

The MO



Editor's Notes

By Ellen Berrill-Osborne

Hello everyone; welcome back to *The Mo*.

I've got some sad news, this is my last edition as editor of *The Mo*. By the time you're reading this, I'll have already left Marlborough and will have moved onto the next stage of my life. However, until that starts, I have a long summer ahead of me, spending time with my friends and having some much needed freedom before joining the world of work in September, and then eventually embarking on university.

It's been quite an up and down year for *The Mo*. We have been in and out of school ever since the pandemic started, and yet we have always managed to pull through and tried to bring you the best editions we could! I hope they've provided you with some escapism and have been a constant in an every changing world.

In this edition, we have some very interesting articles. We learn about the amazing poet Amanda Gorman, the future plans and legacy of SpaceX, an interesting murder case, the impacts of cancel culture and false female empowerment in the film 'Promising Young Women'. There's also a short poem which really relates to the theme of leaving school and moving on.

I hope you enjoy this edition. It was so fun to be the editor, an amazing experience. I know the Year 12s will do a fantastic job carrying it on from here!

Farewell,
Ellen x

OUR TEAM:

Ellen Berrill-Osborne: Editor, Designer

Kaylei Callaghan: Writer

Lauren Cropper: Writer

Nell Delaney: Writer

Jenna Hutton: Writer

Dan Howell: Writer

And....

Ms Redfern: Chief

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Who is Amanda Gorman?

When Amanda Gorman took to the podium during President Biden's inauguration back in January few had heard of her. She faced the hugely daunting task of capturing what was arguably a divided nation's heart as she took to the podium (her poem was read just weeks after the storming of Capitol Hill and amidst the scandal of Trump's forthcoming impeachment). As she approached the microphone her task was of epic proportion, not because she was speaking at a time that signalled a move away from President Trump's regime but because she was challenged to inspire Americans.

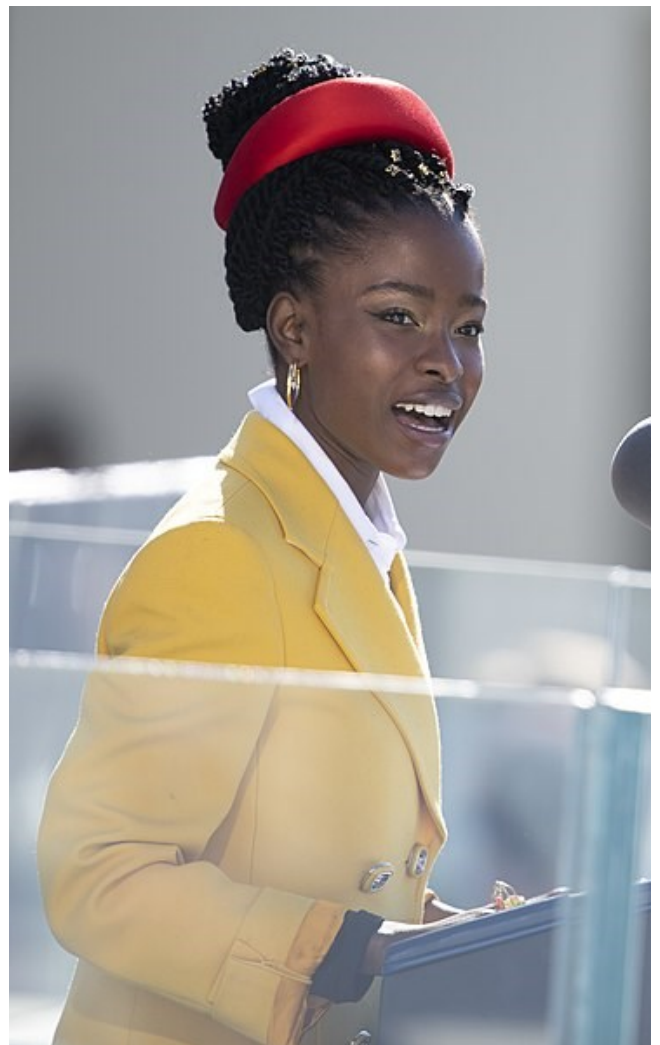
Her poem, 'The Hill We Climb' brought tears to many eyes – including former president, Barak Obama (whether the same can be said for Trump, who knows. Trump declined not to attend Biden's inauguration to office). The poem, written especially for the occasion, was a triumph. Seemingly without nerve and exuding nothing but confidence she declared that we "Let the globe, if nothing else, say this is true, that even as we grieved, we grew. That even as we hurt, we hoped. That even as we tired, we tried." Before beautifully reminding us, "That we'll forever be tied together, victorious, not because we will never again know defeat, but because we will never again sow division."

