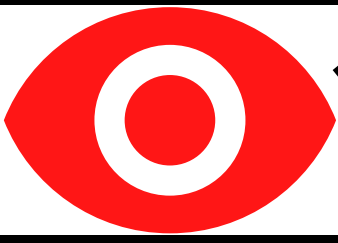
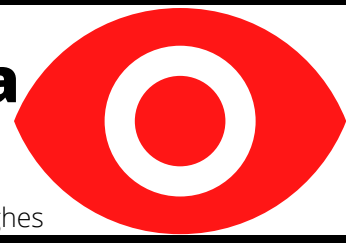


POP PERCEPTION





1984: A Prophecy Becoming a Pathetic Reality?



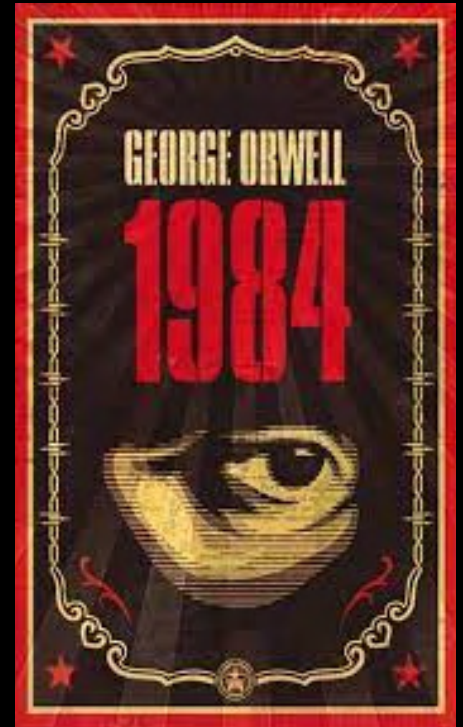
By Iwan Hughes

George Orwell's 1984 focuses on themes of totalitarianism, technology, and censorship, but why has this inspired musicians that produce an audio art form to cite this visual art form as an influence?

Eric Blair, more commonly known by the pen-name George Orwell, is a name much loved by the literary world. He represented both the left and right sides of the political spectrum, with his advocacy of socialism throughout his works inspiring those seeking a social revolution, and his renouncing of the names of British communists while on his death bed; the latter causing him to be nicknamed a 'good leftie' by those who sway right. It is his prophetic novel *1984* that has left the most notable impression on society and within the realms of popular culture. This was a work from which the man himself never saw the effects it had on society, as he died only six months after its publication.

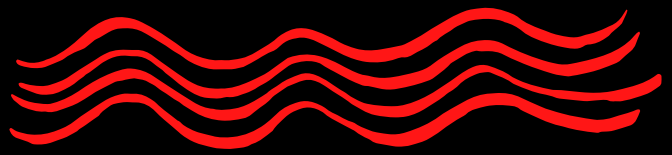
While writing his dystopian novel, on the remote Scottish Isle of Jura, the year was 1949 just four years after the defeating of the totalitarian Nazi party, and with the Soviet Union being fully formed in now modern-day Russia. It is argued that this novel was written to deter people from ever succumbing to the type of totalitarian government that is seen within Oceania and was being seen in some communist states in the real-world Orwell lived. So, with the Soviet Union falling in 1991 and ideas of Communism being constantly frowned upon in 21st-century society, why has this novel provoked so much love from millennials?

Unknown to many, the singer-songwriter David Bowie unsuccessfully attempted to adapt the novel into a stage play during the '70s, however, could not receive permission from Orwell's widow, Sonia Brownwell. She believed this attempt at a musical adaptation to be in poor taste and it was only after her death, in 1980, that the rights to adapt the novel into visual media was allowed. This did not deter Bowie from releasing a song titled *1984* in his 1974 album *Diamond Dogs* which charted at number one in the same year's album charts. The themes represented within Bowie's song, also appear later in his career, through his 19th studio album titled *Outside*. Throughout this album, Bowie presents characters in, with it being a 1994 release, a futuristic, dystopian land on the eve of the 21st century.



'It is argued that this novel was written to deter people from ever succumbing to the type of totalitarian government that is seen within Oceania.'

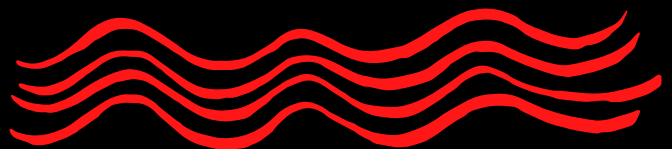




A more recent example of the intertwining of music and Orwell's fiction is the Arctic Monkeys 2006 hit song *I Bet You Look Good On The Dancefloor*, where lead singer and lyricist Alex Turner mentions 'dancing to electropop like a robot from 1984'. Furthermore, Turner hints at another reference to the land of dystopias in the Monkey's most recent record, *Tranquillity Base Hotel & Casino*. Within the song *Star Treatment*, there is an online debate as to whether the lyric, '1984,2019', is a reference to Orwell's novel reflecting the world in which the record was written. This is with the latter date being the year in which it was released. It is up for debate why have successful artistic creators such as Bowie, and Turner, have been so fascinated by Orwell's themes?

The grave warnings of extreme governmental control and technological advancements are dramatized for the effects of entertainment, yet with the invention of Social Media, it is not entirely fictional. An ever-growing consciousness of our lack of freedoms is constantly questioned within a millennial society.

This is exemplified with location trackers such as Snapchat's 'maps', released in 2017, allowing a person's location to be seen at the touch of a button. For this reason, I expect Orwell's novel to continuously be rebirthed into different forms of media in the coming decades as future generations get to grips with the submission of Winston and the desires of freedom represented through Julia and the Proles.



Adaptations of Books

By Oliver Nicol

Films Vs Series: Which is the superior medium?

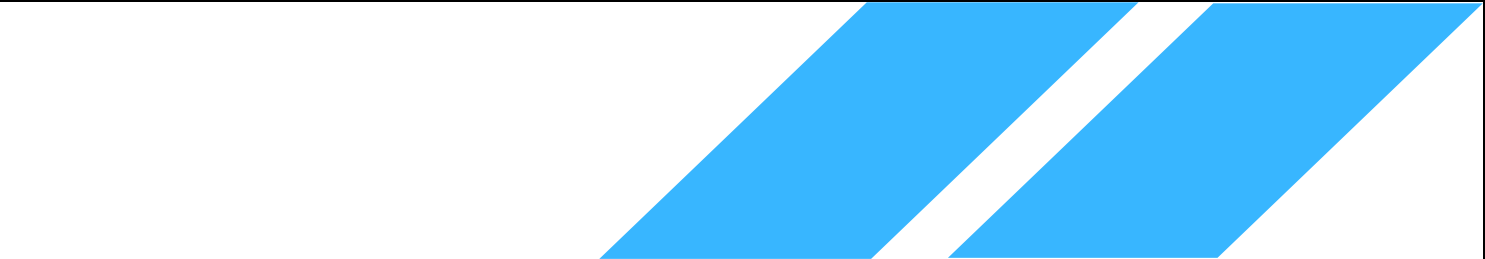
Ever since there has been cinema, there have been cinematic adaptations. Some of the earliest examples of this date back to the turn of the 20th century with books such as Cinderella and Sherlock Holmes being converted into films. However, the movie adaptation has slowly been rivalled by the Series adaptation. This format is becoming more and more popular with the culture phenomenon of streaming services. But which of these mediums is the superior when we come to an adaptation for the screen. Here, the pros and cons of each will be shown along with some examples.

Firstly, the pros of film adaptations. A film adaptation allows a viewer to enjoy the main story line of a novel within around 2 hours. In one sitting the novels main plotline, themes and characters can be explored. This means that those who have not read the books can understand the storyline that the book follows. For those who have read the book it means they can enjoy visual interpretation of the story. Another benefit is that some books are more fitted to be adapted into movies than a series.



One example of this is André Aciman's *Call Me by Your Name*. The book itself lacks any chapters making the book stretch out into one long story echoing the summer romance of the two characters. The film format reflects this long continuous story, unlike if the text was adapted for shorter episodes; disrupting its flow. Film adaptations also benefit when there more than one book to a collection, for instance with *Harry Potter*, each book can be adapted into its own film meaning the whole of the story that spans multiple books can be enjoyed.

However, this also brings a big con of film adaptations is that some of these books are not able to fit into just one film. For instance *Harry Potter and The Deathly Hallows* being divided into two films, something that both film and book fans alike see as an annoyance. This highlights the main issue with films adaptations; the sacrifices of characters, subplots and sometimes entire chapters being lost.



This is where T.V Series has answer. Instead of confining entire books into a couple of hours of movie it can be spread across multiple episodes. With this option we are no longer rushed through and can take more time to engross ourselves within the world of the book, understand characters more and enjoy the smaller details. A great example of this could be the miniseries of Agatha Christie's novel And Then There Were None. By spreading the text across three episodes each characters back story is able to be explored and not rushed past. It also benefitted from the build-up of tension from episode to episode.

Furthermore, expansive novels such as the Game of Thrones series which has such and expansive world and stories is would ultimately have been ruined if the books were attempted to have been crammed into a film format. On the other hand though, Game of Thrones finished with 73 episodes in total. This highlights one major issue of the TV series. Some shows choose to stretch their source material across season after season. Ultimately, this is too large of a commitment for people to fit into their busy lives.



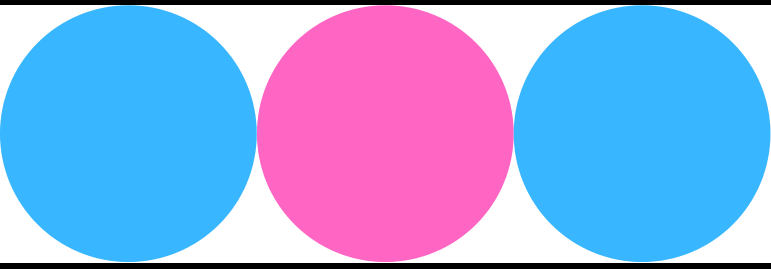
In conclusion, there is not a winner to this battle. Instead it is apparent that certain books fit better into film adaptations where as others into a T.V series. It is down to us as the viewers to decide whether an adaptation is fitting or not to its medium. As personally I am still waiting for a T.V Series Adaptation of Harry Potter. Let us know what adaptations you would like to see on our social media accounts...



@pop_perception



@perception_pop



Two Puberties Too Many.

By Jamie Bilson

The controversy of puberty blockers and the effects of ignorance around the gender spectrum.

Puberty is a wonderful time in life; a sentiment anyone having experienced puberty would be loath to agree with. The truth of the matter is this; puberty was hell for us all. From here I offer you a question, would you want to go through it twice? Annoyingly that is the reality for me and my fellow breakers of the gender binary.

The last few years have thrown some unexpected curve balls; forest fires, murder hornets, and countless social injustices exposing the corruption within modern society. On top of a global pandemic, it has been a lot to take in. So, it is easy to see how many things have swept under the radar of media coverage – especially about a group of people so often erased from the social narrative. Trans and gender non-conforming people have been targeted massively in the past few years. In 2019 there was an 81% increase in reported hate crime towards transgender individuals in the UK and the media's twisted narrative has most definitely done more harm than help with this statistic in the following year.

I could write numerous essays on the deeply ingrained beliefs and stereotypes of trans people in society, but I have a word limit and would hate to lose your avid attention. Therefore, I would like to focus on one specific event. On the 10th December 2020, the government debated the issue of access to puberty blockers for under sixteens. These halt the hormones

which create secondary sex characteristics – for example, the development of breast tissue or growth of facial hair. This completely reversible treatment allows teenagers who are questioning their gender to explore all their options without the damage developing in the wrong body could cause their mental health. However, the verdict of this debate – in the whole twelve minutes allotted to the issue – was ultimately to prevent trans youths from accessing this service unless allowed by a court. A decision made by people who referred to a medical transition using terms like 'castration' and 'heavy unnatural drug use', also stating that 'no baby can be born in the wrong body and human sex cannot be changed post-birth' (Baroness Nicholson of Winterbourne). Prejudiced interpretations like this are what allow negative perceptions of trans people to stew subconsciously.

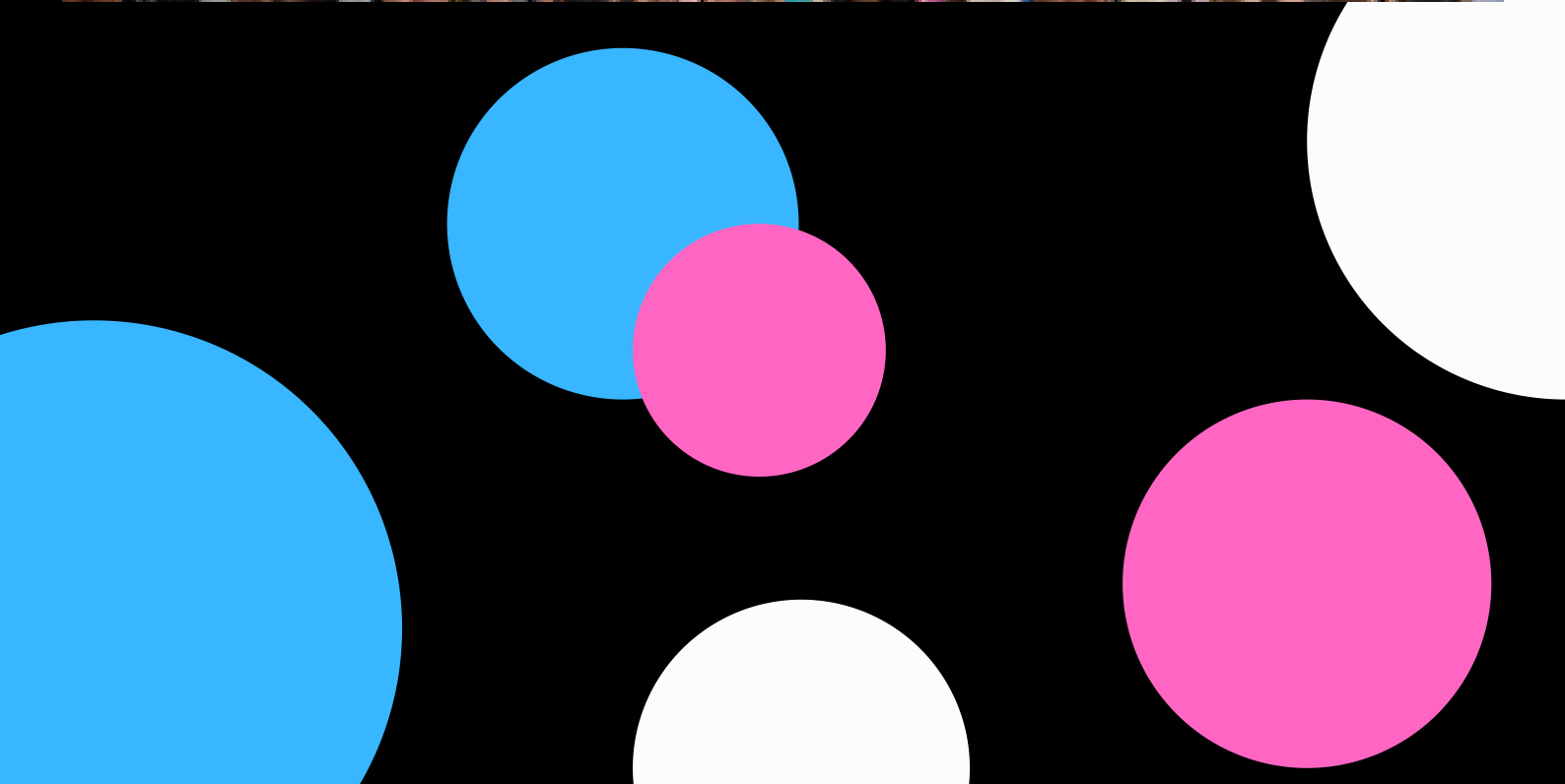
I propose that one root of the problem is bias and discriminatory language being used frivolously and commonly by people who don't understand the struggles of trans folks. So, to better understand life outside the gender binary, literature can be a fantastic resource. *Burgerz*, a play by Travis Alabanza, explores the effects of transphobic violence after someone threw a burger at them with a transphobic slur. Their play offers an in-depth exploration of the transgender existence and how we reclaim ourselves in the wake of suffering.

