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BRADBYS HOUSE PLAY

*"A Man For All Seasons", Speech Room, filmed,
5 and 6 November*

House plays are back, albeit with a different audience configuration, with the exceptional *A Man For All Seasons*, produced by Bradbys. Expertly directed by ACO, the play tells the true story of Sir Thomas More, a maverick who stands by his principles even if it may cost him his life (it did!). The morals and themes of the play feel particularly necessary and relevant given the current political climate which we see rising across the world: the debate between the individual and the collective, and holding true to one's own opinions and beliefs or conceding to those dictated by society.



The turmoil of the characters, as they wrestle with one another over More's character, and attempt to force a concession on his part, was excellently embodied by the Bradbys cast. A play like this is primarily character and dialogue driven, and requires commitment and engagement from all actors. Its sombre and serious tone risks dryness without the subtle unspoken acting of the cast, as we explore their minds through expression and nuance. This was exemplified without flaw by the cast. Federico Greaves shone as Sir Thomas More, not portraying him as a martyr who has sacrificed his life, but as a flawed man who dies because he cannot deviate from his notions and commitments. Liam Rienow and Dylan Kainth played the heartbroken and anxious wife and daughter of Sir Thomas. Their arcs displayed acceptance for Sir Thomas' beliefs, regardless of their lack of understanding of them. Charlie de Hemptinne posed compelling and thought-provoking questions as the Common Man, asking whether our immoralities can be excused by our need to live. It is this compelling question which viewers debate. Adiran Inpan, Charlie Clayton, Rafferty and Sam McGougan, Hugo Bishop and Tiarnan O'Brien all gave strong performances in support.

The minimalist set added much to the play, drawing the primary focus to the characters and their interaction, rather than theatricalities. This was all complemented beautifully by Max Leof, operating the lighting, and David Liu running backstage.

With School back online and the prospect of live theatre seeming distant, *A Man For All Seasons* is a powerful play with a call back to better time. Thanks must go to ACO, who successfully directed a show in the midst of a pandemic!

ORIENTAL SOCIETY

*Benjamin Thu Ya, Elmfield, "Burma: Its Culture,
Food and Politics", 25 November*

On 25 November, Benjamin Thu Ya, *Elmfield*, talked to the Oriental Society about Burma, covering topics such as the Burmese culture, cuisine and politics.

To start the talk, he answered the commonly asked question about whether the country was called Burma or Myanmar; he said both names were legitimate and refer to the same country. He went on to talk about the climate and location of Burma. Burma is situated in Southeast Asia, bordering India, China and Thailand. Interestingly, due to the size of the country, climates vary tremendously, ranging from the tropical waters of Inle Lake in the South to the icy glaciers in the North. He described the big contrast across the country, with a population of 54 million, and how it is diverse and dynamic in terms of architecture and climate.

Next, he talked about the Burmese language. It comes from a Sino-Tibetan family of languages, which is similar to some Chinese and Tibetan dialects. It has a lot of Hindi and English-language influences and over 1,000 adopted words. There are 125 regional languages with over 10 dialects and 33 alphabets.

Then, Thu Ya talked in depth about the cuisine. A Burmese meal would consist of lots of curries in small amounts, with rice being a main staple and the food being in a tapas style. The cuisine has influences from Thai, Chinese and Indian food. There is also a huge snacking culture; there is a saying that a Burmese person's mouth is no different from a goat's: always munching. In upper Burma, dishes tend to be very meaty and greasy because they preserve them by soaking them in oil. Coastal regions have more watery and fishy dishes. Recipes are also rarely used, and cooking comes through trial and error.

Finally, he talked about the politics in Burma. It was a British colony from 1824 to 1948, when they annexed the whole country. In 1885, the Burmese monarchy was ended by a trio of wars and the King and his family were exiled to Ratanagiri. When World War 2 broke out in Burma, Aung San, a nationalist and pro-independence activist, sided with the Japanese to drive the British out. The Japanese took advantage of the local support and gave a 'fake' independence to the country. However, they were unpleasant rulers and the Burmese people realised they were better off under British, who helped drive the Japanese out and later gave them independence in the Panglong Treaty in 1946.

On 4 January 1948, the government was formed, and independence was gained. It was a democratic state with a functioning bicameral parliamentary system, but there were communist uprisings. Military dictatorship from 1962 to 1988 allowed them to manipulate the country. In the 1990 elections, Aung San Suu Kyi had a landslide victory but never went into power as the military prevented it due to her democratisation efforts. Under the very undemocratic military regime, she was never allowed to be president, but she is the State Counsellor of Burma and continues to fight for democracy. With that, Thu Ya ended his presentation.

Throughout the presentation, Thu Ya's knowledge and pride for Burma was clearly demonstrated. A great presentation all round, filled with enthusiasm.

SUMMERSON SOCIETY

ARTiculation: Christopher Gujadhur,
19 November

The ARTiculation final on 19 November 2020 meeting was, of necessity in this year of Covid, a hybrid between in-school face-to-face and online contributions from self-isolating contributors. The slight sense of disconnection and discombobulation caused by this multi-media format – shifting screens, up-front images, or slightly distant images accompanied by voices that sometimes faded in and out – was perhaps a concrete manifestation of the disconnection between the paintings discussed. But this very disconnection produced its own serendipity. The random collecting together of seven paintings with no obvious connection to each other can set up interesting comparisons, sparking off each other, and allow us to think of the paintings in a new way. So, we moved through sentimental symbolism, monumental colour, baroque storytelling, abstraction, mythological eroticism, scientific mysticism and 20th-century realism. Threads of connection seemed to be violence against women and their revenge, echoing the ‘MeToo’ movement, and the chaos, alienation, lack of comfort and sense of insecurity caused by Covid’s shaking of the foundations of the world order.

Jun Wha Shin, *Elmfield*: G F Watts *Hope* (1886)

Jun Wha Shin’s choice of *Hope* (1886) by George Frederick Watts (1817–1907) was a brave attempt to resurrect interest in this perhaps overly used image. The blind girl sits on a globe, her eyes bandaged, bent over her lyre with all its strings broken except one, listening forlornly to the notes she plays. She has an appearance of classical antiquity and is dressed in a greeny-blue dress with touches of gold that are picked up in her hair and the globe.

G F Watts belonged to the Symbolist movement that rejected materialism and aimed to express the value of art through colour, line and composition. Watts said: ‘I paint ideas, not things’. The idea of hope expressed in this painting seems paradoxical: it seems more despairing and pessimistic. Watts had just lost his granddaughter aged one at this time. The painting became immensely popular. Cheap reproductions proliferated – even Picasso seemed to have based his *Old Guitarist* on the pose of the girl – and eventually the image fell out of fashion, with the Tate Gallery removing it from permanent display in 1938.

