



BEST OF THE BETHS



THE BEST OF

DECEMBER



BEST OF THE BETHS

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Balenciaga Controversy

by Mustafa 10H

Balenciaga, a famous luxury clothing brand, recently found themselves in the watch of the public eye – per a scandalous series of ads they released featuring child models holding explicit items. We know how *ambitious* a company can get when they are in competition for media coverage and advertisement with other major brands, but then we must ask the question, “How far will they go?”. In many cases too far. Balenciaga is under a French parent company called “Kering” which also owns many of the other main luxury brands such as: Gucci; Yves Saint Laurent; Bottega Veneta; Alexander McQueen... the list goes on.

Fashion nowadays has taken a turn from being wearable – promoting the purchase of the specific good, to an “art form” consisting of peculiar items of clothing. I am not a fashion critic, but I do have the common sense to recognise that the clothing they sell to customers on fashion shows is outlandish to say the least.

The recent fashion campaign released by Balenciaga caught the attention of worried fans and any human with good morals. Western media usually does not react negatively to certain themes being shown to the public – specifically adult viewers seeing adult content, however there are some topics which are intolerable across the world, regardless of political views. Balenciaga has consistently been sending subliminal messages to people who are a part of the trendy, “in-the-moment” demographic about very worrying things. Why is it worrying? Because what they put out is without a doubt intentional. Their social media posts and fashion campaigns must go through rigorous editing and approval before they can even reach the public eye – dropping the slight chance that they put something out to the public and it causes them to be negatively affected.

Balenciaga Controversy

by Mustafa 10H

I do not want to go down the conspiracy theory rabbit hole, however one important thing did intrigue me - a photoshoot of which was inspired by the theme of a messy office. A closer inspection of the only legible document on the table talks about an act in America which allows the creation of inappropriate content with children— only if the child is not involved. This had to be on purpose as it was the ONLY paper on the table which you could read – the editors could have blurred it out or even replaced it with a different piece of paper. At its base, Balenciaga put this out to ridicule and dismiss those who looked to take legal action.

Balenciaga removed all prior tweets and social media involvement before anything deeper had been able to be uncovered. The models who engaged with the summer edition probably have a paragraph in their contract restricting them from speaking negatively about the brand for a time. They are trying to cover it up and move on with their half-hearted apology. We need to act. Now.



Return of the Premier League

by Ehimen 7W

After an amazing and entertaining World Cup with absolute shocks and crazy score lines, all the national leagues start opening again including the prestigious Premier League. On this segment of the newsletter, I will tell you about my predictions for the winner of the premier league, top goal scorer, assister, most clean sheets and keeping you up to date with the matches!

First, I am going to be providing you with the matches and my predictions for them.

The first match is on Monday the 26th of December, it is Spurs Vs Brentford. It is 4th vs 10th. Spurs in 4th have a better overall squad but they better watch out for Brentford's danger man, Ivan Toney who has 10 goals in 15 games and is 3rd for top goal scorer. I do think that the Spurs will win and come out on top. Then it is Crystal Palace Vs Fulham, its 11th vs 9th with Zaha and Mitrovic wanting to shine, I predict this match to be a draw.

Everton vs Wolves is a matchup where Everton are in 17th and Wolves in 20th. Both teams have not had a great start to the season, but I do think Everton will edge the victory.

Leicester vs Newcastle is where 13th meets with 3rd, Newcastle who have exceeded their expectations this season with their star player Miguel Almiron. With that, I do believe that Newcastle will win this match.

Southampton, in 19th place, played Brighton, who exceeded their expectations of themselves, being 7th. I do think that Brighton will have confidence and win this match.

Liverpool is in 6th place, they would have expected to be higher; playing Aston Villa in 12th place, who beat Chelsea 1-0 in a mid-season friendly during the World Cup. I do think that Liverpool will win though.

Arsenal, the leaders in the table, currently play West Ham who are 16th in the table. Arsenal will not be able to play Jesus as he is out injured, and I think this will be a bigger impact than most people think so I am going bold with a draw.

On Tuesday the 27th of December 8th place Chelsea who have already sacked Thomas Tuchel and are on



Return of the Premier League

by Ehimen 7W

a 3-loss streak, will look to beat 14th place Bournemouth and as Chelsea fan I do believe that we will beat Bournemouth.

The final match of the day is 5th place Man United vs 18th place Nottingham Forest, with Ronaldo's contract terminated Man United will want to show what they can do without him, and I do think Man United will win.

Now, the final match is 15th place Leeds vs 2nd place Man City. Man City want to win the league and go on a title charge so I do think they will win.

