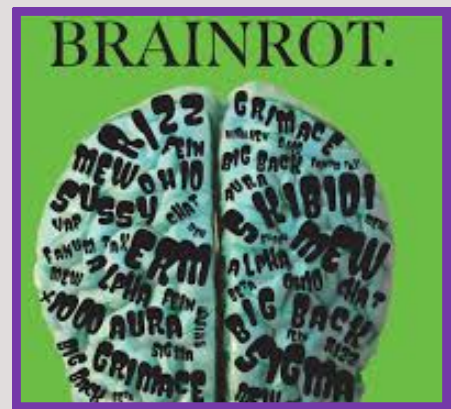

Longley Park Gazette

Brainrot: The New Frontier Language

“I got kicked out of Biology because I was rage-baiting the teacher so hard...”

This was the sentence I heard between two secondary school students on the bus that sparked the curiosity behind this whole article.

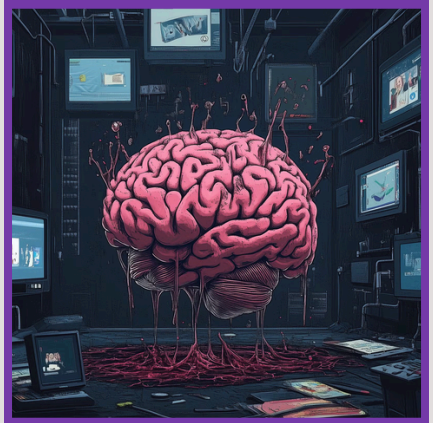
If you searched for a definition of the term “rage-baiting”, you’d find it means creating purposely infuriating content to garner more engagement: more views, comments, shares, etc usually for monetary incentive. So why was it being used in this context? It made me realise how social media is shaping the language of a generation of kids who have never known a time before the internet. And, undoubtedly, I am a part of this generation, yet why do we have this collective misunderstanding of this new form of language?



Brainrot was the word chosen for the 2024 word of the year, and it perfectly illustrates our growing discontentment with social media’s grip on society yet how it has such great influential power on our language. So called “Gen Alpha slang” is categorised by its low-brow, mind-numbing effect much of the content that it uses may have. It is not seen as an evolution of language formed by the new generation for a different purpose and context than mainstream standard English but as a result of the anti-intellectual and misguided nature of today’s children.

For example, the use of the term “rage-baiting” in describing classroom behaviour is an insightful and creative way of seeing what most would call “taunting”. In this context, the negative behaviour of the student is likened to manufactured content for others to consume; the audience of that content being the teacher. This describes a performative nature to children's classroom behaviour and how there can be incentives for students to behave badly, in the form of attention. Whilst the kid using this word probably was not making a great philosophical comment on human behaviour, it does provide a unique outlook, which would otherwise be lost.

Words like “rage-baiting” were created for the purpose of describing new concepts that lacked already existing words. This has been a common reason for new language as technology has progressed significantly over the past century; however, it’s not the full story. Most of the new slang associated with Gen Alpha describes already existing concepts or are words that have already existed for years, such as “brainrot,” which was first coined in 1854 by Henry David Thoreau, in which he likened the intellect of the new generation of that time to the potato rot of the 1840s. Clearly, this is **not** a new phenomenon.



So why have so many words become popularised among Gen Z and Gen Alpha, spreading like wildfire every month or so? A lot of this can be attributed to TikTok. Its combination of short-form content, popularity among the younger generations, and the algorithm, which tailors content specifically for each viewer, all create the perfect environment to make new artificial social groups. These social groups create new and adapt already existing language to form group identity and reinforce it; and this is nothing new. For centuries, each new generation has come up with innovative uses of language to distinguish themselves from their parents and bond over shared youth culture. For example, the word “cool” originally came from African American jazz culture to separate themselves from the mainstream and was revitalised by young people in the 90s for a similar purpose before being eventually normalised into our everyday vocabulary. Cool, right?

