



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY.

We wish to acknowledge, first and foremost, that the University of Adelaide's 'On Dit' magazine has been written and created upon Kurna land. In a region where stories and art have been performed and shared for centuries before us, it is with a sense of duty and care that we continue these traditions.

The Kurna people are and will continue to always be, the traditional custodians of this land we occupy – and their culture, connections, and protocols continue to run deep within this Country.

To any mob reading this edition, we pay you our deepest respects. Your land and sovereignty was never ceded.

*Always was, and always will be,
Aboriginal Land.*

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Wow. Hi guys! Welcome to our Mock Dit – please, just take off your shoes at the entrance (*we don't like to give our Roomba the extra work*).

Arantza here, your designer for this mock-up edition! I'm here to introduce you not only to us, but also to tell you a bit about our goals, our vision, and the strange little world we're creating just for you. Having had a bit of a quiet year for On Dit, it's now our job to give you the *full* rundown of everything we **can** do, and everything we **want** to do.

Scrolling through these countless pages, you'll find articles about politics, arts, literature, poems and artworks, mini games, horoscopes – basically anything and everything we deemed interesting enough for your eyes to behold. And throughout all of that, we aim to give you some insight on what's most important to us in representing student life at the university. We wish to create a space for *all* students, which means that accessibility, acceptance, and diversity are at the very top of our priority list. Our team is chock-full of talented writers, all who come from different backgrounds and life experiences who will make sure to deliver content all students will be able to relate to, and feel supported by.

The University of Adelaide is often set apart from its neighbours for its thriving student culture – which include its clubs and year-round events. On Dit is meant to be at the center of all that hubbub, and *that* will be our goal should we be voted in. To re-establish its legacy, and give you guys a product you'll *itch* to sink your teeth into.

With all that being said, I hope you enjoy this year's Mock-Dit! With so much love it's insane, Arantza xx



meet the team

A portrait of a young woman with long, wavy, reddish-brown hair and bangs. She is wearing a dark purple V-neck sweater over a blue and white striped shirt. She has a nose ring and is looking slightly to the right of the camera with a gentle smile. The background shows stone steps with decorative patterns.

amber
she/they

Hey guys! I'm Amber, a first-year Philosophy, Politics and Economics student and aspiring everything - from writer to finally getting rehab for my thrifting addiction. I am currently one of the Features Editors for the Fresher Magazine and working hard on bringing glory to our beautiful older sister the Adelaide Fashion Collective.

Shameless promo aside, you can find me constantly needing to defend my love of the Twilight movies whilst actively hating myself for it, watching and rewatching *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* and attempting to make my own clothes (ask me about my tie skirt!).

I've always been an avid writer, from my cringey middle school poetry, to my more recent - but no less cringey arguably - prose and argumentative pieces.

I hope to continue to bring writing to life, through my own and the other wonderful voices here at the Uni. Uni life should be about forming connections as we all struggle in the transitional phase of being thrust into the adult world and finding our place in it. On Dit is the perfect platform for that, where we can bring students from all walks of life together and create a thriving community that focuses on uplifting students to let them know their voices matter and can be heard.

I can't wait to show Adelaide what we're made of and offer a refreshing perspective of the power of young people.





charlotte
she/her

Meet the team

Hi there, I'm Charlotte! I'm a fourth-year Media and Arts student with concentrations in Journalism and English Literature. Pssst! I'm also a law school dropout- no shame, 10/10 would recommend. My top ways to procrastinate studying include trawling Ao3 for fanfics of an undisclosed cult classic film, listening to 70s and 80s music, and puzzling over Gen Alpha slang (Wtf is a 'skibidi toilet'?).

You may recognise me as a Columnist and Sub-Editor for On Dit 2023, where I distinctly remember professing to the Editorial Team that I didn't want to be put in a box and only write about disability affairs...and then proceeded to voluntarily curl up into said box almost every issue (lmao).

Since then, I've forged a career in Marketing and Comms getting paid to do just that, so it all worked out! My greatest hits include the opinion pieces 'Normies Vs Outcasts' and 'In Defence of Nepo Babies', alongside the Eras Tour satirical news story 'Ugh, Wish I Had An Access Plan' (please don't come for me Swifties, it was just topical at the time!). Having had the honour of dipping my toes into this coveted position as a Guest Ed for Queer Dit, I'm hungry to bite off more than I can chew in service of the wonderfully quirky student body.

In 2025, I hope to continue my work of amplifying marginalised voices within our uni community (where the heck did the special First Nations edition go?), in addition to playing a mentoring role for emerging journalists, writers, and artists.

'Ello loves!!

I'm Arantza, second-year Sociology major and 20-year-old "free spirit". I'm a pretentious poet and self-proclaimed artist, and the designer for your 2025 On Dit team!

Some fun things about me, and I'll try not to just recite my Tinder profile, is that I'm in love with Dev Patel, I'm an avid and unashamed lover of musicals, and I have a thirst for the development and curation of all things community.

It's this thirst that first lead me to the On Dit team in 2023 as a sub-editor and artist, and now here I am - trying my hand at the big-boy role of an editor.

I see On Dit as much more than just a magazine - but rather, a stage. It's free real-estate for all

those that wish to speak their truths, their experiences, and their opinions. And above all else, I believe it to be a home for community and a hub for all things university.

In 2025, I'm most interested in making this magazine into a staple of university life, and a playground for all budding journalists and writers. Plus, I'm hoping having this outlet will help me shut up in class (my sincerest apologies for everyone I've ever had a class with, I've yet to learn how to *not* share my opinion ♡).

I hope y'all are ready to join us on this journey, 'cause we're dragging you along by the hair with us!



arantza
she/her

meet the team

meet the team

shreya
she/her



Hello everyone! I am Shreya, and I am a first-year law student. There are three crucial things you need to know about me. You will always see me with an iced coffee and a sweet treat in hand because you need to treat yourself at the end of the day. Secondly, my daily average screen time on Pinterest alone is 5 hours, and I have an entire board dedicated to planning out the layout and theme of my loft in New York. The Pinterest board in question has five thousand pins.

Lastly, I love a fresh bouquet of flowers from the florist weekly, and I do not like supermarket flowers. Gotta get out there and support your local florist.

I have always been fascinated with writing and the art of storytelling. My grandfather, a writer, has always left a great impression on me throughout my life. I grew up around him, digging deep into his research

and editing his work for many years before he finally published his books. His books help keep the memories of his childhood, the people he loved and cherished, and the impactful moments that made him who he is today alive through his books. Because writing keeps things alive, it stirs discourse, allowing people to find new avenues through which they perceive the world and find their own voice and place in it. Because of this, writing has always been very dear to me. My writing is an extension of me, what I believe in, what I find humorous, my observations of the world around me, and things that I find interesting across all fields that have me going "huh ...no way" or "oh... so that's how it works."

Writing has always been my first love, and I'm incredibly grateful to have shared my stories, observations, and questions about the world with all of you.

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EDITORS' PICKS

Chappell Roan has taken over all of our lives recently – whether we wanted her to or not. It seemed only appropriate, then, that we share the songs we're keeping hostage in our playlists.

SUPER GRAPHIC ULTRA MODERN GIRL

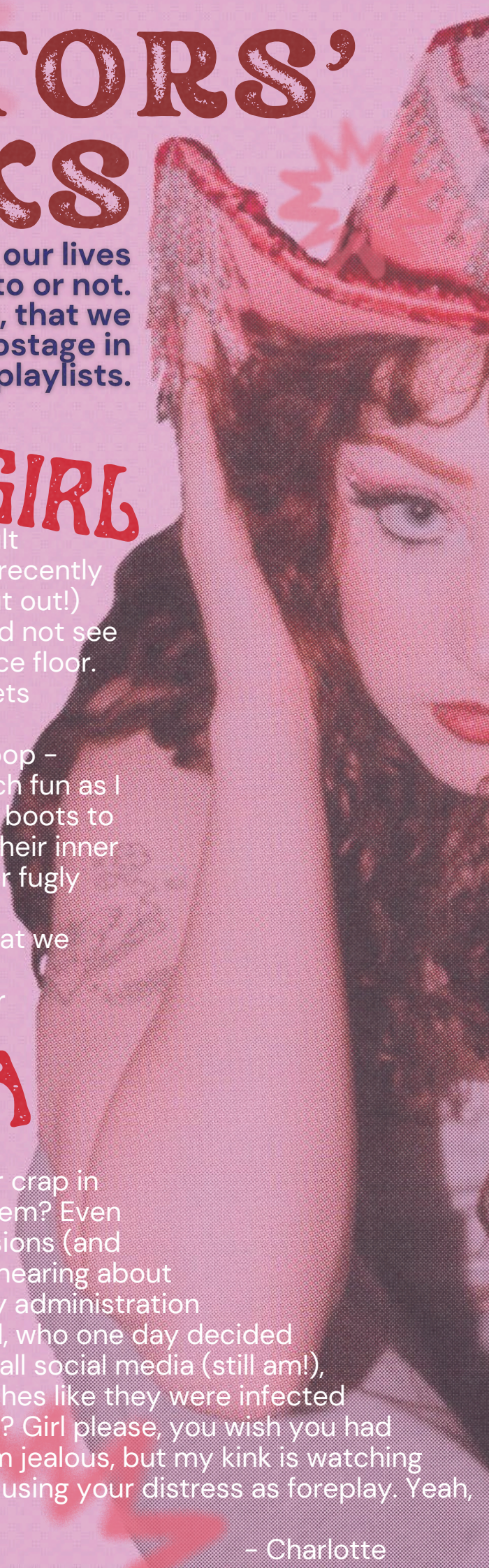
As someone obsessed with Chappell Roan, it was so difficult choosing just one song for my pick. But, I was recently at a Chappell Roan themed night at Jive (shout out!) and let me tell you, when this song played, I did not see a single super mega bumper boy on that dance floor. There's something about this song that just gets everybody up, moving and having fun just unapologetically living. This song is peak gay pop – sorry Jojo – and I genuinely never have as much fun as I do when I dance in my mini skirt and my gogo boots to this song. So, I think everyone should release their inner super graphic ultra modern girl and never wear fugly jeans because you know what? We are NOT overdramatic, we know what we want. And what we want is to listen to this song.