Seasonal Predictions

My Prediction for the Premier League title is Man City and I do think they will win the league with Arsenal bottling it. My prediction for top goal scorer is Erling Haaland and with Man City going on a title charge I think he can break Mohammed Salah's goal record. The Top Assister award I think will go to Kevin De Bruyne with Haaland scoring the goals. I also think that Ederson will get the most sheets and by all these awards I think you can say that Man City will run Riot!

That is all you need to know for the Premier League Season!

Chess' Greatest Controversy

by Aidan 10W



The world champion beaten, a 100 million lawsuit and the chess world in ruins. How did this happen and who's to blame, what happens and can the chess world recover? It all started on the 4th of September when the debatably greatest chess player of all time, Magnus Carlsen, had his 53 win streak ending unexpectedly by Hans Niemen, a fellow Grandmaster. All seemed alright beside this upset until Magnus hinted at foul play from Hans's doing. Magnus never straight out accused Hans but his intentions were clear, It was at this point when everything went downhill. This was the first time anyone had been suspected of cheating across the board and after careful analysis, something seemed off. Hans had played essentially the perfect game against Magnus and played insane, unheard of moves that ended up being deadly. But how did this happen, cheater or mastermind? Well, the way Hans was suspected of cheating is so... strange that I don't dare put it here in the case that Ms Stevens gives me that sack. But I'm sure you can at least guess. In any case, this is obviously a serious allegation but, nothing could be proven, David had beaten Goliath unjustly or not but what happened next could not find justification. The abuse and hate Hans received really showed the true colours of such a community and as time went off, things only got worse for Hans. He started going on a losing streak going 0-4 the next day which only aggravated people more. Security became for thorough meaning there was no way he could've cheated, but was this a result of him being searched, or the hate damaging him? In recent weeks, Hans recently publicly disclosed that he is suing Magnus himself as well as a range of other chess players for 100 million dollars in damages both emotionally and for his reputation. Whether this will be of any significance, only time will tell, but as of now, chess's greatest controversy is in effect

KS3 Food Drive Competition

by Dev 9B

In KS3, there has been a competition about a food drive in our school that was instilled 3 weeks ago. This was proposed by the school where they got the idea from our local Bexley Food bank. In this competition there are two parts to this; number 1 being bringing any food, edible items or cleaning equipment such as toothpaste and shower gel. Number 2 is to design and create a hamper to hold all of the food you gather in your forms and to then gain house points and commendations based on how creative your hamper is (typically based on how the design reflects the festive season!) and also how much food you put together in the forms.



Now you must be thinking its Christmas; surely I will need the food for the festivities that are just around the corner? Well, my friend, you are not wrong in saying that but there are people who cannot afford to buy those items for themselves or their families. Especially in this time of the year, where there are sub-zero temperatures and people are in a frantic shopping spree to make sure they have all the items they need for Christmas, homeless people and people who are in poverty need the support more than ever. In order to help with the strive to help these people in need, the school decided to set up an event in the style of a competition so we, as a school community, can give to the food bank so the people in poverty or who cannot provide for themselves can enjoy a Merry Christmas this year.

I, personally, think that it was a great idea as it gained a lot of recognition within the first few days and my form especially was a bit slow but with a little teamwork and determination (and some help with a certain department!) we managed to create a lovely festive hamper which I won't disclose now and also a great number of tinned foods and sweets to go in the hamper. I definitely enjoyed taking part in this festive competition and also knowing in the back of my mind that all of the food we have given will go to a great cause and provide for a lot of people!

A photograph of Kanye West at an event. He is wearing a dark jacket and a gold chain. The background features logos for 'INNOVATION FESTIVAL' and 'COMPANY'.

