

## An Introduction to The Langtonian

Welcome to the Langtonian, a new school newspaper taking the name of a school journal that ran through most of the 20th century, and we are hoping to emulate its longevity. We aim to enrich the minds of pupils and give a creative outlet to all the people who wish to share their opinion with the school. We hope that this will allow students to express their opinions, no matter how controversial, to the community, give a reasoned argument for their thinking and start a discourse between students about intriguing and important topics.

We would like to acknowledge and thank all those who participated in the creation of the first issue of the revived Langtonian, to thank Dr Taylor for giving us this opportunity, and most importantly we would like to thank all those who submitted an article regardless of whether it has been published, as you are the people that have made this newspaper possible. To anyone who did not submit an article or did not have their article published there will always be another issue and another chance to be featured in a school newspaper. We would also like to thank Mr Moffat for kindly funding the revival of the Langtonian: the only man willing to give away the school budget for something completely unnecessary and that will quickly become a weapon used in the school corridors. We would also like to thank ourselves for working tirelessly to finish the newspaper on time. We hope you find these articles worth your time, and that they may sway your opinions or provide you with entertainment.

## *inaugural*

dear langton learner perma-prone  
to gormless gaming on your phone  
behold a novel kind of rag  
don't stuff the blighter in your bag

no need to swipe a sticky screen  
no viruses. the content's clean  
it's portable. no ads. no spam.  
no trojan horse or cyber scam

no strings attached: no axe to grind  
just read us with an open mind  
we're primus inter pares see?  
and hold the phone - we're gratis  
(free)

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## Notes on the School Life of Year 11 Langton Boys

By Daniel Banica

The school day starts at 8:50 and ends at 15:45. That's about seven hours a day, five days a week, summing up to a grand total of seventy hours spent in school every fortnight. What do you get out of this time? Let's evaluate:

Citizenship, two hours every two weeks. This is the time the school takes to teach Langton boys about life. There are no exams. We're watching a movie about AIDS, it's great. **10/10**

PE and games take up four hours every two weeks (the recommended minimum). These are the lessons where mere mortals train to become strong like Dr Warner. **10/10**

History of Ideas takes up three hours every two weeks. Very few people actually care to engage with the lectures, and the ones that do always complain. Some specific lecturers are liked more than others, and they can probably tell. **6/10**

English, 10% of your time at the Langton, by far the school's weakest subject. Among the Year 11 cohort, this subject (and some of its teachers) are generally disliked. Because of the subjective nature of answers in this subject, and the immense intellectual prowess of 16-year-old boys, the teacher always appears to mark too harshly, which is likely why so many dislike this subject. **5/10**

Maths, another tenth of your time at the Langton, is by far the school's strongest subject. Many declare mathematics their favourite subject, but the department also appears to be almost universally disliked, from Q1 complaining about personalised tests, to the person in charge of telling Year 11 off being a maths teacher. Generally regarded as the most important subject, as a high grade in mathematics can land you the three 6th form courses you need. **8/10**

Science takes up nine hours every two weeks. The science teachers are generally liked, with Dr Warner being a student favourite. Everyone likes Dr Warner, be it for his universally appreciated, subtle yet impactful, slightly ironic humour, or enormous biceps. Science at the Langton is one of the highlights of the school experience, students achieve high results and most of them enjoy at least one of the three sciences they study. **10/10**

Optional subjects take up eighteen hours every two weeks. Nobody likes their optional subjects. Everybody complains about their optional subjects. If you are in Year 9 reading this, make sure to pick business studies, better known informally as 'the easy 9'. **4/10**

With love,

Banica Daniel

# The Decline in Intergenerational Relations - ('Ok Boomer')

By Ben Francis

With multiple major crises coming to light these past few years - such as the issue of climate change, the housing crisis, and in more local terms, Brexit - the views of the public are becoming more extreme and each generation provides different solutions to these problems. The 'Ok Boomer' meme, originally derived from the trending social media platform TikTok, is essentially a manifestation of the younger generations' frustration with the lack of cooperation from older generations, specifically the Baby Boomers or those with the same stereotypical mindset.

This seemingly harmless viral joke has sparked a surprisingly fiery reaction from the people I will refer to as 'Boomers' from now on. An article released by the ever-popular New York Times stated that the 'Ok Boomer' meme marked "the end of friendly generational relations"; as well as this, many Boomers have the audacity to claim that the use of the phrase is a slur, despite the fact many of them - although mainly concentrated in the USA - apparently missing the irony of the most racist generation currently alive complaining they are being slurred.

However, the idea that intergenerational relations have only significantly deteriorated recently is one to be dismissed, as Boomers have been attacking Millennials for years now. Many articles have been published claiming that Millennials are attempting to kill any industry that's going, from the movie business to golfing, the Boomers have complained about it all. From this alone, you can see that the older and younger generations of our time have almost never gotten along, and this is mainly due to the fact that the Boomer generation have entirely severely damaged the economy and political situation for future generations just to make sure their age-wrinkled bodies sleep well at night in their 4-bedroom house for two. The 'Ok Boomer' meme isn't something that has sparked conflict, but simply something that highlighted the tension that was already there.

Moving away from meme culture however, I don't believe that Boomers are the absolute evil in this scenario. Millennials 'attack' the older generations for potentially ruining or restricting their chance at living the life they want; although this is somewhat true, you cannot expect anything to change if all you do is complain about how expensive houses are on Twitter instead of spending your time doing more productive things such as looking into local housing prices and figuring out a way to combat the scenario.

I too am extremely angry at the fact that my future house will cost approximately three times more than what my ancient neighbour paid for theirs, however I can still afford the house I'm buying, - as can many others - which begs the question of whether life is really twisted by our predecessors as many of the young people today seem to think. When it comes down to it, no matter how hard done by you feel by others, it is still your responsibility to live your life in the best way possible instead of 'accepting defeat'.

From this, I hope you take away the idea that although the different generations of today are rightfully angry at each other, in order for the world to achieve the positive change that it so desires, we must learn to stop blaming each other for the inconveniences that we all cause and work towards a prosperous and unified future.

# The Forgotten Oppressed - The Night Owl

By Bob Hart

Increasingly, much of modern-day politics revolves around who qualifies as 'oppressed' and who doesn't - however, a group that is truly oppressed gets no lip-service: the night owl.

I, along with approximately 30% of the population, can be classified as a 'night owl': someone who enjoys going to bed and waking up late. But this is just laziness, right? I should get over it and get up at a sensible time - or should I? As it turns out, society's obsession with an early start is nothing but archaic, unfair, and often unhealthy.

There are a plethora of factors that affect whether a person is either an owl or a lark. Some of the most prominent factors include: age - older people tend to get up earlier; the environment - such as if they live in a place where the days are long. However, the most important factor to this discussion is your genes. A large part of which category you fall into is decided by genetic information inherited from your parents, forming your 'chronotype'. There are many theories on why we evolved to have some of our species wake at different times, but the most compelling states that having different members of a tribe awake at all times is hugely beneficial for the survival of the group, as someone will always be watching over and ready to protect from threats.