Mimi Lemay's *What We Will Become* explores an alternate perspective: a mother raised in faith discovering how to accept her son through his transition and how acceptance can allow a person to live the life they choose. A warning to any who take my advice and read these

amazing pieces of literature: I openly admit, I cried rivers reading the latter.

Hearing more trans narratives – especially those written by transgender people – can not only normalise gender non-conformity but encourage cisgender people to understand the truth of our lives. We simply exist. There is, shockingly, no secret agenda. We just politely ask to be understood and not demonised. We go through puberty twice, haven't we suffered enough?

Figure 1 Photo by Ted Eytan



Reading and Me

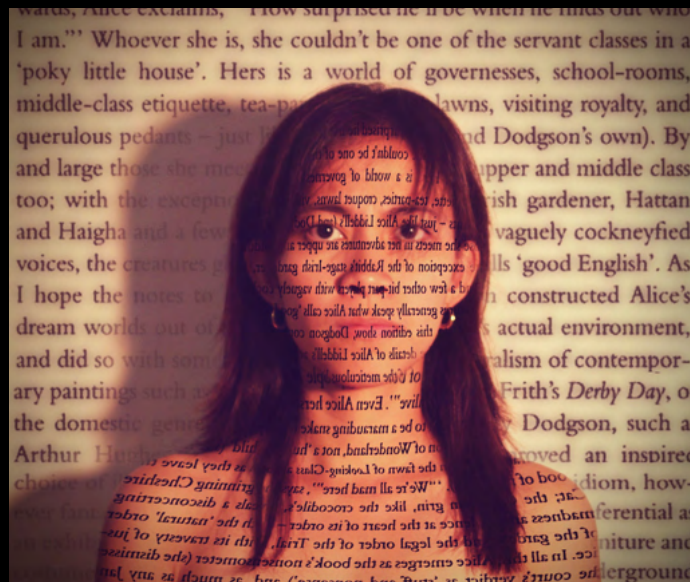
By Megan Walters

The irony of a dyslexic English Literature Student

Yes, you have read the title correctly, irony is what I live for. Reading, within itself, is very personal. The way someone reads a novel is in no way the same as someone else. Even reading it a second time changes the interpretation to an individual. That is why reading should be considered magic; the message of a book changes with every re-read. Then when you think of how books are adapted from paper to screen, be it for a TV show such as *The Vampire Diaries*, or for movies like *Harry Potter*, the experience can still be very personal. This is what makes reading such a magical experience. But this doesn't mean it is accessible to everyone.

From personal experience, I can say reading can definitely feel like a chore. If you were to ask me what one of my favourite pastimes was, I would say to read. Annoyingly, that would also be the answer to 'what task do I find most difficult?' some days. Yet I still open every book with the same anticipation of wondering what new thing I will feel. Will it be a comfort filled with the warmth of a happy ending? Will it be the fear from a thriller? Or even annoyance at the book and the author? Each occurrence is as likely as the next. However, if I must pinpoint one reason as to why the activity I enjoy so much feels like such a chore, I would blame my dyslexia.

According to the NHS, 1 in 10 people in the UK are dyslexic, so we shouldn't be so shocked to learn of some famous authors being dyslexic, yet we are. Some of the authors we would be stunned to find are theorised to be dyslexic are F. Scott Fitzgerald and Edgar Allan Poe. Both having made big names for themselves in the world of literature. The idea that they were possibly dyslexic came from reports of how they were in school.



Dyslexia is a funny thing, and I can say this from experience. It makes letters jump, lines jive and paragraphs grow making the task of reading so much more difficult. I can and will re-read the same line and words over and over without even realising. This can be a novelty, something to have a little laugh at, but most of the time it is a massive frustration. However, my biggest grievance is when someone doubts the ability to love reading because of dyslexia. Is it more difficult to enjoy? Yes. There is no argument there, but does the end product of reading change for the individual? No, it just becomes more. It becomes more because not only have you delved into this new world and enjoyed another person's work, but you have also achieved something.

The perfect way to end this article would be to give tips to the fellow dyslexic reader. So, I will try and do so without sounding as patronising as my GCSE and A-level English teachers were at times.

The time frame in which you finish your book does not matter. It is the enjoyment you experience that counts. Do not be embarrassed of using a coloured overlay as well as using the correct one for you (I am far too guilty of this). Finally, let the ambition to prove others wrong fuel your reading! By enjoying a good book regardless of what others know and understand, you can change these misguided conceptions about dyslexia.

My Films Of The Year

By Dylan Moore - Jaunaii

Film in 2020 was hit hard by COVID, just like everything else I suppose. From studios having to put back their release dates (by years in some cases) to whole projects being put to a stop over COVID safety. However, Hollywood always seems to find a way, and we got some good ones this year for sure! Now the nominations for the 93rd Oscar's ceremony are out, I think it's time to give MY top 5 best contender nominations. Academy who?

Judas and the Black Messiah - Warner Bros. Pictures

Can I just say, the academy picked well on this one. Shaka King's biopic, set around the events which lead to political activist Fred Hampton's assassination in 1969, is incredible. Nominated for multiple academy awards, including best picture and two best supporting actor nominations, the film tells an important story of the racial tensions in late 60s America; and the internal conflict faced by William O'Neal (LaKeith Stanfield) as he operates as an FBI informant while undercover as a member of the Illinois Black Panther Party. It had to be on the list - and honestly I wouldn't be surprised if it turns out to be a winner.



Warner Bros.

TENET - Warner Bros. Pictures



Warner Bros.

Now, I know a lot of people said Tenet didn't "live up to the hype" but I'm going to disagree. John David Washington and Robert Pattinson isn't the partnership we deserved, but it was the one we needed to help get us through lockdown. I really hope I see them partner up again because the onscreen chemistry between the two actors made 'Tenet'. Christopher Nolan's eleventh feature film, a modern spy thriller with a time twist, and a focus on covert operations put in place to prevent the end of the world, easily goes in my top 5. It's a Nolan film so "visually stunning" goes without saying, and with the mind bending concepts put forward it's probably just complex enough to be Nolan's most out there film. It will not let your mind rest.

His House - Netflix

Scary is an understatement, brilliant is a fact. Remi Weekes' debut feature was very impressive. After escaping a war-torn homeland of South Sudan, an immigrant couple face troubles from a malevolent ghost and racial tensions in their new home. This is one which caught me off guard because I honestly didn't expect it to be as good as it was, and it was a pleasant surprise. Even though I couldn't sleep after...



Netflix

watching this, it's a film with a strong plot and great performances from leads Wunmi Mosaka and Sope Dirisu - I guarantee if you're a horror fan you love it. Hell, if you like good films at all you'll love it.

The Devil All the Time - Netflix

I could honestly talk about this film for a lot longer than I'm going to, it might be my favourite of the year. Another Bobby P entry, alongside a lead performance from Marvel mega star Tom Holland, that has blessed all the movie lovers out there.



Netflix

If you thought Tom Holland was gonna stay playing nice guys, 'The Devil All the Time' has proved you wrong. This film was dark! In fact, it had a strange ability to get even darker at every point you thought it definitely couldn't. Antonio Campos' graphic depiction of police corruption, abuse scandals and MURDER in southern Ohio and West Virginia - make it not for the faint hearted (or stomachs) so maybe watch this with the lights on? Scratching my head as to why I didn't see it on the Academy Awards nomination sheet.

"Soul" - Disney

It's an animated film sure, but this doesn't need a separate category it can hang with the rest on this list. There's a reason Disney makes the big bucks, they don't miss. I'm not one for kids films, so we'll call this a motion picture aimed at a younger audience, which I just happened to enjoy...a lot. Seriously though, wow! It's rude of me to have called this a kids film because it really is so much more. Typical of Disney projects, 'Soul' takes its audience on an emotional journey, and teaches lessons that a lot of adults could do with learning themselves. As it just won the Golden Globe for best animated motion picture it's safe to say this is something special. But all the same I'm letting everyone know, in case you missed the news.



Disney

Now, I know I said only five but I have to give a few honourable mentions. They are as follows:

- "One Night in Miami" (Dir: Regina King, Starring: Eli Goree, Aldis Hodge, Lesley Odom Jr and Kingsley Ben-Adir)
- "Nomadland" (Dir: Chloé Zhao, Starring: Frances McDormand and David Strathairn)
- "The King of Staten Island" (Dir: Judd Apatow, Starring: Pete Davidson, Marisa Tomei and Bill Burr)
- "Ma Rainey's Black Bottom" (Dir: George C. Wolfe, Starring: Chadwick Boseman and Viola Davis)
- "Pieces of a Woman" (Dir: Kornél Mundruczó, Starring: Shia LaBeouf and Vanessa Kirby)

So there you have it. My top films of 2020. If you haven't seen them yet make sure you do ASAP, spoilers are always lurking!

Five Alcoholic Drinks with a Literary Twist

By Lucie Evans

Once upon a time there was the invention of the 'cocktail'...

...dating back to the 1800s. You have your classics, 'The Mojito', 'Mai Tai', 'Manhattan', the list could go on. But imagine this, you're choosing a new novel to read, it's heading into summer and you want a cocktail that would perfectly pair with your escape from reality. Here are five word-play cocktails that any English literature fan will enjoy.



Introducing number ONE, the oppressed drink-
'The Handmaid's Cocktail'

A classic drink to couple up with a classic novel, sit yourself down in 1985 with this dystopian novel which is one for the feminists out there. Envisage yourself sipping a dark, luxurious red wine whilst twisting into the horror and dark tales of Offred's life. Thank yourself lucky being able to have one of life's pleasures whilst knowing these women live on the bare minimum of rations. You would locate a drink like this in 'Jezebels', the secret brothel. A place for the commanders in the novel- "wives aren't allowed". So, grab yourself a glass from Jezebels and enjoy the secrecy.

What you'll need:

- A dark red of your taste (we recommend Chateaufneuf de pape)
- A large wine glass

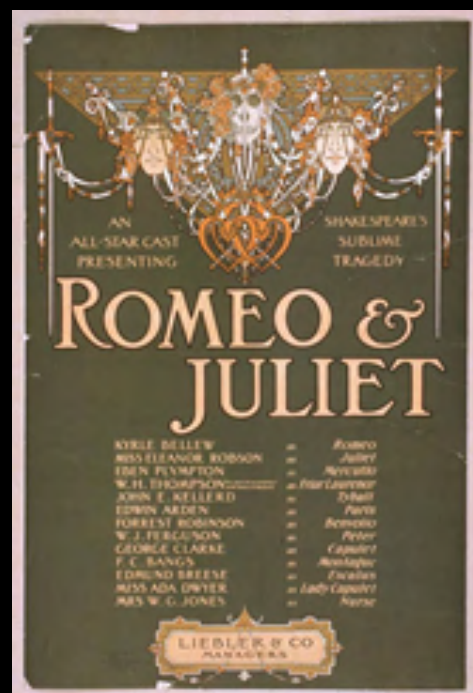
Coming at you at number TWO is the classic you all studied in school

'Rum and Juliet'

Fingers crossed you studied 'Romeo and Juliet' not 'Rum and Juliet' but I'm sure we wouldn't mind giving that one a read. This most famous love story to date. This romantic tragedy really gets you in your feels as you take pleasure in a rum punch cocktail. With all that fighting you'll need something to relax with. Maybe partake in this drink on valentines with the ones you love, create your fantasy like you're seeing your partner for the first time, love at first sight - "thus with a sip I die".

What you'll need:

- Orange juice
- Lime juice
- Malibu
- Dark rum
- Grenadine
- Crushed ice
- And a slice of orange to garnish





At number THREE comes not 'The Wizard of Oz' but the
'Wizard of Cosm'OZ'

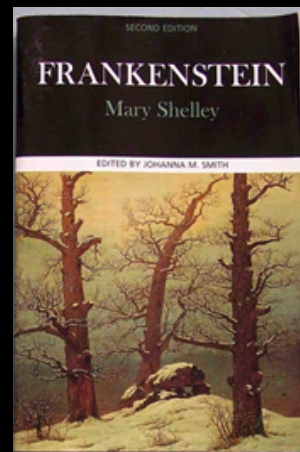
The Scarecrow needs a brain, the Tin Man needs a heart, the Lion needs courage, and you need a Cosm'OZ to lead you down the yellow brick road. Unlike the traditional cosmopolitan, which is red, ours is green to lead you to the Emerald city, after one or two you'll start seeing flying witches. You'll blow yourself through a tornado with this drink.

What you'll need:

- Lemon vodka
- Triple sec
- Cranberry juice
- Lime juice
- Green food colouring
- Ice and orange zest for garnish

For number FOUR it's
'The-Frank-in-a-Stein'

Frankenstein's monster is created in multiple parts, just like 'The Frank', to make it more authentic place your drink in a stein glass and live out the full name. A perfect piece of gothic literature to spook all ages. If you wanted to impress your literature friends you could add some dry ice and pretend, you're the scientist for the night, giving your drink an eerie mist over your green drink.



What you'll need:

- Cognac
- White port
- Maraschino liqueur
- Orange bitters
- Lemon peel
- Dry ice (optional)



Finally at number FIVE and my personal favourite
-'Gin Austen'

Treating you to not, one but two feminist heavy novels, this romance, comedy and independence themed novel provides you with an experience to how life was back in 1812. Pride and Prejudice having a light- hearted spring feel, it was only appropriate to pair it with a fresh and fruity gin. "it is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good gin, must be in want of a wife".

What you'll need:

- An orange or lemon gin (Whitley Neills or Gordans)
- Ice
- Frozen lemon and limes
- Lemonade or tonic water
- And a flower of season to garnish

Sip back and get lost in your book.

Self-Help Superheroes

By Ketty Mather

Faced with a year like no other, we have once again seen literature come to the rescue much like the superhero it is!

Self-help books have become a lifeline for many throughout the pandemic and as a result, we have seen them flying off the imaginary shelves of the internet. We have truly witnessed the power of literature, seeing it finally being used to its full potential. This is most certainly one win for us literary fanatics have had during the pandemic and for those of you who haven't taken advantage of the abundance of self-help books we have been so dearly blessed with during this pandemic, do not fear. Today, I will be granting you with the inside scoop regarding my top 4 self-help book game changers.



Atomic Habits by James Clear

James Clear writes in his self-help book, Atomic Habits, "every action you take is a vote for the person you wish to become." His bestselling book (which has sold over a million copies) embodies all aspects of change. James writes about making small changes and taking back control of your own life. He writes on how these small changes can eventually lead to a renewed life and sense of self, what more could you ask from a self-help book?

If you're longing for change after a year being stuck inside, this book is perfect for you. Helping you to easily implement small and subtle changes to create a 'new you.'



Act Like a Lady by Jae Vanek, Becca Tobin and Keltie Knight.

During 2020, we were faced with much more than just Coronavirus, political injustice became a major talking point and rightly so. Act Like a Lady is a book written by Jac Vanek, Becca Tobin and Keltie Knight. They write on being, "unapologetically yourself."