– Amber

MY KINK IS KARMA

Is there anything more satisfying than watching someone who treated like you utter crap in your formative years get what's coming to them? Even better if it's the result of their own poor decisions (and not the universe or whatever)! Not gonna lie, hearing about a certain airline company going into voluntary administration recently did make me think of a former friend, who one day decided I didn't fit their 'popular' vibe, blocked me on all social media (still am!), and actively avoided all extended olive branches like they were infected with COVID. As if I was a stalker or something? Girl please, you wish you had my cute aesthetic. So yes, people may say I'm jealous, but my kink is watching YOUUUU ruin your life, thinking I care, and I'm using your distress as foreplay. Yeah, it's coming around. Oh, God. Oh, God.

– Charlotte





EDITORS' PICKS

NAKED IN MANHATTAN

This choice was UNBELIEVABLY easy to make. 'Naked in Manhattan' is just *not* talked about enough. Like, at all. The pulsing energy that seeps from the beat and vocals, the chorus that transports you into a 2000's teenage rom-com, and the frankly indecently fun music video - this song deserves all the love and more. It has reignited my uncontainable need to live in New York - which is a crazy feat, considering the state of America right now. Only Chappell could make me consider even going *near* that... charming nation.

Also, i'm just like. A little bit (a lot) obsessed with how she says 'cicadas' for some reason.

- Arantza

RED WINE SUPER NOVA

'Red Wine Supernova' is the perfect soundtrack for anyone who has ever been swept up in the magic of a crush. The song captures the thrill of new love, that dizzying, heart-fluttering feeling that makes you want to scribble your crush's name in the margins of your notebook, surrounded by hearts and stars. It's the kind of song that takes me back to middle school, where every crush felt like the most important thing in the world, and my lockable diary was my most trusted confidant. Listening to it is like stepping into a rom-com where everything is just a little more sparkly, and every glance or smile from your crush feels like a moment straight out of a movie.

And who doesn't love a good cheesy rom-com.

- Shreya



VOX?

POP!

HOW ARE YOU COMMEMORATING BRAT SUMMER?

For me, Brat is a state of mind. It's dancing all night while trying to come to terms with the fact we're all running out of time. It's sleeping in my eye makeup because I forgot to take it off. It's wearing whatever you want and doing whatever you want when you want simply because you want to. As a corporate girly, it's also blasting the album while playing sudoku on my iPad before bed after a long day at work.

WHAT SPORT DO YOU THINK SHOULD BE IN THE OLYMPICS?

Netball, although I understand it may not have the global popularity to be included yet :(

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE FROM ON DIT NEXT YEAR?

I want to see On Dit continue to grow and provide a safe place for students of all walks of life to share their thoughts, experiences and passions. I want to see art and poetry and quizzes and horoscopes and hard hitting think pieces and anything and everything in between!



Talara McHugh *she/her*
Bachelor of Media (Journalism)

VOX?

POP!

HOW ARE YOU COMMEMORATING BRAT SUMMER?

By writing all my assignments for this semester in a low-resolution Arial font on a lime background.

WHAT SPORT DO YOU THINK SHOULD BE IN THE OLYMPICS?

I would personally like to see hot dog eating. The real skill is being able to watch one of those tournaments without feeling sick. Very happy to see squash added for 2028, I play casually but it's so cool to watch.

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE FROM ON DIT NEXT YEAR?

Well, sure would be nice to have Charlotte, Arantza, Amber and Shreya as the editors...



Josh Wilson *he/him*
Bachelor of Laws and Media

Autism & Changelings

charlotte whincup

CONTENT WARNING :
Contains discussions of
ableist violence against
children and filicide.



Lately, I've been fascinated with fairies and goblins in European folklore (by 'lately' I mean for the past 3 years to the exclusion of all else – thanks Jim Henson!). So imagine my surprise horror when I discovered the changeling myth and its connection to our modern understanding of autism and neurodivergence.


Prior to the 20th century, when autism was first diagnosed by child psychologists like notorious Nazi sympathiser Hans Asperger, neurodivergent children were not believed to be human, but the offspring of malicious sprites. Back in the days of yore, many Western cultures thought that fairy-tale creatures were plotting the downfall of humanity and the primary way in which they achieved this was by kidnapping mortal babies from their crib (they just couldn't resist those chubby cheeks) and substituting them with a 'changeling', a fairy child with a glamour/shapeshifting abilities disguising their true nature to the unsuspecting parents. They'd then grow up to wreak havoc on human communities; poisoning water wells, setting fire to the winter food supply, casting spells to make people infertile, fall out of love with their spouses, or kill children.

Curiously, as these changelings progressed through early childhood, they'd exhibit 'strange' behaviour that set them apart from 'regular' human children. Either they were precocious beings that could talk, sing, and dance with superior skills than was expected for their age, or they were 'stunted' in their development; wholly or partially unable to speak, obstinate, and prone to crying spells. Regardless of which end of the spectrum they lay, they possessed commonalities in how they communicated and responded to their environment; failing to pick up on social cues, flapping their hands, and rejecting their parents' displays of

physical affection. These traits were all observed as signs that they weren't human.

Based on the spooky similarities between changelings to presentations of autism, we can understand this myth as a pre-scientific explanation for developmental disabilities. As medieval communities lacked the medical knowledge to understand why some children behaved 'abnormally', parents would've sought comfort from the idea that their babies were simply from another world and resulted through no fault of their own. However, this folklore led to the abuse, abandonment, and murder of autistic children, by way of drownings in rivers and cauldrons and beatings with wooden sticks, all justified by the belief that their 'real', neurotypical child had been 'stolen'. If you didn't have the heart to commit filicide, some myths stated that the fairies would return your child to you if you proclaimed to the changeling, the neurodivergent child, every day that you didn't love them and wished they'd go away.

Sadly, this ableist rhetoric is still prevalent today. Due to misunderstandings of autism as a 'disease', many parents genuinely believe that it's a condition that manifested in their child as a toddler, in need of being 'cured', rather than a natural difference in their neurology they



were born with. In the same way that medieval parents thought their babies had been stolen by fairies, they too think of autism as something that has 'stolen' their healthy child, even though the traits are typically only apparent from age 2 to 3. The biggest culprit for the propagation of this view is the American organisation Autism Speaks, who called upon the changeling myth in their infamous 2009 'I Am Autism' TV ad: 'I know where you live...I live there too...I speak your language fluently...if you're happily married, I will make sure that your marriage fails...I derive great pleasure out of your loneliness. I will fight to take away your hope. I plot to rob you of your children and your dreams.'

As disturbing as it is to see how far back in our history ableism can be traced to, it's empowering in a way to have our existence acknowledged before modern medicine was able to. Who knows? Maybe I am a fairy. They're magical, grant wishes, and bring joy to a lot of people. That would explain my susceptibility to iron deficiency...

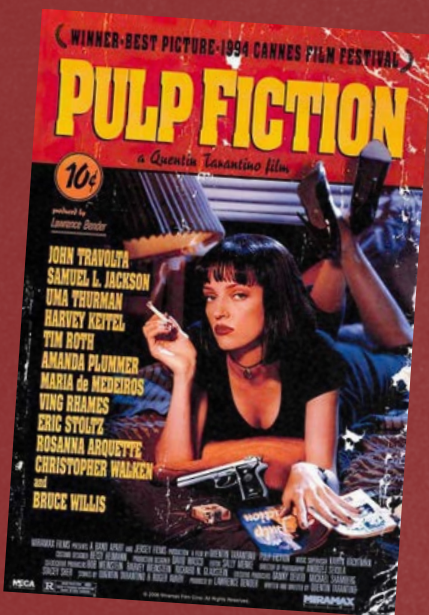
The Signs As...

amber lomax

CULT CLASSIC FILMS.

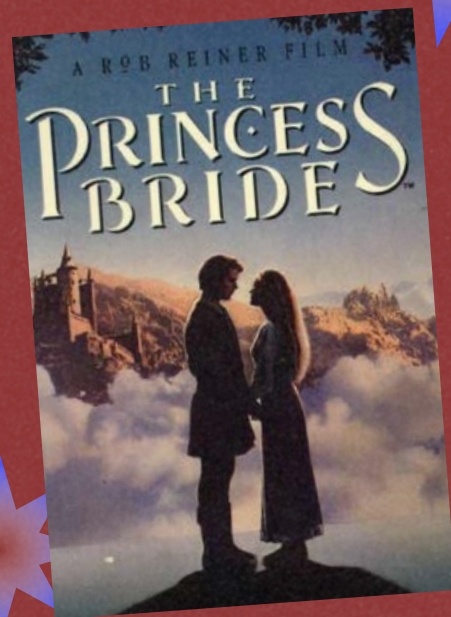
ARIES

Passionate and bold, motivated by a quick temper and desire to win, Aries, there is no denying you are Tarantino's 1994, *Pulp Fiction*. With a wild and competitive spirit, we can always count on a determined Aries to take charge. You are the life of the party, always leading the wildest and daring activities, pushing us to let loose and have fun. Just not too much, we don't need another Mia on our hands.



TAURUS

Oh Taurus, a secret romantic at heart, *The Princess Bride* is the perfect combination of feel-good romance and funny, likeable characters. Like Buttercup, you seek the high comforts of life, security, luxury, a steady life and will work hard to gain them. You can accomplish anything with a little ambition, and with a little help from those around you, anything you want will be as you wish.



GEMINI

Gemini, Gemini, Gemini, what are we going to do with you? Notorious for your playful and erratic nature, you are the epitome of fun and joy. You are *Romy and Michele's High School Reunion*, filled with camp outfits, the joy of the valley girl accent and the creator of the post-it note. The underdog story we all needed from two beautiful but ditzy, fashion-focused blondes. And Alan Cummings in a limo.

The Blonde Leading The Blonde.



CANCER

1, 2, 3, 4, Cancer, you're the one that I adore! 5, 6, 7, 8, don't run from this movie, because this is fate! Just like Megan, you are sensitive and compassionate, often acting with your heart in all matters. It takes someone special to make you feel safe, and whether you find that with your friends and family or a certain someone, I know you are guaranteed to open yourself up to a new, beautiful life in your true direction.