Since that date, many have seen the young woman on various American talk shows, may have started following her on social media and may even have started reading her work. However, who is Amanda Gorman?

Gorman is a 22-year-old Harvard graduate and the youngest ever poet to be invited to perform at a presidential inauguration. Her talent however, shouldn't come as a surprise – Gorman was the first-ever National Youth Poet Laureate in 2017. Before that, she was chosen as the Youth Poet Laureate of Los Angeles in 2014—at just 16 years old! She is a Los Angeles native and now lives in an apartment in West L.A. She has an older brother, and a twin sister (who is becoming increasingly recognised as a film-maker and activist. As her poem mentioned, she was raised by a single mother, an English teacher named Joan Wicks.

Dr. Jill Biden, an English teacher first and the First Lady of

the United States second, requested Gorman to perform after seeing her recite poetry at the Library of Congress and advocated for her to the inaugural committee. First Lady Biden, in choosing Gorman, didn't just help inspire, women and girls by choosing Gorman. Her choice in selecting Gorman helped demonstrate to all who might struggle speaking in public or finding their voice. What few know is that as a child Gorman suffered from chronic ear infections as a baby and developed an auditory processing disorder that caused speech impediment. Gorman is quoted as saying, "My speech impediment...was dropping several letters that I just could not say for several years, most specifically the 'r' sound," she specified. "I had to really work at it and practice to get to where I am today."





Reading aloud to an audience, a nation and the world was a stunning example of perseverance and endeavour in the face of a challenge. Few noticed the ring she wore, a ring inspired by her love for Maya Angelou. In fact, she has named Maya Angelou as one of her biggest inspirations. Angelou, a poet and novelist, performed at Bill Clinton's 1993 inauguration. As a tribute to how Angelou helped pave her path, Gorman wore a ring – a gift from Oprah - with a caged bird in homage to Angelou's famous work 'I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings'.

Since reading on the world's stage, Gorman's books have become best seller's (in presales alone). Gorman even performed at the Superbowl in February honouring people who served on the front line during the pandemic. Whilst some cynics might doth their cap to the fact that one lone woman, without an entourage

and chorus line of dancers might very well suit the social-distancing measures required to help America out of lockdown, her Superbowl appearance was a clear nod to female equality, the power of voice and the beauty of poetry.

In fact, in April her book, 'The Hill We Climb: An Inaugural Poem for the Country', was not only the first book of poetry to debut at No. 1 on USA Today's Best-Selling Books list, but it was also the first book of poetry to ever claim that spot since the list's start in 1993.

At just 22 years-old and with the world watching, there isn't any cage that could stop her singing.

Written by Anonymous

Photography by Wikimedia Commons, Amanda Gorman speaking at LOC 2017 and Amanda Gorman 2021

The Jigsaw Murderer

True Crime, a genre which has proven to be of great interest to a many people, of many ages. It's no secret that many love to indulge in a true crime podcast or a mysterious TV documentary. Similarly, programmes such as 'Line of Duty' and 'Unforgotten' are quickly becoming popular favourites. In fact, the BBC's 'Line of Duty' had record numbers of audiences watching live as the discovery of 'H' was revealed. Many feel inclined to solve the mystery as it unfolds, or even engage in discussions about the processes of the fictional investigation. Something about crime seems to induce a sort of adrenaline amongst viewers, maybe it is the chilling 'truth' in the stories, the way they are conveyed, or perhaps just the determination to find out which character committed the crime. Evidently, the prospect of something so unusual seems to entice viewers, to the extent where we become excited by what twists and turns could happen next.