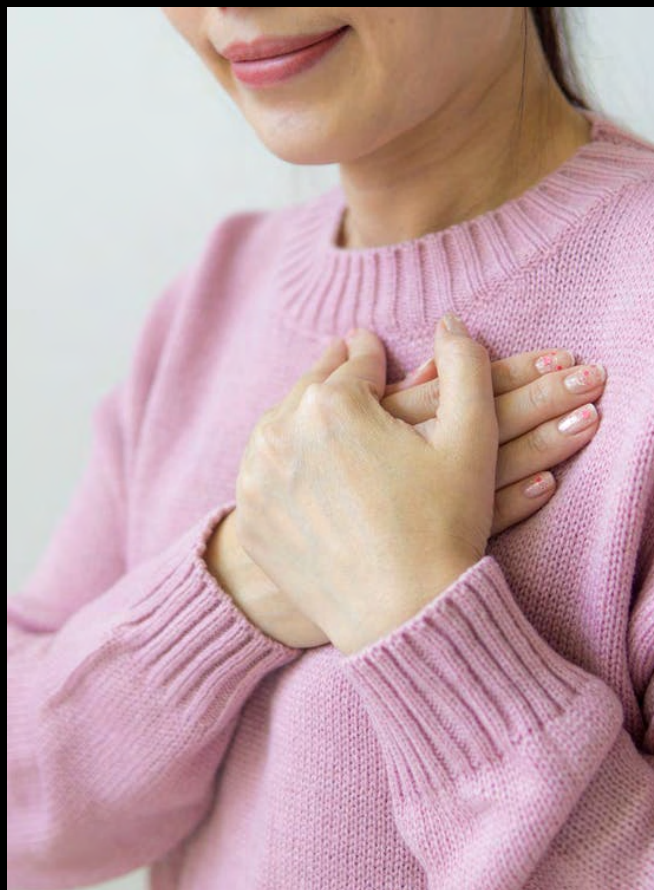
In an age where we are all subject to judgement in varying ways, it can be hard to feel as though we can be our, 'true selves.' Using stories, advice and opinions these three outstanding women create a way for all women to be heard. For anyone who feels they've lost the 'sparkle' during such a rough time, this book may just be the cure, paving the way for you to truly be and feel yourself.



[Forgiving What You Can't Forget: Discover How to Move On, Make Peace with Painful Memories, and Create a Life That's Beautiful Again by Lysa TerKeurst.](#)

I'm sure many of you will agree that during this last year we've all been given an unspeakable amount of time to just sit and dwell with our often negative thoughts. What better way to utilise this time than to forgive and heal? Lysa TerKeurst's self-help book has inspired many who feel trapped in an uncomfortable cycle of pain and anger because of other people's actions.

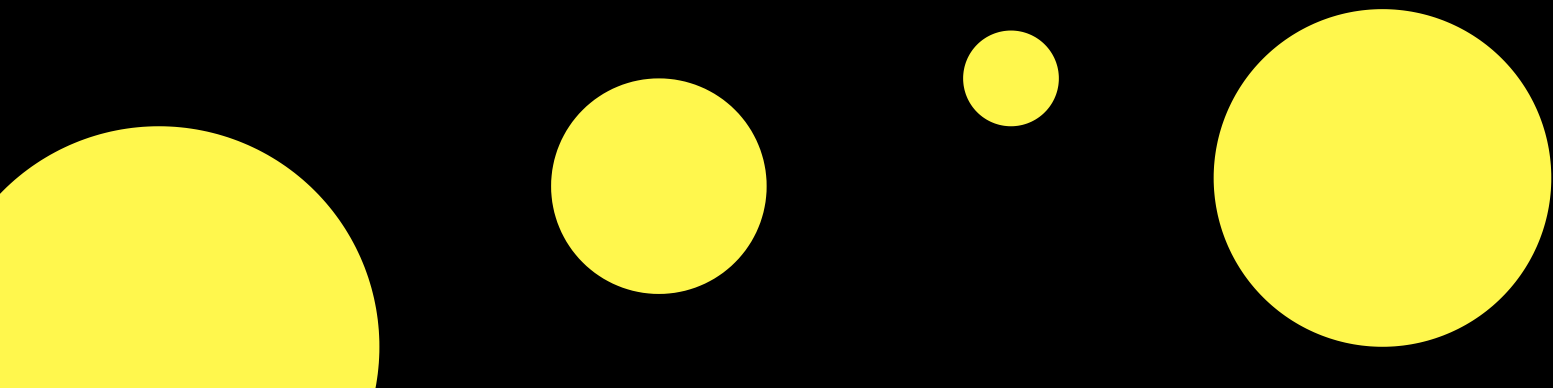
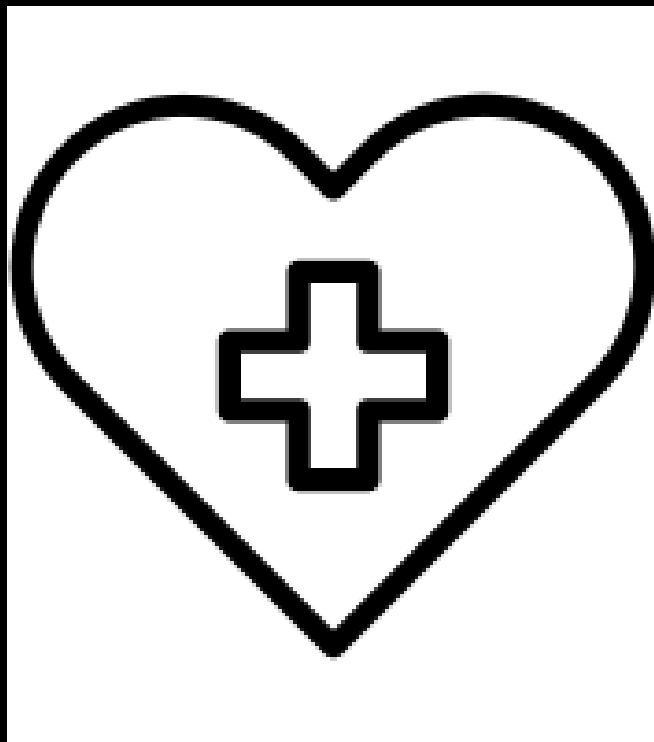
Lysa writes, "your heart is too much a beautiful place for unhealed pain", this inspiring book has been a saviour to many, giving many the ability to embark on a journey not only to forgive others, but also to forgive themselves. If you are looking to be freed from the negative ties of anger due to suffering, look no further, you might just find peace within the pages of this book.



[Reasons to Stay Alive by Matt Haig](#)

Many would suggest Coronavirus isn't the only pandemic we have been victim to this year and that, sadly, the events of the last year have led us to a mental health crisis. It is imperative that we always speak about the subject of mental health and the ways in which help can be given. Matt Haig writes within his Sunday Times bestselling book, *Reasons to Stay Alive*, about overcoming crisis and his battle with depression.

It has been described multiple times as a "life-saving" book and to many it has been. This book will make you laugh and cry. It gives an extraordinarily honest insight into surviving depression and the ways in which you can start to feel more alive. Whether you are wanting to educate yourself or help yourself, this is an incredible book which I recommend for everyone to read.





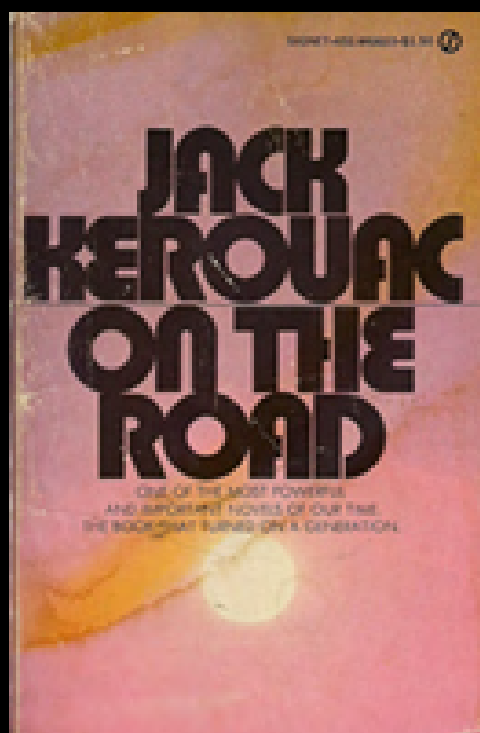
Brits Band Branded By Book

By Paige Robson

Manchester - based band The 1975 not only reference written works of literature in their lyrics but their very name derives from the pages of a book. The band is one of the many who bridge the barriers between literature and music.

The perpetual parallelism between literary and music is undeniable, usually being entwined and entangled. The abstract, ambivalent band The 1975 are no exclusion when combining the duo harmoniously. Matty Healy, George Daniel, Ross McDonald and Adam Hann compose the four-piece pop- rock band.

Frontman Healy clarifies that the name is inspired from the discovery of a copy of American novelist Jack Kerouac's *On the Road*, a novel exploring the themes of freedom, travel and wandering, motifs the band investigate in their melodies. On the back page Healy describes there to be 'deranged and mental' scribbles, the date '1 June, The 1975' emerged, the band was captured by the small yet effective article. The 1975 was born. This was only the beginning of the band's linkage with literature and music.



Joshua Hilgart-Roy (2009) Jack Kerouac - On The Road (Paperback) \$1.50 in 1957: Flickr

Their name is not the only correlation between the band and the literary world, so do their lyrics. In their second electro-pop ballad album, *I Like It When You Sleep, For You Are So Beautiful Yet So Unaware Of It* in their track 'A Change of Heart' they link to the novel with the lyrics 'I'll quote On the Road like a twat/And wind my way out of the city.' The song depicts the stages of falling out of love with someone, the employment of *On the Road* in their song generates an ambiguous effect, humorously referencing to the origins of their name and implies that Matty is running away from his beloved city in searching to fill his emptiness which is what Kerouac was portraying in the novel when writing 'A pain stabbed my heart, as it did every time, I saw a girl I loved who was going the opposite direction in this too-big world'. Despite the link the band see faults in the novel. Kerouac glorifies 'winding his way out of the city' the band juxtaposes this with running away from your problems doesn't mean you escape them.

In the same album, the song *Loving Someone* declaring its alliance with the LGBTQ+ community in everybody deserving to love and be loved. A lyric is 'Even Guy Debord needed spectacles'. Guy Debord, a French Situationist philosopher who is known for the book *Society of Spectacle*, examining the spectacle as 'autocratic reign of the market economy,' Debord references mass media, linking to the pop culture thus music. Debord interprets that the spectacle actively alters human interactions and relationships *The 1975* torment the idea that he who opposes the society of the spectacle wears the exact thing, we should do what we feel not what we see and as they say [we] should be loving someone!

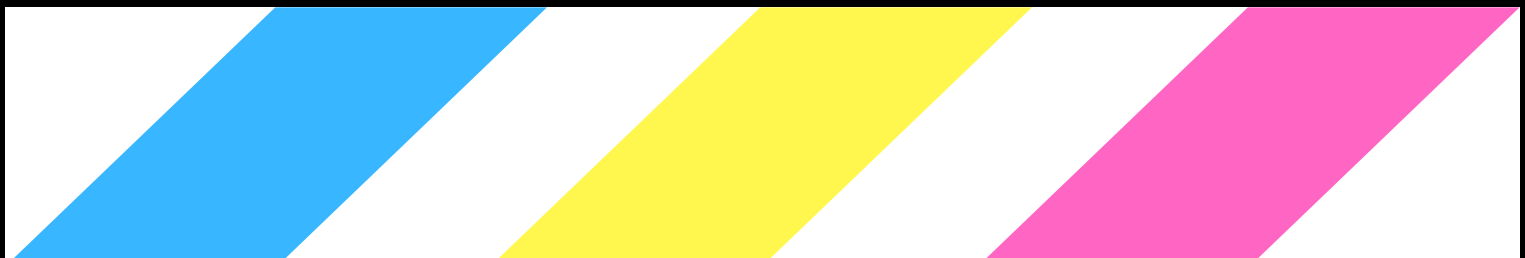
'A Brief Inquiry Into Online Relationships', *The 1975*'s third album their song 'Surrounded by Head and Bodies' is a connection to David Foster Wallace's novel *Infinite Test* Matty found the novel on the first page where the title of the song was formed from the literal opening lines from the book. Literary influence also flows into the artist's personal lives with singer Matty,



Pitpony, photography (2016) The 1975 @ Rock im Park 2016: Wikimedia Commons

revealing the name of his pet dog, an eponym alluding to American political poet Allen Ginsburg, friend and fellow 'Beat' poets with Jack Kerouac. The political pet reference links to the ensemble making up three-time BRITS winners who through their exploration of extensive genres of music and their innuendos to written words explore troubling, taboo topics.

Ultimately, literature and music are both creative art forms, music adds a perspective to literature and literature gives words to the feelings music evokes. *The 1975* use the creative blend to enhance their sounds. The band whose very name is inspired by the pages of a book, whose lyrics use influence from the words of writers are just one example of the fluidity between the literature and music. The two art forms have beautifully integrated into one making the distinct line between the pair blurred. As after all, they are both creating the same thing. Art.



5 Science-Backed Benefits of Reading for Students

By Daisy Ward

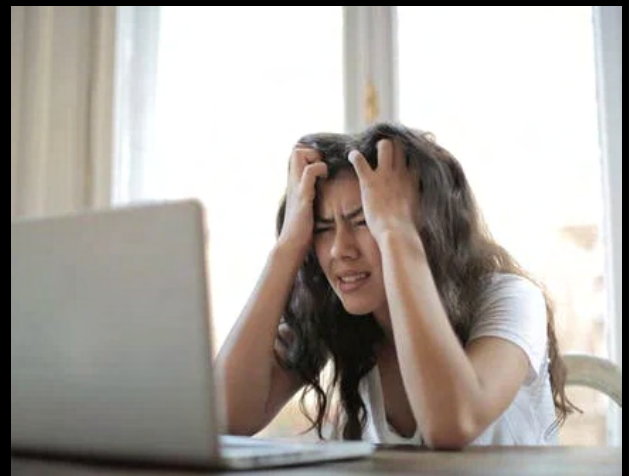
If you don't tend to make a habit of reading, science suggests your university experience might be suffering.

Has our generation fallen out of love with reading? Is it too difficult to read in a world of electronic distraction? I don't think so. But if your love for reading is lacking, here are some student-specific benefits that might nudge you in the right direction.

1. Stress reduction

All students experience stress at varying degrees throughout their time at university. For some it is at its highest around exam season, for others, it is a result of mental health struggles. Some of us might ignore our stress, some even try to cure it with herbal teas or the drinking cure. Though the solution could be much simpler: a good book! A 2009 study by Sussex University found that reading regularly can reduce stress by as much as 68%.

David Lewis cognitive Neuropsychologist told The Telegraph that "It really doesn't matter what book you read, by losing yourself in a thoroughly engrossing book you can escape from the worries and stresses of the everyday world." So, if you are feeling stressed a good book might be the solution!



2. Increased intelligence

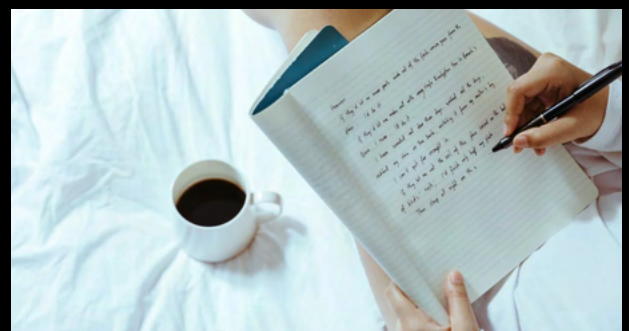
Einstein once said, "The only thing you absolutely have to know is the location of the library." As one of history's greatest minds, this highlights the importance of reading for the mind. This benefit is often overlooked, as people tend to focus on the escapism of reading. Though this is important, potentially even more beneficial for your degree is what it can do for your mind. Those who read have more diverse vocabularies, which assists in essay writing and debates.

According to Ken Pugh, president of Haskins Laboratories, parts of the brain such as vision, language, and associative learning connect in a way that is very challenging when reading. Simply, reading is a workout for your brain, which in the long run increases your overall intelligence



3. Better writing skills

People who read a lot are generally well written, as they absorb different writing styles and subconsciously imitate them. And you might be asking, well how is this useful to me? I do a Physics degree. I suppose I am biased as I am a writer and study English literature. Yet, this benefit is critical to all students. All students have to write essays, reports, and emails. Being able to communicate your ideas well, no matter which degree you study is bound to improve your grade.



4. Better sleep

All students, at some point, struggle with sleep. Maybe it's the worry of deadlines keeping you up, or your noisy roommates. Whatever it is research suggests that a good book can help. Creating a ritual before bed, like reading a book tells your body it is time to start slowing down, according to the Mayo Clinic. So maybe opt for a good book, rather than a binge-watch of the next popular Netflix series. Your tired mind will thank you for it in the morning.



