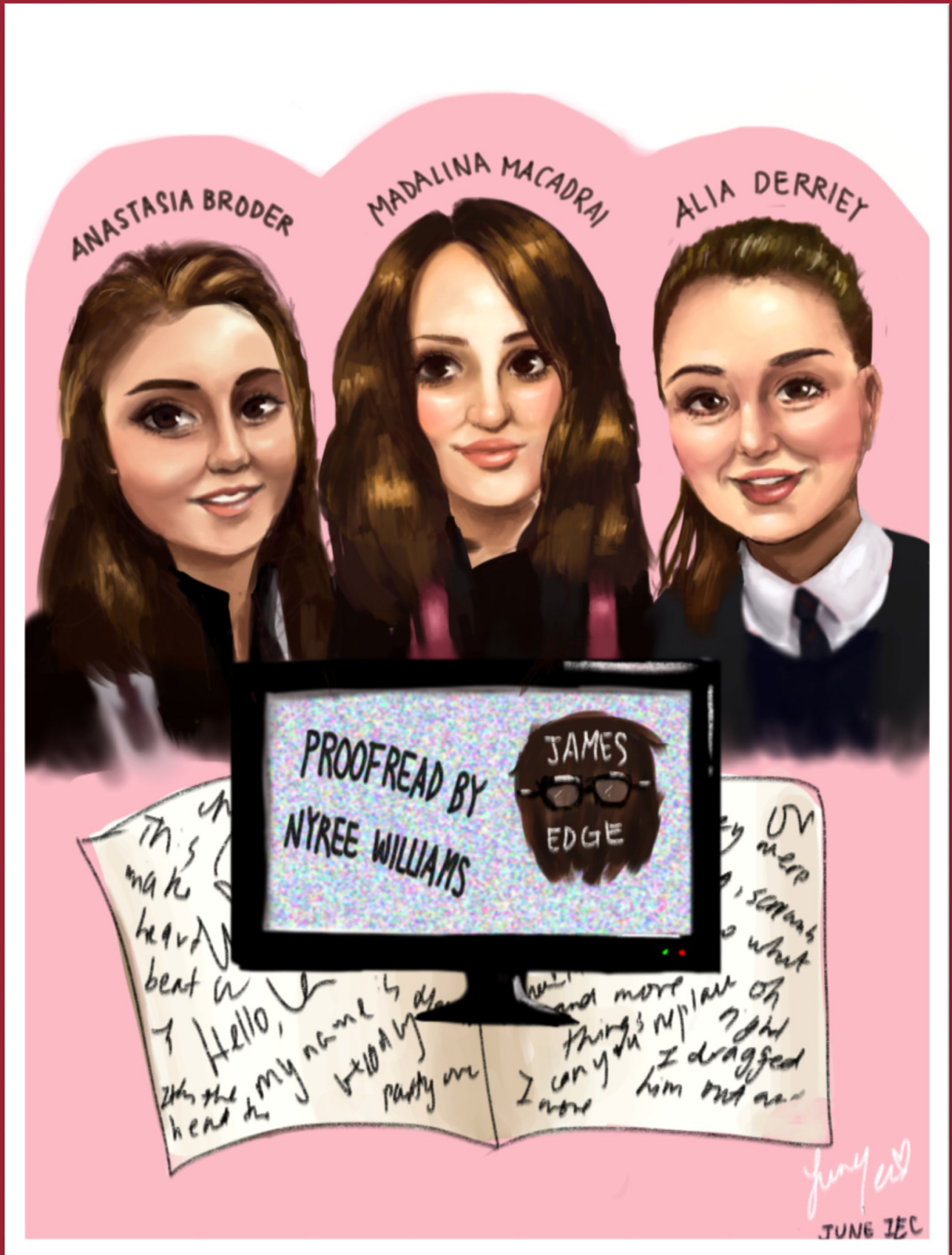


TWO ZERO ONE

Issue 1 : January 2016



What should we resolve for 2016?

By Ben Payne

Living in the moment. Right there, you have something that I believe should be addressed to me specifically, as well as to many other people for 2016. Having the ability to live in the moment can apply to many things. Are 'new year's resolutions' really that great if they're always delayed ambitions that fail? Are your anxieties triggered by a lack of thought? Is this said thought only necessary if we live in the moment? And is technology necessary to be with in all situations?