But *Hope* inspired Martin Luther King and later, Shin suggested, Barack Obama, whose portrait in the poster *Hope* was an image of hope for the time. ADT, adjudicating, enjoyed, as a historian, Shin’s use of historical references to place the painting. Shin’s conclusion was that today, with Covid and a global recession, G F Watt’s message that there is always hope still seems relevant.

Adam Chambers, *Rendalls*: Mark Rothko *Black on Maroon* (1959)

The obvious representationalism of *Hope* could not contrast more with Mark Rothko’s *Black on Maroon* (1959) chosen by Adam Chambers. The painting is 266cm x 381cm and was produced as a mural for The Four Seasons Restaurant in the Seagram Building in New York, so it has a monumentality which, Chambers said, is the idea of something bigger than life. Its size in a small room makes the room seem even smaller. The colour palette is black on which two vertical rectangles of purple are set side by side, their edges fuzzy. This limited colour palette, which moved on from Rothko’s yellow and red palette of 1952–53, can change our mood. Rothko suffered from depression and seems to be trying to express this as he devolved to abstraction. He said: ‘Following artistic tradition was not only irrelevant but irresponsible’. Chambers explained that Rothko wanted to eliminate all obstacles between the painter and the idea, and between the idea and the observer.

Chambers quoted Mark Rothko: “We favor the simple

expression of complex thoughts.” Rothko’s method of expression could not be further from the story-telling painting of *Hope*, and Rothko’s personal battle with depression, ending in his suicide and expressed in his painting, showed that he did not feel hope in his life.

Haiwei Li, *Bradlys*: Artemisia Gentileschi *Judith beheading Holofernes* (1613–20)

From Rothko’s abstract expressionism, Haiwei Li took us to another form of expressionism: Baroque in all its exuberance, movement, contrast, grandeur and surprise. In Artemisia Gentileschi’s *Judith beheading Holofernes*, painted between 1613 and 1620, and in the Uffizi Gallery in Florence, we see the Israelite heroine from the Apocryphal book of Judith, assisted by her maid, beheading the Assyrian general Holofernes after he has fallen asleep drunk.

Gentileschi shows the violence of the scene in all its graphic detail. Li explained how all the limbs in the painting point towards the head of Holofernes, making the viewer focus on the horrendous act of beheading: the physicality of the two women, the spurting of the blood, the effort shown in the maid’s face as she is gripped by Holofernes’ fist as he struggles to survive.

Li compared the painting to an earlier version in Naples, painted by Gentileschi between 1612 and 1613, which is much less shockingly violent in its depiction. Holofernes’ legs are not shown and there is less sense of struggle and focus on the violent act and as a result it is less dramatic. Li also showed Caravaggio’s painting of the same episode in which Judith seems a reluctant aggressor. Li preferred the more resolute Judith in Gentileschi’s version.

Li posed the question of why Gentileschi’s interpretation of the scene became more violent in her second version and explained that in between the two paintings, Gentileschi attended the trial of her neighbour, Tassi, who had raped her when she was 17. The trial was a humiliating experience for her though she won the case. Li explained that Gentileschi, after this experience, wanted to depict strong heroic women standing up to the patriarchy, perhaps in revenge for Tassi’s rape. Gentileschi thus identified with Judith.

Li’s setting of the painting in its historical context was appreciated by ADT, who also commended Li’s development of his argument, rather than merely listing out interesting facts about the painting. Li viewed the painting as an early embodiment of feminism, which seems very topical at the time of ‘MeToo’. So, Li showed us a good dramatic story but with an interesting message that raises the impact of the painting.

Sachin Vyas, *Elmfield*: Jackson Pollock *Yellow Islands* (1952)

The alternation between figurative and abstract painting in this talk moved us on then to the great abstract artist Jackson Pollock, and his *Yellow Islands* (1952), as chosen by Sachin Vyas. It is perhaps a challenge to talk about an abstract painting where there are no recognizable representational elements to latch onto. It is interesting that we had Pollock after Rothko, both part of the Abstract Expressionism movement, in Pollock’s case “a superstar”, in Vyas’ words, and both rivals but with very different styles.

There is almost the exuberance of the Baroque in Pollock’s paintings and *Yellow Islands* is a strong example. Vyas described it as “action packed”, showing complexity and energy that captivates the viewer.

Vyas explained that Pollock’s method was to aim to allow the painting to have its own life and autonomy. He painted half of the painting as the canvas was lying on the ground, pouring the paint onto the canvas and tipping up the canvas allowing the paint to run, thus permitting gravity to affect the outcome. The effect was to make the painting look frozen. The large black ‘hole’ in the middle appeared when the painting was on the wall and paint dripped down. The blotches of white paint seem to impose some illusory form on the swirls of black

paint. Although the white could be said to represent purity, linked to Pollock's Christian upbringing, and the black could be said to represent power, authority and death, celebrated as the Mexicans do, Pollock's goal does not seem to be to convey meaning with the colours. Vyas explained that Pollock created his works from within and did not depict his interpretation of external ideas, the development of an argument that ADT enjoyed. The paint speaks for itself, is not only the means to describe subjects, as in the paintings of Titian or Caravaggio, but is itself the subject of the painting.

Freddie Strange, *Newlands*: Cy Twombly *Leda and the Swan* (1962)

Cy Twombly's huge graffiti-like mural of the beautiful Leda being raped by Zeus, who had taken the form of a swan, is an almost abstract depiction of this famous story, with its energetic strokes of crayon and pencil, and so follows on from the discussion of Pollock, yet ties in with the storytelling paintings of *Hope* and *Judith beheading Holofernes*.

Freddie Strange used Twombly's image as the basis for an intriguing discussion, commended by ADT, of how we should interpret paintings of this act of violation of a woman. He explained that Leda was attacked by an eagle but saved by the swan, which then went on to rape her: this seems another example of the suppression of women by the patriarchy.

Strange showed us Ruben's interpretation, with Leda's sensual flesh and the swan laying its head between her breasts. Michelangelo's destroyed version was considered difficult to look at. Strange asked how we can see beauty in these interpretations of an act of violence against a woman. Are these paintings intended for the titillation of male viewers in which there is a sense that this act of Zeus was his right to do, as a dominant male? Strange then showed us Derrick Santini's 2013 photographic depiction of the myth, which he felt was almost pornographic in its literalism.

A statue interpretation shows Leda grabbing the neck of the swan and suggesting a sense of female enjoyment. Twombly's version of vigorous scribbles, with red streaks suggesting bodily fluids, is almost exciting. Strange ended by suggesting that it does not matter what the artist thinks: it is how we viewers interpret the image, whether as rape or beauty.