5. Improved Empathy

Fiction in particular has the superpower of assisting readers to understand others. In times like these, with a global pandemic and reports of poor mental health on the rise, it is so important to connect with others. It is becoming increasingly hard to connect truly with others, as it seems the screens and devices that are supposed to connect us often do the opposite. The cure to this, for me, is empathy. To put yourself in another's shoes, and really feel how it must be for them. As George RR Martin once said, "A reader lives a thousand lives before he dies."



Reading, therefore, is the key to empathy, as a good read can help you experience, for a moment, the life of another.

THE TRAGIC STORY OF ELISA LAM? OR THE TERRIFYING STORY OF ELISA LAM?

by Lyddia Rozee-Johnson

Netflix's True Crime documentary series "The Vanishing at the Cecil Hotel" is a new and popular Documentary on Netflix. Its reviews have seen the show as one which has left viewers disturbed and being unable to sleep at night. However, is this what the audience should be feeling from a documentary about mental health awareness? Is the portrayal of the documentary preventing or benefitting Elisa's tragic story?

It is still a controversy about the representation of mental health in the Entertainment media. Mass media represents the idea that criminality and mental illness is something which exists together, representing the stereotype that mental health equals insanity. 'Consequently, all forms of media [...] have been criticised for disseminating negative stereotypes and inaccurate descriptions of those with mental illness' (1). It is easy for society to stereotype those that appear abnormal to be a threat, but is this because we are not educated enough about mental health? Individuals that possess behaviour which is considered to be out of the norm are labelled the "crazy" (2) by the entertainment media, is it that society is literally scared of them individuals? Or is it the media's portrayal that has made society see it like this.



'[!]n reality, somebody with mental illness is much more likely to be a victim- rather than a perpetrator' (1), this contrasts the negative stigma yet it is still a shock to us as this understanding is undermined by the negative portrayal which overpowers. It is easy to stereotype those who don't appear "normal" to be dangerous, but what does it mean to be normal, after all, we all suffer with mental health to an extent.

According to Wikipedia, a news article discusses current or recent news of either general interest (i.e. daily newspapers) or of a specific topic (i.e. political or trade news magazines, club newsletters, or technology news websites).

Netflix's "The Vanishing at the Cecil Hotel" is an example concerning the representation of mental health in the media. The docuseries was released February 2021 and is great watch if you are in the mood for something spooky and suspenseful, however, was this the right approach for a documentary about the reality of mental health? The series explores the disappearance of 21-year-old Elisa Lam who suffered from Bipolar Disorder, she went missing around the time she was staying at the Cecil Hotel in downtown LA. The Netflix show focuses predominantly on the hauntings of the hotel which although is intriguing, it does not have any involvement with Lam's tragic death. As the suspense continues throughout the prolonged 4-episode documentary, the audience is shown surveillance footage of Elisa in the hotel's elevator, her behaviour is publicised 'bizarre' by CBS News (3) And Web sleuths questioned if there was a paranormal presence to blame due to the hotel's reputation. The footage was the last that was seen of Lam and later they found her deceased body in the water tank on the roof top of the hotel. Her investigation underwent sexual assault and murder questioning, but it was only until a last resort that Lam's illness was considered and was in fact the cause. Until the final episode, the documentary spreads the awareness of mental health, but why is it this is considered at the end of the investigation we ask and how is this relevant to the initial suspense of horror presented in the hotel's past?

The Netflix documentary conforms to the 'overgeneralised' (1) stigma of mental health being seen as dangerous. 'Although there is often a stigma associated with all mental illnesses, bipolar disorder can be especially stigmatising' (2) and something which can be argued through the elevator footage. It was suggested that Lam could have been on hallucinogens because of her behaviour looked as though she was scared or hiding from someone. Lorraine Ali says the series 'fails to persuasively entwine the hotel's past with Lam's demise, relying instead on the salacious aspects of both storylines to drive the narrative' (3). Was this because it was more realistic? Again, is this because there is not enough education around Mental wellbeing?

Lam's death was a tragedy, suffering from her illness and mental isolation it caused her death. The show however abuses the reality of her case by centralising the piece around the hotel's reputation as a way to boost audience interest as a product of film in the media.



Memorial For The Canadian Mental Health Victim Elisa Lam.

How social media has helped to uplift black voices in 2020.

By Ariana Whiteford.

Performative activism is a prevalent problem online however condescension over resources and routes of learning about social injustice is an unnecessary form of gatekeeping 'wokeness'. Social media played a special role in the emergence of the Black Lives Matter and the #MeToo movement, yet the use of social media to inform is critiqued.

Police brutality and the overall oppressive manner in which black individuals are treated has been an issue that entered conversations worldwide. Discourse on the subject has entered and left mass media headlines for decades but in 2020 Black Lives Matter, or BLM, stuck in the social conscience with 'Black Lives Matter' ranking as one of the most popular searches globally. It would be misguided to claim that social media platforms didn't undoubtedly aid in this.

Black Lives Matter has been a prominent movement since 2013 when the hashtag trended for the first time, after the untimely deaths of Trayvon Martin and George Zimmerman. This brought the mistreatment of black individuals by police officers to the public eye. In 2020, it was a video of the death of George Floyd at the hands of Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin going viral on Twitter that stoked the flames of the movement. Other deaths including Breonna Taylor continued to enrage the masses while punishments were not dealt to the perpetrating officers. Also, media coverage was met with backlash and many remained complicit as the discourse of such a loaded topic created unease.

But without discourse there is no progress. When discussing matters of race and encounters with racism the best way to learn is to listen to black people. It may sound simple, but it is often overlooked. Black voices have repeatedly been silenced and censored whether it be in music, politics, literature or in everyday scenarios. In literature in particular, critiques of unfair systems and racial injustice have been brought to the forefront of reader's minds. Poets such as Claude McKay and Langston Hughes belonged to the Harlem Renaissance which celebrated African American art. Through literature and other art forms black voices, ideas and protests were heard. Harlem has become an oasis for black artists as other writers such as Alice Walker have written about its significance. In *The Colour Purple*, the character Nettie explains her love for New York as black people 'own a whole section of it, called Harlem'.

It was through literature that I learned the cultural significance of Harlem, however it was through an Instagram infographic that I was educated on the gentrification of Harlem and the subsequent problem this poses to black communities living there. Instagram activism, or social media activism, has been called annoying and performative but, black squares aside, a well written infographic can go a long way. In an age where reluctant readers are rife, quick and colourful slide shows posted on stories are a quick way to share and spread awareness. Any attention that can be drawn to issues of racism that have previously been ignored or deemed uncomfortable to discuss now take center stage and encourage people to go beyond the infographic to study the routes of medical racism or the troubled routes of slurs for example.

BLM

Online activists such as rapper Fatimah Nyeema Warner, known professionally as Noname, continue to engage in this discourse on social media and by recommending books through her online book group that further education on black experiences. As long as we all continue to progress our learning and continue to recognise our privileges, we can better address our own biases. Black voices being heard disrupts the eggshell white echo chamber that surrounds our society, whether this is done through an Instagram post or novel, common ground is found in the content of the words, not the form.

Film Fanatic to Bookworm

By Carrie Sheldrake

A look into how you can develop from an experienced film buff to avid book reader

This article focuses on the difficulty that new readers, or unexperienced readers, have with kickstarting their journey into discovering literature that they can enjoy. My advice here, is to stick with what you know until you are ready for something else. By reading the book adaptations of your favourite films, you already know that you love the storyline and the characters, and it will be easier to follow.



<https://manybooks.net/articles/5-books-that-were-featured-in-movies>
'5 Books That Were Featured in Movies'

If you are an avid bookworm, you will understand the struggle of watching your favourite books be transformed into films, sitting nervously in front of the screen to see whether it lives up to your expectations. Although most of the time these films probably include everything you could have wished for, a lot of literature fans will tell you that they often miss out key details which are included in the book. Therefore, if you consider yourself a 'reluctant reader,' why not try reading the book of your favourite film? This way, you will discover even more information and about your favourite plots, get to learn more about your favourite characters, and it may finally encourage you to open up the world of literature in all its greatness.

Depending on which genre of movie you tend to steer towards, many of the classics have been adapted into films, TV series and spin-offs. For example, *Clueless*, directed by Amy Heckerling, was a 1995 teen romance film that is still widely popular today. However, this film was actually an adaptation from Jane Austen's novel *Emma*, which has a similar light-hearted comedy to it, and is an easy read for those who struggle with the language of the classics. If you like a dystopian or a bit of action, *The Hunger Games* and the TV series of *The Handmaid's Tale* have both been adapted from novels. Although a literature-lover may argue that *The Hunger Games* is not the most advanced of the dystopian tales – as opposed to, for example, *1984* and *Brave New World* – it is an interesting read and a good start for a 'reluctant reader' who loves the films. It may surprise you that even some of the highest acclaimed horror films have been adapted from best-selling novels. For example, Stephen King's *The Shining* and *IT* are said to be two of the scariest books of all time and will most certainly give you the creeps just as much as the movies.

Some of my best experiences with reading the novel after loving the film, have been Andre Aciman's *Call Me By Your Name*, which was adapted by Luca Guadagnino in 2017. This was a different sort of read for me, as it was written in first person through the perspective of a young boy, yet most novels I read are from the narrative of a woman in a heterosexual relationship. The innocence and beauty of the film are just as prominent in the novel and will definitely make any fan of this film experience the same joy, emotion and heartbreak. Sticking with the theme of love, *Lolita*, written by Vladimir Nabokov, is a twisted love story (if you'd even call it that), that was adapted from a dark but witty novel. Although a slightly more challenging read for a beginner, the novel delves into the mind of Professor Humbert, and his ability to manipulate his reader through his intelligent and artistic language. Everyone's favourite romance – *The Notebook* – was also adapted into a movie, from a novel by Nicholas Sparks. A beautiful story as well as film, this tear-jerker is ideal for early readers, who long to experience true love.

Everyone's favourite romance – The Notebook – was also adapted into a movie, from a novel by Nicholas Sparks. A beautiful story as well as film, this tear-jerker is ideal for early readers, who long to experience true love.

A rather stereotypical example, but definitely one that shouldn't go forgotten, is the Harry Potter series written by JK Rowling. As a franchise which generated near a billion dollars per film, it is easy enough to forget where the magic first came from. As spectacular as they are, they aren't able to capture every little detail of the seven books, and any Harry Potter fan should definitely target this series if they are trying to enjoy reading more. The detail of the novels does not even compare to the films, and as you embark on the journey of discovering the 'Wizarding World' with Harry, you feel a connection to him far greater than you could have realised.

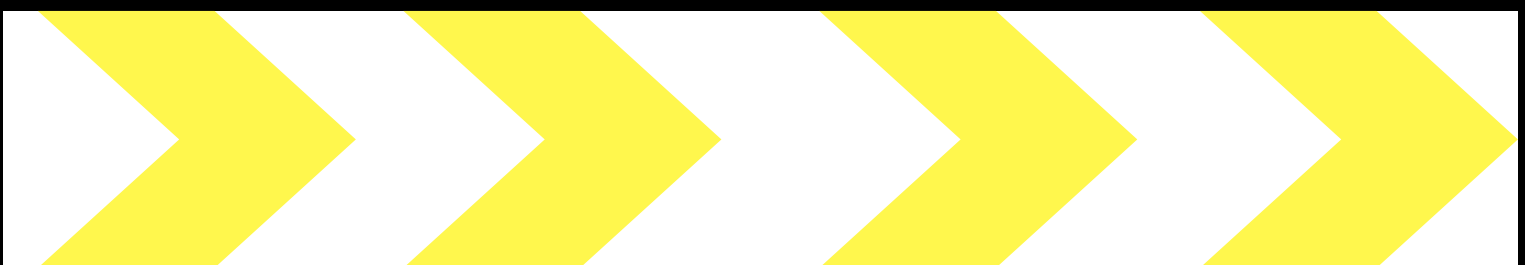


https://harrypotter.fandom.com/wiki/Harry_Potter_and_the_Deathly_Hallows
Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows



<https://search.creativecommons.org/search?q=coraline989>
Coraline

Another of my personal favourites, a little more of an obscure novel, is Coraline, written by Neil Gaiman in 2002. Simultaneously innocent and complex, it was awarded the 2003 Hugo Award for Best Novella, the 2003 Nebula Award for Best Novella, and the 2002 Bram Stoker Award for Best Work for Young Readers. Through the twisted plot and ominous suspense throughout, Gaiman is able to create a cautionary tale for younger readers, taking a turn on the common phrase of 'be careful what you wish for.' These are only a few examples of some of the best books/films that can spark an interest in literature. There are many, many more and talking to others about their personal favourites is probably the best place to find them out. You'll be a bookworm before you know it!





CREATIVE CORNER

Synaesthesia

By Daud Xiddig

On March 23rd, our nation's Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, ordered the country to stay at home. In lockdown, weariness began to set in. My senses morphed into each and I felt numb to the concept of time. The following poem aims to capture this blurriness.

I wake to see the loud ticking of my broken watch,
The calendar sinks slowly into the sand,
The clock stands up and leaves the room,
I have not seen him since,

I listen closely and hear Cumin and Cayenne,
Coconut and Cajun,
I witness the symphony in the kitchen,
My mother is leading her orchestra,

Gently, I touch the news blared over the radio,
1000 new cases carefully counted,
Protests erupting in front of 10 Downing Street,

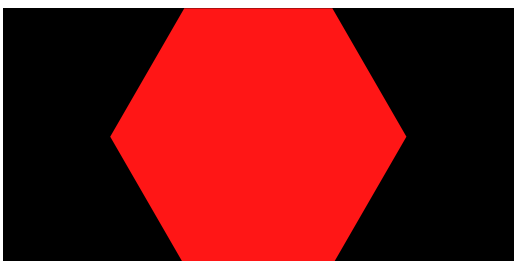
I taste the burning of coal colliding with the fumes of gas,
The rumbling stomachs and the scorching heat,
The BBQ consists of 'The smell of freshly cut grass' and 'Lemonade',

I immediately smell red and yellow and blue,
Adults meticulously colour in their books,
Whilst their babies adjust their glasses, holding 'The Times',

I feel the whispers tumbling out of my house,
Flowing through the empty streets,
Walking into the shops,
Sitting on a watchtower, overlooking the abandoned cities,

I hope that the past never meets the future,
I hope the two never exchange numbers,
I pray they never pick up on each other's bad habits,
I hope that in her palm, the future holds nothing this past year held,

When will my senses calibrate.
When will normalcy seep back into my life.
When will the colour lift from the page and paint the dull world.
When will Black Lives Trend become Black Lives Matter.
When will solitary confinements turn back into hospitals.
When will our clasped mouths open and scream.
"Where can I exchange this year, it doesn't fit me anymore?"



State of EmerGenZ

By Daud Xiddig

I have always wanted to write a poem about the world I was raised in, but it feels like that world is constantly changing. Writing a poem on the state of the world is like climbing a mountain made of sand. Therefore, in this poem, I have opted to capture the zeitgeist of my generation.

I built my ideals on standards that were sold to me in
tiny kits,
I was a giant in a playground, so awkward and
disproportionate.
Bricks guarded my heart until it turned black, brittle,
and blue,
Manuals of how to walk, how to laugh, how to chew.

Guides to masculinity were crushed and chased
down with water,
Students scrambled over straws and mine always
came out shorter.
I sat in classrooms and saw them follow paths
different to mine,
I know those twisted and dark trails were meant for
me and my kind.

My tailor sewed me a suit one size too small,
A unique fit that was not intended for all.
Wanted me to remain aware that it was there,
I often found myself needing to gasp for air.

Morning strolls turned into mourning scrolls,
Each post poured a new death in the mould,
I ate Instagram for breakfast, Twitter for dinner,
Looked in the mirror- I'm getting bigger and thinner,
I saw a post informing me that I shouldn't see colour
and
I looked down at my disappearing hand.