LEO

Leos, give yourself over to absolute pleasure with everybody's favourite Camp Musical Thriller film – *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*. Forever living on the wild side, and with a flair for dramatics, it's no surprise that you don't mind staying the night at the Frankenstein place. Passionate and with a love for commanding attention, you emulate the crazy doctor in all the best ways. Your confidence knows no bounds and we love you for it.



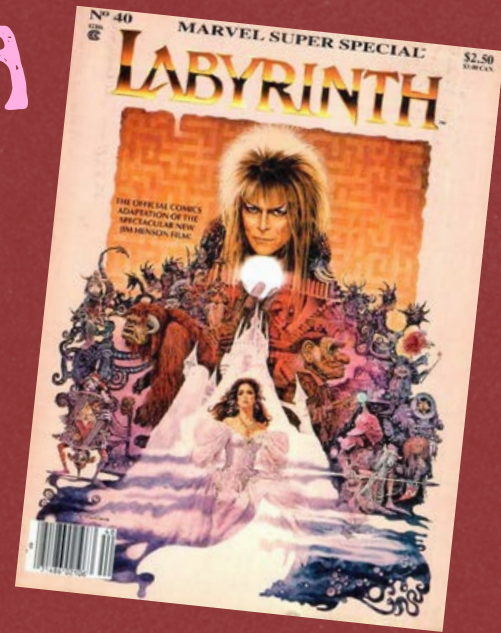
VIRGO

God Gemini, being erratic is so '87. Virgo, unlike your fellow Mercury-ruled sign, you are extremely focused and practical. Your perfectionism extends to most areas of your life. Just like Veronica, you have high Ivy-League level goals, and with the brain to match, there's nothing you can't do. Of course, with your practical and analytical nature, the unknown is high on your anti-list, after all, chaos is what killed the dinosaurs!



LIBRA

You remind me of a Libra. What Libra? The Libra who should watch this film. Whilst David Bowie and his goblin citizens have a skewed sense of justice, my dear Libra, you do not. Just like Sarah, we are enamoured with your charming and amiable nature, making friends in the unlikeliest of places. Trusting and loyal, we would swear fealty to your cause – whatever it may be because we all know and love your desire for peace and balance.



SCORPIO

Now for those who don't like boxing movies, Scorpio, I have a treat for you. Just like Jennifer, Scorpions go both ways, ranging from the sensual, moody and calculating former Snowflake Queen, to the empathetic and fiercely loyal Lesnicki. It's always a wild ride with you, never quite sure what we're going to get from your mysterious nature. Despite it all, we wouldn't trade you for the world, even if you became a boy-eating demon. Well, maybe.



BEELEJUICE

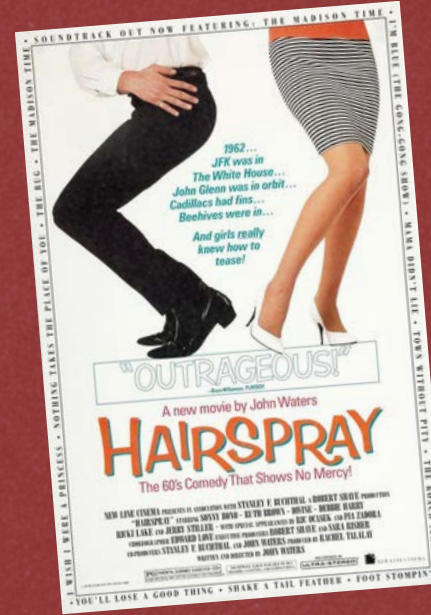


SAGITTARIUS

Sagittarius, Sagittarius, Sagittarius! As I know you will be, I hope you're up for an adventure! *Beetlejuice* is all about the wacky and zany and trying to overcome Betelgeuse's desire to wreak havoc. As funny and curious problem solvers, the crazy journey of trying to exorcise the chaos spirit is sure to entice you. Despite your desire for independence and adventure, you maintain a love for people around you and building things that last.

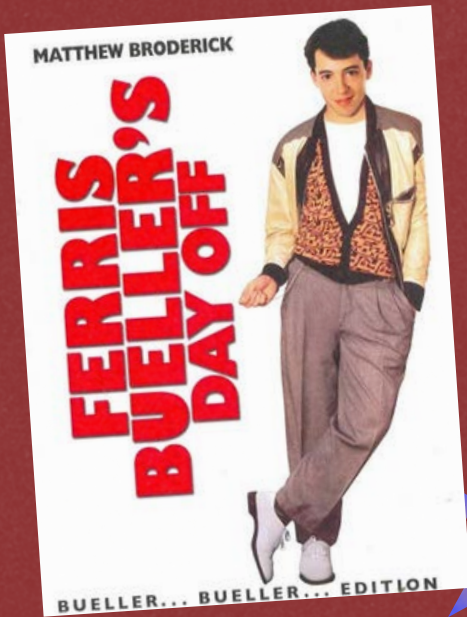
CAPRICORN

Capricorn you are positively, permanently (not) punished with this film! Your hardworking and competitive nature makes you a natural sister of Tracy Turnblad, who defied all expectations and became the star of the *Corny Collins Show*. Patient, resilient, loyal, dedicated, what's not to love about you Capricorn? You will rock this world because you are what makes the world keep spinning round and round. Taking your life by storm, we can't wait to watch it.



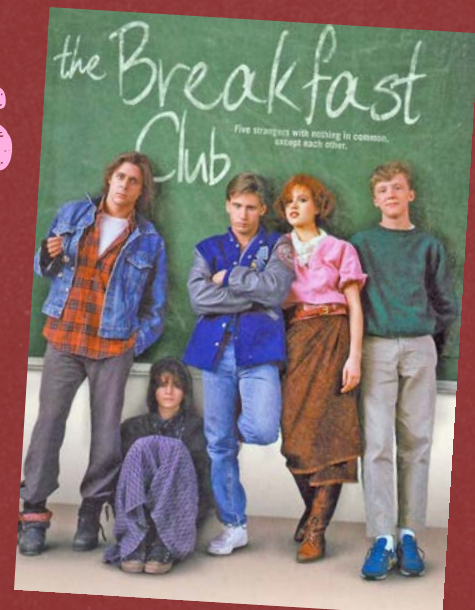
AQUARIUS

Okay, so you may be a truant, but Aquarius, it looks amazing on you. The two sides to your personality are perfectly represented by Ferris – the practical, intelligent mind coinciding with the rebellious, spontaneous tricks. Although we're all a little jealous of your natural charm and wit, we are glad to have you on our side as a wonderfully balanced leader. Ferris would call you guys humanitarians, doing the world a favour with your existence.



PISCES

Gee hon, isn't our Pisces swell? What other film would be perfect for our resident empath than the coming of age story of five teenagers from all different walks of life. Unbelievably selfless and gentle, you carry the sensitivity and gentle nature needed to handle this film. Extremely creative and imaginative, the only thing we ask of you is to never define yourself and live freely and openly as you do already. Yours, the On Dit club



And just like that, we're done! If you have any complaints, don't send them our way. Deal with it <3



A Room of One's Own

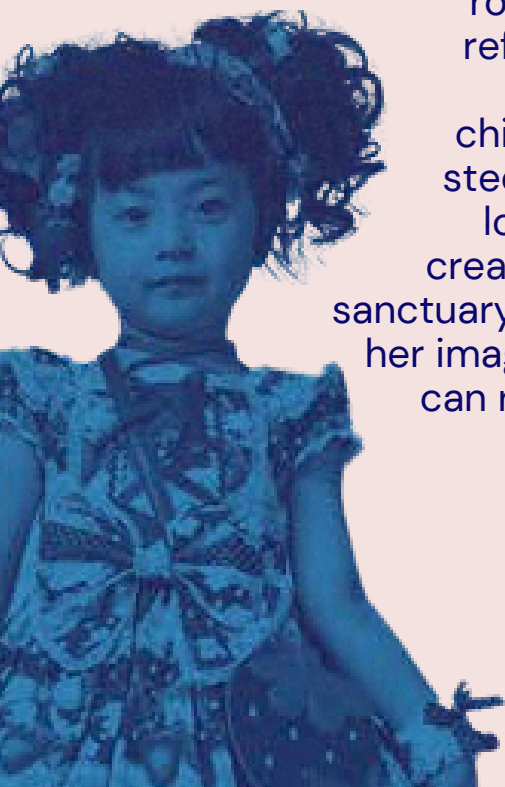
shreya pande *The Stories Our Spaces Tell*

Every room I have ever had has been an extension of me, a cocoon, a looking glass, where pieces of my past have deeply embedded themselves. In this room I am everything all at once. Who I aspire to be, who I wish I had been and who I am. Posters, miscellaneous pocket trinkets and pictures of my parents, pieces of paper with poems I have never completed. As I have grown, my room and the objects within it have changed and so have I, but my room has been an extension of me, everything there is to know about my life is in my room, in all its rawness. Walking into a person's room is a map to them, who they are behind-the-scenes.

This deeply personal connection to our spaces is something photographer James Mollison captures beautifully in his project *Where Children Sleep*. Mollison takes us into the bedrooms of children around the world, offering a glimpse into their lives through the lens of the spaces they inhabit. Just as my room has been a reflection of my journey, the rooms in Mollison's photographs serve as windows into the lives of these children, each one telling a story of its own.

In Tokyo, four-year-old Kaya's room is a bright, vibrant space filled with dresses handmade by her mother, shelves overflowing with toys, and a sense of joy that mirrors her dreams of becoming a cartoonist. Her

room is a reflection of a childhood steeped in love and creativity, a sanctuary where her imagination can run wild.



In stark contrast, eight-year-old Roathy's sleeping space in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, is a bed made from old tyres, set amidst the harsh reality of a rubbish dump. His room, if it can be called that, tells a story of survival and resilience, a life defined by the struggle for basic necessities. The objects in his space—scavenged cans and bottles—are not just items; they are the tools of his survival, the markers of a life lived on the edge.



Each of these rooms, whether filled with luxury or stripped to the bare essentials, is a reflection of the child who inhabits it. Just as my room holds the key to understanding me, these spaces offer a profound insight into the lives of the children Mollison photographed. They reveal the disparities in wealth, culture, and opportunity, but they also highlight the universal need for a place to call our own—a space where we can dream, grow, and simply be ourselves.

