



THE COLUMNS



By Pupils; For Pupils | HSD's Newsletter: Issue 152

Photo - Ruby McNair

152 - Number of cubes visible on the outside of a 6x6x6 cube

16:01, 7th June 2026:

I've had to leave The Columns in the capable hands of my fourth years due to being away on my Gold Duke of Edinburgh expedition.

-Maisie

Despite the school year drawing to a close, things certainly haven't been getting any quieter. With our Festival of Sport, prizegiving, and the performances of the senior school musical *Pippin* at The Space (tickets still available via the Eventbrite website) all taking place next week, there is much to look forward to as we celebrate all HSD has to offer. In addition to this, we have both Gold and Silver Duke of Edinburgh trips taking place this week and next, before the end of term service, after which pupils will embark on their well-deserved and long-awaited summer holidays. Anyway, we shall stop delaying you to allow you to enjoy this weeks edition of The Columns!

-The Columns Editors, Haoqi, Rosie & Jack



PRIDE MONTH

QM Team

This month, HSD is proud to celebrate Pride Month and recognise the importance of inclusion, equality, and respect for all members of our school community. Pride Month is a time to honour the history, achievements, and contributions of LGBTQ+ people while also looking forward to the journey towards a more accepting and supportive society.

QM believe that everyone deserves to feel valued, respected, and free to be their authentic selves. Celebrating Pride Month is an opportunity to raise awareness, encourage understanding, and show solidarity with LGBTQ+ individuals, both within our school and beyond.

Throughout the month, we encourage everyone to learn more about the significance of Pride, engage in the meaning of some terms (ally, gay, bisexual, straight), and support initiatives that promote diversity and inclusion. By embracing different perspectives and experiences, we help create an environment where everyone can feel confident.

Pride is not only a celebration but also a reminder of the importance of standing together against discrimination and prejudice. It highlights the progress that has been made while recognising the work that still needs to be done to achieve true equality.

QM is committed to giving a sense of belonging, and we are proud to celebrate Pride Month with our school and wider community.

CALIFORNIA GOVERNOR RACE

Jack Mitchell

The race for a new governor of California took one of its most important steps yet last week as the vital primary election took place. Over 60 candidates put their names forward for the governorship, but only two can advance to the next stage in November. This 'top-two' primary system means that the two candidates with the most votes from the primary will run against each other in the general election, regardless of party. This caused a minor panic in the Democratic Party earlier this year when it briefly appeared that their party vote would be so divided that two Republicans might be able to get to this second stage. However, with time this issue has seemingly been resolved.

Out of all the candidates, three led the polls over the course of the campaign: Steve Hilton, Xavier Becerra and Tom Steyer. Mr Hilton was the leading Republican in the race, with Mr Becerra and Mr Steyer both representing the Democratic party. Current Democratic Governor Gavin Newsom is unable to run due to state term limits.

Perhaps the most interesting candidate in the race for Governor is Steve Hilton, who unlike most of his peers in the race was not born in the United States, but rather in the United Kingdom. He worked as an advisor to British PM David Cameron for many years before moving to the US, where he co-founded a Silicon Valley tech firm. He also had a show on Fox News from 2017-2023, where he became a pro-Trump commentator and repeated false claims about election fraud in the 2020 Presidential Election. Due to being the only Republican in the top three candidates, he led many polls due to the splitting of the Democratic vote between the other two.

The leading Democrat running is Xavier Becerra, who has more direct experience in government than Hilton and Steyer. He served for decades as Congressman for multiple California districts and then as Attorney General for California from 2017 to 2021, taking over from Kamala Harris. This was followed by a term as Health and Human Services Secretary in the Biden Administration, a position which has been capitalised on during the gubernatorial campaign.

His party colleague Tom Steyer was largely seen as more of an outsider, which was proven in the many polls that showed him trailing the top two candidates and eventually losing, despite spending the most in Californian history on his campaign for the governorship. The roughly \$200 million spent has primarily come from his own pocket. This is possible because Steyer is a billionaire who made his money from the San Francisco hedge fund he co-founded in the 1980s. Since leaving the fund in 2012, he has become a climate activist and philanthropist, although these facts have seemingly not been able to counteract the negative electoral impact of his billionaire status.

A week after votes were cast, the results were announced. They show that, as many polls indicated, Hilton and Becerra will be facing each other in November's general election to replace Governor Newsom. How well the Democratic candidates do in the Californian primary could give a good picture of how the national midterm elections may fare for both major parties. Until then, though, anything could happen.