I hold up the mirror and light always finds me,
I look in my Quran and God always guides me.
My skin is soaked in dahab* and milic*, I wear it
proudly,
My friend, the pen, clears his throat and declares it
for me loudly.

Somali Translations:

**dahab- gold*

**milic- sunlight*

If People Were Colours

By Daisy Ward

'If People Were Colours' explores the concept that our relationship with nature is an unequal one. It is an instructional poem, written in the hope that those who read it might look at their own relationship with Mother Earth, and see if there is any way they could change their behaviour and by doing so treat her more like a friend.

If people were colours what would you be?
Would you be warm or cool in tone?
Would you reflect the forest or the sea?
Would you be of blood or of bone?
I know what colour is the colour for me,
It is the colour of every tree.

Do I mean khaki, or do I mean jade?
Maybe I mean chartreuse or lime?
Whatever I mean my colour won't fade.
For green is the shade of time,
It's the colour of the Birch and the Elm
It's a colour that does not overwhelm.

Green is what has got me through the year.
The isolation, the distance
The illness, the fear.
Nature is what has got me through this grey existence,
And I owe a lot to my friend Mother Earth.
Though she is a friend I'm not sure I deserve.

Before I did some things that make me blush,
I used to have showers that would last for hours,
I used to order online in such a rush,
I used to ride my bike over flowers.
I was a fool back then
It's not a mistake I will make again.

Society tricks us into wanting more than we need,
Encourages us to make mistake after mistake,
If we don't act soon Mother Earth will die from our greed,
And we cannot fix Her after she breaks.
We need Her.
Without Her we could not breathe.
And air is one of the only things
We **truly** need.



The New Normal

By Isobel McElligott

For this poem my aim was to make light of the difficulty everyone is facing in lockdown and to show to people that everyone is feeling the same. Despite the dark nature of the poem, the beginning is meant to act as a reminder for life before lockdown, and what will soon come back to us.

Restless nights leave me drained
Lulling in and out of slumber throughout the day
I wake up to a darkness staring back at me
I go to sleep with the same fate, devoid of sunlight

Feelings of sluggishness,
Days transfixed and faces plastered to screens
Fast food and snacking consuming my days
Blurry vision from watching too much tv

Online classes leaving me confused
Deadlines looming, yet no motivation
Social life disappearing, friends lost
Trying to build connections on zoom

I long for the buzz of a busy crowd,
The bustle of a bar, the people loud
The queasy nervousness before a night out,
Uncontrollable laughter erupting between with friends

Spilt drinks and clumsy behaviour,
Buses filled with happy singing
I wish for the panic of not knowing what to wear
Messy rooms and what to do with my hair

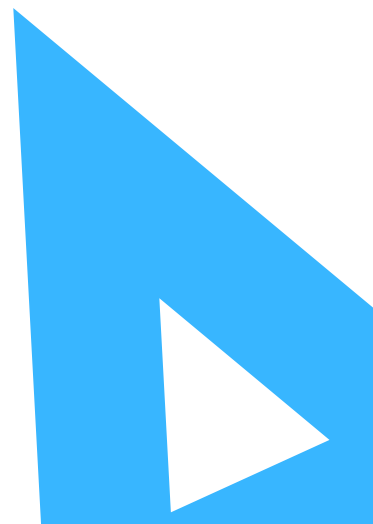
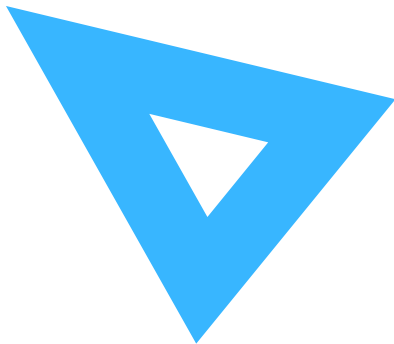
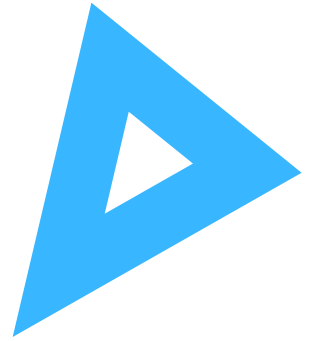
I dream of beaches and sun hats,
Sands stuck in my shoes for weeks on end
Sticky ice cream melting on over my fingers,
Afternoon naps accompanied by the July heat

I wake up to my harsh reality
No laughter, no friends to accompany me
Everyone else feeling miles away
Walks aren't enough to make me feel okay

The light at the end of the tunnel diminishes
Daylight disappearing more and more, day by day
Colder weather and grey skies
As I fantasise about my old life

I ponder over the many relationships lost
Contact diminished over months spent apart
Struggling connections over FaceTime and messages
Whether it be digitally or emotionally

I stand before the mirror, not liking what I see
My face looks gaunt, I no longer look like me
I flick on the tv, filled with bad news
No signs of escape, a lockdown till June



I AM NOT A MAN!

By Iwan Hughes

In the UK, suicide is the single biggest killer in men under 45. Let that sink in. Why is this the case? The façade of what it means to be a man transcends from outdated stereotypes which eliminate the possibility of some men being able to show emotion, and to tell people when they're struggling. This is not right. This needs to be challenged. This needs to change!

I find time to appreciate others, and I cry. I sit alone in my room and ask God why I am plagued with my negative thoughts.

No response, ever.

I am free to act the way I want, without the crucifixion of the World Wide Web. The only tweets I appreciate are those of birds in the tree. Perhaps, on reflection, they're the ones actually laughing at me.

I read and I write. I try to understand the questions that man had yet to fully understand. I am no one special so understanding is never really hard. I am not happy. I am who I am.

That is not your definition of a man.

Homosexuality. Christianity every so slyly rejected that. "Chemical castration for you, sir". I'm sorry Mr Turing. We certainly failed you. The enigma of acceptance is yet to be broken. Fashanu found out that it's all so cruel; I hope you sleep well as you are the real men.


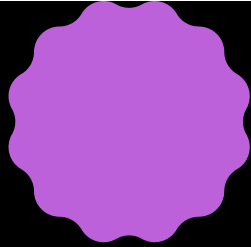
I try to prove to people that there is a fluidity in what they define as masculinity. In their eyes I see their pity. But I won't become the defined man. Cause that obviously wasn't my plan.

To you, and maybe me, I am not a man!



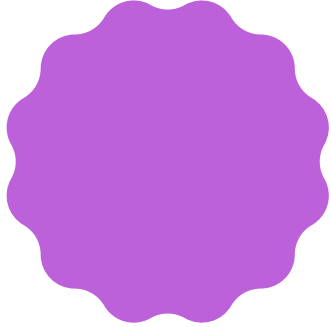
I Can't Wait

By Paige Robson

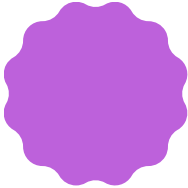


A light-hearted poem, displaying hope and laughs for the future ahead, once we are out of lockdown and all the things, we can't wait for to come or be over.

I can't wait for life to be normal
Being able to meet a mate
And life isn't as awful
All being locked in by a gate




I can't wait for life to go back
Without all this hate and debate
Nobody getting the sack
Life just being great



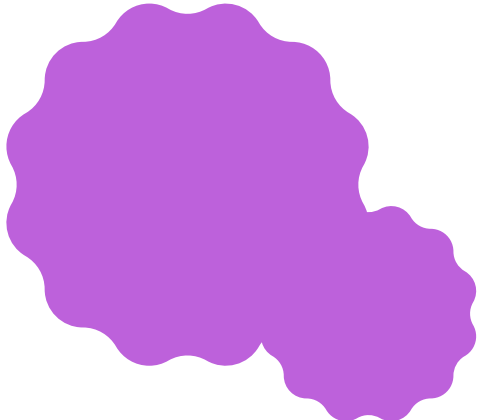
I can't wait for life to be mundane
Coming back from the restaurant regretting what you ate
Living life with no restrain
Always turning up late

I can't wait to not be locked in
Creating the life we want to create
Going out feeling like a sin
Putting on lockdown weight



But

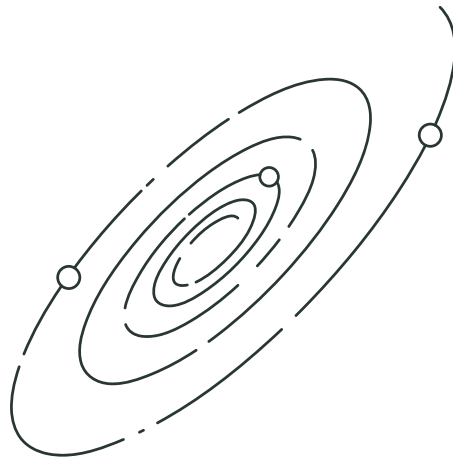
Now there is a date
All in our fate
The date that we can't await
I can't wait
I am filled with elate
I bet you too
Can't wait



AT WAR WITH A SATELLITE

By Iwan Hughes

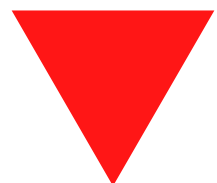
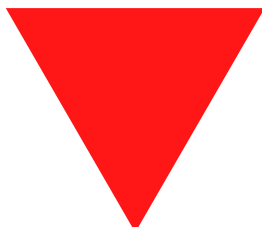
I am guilty to admit that my iPhone alerts me weekly that my screen time averages around six hours per day. That is six hours a day where I am taking in visual media, most of which is nonsensical. Scientifically, this most common of addictions can be traced to the released of dopamine whenever a person is on their phone. It is incredibly pleasurable, but arguably incredibly self-limiting. Neil Postman argues in his book 'Amusing Ourselves to Death' that as a society we are becoming obsessed with information that has no effect on our lives; he defines this as the 'Information Action Ratio'. So, next time you are in the park with your friends, stay off Instagram and appreciate the company and surroundings nearby. The last bit was also a note to myself.



I wake up and take a look at my phone. I make a judgement on some bloke I don't even know. I compare myself to him. Do my eyes make me more attractive? Is my waist even that thin? I sit and cry. My mum walks in and starts asking me why? I think I'm asking quite a lot. Cause can I really love my screen so much?

So discrete is this punishment. Self-inflicted pain that seems to wash away the days. I look myself up and there I am. Are my ears too big? Why do I often frown? I try to laugh, but it doesn't last. My head is a mess and I'm starting to crack. I delete, my recent tweet. My opinion was too strong. I took advantage of free speech.

I am asleep. I am awoken by the bleep. My friends sent me the 'most amazing thing'. But when I look, I'm incredibly underwhelmed. It was only a celebrity scandal, and one I was unlikely to ever meet. I get up and out of bed. I've been on my screen too long and I want to do something else. But it's not long, before I'm called, and ready to return with no plans to leave anymore.



TO WALK ALONE AS A WOMAN

By Alycia McNamara

A poem written in light of recent events surrounding the tragic death of Sarah Everard resulting in the 'Reclaim The Streets' movement. The poem features the names of some of the many women who have been murdered by men in the past year.

Walking alone at night,
Filled with fright
Scared, afraid, alone
Just desperate to get home.

Checking. Is anyone behind?
Constantly on my mind.

The night is dark,
We're told don't cut through the park.

A personal alarm -
Meant to keep us calm
Would it really save my life?
What if he was aggressive or even had a
knife?

Don't walk late at night
Make sure you walk by the light.
Safe is how we would like to feel
On our way back from the pub, a club, a
meal.

Text me when you're home?

Don't walk on your own.

Call me if you need,

That's what we've always agreed.

But all this has got to change.

Don't you think that it's strange

That it is like this anyway?

Women are finally having their say.

One day we will walk alone,

Safely, happily to our home.

Not checking, unafraid,

**Not needing anyone to come to our
aid.**

So, we will Reclaim The Streets

For Sarah, Tracy, Mary, Carol,

Lauren, Angela, Suzanne, Helen,

Maria, Louise, Julie, Nicole...

For Sarah.

REMAKING WEST SIDE STORY: ARE WE RUNNING OUT OF IDEAS FOR NEW FILMS?

By Lucy Barry-Shaw

WHEN WEST SIDE STORY WAS RELEASED ON FILM IN 1961, CRITICS RAVED ABOUT ITS MUSICAL GENIUS AND EVEN NOW IT IS DEEMED TO BE CULTURALLY SIGNIFICANT BY THE UNITED STATES LIBRARY OF CONGRESS. SO WHY NOW, 60 YEARS SINCE ITS INITIAL RELEASE, HAS IT BEEN CHOSEN TO BE REMADE?

'If it ain't broke, don't fix it' often springs to my mind whenever I hear about the potential remake of a classic film, and I begin to cringe before they even begin production. Quite often I'm right to think and feel this way, as the remake just doesn't capture the same magical feeling that the original did. Sometimes the actors end up trying too hard to act like the original actor did instead of creating their own interpretation of the character. Other times, the storylines and jokes appear outdated and old-fashioned, like they should've been left to die off in peace rather than having this sudden resurrection.

But sometimes my gut feeling is wrong, and this is certainly one of the times I hope for it to be. West Side Story is considered a timeless classic and is one of my personal favourite musical movies, so why shouldn't it be remade and updated?

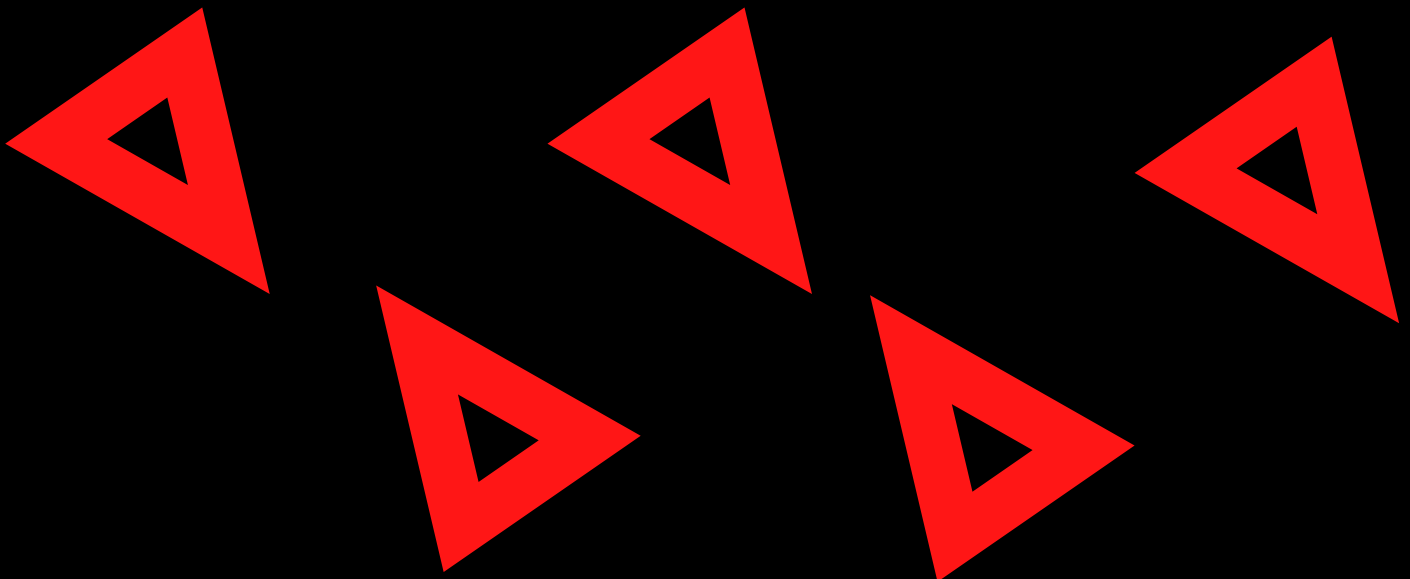
Let's be honest, the original film certainly lacked with regards to a representative cast. In a film confronting racial issues in America, they continued to cast Caucasian American actors in the majority of the roles... Anybody else see the issue with this?

