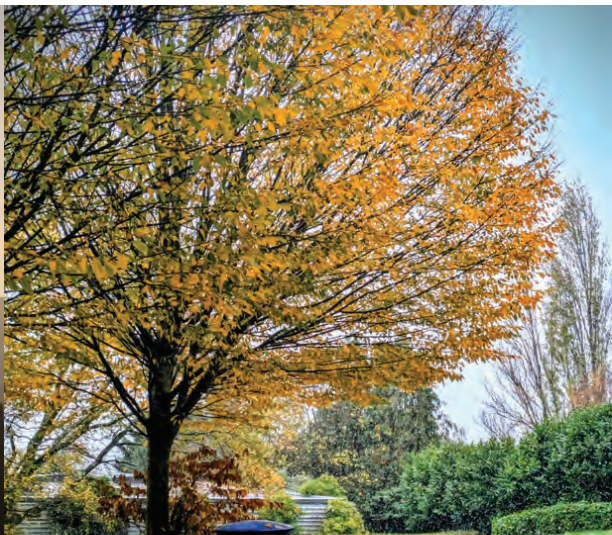




ST DOM'S DISCOVERY MAGAZINE



SPRING 2026

CONTENTS

PAGE NUMBER

1	Interview with James Murray MP, Chief Secretary to the Treasury	Kate Conboy
6	How Does Political Oppression Affect Arts & Culture	Anahita Sharma
9	Four Patron Saints of the UK	Rebecca Ihegbu
14	Critique of Theism	Ehsan Hakimzada
26	The Development and Role of IQ in Academic and General Performance	Asav Dahal
30	Criminals, are they born or are they made? The Nature-Nurture Debate	Sofia Zachopoulous-Butler
31	When Healthcare Becomes a Crime	Shangavy Kalaichelvan
35	The Menendez Brothers	Rhea Ravindran
36	The Laws Hiding in Plain Sight	Chloe Medeira
38	How Pop Culture Shapes Our View of Lawyers	Iman Hassan
40	Sixth Form Speaks: 15 Students, 15 Opinions	Joanna Rodrigues
44	Trendy Wardrobe Staples for 2026	Rebecca Ihegbu
46	Album Recommendations	Hope Kanangila
48	Short Story	Gemma Shirran
49	Why Our Brains Fill in Gaps Before We Notice	Reva Ravindran
50	Understanding Alzheimer's Disease	Bisma Paracha

INTERVIEW WITH JAMES MURRAY

LAST DECEMBER, I HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO GO TO THE OFFICE OF JAMES MURRAY TO CONDUCT AN INTERVIEW WITH HIM. JAMES MURRAY HAS BEEN MP FOR EALING NORTH SINCE 2019, AND AFTER BEING RE-ELECTED IN 2024 HE WAS PROMOTED TO CHIEF SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY – A MEMBER OF THE CABINET ALONGSIDE SIR KEIR STARMER



FOR PEOPLE WHO DON'T QUITE UNDERSTAND THE ROLE OF THE CHIEF SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY, WHAT CAN YOU TELL ME ABOUT YOUR JOB AND WHAT ARE THE MAIN THINGS THAT YOUR JOB CONSISTS OF?

So, being Chief Secretary to the Treasury is to be one of the members of the Treasury team administrators working with the Chancellor of the Exchequer and other ministers, and specifically I have responsibility for overseeing public spending as well as infrastructure investment. Public spending is the biggest part of the job and what it means broadly is that the Treasury will allocate money to individual departments for them to learn the government's priorities, so there will be a budget set for the NHS, one for the department of education, one for the department of working pensions, they all get their budgets. My job is to make sure they are spending their money well, that they are using tax payers' money efficiently, making sure we've cut down on waste where possible, making sure that they are spending that money in the way that's intended and under the agreement we had with them, so it's basically monitoring and making sure spending public money is effective

AS THE CHIEF SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY, WOULD YOU HAVE CONSIDERED YOURSELF QUITE AN INFLUENTIAL FIGURE IN CRAFTING THE (AUTUMN) BUDGET FOR 2026 AND WHY?

So I, was involved in the budget process as one of the Ministers working with the Chancellor. Ultimately the budget is the Chancellor's, and she takes the decisions and passes it to Parliament on budget day and it's very much her budget. But as a member of her team, I'm involved in some of the policy work and discussions ahead of that but then once the budget is then announced and set out in Parliament it's then in the public domain and the whole government stands behind it, the whole cabinet, and we all go out and explain to people why we're doing what we're doing

IN THE AUTUMN BUDGET, RACHEL REEVES ANNOUNCED MAJOR TAX INCREASES WORTH AROUND £26 - 30 BILLION A YEAR BY 2030-31. WHAT WAS THE REASON FOR THIS INCREASE? SPECIFICALLY BECAUSE KEIR STARMER DENIED RISHI SUNAK'S ACCUSATIONS THAT HE WOULD RAISE TAXES FOR THE WORKING CLASSES IN THE RUN UP TO THE 2024 GENERAL ELECTION

So, one of the big parts of the budget process was the Office of Budget Responsibility, which is the independent forecaster and doing a review of productivity in the UK economy. They looked at the impact of the previous government of the 14 years that we had the previous administration - they downgraded our productivity in the UK on the basis of some of the decisions taken under the previous government so the cuts to public investment, the way Brexit was handled and so on. That means that that has an impact on the economic forecast going forward and on the revenue that comes into public finances in the future years. Because of that, that then meant that in order to have a stable economy with a decent amount of headroom, which is basically a buffer in public finances, we had to take some decisions we think are fair and necessary to make sure that public finances were in a strong position and that we didn't cut investments in public services and infrastructure that we know is so important to improve our country. We were able to keep the tax burden on working people as low as possible by taking public decisions around taxation. So, for instance, we introduced a new charge on the highest value homes to pay an extra surcharge on council tax, we increased the rate of income tax on income for property. Some of those changes and others meant that we were able to keep the tax burden on working people as low as possible

ACCORDING TO THESTANDARD.COM WEBSITE, THE AVERAGE PRICE FOR A HOUSE IN LONDON IS £556,000. BEING A LONDON MP, DO YOU HAVE ANY CONFLICTS YOURSELF REGARDING THE NEW MANSION TAX TO BE PLACED ON PROPERTIES OVER £2 MILLION?

So, I think that what we've decided to do about asking or introducing a new surcharge for properties worth 2 million pounds or more, it's a fair way to raise revenue for public services and it's really important to me that our tax system is fair and that we take fair and necessary decisions. I think that people can understand that asking or introducing a new surcharge for people with homes worth over 2 million pounds and more, is a fair way to make sure that we invest in public services and make sure that the contribution we make is fair across the whole of society

AS A FOLLOW UP, WILL ELDERLY, RETIRED WORKERS WHO BOUGHT HOUSES YEARS AGO IN AREAS WHERE INFLATION HAS CAUSED THE HOUSING PRICES TO RISE HAVE TO PAY THE MANSION TAX? AND IF THEY REQUIRE ASSISTANCE IN DOING SO HOW DO YOU PLAN ON HELPING THEM?

So the details of the way that this would be implemented are being developed, we will be consulting on that and making sure that that is done in a proper way. One of the commitments we've made is to make sure that the right provisions in place for people in situations where they might have an estate which is worth a lot, but takes accountability of their situation, so we look at all of those details when we develop the implementation of the policy.

IN THE EALING NORTH CONSTITUENCY, HOW DO YOU PLAN ON MAKING HOUSES, APARTMENTS AND LIVING SPACES MORE AFFORDABLE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE TO AFFORD HOMES?

The number one thing is to build more homes, and in particular more affordable homes for young people to buy and social housing for rent - that's what we need more of in Ealing North and across London and in many parts of the country. I think you know there's no way around it, but we need to build more homes. I know that the priority for what we build here is to make sure that we've got homes for young people to buy, homes that we have for social rent but we need all sorts as well so that's why we made some big changes to planning regulations to make it much easier to build new housing because it's about, for me, it's about fairness for the next generation.

(Just a follow up, when you mean building more housing, are you talking about semi-detached houses or apartments or just a mix of both? - Well, we're living in a big city, a lot of people live here, and we need to make sure that we've got enough housing for people. I think we need to have the appropriate density for development in London. Now a lot of new homes that are built in London are going to be flats, blocks of flats or high-density housing. But there might be some cases where individual houses, terrace houses might be appropriate but we have got to make sure that we've got the appropriate density so particularly here we're building in London having a good level of density to make sure we've got enough homes being built is really important now. You can get high density without being super tall, there are designs you can use to achieve high density whilst being midrise rather than high rise and we should always prioritize, I think really high-quality designs. I think design is too often an afterthought in the development process and I think we should have design up front because well designed homes are better for people to live in, more attractive for the local area and they create better spaces for the future but we've got to build these homes.)

IN THE EALING NORTH CONSTITUENCY, THE GOV.UK WEBSITE STATES THAT THERE ARE 36,690 PEOPLE (WHICH IS 36.3% OF THE POPULATION OF THIS CONSTITUENCY) THAT ARE ECONOMICALLY INACTIVE. WHAT WOULD YOU DEFINE AS ECONOMICALLY INACTIVE? DOES IT REFER TO HOUSING OR UNEMPLOYMENT ETC.?

So when people are economically inactive, it means that they are not part of the workforce, they're not in a job, and they're not looking for work and in a lot of cases, I think particularly under the previous government, people have been written off as being economically inactive and then forgotten about and I think that's wrong. I think that a lot of people who are economically inactive with the right support and the right structures can get back into the job market that means they'll then be looking for work, and they'll be able to find a job. I don't think it's acceptable for people, particularly young people, to be written off as economically inactive and out of the job market for their whole lives. We need to make sure we're supporting people to search for jobs, to find jobs, and to build a life for themselves because that's good for them and it's good for the economy.