Charles Read, *The Grove*: Hilma Af Klint *No. 7 Adulthood* (1907) From the highly charged eroticism of the depictions of the rape of Leda by the swan, we moved to a calmer sphere of abstraction, with Charles Read's presentation of *No. 7 Adulthood* (1907) by the Swedish painter Hilma Af Klint (1862–1944). Suddenly, we are in a cerebral world of almost mathematical paintings that are intended to be a visual representation of complex spiritual ideas. *No. 7 Adulthood*, at 3m high and 3m wide, was a massive canvas for the time. Af Klint's inventive geometrical visual language conceptualized invisible forces of the inner and outer world, often encountered in seances, religion, science, evolution, atoms and plants. *No. 7 Adulthood* resonates with themes from Af Klint's botanical studies in which she was interested in the growth of plants from a mathematical perspective. She uses colour to symbolize the unity of genders. The forms could be planet-sized or egg-sized, all depicted in a mystical way, full of inner spirituality.

Af Klint could be said to be the first Western abstract painter. Under the terms of her will, her works were kept locked up for 20 years after her death, and this contributed to her remaining relatively unknown compared to other giants of abstract painting, Kandinsky, Malevich and Mondrian. Yet she was ahead of them in terms of freeing her art from the representational, an argument appreciated by ADT, and in terms of the presentation, another example of the empowered woman.

Gareth Tan, *Moretons*: Edward Hopper *Nighthawks* (1942) The ARTiculation event ended with a return to the safer ground

of the figurative in Edward Hopper's famous *Nighthawks* (1942), as presented by Gareth Tan. The scene is of three customers at the counter of a New York café at night, being served by a white-coated barman. We see them through the large plate-glass window of the café, and the street outside is lit by the fluorescent lighting from the café, emphasized by its lemon interior walls. The street is deserted, the shop fronts empty, suggesting that this scene is late at night.

Tan used interesting photo-shopped images from the painting and transitions to delve deeper into the analysis of the painting and to interrogate its name, which was highly commended by ADT as adjudicator. The first impression that the viewer has is of the loneliness of big city life, accentuated by the late hour. The group of two men and one woman at the counter seem divided by their body language despite their physical proximity. Yet, at the same time, there is an intimacy as we look at this scene with the same view as the man with his back to us.



Tan suggested that the painting encapsulates the notion of 'sonder': "the feeling of realizing that everyone, including strangers passed in the street, has a life as complex as one's own, which they are constantly living despite one's personal lack of awareness of it". The name *Nighthawks* may refer to the man with the hawk-like nose next to the woman. Or does it allude to night predators, pimps who pedal prostitutes, and is that who the woman in the painting is?

Tan brought the painting's meaning up to date by relating it to the year of Covid. The painting was painted 44 days after the United States had entered the Second World War, when a feeling of paranoia was prevalent in American life, and this historical reference was appreciated by the adjudicator. The spacing between the figures almost mimics the social distancing that has become a fact of everyday life in 2020. Tan suggested that the isolation enshrined in *Nighthawks* speaks powerfully to the isolation necessitated by protection against Covid in the world today. This referencing of a 1942 painting to the troubles that the world faces in 2020 picked up the theme that Shin posited in his account of *Hope*, earned Tan the winner's title, and brought the ARTiculation artistic journey full circle.

LAET

It was with great excitement that the London Academy of Excellence Tottenham (LAET), a school partnered with Harrow, was announced this month as the Sunday Times Sixth Form of the Year. LAET is a school built on partnerships and good relations. Founded in 2017 and connected to the new White Hart Lane Stadium via a glass walkway, it took shape as quickly as the stadium that grew up beside it. The roots of the school, however, were much deeper. Supported by some of the best schools in London, including Harrow and Highgate, LAET is grounded in the communities and students of Tottenham and, with the support of some unquestionable educational muscle, is committed to providing a diet of academic excellence worthy of its name.

East Haringey, where the school is situated, contains some of the most economically deprived wards in the country. Yet, in only three years, students from the local area have achieved A level grades comparable to the best schools in the country and have gone on to study at Oxford, Cambridge, Imperial, UCL, King's and many other first-class universities. "To say that we couldn't have done this without the partnership of Harrow is an understatement" says LAET Head, Jan Balon. "From LAET's inception, Harrow has worked closely with LAET in lots of ways and in various departments; the Lumina programmes are particularly invaluable for our students."

Like all good partnerships, the relationship is two way and LAET and Harrow both benefit from it. LAET winning the Sunday Times State Sixth Form of the Year, an award based on A level success and university destinations, is not achieved without considerable support as Jan Balon warmly acknowledges: "some of that award is owed to our partner schools: Harrow, we are constantly grateful for our friendship and support."

METROPOLITAN

HERE AND THERE

Alex Bonsu, husband of Mercy, who worked here at the School between 2006 and 2018, works as a supermarket assistant at Waitrose but is also CEO of The Christian Eye Foundation – a local charity that supports people in need with shopping and food donations as well as supporting African charities.

During the pandemic, Alex, Mercy and the charity worked tirelessly to support the elderly and people in need. The charity has helped customers with more than £50,000 worth of groceries. He has received a Hero of Beaconsfield award from the local MP.

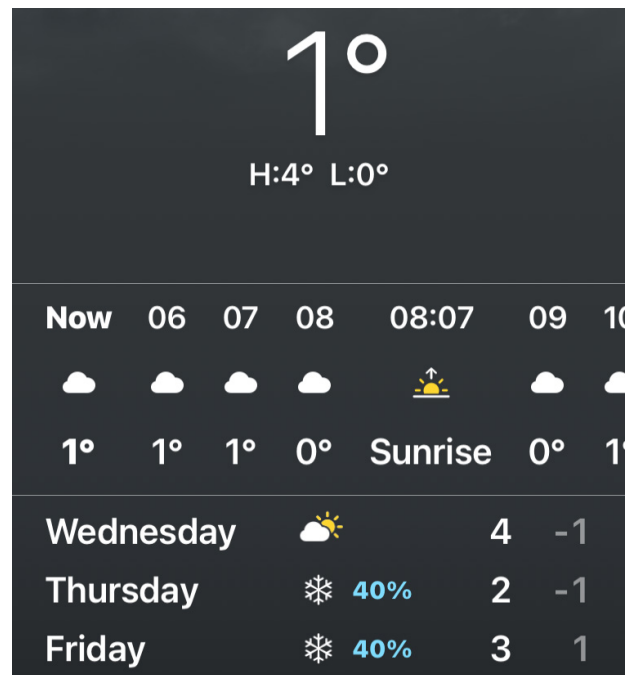
WINTER IS COMING

Photography Competition

The typical characteristics like the bare trees and a high moon work really nicely to show the coming of winter. The tree branches on the right also create a frame around the moon, which is a really effective use of that space.