Furthermore, the interconnectivity of apps like TikTok, which allow people all over the world to interact with each other, has created an interesting effect on our language. Not only are speakers of foreign languages learning English for the first time, but they are actively participating in its evolution and the internet is a huge catalyst in this. As well, speakers of different English dialects, such as AAVE, are interacting with other English speakers all across the globe whom they probably never would have communicated with otherwise. There are so many examples of this in Gen Alpha slang, from “bussin” to “gyatt”. All of this together creates a global cultural exchange in which young people are not only learning to grow alongside but also contribute to.

I concede, it is not all positive, from the cultural appropriation of black and queer culture to the manufactured nature of these words made from short trend cycles which encourage us to divert our attention the moment we see our next dopamine hit.

Nonetheless, I believe that this language change is natural and necessary and young people play around with words to suit their style of communication. And really, is that not what language is about? So next time you see your Gen Alpha cousin or a schoolkid on the bus using “brainrot” language, don’t scorn them. Perhaps, think of them as pioneers of a new frontier of language: a language that was born from the unique adaptations kids made hundreds of years before you.

Archer Maslen

The 2025 Israel-Hamas Ceasefire Agreement



On 15th January 2025, Israel and Hamas reached a crucial agreement on a prisoner exchange and an armistice to end the Gaza war. This agreement, which came into effect on 19th January, introduces a structured plan aimed at achieving lasting peace through a three-phase initiative. The first phase includes a six-week ceasefire, involving the exchange of all Israeli hostages held in Gaza for several Palestinian prisoners detained by Israel. The second phase seeks to establish a permanent ceasefire and Israel's withdrawal from Gaza, while the third stage focuses on a three-to-five-year reconstruction process.

The ceasefire brings immediate relief to civilians in Gaza by allowing much-needed humanitarian aid to enter, improving access to food, medical supplies, and essential services. The phased structure of the agreement, which includes provisions for an Israeli withdrawal, addresses key concerns raised by the Palestinian leadership and offers hope for a reduction in long-term hostilities. Additionally, the release of Palestinian prisoners is viewed as a diplomatic achievement, strengthening the position of Palestinian negotiators. Beyond the immediate impact, the ceasefire provides an opportunity to focus on reconstruction efforts and could serve as a foundation for broader political discussions aimed at achieving long-term stability. However, concerns remain over whether commitments to rebuilding and de-escalation will be fully upheld, as well as the potential for ongoing political divisions within the Palestinian leadership.

This long awaited proposal provides an immediate humanitarian and security benefit by ensuring the safe return of Israeli hostages, addressing a key national concern. By temporarily halting hostilities, it reduces the risk to both civilians and soldiers, preventing further casualties and offering a period of stability. On a diplomatic level, Israel's willingness to engage in negotiations strengthens its international standing, reinforcing alliances with key Western and regional partners. The agreement may also ease external political pressure and contribute to broader diplomatic efforts aimed at long-term security. However, concerns remain over whether Hamas will use the ceasefire period to regroup and rearm, posing a potential risk to Israel's future security. Additionally, there is an internal political debate, with some factions arguing that concessions to Hamas could set a problematic precedent and questioning whether the ceasefire will result in lasting peace.

The Israel and Hamas ceasefire represents both a hopeful step towards de-escalation and a contentious issue fraught with security concerns. While it provides an opportunity for humanitarian aid and diplomatic progress, both sides face significant risks. The ultimate success of this agreement will depend on the ability of all involved parties to commit to long-term peace and stability.

Tony Cawley

My Three Rom-Com Movie Recommendations

by Meryem Sirmeni

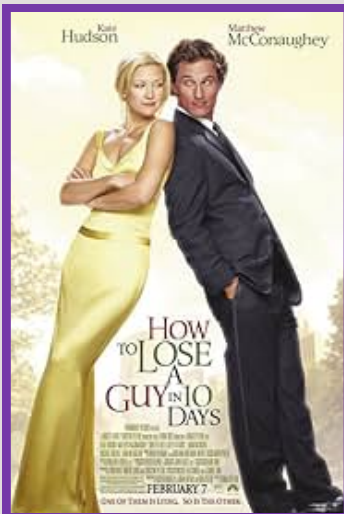
Imagine Me & You

Imagine Me & You, follows a truly unexpected love story between two women. The plot follows Rachel, who is getting married to her longtime boyfriend, when she meets Luce, a florist who is tasked with providing the flowers for the wedding and feels instantly drawn to her. The two of them become close friends, Rachel begins to question her feelings for Luce, despite being in a happy marriage with her husband. The movie explores themes of self-discovery and love. It is truly an amazing movie and if you do choose to watch, you will find yourself on a journey of emotions as you will feel lots of different things which is one of the main reasons that make this movie amazing to watch.