ACCORDING TO YOUNG GOV.COM, ONE IN FIVE BRITONS SAY THAT THEY WOULD CONSIDER VOTING FOR THE GREEN PARTY AT A FUTURE ELECTION. ASSUMING THIS IS DUE TO THEIR HEAVY FOCUS AND STANCE ON THE ENVIRONMENT AND ISSUES SURROUNDING IT, AS A MEMBER OF THE CABINET, WOULD YOU EVER USE YOUR POSITION TO ENCOURAGE OTHER MEMBERS INCLUDING THE PRIME MINISTER TO TAKE A STRONGER STANCE ON THE ENVIRONMENT?

I think as a government we've got a really strong response to the environmental challenges that we face and they're deliverable responses, because I think one of the problems with the Green Party and other parties as well is that they promise things that they're never going to be able to deliver, they look at a problem and they say to people they'll do something which they probably know is not possible and I don't think that's fair. I think we should only propose solutions which we can actually deliver and if you look at what we're doing for clean energy for instance - introducing all of the extra wind power, solar power and having more nuclear power - everything we're doing on moving to clean energy, we're moving or we're trying to move really quickly on this to try and really change our energy mix in this country to bring down bills in the long run and to make our energy supply more independent. But that's a deliverable plan. That's something that can actually benefit people, and I worry about some of the other parties in the political space at the moment because they talk about ideas but they're not deliverable solutions and I think that that breaks trust in politics and it's unfair for people to offer solutions which they know they can't deliver.

ALSO ACCORDING TO THE GOV.UK WEBSITES, 2.1% OF PEOPLE IN EALING NORTH RECEIVE 50 OR MORE HOURS UNPAID CARE A WEEK. WHAT QUALIFIES SOMEBODY TO RECEIVE THIS AMOUNT OF CARE AND DO YOU THINK THAT THAT IS FAIR TO PEOPLE WHO HAVE TO WORK AND RECEIVE LITTLE TO NONE OF THIS "CARE"(/BENEFITS)?

Well I think that if you look at the way people receive care in Britain, there's a lot of people who receive care from unpaid carers which are quite often family members who give out a huge amount of time or effort to care for their relatives and we should be incredibly grateful for what they do and give them the respect that they deserve. We need to make sure that we're supporting them the right way as well because they do such an important job for their family members or those who they care for, and it's such an important job for society as well.

ACCORDING TO A YOUNG GOV PROJECTION OF THE 2029 GENERAL ELECTION, REFORM IS GOING TO GAIN THE MOST SEATS AND THE GOVERNMENT WOULD BECOME A HUNG PARLIAMENT. DESPITE MOST (PREDICTED) REFORM VOTING CONSTITUENCIES BEING IN RURAL AREAS AND THE NORTH, WOULD YOU CONSIDER YOUR SEAT IN PARLIAMENT BEING THREATENED BY THE COMPETING REFORM MP FOR THIS BOROUGH?

Well, none of us as MPs should ever take our position for granted. We should always, when we're going into the next election, think about how do we make the case for why we're the best person to continue to represent that local area and why is our party the right party to continue in government in the general election. I think that we know that when we won the general elections in 2024 that we were going to face a real set of challenges, so we're going to inherit a real mess on lots of fronts and that's exactly what has happened and I think if you're turning around the kind of mess that we inherited and taking on the challenges that we are it takes time. What I think is right though is that we do the right things, make the right decisions now and then come the next general election we can show people how we're moving in a better direction. We won't have necessarily fixed every problem.

How does political oppression affect arts and culture?

On the 16th of March 2022, in the early weeks of the war between Russia and Ukraine, the Mariupol Theatre in Ukraine was bombed, destroying most of the building and causing many deaths. The theatre was a Ukrainian heritage and cultural site which had been granted academic status, and the airstrike on it was deemed a war crime. In December 2025, three years later, it was announced that the theatre was to reopen – with a performance of a Russian fairytale. The Russian government has displayed their rebuilding of the theatre proudly as a symbol of their rule in occupied Ukraine, but there are conflicting feelings about the reopening. Some claim that to sing and dance in a place where so many were unjustly killed, and in tandem with the Russian regime, is insensitive and should be looked upon with disgust. Other actors believe that politics and the arts can remain separate, and so have remained in Mariupol working with the new theatre's leadership – determined to keep culture alive, no matter what form it takes. Despite the multitude of reactions to the reopening of the theatre, it is clear that when politics gets involved with the arts, the result can be a dramatic change in the trajectory of culture that is hard to ignore. So how exactly can politics impact arts and culture and to what extent does this occur?

One of the most cited examples of a tragic intersection between politics and art is that of Nazi Germany. Oppressive political regimes such as this one often appear strong and composed on the surface – and this is what can originally draw people into supporting them – but underneath they are in fact insecure and unstable, requiring the use of extreme methods to keep their power. One such method is censorship. This can take several forms and most commonly refers to text, where certain words and phrases or sometimes entire articles are erased from the public view. However, it is also possible to censor more creative forms of expression, such as art. The Nazis created a term for art they disagreed with, known as 'Degenerate Art.' This included most modern art movements, such as Expressionism, Cubism, and Surrealism – all said to be 'un-German.' From 1937, thousands of artworks were confiscated from museums across Germany, with the figure ranging from 16000 to 20000. Instead, they promoted pieces that displayed the traditional Germanic lifestyle and their Aryan racial ideologies. Artists such as Fritz Erler, with his heroic war scenes, were venerated. It is perhaps a testament to the significance of art that an entire political regime felt so threatened by inventive paintings to the point where the only option, in their eyes, was to destroy them. The widespread approach of the Nazis (who covered almost every style of modern art) displays the extensive impact that politics can have on art, and particularly shows the fatal end of creative movements that do not wish to conform to oppressive standards. Again, it hints to the fact that composure is only surface-level and 'strong' regimes utilise high levels of micro-managing in all aspects of society in order to prevent themselves from toppling over.

A further, and more recent, demonstration of how political regimes can restrict artistic and cultural freedom is the current situation in Cuba. In 2018, the Cuban government – under the leadership of First Secretary Miguel Diaz-Canel – passed Decree 349, a law requiring all artists to seek permission from the government before any public or private activities such as exhibitions. This was effectively a way of ensuring that no independent work was carried out, and it also barred artists from selling their work without pre-approval. Not only did artists lose their freedom to create, they also lost the ability to use their work in the ways they wished to. The consequences for breaching this decree include artwork being confiscated and fines being handed out by government inspectors. A number of dissident creatives have expressed their outrage over Cuban restrictions, including through national campaigns such as those carried out by the 27N collective of intellectuals and artists. One such activist is Tania Bruguera, who was jailed by police and then reportedly held under house arrest for organising a sit-in protest against Decree 349 that same year. Years prior, her passport had been confiscated by the government, again as a result of her political activism through her artistic performances. Bruguera's *Tatlin's Whisper #6*, which involved her setting up a podium, a microphone, and granting the public one minute of free speech, resulted in her detainment several times and led to her facing legal challenges. Free speech alone was seen as contradictory and criminal to the Cuban authorities. Due to the Cuban regime, a generation of voices was silenced and forced to either stop doing what they love, or leave the country – an option that comes with its own risks. There is no limit to the number of restrictions some governments are willing to impose on their citizens, and the result is a suffocated arts and culture scene that is unable to develop to its full potential. Some of the best and most influential works have originated from a position of frustration and anger at the current times (for example, *Guernica* by Picasso). Here, no room has been made for political criticism, and this leads to the deterioration of an already deficit democracy when those being governed have no opportunity to express their views.

However, when things like this happen, the resulting protests do not necessarily have to be kept quiet and under-the-radar, as it can be in the case of smaller countries where political reporting is largely state-controlled. There have been a number of instances where people have used art to revolt against political oppression, and the result has been recognised globally for its significance. Two well-known examples of this are Banksy and Jean-Michel Basquiat, who both used their artwork to send a clear message to their respective authorities. Banksy is a frequent protester of war, as seen in his piece *CND Soldiers*. *CND Soldiers* depicts a soldier crouching on the ground, holding a machine-gun, while the other uses a paintbrush to paint a red peace sign. The peace sign was once the symbol of the British Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND). Even more significantly, the piece was first painted outside the Houses of Parliament in light of the realisation that millions of people's (and soldiers') protests against the UK's involvement in the 2003 Iraq War had been ignored. Through this piece, Banksy alluded to the hypocrisy of the military, and how they pledged to 'keep the peace' but in reality only caused more bloodshed. But in addition to this criticism, he highlights the human nature of soldiers too, and how they have become disillusioned with their role in war – signified by the painting of the peace sign, which, being done in red, suggests that the soldiers' only option is to continue fighting regardless.

Basquiat's work, *Defacement*, was created in 1983 in response to the killing of a Black man, Michael Stewart, by the New York City Transit Police. Stewart was a 25-year-old graffiti artist who ran in the same circles as Basquiat, even dating his former girlfriend. He was arrested by the Transit Police after allegedly graffitiing the walls of the NYC subway – a detail disputed and ultimately never confirmed. Police officers reportedly threw him to the ground and beat him, and he ended up in hospital for 13 days, after which he passed away. His suffered bruising and brain damage indicated strangulation. Basquiat was struck by this story, and the similarities he shared with the young artist made him state that 'it could have been me.' During the aftermath and outrage over police brutality towards black people, Basquiat painted *Defacement* on Keith Haring's studio wall in just a few days. It depicts two pink-skinned policemen in uniform, with one displaying fanged teeth and both carrying batons in their hands. They are ready to strike a shadowy figure in the middle of the canvas – which represents Stewart, but also any other potential black victim of police brutality. Other influential artists also produced artworks surrounding Stewart's death ; notably Andy Warhol, Keith Haring, and David Hammons. *Defacement* went on to matter a great deal to the Black Lives Matter movement, and inspired the future generation of artists to use their work to send important political messages.