It happens every year. You see people talking about having New Year's resolutions. If we define 'resolution', we get that it is the 'firm decision to do or not to do something'. Setting yourself up for such a thing surely must mean that you will fulfil your resolution as soon as you can? Unfortunately, 99% of the time this doesn't appear to be the case. For example, you give yourself a goal to "get fit" and to "lose weight" in the New Year. You make this resolution in December 2015, and, like the rest of us around Christmas time, you eat a fair bit of food. By the time you get to January 2016, you unfortunately continue to eat a lot of food. This puts you off your own goals that you made a month prior to this. It is now March 2016, and nothing has happened. You had hoped to be fit in time for Valentine's Day, but still this was not to be. The point I'm trying to get across here is that if you want to do something, and have ambitions to do it, do it now. If you take the example I have just explained, if a person like that had started going to the gym in December, *around* the time they were eating a lot, it is likely that they would add this process into their weekly routine and continue it from December 2015, through the whole of 2016 and for the foreseeable future. How does this relate to 'living in the moment', you may ask? The fact is, having goals and/or ambitions to do anything, shouldn't be delayed. Just because there is a traditional process of having a 'New Year's Resolution' doesn't mean that you must begin "getting healthier" or "cutting down on chocolate" in January, if you have thought about it in December. Delaying anything, I have found from past experience, often results in failure to do anything. In an age where the world is moving on so fast, you won't have the same motivation to do something in December, in January. Thus, it is important to 'live in the moment' in this respect, as it means what you want to achieve can be achieved when it is thought of. In my opinion, resolutions can be any time in a year, and traditions can be flexible.

Another way that 'living in the moment' can help you is when coping with anxiety. In the modern world that we live in, there are always "things to be done", "reports to be handed in", "bucket lists to be fulfilled", and even "DVD boxsets to be watched". Having to do anything like this can automatically put stress on a person, and they are put into a state of panic. For example, in a school environment, there are many subjects in which homework must be done

and handed in, as well as letters to give to parents about trips that are coming shortly, and meetings that you must go to for help in any areas of concern. With all of these things piled on top of you, you go into overdrive and don't know where to start. This can lead to all sorts of negative traits, such as anxiety and stress. Now, this is where 'living in the moment' comes in handy. All of these things are events and deadlines that take place in the *future*. Thus, in the present, they don't need to be worried about, as they're not yet happening. My mind, like the minds of many other humans, has the tendency to exaggerate things that are thought about. If this includes stress triggering deadlines and events that are going to happen, the idea of them can get worse and worse. However, if you live right in the moment, you are able to manage anything that you have coming up, and organise everything. Take homework, for example: using the dates that they're due in for, you can be able to organise the order in which you complete the tasks required. Rather than worrying about what homework to complete first, or worrying about whatever your teacher says about the said homework, it is important to just 'live in the moment', take each homework as it is set and not get bogged down with dealing with it all at once.

The year is now 2016, and technology has appeared to become a necessity in most of the human population today. When you see someone under the age of thirty-five walk past you in the street, the likelihood is that they're on a smartphone or other touch screen device to communicate with another human or indeed, if they have become so infatuated by it, their own cat. I am inclined to agree that technology is a fantastic way to communicate with people and to know the latest in current affairs. However, there are some moments in which it is inappropriate to use it. Usually, when I go for a walk, I go for one to enjoy the great outdoors, breathe some fresh air and have an escape from the fast moving world of technology. That is why it really annoys me when someone is walking somewhere and is staring right down at their device, texting or even playing a game without taking time to experience the world around them. It makes me think, 'what is the point?' What is the point in being outdoors if all you're going to do is not even bother to experience it? It is the same as going to see a film at the cinema, and just watching a television show as a repeat with headphones in instead. In that situation, you've gone to see a film, so watch the film! Don't do something else during its transmission that could easily wait another couple of hours. Sometimes, technology should just be put to one side, to take time to experience the world around us. Time to live in the moment we're in. The world we live in now is so busy, loud and 'shoved in your face', that we need time to recuperate and experience the true relaxations of it. Reading a book is a great way to escape. It is still a good source of entertainment, and if you're endorsed in a good book, the busy world can be allowed to shut down for a little while.

I have wanted to get this message across for a while. I believe that human beings, in general, should have time to just breathe the air we're surrounded by, experience the world around us and to just live in the moment.

My Love

By Lauren Milburn

White is a lilly, blossoming in the rain,
White is the snow, beautiful and yet to feel pain.

White are the cigarettes he smokes to the dirt;
They are the smell on his white t-shirt.

White is the purity, the passion and loves,
White are the fights, the anger and shoves.

White is your innocence he took with warm embrace,
White were the walls, when you moved to 'Our New Place'.

White is that summer dress you wore last spring,
There he presented your white gold wedding ring.

White went his face as you announced a mini him,
White were his tears threatening to brim.

White is the page of a brand-new chapter read,
White is the start of a new life, as he said.

White is your hair, as you grow old forever,
White is loving and dying together.



Film Review : Joy (2015)

By Hannah Jones

The true irony of *Joy* is that there is something inexplicably grey about it. The real-life story of Joy Mangano; played by Jennifer Lawrence, a perfect fit for this rags to riches saga, isn't your usual fairy-tale. As always, David O'Russel manages to keep the film grounded and gritty, never once allowing us to feel content at Joy's success. The film tells the story of Joy, a struggling single mother who became a multi-millionaire in the 1990's after inventing the world renowned "Miracle Mop."