Winner: Miss Emma Pinto, Database and Research Officer, HDT



Ms Sheila Price, Rendalls Matron



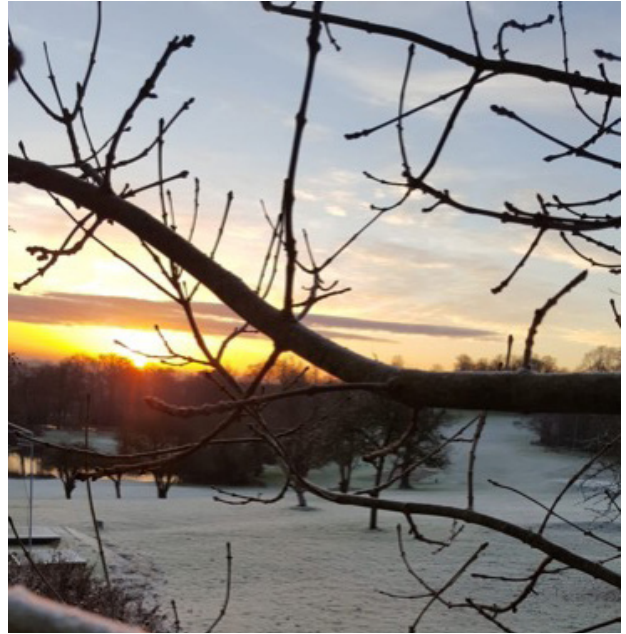
Raulph Lubbe, *The Grove* – Shell



Miss Gina Hollaway, HR Administrator



JAPB



Mr Mick Broadbent, Waste Co-ordinator



Custos



HAH



Cooper Swan, *The Grove* – Upper Sixth



CEP



Ulrico Zampa, *The Head Master's*, Remove



Captain Robson



Miss Sinead O'Grady, School Nurse



Mrs Karina Gumm, Chemistry Technician



June Hyun, *West Acre* – Remove



HRF

WINSTON CHURCHILL ESSAY PRIZE

The 2020 Winston Churchill Essay Prize asked boys to consider the statement 'Statues deny the realities of the past'. Boys submitted a fascinating range of arguments and perspectives, with the best essays showing thorough research and reflection. Shells, Remove, and Fifth Form boys responded to two articles, one from *The Guardian* and one from *The Spectator*. Sixth Form boys were free to take the direction of their argument where they wished, which led to an excellent range of essays.

Shells

Hans Patel, *Newlands* – winner

Awni Dajani, *Moretons* – highly commended

Removes

June Hyun, *West Acre* – winner

Charlie Ni, *Elmfield* – highly commended

Alex Adefarasin, *The Grove* – highly commended

Fifth Form

Matthew Chin, *Bradlys* – winner

Aum Amin, *Elmfield* – highly commended

Harry O'Shea, *Druries* – highly commended

Sixth Form

Ilyas Qureshi, *The Park* – winner

Daniel Sidhom, *The Knoll* – highly commended

Justin Chan, *Druries* – highly commended

STATUES DENY THE REALITIES OF THE PAST

Shell Winner, Hans Patel

In March 2015, a student called Chumani Maxwele brought a pail of poo to the University of Cape Town and emptied it over a statue of Cecil Rhodes, the British imperialist and diamond tycoon of Cape to Cairo fame. Maxwele declared, "there is no collective history here – where are our heroes and ancestors?" The following year, the protest spread to students in Oriel College, Oxford who launched their own campaign to topple a statue of Cecil Rhodes, their generous benefactor. Fast forward to July 2020: in Bristol, protestors threw a statue of Edward Colston, a city philanthropist into the river Avon, from Pero's bridge, which is named after a slave. In London, Winston Churchill's statue on Parliament Square was nailed into a wooden box for protection. In Brussels, an effigy of Leopold II, Belgium's brutal colonial monarch was hastily removed. Meanwhile in America, statues to the Confederacy have been destroyed by protestors or stealthily removed in the dead of night by the authorities. From Africa to Europe to the Americas, no public statue is apparently safe. Statues are bitter scenes of conflict over interpretations of the past. Yet, why do lumps of stone, concrete and metal in public spaces, which often just blend into the background, inspire so much rage?

Statues may be tangible memorials commemorating influential historical figures and events, but statues are also celebrations. They glorify people who are literally 'put up on a pedestal' for the rest of us to look up to as models of virtue. Statues fulfil our human need for heroes. They remind us that what we choose to do during our short time on Earth can live on long after we are dead and buried.

However, as Byron said, the problem with a statue is that it, "smacks something of a hankering for public fame" and, "looks like putting up pretensions to permanency". Statues

represent a suspiciously edited version of reality making the subject look squeaky clean and shiny. But be careful of the kinds of 'turds' you choose to shine! Shouldn't any person, cast in bronze upon a plinth, have to have an untarnished reputation? Which led us to the problem with dead people – at least those we chose to put up icons to. Famous people, like the rest of us are complicated and if we dig into their past and the times they lived in, with different values from today, we discover their feet were made of clay. Therefore, in order to admire them we end up whitewashing over the dodgy parts of their past.

The historian Olusoga is clear: generations of Bristolians have been defending the statue of a "mass murderer". They try to justify keeping Colston's idol by talking about the great things he did for his home town. Colston gave away the proceeds of his slavery enterprise to Bristol's schools, churches and charities. "Bristol owes Colston" the *Spectator* proclaims. But is philanthropy an acceptable way to launder dirty money? After all, that money went on to benefit people who were white. It seems that black lives don't really matter to the *Spectator* magazine.

So on one hand, Colston is a philanthropist and Rhodes an adventuring imperial visionary. On the other hand, Colston is a perpetrator of crimes against humanity and Rhodes a racist white supremacist. Someone's hero, another's villain. Rhodes and Colston were just men of their time. The past has passed and those ideas and values no longer exist. Unfortunately, it is not so simple. Some bits of history are so horrific that you must take a stand on the right moral side. For slavery or against? For the Jewish holocaust or against? It's not as if they did not know what they were doing. Enslaving, brutalising, killing for 400 years; millions of souls displaced. The battle for some historical truths are necessary. With the example of Colston and Rhodes the 'history war' is for the truth about slavery and colonialism to be told because the legacy of these events continues to harm people of colour today. Ironically, removing Colston could also hide further Bristol's link to the slave trade. So in some cases destroying statues is more likely to deny the realities of the past more completely.