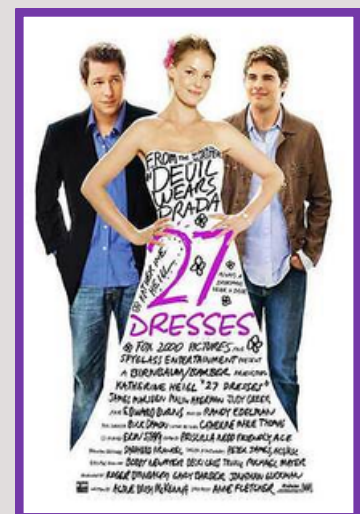
How To Lose a Guy in 10 Days

How To Lose A Guy In 10 Days, is a romantic comedy that follows Andie Anderson who is a columnist for women's magazine and Ben Barry who is an advertising executive. The plot revolves around a similar bet that both Andie and Ben agree to; Andie must make a guy fall in love with her in 10 days for an article while Ben is trying to make a woman fall for him to land a business deal. Neither knows the other is playing a game, and they end up falling for each other. If you choose to watch that I personally recommend as it is truly an amazing movie that will make you laugh lots throughout the movie.



27 Dresses

27 dresses, is an amusing, charming and romantic movie, it follows our main character Jane who has been a bridesmaid 27 times, always the bridesmaid but never the bride. she's always been putting others happiness before her own, but when her younger sister announces she's marrying Jane's longtime crush, Jane finds herself struggling with her feeling. Meanwhile, a journalist, Kevin covers the wedding industry and takes an interest in Jane's story leading to an unexpected love. And the ending is the best part of it so I completely recommend watching this amazing and funny movie because I know you will enjoy it the same way I did.



Sonic History

The Success That Led To The Movies

Sonic? Everybody knows he's a blue hedgehog who runs fast. But what is his backstory? Why does it captivate fans across all ages and countries? Most recently, The Sonic 3 movie was released a couple of months ago which has established a trilogy and has now made over \$400 million dollars at the box office. This is a brief look at sonic throughout the ages, long before his successful movie stardom.

Would you rather walk as slow as Mario or sprint as fast as sonic? In 1990, Sega sought to make a rival mascot to Mario, during that time Nintendo had a monopoly on 90% of the game market, being all about family friendly fun and easy-going pace. He was designed by Japanese video game designer Yuji Naka in an internal contest among Sega employees to design a mascot for the company, various other characters were considered such as a rabbit, but ultimately the hedgehog was the most popular. He was originally called "Mr Needle Mouse". The hedgehog's name was finally settled to Sonic due to his speed being seen as able to break sound. As the definition of sonic is: "denoting, relating to, or of the nature of sound or sound waves."



They tried to steal Nintendo customers by lowering the price of their console, the Sega Mega Drive while also including a copy of the game on it. Then Sonic The Hedgehog was realised on the 23rd of June 1991, toppling over Nintendo's monopoly, which allowed other video game companies to breathe and be known.

A few different successful sequels followed, such as Sonic 2 which was wildly anticipated release. Sega released Sonic 2 on Tuesday 24th November 1992 worldwide at the same time. This day was a celebration Known as sonic "twos day" with gamers of all ages being given limited edition merch and kids rushing home to play the game their parents had bought for them. It included the debut of the blue blur's sidekick, Tails the flying fox. Gamers could play as him in the two-player split-screen mode also new for the game, and it had the spin dash which could boost Sonic's speed without running for momentum from a steep hill. The seventh chaos emerald was introduced which gave sonic to turn into supersonic, which was inspired by the super Saiyan form from Dragon ball. It really sustained Sega's position as a distinctive video game maker.