It has been brought to the screen by Oscar-nominated director David O'Russel. This, his third collaboration with Jennifer Lawrence, Bradley Cooper and Robert De Niro, manages to be quirky and perceptive. But is it a joy to see?

It is an en-joy-able experience which celebrates the good old virtues of honesty and can-do spirit, but you can't help feeling a little let down afterwards. Despite a brilliant cast and a witty screenplay, *Joy* just seems to lack that "wow" factor and leaves you wondering whether you simply weren't intelligent or cosmopolitan enough to understand the appeal.

Jennifer Lawrence presents a strong case of world-weariness and defends herself against the critics who claimed she was too young to take on the part. In fact, she handles it all with supreme control, exuding a weary survivor quality throughout the film.

At the start, there is hardly a moment in which you don't feel sorry for Joy and her slowly deteriorating dreams. From her highly dysfunctional family: a self-obsessed father, a shameless mother and a jealous sister, to her broken marriage, dilapidated house and a job that's going nowhere. Through no fault of her own Joy really hasn't had the best of luck. All in all, it's Joy's character that shines through. Her resilience, her heart and her determination not to allow her dream to slip away is refreshing.

The message that came across from this is that when we are young, we have aspirations and yet as we grow older we forget about them. We allow our dreams to hibernate and then slowly die. *Joy* is allowing us to witness that no matter what our age, we still have the power to take control and make something of ourselves. Russell commands a stellar cast in a sincere tribute to the power of a woman's resolve in a man's world.

Book Review: The Hours – By Michael Cunningham

By Alia Derriey

The *Hours* follows a day in the lives of three women: Clarissa Vaughan, known fondly as ‘Mrs Dalloway’ by her closest friend, is planning a party one New York morning; Laura Brown, living in a Los Angeles suburb in the 1950s, struggles to maintain her conventional position as mother and wife to her perfect family; and Virginia Woolf who, recovering in a London suburb after a bout of depression, is writing her famous novel, *Mrs Dalloway*. The book’s chapters alternate between these three characters, linking them through parallel emotions, themes and details. Although written in the third person, the book seems almost wholly from the perspectives of the protagonists: each character’s consciousness is personally imparted, giving a commentary on the events happening in the book whilst offering an insight into the characters’ personalities.

The Hours is beautifully, eloquently written; Cunningham adopts extended metaphors that are not only pleasing, but also accurate. Perhaps his writing was influenced by Woolf’s, as it is vivid, metaphorical and slow-paced, reminiscent of her distinctive writing style. This book reveals another dimension of Virginia Woolf, who was not just a famous intellectual figure but was a troubled woman, battling with depression. The protagonists are ambitious and clever, yet damaged, albeit to different extents. In particular, Brown and Woolf both struggle to act ‘normally’, to effortlessly keep up appearances. At times, they comment in admiration at other women’s abilities to act accordingly in every situation. They obsessively seek perfection, driven to madness by the idea that they are irreparably flawed. The theme of sexuality, as something to be rebelliously explored, is touched on when Laura, and later Virginia, spontaneously kisses a woman; it is described as a ‘forbidden pleasure’. This act of ‘rebellion’ is ironic, as it contradicts the



characters’ desire to act appropriately.

This book questions the meaning of life; it ponders what is ‘enough’ for a person to have lived a happy, successful life. Although it doesn’t directly answer this question, it does suggest that the hours in one’s life spent being happy, with someone that they love are ‘enough’; this notion of ‘enough’ is synonymous with happiness and contentment.

I would recommend *The Hours* to readers who enjoy Woolf’s writing style, and are interested in her life. They would also enjoy this book if they don’t mind a somewhat slow-paced read about the everyday lives of troubled women.

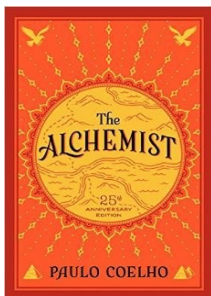


Top Five Books for the New Year

By Alia Derriey

Make 2016 your year of reading – and there's no better way to start it off than by reading a great book! Use this guide to find the perfect book to suit your mood.

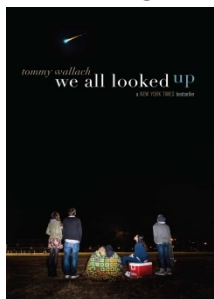
1. Inspiring and philosophical: *The Alchemist* – By Paulo Coelho



The Alchemist is an endearing tale of a boy's spiritual journey: his dreams, successes, and the obstacles he must overcome. This book is different from any other I have read before: its childlike simplicity in

portraying deep philosophical notions is disarming, and will leave you feeling enlightened. I thoroughly recommend this book if you're looking to be inspired and motivated.