A person who is predisposed to getting up late will find that their prefrontal cortex's neural pathways will not be as active in the early hours as someone who prefers to get up earlier. This lower level of brain activity means that they may appear slower or find it harder to think, making it an unfair playing field against someone - who by no action of theirs - have a higher level of brain function during the earlier hours of the day. This is where we can begin to see the ways that night owls are mistreated everyday.

Society seems deeply entrenched in the idea that doing things early is the best method - however, we no longer live purely agricultural lifestyles and have no need to maximise sunlight hours. The lightbulb has been around for over 140 years, and we are yet to adjust our working routines significantly. The world is certainly becoming more accepting, but many things such as school and work could just as easily function on later hours such as 10 - 6 or 11 - 7, but instead clearly creates a situation where a minority is oppressed by the system.

As Mr Holloway can tell you, I am by no means an expert in Biology. Even if the science that I have outlined was discovered to be false, would it make a large difference to the argument? I do not believe it would. We have the technology and a society that is often lenient on many social norms. What is the harm in not sticking to this one?

What is the solution? It is, unfortunately, often not very practical to let everyone operate on their own schedules, especially in a school. Unlike many other modern day political causes, protests and riots may not be most fitting answer. However, I would like to ask for people to be a bit more considerate when they next make an appointment for 9 in the morning, and allow for a bit more leniency for those among us who would much prefer to be in a deep sleep at that very time.

## Liam Malswix Thinks

By Max Williams

Like some people, Liam Malswix has thoughts. He wanted to write an article for the Langtonian in the naive hope that it might advance his dwindling writing career, but had no idea what to write said article about, and so decided that he would simply vomit a stream of consciousness onto his laptop screen and pray to the gods of Hades that the musings of his plagued and corrupted psyche made sense to the wider world.



There are many mysteries and conundrums in this world of ours that boggle my mind, and many unanswered questions that leap out at me while I'm driving like foxes in the road.

Yes, in the same way that Greta Thunberg can apparently see carbon dioxide with the naked eye, I can actually see the crucial enigmas that deprive our reality of sense and logic flying around me like mosquitoes on crack.

Why is it that we're told to always store bottles of alcohol in a dry place when it shouldn't make a blind bit of difference because the alcohol itself is wet anyway?

With The Orb's 2001 single, *Once More...* (one of the best pop singles of all time if you ask me) only ever making it to number 38 in the UK singles charts, while piles of aural codswallop such as Aqua's *Barbie Girl* and Taylor Swift's *Look What You Made Me Do* head straight to number 1, can we really tell ourselves with any sincerity that we live in a fair, equal and just society?

What is the world coming to when Blu-Rays offer significantly better picture quality than DVDs yet all the neurotypical fools that surround me can't tell the difference, blatantly obvious though it is?

But one of the things about our modern society that I don't get - one irrational element that particularly flabbergasts me - is our new-found fixation with something that I believe is called a 'die-in'.

The best and most succinct description that I have found on the Internet of a 'die-in' came, as ever, from Wikipedia, who characterize a 'die-in' as being 'a form of protest in which participants simulate being dead.' Yes, you change the world and make a positive impact on humankind's future by lying down for a bit like sloths. Or sometimes, by going all out and using fake blood or stimulating death throes for that extra bit of authenticity. This clearly draws attention to the chosen cause, makes you, the protester, look like you know your stuff, and certainly does not make you look like an irrational hippy pudding-head. On a not-at-all-related note (golly, this paragraph isn't very sarcastic, is it?), 'die-ins' have become a particularly popular form of protest amongst Extinction Rebellion members, and I say power to these people, because, as we all know, it has been scientifically proven that lying on the ground in the Natural History Museum and writhing around a bit will single-handedly alleviate the climate emergency, reducing global temperatures by 50% and converting people to join Extinction Rebellion who otherwise would not have allied with a militant group that is causing needless and infuriating disruption to commuters then wondering why they're being dragged off trains by frustrated Londoners who just want to get to work.

In all seriousness, I find 'die-ins' laughable. I also find Extinction Rebellion laughable - although I consider myself a friend of some in the school who happen to be members of the movement, and I would never want to condescend or talk down to them and say that they are categorically wrong. As we know, there is no absolute truth, and an opinion is just an opinion. I just think that XR's targets are unrealistic - whether you like it or not, going completely carbon neutral by 2025 is a pipe

dream because it would mean the end of much of Britain's infrastructure, as we'd have to stop all flying and get rid of all the cars and buses, and that's just for starters. You really think that every single human being in Britain will be able or willing to fundamentally change their lifestyle in exchange for one that is less convenient or advanced? We are, after all, a very united species that collectively agrees on everything.

Furthermore, I don't agree with XR's true ulterior motive - according to XR founder Roger Hallam, the ultimate end goal is a revolution in which capitalism and the state as we know it are utterly ground into oblivion. 'We are not just sending out emails and asking for donations,' Hallam said at an Amnesty International address on the 4th of February 2019. 'We are going to force the Governments to act. And if they don't, we will bring them down and create a democracy fit for purpose... and yes, some may die in the process.'

This sounds perfectly rational and is not at all an extremist, anarchist or risky manoeuvre that could easily cause complete and unadulterated chaos. But what do I know? I like TV shows from 25 years ago such as *Inspector Morse* and *Last of the Summer Wine*, and I have unsightly facial hair.

But enough about controversial politics, because despite what social media might have you believe, politics is not the world. And besides, I now feel like doing a mini-review of *Via Nostra*, an ambient techno album released in November 1998 on R&S Records by the Berlin-based duo, Sun Electric. Because it's my article and I'll do what I want with it.

Physical copies of this album are comparatively hard to find, but I like an album that plays hard to get, as they say. Of course, you can just easily download the album on those digital platforms, but where's the fun, the superior sound quality or the nifty Designers Republic artwork in that? No, with music, I prefer to get physical. But CDs are less expensive than vinyl and therefore better. Period.

Anyway, I digress. *Via Nostra* is a perfect antidote to the grating sounds of modern life and what Keats once generously described as 'the jumbled heap of murky buildings' which stands as a visual symbol of our despicable lifestyles and modernity and dirty corporatism. At the time of its release it was described in its publicity as 'peculiarly fragrant, almost pastoral, still electronic but somehow free-floating and light as air', which is as good a description as any other I would've thought of if I could be bothered. But no, much easier and quicker to steal, so what the hell.

Another description that gets bandied around a lot in relation to this album is the term 'free jazz', and while *Via Nostra* is thankfully not saturated with sad anoraks in black polo-neck jumpers playing exasperatingly long and meandering saxophone solos that make you want to slash your wrists, it does share with jazz a fresh improvisational element that lifts the LP whole storeys above your average techno dross, along with a distinctive production and attention to detail that you won't really get approximated anywhere else.

Standout tracks include:

1. The obligatory single *Tee*, which mixes samples of reversed flutes, virtuosic jungle breaks and what sounds like someone having a pee together into a potpourri of catchy popiness.
2. *Fried Ed*, which sounds like your textbook dance or drum and bass tune but with a twist of lemon kicking it up in the air so to speak.
3. *Things You Like To Hear*, where ambient synth pads meet pitch-bent dulcimers and fragmented vocoders.
4. *The Long Walk*, a dark relentless toe-tapper I wouldn't mind playing repeatedly and getting lost in. Like an episode of *Inspector Morse*.
5. The chilled-out perkiness of *Bonga*.
6. *7:07*, which features an irresistible mid-section from around the two-and-a-half-minute mark.
7. *Sierra*, which is ideal background music to torture infidels and dissidents to.