Intriguing as the crime genre may be, the act of murder and crime scene investigations happening in your local community are rare, and never something one expects to realistically encounter (it isn't as if we live in the fictional, but deadly village of Midsomer!). However, as unnerving as it is, and as rare as these complex 'who dunnit' investigations are, there are times when they become something of a reality... and twelve years ago one such case occurred exceptionally close to home. It was a case that forced lovers of the crime genre to

Hertfordshire Major Crime Unit began to receive frequent reports of scattered dismembered body parts being discovered near and around our county. A forearm was unearthed in Wheathampstead, hands in Epping Forest, a right leg in Puckeridge. The police were forced to piece together a monstrous jigsaw in an attempt to identify the victim. The murder of Jeffery Howe was a chilling and appalling rarity happening unnervingly close to home.

Following a lengthy investigation, Stephen Marshall was tried at St Albans Crown Court for the murder of Howe, who, it turns out, was previously his landlord. Marshall was a bodybuilder based in the Borehamwood and Park Street area, he frequented St Albans, and had even set up an account at St Albans Library. There is also footage of Marshall parking at the M&S petrol garage, less than a quarter mile from our school.

Marshall initially denied having any part in the murder of Howe, claiming that the only role he played was in dismembering and disposing of the body. Howe's body was separated with such precision that pathologists quickly concluded that the criminal must have had previous experience in dissecting body parts- they were correct. Later, Marshall even boasted of the considerable experience he had in dismembering previous deceased bodies, consequently the name he is frequently known by: The Jigsaw Murderer, was created. Despite his original statement, Marshall changed his plea to guilty three weeks into the trial, and was sentenced to life imprisonment. Giving evidence, the police reported that Howe was stabbed twice in the back with a four inch blade; one of the wounds fatally puncturing his lung. It is believed that over twelve hours, Stephen Marshall then dismembered the individual parts of Howe's body, with the intention of disposing them separately, and thus hoping to successfully cover his tracks.

Following the trial of this peculiar and rare case, it has been revealed that Stephen Marshall had previous convictions of assault, battery, possessing a firearm and the illegal possession of cocaine. Evidently, this criminal who was previously described as "charming" and yet



“highly volatile”, deserves to be behind bars not only for murder, but for his numerous other offences.

Despite the unsettling nature of this case, it remains true that crimes alike to this are of incredible rarity and do not frequently occur. Although the crime genre continues to be immensely popular within books and TV programmes,

it is extremely uncommon for such terrible crimes to happen in society. Whilst the Marshall case had Hertfordshire residents living their own crime genre, I feel I have to stress that they are not common and therefore should not induce any fear or worry. We’re safe.

The case was tragic and unsettling, and yet we need to

remember that it was solved and the criminal faced the full force of the law. So, try not to worry, instead, turn on your crime drama, or your true life documentary and enjoy (with a degree of disbelief) knowing that we are watching it through a TV screen or the pages of a novel. This is a way of protecting ourselves perhaps, so that the truth doesn’t strike so hard. And, if the truth about the true nature of a crime does unsettle then perhaps we turn off—that way, who knows, the shows might become a little less addictive and entertaining.

Written by Jenna Hutton

***Photography by Levi Stute and Murai.Hi at Unsplash
photos for all***



~~Cancel Culture~~

Cancel culture or 'cancelling' is the attempt to strip a public figure of their popularity and fame after they say or do something that you deem to be offensive. The goal is to ostracize them from society and the media so that no one else is influenced by their immoral behaviour, however it also stands as a reminder to other celebrities to take their jobs as role models extremely seriously.