Defacement
Basquiat
1983



Before the death of Michael Stewart, the New York City art scene was largely explorative and yet apolitical. This changed instantly when a few policemen, who were seemingly above the law and tripping on an excess of power, inflicted terrible violence on an undeserving man purely for the colour of his skin. This clearly shows how necessary it is for political power to be kept in check, and for that same power to then be used to draw the line for others. An uncontrollable police state is possibly the most terrifying result of corrupt politics ; when the same authority whose duty is to protect you begins to hunt you. The resulting wave of public indignation and the art movements that followed are proof that when politics goes wrong, the arts and culture scene is changed forever, but that people will continue to use any means they can to convey their anger.

Overall, it cannot be denied that political shifts will ultimately result in shifts within the world of art and culture. However, these shifts will always be countered by the brave artists who utilise their work to point out problems in society – and when this freedom to do so is taken away, politics can become not just the issue of governance but also a lethal weapon.

FOUR PATRON SAINTS OF THE UK



The four patron saints of the United Kingdom, representing its constituent nations, are St George for England, St Andrew for Scotland, St David for Wales, and St Patrick for Ireland (Northern Ireland). Each saint has their own national day (e.g., St George's Day, St Patrick's Day) and is a significant cultural symbol for their respective country within the UK





Saint George - England

Feast Day

Thu, 23 Apr 2026

"Don't be afraid to take a big step if one is indicated. You can't cross a chasm in two small jumps." - **St George**

Saint George is the Patron saint of England. He was a venerated early

Christian martyr who refused to renounce his faith under Emperor Diocletian which led to his torture and execution around 303 AD. He is believed to be born in Cappadocia which is now modern-day Turkey. Later in his life he became a soldier in the Roman army, serving Emperor Diocletian, However when the emperor ordered the persecution of Christians George refused to renounce his faith, as a result he was tortured and executed.

He received his status from his reluctance to renounce his faith and led to him being highly venerated by crusaders who returned from the Middle East, linking him with military protection and Christian chivalry. He is often recognized through the famous tale of him slaying a dragon which symbolizes the triumph of good over evil and courage against oppression.





Saint Andrew -Scotland

Feast Day

Mon, 30 Nov 2026

"Love is acceptance. When you love someone ... you take them into your heart, and that is surely why it hurts so much when we lose someone we love, because we lose a part of ourselves" - St Andrew

Saint Andrew is the patron saint of Scotland and was one of the first disciples of Christ and his martyrdom goes straight back to the start of Christianity. Andrew was a fisherman who Jesus called to be "the fisher of men" . Making Andrew leave his nets to follow Jesus' ministry . After Pentecost he traveled to Greece and Asia Minor to spread the gospel. As a result of his preaching, many people converted to Christianity. Once his preaching spread in Greece, the Roman Emperor Agitates ordered his death in 60 A.D because Andrew converted his wife . Andrew was martyred by crucifixion on an X shaped cross because he felt unworthy to die on the same type of cross as Jesus. This is the reason why the flag of Scotland is an X shape





Saint Patrick - Ireland

Feast Day

Tues, 17 March 2026

"On occasion, I used to give presents to the kings, besides the hire that I gave to their sons who accompany me; and nevertheless, they seized me with my companions." - **St Patrick**

Saint Patrick is the Patron Saint

of Ireland. This is due to his pivotal role in bringing Christianity to Ireland in the 5th century, by establishing churches, training his clergy and challenging paganism. After being kidnapped from Britain and later returning to Ireland as a missionary, he dedicated decades to converting the Celtic people. He spread Christianity by establishing churches, training local leaders as priests, baptized converts and laid the foundation for Christianity in Ireland. He also challenged injustice by writing against the mistreatment of Irish Christians, showing courage and faith. He is often symbolized with a Shamrock as he used a three leafed Shamrock to explain the Holy Trinity (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit)





Saint David - Wales

Feast Day

Sunday, 1 March 2026

""Be joyful, keep the faith, and do the little things that you have heard and seen me do".

St David

Saint David is the Patron Saint

of Wales. due to his life as a revered 6th-century Welsh monk, Bishop, and preacher, known for founding monasteries (including Glastonbury), leading an austere life, opposing heresy (Pelagianism), and performing numerous miracles, most famously raising a hill to be seen by a crowd, leading to his declaration as the patron saint of Wales and later canonization.

This national day in Wales commemorates his life and is celebrated with parades, Welsh songs, and wearing national emblems like daffodils and leeks, connecting modern Wales to its ancient saint. You could also ask him to pray for you if you are traveling to the country of Wales, or for someone you know who is traveling to Wales. Additionally, St. David is the patron saint of poets. You can seek his intercession if you are a poet, or for someone you know who is a poet.





EHSAN HAKIMZADA

CRITIQUE OF THEISM

0.1 PREFACE

To be clear, I am not writing this from an atheist position, so I am not biased against the theistic position. This paper is not written with the intention of attacking any theistic belief, so please do not take away from this paper that I am trying to attack your beliefs. It is quite the contrary. I wrote this paper from the viewpoint that our deeply held beliefs, especially those that shape our thinking and understanding of almost everything, should be examined and critiqued if necessary to clarify the foundations of our beliefs, just as René Descartes does in his First Meditation (maybe not so extreme though). So please consider and take into account what I write, and do not hold a bias whereby you believe that whatever I am writing is a whole lot of rubbish and is not even worth considering, because if you do read this paper with the intent to change, you might change your whole belief system, or stay strong in your belief and strengthen it.

This paper primarily examines three closely related aspects of classical theism: the modal collapse argument, the form of necessitarianism that follows from it, and the doctrine of divine simplicity. The arguments I will be presenting are not claimed to be decisive or infallible and are obviously open to rebuttal. Finally, a short note is that I could not get access to the original paper on modal collapse, so I have taken the second best option and used a paper on the original paper. If you wish to talk about the arguments or have concerns about certain parts of the paper, please email me.

1.1 Kurt Gödel and His Modal Ontological Argument

Kurt Gödel, one of the 20th century's most influential logicians and mathematicians, is best known for his incompleteness theorems: In the 1970s, he also developed a modal ontological argument for God's existence: Gödel aimed to show that God's existence could be established purely through logic, without relying on empirical evidence or faith:

To understand Gödel's argument, some definitions are necessary:

- **Positive properties:** In Gödel's argument, a positive property is something that represents a pure perfection or excellence, something that is intrinsically better to possess than to lack: Gödel does not give an exact definition (which is a critique of his argument) but formalises positive properties through axioms:
 1. If a property is positive, its negation cannot be positive.
 2. Any property necessarily entailed by a positive property is itself positive: The idea is that a being possessing all positive properties would be maximally perfect.
- **Essential properties:** A property is essential to a being if it must belong to that being in every possible world where the being exists: For God, all positive properties are essential:
- **Modal logic concepts:** Modal logic distinguishes between what is possible (true in at least one possible world) and necessary (true in all possible worlds): Gödel's argument relies on reasoning about existence across all possible worlds, not just the actual world:

The rough outline of Gödel's argument is as follows:

- P1. There are properties that count as positive in an objective, non-arbitrary sense.
- P2. For any property, either that property or its negation is positive, but not both.
- P3. If a property is positive, then it is positive in all possible circumstances (its positivity is necessary, not contingent).
- P4. If a property is positive, then it is logically possible for some being to possess that property.
- P5. A being that possesses all positive properties is coherent and logically possible.
- P6. If a being possesses all positive properties, then possessing all positive properties is essential to that being (it could not exist without them).
- P7. Necessary existence is a positive property.
- P8. Any being that possesses all positive properties therefore possesses necessary existence.
- P9. If it is possible that a being with necessary existence exists, then such a being exists in all possible worlds.
- P10. If a being exists in all possible worlds, then it exists in the actual world.

C. Therefore, a being that possesses all positive properties exists necessarily.

The point of outlining the argument wasn't to show that Gödel was successful as the success of the argument depends on whether one accepts Gödel's axioms and his definition of positive properties. But I want to show that even if one grants Gödel's axioms it leads to another huge problem for classical theism.

1.2 What Modal Collapse Is

In modal logic, a distinction is normally drawn between necessary truths (truths that hold in all possible worlds) and contingent truths (truths that hold in the actual world but could have been otherwise, e.g. you could have drunk coffee instead of tea this morning). Modal collapse is the result that this distinction disappears, meaning that every truth becomes necessary.

Formally, modal collapse can be expressed as:

$$\forall X \forall x (Xx \leftrightarrow \Box Xx)$$

This states that, for all properties X and for all objects x , x has property X if and only if x necessarily has property X . Simply put, if something is true, then it could not have failed to be true. There are no merely contingent facts.

This result is important because it undermines the distinction between necessity and contingency that underpins much of our reasoning about the world. Modal collapse implies that everything that is the case could not have been otherwise. This conflicts with our everyday intuitions, such as the idea that people could have made different choices, meaning that there is no free will under modal collapse and, therefore, poses a huge threat to theism.

1.3. Why Modal Collapse Occurs

The core problem is that Gödel's axioms allow necessity to spread from a small set of claims (such as the necessary existence of a God-like being) to all properties whatsoever. Once the system proves a statement of the form:

$$\phi \rightarrow \Box \phi$$

"If ϕ is true, then ϕ is necessarily true."

it follows immediately that:

$$\Box\phi \leftrightarrow \phi$$

“ ϕ is necessary if and only if ϕ is true.”

Any true proposition is necessarily true, and any necessary proposition is true. This is exactly modal collapse. Importantly, modal collapse does not arise merely because Gödel uses S5 logic (the logic he uses in his argument). Rather, it emerges from the combination of S5 with Gödel’s specific axioms about necessary existence.