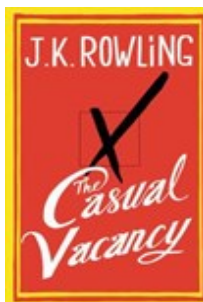
2. Apocalyptic: *We All Looked Up* – By Tommy Wallach



The New Year, usually intended for fresh starts and resolutions, is perhaps an odd time to read an apocalyptic book. However, I think it's a great (and fitting) opportunity to ponder what you would make your last achievement before the end. In *We All*

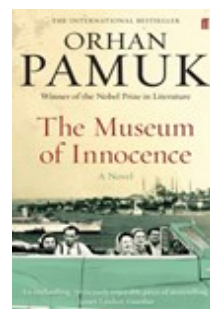
Looked Up, an asteroid is hurtling towards Earth, said to arrive in two months. Four teenagers with various backgrounds and aspirations are determined to do something meaningful with their lives before the world ends. This book follows their lives from before the asteroid up to the moment before it is scheduled to collide.

3. Good-quality and entertaining: *The Casual Vacancy* – By J.K. Rowling



For a well-written, entertaining book, read *The Casual Vacancy*. When Barry Fairbrother – a popular and ambitious councilman – dies unexpectedly, Pagford is left in shock. The ostensibly quaint, idyllic town becomes increasingly chaotic as the mad scramble for the empty council seat turns nasty. I found this book riveting, despite its length and slow pace; many of its characters remind me of people I know, which made it all the more humorous.

4. Beautiful love story in an intriguing setting: *The Museum of Innocence* – By Orhan Pamuk



Set in 1970s and 80s Istanbul, *The Museum of Innocence* recounts the life of Kemal, a wealthy heir who is infatuated with Fusun, an 18-year-old shop girl and distant relative. Historical and social details are artfully intertwined, describing Istanbul vividly as a city stuck between the West and the East. This beautiful yet devastating love story will keep you fascinated to the last page.

5. Highly-descriptive and well-written: *Saturday* – By Ian McEwan



Saturday is an account of one day in successful neurosurgeon Henry Perowne's life. The novel is highly descriptive yet readable, conveying behaviour and thoughts accurately and intelligibly; you'll enjoy it for its amazing quality rather than its plot.

This fantastic read will make you appreciate books like no other can.

The Murder Trail

-Pilot

By Jagveer Uppal

Artwork By

Anya Butler and June Lec

“Quick now get his legs.”

“I’ve got him, you just focus on your half. Jesus, John what have you done?”

“What I had to. Now, will you shut up and... lift!” said John giving a heave.

“Oh Jesus, Oh God.”

“Shut up!” John’s eyes now fixed on his partner “Let’s just get this over with.” The two shuffled along the pier to its edge. The wind whipped in every direction, strong and hard. The water thumped against the poles holding up what was left of the pier in a fierce, foaming frenzy. Each step the two took caused an eerie, distinctive creak on the moist boards that made the feeble surface beneath their feet. The only light was emitted by a disconcertingly bright moon, the distorting beams made the pier seem endless, a road down a dark, foul path that would surely be hard to return from. The sky was clear, no stars could be seen, every other source of light had vanished leaving only the moon’s maddening rays.

“All right, we’re almost there.” A half grin complemented by a pair of deranged eyes formed on John’s once charming face.

“I can’t do this, I just can’t.” she dropped the legs and covered her nose and mouth in a frantic manner, teary all the while. “I want to go home, John. I just want to go home.” the crying escalated from a sob to a flood of tears and sorrow.

“Listen. Don’t feel bad, he deserved it. Don’t listen to a word he said. For God’s sake half of what he said was pure crap, Kat” Katherine didn’t reply, instead she closed her eyes and just kept bawling into her hands. “All right. Head back to the car and I’ll do the rest.” without hesitation she did.

John lifted the covered corpse with one arm under his back and the other under the lower side of his knee. For a brief moment it looked like he was helping the guy out, carting him to safety. No. John lifted as high as he could, as hard as he could then with one swift ark of his arms dropped the body into the frothy abyss below with a colossal, but unheard, splash.

*

Morning came too soon. The sun replaced the moon, the light engulfed the darkness and the day removed the night, but nothing came to take away the tension left by the events at the pier. Katherine and John stayed quiet, neither spoke a word. God knows both were awake all night and God knows they slept in the same bed, but neither spoke. Turned over, their backs facing, both welcomed sleep. It didn’t come. John rose earlier than Katherine, continuing with his morning, mustering what energy he could. Dressing himself in his tattered suit and trilby he dared to face what the day had for him. Before he left he called to his wife with an: “I’m off now!” there was no answer.

John Mord was a middle aged builder and in truth, until now, he’d never really had a story of any interest to tell. He’d left school at the age of fifteen, never even having sat an exam, he met his wife four years later and married her the following year. He wasn’t exactly cunning, but he wasn’t exactly thick either. He had a steady job, a wife who he adored and a modest, but happy home. However, he was getting old. The pain in his back and the creak in his tired knees served as proof. Honestly the only reason he could bring himself to sport a trilby was to cover as much of his short greying locks as he could. It

wasn’t long before some kid came along who’d do the same job for less. John had experience, but the kid had energy and, as he put it, the *gumption*. John was switched like a dead battery. He’d looked for work, but nothing came. What do you do when you’re too old to do the only thing you know how to do? The thoughts rolled in John’s head over... and over. He tortured himself with the same concept time and time again and each time a little more of his sanity, his self-worth dissolved. Each time the familiar idea struck him he became a little less lively, a little more bitter.