THE GREEK GODS' FAMILY TREE

Rosie O'Ready

Classical Greek myths can get very confusing, especially when you're constantly trying to keep track of which gods are siblings, parents, or partners (sometimes the answer is even all of the above, which is both disgusting and confusing). When you consider the varying versions of the tales, the situation becomes even more of a muddle. Therefore, below is a small and basic guide to discover who's who in the world of the Greek myths.

In the beginning, there was nothing but Chaos. Both the deity, and the state. Time hadn't been created yet, so everything was happening at the same time, but... without time. The Greeks believed that this formless entity is what began the creation of the world. From Chaos, Erebus (Darkness) and Nyx (Night) sprang, who coupled and created Hemera (Day) and Aether (Light). Chaos also created Eros (Love), Gaia (Earth) and Tartarus (the depths of the Earth). None of these deities were technically gods, but were more like beings, which lacked character or personality. They were literally the things they represented, so Gaia was literally the ground, Nyx was literally night, etc. Despite these forces being present, the world was empty, until Gaia created Ouranos (Sky).

Gaia and Ouranos met, and from their union the twelve Titans were born. Among these was Cronus (or Kronos), who acted as the leader of the Titans, and his wife and sister Rhea. Gaia and Ouranos also spawned the Cyclopes and the Hecatonchires, who had fifty heads and one hundred arms.

Cronus and Rhea created the first six Olympians: Hestia (goddess of the hearth), Demeter (goddess of agriculture), Hera (goddess of marriage), Poseidon (god of the sea), Hades (god of the underworld), and Zeus (god of the sky). Despite Zeus and Hera being siblings, they married and acted as King and Queen of the gods, usurping Cronus and Rhea who had formerly occupied similar positions for the Titans.

The remaining six Olympians are typically seen as Zeus's children, however with varying versions of the myths it is difficult to be certain of who was the mother of each child. Usually, Hera is regarded to be the mother of Ares (god of war) and Hephaestus (god of craftsmen). Leto (the child of the Titans, Phoebe and Coeus) is seen as the mother of the twins Artemis (goddess of all wild things) and Apollo (god of prophecy). Zeus also had relations with Maia (the child of Pleione and Atlas) and from their union, Hermes (god of messages) was born. Athena (goddess of wisdom) was born from Zeus and Metis (the previous goddess of wisdom).

There are two remaining gods who I haven't mentioned who hold some importance; these are Dionysus (god of wine) and Aphrodite (goddess of love). Dionysus is sometimes substituted in place of Hestia as an Olympian, but this is uncertain. He was created by Zeus and Semele (a priestess of Zeus). Aphrodite is occasionally said to have been born from Cronus and Rhea, but most people say that she was born from the dismembered body parts of Ouranos after they were thrown into the sea by Cronus.

Greek mythology is a messy and confusing topic, and despite this guide being a full page long, I have barely scratched the surface. If anyone reading this would like to know more about the Greek deities, I recommend the book *The Greek and Roman Myths: A Guide to the Classical Stories* by Philip Matyszak, as it explains the intricacies of the family tree in a whole lot more detail.

PIPPIN!

Rosie O'Ready

This week, the *Pippin* cast and crew have been hard at work in intensive rehearsals. Students from all year groups have been pitching in, not just with acting, singing, and dancing, but also with props, circus skills, costume, and makeup. Of course, many teachers have been involved too, working in props, costume, producing, choreography, and directing, and I'm sure there are many more people working tirelessly behind the scenes to bring this spectacular performance to you all.

Pippin is the tale of a boy searching for fulfilment in life through a diverse range of pursuits, from war to religion, egged on by the eager Players. This musical, set in the Middle Ages, is filled with unique characters, memorable songs, and of course, a pinch of magic. *Pippin* is definitely a show you won't want to miss.

From Tuesday 16th to Friday 19th of June, you too can come and witness the spectacle, being held at the Space Theatre, Old Glamis Road, Dundee. Tickets are still available for all four evenings, but hurry, they're selling fast! Posters are plastered around the school which contain a QR code. This shall bring you to the website where you can buy the tickets. If you are unsure, go to Mrs Tevendale's room (RF12) and you can use your phone to scan the code from the poster on the wall.

Everyone from the cast and crew of *Pippin* dearly hopes you shall attend and witness a truly extraordinary show, which will hopefully give you a chance to escape from the mundane everyday into a fantastical world of music and magic.