1.4 Sobel’s contribution

J. H. Sobel analysed Gödel’s ontological argument and formally proved that it logically entails modal collapse. He showed that the formula

$$\forall X \forall x (Xx \leftrightarrow \Box Xx)$$

is a theorem of Gödel’s system. Sobel also demonstrated that modal collapse does not depend uniquely on S5; even weaker modal logics, such as KB, suffice to derive it once Gödel’s axioms are applied.

1.5 Proof

Left-to-right direction ($Xx \rightarrow \Box Xx$)

Assume that an individual x has some property X . Gödel’s axioms imply that properties possessed by a God-like being are essential and necessarily instantiated. Through Gödel’s definitions of essence and necessary existence, this necessity propagates from divine properties to properties in general. As a result, if x has X , then it is necessary that x has X .

$$Xx \rightarrow \Box Xx$$

"If x has property X , then x must have X in every possible world."

Right-to-left direction ($\Box Xx \rightarrow Xx$). By the T-axiom of S5 ($\Box\phi \rightarrow \phi$), if it is necessary that x has property X , then x in fact has property X .

$$\Box Xx \rightarrow Xx$$

"If x must have X , then x actually has X ." Necessity means actuality.

Combining the two directions Putting both implications together gives:

$$Xx \leftrightarrow \Box Xx$$

x has property X if and only if it necessarily has X.” Since X and x are arbitrary, it applies to all individuals and all properties, producing full modal collapse.

1.6 Why modal collapse matters

During the HE and careers day, I went to the philosophy talk given by St Mary’s University, and a student asked, “Is God rational to believe in?” along those lines, and the person gave a response that is a variation of the argument from contingency. The argument follows that

P1: Everything that exists is either contingent or necessary

P2: Not everything can be contingent, because if everything were contingent, there would be an infinite regress which is logically impossible.

P3: Therefore, there must exist at least one necessary being whose existence is not contingent on anything else.

C: There exists a necessary being, which is often identified as God.

The problem arises when we consider the doctrine of divine simplicity alongside the Argument from Contingency. Divine simplicity asserts that God is without parts, meaning His essence is identical to His existence.

However, if God’s essence and existence are identical, then every property or action of God must also flow necessarily from His essence. This leads to necessitarianism: everything God does must be necessary, because it is an expression of His unchanging, simple essence. There is no room for contingency within God Himself.

The problem is that the Argument from Contingency relies on a distinction between necessary and contingent beings to establish God’s existence. But if God’s necessary existence entails that all of His actions and properties are necessary, the same reasoning must extend to the universe itself. Everything would be necessary. The distinction that the argument depends on between contingent beings and a necessary being falls apart. However, the problem of divine simplicity and modal collapse does not only occur during the argument from contingency, but occurs just by the existence of God under the doctrine of divine simplicity, so there must be a way to distinguish between the divine will and God to solve the issue.

1.7 Philosophical Significance

Gödel's argument aims to prove the existence of a necessary being, but modal collapse shows that necessity spreads to all things, not just God. This eliminates the distinction between necessary and contingent existence, producing a world where nothing could have been otherwise, and meaning that free will is gone, removing the free will defence for theism and providing a huge problem for nearly all religions. J. H. Sobel emphasises that this is a fundamental consequence of Gödel's axioms and modal logic.

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2.1 What is Necessitarianism?

Necessitarianism is a position of modal metaphysics which claims that there exist no non actualised possibilities.

An example would be this: you have a cat which is currently sitting on your lap. Most people would believe that, prior to your cat sitting on your lap, it was possible that he could sit on your lap, but it was also possible that he could sit on his bed. Under necessitarianism, however, there are no non actualised possibilities; therefore, when your cat sat on your lap, the only possible outcome was for your cat to sit on your lap.

2.2 God is omnipotent, omniscient, and omnibenevolent

This is a critique of classical theism, so this premise is uncontestable.

2.3 God is Omniscient of the Divine Will

The divine will refers to God's determination of what happens in reality. It is the principle by which God brings about states of affairs. In classical theism, the divine will is not a separate psychological faculty like human reasoning.

If God is omniscient, then He has complete and infallible knowledge of His own will. This means God knows which choices He will make prior to making them. There is never a moment at which God is uncertain about what He will do. Since God knows eternally what choices He will make, He also knows what choices will never be made.

The crucial issue is this: if God eternally knows that He will choose X, then it cannot be the case that He will choose not X. If He were to choose not X, His prior knowledge would have been false, which is impossible given the quality of omniscience. Therefore, whatever God knows He will choose is fixed. It becomes incoherent to claim that alternative choices were genuinely 'possible' if God could not have acted differently from how He knew He would act.

Some might argue that knowledge is not deterministic, that God knowing His future choices does not mean it was impossible for Him to do otherwise. By this they mean that knowledge does not function as a cause: God's knowing that He will choose X does not itself produce or force the choice of X. While this may be true in terms of causation, the issue here is about modal possibility, which concerns what could or could not have been the case across possible worlds. This does not affect the stance, as I am arguing whether there exists any possible world in which God chooses not X. If it is eternally true that God will choose X, then there is no possible world in which God chooses not X, because in any such world His omniscient belief would be false, which would be a contradiction in God's nature.

The argument is further strengthened when divine simplicity is introduced. Since the divine will is identical to God's essence, and God's essence is necessary, the divine will must also be necessary. A necessary will cannot vary across possible worlds. God is the same in all possible worlds; His nature does not change. If His nature is necessary and unchanging, then His reasons are identical in every possible world. If His reasons are identical, then the outcome of His will must also be identical.

Therefore, if God is simple and necessary, His will cannot be contingent. And if His will is not contingent, then there are no unrealised divine possibilities. What did not occur was never a genuine possibility.

2.4 “Divine Will and the Contingency of Events”

Since all contingent events are dependent on God, whether they obtain or do not obtain is dependent on the freedom of the divine will.

Since the divine will decides “you get to exist, you do not” with all such contingencies, the divine will itself must be contingent to allow for its effects to be contingent. If the divine will were necessary, then all of its effects could not have failed to obtain, making them necessary rather than contingent.

The divine will is necessary, as mentioned before, through divine simplicity, but the main argument here is that it is necessary through omnibenevolence.

2.5: Divine Choice

Due to God's omnibenevolence, and due to the fact there cannot be multiple but differing perfect choices, there is only one choice God can make in every deliberation.

Omnibenevolence is a property applied to someone who makes the best moral choices possible. Since God and His will are also perfect, He not only makes the best moral choices possible, but the best choices possible. To deny this is to deny His perfection.

Only one thing can be perfect. There cannot be two (or more) things that differ in qualities or properties that are both perfect, because any differences must have a reason. If that reason is fulfilled in one being but not the other, then the other being is not perfect, since there exists another being which fulfills more reasons.

Similarly, two choices cannot be equally perfect, because any difference in action must have an explanation or reason. If God is entirely motivated by goodness (due to omnibenevolence), there is only one action that fulfils all reasons aligned with goodness.

Therefore, only one choice is possible for God in every deliberation.

2.6 One possibility

From P4, there is only one possible chain of events which could occur.

2.7 Omniscience leads to necessitarianism

Since God knows His choices before they are made, He knows which choices and events will never happen; this means there is no such thing as "possible but never actualised", since God could not have chosen differently, so what didn't happen could never have happened at all.

It becomes immediately apparent that God's choices are necessary, as there was no alternative which could have been obtained but didn't. This is because to choose differently is to contradict his omnibenevolence and perfection, as he would be choosing other than the best option.

Since it is an impossibility for God to choose otherwise, it makes a contradiction in His nature. If alternative choices and subsequent chains of events were never possible, it means that the current world we live in was necessary and the only timeline that could have occurred.

And since all events and features of reality are typically described as contingent, then all of them are subsequently necessary too, as they could not have failed to obtain.

Therefore, necessitarianism is true.

2.8 Summary:

P1: God is omnipotent, omniscient, and omnibenevolent.

P2: God is omniscient of the divine will. He knows what choices he will make. To deny this is to deny omniscience.

P3: Since all contingent events are dependent on God, whether they obtain or do not is dependent on the freedom of the divine will.

P4: Due to God's omnibenevolence, and due to the fact there cannot be multiple but differing perfect choices, there is only one choice God can make in every deliberation.

P5: From P4 there is only one possible chain of events which is obtained.

P6: Since God knows His choices before they are made, He knows which choices and events will never happen, meaning there is no such thing as possible but never actualised, since God could not have chosen differently, so what didn't happen could never have happened.

C1: Therefore, all contingent events which obtain are necessary, and all contingent events which did not obtain are impossible.

C2: Necessitarianism is true.

2.9. Implications:

If this is the only possible world that God could have brought about, then it must be the best possible world, since God makes the best possible choices. Meaning, if this argument succeeds, the theist must accept this is the best possible world: a hard pill to swallow for most

people. If the theist accepts that necessitarianism is true, then they subsequently accept the universe is necessary; and if it is necessary, it sounds a lot like many atheist positions, that the universe is necessary and a brute force fact. If they accept the universe is necessary, what's the explanatory power for God? The universe couldn't have failed to obtain, even under their view.

This also destroys omnibenevolence as a quality, as God would be the direct author for evil and suffering, since the evil and suffering events in the world are necessitated by God's will.

3.1. Creation

Creation: Under typical Christian doctrine, creation is not eternal. That is, the universe is not eternal. There was a point in time where there was only God in existence.

Theists believe God is necessary for the universe to exist, as nothing can move from potentiality to actuality, actuality being the realised state and potentiality being the inherent capacity to change, without something outside of it already in a state of actuality. The claim is that God is Actus Purus (pure actuality), which moves reality from a potentiality of containing a universe to the actuality of a universe existing.

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3.2 Definitions

Divine Simplicity: a theological and philosophical doctrine asserting that God is absolutely, metaphysically one, lacking any internal parts, composition, or distinction between his essence and attributes.