After surviving what he described as ‘an ugly bitch of a morning’ he’d reached the place of his employment: Saint Andrew’s. He stepped through the immense, pine doors into a particularly pleasant church. Nothing unusual, the room was decorated with crosses and images of various saints, that none could honestly remember. The altar and pews were right where they should be and the whole building was propped up by majestic, marble columns littered round the room. Only one thing was missing: people. There was no sign of a priest, his flock or even a cleaner of some description. John made his way to the edge of the room where an oak confessional stood. He removed his trilby, ducked and slipped inside.

“Forgive me mother, for I have sinned.” he whispered.

“Very funny,” said a mildly amused, feminine voice from behind the ajar window linking the two sides “now John, how are you?”

“Little shaken up, but you know the world keeps turnin’.”

“So true. Now about last night,” the voice’s tone elevated as though it was moving to discuss a more engaging topic “how did that go?”

“Umm... I did what you said Miss and...”

“Oh please, call me Karman.”

“Well... Miss Karman I did what you said a-a-and dumped the body like you said.” John reported while clenching and unclenching his trilby in a sweaty fist.

“Did anyone see you?”

“No, just me and the wife.” The instant his sentence was done the window was thrown completely open with a sharp thwack, revealing the voice’s owner. A short, pretty young woman dressed in rich reds and blacks suddenly came into view.

“Wife!?” said the woman with a crazed spike in her voice. Froth emerged from

her scarlet lips while she spoke and her sensational brown eyes latched onto John. She lunged at the grill which was now John’s only protection from the freshly emerged beast on the other side.

“Yeah, I took her with me. She seen me do it.” John quivered upon sensing her sudden change in tone.

“John,” said the woman “You know I might have to have one of my boys pay her a visit.” He fell on his knees dropping his creased hat. An astonished look overtook his face, for a moment he was rendered speechless; for a moment the world stopped turning.

“No. No. Christ no. Please no!” he pressed his hands together and glared longingly at the set of stunning, piercing eyes before him. “I’ll do anything, she doesn’t know nothin’ about you, about the job, she don’t even really know who the guy was. For Christ’s sake she thinks

I’m at work right now. Please. God please.” her eyes softened and a half grin formed on her face. The crazed feel about her relaxed into one of a calm and seemingly agreeable flair, upon witnessing John’s plead.

“All right Johnny. She’s safe, but don’t you involve her in anythin’, you hear? ‘Cause next time I might not be in such good mood.”

“Thank you. Thanks so much Miss Moody.” blubbered John. “You won’t regret this.” Mooney raised her head in agreement.

“I’m sure I won’t. You good?”

“Yeah. Yeah I’m good.”

“Good, ‘cause I’ve another little job for you.”

To Be Continued...

The TEDX Teen Experience

By Anamaria Cuza

It is so incredibly easy to forget who we are, who we can be, to forget that we are humans because of our creative nature, but also because of the conscious choices we can make, defying our genes: to be unselfish, to push forward our limits, to decide not to be afraid.

Days and days spent in routine, the usual small failures brought by life and our tendency to get absorbed by our own problems are definitely our worst enemies: they make us unsure, make us feel invaluable, small and afraid. This is when we need to desperately grab the first chance we have in doing something unusual, crazy - something that makes us tremor at the sight of the unknown.

Three months ago I applied as a volunteer at TEDX Teen and I got... no answer. Two days before the actual event though, I got an email from the organizers asking me to volunteer. Time was short and I had no idea whatsoever what to expect, but on Saturday morning I was on the train to London.

I took the subway, got to the O2, called a so-named Sophie and at 9:00 am I was among the volunteers, wearing a “TedxTeen Crew” T-shirt, ready to welcome the hundreds of participants. Handing out badges, trying to answer questions, carrying heavy boxes, talking with the

TEDX

organizers and mostly running around - I loved every single second of it! I was part of a team of people, working to help others get inspired and feel special. I had access to the backstage, staying amongst the speakers, and I had the incredible chance of attending most talks.

What do you take out of such a day?

There were so many world changing ideas, so many amazing artists, so many opportunities available and so many awesome people I met - and all in such a small amount of time. Something unexpected happened though - the talks weren’t the ones that defined that day, they definitely didn’t represent the whole TedX experience, but rather the realisation of the community we are part of: seeing strangers approach each other and talk with a lot of enthusiasm, seeing people from the audience covering a huge board with drawings with ideas from that day, watching how even the shyest ones joined in auditioning for next year’s TedX Teen event.