Like many albums I've heard, it could have done with streamlining and cutting down, removing the fat that just pads out both the album and this column, but it flows really well as an album and makes a refreshing change from the transient and ephemeral wild-and-woolly poptrash that mainstream radio stations like to shove down your throats these days. I highly recommend that fans of electronic music, or more general music lovers with a sense of adventure who yearn for something different, go check this out in whichever way they see fit. 8/10 for me.

And, while I apologise for sounding like an Amazon page, if you like *Via Nostra*, you may also be interested in other work by Sun Electric, such as:

- *Kitchen* - Sun Electric's debut album from 1993, which carries a much more raw and clubbier feel thanks to its use of primitive analogue equipment. Admittedly, there are a couple of less successful tracks that just plod along, featuring solely one promising melody and a beat for five or six minutes and stubbornly refusing to go anywhere. I can listen to Steve Reich's 20-minute *Piano Phase* or Phillip Glass' 13-minute *Mad Rush* and even I could do without these repetitive filler tracks. However, *Kitchen* overall contains quite a few decent standalone tracks, including *Entrance*, *Sarotti*, *∴* and *∴*, *R-Gent* and *Sonification*. 7/10
- *30.7.94 Live* - three long live performances of ambient music, together totalling an hour and rather perfect actually.

Well-produced and great background music for your revision (Year 11s and 13s had better be taking notes). 9/10

- Also check out the maxi-singles *Olocco* and *Tee+*, as well as Sun Electric's final album, *Lost & Found (1998-2000)*, for some extra hidden gems.

You know there are many cynics who've told me that I'm irksomely behind the times and distinctly uncool and boring. I frankly don't know what they're on about. But that's all from me for now as I simply cannot conjure up the required effort to write any more of this blethering tripe/hogwash/piffle/claptrap/garbage. Please leave me and this disgustingly thin page in peace.

**At time of publication, Liam Malswix is currently working on his magnum opus; a 100,000-word dissertation on the use of the noun 'jumper' in the Oxford dictionary. He does not regularly make contact with the outside world and is a sad asinine fool, but you can follow him on Soundcloud ([soundcloud.com/maxwilliamsmcpr](https://soundcloud.com/maxwilliamsmcpr)), BandCamp (as M-Corp) and YouTube (as Liam Malswix).**

As told to Max Williams.

## The Democratic Case for a Second Referendum on Brexit

By Lindley Trueblood

As we head into the fourth year of deadlock over Brexit, and towards a general election that will likely resolve little and result in yet another hung parliament, it is no wonder that the national discourse has increasingly turned towards frustration at Brexit and a desire to move back towards more normal political axes. In my opinion, a second referendum is an obvious unifying solution to this problem, that although it would not eliminate opposition and argument between Remainers and Brexiteers would at least give a significant mandate to the final outcome and hopefully create a result that would be incontrovertible enough to allow political discourse to move onto the variety of political problems that have been forgotten in the deadlock over Brexit.

The first argument in favour of a Second Referendum is the colossally vague nature of the first referendum. This has led to a myriad of individuals and parties who claim that their solution to Brexit is the mandate of the 48 or 52% while having no evidence whatsoever their policy has the support of either of these groups (take the arguments of the Brexit party who frequently proclaim the mandate of "the 13 million" for no-deal while gaining roughly 4.5 c.million votes in the only national election they have fought since their creation.) It is clear that Brexit is a hugely complex with a myriad of outcomes - none of which were represented in the Binary vote in 2016. It is totally unreasonable for any group or party to claim their policy as mandated by either side of the referendum as by its nature (and due to the expectations of victory for remain in 2016) it provided no options as to what from Brexit should take. It is utterly preposterous to suggest that a Conservative Brexiteer such as Boris Johnson desires the same kind of Brexit as a socialist Brexiteer such as George Galloway and the treatment of either side of the referendum as a voting bloc who will all support a particular argument must stop. Given the vague nature of the original referendum it is impossible to claim that at this stage there is democratic support for any option and so those who are truly interested in democracy would support another plebiscite of some kind.

The option of a general election that has been tried so far to gain popular support for a Brexit solution is fundamentally flawed. Within our parliamentary system (one based around majority control of a single party not compromise) it is nigh on impossible for a majority to be found for any Brexit solution due to the variety of opinion, rarely found elsewhere in British politics. This and the non-partisan nature of the issue that has meant even a government as close to a majority as May's in 2018 could suffer the largest defeat in parliamentary history and this example encapsulates the greatest problem of trying to force Brexit through parliament: no policy can command majority support from the extremes of both sides. Although the country will return to the polls in December with Johnson at the head of a rejuvenated Conservative party it is difficult to see a situation where the Tories have enough of a majority (if one at all) to push Johnson's deal through Parliament, especially considering the break-up of the supply and demand agreement with the DUP. In addition to the low chance of a general election producing a solution to Brexit, a general election will never be a single issue "Brexit Election" as evidenced by Labour's success in 2017 despite their widely perceived lack of clarity on Brexit.

This fact thoroughly undermines the idea of an election providing a democratic mandate for a Brexit policy, as most people will elect MPs based on a variety of factors in their wider rhetoric and manifesto rather than just one policy (as seen by Labour's continued strong showing in both Remain and Leave areas in the 2017 election).

The most frequent argument fielded against a Second Referendum is that it is an undemocratic overturning of the 2016 results. However, this is simply untrue as the situation in 2016 was fundamentally different from that in the present. If one casts their mind back to the time of the referendum, and the months afterwards arguments that an end to the free movement of people alongside single market access was eminently possible or that here was no chance of a no deal exit. The political situation was fundamentally different and consequently the opinions of many voters would likely have changed when faced with the realities of the negotiating situation and the deal that has been negotiated over the past 3 years. Furthermore, the absolute reluctance to return to the people with another referendum is almost never faced when a general

election is suggested. According to the logic of the argument that a second referendum is undemocratic, a general election would be similarly so as you are presenting the same major parties to the electorate. Although the idea of general elections being undemocratic for this reason is plainly preposterous, it is suddenly regarded as valid when applied to a Second Referendum. The situation between 2016 and the present on Brexit is easily as different, if not more so than that between most general elections and this argument should be given no more credence than when the same argument is applied to a second referendum.

To conclude, there is a clear non-partisan case for a second referendum as the only way to move forward and find a solution to Brexit with a strong democratic mandate that is indisputable enough to allow the country to move onto the mass of other pressing issues. Although this outcome is far from guaranteed, and it is possible that another referendum would simply serve to further alienate remainers and leavers and toxify political discourse, it is the only viable option that at least has a hope of achieving some consensus. So finally I would urge readers, particularly Brexiteers, to move beyond basic political tribalism and support a Second Referendum as a neutral way to try and reach consensus on Brexit.