Mollison's project reminds us that a room is never just a room. It is a living, breathing extension of the person who occupies it. Whether it's a top-floor apartment on Fifth Avenue in New York or a makeshift bed on the streets of Rio de Janeiro, each space tells a story of identity, of aspirations, and of the complex social fabric that shapes our lives.

In the end, *Where Children Sleep* is more than just a collection of photographs. It is a powerful reminder that our rooms, no matter how small or grand, are the places where our lives unfold. They are the silent witnesses to our joys and sorrows, our dreams and fears. Walking into someone's room is like stepping into their inner world, a map to who they are behind-the-scenes. And through Mollison's lens, we are invited to take that step—to see, to understand, and to connect with the lives of others in the most intimate of ways.

WORD SEARCH:

THE WORD-LYMPICS

b m i k t c a r d b o a r d v b v h j v
p f l w t o z v g a z h k j b d s r y d
o v o u w a i d c i o k v x m d g a x s
m u n s n o n c h a l a n t t u r k s w
m s a z a o x j i s e i n e c z h x u d
e f n z j h a q n j d t f c a m x d e x
l s z r f m j x p n q r n e h r i v t i
r f a r v u b u i f w a m j y b r d p n
a u g e t f u c x k n d e q g i x j l z
y n p e h f c e n u p i t n i l j t l s
g z r d a i v o i a b n n a w e c h m d
u i t r m n r i r v s g u r r s e r r x
n o u x m m x e l e c p t l h v y o k i
m o r s i a k w f l h i b c h y a u w n
s s u o r n f w i u a n u y y p i p b t
q q h v a j d a p n g s s u c j w l e y
o p r e t c c i m a i e h v y b h e h f
i v q z i n s n o g n f e g o w h v d e
s r a g y d m a y y h z h s i g d q s m
o e a i g r n l s n o o p d o g g t u g

FIND THE FOLLOWING WORDS:

- muffin man
- cardboard
- snoop dogg
- trading pins
- refugees
- throuple
- pommel
- villa
- nonchalant
- turks
- ammirati
- mr. biles
- seine
- ilona
- raygun
- nutbush

How the blue and red walls CRUMBLE.

sebastian andrew

Political nerds should be familiar with the terms 'Blue wall' and the 'Red wall'. In an American context, these refer to states which have consistently voted either Democrat or Republican at the presidential level, without interruption, usually over a certain period of time (usually decades). As proved in 2020, when Democrats won Georgia and Arizona for the first time since the '90s, or in 2016 when Michigan, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin went red for the first time since the '80s, walls are solid... until they eventually break.

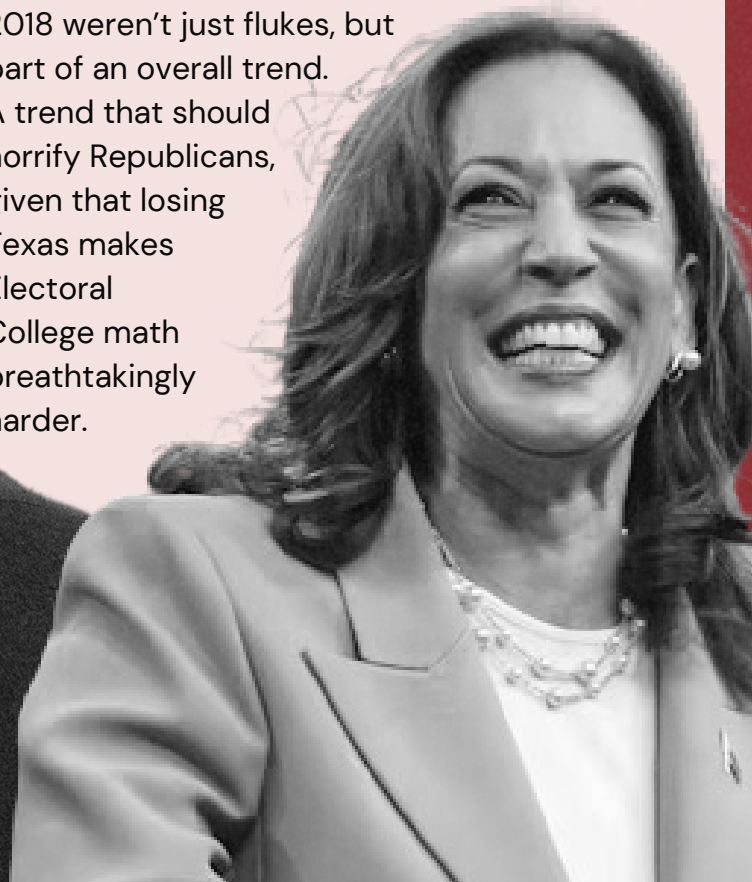
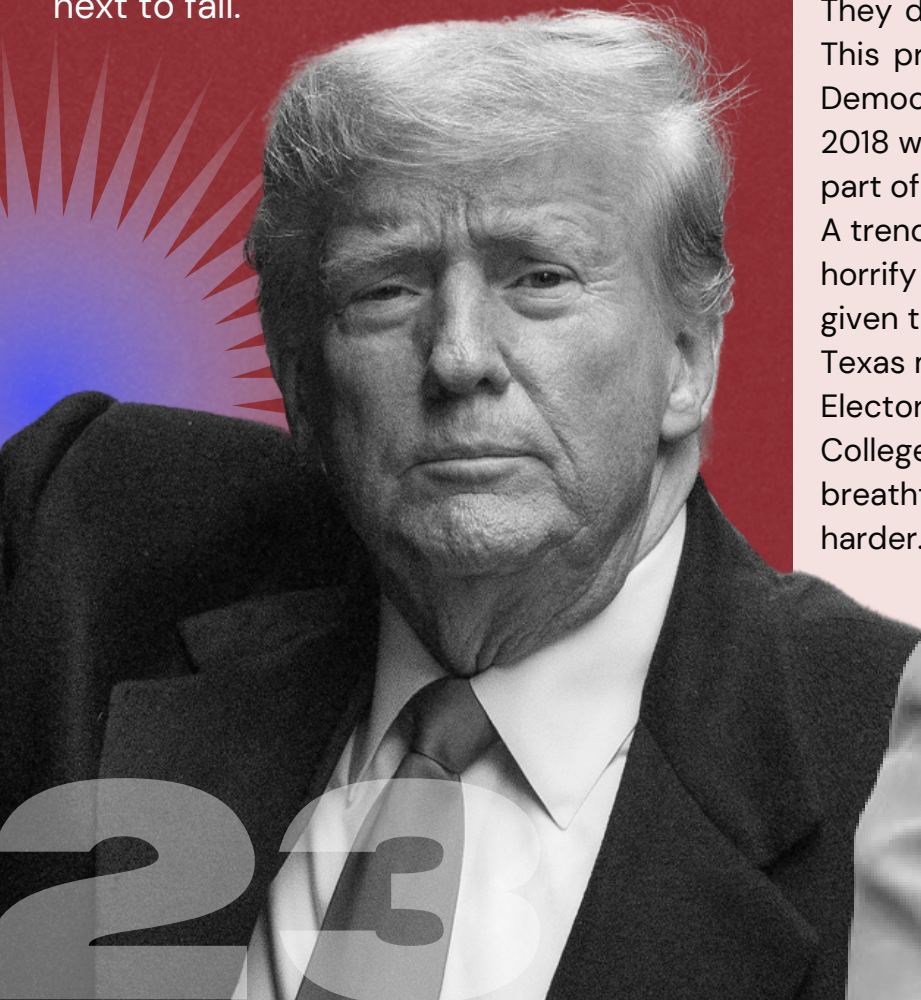
So instead of subjecting you to another 2024 election prediction and frothing over which of the most marginal swing states will or won't flip, let's look ahead to the future to see which states will be next to fall.

#1 TEXAS

(last voted D in 1976)

Blexas ('blue Texas') is inevitable. On paper, Texas' demographics are awful for Republicans. Only 40% of its population is non-white Hispanic, equal to its Hispanic (of any race) population, while the state also boasts large black and Asian populations. Eschewing its reputation of a rural cowboy state, a whopping 84% of its population is urbanised, and its large liberal cities are only skyrocketing in growth. Texas has bolted left in recent years, with the Republican winning margin shifting from 15.8% in 2012 to 5.6% in 2020, a swing of 10% to Democrats over two election cycles. Even more concerning for Republicans, the Democratic floor (the minimum baked in electoral support for the party) is increasing. In the 2022 midterms, while Texas' electorate was considerably red, Democrats held their own. They didn't overperform, but they didn't crash. This proves that Trump's margin losses, or the Democrats' near snatch of a Senate seat in 2018 weren't just flukes, but part of an overall trend.

A trend that should horrify Republicans, given that losing Texas makes Electoral College math breathtakingly harder.