"Look on my works, ye Mighty and despair!" Ozymandias declares gazing across a wasteland of desert. We despair because unlike Ozymandias the works of Colston and Rhodes have not turned to dust. Time has not worn away their deeds. Of course it lives on in the buildings and the money their ill gotten gains generate. We despair because Colston's wealth and reputation was built on man's inhumanity. His 'works' were the trade in black lives. It was man's most profitable project – ever.

Maybe tearing down statues won't create the equality Black Lives Matters want, however it is possible to turn statues around and reveal their Janus face? In short, can we do what the *Spectator* says and go from glorifying to reflecting? Perhaps instead of denying the past, we can see statues as concrete examples of the kinds of people our ancestors really were. Clearly in the 18th century it was a badge of honour to be a successful slave trader – not a good look today. Similarly, in the late 19th century to speak of whites as a "supreme race" and African people as a "subject race" to be "treated like a child" and kept "in their proper station" was nothing to be ashamed of. We can learn so much about the people in the past and their times by who they chose to idolise. The longer controversial concrete statues are allowed to stand, the more widely we can educate people about the "ugly details" of British slave trade and imperialism.

Unfortunately, Heaven writing in the *Spectator*, proves even the best education won't help him loosen his loyalty to a biased history. Seeing is believing, so Colston's stature is accepted without questioning it. Even when he is forced to confront the holocaust Colston was involved in, Heaven holds on to his view that Colston's statue ought to stay. Sadly, too many people believe that being cast in stone must mean you are one of the "good guys" and they are almost always "guys". Where are the statues to women?

In addition, there are deeply disturbing reasons for the existence of some statues. For example, many Confederacy statues and monuments scattered randomly across America are a problem. Not all are historic. Not all commemorate battles. Not all remember lost loved ones in the civil war era. Instead these statues are totems put up in the 20th century commemorating the Jim Crow past of segregation and white supremacy. Statues such as these cause fear and menace. They send a clear message to people of colour about watching their place. These statues are racist symbols hiding in plain sight, which are used to intimidate black voices.

The Victorians a century later, who placed Colston on a plinth, may not have had racist intentions nor did they want to create fear but they did intend to present a version of history that praised community service - building schools, town halls, libraries, facilities. This is what Colston symbolised to them. They had the power to erase an 18th century slave trading past and write a new history.

So, should Colston stay or should he go? In fact, iconoclasm (tearing down statues you don't like) goes way back. During the English Reformation tearing down statues was popular. Protestants burned and destroyed thousands of statues of saints, even idols of Christ and Mary, to dictate who should be worshipped. But surely what's good for the English Reformation is good for Black Lives Matter? At the end of the Second World War statues from Nazi Germany were purged and one of the first things American troops televised after invading Iraq in 2003 was to topple a statue of Saddam Hussain. There are just some statues that draw attention to dark ideas.

In conclusion, of course, statues deny the realities of the past; they are like history written by the victors which isn't a very good history. Statues are not about telling an unbiased history, but they are great at propaganda. They airbrush a troubled past and can even be designed to intimidate groups of people. So let us ask: what is the purpose of this statue? Is it to glorify a slave trader? If so, time to tear it down. Why not replace it with someone we can all believe in. And, if you feel worried about losing your heritage it's time to start thinking of the past as an evolving story rather than something frozen in time, like a statue.

DO STATUES DENY THE REALITIES OF THE PAST?

Sixth Form Winner Ilyas Qureshi

The Conundrum of Permanence

Do statues deny the realities of the past? This question assumes that the nature and meaning of *past*, *reality* and even *statues* is, and has been, universally understood. But even a cursory glance at a newspaper tells us that is not the case, which complicates the answer. For example, when President Obama took office in 2009, a bust of Winston Churchill was removed from the Oval office. By doing so, did Obama deny a reality of the past, or was the presence of Churchill's bust in the Oval Office denying a reality of the past? While it may appear contradictory, the correct answer to both questions is yes. This will become evident as we delve deeper into the phenomena of past, reality and statues, and discover the answer to our question.

So, what is the past? The past is what happened before the present. Correct, but how do we *know* of the past? Since our memories are limited, and the past extends well beyond human lifetimes, most of what we know of the past is told to us through history – written, oral, filmed or otherwise. This history, through which we know of the past, is written by historians who choose what to include and what to omit and emphasize and deemphasize events and personalities as they, with their predilections and

limitations, see fit. The history reader's knowledge of the past is thus coloured by the historian's filters. For example, when an English child seeks to learn about the decisive battles of the Second World War, the British historian they will likely read will inevitably emphasize the western front. When a Russian child seeks to do the same, the Russian historian will tell them that the Red Army won the war for the Allies. And neither the British nor the Russian historian will likely mention that 2.5 million Indian troops fought in that war, or that 15 percent of all Victoria Crosses awarded in that war went to Indian and Nepalese troops. Same past, different knowledge.

Moreover, historians themselves must squint at the past through the filters of the primary and original sources they rely on to write their histories. The prejudices of archivists directly impact how histories get written because archivists can and often do hide primary documents that don't fit their preferred narrative. An example of this is Operation Legacy, where sensitive colonial records were destroyed and "a sizeable portion" kept secret until this century "to save Britain's honour and to protect its collaborators."* Or take Brexit. When a historian writes its history in 2120 CE and goes to newspaper archives for primary sources, between its coverage in the *Daily Mail* and the *Daily Mirror* (or the *Daily Telegraph* and *The Guardian*), she won't know if Britain was on the verge of allowing itself to be overrun by even more Eastern hordes (Turkish this time, not just Poles and Latvians) or complete economic collapse.

We know the past through history. Since that history is much filtered through the history producer's, i.e., the historian's, the archivist's and the correspondent's, biased lenses, as we have just established, we can never be sure that what we know of the past reflects the truth. Yet most of us seem pretty certain of our views of the history we know. The reason for this lies in another layer of filters: those of the history consumers.

Our prejudices dictate what truth we glean from history. If two people read the same history book, the truths perceived from that book will be different depending on the individual's prejudices and predispositions. George Bush's truth when he installed the bust of Churchill in the oval office was that of Churchill's importance to pushing the USA into international politics and onto the world stage. The truth of Winston Churchill to Obama when the bust was removed was that of the brutal suppression of the Mau Mau rebellion in Kenya, where his grandfather was imprisoned and tortured by British troops. The same past exists for both people, yet their respective truths are different. Our perspective, and what information we have available to us, all affect our truth. Another more immediate example is in an earlier paragraph of this essay. Why did I choose to include statistics about Indian soldiers as opposed to say, African soldiers? The answer almost certainly lies in my ethnic background. I feel more affinity with the Indian soldiers and so my truth of the war includes them in a place of prominence. The same past was available, but the truth I took from that past is unique to me.