Then after that, came Sonic 3 and Sonic and Knuckles in 1994. They were meant to be one large game, but it was split into two apparently due to the storage being above what a standard game cartridge could store. They managed to still make a combined version of the two games by introducing "Lock-on" technology, kind of like Physical DLC, where you attached one cartridge on top of the other to get more levels and characters. Combining Sonic 2 with both Sonic and Knuckles got you the ability to play the normal Sonic 2 with Knuckles, while attaching Sonic 3 gave you the intended big, combined game Sonic 3 and knuckles that was split. Sonic 3 introduced Knuckles, an echidna who gets annoyed by Sonic's arrival onto his island and steals his chaos emeralds. On top the chaos emeralds, in Sonic 3 the super emeralds, collected in the second part of the game gives you the form of Hypersonic, the superior form of Supersonic except he's flashing like a rainbow with sparkles coming out of him.



After the classic Sonic trilogy was out, Sega began to shift towards attempting to make 3D video games, attempting to replace the mega drive with the Sega Saturn. Sonic 3D blast, a spin-off sonic game, released on the genesis which was astonishing for its power. A mainline game, Sonic X-treme is the most infamous cancelled game in the franchise, having had its developers gradually decrease until it had to be cancelled all together due to disputes between its developers in Japan and America. Sonic wouldn't rise again until the Adventure series began on the next console the Sega Dreamcast, in 1998.

This brings me onto the source material for the Sonic 3 movie, the second Sonic adventure game is the game which the movie is based off. Featuring Shadow who was hyped up in a year-long campaign by Sega last year titled "Fearless: year of shadow". I do not want to give any spoilers so i will just vaguely articulate that my personal favourite about the movie trilogy is that instead of being a retelling of older games, it incorporates characters and aspects of older games into its own cinematic universe which enriches conflict the plot.

And now with the confirmation of a fourth sonic movie, i can safely say that the blue blur will not stop running anytime soon and it's here to stay lifelong. With the release of games such as Sonic Mania, Sonic frontiers in recent years which have introduced it to a new generation of fans alongside keeping lifelong fans happy. There's no other way around it: You cannot live a complete life without seeing the hedgehog in a poster or an ad at least multiple times.

Haniah Tahir

The Meme Paradox:

How Humour Can Both Help and Harm Student Mental Health

Ever found yourself scrolling through your phone at 2am instead of studying for that exam you have been avoiding? Welcome to the meme paradox. In today's digital age, memes have become more than just a source of laughter; they are a cultural phenomenon that influences how we communicate, cope and connect. As students, we are no strangers to the world of TikTok videos to relatable Instagram memes, but have we ever stopped to think about the impact of memes on our mental health?

First off, let's talk about the good. Memes often encapsulate our shared experience, from exam stress to life absurdities, in a humorous way. This isn't just for fun, it's therapeutic as laughter from memes can trigger the release of endorphins, those feel-good chemicals help reduce stress and pain especially when you have a meme that perfectly captures your current state of mind, it's like a mini-therapy session, reminding you that you are not alone in your struggles. Let's face it – laughter is the best medicine, and memes can help us feel connected to others who share similar experiences and interests. It's like finding your tribe. They flood our social media feeds, providing comic relief from the stress of academic life and whilst offering a unique coping mechanism for stress and anxiety by laughing at relatable content providing a much-needed break from our academic and social life.

Professor: "What inspired you to write this essay?"

Me: "The due date"



Moreover, memes can have a range of emotional benefits as they can improve mood, reduce symptoms of depression, and provide emotional support and validation. Memes can also encourage creative expression, critical thinking, and problem-solving – all of which are essential skills for academic success.

However, it's essential to acknowledge the potential drawbacks of memes as they can also have a darker side by perpetuating attitudes and behaviours like cyberbullying, body shaming, and mental health issues as it can be used to bully, harassing others or make people feel inadequate or insecure in a humorous way. This can negatively affect the mental health of the victims or others going through the same thing stopping them from seeking help as they believe it's a norm.

So, what can we do? First, it's essential to be mindful of meme consumption and creation by making sure we are not perpetuating harmful or unrealistic content to gain followers, likes or comments. By being mindful of our memes consumption and engaging with them positively can promote positivity and inclusivity.