One way to cancel someone is to cut them off from the source of their fame, for instance by boycotting an actor's movies or a music artist's latest album. You could also unfollow them on social media and encourage others to do the same, like in the case of Youtuber James Charles, who infamously lost over 1 million subscribers in a day after he was accused of transphobia, sexual harassment and lying to his fans. Considering that many influencers' wages rely almost entirely on their number of followers or subscribers, this simple act can make a huge dent in their careers. Another common - although often problematic - method is to head over to their social media accounts and flood their comment sections with backlash and moral condemnation. Although some comments are constructive, the majority are filled with insults and attacks that can be detrimental to the mental health of the 'cancelled' person. For some of the bigger names, like Ellen DeGeneres or J. K. Rowling, (both of whom were cancelled in 2020) their accounts will spiral out of control with furious, upset commenters arguing amongst themselves about their right to demand accountability. More often than not, cancelled celebrities have no choice but to disable their own comment sections in order to get away from the ongoing war beneath their Instagram posts.

Cancel culture is such a hot topic at the moment because it seems to be happening everywhere on social media, sparking heated debates. Some feel that everybody has the right to their own opinion, and it's unfair to destroy a person's career for voicing something controversial. They fear that freedom of speech is being stifled by a constant demand for political correctness, and that soon we won't be able to say a single thing without

others believe that as society's role models, celebrities should recognise their power to influence the public and use their platforms to advocate progress and change, instead of absent-mindedly tweeting their opinions without a thought for the amount of damage this can have on those with less privilege.

You could say that 'cancelling' of some sort has been around forever. Yet, the modern sense of the word arose from the #MeToo movement of 2017. Victims of sexual assault used social media as a tool to call out their offenders and hold them accountable for their crimes, no matter how rich or famous they were. Infamous film producer, Harvey Weinstein, was found guilty of sexual misconduct, harassment and rape after over eighty women came forward with allegations. Their bravery inspired an unprecedented number of women to speak up about their experiences of abuse, which exposed a sickeningly high number of guilty celebrities and provoked a worldwide discussion on sexual assault. This process of using social media to call out and punish has developed into what we now call cancel culture, and cases like these highlight the value of social media in bridging the gap between the general public and the previously 'untouchable' stars.

My interest in cancel culture was sparked by an Instagram post from actor and activist, Jameela Jamil, in May 2019. Jamil had faced backlash on social media for featuring in the podcast 'Under the Skin' because the host of the podcast, Russell Brand, had recently been cancelled for making sexist comments in an interview. The activist defended her decision to collaborate with him, explaining on an Instagram post that she had witnessed him "own up to his mistakes" and "tirelessly try to make right what he has gotten wrong." She stated: "I believe in progress and not perfection, and I believe in the human potential for change and education." I'm not here to argue about whether Russell Brand is or isn't a good role model; I agree with many of Jamil's points on cancel culture and the current climate of social media. While I understand the importance of challenging people's offences and mistakes, we should focus on the goal of

educating people and changing mindsets, instead of shutting them out of society completely. That action simply isn't progressive. And when people demonstrate genuine remorse and self-improvement, we should accept their apologies and forgive their pasts, or else we will never move forward.

Whatever your opinions on cancel culture, it's essential we remember that all human beings, no matter how famous, are imperfect and capable of growth. It's pointless to shun a person for having misinformed opinions. It's futile to fight hate with hate. We need to

change the way we debate and focus on reeducating and inspiring the people we disagree with, whilst remembering that people are, and always will be, works in progress.

Written by Lauren Cropper

Photography by Omkar Patyane at Freestock.org



Time. Distance

Time.

It has always been a fear of mine,
I've tried to embrace it, but to no avail
I continue to hide from its moving hands as they try to grab me

Time.

It's only inevitable that it catches up to us,
But I never thought seven years would go by so fast,
Nevertheless the last eight months

Time.

We're running out.
I'm trying to live in the moment but my mind wanders so far,
As far as you will go when September comes around

Distance.

It never bothered me,
For most of my life I've wanted to travel as far away as possible,
Yet now the thought terrifies me.

Distance.

Two-hundred and thirteen,
Two-hundred and seventy-nine,
The numbers just keep increasing

Distance.

A different room
A different city
A different country.

Time. Distance.