Statues themselves are not free of filters either. We all have an idea in our mind of what a statue is or is supposed to be. Perhaps you are picturing one right now. Michelangelo's David; Christ the Redeemer. What is important to distinguish is the difference between statue, sculpture and icon. Sculpture is the umbrella term that describes all the visual arts that operate in three dimensions. A rock could be a sculpture if you so wished. Icon is perhaps the easiest to define. It is simply any religious work of art. A statue of Christ: icon. A painting of Mary: icon. A statue of Buddha: icon. Statues are realistic sculptures that are meant to represent a figure. For the sake of this essay, let us say that a statue must represent a historical figure, as they have the most relevance to the past. All three-dimensional art that does not fall into either the icon or statue category is simply sculpture. Michelangelo's David is a sculpture. Christ the Redeemer is an Icon. A bust of Winston Churchill is a statue. Statues, perhaps because of their materials, or because of their

placement, often become permanent fixtures of a community. The reason statues are put up is because, at the time of the statue being constructed, the subject of the statue is deemed to have done something worth celebrating. The purpose of statues is to commemorate a historical figure. Statues, like history, are versions of a person that have been filtered by the 'writer' (the sculptor) of the statue. Unlike history however, they cannot be 're-written' by future historians. Their permanent nature means that once statues are erected, they cannot be changed. That filtered version of the person will remain constant.

Returning to the question at hand. Do statues deny the realities of the past? Knowing what we do now, I think it is impossible for statues, permanent objects, to represent the shifting truths of the past. In this way, I would say that statues do deny the realities of the past. However, because of the ever-changing nature of the past, statues can, and sometimes do, accurately represent the past to some people some of the time. So, rather unsatisfyingly, my conclusion to the question is: it depends. It depends on who you are and when you are and what you know and who told you. Perhaps the best way to rid ourselves of this problem would simply be to no longer construct statues. When we construct them, they become permanent representations of our present and can never continue to be accurate as the eye of the beholder and history itself changes through time.

* Shohei Sato (2017) 'Operation Legacy': Britain's Destruction and Concealment of Colonial Records Worldwide, *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 45:4, 697-719, <https://doi.org/10.1080/03086534.2017.1294256>

SNOW WHITE SHORT STORY

In a land far far away, a King lived with his wife in a stone-rounded castle. The King often boasted his fair lady to any envoys, ambassadors, emissaries he came across; the Queen would then blush her feather-white skin as if two large apples rested on her cheeks. One winter's day, the fair Queen succumbed to death in childbirth. With her last breath, she lovingly gazed at the beautiful child, bare, naked, innocent, and uttered two raspy words: "Snow White," as the winds wept and the baby cried, and the King gulped his tears.

Maria Grimhilde was the perfect bride; daughter of the neighbouring King (who was very noble indeed), unique in feminine beauty (as well as meaty), well taught in the conduct of families. She was also very cunning. Via thorough observation of her father's courtships, the youngling recognised the vanity of marriage-seeking women. One's low cut dress teasingly exposed her swollen nipples, while dangerously bared shoulders painted the same delighted smile on her father's face. However, Maria never saw cunning women coming to spend a restless night. Such creatures shouldn't, couldn't exist. Maria learnt; she experimented, on boys her age, on young men, on men her father's age. It wasn't shyness and intelligence which finished the deed. It was beauty.

So ambitious, young Maria Grimhilde practised her charms and prided herself over it. Her casting spells enraptured many men indeed, including the lonely King and his sweet ebony child. Every day she observed a beautiful figure in the mirror, examining the twitching features, voluptuous bosom, sharp cut, angular face. She practised and brooded and brooded and practised, in the interim loving her husband. The dainty little child was, well, a thing of least importance. For 6 years, the new Queen frolicked in the delphinium-blue garden, monotonously devoid of the orange and cloth-white of fantastical emissaries. She conquered the King and his delightful toad-green Kingdom. From time to time, his disposition to gaze in sea-deep meditations

at a patched, frayed, crinkled locket disturbed her ironed cloth called sky; did she not satisfy him? Her nightly works, grasping the virgin-white sheets against a petrified figure, blank face, golden moustache with a tinge of age, springs cackling beneath, seemed to float in its importance.

Diurnal turns saw the King blemished from the Queen's life. The relationship brought power and wealth to the Queen; a success among her peers. The placid mirror began to drown in the sudden amalgamation of grotesqueness. Is that a charred pimple I see against the porcelain skins? What about the hands, which carry murderous, white crusts concealed underneath the thin, light-mouthed gloves? A sea of fear twisted and churned within her innards, blowing in fire-red tempests rationale's ship against the waves.

Meanwhile, Snow White, that darling, with peels of winter's tears, kisses of salmon's blood, strings of bark-brown gore, compared, excelled in beauty against the Queen. The King spent more and more time away; with her; the days of relaxation, witchcraft, monopoly gave way to concessions, scathing comments, slight sighs. To Snow White went everything; to her, nil.

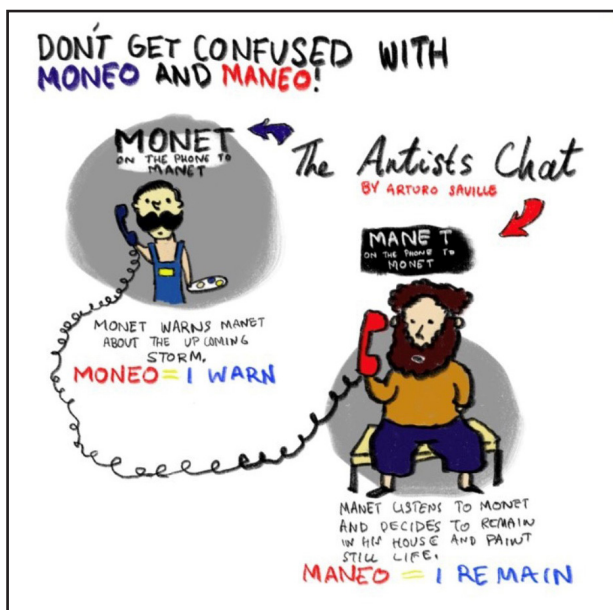
As a woman to woman, and in matters of action, the Queen put her cunning back into work. With what little empathy she had for the girl destroyed by the increasing threat (the missy controlled the King. What if she orders him to let go of me, the evil, uncaring stepmother?), Maria sent Snow White with a huntsman to the woods. Oh, these sweet moments of bitter tensions! The little, grey gremlins pounding the eardrums with thousands of arguments, little ear teasers. As if amidst a ship at sea, Maria vomited on her silver shawl. The huntsman found her sprawled on the magenta curtained, brooding bed, staring with a deathly shade upon the heavens drawn on the focal-pointed ceiling. She used to gaze at the stars. They were beautiful, twinkling and twaddling, sometimes blue and red, always gleaming in their ethereal throne at the grand show of humanity. And her hot, steaming tears, burning with a gentle hiss on her father's lap, would orbs wonder at. Tears. Of solace? Of grief? Of a world she would never touch, know, live the norm? No. Of joy and shame. Shame, for trusting that dastardly, moronic, common huntsman who has succumbed to the polar-white skin and light pink pinky toes to murder, devour, gorge out with his bare hands a bestial heart for an innocent soul.