To explain, under Divine Simplicity, God is not a being which is constituted by a will, an essence, goodness, eternal existence, etc. God is identical to these attributes; they do not "make up" God's being. God does not "have" goodness; He "is" goodness.

3.3 Implications

If creation had a beginning, then there was an existence when the universe did not exist. To bring the universe into being, God would need the capacity to create it, which seems like a kind of potentiality. He could create, but had not yet done so. If God moved from potential to

actual in creating the universe, it would mean He changed, because change happens when a potential is fulfilled. This creates a problem, because God is supposed to be perfect and unchanging.

Change is bad for God because it implies imperfection or incompleteness. Since God is an intelligent agent, all changes must be intentional, meaning they are goal-driven and therefore have a reason. Since God is perfectly complete, He cannot need to improve or adjust; He must already exist in a state of total goal-fulfilment. Any change, including creating the universe, would suggest that God was somehow lacking or had unrealised potential before acting, which conflicts with His perfection.

Furthermore, creation cannot be explained as a response to a new reason that arises when the universe begins. If God exists alone before creation and time itself begins with the universe, there is nothing external to God that could provide a new reason for Him to create. Because God is perfect and unchanging, He cannot be motivated by anything outside Himself or by new circumstances.

3.4 The Issue

For reality to go from just God to God plus creation, something would have had to change. But a change can only happen if something already actual brings it about. Before creation, the only thing that exists is God, so if anything changes, it must be caused by God.

The issue is that God contains no potential, meaning he does not change. If God cannot change, then He could not move from a state of just God to a state of God and creation. This means that if creation exists, it must always have existed alongside God. If creation had a beginning, it would imply that God had the potential to create first and then actualised it later, which conflicts with the idea that God is unchanging and already fully actual.

The Development and Role of IQ in Academic and General Performance

Asav Dahal

- Why IQ matters, despite the stigma
- IQ in practice

Precursors:

- -1 is considered 'perfect negative correlation', 0 is considered 'no correlation' and 1 is considered 'perfect correlation'
- 'g' refers to general intelligence

1.1 Why IQ matters, despite the stigma

Some people claim that having a high IQ is not an achievement, and therefore IQ is obsolete. While their premise is correct, their conclusion is not. It is true that IQ scores cannot accurately map out the lives of individuals, and therefore are nothing to boast about, but it is a separate falsehood to claim that IQ has no relevance at all - in fact, IQ tests have a measure of the extent to which they correlate with general intelligence, referred to as 'g-loading'. This measure relies upon the 'g-factor', which represents underlying general intelligence.

	Classics	French	English	Mathem.
Classics	-	0.83	0.78	0.70
French	0.83	-	0.67	0.67
English	0.78	0.67	-	0.64
Mathem.	0.70	0.67	0.64	-

Figure 1¹

The 'g-factor' was a term originally coined by psychologist Charles Spearman. He observed that students' performances across multiple

¹Adapted from Spearman, C. (1904). 'General Intelligence', *Objectively Determined and Measured*, 275.

seemingly unrelated school subjects were positively correlated, as seen in Figure 1, despite the common misnomer that students usually excel in one particular field. For example, if a student performed excellently in Classics, it's likely that they also performed excellently in Mathematics.

This link, established in Spearman's paper, inspired the creation of the standardised *Binet-Simon Intelligence Test*, the world's first IQ test. Students who took the test were benchmarked against other students to generate a 'mental age'. To measure IQ, the test used the following formula:

$$(\text{Mental Age} \div \text{Actual Age}) \times 100 = IQ$$

The *Binet-Simon Intelligence Test* was then brought to the United States by eugenicist Henry H. Goddard, and with a few modifications, was named the *Stanford-Binet Intelligence Test*. The stigma around IQ may come from the unjust and authoritarian forced sterilisation of US citizens that resulted from eugenicists misusing the *Stanford-Binet Intelligence Test* for political purposes.

CHAPTER 215.

"AN ACT entitled an act to **prevent procreation** of confirmed criminals, **idiots, imbeciles** and rapists..."

Known as the 1907 Indiana Eugenics Law²

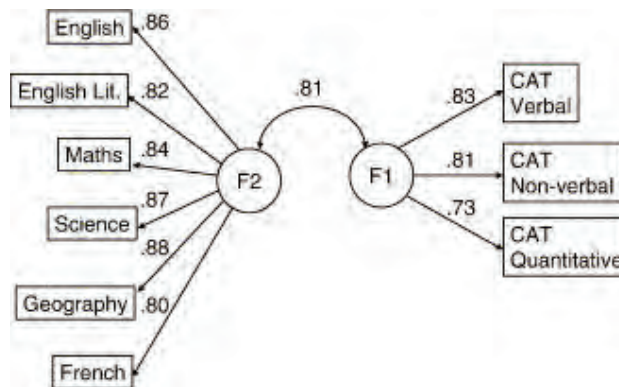
Ideas about IQ have developed over time. One of the largest changes is that we now consider genetics to play a role of around 50% in IQ, whereas Spearman attributed it to 100% of the g-factor.

² This article is not intended to address the American eugenics movement, though further reading could include *Buck v. Bell*, 274 U.S. 200.

1.2 IQ in practice

The idea that regardless of g-factor level (general intelligence, which is largely natural) can succeed in any field given that they put in enough hard work is a gross misunderstanding of intelligence.

An interesting study³ to the reader in terms of relevancy may be the investigation of the correlation between Cognitive Abilities Test results taken at the age of 11 and GCSE grade results at the age of 16 of 70,000 children in the UK. The diagram below reveals that if GCSE grades were awarded at the age of 11 using CAT scores, they would be largely accurate.



GCSE grades in correlation to Cognitive Abilities Test (CAT) scores³

It's well established that IQ is strongly correlated to educational performance (which some claim is because school exams are IQ tests in disguise), but this is not its only purpose. We can also consider other types of performance in relation to IQ, with the example provided being military performance.

During the Vietnam war, the US military relaxed its IQ standards through Project 100,000. The project aimed to induct 100,000 mentally deficient men into the military, mental deficiency being defined as having an IQ of 71-80. These men were known as NSM (New Standards Men). These men required three to nine times as much

³ Deary, I., Strand, S., Smith, P., Fernandes, C. (2007). *Intelligence and Educational Achievement*. *Intelligence*, 35, 13-21.

remedial training as non-NSM peers and their casualty rate was over three times that of non-NSM peers in combat⁴. This was such a poor outcome for the US military that they reinstated their previous thresholds.

1.3 Conclusion

It is unjustified to disregard IQ as a measure of cognitive performance because IQ tests with strong g-loading scores correlate greatly with general intelligence, something that's been clear since Spearman's paper in 1961. It is understandable that there is stigma around IQ tests due to the American eugenics movement, and the false idea that IQ is permanent. As shown in Section 1.2, there are real-world purposes to cognitive tests that are correlated with real world outcomes.

Disregarding IQ as a metric of cognitive ability is akin to denying science.

⁴Gregory, H. (2016). *McNamara's Morons. Salvaging the Deficient for the War Effort.*
https://vovaveteran.org/36-3/36-3_morons.html.

Criminals, are they born or are they made? - The nature-nurture debate

Throughout the years many scientists and psychologists have been divided over nature vs nurture, and which has the greater influence on human behaviour. Many studies have been conducted on twins and adoption, hormone levels and learning behaviours from researchers such as Bandura and the Bobo Doll experiment. New studies have also come to light on the intricacy between the two, and the extent to which both nature and nurture are intertwined with one another through the role of genetic nurture.

This raises the questions: are we born predisposed to certain behaviours or are we forms of constructs shaped by society? Is the crime we commit a result of an innate drive within us or are we simply taught these behaviours through our environment?

Within psychology there have been a number of studies covering twins and adoption throughout the years that look into whether criminal traits are engrained in DNA. Genetic twin studies show a higher likelihood of Monozygotic twins (identical) sharing criminal traits compared to Dizygotic twins (non-identical) even when raised apart, suggesting some of the explanation behind a crime must be inherited.

Another factor backing up the idea it is nature leading to criminality is hormones. People who exhibit higher levels of testosterone display increased levels of violence. This is because the area of the brain that helps to regulate threat detection - the amygdala- may be malfunctioning and detect situations as threats when, in reality, they are harmless, leading to a person displaying an increase in violent tendencies. This indicates that criminal activity linked to aggression is due to nature and predisposed DNA.



**BANDURA'S BOBO DOLL
EXPERIMENT**

However, Bandura conducted his Bobo Doll experiment in Stanford University and found divergent conclusions. He exposed nursery school children to an adult role model who either acted aggressively or passively to an inflatable Bobo Doll. He found children who observed the physically aggressive adult model were more likely to imitate the behaviours and that these same children were more influenced by same sex role models. He concluded that social behaviours such as aggression and hostility are taught through social behaviours. This suggests that behaviours originate more from the nurture debate, rather than purely genetics.

But what if we combined the two?

Genetic nurture is where the parent's DNA affects how they nurture their child, for example an aggressive parent will create a chaotic home and, as a result, have an indirect environmental effect on behaviour; this makes it increasingly more difficult to disentangle genetic and environmental causes to parent-offspring similarity.

Environmental factors can also interact with genetic and epigenetic factors to increase the risk of aggression. A study by Caspi et al (2002) found that individuals with a specific gene variant, who had also experienced childhood maltreatment, were more likely to exhibit aggressive behaviour later in life than those without the gene variant.



THREE IDENTICAL STRANGERS
- the triplets separated at
birth in secret for a 'nature vs
nurture' study

Both of these intertwined factors are backed by the idea of epigenetics, where environmental factors such as childhood trauma or living in areas which are prone to crime, can shape the genes that are expressed and encourage more antisocial traits to be shown. Therefore, epigenetics shows that criminal behaviour is influenced by both nature and nurture because environmental experiences can switch certain genes on or off, affecting behaviour such as aggression or impulsivity.