Mrs Ravenwood at Bran Castle

## My Love Affair with the Gothic

By Mrs Ravenwood

When my loving fiancé asked back in 2014 where I would like to go on honeymoon, I doubt he expected my answer. In fact, I imagine he anticipated that I would say “Paris,” “Venice,” or even “New York,” among other clichéd and supposedly romantic holiday destinations.

Imagine his surprise then when I responded with “Transylvania”.

You see, it’s somewhere I’ve dreamed of visiting ever since I was a teenager and first read Bram Stoker’s *Dracula*. If you haven’t already heard, it’s one of the most famous Gothic novels of all time and inspired, not only in me but in the popular imagination more generally, a love of vampires that won’t be put to rest.

During the Victorian era, there was an explosion of all things dark and vampiric: penny dreadfuls, Edgar Allan Poe, the Brontë sisters, Charles Dickens, Sheridan Le Fanu’s *Carmilla*, *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and many more such examples were published during this time.

The enduring power of Stoker’s novel is that it is both ancient and modern, mythical and historical. It is deeply embedded in very old structures of story, from the quest of white knights to kill the dragon, or the chivalric defence of female virtue under severe test, all the way up to using every convention of Victorian melodrama, in which dastardly and louche aristocrats menace women but are eventually bested by a gang of middle-class professionals.

As for the metaphor of the vampire itself, it is flexible beyond the limits of its own time. You do not need to be an expert in the life of London in the 1890s to get the raw power, the dread and anxiety, that suffuses this text. The vampire has been invented and reinvented and become a container for exploring the many different aspects of the ecstasy or fear of losing our boundaries, of invasion, of infection, and beyond.

But what is so striking about the novel for me is its setting. Transylvania is part of modern-day Romania, in south-eastern Europe. And Castle Dracula is located on the eastern side of Romania, close to the Black Sea. With its medieval towns, mountainous regions and citadels like Bran Castle, a Gothic fortress associated with the legend of Vlad the Impaler, it’s the perfect place to imagine a vampire might really lurk.

I also recommend it for your honeymoon...

## The Importance of *Downton Abbey* to Today’s Society

By George Knight

When one is met by the lulling theme of *Downton Abbey*, an avid television enthusiast would immediately dive for the remote, with the intention to find anything other than the aristocratic monotony of the Crawley household. However, one must remember that this is not simply the story of a long-forgotten aristocratic family, focused solely on the trivial dilemmas of their privileged life. The narrative portrayal of changes in society and the repercussions of them on every class gives us a picture of not only the past, but the present, which is what ultimately makes this television program so interesting. This fictional representation of the historic changes in society and the way people used to act could have a clear link to today, and

makes you reflect on the actions of society in the present.

The most evident societal comment early on in the program would be its inclusion of women's rights in the political and social world, and the way strong conservatives of the time would respond to this. In Season 2, Lady Edith, later Marchioness of Hexham, expresses her interest in learning to drive, and ultimately, the desire to drive a tractor at a local farm. This comment however was met merely with the comment 'Edith! You are a lady, not Toad of Toad Hall!' from the Dowager Countess, Lady Grantham. Although this desire to progress as a person was met by a quick remark, it still manages to portray the intent of women, which fortunately adorns the world in this day through the forms of feminism and equal rights. Today's society however, does not supply a witty comment, but barriers in the form of the gender pay gap or general gender-based discrimination, which are being broken by the undeniable intent of women today. This illustrates the importance of 'Downton Abbey' as it represents the progression of female empowerment and their true capabilities previously oppressed by society.

Not only this, but the program shows the introduction of new technology that is either accepted or declined by the people. The viewer is subjected to both of these contrasting opinions, with the input of new technology such as the telephone, the car and the wireless. These new pieces of technology made a huge affect on the way the people in the show could commute, communicate and spread the news of important events, but they still took a while to be fully accepted. This skeptical nature is fading in today's society, as people become more and more dependant and demanding of new technology; I believe that this seemingly small piece of advice the show gives could present us with morals to live by in modern day.

Therefore, I encourage you to consider what you are doing when you next pick up the remote to change the channel to 'You've been framed' or 'Can't pay? We'll take it away!' and remember the important messages that will hopefully introduce you to new ideas that may change your way of thinking.

## Extinction Rebellion

By Ollie Gregory

Climate change is undeniably one of the defining issues of this generation. Across the world, sea levels are rising, the polar ice caps are melting, heat waves are intensifying; all of these are expected to accelerate with the further increase of global warming. It is expected that by 2050, the Arctic Ocean will be ice free during the summers, which will cause a global sea level rise of between 1 to 4 feet. Both individual and system-wide changes are necessary to mitigate the effects of climate change. As an individual, the best thing you can do (besides not having any children) is to go car-free. However, it is an issue far too large to be solely resolved by small, personal improvements - although they do help. System-wide changes that need to be implemented include switching to more renewable energy, for example wind farms or solar power. This is just one of the actions that is required in order to extenuate the effects of climate change.

There has been an international calling for governments to make these changes and to raise awareness for the issue; for example, the massive student protests in towns and cities across the country. As positive as this may seem, there seems to be one protest organisation named 'Extinction Rebellion' (also known as 'XR') that has actually been having a decidedly negative effect. Protesters went on strike for two weeks and formed mass demonstrations in major cities across the world, such as London and New York. On the surface it makes sense, and from that description you would be led to believe that they are having a positive effect and raising public and government awareness of the issue; however less widely broadcast is the significant amounts of hypocrisy and lack of consistency shown by the organisation.

The actions of XR have been detracting from the actual issue at hand and draw a lot of negative attention to the movement. The group have been causing major disruption to the public and it reached a point where on the 17th October, protestors at Canning Town tube station in east London were pulled from the top of trains and potentially attacked (however not confirmed) by members of the public. This is an example of how XR are not gaining public support or sympathy but actually disposing of it.

Along with this, during the protests, participants were observed all over London taking advantage of fast food establishments like McDonald's - the largest provider of processed meat and food in the world and serves all its food in separate packaging. This is a clear example of hypocrisy from the protesters and a clear message to the public that they don't practise what they preach. Some people would argue that those are all just individual events and don't actually represent the group and their ideology. Whether that is true or not, it does not change the fact that they are becoming a public nuisance and drawing a significant amount of negative press attention to the movement as a whole.

Climate change is a hugely important issue facing our generation and imminent, drastic changes need to happen to ensure that our planet and climate is preserved. Extinction Rebellion have been drawing negative press attention and turning the public against them and consequently depleting support for the climate change movement. Therefore, if they actually care about climate change, they either need to change their plan of action or, if not, then they need to stop using it as an excuse to riot and take two weeks off work.

# The Student Union

By Charlie Baker

The Student Union is still in its infancy, but in the past four months specifically it has become a highly productive, student orientated group. Last June, we asked for students to come forward as representatives and you gave us an overwhelming response, so much so that we had to poll the Student Body to decide who to choose. Each candidate made inspiring speeches at their year group assemblies to gain votes from their peers. Then, on the 14th June, the student body went to the polls with the ultimate aim of electing those who promised to uphold their views on the board of union representatives.