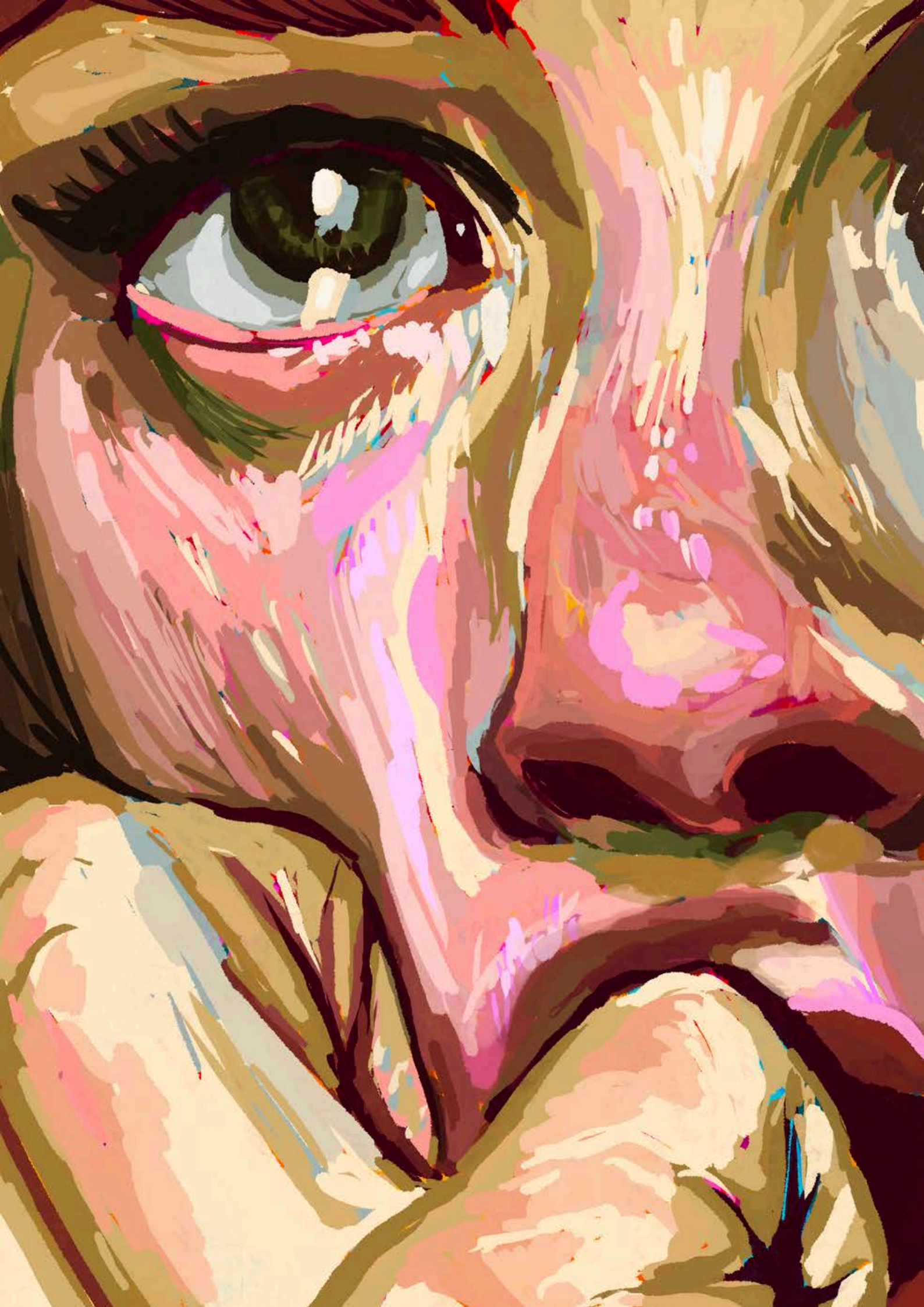
#2 ALASKA (last voted D in 1964) Often considered inconsequential in presidential elections, due to its strong Republican bias and its meagre three electoral votes, Alaska is a surprisingly close second to Texas. Roughly 40% of its population is concentrated in Anchorage. While this means the urban/rural divide is less pronounced, it also means that a majority of its population can be targeted by ad-buys in one media market (roughly 65% of Alaska lives in Anchorage's media market). Alaska's smaller population means that overall, fewer actual votes have to be moved. Demographically, Alaska is only 58% white, while Alaska Natives comprise 22% of the population. Anchorage itself is ethnically diverse, with growing Asian and Hispanic populations, and a larger than national average Pacific Islander population.

The state's strong libertarian lean puts it out of step with the Republican Party on social issues (except on the issue of guns). Additionally, fisheries and tourism form important parts of Alaska's economy, making conservation natural lands an issue of importance, and making Alaskan voters more sympathetic to the party (Democrats) that believes in environmental protection. The state economy's reliance on petroleum will keep it Republican for the time being, but for how long?

Cheating, I know. Deal with it. Minnesota came close to flipping in 2016 (Trump lost it by 1.5%) and is situated **#3 Minnesota & Maine (last voted R in 1972)/(last voted R in 1988)** in the hotly contested Midwest. It stands to reason that the next time a Republican performs well, Minnesota is the next logical state that will fall from the Blue Wall. The state's demographics aren't overly favourable to Republicans; much of the population is situated in the educated, left-leaning Minneapolis-St. Paul metro region. However, Democrats' support has collapsed in the state's rurals, and still have room to fall in smaller cities and the blue-collar 'Iron Range' region that are still somewhat crucial to margins. Narrow losses by some Republicans in the 2022 midterms demonstrates that despite urban/rural and educational polarisation, Minnesota is still on the menu in a strong Republican year.

On demographics alone, Maine is ranked as one of the best states for Republicans. Its population is overwhelmingly white, it's only 40% urbanized (making it the second most rural state), and blue-collar sectors such as agriculture and forestry form a large part of its economy. It's only the socially moderate views of its population that seem to have kept it firmly in the Democratic column. Like Minnesota, Maine came close to flipping in 2016 (Trump lost it by 3%), and a strong Republican national performance could finally see this on-paper safe state flip.

#4 Utah (last voted D in 1964) Were it not for Mormons, Utah would probably already be safely Democrat. It's incredibly urbanised, with 80% of its population residing in the Wasatch Front metropolitan area, very educated (61% of Utahns have a post-high school education), and with a median age of 30, the youngest state in the nation. What keeps it solidly Republican is religion. The LDS church weighs heavily on Utahn's lives and preaches conservatively on issues such as abortion and LGBTQ+ discrimination. However, on issues such as immigration and religious freedoms, Trumpism and the LDS church differ greatly. In both 2016 and 2020, Trump put up abysmal performances, the worst for a Republican since the '60s. Flipping Utah won't come easy, but as urban and educational trends continue to go brrr, as 'Trumpism' becomes less a bug than a feature in the national Republican Party, and as the LDS old guard is replaced by younger and more socially liberal members, it's not long until what used to be THE safest Republican state slips away.



RECIPE

arantza garcia

BOOK.

my mother doesnt have a recipe
book.

when she cooks
its as if shes preparing for the last
supper—
which is to say,
she too offers her
body in the bread
we break at the
dinner table.

my mother
doesnt have a
recipe book,
—but is still able to
craft miracles atop plastic counters.

like the miracle,
of feeding your family,
with an empty fridge.

the miracle,
of bringing a grown man to his knees,
with nothing but a wooden spoon.

the miracle,
of speaking a loves confession,
without a
single
word
uttered

and she tells me,
that these miracles
passed down from mother to
daughter,
cannot be written down
in anything except,
a dna strand.

culture
is not an ingredient
you can just buy
at a grocery store

and the heritage
in our hands
just dont fit on a
spice rack

my mother
doesnt have
a recipe book,
in the same way the universe
will never just open its mouth
and *tell us* how it was created.
instead,
we must find its origins
in the mythology
we create
out of its constellation skin—
—and let me tell you,
that my mothers rice
had never tasted so much like
STARS.

sometimes,
i think i can even taste
my mothers sacrifice
in how much spice
she pours into a boiling pot.

taste my mothers loss,
in how many placemats
she takes away from the dinner table.

taste my mothers love
in how she waits for me to take a second bite
before she can take her first

and my mother doesnt have
a recipe book
'cause she was born
with the weight of eves apple
in the pit of her stomach-
-and found that this.
this is the only way she knows
how to beg for forgiveness.

is the only language
that came easily to her.

and so.
my mother just
doesn't have a recipe book.

so when i ask her
how much oil
i should pour into the pan,
she laughs,
holds me to her chest,
tells me
to listen to her heart beat-

-and to pour
that oil
until i can
no longer hear
her pulse.



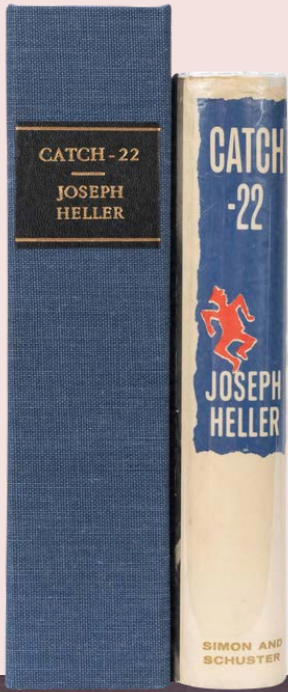
‘You don’t read the classics?’

amber lomax a defence of modern literature

Before we begin, I would like to acknowledge that I am not completely unaware of the impact that classic authors had on society and culture, but I am only doing what has been long overdue; a critique.

Now, as a long-time reader, I knew I could not call myself a bookworm until I had read every classic under the sun. From Austen to Wilde, I was determined to call myself cultured. However, as soon as I opened up *Catch-22*, I knew I was going to struggle. While I didn’t think too badly of Yossarian’s character and understood he was literally in hospital, I struggled to continue to read. Spoiler alert: Yossarian’s inner monologue is exhausting. The idea and message of the book – and even some of the characters compelled me – but I couldn’t get over the unnecessary writing style. As my high school English teacher would say ‘Be more concise!’.

So, I figured it was high time we debunk some of the greatest literature in history – or so they would have you believe.



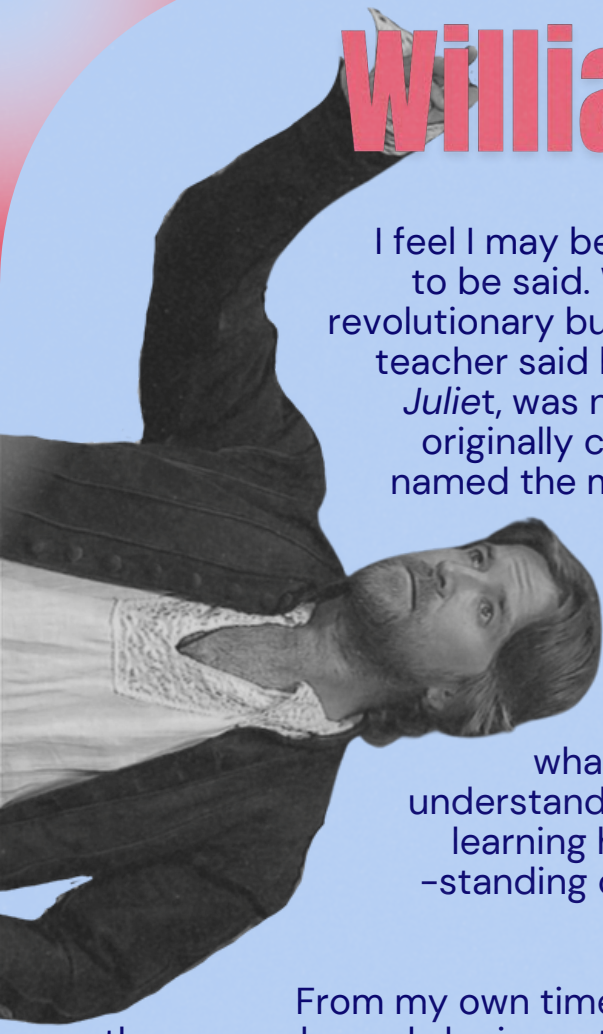
Jane Austen

Now before you sentence me for this, the extended title is in defence of modern literature. Austen was one of the greatest minds of her time, and her novels and stories have transcended generations and maintain a constant presence in the media. She was the inventor of modern romantic-comedy and thus, invented many rom-com traits we see – and fault today. Enemies to lovers? Elizabeth Bennett and Mr Darcy. Right person, wrong time? Elinor Dashwood and Edward Ferrars. Friends to lovers/the boy next door? Emma Woodhouse and Mr Knightley. ‘It’s always been you’? Anne Elliot and Captain Wentworth.