The following page contains a small selection of photos which showcase some props and activities the cast and crew of *Pippin* have been working on the past few days. Even in our free time, everyone participating in this magical musical has been practicing circus skills, running lines, creating props, rehearsing dances... it has been a tiring week, but the smiles on everyone's faces prove it is all worthwhile.

Next week, please enjoy: *Pippin* brought to you by The High School of Dundee!

PREPARING FOR PIPPIN PHOTOS



 **Music & Lyrics by
STEPHEN SCHWARTZ** 

PIPPIN

Book by
ROGER O. HIRSON



Tues 16th – Fri 19th June 2026 at 7.30pm
The Space, Dundee. Tickets £20, under 18s £15

Originally produced on the Broadway stage by Stuart Ostrow. Directed on the Broadway stage by Bob Fosse. 2015 Broadway revival directed by Diane Paulus. Theo Ending Originally Conceived In 1998 By Mitch Sebastian.

This amateur production is presented by arrangement with Music Theatre International.
All authorised performance materials are also supplied by MTI



5G CONSPIRACY THEORIES

Haoqi Liu

5G is the fifth generation of mobile network technology, hence its name. The new technology allows data speeds up to 10 times faster, while also having lower latency and higher network capacity compared to previous generations. 5G was first deployed on a large commercial scale in April 2019, in South Korea. The rollout then expanded rapidly worldwide throughout 2020.

Numerous conspiracy theories have emerged about 5G mobile technology. They are presented as factual, but they are designed to be deceptive and spread misinformation. There is no credible scientific evidence to back these theories.

Due to the coincidence of the two events, many conspiracy theories create a relationship between the global COVID-19 pandemic and 5G.

There have been popular suggestions that 5G is the cause of COVID-19, or that the outbreak began due to the large number of 5G towers in Wuhan. However, COVID-19 is spread through a biological virus, and 5G is transmitted with radio waves, a form of light, so there is no possible way for COVID-19 to be caused by 5G.



Source: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/pasal/50253150903/>

There have also been suggestions that 5G is being used as part of a wider mass surveillance system. Others suggest that the COVID-19 vaccine is being used to implant microchips into our bodies so that we can be tracked using the 5G network. However, this is impossible because there is no way for the needle to implant a microchip, as even the smallest microchips are larger than vaccination needles, and the signal would not be powerful enough to penetrate the body.

Aside from COVID-19, other conspiracy theories claim that 5G causes cancer or other negative health effects. To cause cancer, 5G would have to damage DNA, which cannot happen because radio waves are non-ionising. Additionally, numerous studies from several public health bodies have shown that 5G exposure has no adverse effects on health.

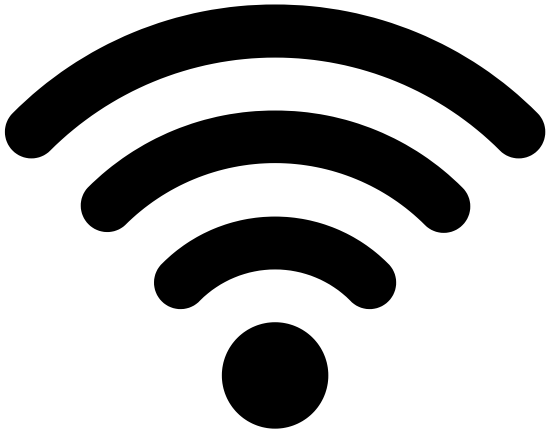
Lastly, a claim that governments can use 5G to control our minds has no substance to it. There is no scientific basis for the possibility of radio waves interfering with our thoughts or behaviour.

The spread of such conspiracy theories can have serious consequences for society. These conspiracy theories feed off of confusion and are presented as facts, despite the lack of evidence to back them. A 2021 American survey found that 20% of respondents believed the idea of the coronavirus vaccine being used to implant microchips as 'probably true' or 'definitely true.'

Once people started believing these conspiracy theories, numerous mobile masts around the UK were vandalised and hundreds of incidents of abuse were reported against telecoms engineers. These attacks damaged our country's critical infrastructure and stalled the development of new technology.

The dangerous impacts of these conspiracy theories mean that we must combat them seriously. While more denunciation from world leaders or organisations such as the NHS would certainly have helped, there are also simple yet effective steps that we can take ourselves. We should stay informed from reliable sources and stick to what we know are the facts. When we spot misinformation, we should report for removal, and refrain from engaging in or sharing it.

While such measures may seem obvious, it is important to rely on credible evidence and challenge misinformation, so that we can prevent the spread of harmful conspiracy theories and make better-informed decisions.