A scary duo
Yet perfect together,
Just like us

Written by Anonymous



SPACEX



As t- hits 0, a metallic roar is heard for miles around. At t+ 1 minute, the beast has shot up 2 kilometres, and continues to climb. 4 minutes in, it flips. Belly to the earth, beginning its descent. It falls, flips once more, columns of flame torching the ground beneath, kicking up clouds of dust. Then silence. The smoke clears, to reveal the rocket, standing proud. The first of a long line of tests to properly succeed. Cheers from engineers and spectators alike to mark the start of humanities reach for the stars. If you haven't been following the development of Starship, or SpaceX for that matter, you probably have no idea what I am talking about. In short, Elon Musk and his band of geniuses successfully landed the 15th iteration of their latest rocket: *Starship*. Possibly the most ambitious project currently in development. Designed as a rapidly reusable launch vehicle, with the capability of bringing humans to and from Mars, possibly beyond in the future. Musk's aggressive timeline puts the first orbital launch later this year, with aspirations to send an unmanned mission to the red planet in 2024, and the first colonists by 2026.

But it hasn't been smooth sailing all the way through. SN15 was the first to properly survive a launch, and only the second to land at all. A brief look at the development timeline shows how much has gone into the creation of Starship. The project was first hinted at back in 2012, when Elon proposed a privately funded system of launch vehicles to eventually transport humans to mars and back. Initially named the MTC (Mars Transport System), it would be redubbed the ITS (Interplanetary Transport System), as Musk's ambitions grew to "go well beyond mars". Design and development continued until late 2019, when Starhopper was brought to the launch pad. A short, stubby "water tower" containing a single motor, used as a test vessel for the newly developed raptor engines. Starhopper made two hops, one of 20 meters and one of 150 meters, before being retired. It still sits on the launch pad to this day, watching the continued development of its brothers. Then the fun began.

Serial Numbers (SN) 1-4 never made it past static fires,

either collapsing due to pressure issues, or exploding due to plumbing issues. SN5 and SN6 both successfully completed 150-meter hops across the pad, revealing the first glints of success for the project. SN7 was used to test the limits of the fuel tanks, and was inevitably destroyed. SN8, 9, 10 and 11 all showed major leaps from the predecessors. All were capable of 10km hops, with a truly amazing landing mechanism. As they reached the apogee of their launch, 2 of the 3 engines shut down. The rockets flip so they lie horizontally in the air, and then "belly flop" to the ground. As if that wasn't amazing enough, the engines reignite, flipping the rockets back to a vertical position, to allow for a proper landing. SN8, unfortunately couldn't slow down in time, leading to a "rapid, unscheduled disassembly" (RUD). SN9 overshot it's second flip, leading to an awkward landing, and another RUD. SN10 stuck the landing, but a little too hard, causing damage that later led to yet another RUD. SN11 had plumbing issues, forcing SpaceX to terminate the launch before it was able to land

And that bring us back to SN15. The first marks of success. Proof of the genius employed in the company. And the first step towards an interplanetary humanity. Elon Musk's timeline may be ambitious. But whether he's able to send us to mars on time doesn't matter. SpaceX is a shining example of human ingenuity. An example of how no project is too advanced for us to tackle. The activity of SpaceX's rockets is nothing short of science fiction. And yet they're real. Actual things that will become a part of everyday life in the not-too-distant future. All because one man decided he wanted to go to mars, and had the balls to actually try. I look forward to seeing what comes next. Who knows, maybe SN16 will go orbital. Maybe by SN20 we'll be sailing around the moon. Maybe even before SN30 we'll be on mars. And the doors of the universe will begin to creep open. And we can have a peak of what may be our future.

Written by Dan Howell

PROMISING YOUNG WOMAN AND FEMALE EMPOWERMENT

****TRIGGER WARNING - This article talks about sexual assault and rape, and could cause upset. The article is not intended to upset; however, if you are affected please seek support in an adult you trust.****

A few weeks ago, I had watched a film called 'Promising Young Woman'; it is a film that has definitely stayed with me. The female directed film focuses on the protagonist, Carrie, a vigilante who seeks revenge on men that assaulted her friend and filmed it to spread around the university she attended. Primarily, the film focuses on how men react to being 'caught out' by Cassie, and the ways Cassie gets her revenge. However, although the film is very important in terms of bringing awareness to a situation that some women face everyday, it really covers difficult topics like how rape and assault are presented in the media and questions the worth of rape-revenge' plotlines and whether they do as some profess, which is to empowered women.