There was one talk, though, given by a Russian student, who dedicated his time researching ways of providing water all over the world and trying to solve the problem of water drought. He was overwhelmed by the number of people in the audience and many times got lost in his speech. But, at the end, the most inspiring thing happened - the whole audience got up, clapped and cheered more than for any other speaker. Compared to all the experienced speakers, Konstantin Avdienko had the courage to get on stage, even though he was experiencing stage fright, only to be able to share the idea he believed in most, with the rest of the world.

That is what TED is all about - and that is exactly how we should live our youth: taking risks, sharing ideas, leaving our fears behind and making the world a better place, even at a small scale.

AnaMaria Cuza

HUMANS OF BROMSGROVE

By Anastasia Broder



What do you think people should cherish more?

I think life in general, really. It's so valuable. I mean, when you see all the horrible things that are going on in various parts of the world, just to be alive is really good, isn't it? So just grab it and don't waste it.

And also, I am fifty-six years old now. I can remember when I was little, 56 seemed really old. You think you're never going to be that old. Now that I am 56, I realize that before you know, life just disappears and you're thinking- what happened to 56 years? It goes by so quickly; you have to use every minute.

What makes you happy?

Many things, really, but the main thing would have to be my family. Knowing that people that are important to you are happy is the greatest joy there is.



What's one piece of advice that you could give to your 18-year-old self?

Don't be afraid to chase your dreams. Don't tell yourself you can't do it.

What are your main goals for this year?

To get into my first choice university and to get fit.



Do you think the world is getting better or worse?

It's very easy when you read the newspapers and listen to the radio to assume it's getting worse, but actually, when it comes down to it, it's about the same. Most people are good. They are kind. They are generous. They always have been and always will be.

Book Review: The Earth is Singing – By Vanessa Curtis

By Nadya Durova

The book follows the story of 15-year-old Jewish Latvian called Hanna, whose father has been taken by the Russians. The story is set during the Second World War in Riga. Even though life is becoming harder for Hanna, she still follows her dream of becoming a dancer. When the Nazis increase restriction laws for Jewish people, Hanna and her family go into hiding.

While the story is fictional, it is based on true events. It is a thought provoking and heart-breaking story of a young girl who is forced to grow up amidst the dangers of war. The story of her family reflects some of the many problems that Jewish families faced during the war, including separation, ghettoization, betrayal and death. Facing isolation and betrayal, Hanna realizes how important her faith is; she learns that she shouldn't try to deny it.

This book tells the story from first-person perspective, drawing the reader in and making the story more realistic. The book is fast-paced, the story developing quite rapidly and unexpectedly. I would recommend *The Earth is Singing* for anyone interested in History, but also the simple problems of being a teenager.

Stop Resolving, Start Living.

By Sirinda Songthumjitti

It's that time of the year again. The gym becomes swarmed with people eager to kick-start their New Year's Resolution of eating green and working out. Girls begin locking up their credit cards to avoid splurging money on irresistible footwear. Students resolve to work harder and reduce procrastination in order to get more than five hours of sleep. For Me, the new year has consistently been a matter of assigning myself multiple unattainable tasks and experiencing the torment of watching my brother devour a piece of triple chocolate chip cookie while I sit in front of him with a small portion of garden salad, going to the gym for three hours only to end up in bed the next day with sore limbs and broken bones, or even resisting the temptation of those glamorous white Nikes only to cry over your best friends' pair. Over the years, New Year's Resolutions felt more like a burden or errand that I was obliged to fulfil, the idea of turning a new leaf and flipping over a new chapter got lost in translation. 2016 would be different, it would be the year I start living and stop resolving. Most people don't realize it but the resolution everyone should be making is to live life to the fullest and savour each moment. Don't get me wrong, there is nothing wrong with wanting to resolve past problems and better our future lives, but after years and years of setting the same goals, don't we deserve a break? Shouldn't we take a moment and open our eyes and enjoy what the world has to offer? Teenagers nowadays don't hear it much, but I think learning to appreciate life is just as crucial as learning to build one. Since traveling 6000 miles away from my family just to pursue a better education has brought out a different side in me and my loved ones. Even though the phrases we think we hear over

and over again from our parents are "go to your room and write that college essay!" or "where's your report card?", and then there's "why can't you be more like your brother?", but actually, the most important news they want to receive from you is that you are safe and happy, nothing puts your parents more at ease than knowing the fact that you are okay and your fine. My relationship with my mom has changed drastically since I haven't been able to see her every day. I no longer flaunt to her my outstanding test results, or hound her about that jacket I saw in Topshop that I really wanted. I learned to be thankful for my mother's presence, and to enjoy the time I have with her. It is easy to lose our paths when we're 16, image becomes so important, education stresses us out, and that is exactly why I find it inequitable that most teens are still squandering their New Year's resolutions on desiring a hot new body or pressuring ourselves to spend every breathing hour on suffocating math equations. That is not what we want and deep down, it is certainly not what our parents ask of us. It's okay to unfasten our seatbelt a little and live in the moment instead of trying to find a justification or purpose to everything. Therefore for 2016, I resolve to stop resolving and start living, to do the things that make me happy and that I believe can make myself successful because ultimately, no one understands me better than myself and I advise everyone out there to be your authentic self and to thrive instead of survive, in 2016.