Book Review

THEY WISH THEY WERE US

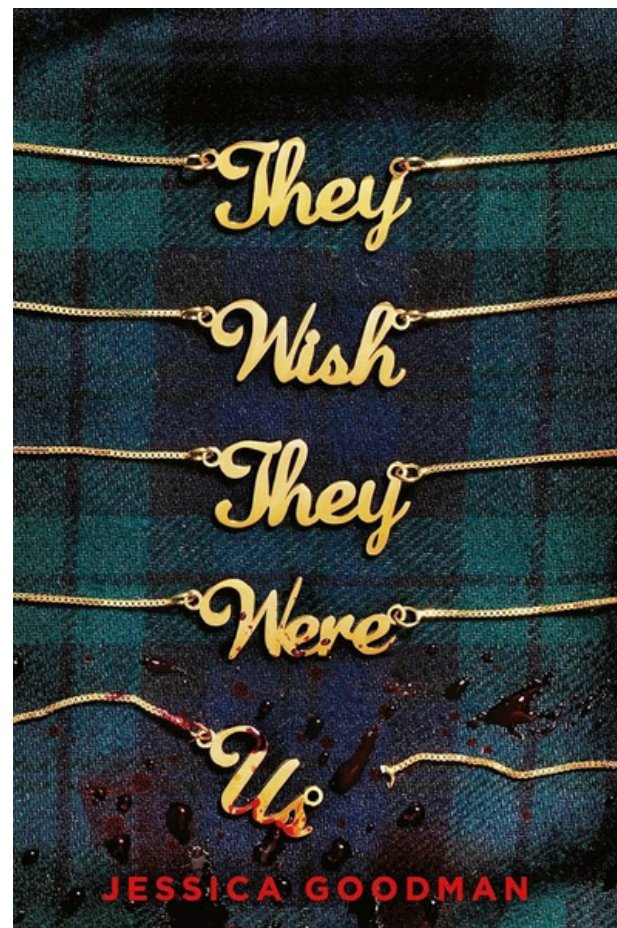
Kirsty Caddick

They Wish They Were Us by Jessica Goodman is a thriller, written in 2020. The book addresses themes of privilege and power by exploring how social status can protect people from consequences and shape the truth.

The book follows Jill Newman, a senior at an elite private school in Long Island, US. Jill is a member of the school's most exclusive group, The Players. In freshman year, Jill's best friend Shaila Arnold was murdered. Shaila's boyfriend Graham was convicted and the Arnolds left town. Jill receives a message at the start of senior year that claims Graham is innocent. As Jill investigates, she uncovers many secrets, questioning everything she thought she knew. She risks friendships, her future, and her place in the social world she has always wanted to belong to.

I would give the book three stars. Whilst the mystery element was interesting, the plot was quite predictable. The plot twists were easy to anticipate, which weakened the suspense. The trope of privileged private school led to the writing being clichéd at times.

Overall, an enjoyable read, but not a standout. Despite its flaws, it was easy and entertaining to follow, which would appeal to many.



Seven Questions for Staff

Haoqi Liu &
Rosie O'Ready

We have continued Seven Questions for Staff, but the questions may have changed ever so slightly...

Anyway, without further ado, we present **Dr Morris!**



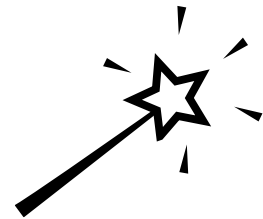
1. If you were a doctor, how many apples would it take to keep you away?
One would be enough

2. What are the best weather conditions to eat cake in?
Autumnal sun

3. If you trained really hard, do you think you could enter the Olympics? If so, for what sport?
No

4. Which HSD teacher is most likely to accidentally walk into a lamppost because they were reading a book whilst walking?
Mr Stewart

5. What Harry Potter spell do you want the most in real life?
Is there one to do with clothes? In that case, transfiguration.



6. Define "art" using an artistic sentence.
"A spontaneous overflow of feeling."

7. What colour of ink indicates a reliable source of historical information?
Dark blue

An interesting collection of answers here, I guess it gives us some insight into Dr Morris' personality. But the job description for HSD teachers probably didn't include "answering ridiculous questions from teenagers".

In case anyone needed this:

Gubernatorial is an adjective used to describe something that is related to a governor, or the office and duties of a governor (most commonly associated with the governors of U.S. states).

How does Jack know this sort of vocabulary?

Anyway, moving swiftly on, next week will be the last edition of The Columns this term.

Hope you enjoyed reading, and have a nice weekend!

Your Temporary Editors - Haoqi, Rosie & Jack