Well, director Steven Spielberg certainly did and has set about casting actors that are much more representative of the characters. Although, this does begin to raise the issue of whether an actor has to be exactly like their character or not. While I firmly believe in 'colour-blind casting' (where the role goes to the actor with the best talent, not necessarily the best looks), I feel that in films where the race of the character is so crucial for the storyline, it's important to visually show a representation of this, rather than just imply it symbolically. This feels especially prevalent in modern-day society where people are being encouraged to speak out more on issues of racism and everyone should be taking action against it. The more recent 'Black Lives Matter' movement, which gained massive momentum in May 2020 following the death of George Floyd, is one highlight of why these issues are so important and should not be ignored. So, a remake of a much-loved family film, correcting the problems created in the original, helps raise expectations of what the film will be like.





However, I am worried by the fact that Spielberg has decided to stick with the original setting of 1950s America. This leaves me concerned that, rather than create their own interpretation of such a heart-breaking story, they are simply going to copy the original film, word-for-word. Racism is still a global issue, so why not update the setting of the film to portray this? Quite often, racism is ignored by the people who have never experienced it because it isn't happening directly to them or it feels like a thing of the past. These people who are oblivious to their racial privilege and who have never received hatred due to the colour of their skin appear to refuse to accept the fact that unfortunately, these outdated attitudes are surviving. Their refusal to speak out against it is helping that. A film addressing how racism is being allowed to survive by these ignorant and privileged people would help show these people that, yes, while we may have advanced as a society in some ways, we still have so far left to go. It calls out their unenlightened excuses and confronts them with the fact that there is never a reason or excuse to allow this to continue.



Leaving Bad Habits Locked Down as Our Road Map to Recovery Becomes 'Clear'.

By Ella Walsh



Boris Johnson recently told a Downing Street news conference that the coming months would be 'seasons of hope, looking and feeling incomparably better for us all'. But just how difficult is it going to be to return to a 'normal' routine as workplaces and universities start reopening?

The succession of three national lockdowns, particularly over the winter months, has had unsettling long-term effects on students. Students are reported to be drinking more, sleeping in, and procrastinating about their work; they are also increasingly anxious about their futures. Second year NTU student Charlotte discussed some of these behaviours in an interview. "I'm sleeping in all the time, because there's nowhere that I have to be", she said, "which is bad because I don't get a lot of stuff done, and it makes me less productive". This is understandable, yet could it be the case that 'because there's nowhere that I have to be' is being used so frequently as an excuse, students have developed a set of bad habits during lockdown? Now that the government's roadmap to recovery has been revealed, perhaps it is time to eliminate these negative habits and focus on new methods of doing things that will enable students to achieve more post lockdown.

Atomic Habits by James Clear encourages and explains ways to make 'good habits inevitable and bad habits impossible.' He highlights that even completing small tasks throughout the day can help to release dopamine: the chemical that allows people to feel rewarded. Having a daily routine of manageable tasks at university could therefore be crucial in maintaining a positive outlook.

The book features easy to read chapters on a range of interesting subjects such as self-control as well as fixing and controlling bad habits. Small changes to everyday life, what he calls being '1 percent better per day', can have a dramatic and lasting effect over a longer period. While most people feel overwhelmed at the thought of drastically changing their waking alarm to hours earlier, the book suggests tricks and tips on how to improve gradually, leading to a better chance of the good habit sticking.

One trick is to 'Habit Track'. Clear states that writing down habits 'provides visual proof that you are casting votes for the type of person you wish to become.' Students that struggle with a routine should begin writing down the time they physically get out of bed each morning. This gives immediate gratification which sparks the urge to improve and stick to the new habit.

Procrastination can be a problem for important tasks. So, when starting a new habit, it should take less than two minutes to do. The example given is 'study for class' becomes 'open my notes'. This 'gateway' habit then leads us down a productive path - in this case: doing work. Once a good habit is initiated, even if only for two minutes, it is much easier to maintain. Clear says that by doing this 'You are taking the smallest action that confirms the type of person you want to be, making it satisfying'.

As a student I found that this book was particularly motivating for me during the lockdown months. I tried and tested a few of his ideas, one being 'making a cue invisible'. I read that 'One of the most practical ways to eliminate a bad habit is to reduce exposure to the cue that causes it'. Focusing on this made me more aware of the cues around my house that were triggering bad habits, enabling me to take action by removing them.

What Have Women Achieved Throughout The Pandemic?

By Alycia McNamara

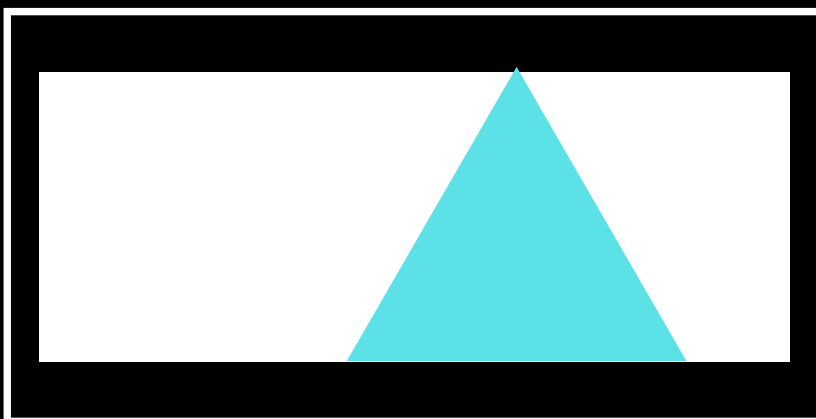
During the pandemic, women have been making the most of the time to achieve and succeed.

Have you taken to the internet to document your lockdown journey? Many women have virtually documented their journey through the pandemic.

Many fitness accounts have been created on social media where women share their health and wellbeing suggestions online. Other women have started their own female led small businesses which have blossomed over the pandemic, and as we emerge many of these businesses are able to be a singular source of income for these women. One entrepreneur is Lucie Halley – Trotter who has launched her own sustainable fashion brand and who has recently caught the attention of the media for her innovation. Many fabulous female authors have published books which have risen to success over the last year. Finally, online female communities have grown with women supporting women in everything from advice on contraception to university.



'Gals Who Graduate' (established in 2019) is an example of this online female community. The Facebook group, which was founded by University of Reading graduate, Bronte King and has now gained an impressive 36,500 members. The group focuses on helping students and graduates navigate university and post graduate life and consists of women including students, graduates, and young professionals. Not only this but, on the literary scene, the 2017 novel 'Why I Am No Longer Talking To White People About Race' by Reni Eddo-Lodge has recently become a must read in light of the Black Lives Matter movement and has risen to undoubtable success. Similarly, Florence Given's book 'Women Don't Owe You Pretty' (2020) quickly gained a reputation for its focus on female empowerment. These books are seen as being part of a new movement of literature titled 'Lockdown Literature' which many are referring to as books written or popularised throughout the pandemic.



Significantly, female led countries have been shown to have lower COVID-19 infection and death rates. The Prime Minister of New Zealand, Jacinda Ardern has gained a reputation for the successful handling of the pandemic with the current total death toll in New Zealand standing at 26 –considerably lower than many other nations. Other women have aimed to achieve small successes each day. Amongst the everyday female population, many have enjoyed taking their daily walk, some have challenged themselves to complete 'Couch to 5K' while others have begun to practice manifestation through completing gratitude journals and goal planning. All these activities prioritise putting mental health and wellbeing first.

These are just a few of the positive outcomes that have resulted from the pandemic, female successes are being celebrated by women and for many the pandemic has been their time to shine!

IT'S YOUR ISSUE, NO, IT'S YOUR ISSUE, NO IT'S OUR ISSUE.

BY MARTINE ORCIUOLI

Nearly a year on, we look at how the catalyst for social justice, has triggered the little to big changes in the University environment.

8 minutes and 46 seconds. The walk from Nottingham Trent Student union to Rock city takes 7 minutes. Yet in the midst of the pandemic, 8 minutes and 46 seconds was all it took to change the face of social justice. On may 25th 2020 officer David Chauvin, murdered George Floyd by cause of asphyxiation, due to suspicions of a counterfeit bill which were found to be false, this acted as a catalyst that forced world wide recognition of the racial injustice within the system, and worldwide protests in the face of police bru. However, George Floyd is not the only name that needs to be remembered, the Black lives matter movement is built, on the blood of countless black men and women who have been victims of police brutality.

Yet why do we feel so connected, to something that happened thousands of miles away? It is human nature, and we recognise that this is an issue that affects us. If we're not talking about it, you are part of the problem, as Desmond Tutu once said 'if you are neutral in situations of injustice you have chosen the side of the oppressor', this means that even if we are not directly affected, we have a duty to listen and learn from those who are. Black lives matter has always fought the corner of justice, from the YouGov website we learn that 84% of all BAME adults in the UK today have experienced racism.



Picture by Tayyib Mahmood

How can we do our bit as a University? The curriculum had been decolonised, and a range of books and texts from BAME authors has been added, along side with modules that focus on Black writing in the UK. NTU does have a zero-tolerance policy to racism, with Vice chancellor Edward Peck launching the Race Equality Action Plan, which has been put into place to support BAME students, and educate the others. The most important part of this is that the conversation of race, has been started, while these things may seem trivial and 'little, they are implementing a seed of growth.

REVIVING THE LITERARY REALM FOR RELUCTANT READERS

By Tom Maguire



Ever Since the outbreak of COVID-19 forced the nation into lockdown, staying at home and being left to occupy our leisure time with indoor pursuits has evidently shown the well of entertainment can soon run dry. So if you find yourself having exhausted the offerings of Netflix and the thought of baking another homemade loaf of sourdough bread leaves you, tempted to stick your head into the oven alongside the doughy bloomer, why not reach for a book, it might not be as painstaking as you may first imagine.

From reevaluating the role of literature to relating film, television and music to books, NTU English Literature student Tom Maguire offers some useful guidance to rouse reluctant readers.

Reluctant readers, particularly those of a younger age category, are unfortunately a common breed. Give many an iPad and they will spend countless hours glued to the screen, immersed in a virtual realm. Seat them in front of a television and they will enter a trance-like state, captivated by the narrative being played out on the flickering screen, yet place a book in front of them and attention will quickly evaporate like bathwater down a plughole. This reluctance to become encapsulated by the written word is not only a pity but has further implications regarding their education. Research has found that children who read for pleasure perform better in school. So how can these children, who demonstrate an interest and engagement with story in a variety of visual media be drawn into an appreciation and willingness to the written word? Below are five areas which could help pave the way for readers of all ages to make a transition from reluctant to willing.

Read for Pleasure

It's vital for a reluctant reader to firstly find enjoyment and fun in their reading. At the initial stage of reintroducing books to children, and those of an older age, selecting a book that is both interesting and accessible should take priority over everything else. Fun, fast paced and lighthearted stories are more likely to engage a reluctant reader's imagination than ones which are slow-burning, heavy on description and light on action.

Recommending reading :

Children aged 5+

Captain Cat and the Treasure Map
- Lucy Diamond

Teenage & Adult

The No. 1 Ladies Detective Agency
- Alexander McCall Smith



Twin a book with a favourite film or tv show

A person who can apply focus to a two hour film or hour long tv programme can demonstrate a pretty reasonable attention span. Why is it then this cannot be replicated when it comes to books? They may feel like the world of books are alien and out of touch with their interests. Selecting a book or series of books that have formed the basis for a film or tv show is a useful way of establishing an immediate connection between the reader and recognised characters and worlds.

Recommended reading :

Children aged 5+

Horrid Henry
- Francesca Simon

Teenager & Adult

Forrest Gump
- Winston Groom



Choose the right book

Selecting the right book is vital for interest, engagement and ultimately reading pleasure. Experiment with different types of books. Beginning with shorter stories or even graphic novels and comics can be a useful way in which to ease a reluctant reader into books. Shorter stories, by their very nature provide a reader with quicker narrative resolution and a faster sense of gratification. Graphic novels and comics which provide a balance of written word and visual storytelling add an extra element of sensory engagement.

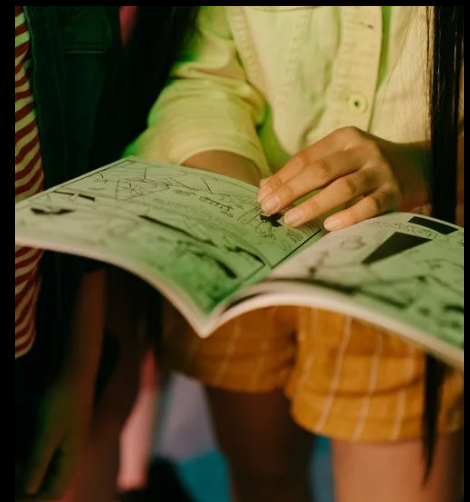
Recommended reading :

Children aged 5+

Diary of a Wimpy Kid
- Jeff Kinney

Teenager & Adult

Persepolis
Marjane Saprati



Draw attention to parallels between Music and Poetry

Providing a reluctant reader, with an interest in music, with a song or lyric book from a favourite band or artist can be a useful segway into an engagement with poetry. Highlighting the similarities between lyric and poem could prove fruitful in sparking an engagement and enthusiasm with poetic composition.

Recommended reading :

Children aged 5+

Songs and verse
- Roald Dahl

Teenager & Adult

Songs and Poems
- Leonard Cohen



Organise a book club

Creating a book club for reluctant readers provides an opportunity to experiment with a wide range of books that can be read simultaneously among peers. Meeting up once a week to discuss books extends the solitary activity of reading to a wider social context and can be combined with other activities such as artwork and role play to develop and enhance the reading experience.



'Meeting up once a week to discuss books extends the solitary activity of reading to a wider social context.'

BRIDGERTON IS THE REGENCY FANTASY WE DID NOT KNOW WE NEEDED

By Ella Ostrowski

An insight into the new popular period drama -Spoilers ahead



It is not surprising that there has been an increased interest in watching shows on Netflix whilst the worldwide pandemic has meant remaining at home. Bridgerton premiered on Netflix in December 2020 and was announced by Netflix that it had become their "biggest series ever" with 82 million households around the world tuning into it in its first 28 days online.

The courting regulations displayed in the series may surprise viewers who are used to modern dating which has evolved to grant absolute choice in who you date. Dating apps enable this as users can connect with a variety of people at the swipe of a screen which would not have been socially acceptable or possible in the Regency-era.

Much of the entertainment provided in the series comes from the clear competition to acquire a suitable partner in the courting season. Amidst this tale of Regency, set in 1813 London, rivalry between the Bridgerton family and the Featherington family is at its heart. Daphne and the three Featherington daughters all are trying to find a husband. The main plot is derived from Daphne and The Duke's fake relationship which aims to ensure another suitor for Daphne and the Duke some peace from his nagging Aunt.

'The courting regulations displayed in the series may surprise viewers who are used to modern dating which has evolved to grant absolute choice in who you date.'

Despite the emphasis on competing in the series providing entertaining scenes, it further brings to light the contextual pressure on women to secure a man. Not only was this to aid themselves to gain financial stability, but it is also to help their families and to start a family of their own. Often marriages in the Regency period worked like contracts, as we see when Daphne is forced to consider marrying the rather unattractive, Lord Berbrooke, to stop him from causing her and her family social ruin.

Jane Austen's 1811 novel *Sense and Sensibility* relates closely to the series where the pressure on women and men to marry in the 19th Century is also a prominent theme. Austen's novel includes Edward Ferrars being warned by his mother, Mrs Ferrars to not be "drawn in" by "any young woman". Much like how the charming eldest child, Anthony Bridgerton, in the Netflix show is advised to cut off relations with the opera singer, Siena Rosso, to find a more suitable wife of his class.

Additionally, Austen's novel explores similar ideas around the representation of women as competitors which is provoked by the pressure on them to marry. The plot involves Marianne whose love interest, Willoughby marries a rich woman named Miss Grey who has a settlement of £50,000. He points out how his "affections for Marianne were not sufficient enough to outweigh the dread of poverty", demonstrating how he must prioritise financial stability in marriage over love as marrying a good suitor was important in the period. This contrasts to the overtly passionate Marianne who states, "money can only give happiness where there is nothing else to give", where she is arguing how money is not everything.