Out of the almost twenty candidates, eight were elected and since then they have been striving to represent their peers towards the senior staff in the school. So far we have had a number of highly successful meetings with staff; we have met with Gay to discuss changes to the menus and pushed for salad boxes to be included on the menu at Café 42 - an option which has been incredibly popular. We have also discussed more vegetarian options and the idea of moving to reusable plastic cups to echo the calls towards a more sustainable future for the school from groups such as the “Langton Environmental Action Forum”. We hope to continue this work with the canteen staff in the future, including deciding how best to organise lunch queues to lower waiting times for all the students eager to get their lunch on time.

Another role of the Student Union is to provide an essential bridge between the Senior Management Team (SMT) and the students - something that has not been formally in place since 2006 when Student Union took a sabbatical. Last June, when summer uniform was introduced, many students asked the question “Why isn’t a tie part of summer uniform?”. This was an enquiry that we took to the SMT, who agreed completely with the students. A tie is now part of the summer uniform - though it is a shame the weather let us down this time. We have also taken a good look at the mobile phone policy that has been in place since the beginning of last academic year - something that is loathed by the students of the school - whilst also looking at the crack down on the uniform policy that was introduced at the beginning of the year.

Over the past few months we have been trying to build on the work of the previous members of the Student Union. We have held elections, met with senior staff, and held regular meetings; however whilst this year has been very successful, we aim for the Union to become even more successful in the future. After the October half term, we held elections for a new batch of Year 7 candidates, and we are also currently in the process of organising Year 12s to take on the role of leaders of the Student union next year. It is these elected representatives that will lead the Union and take it even further that it has ever gone this year. We hope for it to become an even more democratic organisation which will provide a voice for every student – no matter how small. We want to aid students with their journey through school life by providing support and advice for all members of the school community.

If you would like to contact us with any issues in the school, then please email us at [studentunion@thelangton.org.uk](mailto:studentunion@thelangton.org.uk). For regular updates about school life, follow us on Instagram [@thelangtonSU](https://www.instagram.com/thelangtonSU). You can learn of our mission statement, along with a list of student representatives on our notice board outside D2. Other information about the Union can also be found on the school’s website.

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# Blue is the New Green

By Josh Matheson

If I asked you to picture a radical climate activist, you probably imagine an extinction-rebellion, technicolour haired hippie, with body parts glued to trains and with that distinctive anaemic complexion that is brought about by a lifetime of veganism. This modern doomsday cult, complete with child prophets like Greta Thunberg and an endless stream of neo-flagellants willing to prostrate themselves for “the cause” has come to symbolise the entire modern environmentalist movement. However, I put it to you that the most militant, uncompromising, devoted climate activists in the western world are not Extinction Rebellion - they are The Conservatives.

Since 2010, no major country has undergone the kind of green transformation that the Conservatives have brought about in the UK. In 2017, net CO<sub>2</sub> emissions fell to their lowest level since Jack The Ripper roamed the streets of London. This was by no means a continuation of bigger, overarching trends in UK CO<sub>2</sub> emissions; CO<sub>2</sub> emissions hovered around 550 megatons per year throughout Tony Blair’s entire premiership. Rather, this was a result of one of the most ambitious, successful green transitions in the history of the world. David Cameron’s government took us from being heavily dependent on coal to the point where, today, most of our energy comes from renewables for the first time ever. There is obviously always more that can be done, but thanks to this radical government we have cut our emissions by almost 30% in the last nine years: this is undoubtedly something we should celebrate.

This environmentalist zeal is by no means the preserve of the national government, however. The local Conservative Council has gone even further than the government. Just a few months ago, the Conservative-led council declared a climate emergency and committed to net zero CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 2030. Despite what some like to claim, these are not empty promises.

Plans are currently being put together for Britain's biggest solar farm to be built in Graveney, for a hydrogen plant to be built in Herne Bay, for a massive number of new electric car charging points in Canterbury and a whole raft of other ambitious green infrastructure projects.

It's really not that surprising that the Conservatives are so militant in their defence of the environment. They have an impressively long history of environmentalism. In the 1980s, Margaret Thatcher became the first world leader ever to champion climate action and did so in a speech to the UN in 1989. She called for binding international agreements on emissions, in which wealthy countries would help developing countries to meet their emissions targets. Ultimately conservatism is about conserving and yes, that includes conserving the environment.

## Government Surveillance in the 21st Century and the Dark Side of the Tech Industry

By Ollie Stanger

Everyone knows about the oppressive internet policies and bulk surveillance of the Communist parties of China and North Korea. We hear about these types of policies in the dictatorial, restrictive areas of the world, such as these states and places like Russia and Turkey. Similar totalitarian style states of course existed for over a century before the development of the internet, with organisations such as the Gestapo and the Stazi to collect information about the innocent civilians of their nation. However, the existence of digital communication and the Internet gives massive opportunities for the widespread collection of the transmissions and private data of the entire population of a nation - useful for keeping an eye on all dissenting individuals and groups.

So, which states have the most and most powerful mass surveillance structures? Shockingly, the answer is the United Kingdom closely followed by the United States. The UK's 'counter terrorism' (which I will scrutinize later) institution, GCHQ, collects around 50% of global traffic, and the NSA collects literally multiple petabytes a day. This totals around 90 billion emails and 12 billion phone calls a day and most google searches, etc. So no, you cannot hide your search history by going into incognito mode - you are even at some risk using a VPN.

So how do these government agencies collect this information and how do we know about this? In 2013, Edward Snowden made a decision that would lead him to lose his job in the NSA and ruin his life - he leaked all of the documents to prove and describe these practices. Almost all major tech companies send much of their user's private data to the NSA and GCHQ. This program is called PRISM, and puts the Huawei scandal to shame. To reiterate, Google, Microsoft, Yahoo, Facebook, Apple, and many other corporations give all of your data to the counter terrorism services. GCHQ take another step on top of this, siphoning data straight out of fiber optic cables directly, in a project called the TEMPORA program.

But... isn't that a good thing? They're only looking for the terrorists and mean no harm, surely? Well from Edward Snowden and other whistleblowers, we know that they are doing much, much more than counter terrorism. It is proven that they use this information to spy on civil rights leaders and political speakers. It is also known that data programmes shifted to take in the data of everyone that they could, rather than just those who needed to be watched. These programmes are also against the 4th amendment of the United States constitution and echo the totalitarian policies of the states mentioned at the beginning of my article.

These programmes take in too much and are illegal - they only serve to help the government's twisted view of 'national security'. In order to maintain 'national security', the NSA attempted to blackmail their number one threat to 'national security' into committing suicide. Who was that person? Martin Luther King Jr! It is clear that the main intent of these programs is not the protection of the public from terrorism and the like.

My point is clear: We have a problem and the technology industry are complicit in it. The problem is totalitarian and criminal, and we must educate ourselves and others in order to stop it.

Why then have so few people heard about this seemingly incredible reality? This information is not in the news as much as it should be and the truth is hard to find. How then, did I come to find this all out? Just YouTube and Wikipedia, the two most trustworthy sources of information of course.