Queen Grimhilde took matters to her own hands. She couldn't rely on anyone, not against that foolish beauty, against that symmetry which men fell for than wisdom. A hitchhiking magpie announced the sighting of a girl in the eastern woods, while a squirrel chattered the living of seven dwarves and their handmaid in a mud-brown, hay thatched shack while cracking a rounded, gleaming nut. Snow White probably didn't ask to stay there. Her pure innocence could have stopped the senile earthlings to a leaf-groveling low to accommodate a little, useless mound of flesh. Maybe she was a pet? Whatever.

A shower of scarlet red, weed-green, rosin-brown leaves besprinkled the brooding Queen briskly marching along a pencil-thin, coarsely gravelled path. Bearing a beautiful, cotton-white, intricately latticed bodice, Grimhilde found a fair maiden singing a nectar-sweet hymn to her sleepy, yet bustling, audience. A slight swirl of wind encased her baby-blue shirt, as Snow White sat dreaming of her begotten power. The young woman delightedly accepted her offer, demonstrating the foolishness of the absent-minded child; however, the Queen knew it was her physical appeal, not intelligence or persuasiveness which buckled all under her knees. The Queen's fingers tightened the silk ties, threading slowly, one by one, savouring the orgasmic tension and growling with feline agility under the breath. Snow White gasped, struggled, twitched, fainted, and the garment did the deed as the Queen slithered away, delighted from the experience. Her cunning worked. A proof, grandiose, sweet evidence that vanity succumbed to intelligence, that courtesy and flowery dresses vanished under a strict rational.

The Queen chose a bodice to eliminate her stepdaughter to become herself; an ideal of pure femininity murdered by the tool of the fair sex. Yet Fate did not play to her jest. Once again, chance had saved the dangerous girl; Marie wondered if she needed to kill; the King was alone with her, straying further via misery and tragedy from her embrace. Did Snow White prove a threat? But what if, what if, I found her body? Would it confirm her death, my husband's forlorn hope gone, to push him to me as the only remnants of the past? The Queen prepared a poisoned apple and gifted it to the surprisingly unsuspecting child in the dwarves' front porch, making sure the chord struck this time. There were no jolts of excitement or tension; instead, the rolling waves of impatient nausea almost forced the Queen to shove the crimson apple into the blood-red, petite lips. A flutter, a drop of sweat, a heavy, sodden, muffled thump. She checked her pupils - void, wide and lax. Her ankles, did they jolt? No. Prod her. Kick her. Slap her. No movement. The Queen thought herself quite brilliant - a sly reference to the Bible she stole from the Grand library and her favourite story. Maria painted her fingers thick in viscous red and flipped up her mouldy-green, dusted hood with a satisfactory 'flap,' as her scarlet heels sparked against the gravel path and ignited the afternoon with blazing passion. She would leave the body for a few days, imparting signs of a long-ago death and bring her to the King.

As the humble narrator of this tale, I would like to notify the reader that Maria Grimhilde, blood-born noble, self-educated, wife to King and stepmother to Snow White, never lived happily. The girl did not die that fateful autumn afternoon; she suffered a deep coma against the poison diluted by the apple's juice. The seven dwarves, who dearly loved her, placed the body in a glass casket, to honour her frail beauty. Beauty once again charmed Fate to orchestrate the meeting between a necrophile prince and the mourning brothers. His highness was surprised by the sudden boom of warmth in a pleasant corpse but was enraptured by her innocent vibrance and corpse-white skin to hold a wedding. The Queen once again set out to assess this beautiful foe, who might fetch greater power than she. Insanity captured her rationality as her disbelief and anger in her failure mutated a crystal brain into a hot orb of mess. The Prince and his subjects, angered by such intrusion, cursed woman to jump, dance, twist on the simmering ballroom floor as the molten shoes burned her feet. She jumped from the high precipices, burning the fragrant flowers below the towers.



A DAY ONLINE

8:05 slowly wakeup and recall the prospect of Bill, which started five minutes ago. Ignore this.

8:10 finally accept the call from your House Master. Blame camera faults while you pat down your hair to look less like the cross-country track after Long Ducker.

8:30 Attend 2a, but call in from the kitchen while making eggs.

9:15 Blame OneNote and a lack of syncing for your incomplete prep in 2b (but that's not the real reason).

The rest of the morning is a haze of drifting from online lesson to online lesson whilst pondering over the great questions in life: what on earth is happening in *Wandavision*?

12:20 Lunch. Scroll through Instagram and Snapchat mindlessly as everyone tries to create a quarantine "aesthetic".

12:30 Walk the dog. Glance disapprovingly at anyone making physical contact.

12:40 Try to prevent your dog touching a tree touched by another dog as your paranoia heightens.

14:00 Period 3 with blankets and a hot chocolate.

The rest of the afternoon is a haze of drifting from online lesson to online lesson whilst pondering over the great questions in life: how you are going to attend the three society meetings at 16:15 you signed up for?

16:05 Thank the Lord the academic day is over.

16:06 Start exercise according to Mr Finch's fitness regime.

16:07 Give up. Nobody can do that.

OPINION

CORRESPONDENCE

DEAR SIRs,

I am writing in regards to a new initiative set up known as the 'back-to-basics' programme. This term, the aim of the programme is to 'revitalise the community within the School' by introducing opportunities and exchanges, and by doing this, help to bring about a return to a state of daily life.

I wish to begin by explaining the concept behind the programme. It is simple, yet profound and, crucially, I believe to be effective.

It is remarkable that the School has become, and remains in recent times, such a site of community and social cohesion. The number of pupils in the School has increased every year, and the number of Year 9 boys attending has also increased. I am writing here not only to commend the initiative introduced in the Winter term, but also to raise the concern, which I believe has been overstated, that the School is becoming a place which is, in many ways, harder to leave than you found it.

I wish to introduce, therefore, to a small group of boys, the 'back-to-basics' programme.