Jane Austen led the basis for rom-coms. Despite this, I’ve seen readers being dismissive of modern literature for being ‘too tropey’ when that was what Austen did, write plain, ordinary people as they live their plain, ordinary lives and whilst she created them, she still used tropes. Complex and great writing and character tropes are not mutually exclusive. I think it’s a fair point to make that yes, Austen’s works are amazing, but just because they came first, does not make them less than any other old rom-com novel you see at Dymocks.



William Shakespeare



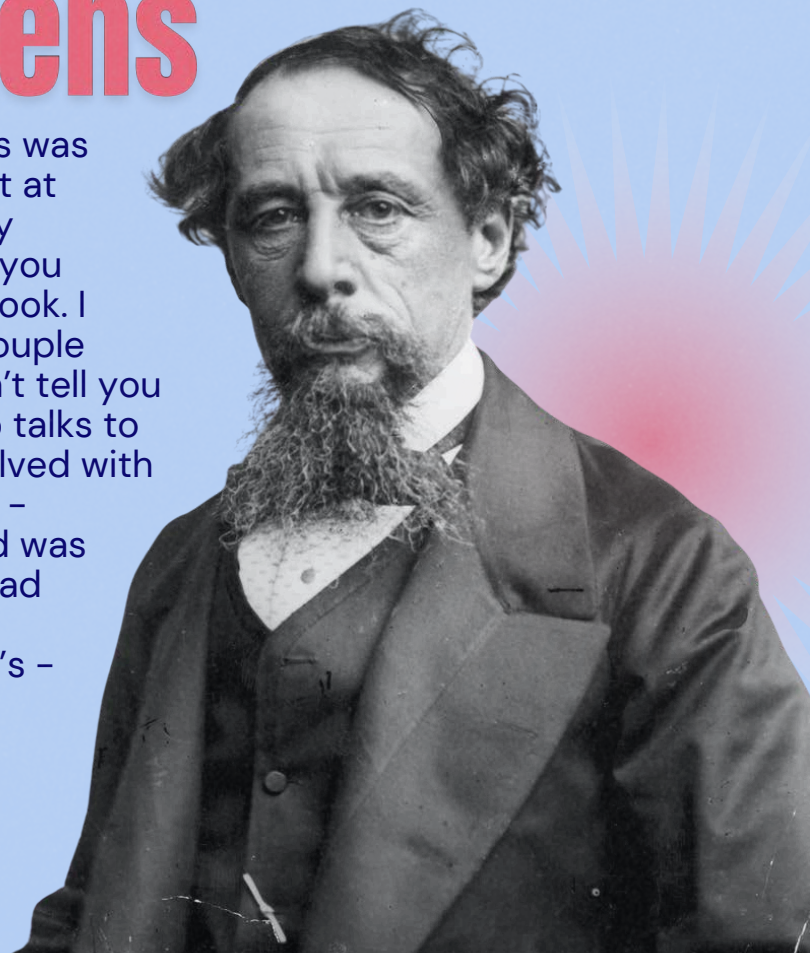
I feel I may be digging myself into a hole with this one but it needs to be said. William Shakespeare was a great playwright, and yes, revolutionary but he is not such the masterful genius that my English teacher said he was. Arguably his most infamous play, *Romeo and Juliet*, was not even his idea! It was an already adapted idea that originally came from an Italian writer named Luigi Da Porto, who named the majority of the characters and placed it in Verona too.

Semantics aside, anyone who was forced through a Shakespeare play for English class knows that half the time reading the play was spent looking to your teacher to translate what was being said. Elizabethan English was simply a different language from what we know and speak now. Half of the time it takes to understand what Shakespeare meant could have been spent on learning how to write a thematic essay and develop an understanding of complex literary techniques, which many students struggle with.

From my own time studying Shakespeare, I can safely say, many of the themes and morals he imparts can be found in other literature. This includes other classic novels (though they are slightly more modern thankfully), such as *The Phantom of the Opera*, *Frankenstein*, *The Importance of Being Earnest*... the list goes on...

Charles Dickens

I'll be brief, because he was not. Dickens was famous in his own time, and let's leave it at that. If you manage to stumble your way through his exhausting exposition then you have already fought about 80% of his book. I started reading *Great Expectations* a couple years ago and for the life of me I couldn't tell you what it's about. I know there's a kid who talks to this old woman a lot, I think he was involved with crime? The only thing I know for certain - because of course, it's Dickens - the kid was an orphan. He was a good author, and had some good morals I'm sure, but I would prefer to stumble through Shakespeare's - at least - interesting language than Dicken's snore-inducing novels.



Some Notable Classics that Should Stay in the Past...

1. *Lolita* by Vladimir Nabokov

Bibliophiles may condemn me for this one and they can make all the arguments they want about it being a commentary on hebephiles and the abusive relationship between Humbert and Dolores but I cannot accept that. It can be argued that it was a powerful choice to have Humbert as the narrator of the story, however, the so-called commentary is unable to be explored as Humbert is unable to regret his abuse of Dolores. Despite his own admission at the end of the novel, his own ego makes this appear as just another ploy to appeal to the reader and paint himself as the woefully mistaken hero who made a terrible mistake.

2. *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Brontë

Whilst revered for being prime feminist literature, I fail to see how a man locking his wife in the attic and being congratulated for it with winning the heart of the leading woman is feminist. Perhaps I'm too hard on Rochester, after all of course the only logical course of action after finding out your beautiful wife is disabled is to lock her away for ten years and fall in love with the new governess. I stand by the fact that *Jane Eyre* should have been a horror story, leaving Jane to reflect on her narrow and horrific escape from that sadistic man.

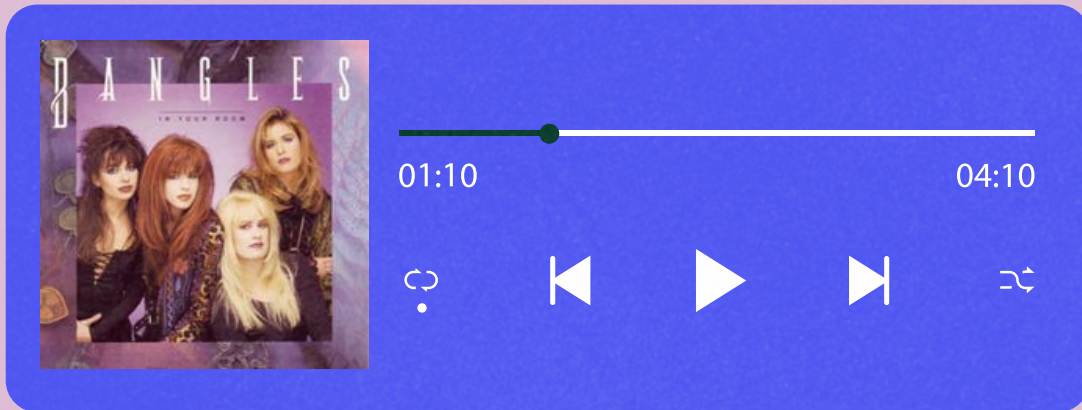
3. *Gone With the Wind* by Margaret Mitchell

I feel like there would be a generally agreeable consensus about this novel. For those who love exhausting stories filled with racist caricatures and an extremely unlikeable heroine and disgusting male lead, this long-winded cinderblock of a novel is for you. If not even the almost four hour-long film can make this story entertaining, I do not know what will.

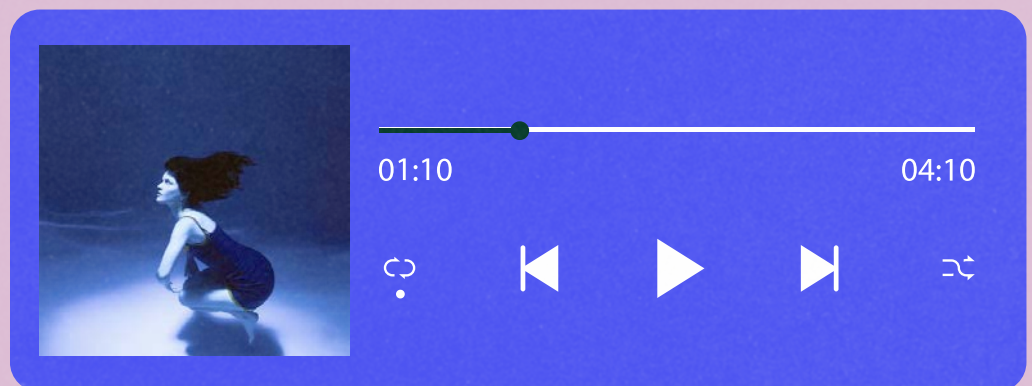
Despite what I said, I still want to read the classics to be cultured, but I don't feel the need to fall into the group of lit nerds with superiority complexes. It's been a couple of years since I first attempted to read about Yossarian and I hope my next attempt will prove my critique wrong. So, it is not to say I despise all classic books, but I do agree that many are overrated, and hopefully you do too - and eventually, we can live in a world where our children won't have to read Shakespeare every year of high school.

MUSIC *on* CAMPUS

What are students listening to on repeat?