Further reading:

YouTube - 'Edward Snowden Exclusive | The Deep State & How You Can Make A Difference' *acTVism Munich*

YouTube - 'Joe Rogan Experience #1368 - Edward Snowden' *PowerfulJRE*

YouTube - 'NSA Whistleblower: Government Collecting Everything You Do' *Empire Files*

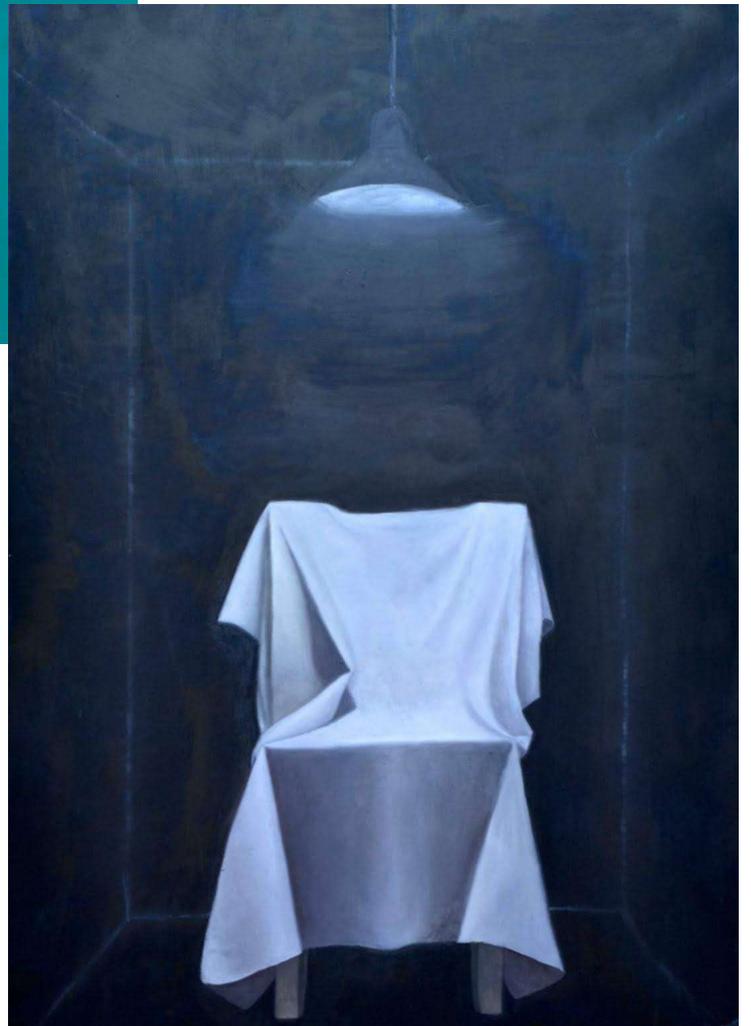
Wikipedia - 'PRISM (surveillance program)'

Wikipedia - 'Tempora'

Amazon - 'Permanent Record' *Edward Snowden*

## Featured A-Level Art

By Charlotte Fincham



By Milo Worthington

# Post-Truth Polemic - Why UK Politics has Reached a Downfall

By Zubair Asim

Our nation has been ruined. Since 2016, the political arena has been dominated by despicable post-truth politicians. The UK has been brainwashed by these cynical politicians who have successfully lied their way through excessive pathos-inducing rhetoric to steer the 65 million UK citizens to a path they never really new about. Never, since the rule of Stalin, have so many people been misled.

I'm talking about the Brexit campaign.

Appalling as it was, it bore testimony to the fact that we are subjected to the dangerous post-truth world of politics of today. The excessively post-truth Brexit campaign was executed through two types of people - the speakers, and the listeners. These people were like cancers: wherever they went, their post-truth toxins would rub off on those around them, and this rapidly spread across the country, thus infecting the population or the 'listeners'; however, these two types of people worked in different ways.

You see, the speakers consisted of politicians who exploited every type of media platform, from television to bus adverts. They facilitated the cultural dementia of today: the likes of Boris Johnson and Michael Gove preyed on this empty void - one where Britain had still not settled to its post-imperial state and the British people wanted sovereignty - and filled it with countless lies and fake news to portray Brexit as the solution. Look at Nigel Farage's anti-EU poster: an extremely racist, fabricated, and unjustified piece of fake news. This type of unacceptable propaganda is similar to what the Nazis used - it baffles me how one could be so ridiculous as to be so nationalistic that they start using fascist-like tactics. Its message was especially a hit to Turkey on the verge of joining the EU; however, not only was this not going to happen in reality, the message behind the poster was a complete logical fallacy - just mere scare tactics, ironically enough from the Brexit campaign (remember when they labelled the Remain campaign as 'Operation Scaremonger?'). But, this scaremongering of the UK public worked - it appealed to Britain's desire



Nigel Farage standing with his anti-EU poster

for power and control that it had decades ago, that Brexit would lead to the UK taking back control from the 'swinish multitude' of the refugees that are invading our country. Fear won over facts. Excessive pathos-inducing rhetoric won over rational debate. Thus, the confusion created caused conflict. But apparently, we were taking back control.

How is it taking back control, if we have suffered the largest increase in hate-crime offences since the Home Office began recording figures? How is it taking back control, if all that's left is this primal fear instilled amongst the British, a long-lasting scar that leaves an unpredictable future? How is it taking back control if we still don't know what kind of Brexit we will have? Guess what? We have not taken back control, and it will take some time before we do once this mess is cleared up.

At no point am I trying to suggest that Brexit was an inherently bad idea, but if only the speakers could have campaigned with more reason than ridicule, or if they had someone who would lay out for us what kind of Brexit we will have and what it looks like, then at least would the public be left with a clearer message and more control over the decision they were making.

But alas, this is the past and this type of post-truth politics - especially as it is growing more than ever with the access to media - has been around for thousands of years and will never change. However, there is one thing that we can change: ourselves. If we first change ourselves, we can change the nation; this needs to be achieved through education. We need to educate the upcoming generations to be able to make more rational decisions, to identify logical fallacies, and to demand from the speakers what we actually need to hear - this is the cure. And although prevention is better than cure, it is an unrealistic goal that we could only dream of changing: post-truth politics will forever haunt us.

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## The Langton at the Vanguard - Teaching Artificial Intelligence

By Dr Askey

The headlines read 'Mona Lisa brought to life'. This is achieved by Deepfake technology from Samsung's AI research laboratory in Moscow. Samsung's AI system mapped facial features and movements from a public database of celebrities gathered from YouTube to anticipate what Mona Lisa looked like in real life. Whilst this is highly impressive and entertaining, it has a disturbing potential for misuse. This technology can be used to literally put words into people's mouths. A fake video of President Barack Obama was created by researchers at Tel Aviv University in 2017. If not regulated, there is the potential danger of never knowing what is, and what is not, fake news.

We might say – well what has this got to do with my everyday life? Well, if you have a supermarket loyalty card, it's got everything to do with you. The supermarket in question is watching your every purchase and is using AI to make assumptions about you and your buying preferences. Its algorithms are learning how to entice you to buy more.

Langton students will have jobs in the future that are yet to be invented. There is the likelihood that they will need to be well versed in the use and understanding of AI. So we are preparing them for their future.

A group of 12 Year 12 students are working with me to learn about the present state of AI research and use. We are aiming to use this information to construct a Key Stage 3 course in Introduction to AI, to be rolled out in the next academic year.