If you focus on the good elements of the film, what Emerald Fennell (the writer, co-producer and director) does expertly is to present the struggles that some women face everyday. Struggles like misogyny and how, terrifyingly, sexual assault seems to have become normalised as part of a 'woman's experience'. When Cassie, the protagonist, goes back to her University to call out the Dean for not bringing justice to her best friend's assaulter, the Dean says, "I mean, what would you have me do? Ruin a young man's life every time we get an accusation like this?". This seems to echo back to The people v. Turner case, where Brock Allen Turner, a former Stanford University swimmer was convicted of three accounts of sexual assault towards a 22 year old woman. Yet the media, his family and his lawyer constantly supported him. Turner's deputy public defender in Sajid Khan even said, "We appreciated ... the judge's understanding of Brock Turner's humanity".

The idea that men are often victimised by the rape allegations towards them is a very shocking reality and should be addressed; yet, it is quite another thing that the victims of sexual assault are villainised or even forgotten about. This is a disgrace. In a letter, Turner's father, said his son's punishment was a, "steep price to pay for 20 minutes of action out of his 20 plus years of life." Comments like this do little to support the victims of assault.

The women who have come forward have so much courage to stand up and tell people about their assault. And yet, there are some whose go-to is to challenge and question. For some women who come forward they are immediately struck down by the doubts and challenges of others. I truly believe that victims of sexual assault (regardless of gender) should be believed.

It's been theorised that the film's title is a reference to Brock Turner, who served three months in jail and was often referred to in the media as a "promising young man." However, Fennell, who also worked on the show 'Killing Eve' said in an interview that it is "a phrase is so commonly used when young men do something wrong," whereas the phrase 'promising young woman,' is hardly ever used.

Yet, I don't think the film is truly as empowering as the cast and the director wanted it to be. The whole narrative is what Cassie and her friend, Nina, do get their revenge. They had to die in order for their revenge to work with Cassie becoming some sort of martyr to her cause. Although this does act as an engaging plot twist, it makes the audience feel defeated. Even though the men suffer for Cassie's murder, it didn't feel like any form of justice. After watching it I felt incredibly bitter and that response truly didn't sit right with me—if you think about it neither Cassie nor Nina win. In deaths, they'll never experience justice, instead, they've become the victims, yet again. Cassie's character, especially in her death, felt as though she was just a construct, of plot device to act as a symbol of a 'powerful woman'; however, Cassie and Nina were characterised as victims and the viewer didn't really get a chance to explore either of their characters in the truest sense. We only saw a little bit of Cassie shine through when she was with her boyfriend (which speaks volumes considering the film focuses on female oppression). Unsurprisingly, and reassuringly, the boyfriend does turn out to be involved with Nina's assault.

My stance on whether Cassie is truly empowered within the film often wavers throughout the film. At

the beginning I believe she was empowered. She became powerful by taking matters into her own hands, and making men feel uncomfortable or scared when they were caught for assaulting her. You can see in these scenes she is the one in charge and these men were her victims as they stumbled and struggled to justify their actions. Yet, subsequently, in her journey towards martyrdom she has to lose her identity in order to fully take revenge on Nina's assaulters. However, revenge doesn't mean justice. Which questions whether these women were empowered or affected by their assaulters. This seems a similar trope when looking at other movies in the same genre, movies like 'The Perfection' or 'I Spit On Your Grave', they all suffer similar attributes often becoming emotionless and determined to appear 'empowered' and 'strong'. What happened to being empowered by having emotions and living your life? Exacting revenge doesn't solve the trauma or fix how

you feel, it doesn't help you move on, it just keeps you in that headspace.

Sadly, the film also presents these women as being personified and defined by 'the worst night of their lives' and thus are the victims. They are kept in a headspace that makes them seem weak and devoted to self-destruction. This is evidenced when Cassie finally meets Nina's rapist, he says, "I mean, it's every guy's worst nightmare, getting accused like that." And she responds with, "Can you guess what every woman's worst nightmare is?"