So, the next time you are scrolling, be mindful while also having fun as in the end it is up to us to create a meme culture that is positive, supportive and uplifting by being responsible and engaging nicely.

Aaron Obe

Book Review

The Handmaid's Tale - Margaret Atwood

The handmaid's tale is a political fiction book that is by far one the best pieces of literature I have ever had the pleasure to read.

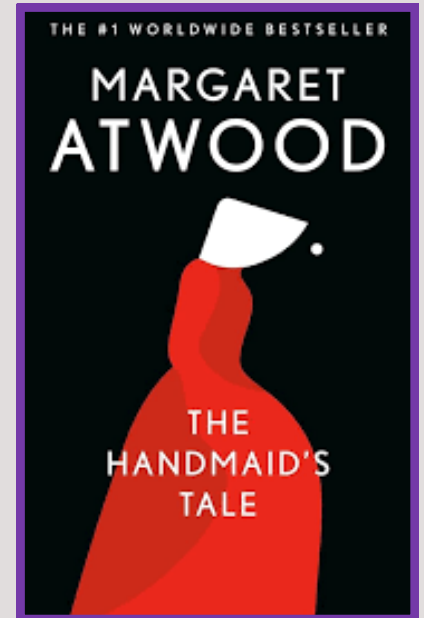
Overall rating: 4.1/5 stars

My rating: 4/5 stars

I believe this is one of those books everyone should read at least once in their life a, especially while we have the privilege to read it. This book is being banned in over several U.S states including: Texas, Florida and Oregon - you should thank your lucky stars that you still have the opportunity to check this book out of a library.

Handmaid's Tale opens your eyes to the suffering women have gone through in the past, and suffering some women still endure today, taking place in a dystopian patriarchal society, this book had me gripped from the beginning.

Although, one thing that remained at the back of my mind through each page of this unbelievable book is that everything that takes place within this book happened at some point within history.



Quotes

“Better, never means better for everyone. It always means worse for some”

“Freedom like everything else, is relative”

“I believe in the resistance as I believe there can be no light without shadow; or rather no shadow without unless there is also light.”

Book playlist

Labour- Paris paloma
The fruits- Paris paloma
Zombie- the cranberries
Girl with one eye- Florence and the machine
Us and pigs- Sofia isella

Kirsty Pass

Can a Tiny Shrimp Fire a Bullet Underwater?

It sounds like science fiction, but the pistol shrimp is a real-life underwater sniper!

Though only one to two inches long, this tiny creature has a superpowered claw that snaps shut with such force it creates a shockwave louder than a gunshot—over 200 decibels! This blast is strong enough to stun or even kill small fish and crustaceans in an instant.

But that's not even the most shocking part. When the bubble collapses, it reaches nearly 8,000°F (4,400°C)—as hot as the surface of the sun—and even produces a brief flash of light. This makes the pistol shrimp one of the few animals capable of creating plasma underwater! It's feared in the ocean for its ability to hit a prey with hot air bubbles that travel 82 feet per second, pop at 218 decibels.

Beyond its firepower, the pistol shrimp is also surprisingly smart. Some species team up with goby fish, using their partner's sharp eyesight for protection while they maintain their shared burrow.

Scientists are fascinated by the shrimp's snapping ability, studying it for advanced underwater technology like submarine sonar. This tiny creature proves that size doesn't matter when you have superpowers! Next time you think of ocean predators, remember the pistol shrimp—the tiny titan with a deadly trigger! Would you want to see one in action?

Grace Bada



Monster's From The Past

Dinosaurs were the main animals on Earth for more than 150 million years. They were lizard-like reptiles and some of them were the largest and scariest creatures that ever walked on land. The word dinosaur comes from Greek words meaning “terrible lizard”.

There were three types of dinosaur food groups: Carnivores - the meat eaters. A carnivore will use its teeth to kill a prey item before eating it. The sharp incisors and pointed canine teeth are perfectly designed for both incapacitating and eating a meal. Herbivores - the plant eaters and omnivores that eat everything. They had no cheeks to keep food in their mouths and no grinding back teeth. Instead, they had peg-like teeth that raked and sliced leaves from trees.