The following describes our present focus of research.

### **Medical Applications of Machine Learning**

By Edward Levings & Josh Greening

AI is becoming increasingly used in identification of early stages of diseases and epidemics because of its ability to offer reliable and objective analysis of patterns in patient data. With increasing use of deep learning, such data analysis has been successfully applied in Ophthalmology, a branch of medicine concerned with the diagnosis, treatment and prevention of diseases of the eye. Machine learning applications in medicine is likely to increase in other areas of medicine where human surveys of patient data can be replicated by computer analysis. But the ethics of AI indicate that expert human collaboration with AI will always be essential to ensure anomalies can still be identified with confidence.

### **Manufacturing and AI**

By Alfie Drew & Safin Gurung

Machine learning is deeply integrated application of artificial intelligence that is already present in day to day manufacturing. The concept behind machine learning in manufacturing is to lower costs whilst improving production quality. For machine learning to be fully capable of manufacturing skill sets, algorithms will have to be fed large amounts of data to gain intelligence on anomalies and quality control standards. AI is capable of understanding these concepts and integrating them into the manufacturing process.

### **Cyber Security with AI**

By Alex Dickers

I am currently researching how cyber security needs to adapt in order to keep machine learning and AI systems and databases secure. I am also researching how AI and machine learning can be used in cyber security to improve the security of personal data as well as mitigating malicious and non-malicious cyber-attacks. This will give The Langton an overall view as to what the future of cyber security might look like.

### **Applications of Machine Learning in Physics Research**

By Dan O'Reilly & Lily Stollery

We are researching the use of AI in Physics Research. A recent groundbreaking moment was at CERN in July 2012, where they announced the discovery of the Higgs Boson, an elementary particle which is incredibly important to the Standard Model of particle physics. Machine learning played a role in helping to detect the pattern of decay which was required to find the Higgs Boson.

Another sector of physics in which machine learning has a wide variety of applications is astronomical research. An example of this is the Kepler mission, which seeks to discover Earth-sized planets orbiting other stars, and which collects data from the Orion Spur and machine learning is used to find the interesting and outstanding parts of data.

### **AI in Education Provision**

By Owen Court & Palin Stanley-Webb

As you are probably aware, students learn in vastly different ways. Machine Learning Technology has not neglected this part of society. In our research we are looking at the personalisation of education: how to keep struggling students up to speed, while simultaneously giving top-of-the-class students a new challenge every day. Additionally, we are looking at making teachers' jobs easier with unbiased, automated marking systems, and even an AI that writes the curriculum for us using predicted jobs in coming years. Writing teacher evaluations, and using these evaluations to match teachers to certain students based on the way they learn, and revolutionary "closed experimentation" on parts of the education system itself. We are even looking at whether education will be needed at all in the future!

All in all, education is a substantial topic regarding Machine Learning in the future, and will be a very crucial area on telling whether machine learning will be a boon or a hindrance to our society in the future.

This gives The Langton teachers some food for thought!

## AI and Crime Prevention

By Jagger Garcia & Josh Matheson

We are analysing varying aspects of the applications of Machine Learning in modern society whilst bearing in mind the implications and importance of how data manipulation and AI could impact our society in the future. Our initial research is focussed around law enforcement and the legal sector. At present, AI is regularly used in geographical prediction of crime occurrence and facial recognition technology with a view to developing crime prevention strategies and reconstructing facial recognition technology with a view to developing crime prevention strategies and reconstructing facial images in forensic analysis.

Further Reading:

Tom Chivers, *The AI Does Not Hate You: Superintelligence, Rationality and the Race to Save the World*. (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2019).

Marcus Du Sautoy, *The Creativity Code: How AI is learning to write, paint and think*. (Harper Collins, 2019).

Hannah Fry, *Hello World: Being Human in the Age of Algorithms*. (W. W. Norton Company, 2019).

Stuart Russell, *Human Compatible: AI and the Problem of Control*. (Viking, 2019).

## The Langton Music Centre

By The Music Department

In a world with an ever-growing population and scarce resources, we need to address humanity's capacity to care for one another. At The Langton we acknowledge the responsibilities that come with working with a large group of intelligent young men and women. Our students will leave us and go on to enjoy professional careers where they will become the leaders of tomorrow. Our mission is to engender an altruistic outlook in these young people; asking them to consider how they can use their talents and intelligence for the greater good of their communities and the wider world.

Langton students have conducted original scientific research identifying the benefits of music on many aspects of health and well-being, particularly amongst the elderly, the disabled, those with learning difficulties and those experiencing poor mental health. As a consequence of our students' findings, we have built collaborations with groups in our local community, including a local dementia care home and a choir for people with Parkinson's disease. Our students enjoy time with their fellow community members as well as getting to know them, whilst using music as the medium of social interaction and care. The benefits for both our students and the community are immeasurable. Our vision is to establish a purpose-built music centre that will provide the opportunity to expand this caring outlook, for there to be fluidity that would foster greater cohesion, enabling members of our wider community to visit us and meet with our students on a regular and enduring basis.

Our vision for the Langton Music Centre is to create a facility which welcomes community music groups both throughout and beyond the school day, thus encouraging our young people to work with a diverse range of people from throughout the community. We hope to become a beacon and centre of excellence for schools across the country, displaying the social cohesion and cultural, emotional and spiritual benefits that musical participation brings to communities and generations.

The new building shall be a stand-alone 160-seater music centre featuring auditorium, teaching and practice rooms as a school and community owned facility to promote the benefits of music in the Canterbury district. This is to replace the current series of aged or prefabricated rooms in which the centre is currently housed.

The centre will serve the district of Canterbury, as well as reaching out to towns and villages south of the city and including Folkestone, Hythe, Sandgate and Dover.

During the day the facility will be a teaching centre, the focus of the school's music research projects and a community resource for use by local primary schools and specific disadvantaged groups. In the evening and at weekends the facility will be a regular rehearsal space for community groups, a significant concert venue and arts centre complementing The Gulbenkian Theatre on the opposite side of the city.

# Climate Change and Environmental Action

By Louis Mansfield

Climate change is often perceived as an issue consigned to the far future, but we are now at the beginning of climate catastrophe and the start of the sixth mass extinction. Everything we eat, drink and breath is being polluted by our economic system in the name of 'progress'.

The frequency and severity of heat waves are increasing globally. For example, the 2003 heat wave caused 55,000-70,000 deaths in Europe and the heat wave that hit Moscow in 2010 killed another 55,000 people. When heatwaves like this hit countries nearer the equator droughts can occur, leading to extortionate amounts of death and misery. Rising temperatures and droughts lead to an increase in number and size of wildfires which can burn forests, farmland and can destroy entire communities.

Although there is a general focus on how the actions of the individual affect the climate (through air miles and the like), just 100 corporations are responsible for 71% of global emissions. The CEOs of these corporations will not be severely affected by the crimes and ecocide they have committed; it will be the masses that will have to suffer the consequences. It is the working people who have contributed relatively little to the climate crisis who will face the brunt of the impact and whose homes will be flooded and livelihoods destroyed.