Although the film does have its problems, where it wins is bringing assault and all of its taboos to the fore. Is it worth watching? Yes. I would highly recommend it to people; it's eye-opening and asks you to question some incredibly serious issues.

The Rape Crisis

The National freephone helpline on 0808 802 9999 (12-2.30pm and 7-9.30pm every day of the year)
www.rapecrisis.org.uk

Support Line

www.supportline.org.uk/problems/rape-and-sexual-assault/

NHS Support

www.nhs.uk/live-well/sexual-health/help-after-rape-and-sexual-assault/

Rape and sexual assault referral centre:

www.nhs.uk/service-search/other-services/Rape%20and%20sexual%20assault%20referral%20centres/LocationSearch/364

Childline

www.childline.org.uk

Written by Nell Delaney

The things I wish I knew

As I you read this, I know that we will have left Marlborough. We will have dressed up, had our leaving assembly and have said our 'goodbyes' to the teachers who have guided through our schooling (sometimes these goodbyes might have even been rather emotional) and we will be beginning a summer of adventure before starting our new chapters.

Friends, who we thought would be by our sides for life may stop calling; the things we might have wanted to fill our time with might be completed quickly and the routine we thought we hated might well be misses. Who knows? What I do know is that there are things I wish I had known. After speaking with the other members of the 2019-2021 alumni, here are some of our pearls of advice for all who follow in our Marlborough footsteps.

1. Pay attention in class.

Take notes. It will help, especially in sixth form (and in life in general). The learning objective might not seem important but I promise you, it is.

2. The teachers are not out to get you.

No teacher dislikes you. They might not like your behaviour but it doesn't mean they have a vendetta! Instead, evaluate what you are doing and make the change.

3. Appreciate the free resources.

You are generally not afforded these luxuries in Sixth Form. So, when your teacher offers to loan you the book or prints you the resources, be grateful. I've just seen my university reading list... wowsers!

4. Back to number three, Be smart with your money.

Buy used books. Do not pay the insanely high bookstore price unless it is genuinely the only place you can find the book.

5. Do not put it off.

This is so much easier said than done. There are so many times I put off things off and then had to rush to get them done. If you finish things early, you have more time to watch Netflix and nap.

6. Listen to your parents, they know what is best.

Whether it is advice about school, work, friends, love or life, take their advice. At the time it may seem like they don't understand or they are just being unfair, but they have probably been in your shoes and are trying to save you from avoidable trouble or heartbreak.

7. You are beautiful.

It is that simple. You are enough the way you are. At times, it is hard to love the person you see in the mirror, but trust me, that person staring back is amazing person.

8. Do not let society define you.

You are a snowflake: unique. Have the courage to be who you were meant to be and try not to follow the crowd.

9. Be kind.

Be kind to every person you meet. You never know what they are facing. One small act of kindness could change someone's entire life. Sometimes it may be hard to be kind, but don't let that stop you.

10. Put down your phone and enjoy the life around you.

I know you think you have to Insta every moment of your but try not to get wrapped up in social media. There's a danger of watching life happen through your camera. Instead, live in the now.

11. If you are low, talk to someone.

Talk to a teacher, a form tutor, a friend, a parent, a helpline, anyone. Share your burdens with someone and let them help you fight your fight. You are never alone, even when it feels that way.

12. Choose who's in your life.

Toxic relationships or friendships should have no part in your life. It doesn't matter how optimistic and positive you are, if you have one negative person in your life they can and will drag you down.

13. Live a life of colour.

Monochrome is very Chanel, neutrals are very VB; however, sometimes what you need is a little Scamp and Dude to inject some crazy. Don't be afraid of colour.

14. Take naps.

OMG this is so important. Enjoy those naps. Naps are great. Naps are life.

15. Yes, you have to go to lesson.

It might feel nice to want to sleep in, go to Pastoral or hide in the toilets, but don't. For every minute that you miss dodging learning you are losing out on your learning. There are some children who don't get the privilege of education so don't waste yours.

16. You can't rush love.

I promise, love will come your way. Do not rush into a relationship. Enjoy being single and have fun with your

friends. The right person will come along when you least expect it.