The tyrannosaurus rex was known as the ‘King of Dinosaurs’. Why is this you may ask? This is because the T-Rex was the first carnivore to be discovered! The name “rex” comes from a man called Osborn Dyere; he used the Latin word “rex” meaning “king” for the specific name so it will translate to “tyrant lizard the king” emphasising, the animal's size and dominance over the species.

Elmer S. Riggs named the brachiosaurus – scientifically named *Brachiosaurus altithorax*. The first word is Greek for "arm lizard", in reference to its proportionately long arms, and the scientific name means "deep chest". This dinosaur is an herbivore with a total of 52 teeth towards the front of the mouth. The brachiosaurus' best defence was size especially its long tail which could whip away most attackers.

Jayden Commander

Wardrobe Elevation

Spring is on the way; here's what you need to know to dress for the season

Now I hear you all screaming at me (I can't actually this is a newspaper) I know college is hard. You're probably wearing sweatpants and hoodies because your about to miss the bus - unless you are faster than the speed of light and can make it on time. You at least want try to look good while chasing down your bus, right? I mean fashion isn't always about fiddling with accessories or obsessing over small details it's more about dressing to fit YOU. That's right YOU and ***I'm here to show you how.***

First off let's start with wardrobe basics; these basically act as the building blocks to help add structure to your looks, think plain shirts, denim jeans. These are generally plain everyday stuff to help you start your fashion journey. It's a good idea to have a solid foundation before trying anything extreme; It saves you money and it saves you time.

Secondly knowing you and your body is pivotal to feeling genuinely happy with what your wearing, if your jeans or cardigan don't match your vision then it might be a good idea to not consider buying the piece at all, it may seem small but ultimately clothes should make you feel comfortable ; clothes are a necessity but you should never change yourself for a piece of fabric.

Third and finally: shape and colour. As someone studying an artistic subject let me tell you something.. these two concepts are ***fundamental*** for when it comes to making a good piece, it doesn't matter how expensive your outfits are. If they look of they look like

Gucci vomited all over you then it is what it is. Sadly many people nowadays seem to neglect the designer brand abuse claims during the 2020's - it's the main reason why you see celebrities wear "simpler" clothes nowadays. It's that understanding of true luxury or a better understanding of self that leads to many of them making the switch.



Faiza Saeed

4 Must Listen to Albums

Music taste variety is sadly leaving our generation and people tend to stick to a few of their favourite artists or the same couple of albums. It's a shame to see; exploring the world's best and most expressive art form is becoming a forgotten past time. In an attempt to recalibrate what was once such a norm, I wanted to share my recent top 4 favourite albums, hopefully motivating those of you that see this to consider the wide universe of melodies.

Integrity> - JME//Genre – Grime

With the reputation as one of the best grime albums of the 2010's, JME solidifies his status as one of the best modern music artists of modern times. He combines comedy, effortless talent and unforgettable beats to create a must listen to album. Even if you're not fond of the genre, JME enlightens you with the best of what is to offer.



Circles – Mac Miller//Genre – Hip-Hop/Funk

This album perfectly encapsulates the soul and beauty of Mac Miller's passion within the music field. Although one of the biggest Hip-Hop albums of our time, this is a perfect record if you're only just getting into the genre. Miller creates an inviting and accessible bundle of songs that are guaranteed to take you on a journey through the emotions wheel.

Skinty Fia – Fontaines DC//Genre – Alternative/Indie

Musically adventurous and hard to summarise; Fontaines third studio album takes you on a musical journey as frontman Grian Chatten exposes his wrestle with identity, discontent with his home country and fight with developing emotional maturity. Through this album, Fontaines paved a new era of the alt-rock scene, creating space for other musicians to explore and be creative within their music. FDC push the boundaries of rock and roll definition.



Songs – Adrianne Lenker//Genre – Soft Indie

Armed with just a guitar, vocals and a cabin, Adrianne Lenker explored her most intimate emotions throughout the lockdown period to give us this beautifully fascinating work of art. No matter how specific your feelings are, Lenker is able to articulate them in a comforting way, reminding you that you're not alone. Such a relaxing compilation of songs perfect for a study session or a background soundtrack for day-to-day life.

Maja Drwal