People living in the global south are already facing the consequences of corporate greed. Indigenous communities in the Brazilian Amazon are being killed or displaced by logging companies and forest fires due to lack of regulation and loosening of environmental policies (including the refusal to stop forest fires quickly from Brazil's fascist president Bolsonaro).

The effects we see now are nothing compared to what will come unless we act now: more than a quarter of a billion people could be displaced by rising sea levels, causing a mass migration cramming people into smaller areas which will increase the likelihood of disease, resource wars, conflicts and an overall negative impacts on human rights. The 'Special Report on the Ocean and Cryosphere in a Changing Climate' (SROCCC) outlines the disasters that humanity will face if greenhouse gas emissions are not reduced. Some of these events include huge increases in flood damages, annual extreme sea level events around the world by 2050 and millions of people's water supplies being affected by melting glaciers. The IPCC report predicts that there are very high risks of our food system becoming unstable after 2 degrees Celsius of warming.

However, it is not too late to act, our governments in their current form have failed us, and it is now up to the people to demand climate action before our time runs out and it is too late to reverse the damage we have inflicted on our precious ecosystems and planet. The human race must unite and challenge corporations and our current governments and create an economic system that does not advocate the destruction of ecosystems and forests for money.

Although our toxic system cannot be changed by the individual, we can all still make small changes to our lifestyle that can help reduce our carbon emissions; we should try to cut down our meat consumption (and if possible completely stop eating meat), attempt to stop buying single use plastics, avoid fast fashion and try to walk or use public transport whenever possible. But most importantly we as students must strive to participate in local youth strikes for climate protection and other non-violent environmental action groups.

I urge anybody who fears the climate crisis to take part in this strike for the real power belongs to the people, who as a collective have the power to bring about real change in societies, the one thing corporations and governments fear most are the people uniting under one common goal.

## Conservation Today

By Jacob Tate

We often refer to the environment as if it is a detached concept; some entity entirely separate from ourselves. However, in light of recent events, some of you know this ideal is hugely flawed, and unfortunately in the light of modern conservation this cannot be more so.

Every day hundreds of threatened species are slaughtered for their hides, meat, or to make some false remedy for the conservationist abomination that is Chinese Traditional Medicine. Some of these animals are even killed for sport or due to human incompetence; take the Yahtzee River Dolphin, extinct due to sloppy government conservation strategies, or the Passenger Pigeon, killed off merely because of its numbers.

Yet we continue our lives as if nothing is happening. This is partly the fault of the media; excessive use of statistics (such as deforestation stats, for example) as a cudgel often desensitises people to the true meaning the fact bears; we hear doom-and-gloom far too often. These incompetent musings are often blown out of proportion by large news sites, until we have heard the story so many times we simply do not care for such matters anymore.

Take the Amazon Rainforest. Often it merely occupies a murky, 'something to do with jungles' part of our minds. Unfortunately not many people are able to comprehend the sheer 'stonkingly' large scale and beauty of the place; the

phenomenal biodiversity there makes it the largest host of tropical species in the planet. Yet every minute we lose another 24 acres of this wonderful land. Yet we do not care. Yet we slouch on our sofas like the gluttons we are gorging ourselves on chocolate that destroyed habitats. We cannot continue to stand idly by while these atrocities are happening.

Granted, some efforts are being made to combat poaching, but unless expanded or fortified this exertion is pointless. The quasi-military ‘soldiers’ are merely skeleton crews paid less than minimum wage. They have little access to the transport or weapon art that is required to track and protect their endangered charges, and many of the crew are killed by the poachers themselves; if given the choice between sparing a human life or £20,000 elephant ivory, surprisingly most hunters choose the latter.

First world countries simply do not have any anti-poaching forces; from some fabricated sense of entitlement often they believe that things will simply ‘get better’. People sit in their suburban three-bedroom houses and sleep easy, thinking that simply because they have recycled their yogurt pot or become vegetarian they are assisting the conservation effort. How naive. Recycling your yogurt pot takes energy; more energy than it took to make it in the first place, and becoming veggie is a moral practice, doing little to actually raise animal numbers. Somewhat amusing is the fact that the underpaid, struggling squads of the DRC are technically doing a better job than the people who can really make a difference.

And I’m not joking when I say this; we really can make a difference from doing small, insignificant things. We just need to do them together or they won’t work. Check that the palm oil in your food and cosmetics is from a sustainable source (more about that next time) to prevent deforestation. Boycott Chinese Traditional Medicine, and help convince others that it doesn’t work. Spend a weekend at your local green space volunteering to clean the lake or restoring habitats.

We are the next generation; our predecessors have done nothing to stop this. It is now our duty to do so now else the effects mentioned in Louis’s article will become very real.

So perhaps we should refer to the planet as ‘our environment’ instead.

## My Thoughts as a Year 7

By Sebastian Gray

My first couple of terms at the Langton have so far offered a wide range of diverse opportunities, outside as well as inside the curriculum. Everyone treats each other with respect but with the correct equivalent of fun and banter to ensure that everyone enjoys themselves. I, at least, feel that I am getting a lot out of nearly every lesson and am learning something pretty much every day, and I’m sure many others do too.

The teachers are honest with you and give you the right balance of constructive criticism and praise, and genuinely know their subject. You are also encouraged to learn and stretch yourself, which I think is important if we want a sustainable career when we’re older and to go to a good university. All the staff are helpful whatever your problem is, whether you’ve lost something or are struggling with homework. The discipline is also strict yet not too much so that lessons become a bore and there is a sense of injustice, and it keeps everyone in line so that all students have the best opportunity to learn they possibly can. I think that it is great that abuse in any way, is properly dealt with, and is not very common anyway.

I appreciate that the school has realised and embraced certain problems, and tried to help stop them. One that immediately springs to mind is climate breakdown. The school has listened to the voices of its students, and has done many things to help tackle the problem, from setting up organisations to permitting students to go on the climate strikes and protest for what they believe in.

There are few criticisms to make, but one minor issue, possibly, is regarding the mobile phone policies (primarily year seven) and that in my opinion, some students use them far too much at breaktimes and lunchtimes. Personally, I find it hard to think clearly after excessive use of screens, and I don’t think I’m the only one. I understand that it is by choice, and there are many things students can do otherwise, but if the fields were open in winter too then perhaps more students would play sport, as the only sport I see played extensively on the playground is football.

To be honest, I can’t think of any more problems within the schools direct control and that’s great. There hasn’t been too much homework so far (fingers crossed) and I haven’t seen or experienced any bullying whatsoever - although I think I’ve been lucky. Most people I’ve met throughout the year group have been friendly, nice and unique, and making friends appears to be an easier task than it would in many other places and schools.

In conclusion, I think the Langton nurtures a unique and great atmosphere brimming with respect and a wide variety of opportunities, and the people there, both students and staff, are encouraging and friendly. The school understands and listens to everyone’s problems and allows them to speak out for what they believe in. There are few criticisms, and about 90% of them are out of the schools direct control. All in all, my first couple of terms have been an experience like no other.

The Langtonian is created by Benjamin Francis, Lindley Trueblood, Bob Hart, Taha Malasi, Ollie Gregory and Gregory Schoen.