So, when looking at an area of a rectangle, you know you must calculate the width times by the length. But what's more important for calculating the area? It's neither, both are equally as important as each other, with both dimensions playing an equal role in determining the shapes area. Nature and nurture follow this same pattern, you cannot have one without the other, you cannot have nature without nurture.

When Healthcare Becomes a Crime

Hospitals are places where people go to be healed and protected. Doctors and nurses often work long hours undergoing huge pressure. But what happens when a mistake in healthcare is treated not as something to learn from, but as a crime to be punished? In recent years, the idea of Gross Negligence Manslaughter (GNM) has become a controversial topic in the NHS and healthcare systems around the world. Should healthcare professionals be judged like criminals when working in environments where mistakes are often linked to understaffing and system failure?

What is Gross Negligence Manslaughter, and how can healthcare become a crime?

According to the NHS, Gross Negligence Manslaughter is a legal term used when someone is accused of causing a death through extremely serious carelessness. In healthcare, this means a doctor or nurse can be charged if the law decides their actions went beyond a simple mistake. The courts consider situations such as ignoring an obvious and serious risk to a patient's health, being aware of a danger but choosing to take the risk anyway or trying to avoid harm but doing so badly that it is considered "grossly negligent."

The Case of David Sellu

The case of David Sellu is often viewed as a key example of how Gross Negligence Manslaughter can be wrongly applied in healthcare. Dr Sellu was a highly experienced Consultant Colorectal Surgeon who had worked in both the NHS and private practice for nearly four decades. In 2010, following the death of a patient, Mr Hughes, at the Clementine Churchill Hospital, Harrow, Dr Sellu was prosecuted and later imprisoned for GNM

Mr Hughes developed abdominal pain after a knee operation and was transferred to Dr Sellu's care. Dr Sellu suspected a bowel rupture, a serious and life-threatening condition, and ordered a CT scan. While prosecutors argued that he should have operated sooner, this narrative failed to fully account for significant system failures.

There was no immediate access to an operating theatre or an anaesthetist, and when surgery was scheduled, it was delayed further due to staff unavailability. These delays, which played a crucial role in the outcome, **were not under Dr Sellu's sole control**. Nevertheless, the **prosecution portrayed his actions as an individual failure rather than the result of organisational constraints**.

Crucially, a Root Cause Analysis (RCA) report commissioned by the hospital examining systemic and procedural failings was not disclosed during the original trial. Despite this, Dr Sellu was convicted in 2013 and sentenced to prison. However, the Court of Appeal later ruled that the conviction was unsafe, and in 2018 he was fully exonerated by the Medical Practitioners Tribunal Service. **Dr Sellu's experience highlights how the criminalisation of healthcare can lead to miscarriages of justice when complex system failures are reduced to individual blame**.

The Case of Abdullah Amin

The case of Abdullah Amin highlights how **junior doctors can become vulnerable targets in a system under pressure**. In 2018, Amin, a trainee Psychiatrist, was convicted of gross negligence manslaughter following the death of a patient under his care. Amin later set himself on fire outside Kensington Palace in February 2016 after he had lost his job at Charing Cross Hospital. An independent investigation found the Trust's disciplinary procedures against Mr Abdullah were **"weak and unfair"**. Evidence submitted to the hearing panel did not paint "an honest and complete picture", the report said. Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust chief executive, Professor Tim Orchard, said: **"It is now clear that we let Amin down and, for that, I am truly sorry."** Like other high-profile cases, the focus was placed on his individual actions, while the wider context of staffing shortages, inadequate supervision, and systemic failures received little attention.

The Case of Dr Hadiza Bawa-Garba

The case of Dr Hadiza Bawa-Garba became one of the most significant and controversial examples of GNM in modern NHS history. In February 2011, six-year-old Jack Adcock died at Leicester Royal Infirmary after developing sepsis following dehydration caused by vomiting and diarrhoea. Jack showed clear signs of severe

illness, including low oxygen levels and profoundly abnormal blood results, with a pH of 7.08 and lactate levels of 11, **indicating critical metabolic distress results that were known to both the trainee doctor and the supervising consultant.**

On the day of Jack's death, Dr Bawa-Garba was working under extreme pressure. **She was responsible for six wards across four floors, was unfamiliar with the hospital, had limited senior support, and had just returned from her maternity leave.** Staffing levels were poor, with reliance on agency nurses, and an **IT system failure delayed access to critical test results.** A later investigation identified six root causes, made 23 recommendations for improvement, and listed 79 actions that could have reduced the risks. These findings strongly suggested systemic failure rather than the actions of one individual.

Despite this, in December 2014, Dr Bawa-Garba and two nurses were charged with GNM. In November 2015, she was found guilty and given a two-year suspended sentence, while one nurse was cleared. In June 2017, the Medical Practitioners Tribunal Service imposed a 12-month suspension. **However, in January 2018, the High Court overturned this decision, stating that striking her off was necessary to maintain public confidence in the profession.** This ruling provoked widespread concern among healthcare professionals, who feared that **honest mistakes made in unsafe systems were being criminalised.** Later that year leading to the Court of Appeal decision, Dr Bawa-Garba was ultimately reinstated, reinforcing concerns that the original handling of the case prioritised blame over learning.

In response to these concerns, many clinicians and patient safety experts argue for a just culture, often summarised as **learn, not blame.** Consultant neurologist Dr Jenny Vaughan has stated that **“doctors are on the same side as patients,”** and that true patient safety can only exist in a no-blame culture where professionals can openly discuss mistakes without fear of punishment. When asked by Jack Adcock's mother whether she would trust Dr Bawa-Garba to care for her own child, Dr Vaughan replied that she absolutely would challenging the idea that a single error defines a doctor's competence or character.

Other countries provide clear evidence that this approach works. In Australia where a strong learn-not-blame culture exists, there have been no convictions of doctors or nurses for gross negligence manslaughter. Dr Samantha Batt-Rawden has argued that **the Bawa-Garba case showed “an individual doctor being scapegoated for**

widespread system failures,” describing unsafe staffing, absent supervision, IT breakdowns, and workload pressures equivalent to doing the work of four doctors at once. Criminalising healthcare under these conditions discourages honesty, increases fear, and ultimately makes care less safe. A healthcare system that truly values patients must prioritise learning, support, and system improvement over punishment. **If patients are looking for a doctor who has never made a mistake, they will simply never find one.**

By Shangavy Kalaichelvan

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The Menendez Brothers

The Menendez case involves brothers Lyle and Erik Menendez, who were convicted in 1996 for the first-degree murders of their parents, Jose and Kitty Menendez, in their Beverly Hills mansion on August 20, 1989. The core of the case has shifted over time from a focus on financial gain to the brothers' claims of a lifetime of sexual, physical, and emotional abuse by their father.

Key details of the case

The Crime: Lyle (21) and Erik (18) shot their parents multiple times with shotguns in the family den while Jose and Kitty were watching television.

Initial Cover-up: The brothers initially reported finding their parents' bodies and suggested the murders might be business-related, linked to their father's work as a wealthy entertainment executive.

Arrest and Confession: The brothers were arrested in March 1990 after Erik confessed to a psychologist, Jerome Oziel, whose girlfriend later tipped off the police. Taped sessions with Oziel were later ruled admissible in court.

Motive:

Prosecution Argument: The brothers were motivated by greed to inherit their parents' multi-million dollar estate after learning they might be disinherited.

Defense Argument: The killings were an act of self-defense after years of alleged severe abuse, as they feared their father would kill them if they exposed him.

Trial 1

The first trial (1993-1994) was highly publicized and broadcast on Court TV, resulting in hung juries (deadlocked by gender).

Trial 2

The second trial (1995-1996) had a single jury and no cameras. The judge limited testimony regarding the abuse claims, and the brothers were found guilty of first-degree murder and conspiracy to murder. They were sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole.

MENENDEZ

Lyle and Erik Menendez J 1993



RECENT DEVELOPMENTS AND PUBLIC INTEREST

Public interest in the case surged again following the 2024 Netflix drama *Monsters: The Lyle and Erik Menendez Story*, which led to renewed debates about trauma and the justice system.

Resentencing and Parole: In a significant development, a Los Angeles judge resentenced the brothers in May 2025 to 50 years to life, making them eligible for parole under California's youthful offender law.

Parole Denials: In August 2025, both brothers were denied parole by the parole board, which cited prison rule infractions (such as having cellphones) and ongoing concerns about public safety. They can try for parole again in three years.

THE LAWS HIDING IN PLAIN SIGHT

BY CHLOE MEDEIRA



Many actions you may perform daily are governed by a complex web of local and international laws and regulations. The law governs many aspects of modern life due to increasing complexities and advancements in society and technology.

The law constantly has areas for updates and improvements. As human interactions and systems become more intricate, laws and regulations expand to manage risks, protect individual rights, ensure safety and provide stability.

THINGS THAT WE DO THAT ARE TECHNICALLY REGULATED BY LAW:

As citizens of the UK, you may do tasks that feel like everyday routines but are technically regulated by law.

Law is so complex that it is easily and often embedded into our lives with every decision we make without drawing a lot of attention.



HERE ARE SOME EXAMPLES:

1. FOOD AND DRINK LABELLING

The sandwich you might grab from a supermarket is under a law in the UK which requires a clear listing of ingredients, allergen warnings, nutritional information and use-by dates. These are designed to protect public health.





3. DISPOSAL OF WASTE

Taking out the bins or finding one seems mundane but waste disposal is heavily regulated. Councils can fine residents for putting the rubbish out too early or in the wrong bin and fly tipping especially is illegal. The simple act of throwing something away is shaped by environmental law.