Financial issues affecting marriage as seen in Austen's novel is also addressed in episode four of *Bridgerton* where the Featherington family struggle financially. Their father's reckless gambling addiction leads to his own death and is discovered by Lady Featherington who upon finding documents realises that her husband has driven the entire family into debt and lost their daughters' dowries. This cliché-ridden tale leaves many story lines open ended leaving you wanting more and awaiting the second season. You are left questioning what will happen to the financially struggling Featherington family. As well as whether the single bachelor, Anthony Bridgerton, will ever be able to settle down?



'Jane Austen's 1811 novel *Sense and Sensibility* relates closely to the series where the pressure on women and men to marry in the 19th Century is also a prominent theme.'

LITTLE THINGS THAT HAVE A BIG IMPACT

By Sara Preka

Things have been super tough lately, so In this article I am here to remind you of different ways to be able to look after yourself during this pandemic and after, keep calm and remind you that you are not alone!

Every day seems to be the same, and for many of us it's been very difficult to maintain motivation when you haven't had anything to look forward too. Mental illness is not something to be taking lightly, and for many of us that are struggling it can feel like a never-ending loop. Here are a couple things that may help you change your outlook on life at the moment and to try work with what we have got (with a minor literary twist).

Make Your Bed

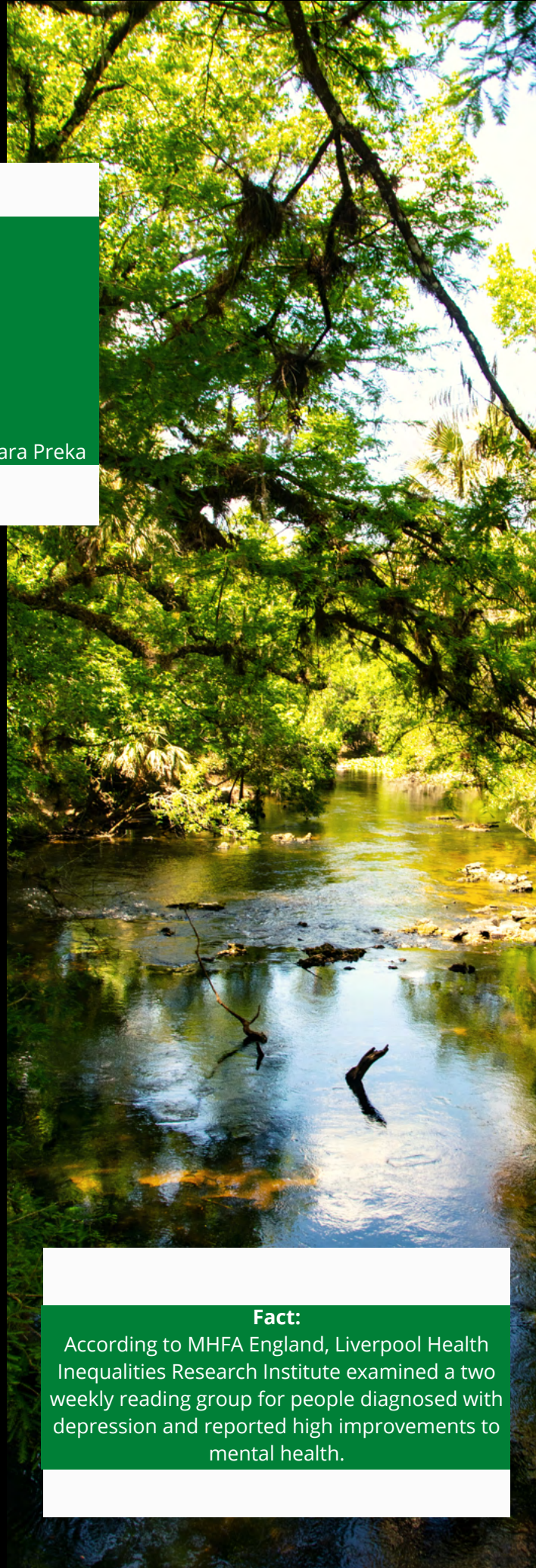
Now I know this sounds stupid, but once you've made your bed you have completed the first task of the day and sets up a positive attitude towards achieving productivity. This will then lead you to want to keep successfully completing more little tasks and before you know it you will have a minor spark of motivation to achieve a little bit more with your day.

Do a SMALL Amount of Exercise

Now hear me out, I am not a workout maniac but doing one small minor workout or even some yoga can calm the mind. According to the NHS website

Fact:

According to MHFA England, Liverpool Health Inequalities Research Institute examined a two weekly reading group for people diagnosed with depression and reported high improvements to mental health.



exercise can lower depression by 30% (even if you do start hyperventilating after). Plus if you're like me up until 5am every night, then doing a small workout will calm your mind and allow you to sleep earlier for a little longer.

Read A Book

The typical question people ask, why read a book when you can watch a movie. The answer is, it just isn't the same as a book, but this is one of my most highly recommended. Reading a book on a topic you're interested about, allowing the rest of the world to fade and let your imagination run wild, escaping reality. When you read a book, you notice every detail and in a way your senses are even heightened, and your knowledge and understanding will expand. Researchers at the University of Sussex have demonstrated that reading can reduce stress by 68%! So just give it a chance.

Write Down Your Feelings

People always roll their eyes at this one but writing down how your feeling can really help you tackle it. Once you understand how you're feeling, you are more likely to be able to know the first step on how

to move forward. Give yourself hope that these feelings can change. If you're an anxious person, like myself, try to remember not everything can be controlled. But, you can take control of your routine and your life.

Challenge Yourself

Now this can be subject to the person, but anything is possible. Whether it's setting up a new business or completing a puzzle. Challenge yourself to something you have never done before, expand your skill set and learn something new. Learn how to cook, learn a new language for your next holiday or even learn a new instrument. Whatever it is, it will make you feel good and can be something you can show off. Trust me, nothing feels better than completing an 1000-piece puzzle. Remember you can think, but will you actually do?

These are just a few simple tips to remind you to look after your mind and soul. But to also remind you that you are not alone. Remember to communicate your feelings because everyone is in the same position, feeling alone with lack of motivation. If you're reading this than this if your sign that you are capable of doing anything and that YOU are in control.

Here are some mental health helplines in-case you need extra support;

- **Shout - Text 85258 for free for any mental health support.**
- **Samaritans - Call 116 123 for free 24/7 free when feeling distress or despair.**
- **CALM - 0800 58 58 58, providing a mental health helpline.**



Literature in the Limelight: One symbol *Catching Fire* across South-East Asia

By Yasmin Turner

The Hunger games' three-finger salute is being increasingly adopted across more South-East Asian countries to promote a shared pursuit of liberal democracy. I speak to Karen and Katy from Taiwan who discuss the recent events in Myanmar and the possibility of their own country faced with losing independence and democracy.

Remember the three-finger salute in Brownies, Guides, or Scouts? Or recognise it from *The Hunger Games* novels and movies?

Well, this symbol has become the prominent gesture for unity and resistance against authoritarian rule, shared throughout popular media. The latest use is found in Myanmar by nurses, Buddhist monks, students and other protesters.

On February 1, the military took control of Myanmar and detained the recently elected pro-democracy leader, Aung San Suu Kyi. Protesters took to the streets but have been confronted by police and military with live ammunition, tear gas and rubber bullets.

In response to these steps taken by the military, Karen, a nurse originally from Taiwan expresses, "Humans have the right to protest. Their job (the military's) is to protect citizens, not against them."

The recent events have caused our Prime Minister to release a statement on Twitter. This followed the comment of the UN special envoy for Myanmar, Christine Schranger Burgener, who confirmed: "the bloodiest day" occurred on February 3 when 38 people were killed.

Amidst the violence and imposed restrictions such as curfews, internet blackouts and the ban of Facebook in Myanmar, the three-finger gesture has risen once again. Borrowed from Suzanne Collins' literary works and film franchise *The Hunger Games*, the three-finger salute became popularized after Thailand's military seized power in 2014, at the same time the third *Hunger Games* film was released in cinemas. In the dystopian franchise, the salute is used as a courageous symbol of support against the Capitol, a totalitarian state that brutally represses the nation of fictional Panem.

Francis Lawrence, the director of three of the four *Hunger Games* films, told *The Sydney Morning Herald*: "It is sort of thrilling, that something that happens in the movie can become a symbol for people, for freedom or protest." Students were found buying tickets to the film and handing them out to the public as a form of protest. Film viewings were subsequently cancelled, and the salute banned.

Following the first use in Thailand's protests, the symbol spread and is used in Hong Kong in defiance of China's threat to their democracy. Just as the salute has been adopted in Hong Kong against Chinese military-backed government control and now Myanmar, it looks as though it won't be long until other South-East Asian countries follow suit. China is threatening Taiwan's independent status as it vows to retake what China calls a breakaway province, just as it did with Hong Kong.



Photograph: Jack Taylor/ AFP/Getty Images

When asked if Taiwan should be a part of China, Karen believes this would be a “negative move”. “Taiwan is considered a democratic country with free speech (social media, TV channels, multiple parties to help citizens monitor the ruling government), human rights and proper educations.” China threatens this with its single political party (the authoritarian Chinese Communist Party) and lack of freedom of speech.

Kaen believes there could be change coming for Taiwan: “I believe one day my country will become like what happened in Hong Kong.” The anti-authoritarian movement will continue to expand across borders as democracy is threatened.

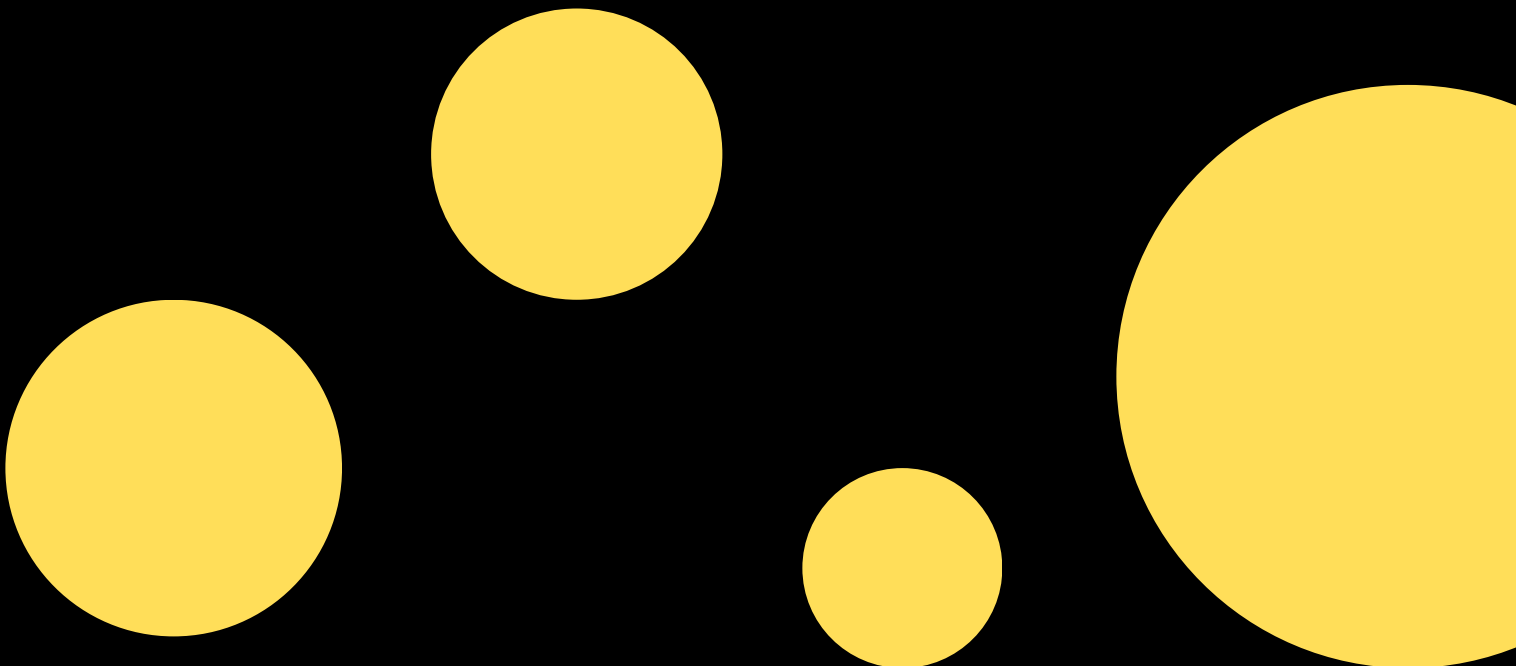
Katy, a secondary school teacher living in Taiwan, recalls when Taiwan suffered from state oppression: “I know the 228 event in Taiwan when the government killed many protesters. My grandparents told me the story about it. They were furious and scared at that time.” On February 28, 1947, an anti-government uprising is estimated to have killed between 5,000 and 28,000 Taiwanese at the hands of the Kuomintang-led Republic of China government military.

Using global popular culture and literature to share struggles abroad is an important way to resonate with more people and prevent history repeating itself, such as the 228 massacre in Taiwan. The power of fiction is important, to draw attention to movements of social injustice, just as hashtags help spread the message online. The globally recognised symbol can provide understanding to us in the West as we realise what is happening in some South-East Asian countries shares similarity with the shocking scenes in *The Hunger Games*.



Photograph: Sakchai Lalit/ AP

If you're interested in finding out more about what's going on, I strongly suggest reading into the online movement Milk Tea Alliance, follow #MilkTeaAlliance. Intrigued? Head over to Twitter and have a look now! Spread the fire.



The Fact Behind The Fiction

By Sian Hills



A closer look at the genre of fictional self-help books and how beneficial they can be to a student's mental health

Often when looking for ways to improve our mental health and wellbeing, we turn to literature for answers. Rifling our way through factual studies and guides on how to be more productive or boost our happiness in just 30 days. However, there may be another avenue for people to explore, like the wonderful world of fiction. The swapping of statistics for storylines has many hidden benefits that students are starting to realise. From exploring new scenarios to learning how to overcome them, authors are capitalising on this new genre of fictional self-help.



Fictional texts are usually pigeonholed as childish literature, that is deemed unnoteworthy for students, but this couldn't be further from the truth. Fictional novels and texts allow for the reader to escape into a fantasy realm where reality becomes irrelevant. As a result of this, students often find themselves less stressed and overwhelmed with everyday life, as they have been able to shut their mind to reality for a few moments. This is why fictitious literature is so important to our mental health. It also helps with emotional growth, by forcing students to confront scenarios that they may one day experience, leaving them better equipped for the future.

So, with the rise of fictional reading amongst young adults and students, authors have taken it upon themselves to create a whole new genre of literature. This has been named as:

'Self-help fiction'.

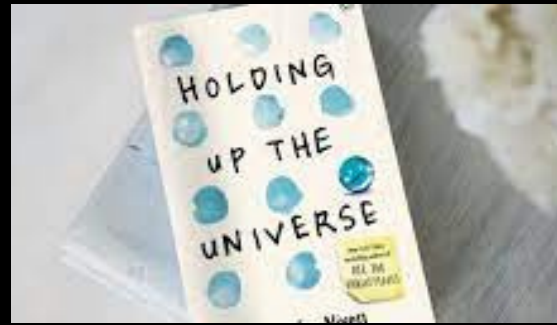
This is where an author will tackle hard-hitting issues that their reader may have experienced and through its characters, teaches the reader how to handle such a situation. Just like a factual self-help book that would provide advice, authors are now embedding this in fictional storylines, to help the reader detached.



So, which fictional self-help novels are the best? Well, here are a selection of stories to break you in this new genre of literature:

1) Holding Up The Universe By Jennifer Niven

This particular fictional tale is the focus of a heart stopping romance but also falls under the category of self-esteem and self-reliance for young adults. It's been proven to evoke every emotion possible, acting as a great escape.