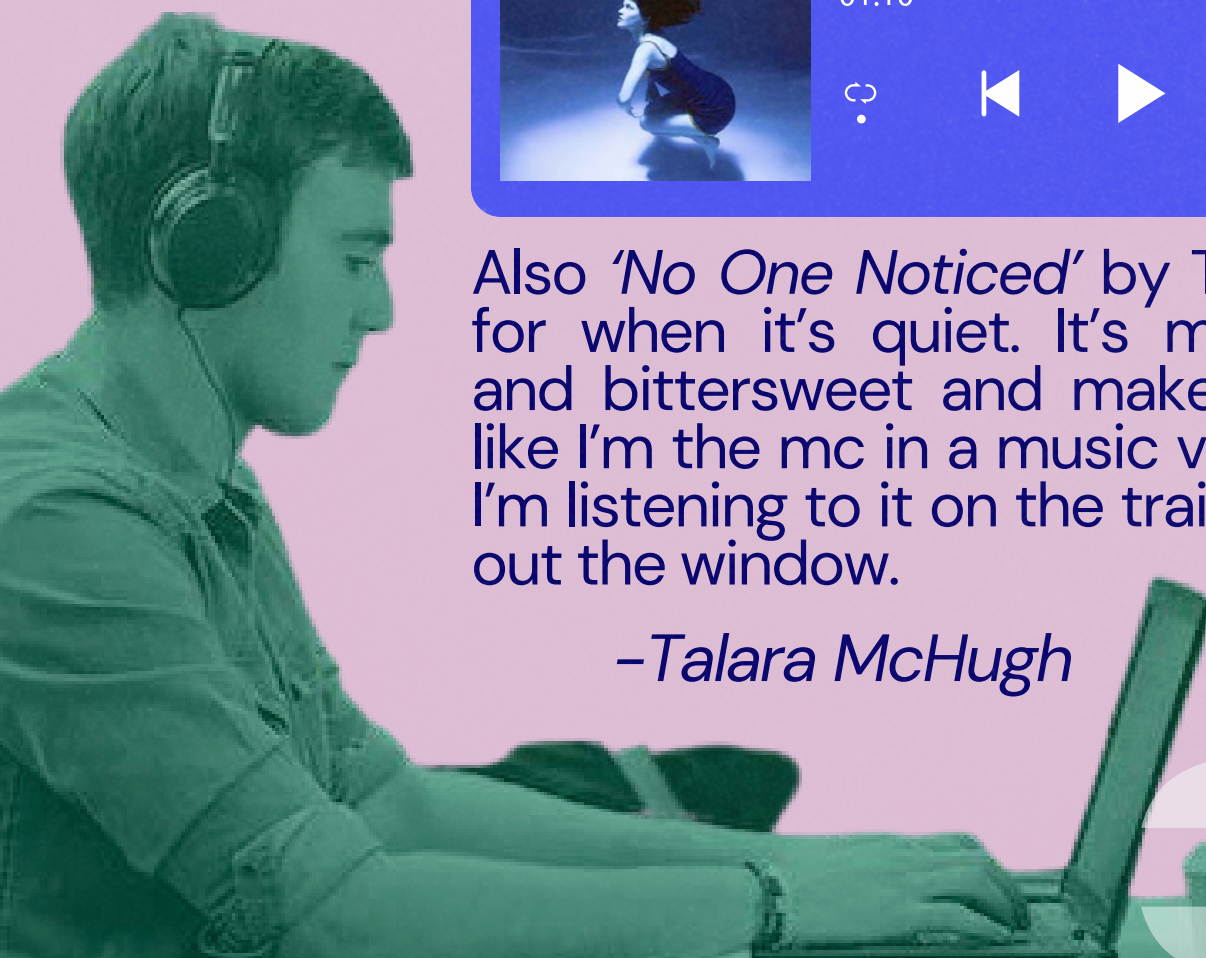


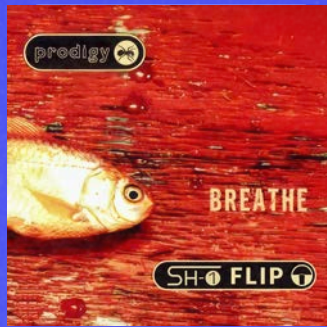
'In Your Room' by The Bangles. It's a really fun song and I love the use of the tambourine. People should use it more!



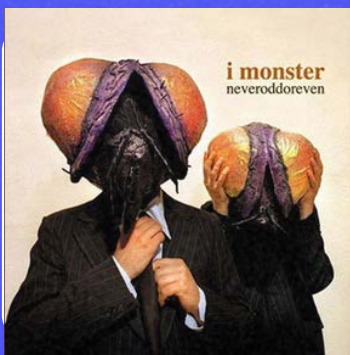
Also *'No One Noticed'* by The Marias for when it's quiet. It's melancholic and bittersweet and makes me feel like I'm the mc in a music video when I'm listening to it on the train and look out the window.

-Talara McHugh





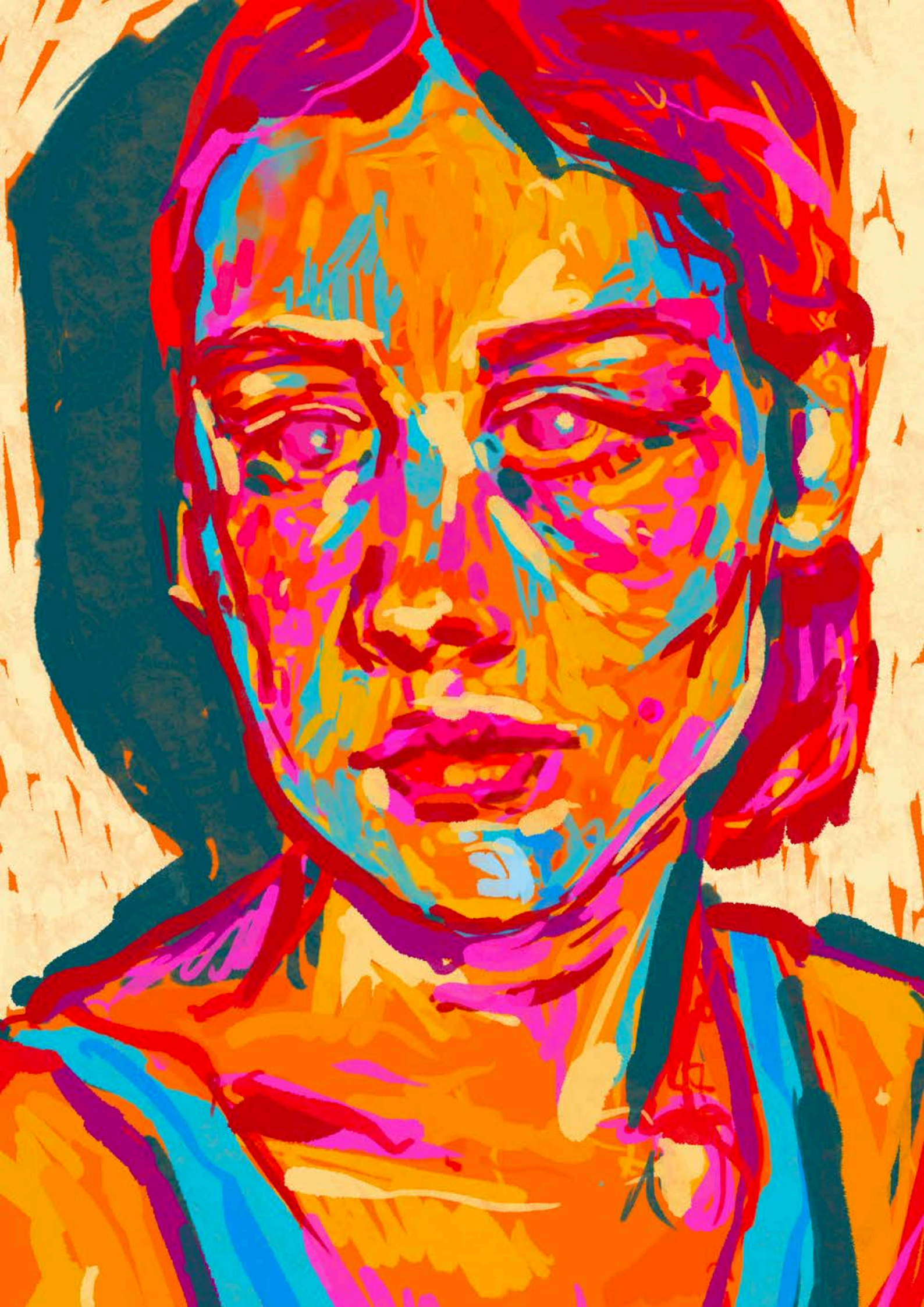
I have been listening to 'Breathe' by The Prodigy as I study which has developed a Pavlovian response in me to do work anytime it plays.



'Daydream In Blue' by I Monster keeps finding itself on my daylist, absolute banger.