Essay prompt for Edition 2

Is Love all we need?

Deadline: Monday 22nd February
2016

INTERVIEW WITH OLD BROMSGROVIAN – LEON DERRIEY

Leon started his 'career' in Bromsgrove School in September 2012, as a lower sixth student. After finishing school in 2014 he proceeded into further education and is now a student at Bard College in New York City, US. (An obvious big change from the small Bromsgrove).

By Anamaria Cuza



Leon did tell me bits of stories about his sneaking outs, rebellious midnight cereals and the unexpectedly heart-warming moments like bringing an international movie to a film club and having 30 people show up, instead of 10; I also wanted to know more about the seemingly clashing worlds that he has experienced and is experiencing now: from a UK boarding school in a relatively small town to a college in the grand cosmopolitan New York

City where he has the opportunity to follow his passion of studying economics and film.

- 1) Studying at a traditional, boarding school and then moving to a liberal arts college is definitely both an eye-opening and radical change. How do you compare the general atmosphere, mentality, ideologies these two institutions are based on?**

Liberal arts is less about looking at past papers than it is exploring aspects of academia that you are genuinely interested in. The atmosphere is more inclusive, but the students you meet are more likely to share similar interests.

- 2) Changing schools, moving to another country - changes in general tend to shift our perspective on the world. What do you think has been your greatest alteration of opinion/view on any topic of interest - the sort of change that makes you wonder how could you have thought in that way in the past? Did it occur gradually or was there any kind of "revelatory" event?**

In American colleges there is a greater focus on the term imperialism, and hence my view has mildly changed on the issue. While British schools may describe it positively, neutrally or rarely, the view is often quite mild, while American colleges seem unanimous in their disdain for imperialism.

- 3) I see that you have an interest both in film and economics - what attracted you towards these fields?**

Economics is an intriguing field that is great to study as we see its impact on all levels of our society. Film is a passion that I want to follow beyond just an interest into employment.

- 4) Have you ever tried colliding these two apparently opposing fields? If yes, how was it? If not, then how would you describe your dream job (inventiveness is encouraged, so it doesn't have to necessarily exist)?**

I wouldn't say they are opposing. I've never heard of a field of study that is opposing. At very most they can be seen as unrelated and even this is somewhat false as there are links (however small) between nearly all subjects. One could join the administration in a film studio, take FOX for example, and need to project the elasticity of demand, relative to different actors participating in the film. Although I don't have a desire to work inside a studio, these theories help you understand your surroundings better and enhance your manner of thinking. I would like to be a feature film director, but beggars can't be choosers and I'd be more than happy to work in any role on a movie set that is making a film I would be proud of.

- 5) Do you have any favourite quote you would want to share, that completely agrees with your own ideas?**

Stanley Kubrick has a good one: "A film is - or should be - more like music than like fiction. It should be a progression of moods and feelings. The theme, what's behind the emotion, the meaning, all that comes later."



US vs UK



Applying to Uni

By Anastasia Broder

It was the night before Christmas as I found myself trying to come up with an answer to the question “How should apples and oranges be compared?” This wasn’t as much of a voluntarily philosophical inquiry, as the necessity to prove to a particular university in the United States that I deserve a place. Personal essays, guided by prompts deemed peculiar by the UK standard, are a major part of the application process that American seniors and international applicants go through every year. Being exposed to both systems gave me a chance to compare what it is the higher education schools are looking for in prospective students.

The gap between US and UK systems of university applications and requirements has often been a topic of debate, each with their supporters and opponents. Academics are the prime focus for UK schools; grades achieved constitute the main criteria for evaluation by enrollment committees. For instance, Cambridge considers AS levels a crucial indicator of success in higher education, and requires a minimum of 89% average across three AS level exams to be eligible. A solid personal statement and phenomenal teacher references are unlikely to boost your chances if your grades don’t match the standard. Top universities don’t really care if you have raised thousands of pounds for a local charity if you want to study Geography, or competed in a major tennis tournament if your course of choice is PPE. It’s not that those accomplishments aren’t admirable; they are just irrelevant to higher education institutions in the UK, and have very little influence over the admission process. On the other hand, USA universities use what they call a holistic approach. In other words, they want you to demonstrate your personality as much as your educational capacity. Despite standardized tests and GPA playing an important role in the admission process, a perfect academic record does not guarantee Ivy School enrollment. To be eligible, your file must include an

impressive amount of extra-curricular activities, leadership positions, charity work, as well as eloquent essays that make your voice come through. Without proving yourself as a valuable member of the community, your chances of gaining a place are rather low.