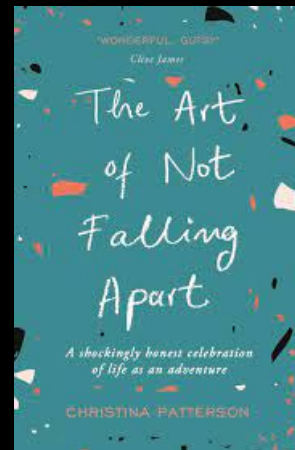
2) Before The Coffee Gets Cold By Toshikazu Kawaguchi

The novel travels back in time to explore the past of four different characters. Each of which have their own issues and emotional traumas to come to terms with. It asked the question of how you would change the past and how to move forwards in the future, wrapped in a beautiful Japanese setting.



3) The Art Of Not Falling Apart By Christina Patterson

Described as moving funny and frank, Christina Patterson's fictional novel tackles the issue of being left jobless in an already crumbling world and how to overcome this. It teaches its reader a life lesson about what's important in life.



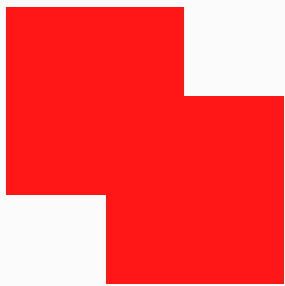
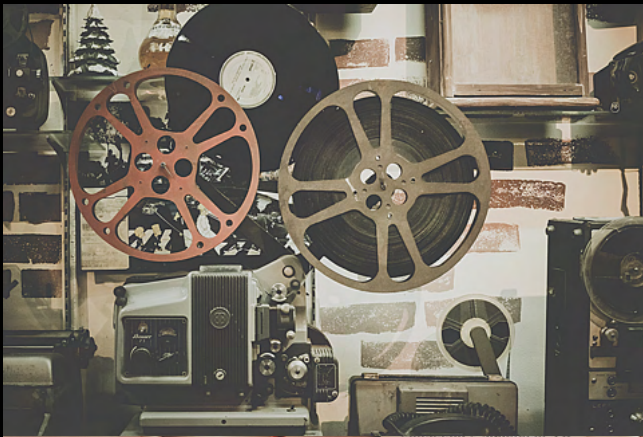
4) It Only Happens In The Movies By Holly Bourne

No cheesiness or clichés allowed in this fictitious novel as Holly Bourne chooses to focus on the pain and confusion of relationships. The novel reflects the realities of love, allowing for readers to finally see that it isn't also fluffy as th films make it out to be.

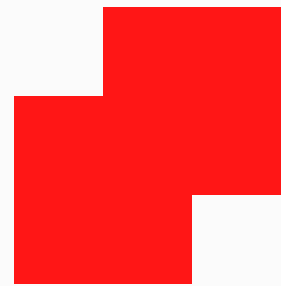
5) The Hating Game By Sally Thorne

This is another novel focusing on the realities of relationships but through the use of a wicked and witty storyline that shows the element that hate plays in all relationships. It's emotional and educational whilst also being utterly delightful.





OF THE YEAR



Here we have Pop Perception's picks for Of The Year, we have six categories all exploring literature, and or connecting to social injustice and wellbeing. We have Film, Television Show and Song either based on literary influences or heavily inspired by the written words of writers. These categories also help those reluctant to read understand the clear linkage between our favourite parts of Pop Culture and literature and explore some issues threaded throughout Pop Perception. Our other categories are multiple forms of literature, with Poem, Novel and Play all displaying the wide and wonderful ways literature can be showed all connecting to issues raised in the magazine around wellbeing and social injustice.

I hope you enjoy our Of The Years selected and us at Pop Perception highly recommend watching, listening, and reading all of them!

Novel of the Year

Why I Am No Longer Talking To White People About Race
By Reni Eddo-Lodge

This cult novel simply cannot be left on the shelf. Released in 2017 as Reni Eddo-Lodge's debut novel, the book has recently gained huge reception due to the Black Lives Matter movement following the tragic death of George Floyd in May 2020. Many people of all races are picking up this book to educate themselves and to make a difference. The book breaks down the concept of structural racism and explains its existence within society while providing a narrative of racial issues which not all of us might have experienced, but that many want to understand and put an end to. The principal of this novel is when you know better, you do better, and this is something we would all like to implement as part of society.

Despite these heavily literary based songs, Pop Perception's Song of the Year goes to the pioneers in rock music, The Rolling Stones 1968 song Sympathy for the Devil a ballad inspired by Mikhail Bulgakov's The Master and Margarita. Being regarded as ambiguous by many, having one of two meanings either Lucifer the devil declaring what he's done through history: wars, deaths, assassinations, and other evil things. On the other hand, that we as the listener are the devil and that the human race did all these immoral things on our own. With lyrics such as 'just as every cop is a criminal and all the sinners saints' suggesting regardless how 'good/holy' we believe we are being there is always the possibility to become the 'devil'. The song supplies an analysis of the dark side of humanity, one that all of us have unfortunately had to witness from climate change, to racism, to the ongoing refugee crisis as well as the extremely recent underlined issue of sexual harassment. Sympathy for the Devil is a rock samba with a paramount point of social injustice that is happening in our very lives. No doubt, it is worth a listen!

Play of the Year

A Taste Of Honey By Shelagh Delaney

Shelagh Delaney's play A Taste of Honey comments and sparks discussions on both conventional and controversial topics, hoping to revitalise the British theatre in the late 1950s. British teen Jo struggles to find love in her mundane life, which is influenced by her alcoholic mother, Helen. Jo has a brief fling with a black sailor and Helen has a new lover, their existing strained relationship is further exhausted. Jo faces more impediments when she discovers she is pregnant but finds support in homosexual friend, Geoffrey.

The reason this has been picked as our Play of the Year is its continued relevancy in the modern day. Through the frequent fighting and animosity of a relationship between mother Helen and daughter Jo, which I think especially with the last year we can all relate to, where many relationships have been tested whilst stuck in lockdown. Along with the representation of marginalization through each character, Helen and Jo's working class which has been highlighted through the pandemic due to the economic crisis coronavirus has caused. Geoffrey who is used as a lens for homosexuality and his effeminate demeanour accentuates the LGBTQ+ community which has from Delaney's present has progressed but still has so much more progress to make. One of the most dominant issues recently has been racism, and even Shelagh Delaney was addressing the topic through her character Jimmie. This play displays a profuse amount of issues, but the overarching moral is providing the harmonization of a diverse group living together honesty and respect. Perhaps a moral we and everyone around us need to be learning, teaching, and living by.

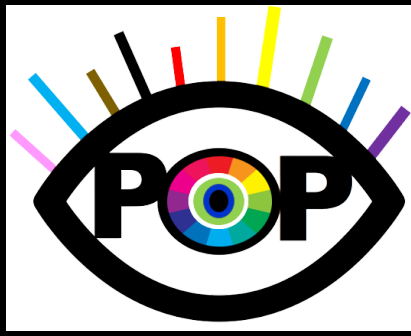
Television Show of the Year

Behind Her Eyes

This supernatural Netflix sensation based on the novel Behind Her Eyes by Sarah Pinborough leaves you glued to your seat and desperate for more. The show follows Louise's journey as she begins an affair with her boss while befriendng his mysterious wife. This psychological thriller demands attention and has one of the most talked about endings of the decade, let alone the year! It is a must watch for sure, you will be taken on a psychological, spiritual, and cultural journey as the show engages with many complex and interesting ideas.

Eve Hewson provides a chilling but brilliant performance of Adele, while Simona Brown's incredible performance of Louise steals the show due to her likeable and relatable character. Pinborough has been criticised for her controversial ending but despite this Netflix have created a hit show and she believes they have produced a great adaptation of her novel. Don't miss out! At only six episodes long, it would be rude not to give it a watch.





AGONY AUNT

'How Do I Get Over A Break Up?'

The breakup happened for a reason. Something we are always told when a relationship falls apart. I hate to say it, but it is the truth that nothing happens by chance. As much as this breakup hurts, and may feel as if you've had your heart ripped out of your chest, it has happened and there is a purpose to it. It may be that you just need time away from each other to reevaluate everything and truly realise and appreciate one another, because it wasn't working and that's why it finished. This could be the start of something great, as however long you are in a relationship from a few months to years it can consume your life. See the positives in being able to remember there was a you before both of you and take this time to love yourself and love the people that are in your life. I wish I could sit here and tell you a special remedy or cure to solve a broken heart but there really isn't, it just takes time. Time with learning and loving yourself, readjusting to the difference. The idea of adjustment commonly is seen as a negative but in honesty change is an amazing thing. Michaela Angemeer's anthology of poems 'You'll come back to yourself' explores a variety of themes one being lost love. Angemeer utilises the specific structure of poetry to convey the overall message of choosing yourself and ultimately coming back to yourself. It is hard to know what to do a time like this, taking some time out and reading some motivating poetry is a way of helping to realise that is genuinely going to be okay. Angemeer's book is definitely a ray of hope.



“Any motivation tips on how to stay focused on your dream career”.

Remember everything in life is a choice if you broke this off then live with your choice or if you didn't then choose to live this new life you've been gifted. Never force anything, everything that is meant to happen will find its way somehow, just hold on.

Living life with ambition will always get you far. When you have your heart set on something, and you have a goal, a desire, you know your end destination. However, sometimes it can be hard to hold on when it seems so far away from reach. They say success is not a destination it's a journey, which is extremely hard to believe sometimes but when you are through the hard times whether it be struggling to revise for your exams, finishing that essay, or working that low paying job for a while. All of them are setting you up for your future as dreams do not come easy, so you have to work hard to get them. If you work hard now you will be rewarded when you get that perfect job you have always wished for. Life doesn't go to plan, and as much as we would like to control it, it's uncontrollable so all we can do is choose the right path that takes us to the place we hope to go.

If you work hard now you will have a life full of enjoyment, if you are lazy now you may enjoy it, but you will have a life full of hard work. Take the Leap: Change Your Career, Change Your Life a book by Sara Bliss through the inspiration and advice from over sixty people and their experiences and stories creates a roadmap to your dream career and how exactly to get to where you want to go. If you are feeling a bit lost, this book will guide you the way back on track.



How To Maintain a Long-Distance Relationship

The dreaded two words that haunt every relationship: Long Distance. Whether its your partner moving for a career or you make the decision to move to a university, hours away. Moving to university is daunting enough, but the prospect of potentially losing your partner increases the sense of fear regarding such a massive change in your life. The first week you may find yourself struggling to juggle: new friendships, enrolling at your classes, settling in with new flatmates, homesickness. All while trying to reassure that this move doesn't affect your relationship. It is important to prepare yourself for this change and know that these difficulties are completely normal, faced by many other students around you.



The beginning of your life change will always be like this, but once the dust settles you may find maintaining a long-distance relationship easier than you think. As difficult as it may be to discuss the future of your relationship when you break that you are moving miles away, it needs to be done. Depending on your situation it may be an awkward topic to discuss so broach it with sympathy, but in the long run, will prove beneficial. The move can spark questions of whether you are both in the position to maintain a healthy relationship. Having a conversation about this will ensure no stone is left unturned and you have both had opportunity to get everything out in the open. The last thing you want is when embarking on your new uni life is to be unsure of where you stand, potentially facing a breakup at a time when you're meant to be enjoying yourself.

Especially freshers!

How To Balance a Degree and Nights Out at Uni



Two things that you need to prepare for when beginning your new uni life, is embarking on your new busy social life, and the massive workload you will have to carry on your shoulders. From personal experience as Christmas or the end of the year approaches, assessment deadlines will loom and your friends will urge for more nights out to end the year with a bang. You may find a number of occasions where you have to make a choice between meeting that deadline or not missing out. Something to note with this new lifestyle is that whilst being sociable is really important in aiding your mental wellbeing, getting your degree is what you are there for. So missing the occasional trip to the club with your friends isn't exactly the end of the world as there are plenty more to come. For those who haven't yet begun Uni, it is important to note that the university take into account that during freshers week you will be more focused on making friends or aiding your hangover, but try not to let your freshers mindset continue throughout the year as it is important to keep reminding yourself of what you are here for. Pre-reading over summer and keeping a tight schedule of work that needs to be done and deadlines will help stop that overwhelming feeling that you have way too much work to do, yet don't want to miss out on making memories. Use your time wisely during this journey!

"I've been at uni for a few weeks and I hate it. I'm really struggling with homesickness, do I drop out?"

Hiya, the way you are feeling right now is normal and I can assure you, you are not the only one feeling this way. I had struggled with homesickness when I began university. Thinking about leaving my family home was bewildering, so when I was left to unpack on my first day there, I instantly felt a pang of homesickness. It is a matter of eventually embracing your new environment. You took the leap to move out to study for a reason, so just remember you've got this far. Don't let your initial feelings deter you from the bigger picture! Universities typically have student support systems implemented in place, so if you research on the resources available, you will be able to find professional support. However, can be daunting so if that is not ideal, I would advise that you allow yourself to feel homesick. Whether it is staying in bed all day or having a cry, give yourself some time to be wallowing around and then pick yourself up and your phone and ask your friend if they would like to explore around. Making your university room feel more homely, decorating it with good memories could also reduce the homesickness, as essentially your home is right there with you then. I would also recommend keeping in contact with family back home but keeping it to a substantial amount where you are involved with the people around you at university more than people back home. Remember you will be back home soon for the holidays and can always visit and I'm sure you'll have plenty of memories to share. Don't drop out just yet; at least get your next student finance instalment in and then leave with style if the worst comes to the worst!



"How to balance my finances at uni?"

Hiya, Ah finances and budgeting at university.

This is a topic you will be glad to know I'm a little more clued on about (don't worry I lived on

Tesco meal deals in my first year, because I spent all my loan on the latest iPhone, trust me it gets better!)

The most beneficial thing would be to establish the amount of income you will be receiving, whether it's your maintenance loan, bursaries, part time job etc. You can then estimate your expenditure, dividing it into essential costs such as textbooks, rent, food and non-essential costs, like new clothes, nights out etc.

Calculating how much of your income will go towards essential costs, will leave you with a figure for non-essential costs. If you divide this to term time you can establish your weekly budget. I organised my finances in budgeting apps which I found useful. I would recommend Squirrel and Monzo, however it is best to do

research of your own to decide which would be most suited to you. A final thing I would advise would be to set goals. If you have a reasonable weekly budget, perfect! However, there's a

likelihood that you might be living off 10 pounds some weeks (it is doable!) therefore it could be useful to set targets to either increase your income or reduce your outcome. Some ways to reduce costs could be to purchase second-hand textbooks which you can sell afterwards. You can also bulk buy your food, especially freezer food as it will last a lot longer.

Balancing finances at university is daunting, however I want to reiterate that you should treat yourself occasionally. As long as you are planning ahead you should definitely enjoy yourself and do the things that you love.



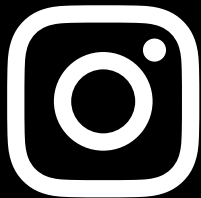
“I’m finding it difficult to make friends at uni and am struggling with loneliness, any advice?”

Hiya, I am so glad you have reached out. Feeling lonely at university is very common, there are a lot of expectations we have as students as to what our experiences are going to be like, and it isn't always perfect and that's okay so do not feel alone. If you are struggling a lot then do reach out, whether it is to friends and family or even to your university. There are student support systems put in place to help with feelings of loneliness and mental health. My university: Nottingham Trent has a health and wellbeing resource page where there is plentiful information to help me if I have any concerns so I would recommend researching on the type of support your university offers for students. When it comes to friendship, it is important to remember that everyone is in the same boat as you, it is a new environment, new people, so if you are living in halls, leaving your door open can make you look more approachable. Facebook group chats will be your holy grail, but if you don't have Facebook, another great way to make friends is through societies. There are numerous societies that universities offer so if you look into ones you may be keen on, you can befriend so many like-minded people. You can also be part of the committee that runs the society if you love it that much, or even make your own! I met some great people this way. Remember your university experience is what you make it out to be, don't be afraid to put yourself out there. It is a daunting time for a lot of people, but there are plentiful opportunities waiting for you. Who knows, maybe your potential best friend for life is living right next to you!



Best wishes,

Agony Aunt



@pop_perception