-Josh Wilson

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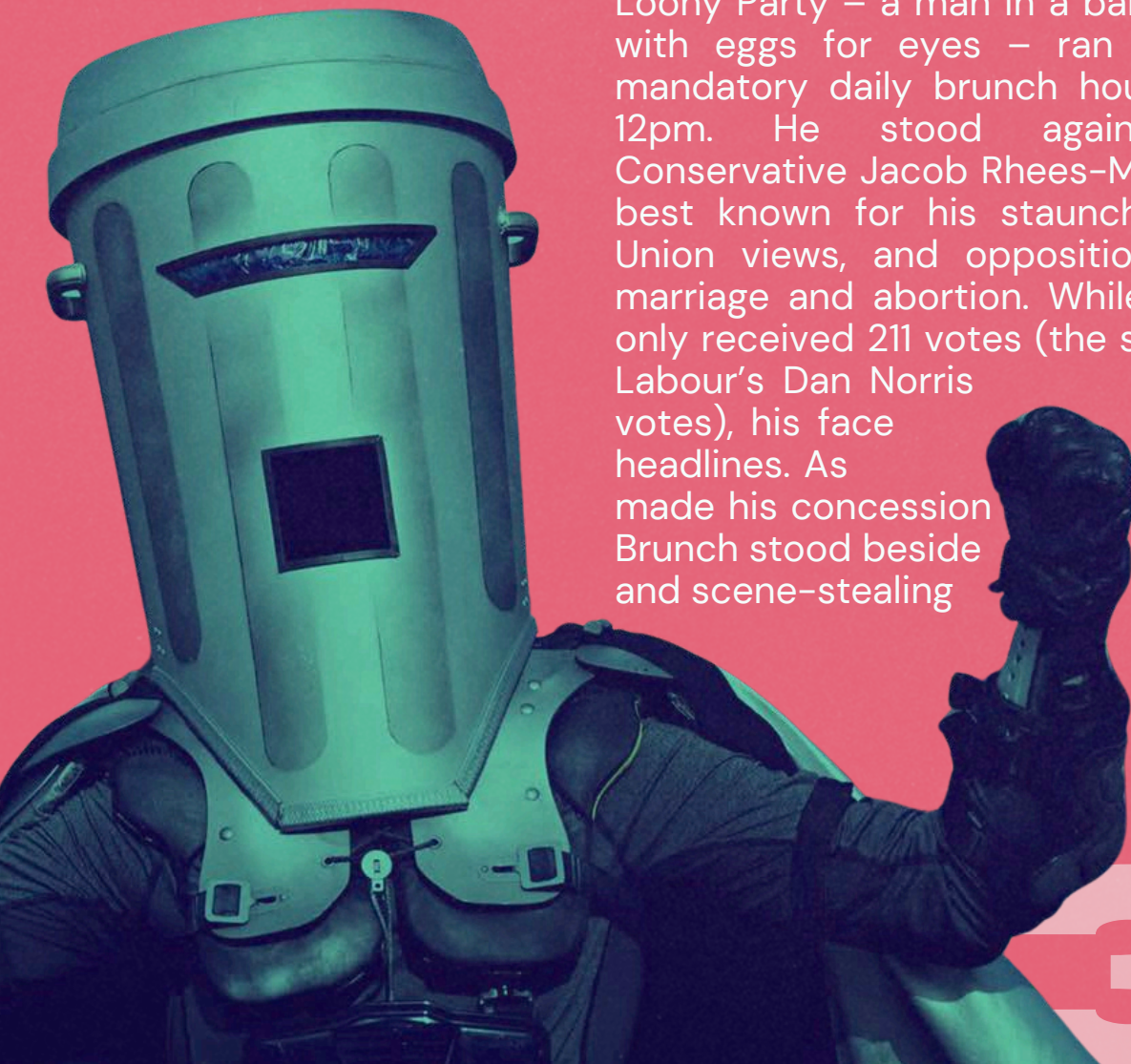
‘Vote Unusually!’ *louise jackson* the UK’s novelty candidate *phenomenon*

In the early hours of the morning on July 5, Rishi Sunak made his concession speech. He’d retained his seat of Richmond and Northallerton but lost the UK prime ministership to Keir Starmer’s landslide Labour victory. Standing onstage with him, in a cramped school gym, were intergalactic warrior Count Binface, a YouTuber holding an L sign, and a man with a ventriloquist puppet.

The UK has a long tradition of novelty candidates running in elections, with varying degrees of success. They seek to satirise the political system, encourage voter turnout, and look as silly as possible while doing it.

Novelty candidacy rapidly grew in popularity with the establishment of the Official Monster Raving Loony Party in 1982. The Party was founded by David ‘Screaming Lord’ Sutch and stood 11 candidates in the 1983 general election. Their highest general election vote count came in 2019 – 9739 votes across 24 candidates. On a local council level, Official Monster Raving Loony Party candidates have even won seats.

Barmy Brunch of the Official Monster Raving Loony Party – a man in a baked beans mask with eggs for eyes – ran to introduce a mandatory daily brunch hour from 11am to 12pm. He stood against incumbent Conservative Jacob Rees-Mogg, a politician best known for his staunch anti-European Union views, and opposition to same-sex marriage and abortion. While Barmy Brunch only received 211 votes (the seat was won by Labour’s Dan Norris with 20,739 votes), his face made headlines. As Rees-Mogg made his concession speech, Barmy Brunch stood beside him with a wide and scene-stealing sausage smile.



In Rishi Sunak's seat, Sir Archibald Stanton was dressed in a garish red and black suit and accompanied by his ventriloquist puppet Gilly Nicholls. Keir Starmer celebrated his landslide victory and ascendance to the prime ministership by first shaking hands with Nick the Incredible Flying Brick. Nick has stood in many elections for the Official Monster Raving Loony Party, wears a very tall hat, and received 162 votes.

Also shaking hands with Keir Starmer was off-brand Elmo of the Give Me Back Elmo Party, better known as Bobby Smith. Smith is a father's rights activist who once described himself as a 'victim of feminism' and received only 19 votes.

Perhaps the most famous novelty candidate to stand in the 2024 general election was Count Biface – an over 5900 year old intergalactic warrior and leader of the Recyclons of planet Sigma IX. Biface wears a trashcan helmet, armour, and a long black cape.

In this election he promised to introduce national service for all former prime ministers (a spoof on Sunak's proposed national service for 18 year olds) and invite European countries to join the United Kingdom.

Standing against Rishi Sunak in a hotly contested seat, Count Biface received 308 votes, finishing sixth out of thirteen candidates. In celebration of his highest ever vote count in a national election, Count Biface declared it to be 'Bindependence Day'.



The novelty candidate is made possible because standing as a candidate in the UK has a surprisingly low barrier to entry. All one needs to register is a £500 (about \$950AUD) deposit and ten signatures from registered voters. Those who receive 5% of the vote share even get their deposit back (though such things are rare for the novelty candidates). Candidates do have to be real people but can have a preferred name listed on the ballot paper. In comparison, nominating as an independent for the Australian House of Representatives requires 100 signatures from registered voters and a \$2000 deposit.

Novelty candidates, as ludicrous as they may seem, do serve an important function in UK elections. A vote for a novelty candidate is a clear and obvious protest vote – it sends a message to the major political parties. The Official Monster Raving Loony Party make clear their belief that a vote not used is a vote wasted. Count Binface campaigns with the slogan, 'make your vote count'. Only 52% of UK adults voted in the 2024 general election or about 60% of registered voters. It was the lowest turnout of registered voters since 2001. In the words of the Official Monster Raving Loony Party, 'if you don't usually vote then vote unusually'.

In a serious world, the novelty candidates of the United Kingdom will always be there to inject some silly for a good cause.



A Richman's Game *samoda silva* in a Poorman's World

Cricket is often hailed as a 'gentleman's game'.

It is a sport derived from humble beginnings, originally played on makeshift pitches by white men with nothing but the whites on their backs and a meek piece of willow wood in their hands. However, beneath cricket's enduring power to unite across borders, you come across the depressing truth that cricket is increasingly becoming a domain dominated by the wealthy.

You could blame inflation, the ICC or the inevitable expansion and corporatisation of the sport, but taking an outing to the oval is becoming increasingly out of reach for those who cannot afford to forego the weekly essentials for a big day out.

What motivated Cricket Australia to charge over \$70 to sit in a third-tier seat at the back of an open-roof stadium for an international ODI against an opponent that unfortunately isn't a huge drawcard is unclear. However, it resulted in an embarrassing sea of empty blue seats in one of the nation's premier sporting venues, with one of the world's most elite sides in the game.



Even if you'd rather watch from the comfort of your living room, if it's not a major game featuring Australia, then you'll be locked outside of a paywall. Anti-siphoning laws were implemented to prevent private and paid broadcasters from monopolising streaming rights before free-to-air channels could get their chance to put up. However, they haven't stopped a clearly unfair bidding war between resourced international broadcasters and basic cable. Say goodbye to the iconic Nines Wide World of Sports tune, the Amazon supremacy has got their grubby, unscrupulous hands on all cricket World Cups, T20 World Cups, the Champions Trophy and the World Test Championship Final until 2027.

A collage of red cricket balls and a white cricket player in a batting stance. The balls are in the top left corner, and the player is in the bottom left corner, both in a light blue/white color scheme. The background is a light orange gradient.

And it's not just watching cricket that will cost you a pretty penny.

For a number of years, I spent my Sunday afternoons in the sweltering sun and on overgrown green turf, standing around in a field to brush my pinkies on a ball once, bowl 4 wides in my one over, before batting 3 overs to get bowled for 10 by a 14-year-old. And don't get me wrong, I loved it. But if not for the team kitbag and the second-hand freebies generously donated by my teammates, I'd be sent out to bat with nothing but the uniform on my back (which, too, was a splurge for 16-year-old me). I had two red balls I'd use in the nets, taking a rest every two balls to retrieve them at the end of the nets by my plastic stumps my father had gotten for free. The groundskeeper, bless him, probably saw me and, in pity, gave me a bag of balls he had collected from around Park 12. Cricket is meant to conquer social divide, yet it too has the potential to reinforce it.

Those with access to support systems rise to great heights, while others without the same opportunity struggle to keep pace.

The Indian Premier League's Kolkata Knight Riders have enough money to buy out Mitchell Starc for an exorbitant \$4.43 million AUD. The Aussie team took home \$6.1 million in prize money for their 2023 World Cup win. The Stanford 20/20 was funded by a rich American who used the league to launder his income from dodgy Ponzi schemes. All the while local cricket clubs are crumbling under the pressure to develop and maintain facilities, infrastructure and resourcing to nurture the next generation of young talent.

Having said that, this doesn't stop young boys and girls across the world from enjoying themselves using bits of wood wedged in the sand as stumps and a taped tennis ball. As Steve Waugh put it, I think this reflects "the very essence and 'spirit' of the game and the passion of the people who love it".

vote! vote! vote!

Aaaand just like that, we've come to the end of another Mock Dit for the ages. And now, it's up to you (*how scary*).

Lots of people won't reach this page. They'll look at the first couple of pages, scroll up and down a bit, and then decide to vote – or maybe not. Which, fair enough, we're all a bit busy this time of year. But for those of you who did get here, we hope you know that you're a dedicated bunch, and for that – we cherish you.

We hope you take that heart and drive – click a few more buttons here and there on the ever-confusing maze that is the YouX website – and vote for the team with your best interests at heart. For the team that will continue to put the work in to deliver you the best possible products, which will embody all of that which makes this university life unique, and critique all that which makes this university life difficult.

We were able to scramble this edition together in a week and a half.

Can you imagine what we'll do with a year?

Vote [1] Arantza, Amber, Charlotte, and Shreya

YOUR Key to On Dit!