5. SEATBELTS

From age 14, you are legally responsible for wearing a seatbelt in the car. If found out, you could be personally fined, Not your parents.



2. PETS AND ANIMAL OWNERSHIP

Owning a pet in the UK comes with legal responsibilities. You can not buy a pet if you are under 16 years old, all dogs must be microchipped by law and owners can be fined if their details aren't kept up to date.

4. NOISE AT HOME

Too much noise from your house such as music or barking sounds from your pet can fall under noise nuisance laws and local councils have the power to investigate complaints and issue fines.

6. MANDATORY AGE VERIFICATION

Teenagers now must pass strict age checks which is carried out through facial age estimation technology or the submission of ID's. This is used to access platforms such as Roblox or social media sites like Tiktok.

At the end of the day, laws aren't just for lawyers and courtrooms, they're the invisible threads that hold our society together.

HOW POPULAR CULTURE SHAPES OUR VIEW OF LAWYERS

In movies, TV shows, and novels, lawyers are often portrayed as glamorous, dramatic, or even unethical characters. While these depictions may create exciting stories, they often paint a misleading picture of what lawyers actually do in real life. Pop culture's misrepresentation of lawyers has shaped public perceptions and created unrealistic expectations about the legal profession.

The perception of what lawyers really do is understood through television, film, and literature. This perception builds primarily because the law operates in places and spaces that are partially hidden from public view. Lawyers operate under a cloud of mystery, aside from those working in the profession, very few people have the opportunity to view all the aspects of law.



Moreover, media tends to focus on the more dramatic aspects of law: intense cross-examinations, surprise witnesses, and last-minute confessions. Shows such as *Suits* or *How to Get Away with Murder*, though entertaining, present an exaggerated version of legal practice, often blurring ethical boundaries and prioritising shock value over accuracy. Even British dramas like *Silk* or *The Split*, while closer to reality, still emphasise personal drama and courtroom theatrics rather than the methodical work that dominates most legal careers.



HOW POP CULTURE SHAPES OUR VIEW OF LAWYERS

One major misconception created by pop culture is the idea that most lawyers spend their time in court. In reality, the majority of UK solicitors rarely step inside a courtroom. Much of their work involves drafting contracts, advising clients, conducting legal research, and negotiating settlements. Barristers, who do appear in court more frequently, still spend a significant amount of time preparing cases, and analysing evidence

Another way pop culture shapes perceptions of lawyers is through the moral framing of the profession. Lawyers are frequently cast as either heroic defenders of justice or manipulative figures willing to bend the law for personal gain. This black-and-white portrayal overlooks the complexity of real legal work, where decisions are often bound by professional duties, limited evidence, and systemic pressures. In reality, lawyers have to adhere to strict codes of conduct, and ethical dilemmas are rarely resolved by dramatic show of empathy or rule-breaking, but through cautious judgement and accountability.

Real legal practice is often far removed from the certainty and speed depicted in pop culture. Cases such as *R v McKenny and Others*, more commonly known as the Birmingham Six, involved the wrongful conviction of six men for the 1974 Birmingham pub bombings and represent one of the most significant miscarriages of justice in British legal history. The case prompted widespread public outcry and ultimately led to the creation of the independent Criminal Cases Review Commission (CCRC). This case illustrates how justice can be delayed and shaped by institutional failings, revealing that the law is defined by patience, complexity, and careful reasoning, not the theatrics that popular media so often emphasises.

These portrayals can also influence how aspiring law students and the general public engage with the legal system. Unrealistic expectations of fast-paced victories and clear-cut outcomes may lead to disappointment when confronted with the slower, more procedural reality of legal practice. By recognising the gap between pop culture narratives and real legal practice, people can develop a more informed understanding of the profession.

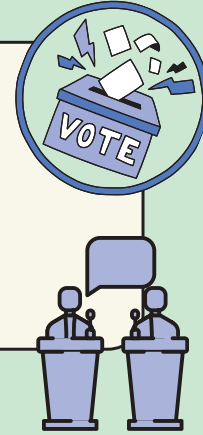




SIXTH FORM SPEAKS

15 STUDENTS 15 OPINIONS

By Joanna Rodrigues!



Is freedom more important than security?

Rebecca Irabor says, 'To me, freedom allows for appreciation of things that were once lost and for people to find their own contentment in life. Although security ensures protection, to its extremist extent it creates barriers that might keep you safe but it keeps you controlled, something freedom would never allow.'

Cyprian Mbogo says, 'I do think that freedom is of greater importance than security. Freedom is a crucial factor to discovering one's self. Favouring security over freedom can inhibit us from accessing our full potential and often hiding from greater opportunities...sometimes you have to take the risk!'

Iman Hassan says, 'I would say that freedom, to an extent, is more important than security as freedom under bounds is not true freedom. However, it is fundamental to have security to protect people but in a way that does not hinder freedom.'

Should voting be based on knowledge, not age?

Rebecca Irabor says, 'Voting should be based on knowledge, the idea that age and knowledge are mutually exclusive is outdated especially when it comes to the younger generation. Knowledge regardless of the age should be commended and allow those to partake in the subject particularly when that issue is related their future.'

Cyprian Mbogo says, 'Voting most definitely should be approached from a knowledgeable standpoint as opposed to age. This is because age doesn't determine ones ability to come to a justifiable conclusion.'

Iman Hassan says, 'Voters should take a test on recent events before elections to determine if they know who they are voting for and if they haven't simply been sceptical to other people's views and propaganda. However, there should be a minimum age which should stay at 18 but arguably could be moved down to 16.'

Avelly Braganca says, 'Security is more important. Without having order and protection within society freedom wouldn't be sustained.'	Avelly Braganca says, 'Voting should be based on knowledge. Informed voters are more likely to make responsible decisions. Age does not guarantee that you understand politics'
Merusa Kirupakaran says, 'Security is more important than freedom. It provides a safe and stable environment where people can live without fear and I think that is the foundation for freedom.'	Merusa Kirupakaran says, 'How can we determine the 'right' amount of knowledge to vote? It could mean even fully developed adults can't vote as they don't have 'enough knowledge'. Everyone should have the right to make these decisions that affect everyone'
Brayden Rodrigues says, 'Without a doubt freedom is more important than security, without freedom the world is just a secure place perhaps a well-managed prison '	Brayden Rodrigues says, 'Voting should be based on age, how does one tell who has the same amount of knowledge to have a fair vote and who does not'
Darcey McHugh says, 'Freedom is essential to any society, but there should be limits on how far it goes. Freedom should be given whilst ensuring a secure country'	Darcey McHugh says, 'It should be based on age because there is no measure to how much 'knowledge' a person should have to vote, that's an unfair system and everyone should have a say.'
Rose Lee says, 'Freedom is important because it allows people to make choices and challenge injustice, while security is necessary to protect society. Sacrificing too much freedom for security can threaten rights that protect citizens, showing that freedom should be prioritised in a democratic society.'	Rose Lee says, 'Although informed voting is important for a strong democracy, using knowledge as a requirement for voting may risk excluding people unfairly. The voting age provides a clear and equal standard, while the knowledge that is required to engage in political issues can be subjective.'

Tehya Osayande says, 'Freedom allows people to express themselves and challenge unfair systems but without basic security, that freedom can't be safely enjoyed in the first place as people become more selfish and greedy when given too much freedom.'	Tehya Osayande says, 'Voting leads to better results when people are well informed about politics in society. There is no limit of knowledge a person can have due to their age so excluding people from voting due to age goes against the basic rules of democracy'
Cordelia Jarville says, 'Freedom is more important than security because it is the foundation of human dignity. While security is necessary to protect people from harm, it should not come at the cost of basic freedoms. Freedom allows us to express ourselves and progress whereas a society that values security over freedom can be oppressive'	Cordelia Jarville says, 'Voting should be based on knowledge because the result of an election can have a very important and lasting impact on a country. Therefore, people should not just vote for the sake of it but instead use the knowledge they possess to make an informed decision. That is why I think knowledge is more important than age when voting.'
Fauzan Mbalba, 'Security should be a priority to ensure the safety of citizens. Laws are created by governments to uphold order and we should not neglect this important aspect that is universally found in society. I think that a libertarian approach to this issue is weak because it assumes that people will act in a way that does not encroach on another people's freedoms; Security enables rights to be enshrined which is what I believe truly upholds freedom.	Fauzan Mbalba says, 'If we base voting on knowledge over age, we risk creating an undemocratic decision-making process. I believe in a true democracy so everyone should be able to vote no matter what. The best answer to the question is a minimum age limit of 16; However, the politicisation of the youth is something that we should avoid. Younger people are more likely to take extreme positions due to the lack of power they hold.'
Nikola Badora says, 'Unchecked freedom can lead to misuse of free will, but autonomy and liberty are what makes us human.'	Nikola Badora says, 'Uneducated voters are why people complain about governments they voted for; knowledge is always more important than age.'