The programme is as follows: a)'Get to know your Neighbourhood' b)'The Challenge' c)'Local Solutions' d)'Landing penthouses' e)'Between Neighbourhoods' f)'A game of football' g)'Restoring a Lost Identity' h)'A game of soccer' i)'A game of football' j)'A game of football' k)'The most important lesson of all'

The programme is set to begin with the back-to-basics session. The back-to-basics session is where we begin to find out how the School is, in fact, run. We are taught how to get in touch with our past, and to sort out the inaccuracies and foibles of those who have left. It is here that we find out what our futures may hold. I wish to start with the 'about us' session. The session starts with a tour of the School. We are led through a labyrinth of corridors by the familiar blackboards of the School. We are also guided through a new development at the moment, which is known as 'The Grove'. The session ends with the players taking the ball from the School Captain and making a run for it. It is here that we are introduced to the School's latest multimillion pound project: the 'Harrow Bridge'. It is a 2.5 mile stretch of road, built over a fallen tree line, which will link the School with the outside world. The bridge is due to open in Autumn 2018. We then have a 'Service Week', which is a week-long period in which boys work on projects in the School while also managing to complete a set of five Science Club questions. The answers to these questions are based on the School's research for the previous term. The session ends with a game of football, in which we played a set of the relevant set of the questions from the service weeks. The result was a draw.

Yours sincerely,
MARUNA KWENA, NOW ONLINE

DEAR SIRs,

The time has come – the vermin-tide has eschewed the ebbs and flows of intrinsic recurrence, and wrought itself upon a new crest of tasteless, platitudinous drivel. An old hand returns to the ring, so as to discipline; were it not bitten, would it not feed.

To begin my castigatory glance at this Modern Prometheus – what? By which I mean, of course, the protracted streams of detumescent puerile self-back-patting that hebdomadally disgrace this once-renowned paper, rendering it little more than a contest of ego and just how very self-satisfied one is with their ability to graze their infantile scalps against a thesaurus and a spell-checker.

Not to stray too far from the verdures of common courtesy, it falls upon me to illustrate thus; ambition is no folly, and pride neither – it is but the bite of bureaucratically-charged nonsenses that bears fangs. Wisdom is the domain of the reserved scholar, and elegance the arena of the be-versed charismact – to feign either is an embarrassment to oneself, and to purport both an embarrassment to others. Intelligence is the gambit of Removes battling A-level, not that of inarticulate, dawdling fools whiling their hours away with their noses pressed to the grind-press of 'academic discourse'. The foundational error upon which this house was built was that of definitions; 'discourse' with 'academics' bears not the profundity of their summative part. So, what to do when plagued by the many virulences – timor mortis conturbat me – of idiots clouding a great paper?

Well, to return to the prelapsarian (in the sense of degeneration, as opposed to inference of the biblical) origins of Harrovian writings, we – as a collective of boys – must endeavour to write no longer in the name of controversy and clout, but rather toward the end of either propitious understanding, or toward the betterment of this institution. These halitotic, 'scholarly' depravities of ill substance and foul style, that have come to be known as articles, must be neglected in favour of prosaically elegant articulation on the nature of things that may really matter.

So how to engineer this paradigm shift in style, in verve, swagger – those tenets that comprise a worthwhile piece of writing? The prevalent idea that must be embraced is that of purpose – write either for the benefit of the readers, or toward the defence of a principle, but never toward the benefit of oneself. If the crowd of scabrious omphaloskeptics reading this takes objection to it – congratulations be yours, you have discovered self-awareness (now be it in your best interests to employ it!) at long last.

To bring the darkly conjured spirit of this passage to an albescent conclusion – I do, truly admire both intent and attempt. The endeavour of writing into the school paper is one that is greatly gratifying both for oneself, and, if done right, for the rest of the Harrovian contingent. The heart of the problem lies upon the verge of the vertiginous promontory of ego – the Harrovian is neither a field for needless dispute, nor a wager-ground for personal distastes, nor even a place to showcase that you are capable of using more than two syllables without crossing mental wires. To end this etiolated critique, I will write in clear, crisp English, so as to be concisely understood.

The above walls of text are nothing but a mockery of how those people – who know who they are – endeavour to sound intelligent, at the price of obfuscating what they mean to say. Why? Because they write in this paper not to convey an idea, but to have something in the paper, a controversy to brag as being theirs. Perhaps the road to hell is indeed paved with good intentions – a write-up here, an op-ed there – but before long, it devolves into a juvenile tit-for-tat of use to nobody but a few chuckling fools in the back of the Vaughan.

What I'm trying to say is, grow up.

Best,
QUMARTH AKHAVAN ZANJANI, DRURIES

DEAR SIRs,

One of the advantages of being 77 is that you get a COVID jab quickly. Mine was scheduled to be at Edmonton, not far from Harrow, and I decided to check out the administering centre a day before my jab. I was shocked. On a Sunday morning at 0830, this centre already had a huge queue of the elderly and their carers, waiting outside in the cold. I managed to peek inside the centre and noted it was full of seniors waiting in a crowded room. Everyone wore masks but of course everyone was breathing and there was little ventilation or separation. Staff were plentiful but uncertain. One was sitting on the reception desk.

On the Tuesday, my jab was due at 4.45pm and I worried that by that time of day the queues would be gigantic and the staff exhausted. I prepared an impassioned speech along the lines of "No way am I waiting in this crowded COVID hotspot. I'll wait outside and you'll have to come and get me for my jab." It was hard to relax.

I need not have worried. There was no queue at all. There was no waiting at all.

An extremely pleasant young man steered me to a mark on the floor, whence another EPYM led me to an impressive consulting room, where a friendly doctor administered the jab in seconds.

I suppose the moral of the story is that one may research a future challenge but often such research is useless when the actual challenge appears. And queues are especially hard to predict.

But the saga didn't end there. After the jab, ancient patients of the Pfizer are then directed to an EXIT WAITING AREA. You have to wait there for 15 minutes in case you have a stroke/ reaction to the jab. I was dismayed to find that this waiting room was also chock a block with about 20 oldies, all sitting there – meekly, breathing and watching the clock. So I said, "No way am I waiting in this crowded COVID hotspot."

To my surprise the charge nurses were sympathetic. "Would you like to wait in a private room?" "Oh yes please." But although the private room was entirely mine, I reflected that all day long other infectious oldies might have been using the room. So I decided to use my Harrow sprinting technique, and dashed out of the various rooms towards the street. But the charge nurse was herself Olympic. "Come Back Mr Stone!" she cried, catching up. I meekly went back and spent the rest of the 15 minutes in an outdoor area, complaining bitterly that I had a wife called Cate, waiting for me outside in a perfectly serviceable Ford Focus, and I felt wonderful, until they got

fed up with me, and after only eight minutes, let me back into the community.

Yours sincerely,
MIKE STONE, MORETONS 1957²

SUDOKU

Persevera per severa per se vera

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