someone sat in it... which they probably did.

Now, I am definitely not blaming the cleaners or janitors for this. I'm telling you, Elon Musk can hire cleaners for our school but that won't do anything. This is most probably because of the pupils.

You see, who else uses the pupil toilets? Pupils! We need to use our toilets. End of. Not irresponsibly, by stuffing stuff that should not be stuffed in the toilet (you can laugh now), but by treating it with enough respect so when the next person comes along, they can swiftly use it and get out, without any trouble.

You see, you don't just make the cleaners and janitors jobs more harder (because, why is the stall door always broken?!), but you also make it more dangerous (because, let's face it, that yellow stain on the ground is a slip hazard).

And if you don't? I'm not even going to threat a part two. If you don't not continue to use the toilets like they're a laser tag course, that suspicious brown stain from the ceiling to the toilet that you neither want to smell, touch, or look at for any longer than needed, will grow conciseness, and soon after, I will be waisting my time writing about the brown stain that hunts people down and gives them constipation.

I'm not going to end this with my usual 'challenge accepted'. Oh, gosh no. I'll leave you with a different message.

You've been warned

Quiz - What would Mr Fyall say? By Haoqi Liu and Al Forbes

- 1) What is your job?
- 2) What happened in London on 5th September 1752?
- 3) Which of these would you put into a soap? Pineapple, pine cones or pine nuts.
- 4) Do fish know they're wet, or do they think that it's normal?
- 5) If my stomach growls in class, does that count as participation?
- 6) Would you rather store your packed lunch on the floor or the ceiling?
- 7) If tomatoes are a fruit, does that make ketchup a smoothie?
- 8) If I eat myself, do I disappear, stay the same, or double in size?
- 9) Is Monday older than Friday?
- 10) How mad would you be if we made this a 9 question interview?

- 1) Head of history, modern studies and classics
- 2) Great Fire of London
- 3) Pineapple
- 4) Normal
- 5) No
- 6) Ceiling
- 7) Yes, but I don't like ketchup.
- 8) Double in size
- 9) No
- 10) I'd be delighted!

Answers

Editors' note
That's all Folks!
Tune in Next Week!

Your Editors - Charlie and Emma.