The name of 4,000-character essay, personal statement, is so misleading, because there is practically nothing personal about it. The formula each applicant is expected to adhere to is as following: begin by outlining the origins of the interest for the subject, prove your aptitude by listing academic achievements, enhance your passionate attitude with references to background reading, and lastly, as a sure indicator of consolidated dedication to the academic area, summarize with a hopeful outline of future career plans. There is no space for personal anecdotes not directly related to the course you wish to pursue. Three adults checked my personal statement to ensure that it stays within the rigid lines of the structure. As a result, there was absolutely no personality left in it; it sounded too pretentious, too dry, and too pompous for an 18-year-old girl. For the US, it was a whole different story. For one school the question I had to address was “Who is the person that influenced you the most, and how did their influence shape your current values?” Another university, known for its quirky approach to the admission process, presented prompts ranging from “What paradoxes do you live with” to “Where is Waldo?” to “How do you feel about Wednesdays?”. The best thing is that there is no structure. You want to write your essay in a form of a poem? Go for it. Interpreting a word in a non-traditional manner is how you choose to approach the question? Knock yourself out. It’s as if these schools were giving my individuality the freedom to shine through. For once, I felt like a university was seeing me as something more than a combination of three letters. For once, I felt that

success wasn’t limited to academic career alone.

However, before bashing the UK for its limited approach, it’s important to realize that the difference of application process reflects the difference of the university experience overall. In the UK, the applicant expresses an interest in a particular course; hence evidence of interest in a subject is in order. The US universities don’t require students to settle down on the major, or main area of study, until the second year, therefore allowing flexibility in the admissions process. It’s also important to admit that the US system isn’t perfect either. The need to participate in so many various areas leads to a frenzy that creates absurd levels of competition. Many teenagers online posted on threads genuinely wondering if “real people” have a chance of gaining a place at Harvard. By real people, they meant teenagers that did not spend 4 months building orphanages in Tunisia, or creating a new method of detecting cancer at the age of 13, or publishing an award winning novel on the question of dealing existential crises, but rather teenagers that engage in community to the best of their ability, have high academic results, and are willing to work hard. So much emphasis on being perfectly well rounded and successful in every field creates immense pressure and unreasonable expectations.

I am glad I had the opportunity to experience both systems and make certain personal conclusions about cultural and social differences between the UK and the US. It’s not about claiming that one system is superior to the other, but I personally found application to the US both more challenging and rewarding. The thought-provoking essay titles made me reflect back on the 18 years I’ve spent on the planet, pinpointing some key moments that shaped my personality or values. This effort that you put into sorting out significant from secondary prepares you better than anything for the next step of embarking on independent living.

SPORTS NEWS (Rugby): Eddie Jones' England 2016 Six Nation Squad

Eddie Jones has definitely made some bold and positive changes to the new look England XV that will face Scotland in the Six Nations opener on February 6. Eddie Jones wants his players to be more competitive and fight for each position and is looking for a higher intensity and a more physical game. Lancaster, in retrospect, was not ruthless enough in his decision making and he had no clear strategy going into the World Cup. Hence resulting in the culmination of numerous mistakes and the early exit from the tournament. Jones' changes both shock and excite me. The troublesome Dylan Hartley has been reintroduced, so to Chris Aston and Manu Tuilagi, yet Tuilagi will miss the Scotland game but will be ready for a call up in the latter stages of the Six Nations when his fitness has improved. Big omissions include Tom Youngs, Tom Wood, Geoff Parling and Danny Cipriani- who were all part of the World Cup squad under Lancaster. In total there are seven new uncapped players with Sam Hill, Josh Beaumont, Jack Clifford, Elliot Daly, Ollie Devoto, Paul Hill and Maro Itoje all getting the call up. Jones has gone for a youth side and hopefully his decision will pay off!

Archie Parker

Is This Right?

By Holly Nichols

I turn to you to say my reply,
But the words come stunted,
And I don't know why,
It was oh so odd, what made me stop?
What made my heart flutter and my stomach drop?
You give a strange look when you see me stutter,
I pass it off casually:
"Never mind," I mutter.
Yeah, that's me, always calm and collected,
A bit quiet from fear of ridicule
And of being rejected.
See, with you now I really don't know what to do,
I'm a timid little kitten, haven't got clue.
So I ponder to myself of what made me this way,
Was it illness, nerves?
Or in what you say?
For your words are like honey,
They're sweet and they stick
To my memory
I remember them in only a click.

So what caught my attention, yes, was your words

But its also the way
You brighten up the world,
Everything is great with you, fun, like a game
And grins pop up
At the sound of your name.
But these feelings aren't right, so I try to dismiss it
Before they grow and they grow
And become far too explicit.
But as I try to block these feelings inside,
I contemplate why,
Why should I hide?
Yes its seen as unnatural,
But is it really so wrong?
Maybe we've been blinded by ignorance,
And prejudice for too long.
Is love such a crime?
Only in a church pew,
For I am a girl,
And you are one too.

(written from the perspective of a book character)