17. You can be whatever you want to be.

Don't sacrifice your dreams. If you want to do that extra-curricular club, to change your reputation, or to pursue one of your talents, please don't let others mock you or make you doubt yourself. Endeavour to be true to you.

18. It's ok to not be ok.

Just because someone may "have it worse" doesn't mean that your problems are less valid. Being yourself is the most important thing!

19. Growing up is a trap!

When you begin to think about being an adult you realise that it might not actually be that great. Even though I will only be partially 'adulthood' when I start university (financial support, no taxes and no real job), I am fully aware that there are going to be so many rubbish things to consider: the washing, the bins, the shopping... So, my advice to you: don't rush to grow up!

20. Document everything.

I wish I knew how precious time at school is. 7 years feels forever when you're in Year 7 and yet, the next minute you're leaving. I wish I took more photos and

videos to remember my time. Always enjoy it whilst you're in it.

21. You don't need to have found your tribe yet.

Weirdly, my mum used to go on about this and I didn't know what she meant. Essentially, you shouldn't be part of a clique. Be friends with everybody, you'll be happier and learn far more about life if you do.

21. You don't have to be rude to be cool.

I was horrible. I was horrible to my classmates, to my teachers and to everybody I came into contact with. I thought being rude and mean was 'cool'. Then, in Sixth Form that group of friends left and I felt free to be me. I hate that I missed out on possible friendships because I thought being rude meant something.

And finally, as I close my laptop and think about everything that our group of Year 13s have been through it is important to leave you with this: never lose faith, stay strong and you're going to accomplish great things, I know it.

By The class of 2021

Photograph by Sincerely Media. <https://unsplash.com/photos/ATnfCHmheDc>



F.R.I.E.N.D.S AGAIN

Twenty seven years ago a young woman in a wedding dress ran into a coffee house and began a whole different life. Twenty seven years ago we were introduced to: Phoebe, Rachel, Monica, Ross, Chandler and Joe. Twenty seven years later we are still watching rerun after rerun of the series. So, what is it about NBC's comedy about 6 beautiful individuals, with their individual quirks living a carefree life in the village that had 25-30 million viewers each week hooked since 1994?

From its premier in 1994, the show was everywhere. The theme song was everywhere, "The Rachel" haircut was everywhere, the catchphrases were everywhere. People loved it. Now, twenty seven years later, the show hasn't just endured, it's exploded and reportedly earns \$1 billion a year for the Warner Bros company. Perhaps terrifyingly, statistics from 2018 suggest that not only is the show one of the most watched on Netflix, F.R.I.E.N.D.S viewers around the world spend 54.3 million hours (the equivalent to 62,000 years). With viewing figures as extreme as that, it's not surprising why Netflix reportedly paid \$80 million to keep it. The modern viewer doesn't need to watch episodes in order one week at a time, rather streaming as and when on any device seems to have an additional level of appeal.

The show's enduring popularity isn't just down to a devoted fan base of nostalgic parents. It's also due to a new generations of binge-watching Gen Z-ers who have been locked down, shut in and bored! For some, they see themselves as they want to be in the characters and situations... even though the cast members are now well

into their 50s!

By contemporary standards, and in this woke era, it is surprising that the show continues to have such a devoted fanbase. Is it that Friends hark back to a simpler time? A time before we started living our lives through apps, social media, and smartphones. Is that the reason we forgive its flaws (and there are many)? Even though the show won a GLAAD Media Award for the depictions of Carol as a lesbian, when we watch it again we should raise an eye at the lesbian jokes fired her way. Plus, there are many areas of modern life that we should call into question: apparently New York is populated by white faces only; the body shaming of "Fat Monica" and transphobic jokes about Chandler's father are just three issues that don't seem to deter viewers.

So, what is it about the 236 episodes that we love about it? Well, for me, it's the fact that the friends, who all suffer their trials and tribulations in adulthood are held together through their friendships. When you're too old to be supported by your parents, the show suggests that it is your friends who provide structure when all else is lacking! The offer a hope that together you can get through everything and at the end of the day there will always be somebody there for you "when the rain starts to pour". Will I be watching the reunion episode? Absolutely.

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