Samuel Stein says, 'I believe quite strongly that liberty should be at the foundation of every modern society. Freedom is what allows people to shape their lives and is something that we often take for granted. However, it is important to consider that freedom and security are not mutually exclusive. Security is required to enjoy freedom as it is impossible to be free if constantly under threat. I resonate strongly with the idea that the bare minimum is for people to have enough security to live without fear and enough freedom to live with dignity. However, ultimately, I believe that freedom is the more important of the two as if we were to consider them as mutually exclusive then the consequences of not having freedom are arguably far worse than that of not having security. I would personally rather live in an unsafe society where I had freedom than a safe one with no freedoms at all.'	Samuel Stein says, 'While in theory it seems sensible to base voting on knowledge rather than age in practicality this would be almost impossible to implement. How would you test people's knowledge? How much do people need to know to vote? Do people need to get tested before every election or just once? Ultimately this system would raise more questions than it answers, and it would remove one of the greatest strengths of the FPTP system: It's simplicity. I also believe that it is immoral to deny people the ability to vote for who is going to govern them just because they aren't considered knowledgeable enough. If your taxes are going to be used and your life is going to be directly affected by policies, then you should be able to have a say in who decides them.'
Queency Lopes says, 'Freedom gives life meaning by allowing individuals to think, choose and challenge but without a basic level of security, it becomes fragile and easily lost. A society is most just when security exists to protect freedom, not to replace or restrict it'	Queency Lopes says, 'Basing voting on knowledge risks turning democracy into an exclusive system where power is decided by who defines "knowledge", rather than by equal citizenship. Age based voting is imperfect, but it protects the principle that everyone affected by decisions deserves a voice'
Chloe Medeira says, 'I think both are important. Freedom ensures dignity and the ability to express yourself but without security, it can not be exercised.'	Chloe Medeira says, 'Voting should be based on age because it can be hard to narrow down what counts as 'enough knowledge'. Most children can easily be influenced on topics through social media without fully understanding the meaning behind it or whether it is propaganda which can be dangerous when voting for decisions that affect everyone.'

TRENDY WARDROBE STAPLES FOR 2026 – Rebecca Ihegbu



The Adidas Originals Tokyo sneaker is a popular, retro-inspired shoe known for its sleek, low-profile design, blending 60s/70s track heritage with modern casual wear, featuring leather or suede uppers, iconic 3-Stripes, and a rubber outsole, offering stylish versatility but with some noting thin soles for all-day wear

£ 84.99 VAT included

Levi's Baggy Dad Jeans, known for their mid-rise, loose fit through the hip and thigh, and straight leg for a relaxed '90s look. The fit is generally roomy and slouchy, designed to stack at the hem.

Sale Price £62.00



The Longchamp Le Pliage Original L Tote Bag in navy, made from recycled canvas, is a lightweight, durable, and spacious accessory known for its iconic design and practicality. It is designed for everyday use and travel, famously featuring a foldable design for easy storage.

£125.00

VAT included

2016 FASHION STAPLES TO BRING BACK IN 2026

NIKE FLYKNIT RACER

The Nike Flyknit Racer is a lightweight, high-performance racing shoe known for its precision-engineered, one-piece Flyknit upper that provides a snug, sock-like fit with, strategic breathability, and support without added weight



£142.95 VAT incl



Supreme hoodies are iconic, heavyweight cotton fleece staples known for their premium construction, relaxed fit, and signature streetwear style. Featuring kangaroo pockets, adjustable hoods, and, most notably, embroidered Box Logos, these garments are designed for comfort and durability.

£225.00

Neverfull GM Tote Bag

The Neverfull GM tote bag unites timeless design with heritage details. Made from supple Monogram canvas with a natural cowhide trim, it is ultra-roomy but never bulky, with side laces that cinch for a sleek allure or loosen for a more casual look. Slim. comfortable handles slip easily over the shoulder or arm. Lined in colorful textile, it features a removable pouch that can serve as a clutch or an extra pocket.



£1,430.00

Album Recommendations

Blending metal, alternative, electronic and art pop, *Speak for Yourself* feels like an emotional escape from reality, creating a introspective atmosphere that draws the listener in. Its timeless sound continues to live on through the music of many other artists such as ASAP ROCKY, Jason Derulo, Ariana Grande and many more influential albums. What I particularly love about this album is how honest and immersive it feels from start to finish.

Fun tracks



Daylight Robbery
The Walk
Just for now

8.5

Speak for
Yourself

From the music, to the styling, to the creative direction, this album truly outdoes itself. Reminiscent of what many consider "real K-Pop," the album is fun, quirky and uplifting, drawing from funk, hip-hop and R&B with flawless production throughout. With no skips and endless personality, it establishes Red Velvet as my personal favourite quirky girls in K-Pop. This undeniably in Red Velvet's top 3 albums of their discography.

Fun tracks



Dumb Dumb
Huff n Puff
Time Slip

8.0

The Red

This album is somewhat of a hidden gem in Charli XCX's discography and draws from different genres such as UK garage, hyper pop, electropop and bubblegum bass. Raw and emotionally charged, this album captures Charli at her most vulnerable while still pushing pop's boundaries. In many ways, it laid the groundwork for BRAT, walking so that Charli's later, more chaotic sound could run.

Fun tracks

how i'm
feeling no

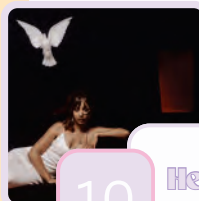
Anthems
Visions
Detonate

8.0

How Pm
Feeling Now

This is an exceptional album in my opinion, from start to finish, the beginning and end runs are especially strong, blending early 2000s nostalgia with bedroom pop, drum and bass and UK garage. It's glossy, pop-leaning sound makes it irresistibly catchy, the kind of music that makes you want to sing along and dance around your room. Though its criminally short, the production ensures every track leaves a lasting impression.

Fun tracks



Capable of Love
Internet baby
Feelings

10

Heaven Knows

Album Recommendations

This is my personal favourite K-pop release of 2025. Avoiding the usual cliches of K-Pop solo artists, this album feels both playful and committed to its concept, more experimental than much of today's K-Pop. With strong production and no skips and a clear artistic vision, *Soft Error* for sure proves that Yves it going places.



Fun tracks

White Cat
Aibo
Ex-Machina

9.0

Soft Error

Saturation III is a hip-hop, rap and alternative R&B and in my opinion, the boldest album in the *Saturation* trilogy. It's energetic, chaotic and emotionally honest while balancing it's hard-hitting production with moments of vulnerability. Ultimately, this album hypes me up and leaves me feeling capable of anything, while still offering moments of introspection.



Fun tracks

BOOGIE
BLEACH
STAINS

8.5

Saturation III

A criminally underrated K-RnB album released in 2021 with tracks ranging from r&b, soul, hip-hop and even house music. This project highlights Sumin's versatility and skill as a producer; polished, cohesive and forward thinking, *Miniseries* is an album that truly deserves more recognition. It's both upbeat and relaxing making it an easy and highly enjoyable listen.



Fun tracks

What Do You Think?
YOGIJOGI
In Touch

9.5

Miniseries

Pink Tape pushes through the boundaries of early 2010s K-pop through bold, experimental tracks. Widely regarded as one of the genre's best albums, it has stood the test of time, maintaining a strong sense of cohesion despite its risk taking sound. This album stands out to me for its confidence and creativity, proving that pop doesn't have to be safe to be effective.



Fun tracks

Shadow
No More
Rum Pum Pum Pum

8.5

Pink Tape



It was unfathomable that the sky would suddenly turn crimson red like it was a figment of someone's imagination. Yet this is what occurred on an ordinary day in the middle of spring...

The clocks struck eight whilst a casual bystander walked his dog. They could see the sun begin to fade in the distance, while families begin to enter their homes synchronously. The crisp air began to grow cold while goosebumps formed onto the dog walker's arms. It was at that precise moment that they decided to head back into the warmth comfort of their home. However, this plan soon faltered when the dog stopped in his tracks to sit and watch the sky shift.

The sky, which was originally a beautiful shade of pale blue, soon converted into a blazing inferno causing the atmosphere to darken momentarily. While shades of red engulfed the surroundings, the dog halted. With his ears flattened and his tail stiff, he remained motionless as he watched children and adults point up at the sky with blank expressions on their faces. All conversations made were hushed as no one dared to speak. They were almost acting like it was the end of the world. It was then suddenly when a halo glow emerged from the light posts triggering light to form around the brittle leaves and the weak trees that swung dramatically in the wind.

"Come along! It's just a sunset", the dog owner claimed while they both spun around, leaving the red sky to darken behind them.

As the next day passed, the red flowed away causing blue rays to overpower the darkness that previously occurred. Nobody ever mentioned the red sky again.

-By Gemma Shirran



The Habit of Assuming

Why our brains fill in gaps before we notice



A big reason for this habit lies in how our brain works. Our brains like patterns and shortcuts because thinking deeply about everything takes energy. So instead of waiting for all the information, it fills in the gaps using past experiences, things we've heard, or what feels familiar. Long ago, this helped humans survive making quick decisions. Today, the same habit shows up in everyday life, even when the situation doesn't actually need a quick answer.

We probably can't stop assuming completely, because that's how our brain is wired. But we can learn to notice it. Taking a small pause and asking ourselves simple questions like "Do I know enough?" or "Could there be another explanation?" helps break the habit. Sometimes, all it takes is slowing down for a moment to replace an assumption with understanding.

The problem is that these assumptions are often incomplete. Our experiences are limited, but our brain treats them like the full truth. Slowly, we start believing our assumptions without questioning them. One small moment turns into a fixed idea, and before we realise it, we've made up our mind about someone or something without knowing the whole story.

Understanding Alzheimer's Disease

What is Alzheimer's disease?

-**Alzheimer's** is a brain disease that slowly destroys memory and thinking abilities



-Over time, people with **Alzheimer's** have more trouble remembering, thinking, and caring for themselves

Symptoms of Alzheimer's



Memory loss



Confusion



Executive dysfunction



Mood Changes

The symptoms worsen over time as the disease progresses



Life in a Care Home



"When I was diagnosed with Alzheimer's, I was fearful for myself but more so for my family and loved ones having to witness me slowly decline"



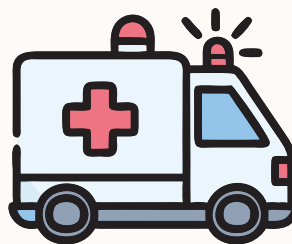
-A resident at Sydmar Care Lodge ages 75

How Alzheimer's affects people

1 in 14

people over the age of 65 are diagnosed with Alzheimer's every year

Alzheimer's makes up 60-80% of all dementia cases



Ways to help someone with Alzheimer's



Be patient



Talk to them



Help with daily tasks



Spend time together