The Rise and Fall of a Star: Kanye West

by Zedaine 10W

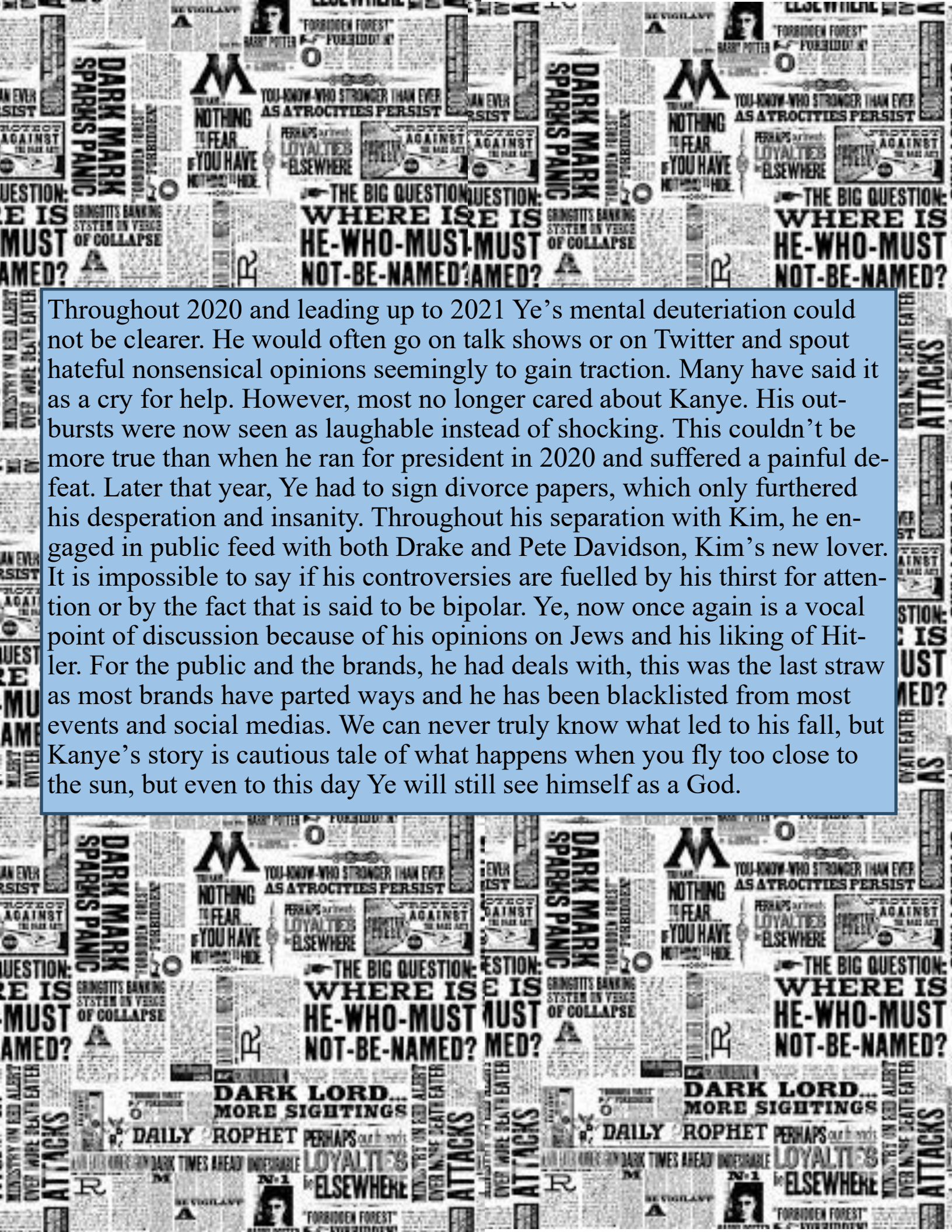
Kanye West is a household name whether it is for his clothing, his music or his many many controversies. Ye is a staple in rap culture as he has pushed the bounds of what it means to be a rapper. He influenced and has helped many of the biggest stars on earth like: Tyler the Creator, Nicki Minaj, Rihanna, Childish Gambino and much more.

It is undeniable that Kanye has cemented his legacy as one of the most successful rappers of all time and more than exceeded mogul status with his billion-dollar company, Yeezy. To most, Ye is seen as someone who has always been in the limelight, but this is certainly not the case. So how was it possible for a teenage producer from Chicago to become the “richest black man in America”. His journey to stardom started all the way back in 1996 when Ye was solely a producer. The dream of him being a rapper was deep inside of him but for years he focused on producing for other emcees. Ye’s remarkable talent as a producer caught the eye of Jay Z. At that time Jay Z was regarded as one of the greatest rappers of all time and had already made his millions. This was the very moments where Kanye changed from being just a producer to focus on his rap and producing. It took years for him to be signed at it was unheard of for a rapper/producer to be commercially successful especially one from Chicago. However, after years of producing for the biggest rappers, he was finally signed to Jay Z’s label Roc a fella. This put Ye on the world stage as now he was seen rapping and performing with one of the greats.

Ye was unlike anything the rap industry had ever seen. He was charismatic, poetic and distinctively different to any other rapper out. From the late 90s to early 2000s rappers were encouraged to talk about the struggles of growing up in the ghettos and to display how hood they were. Kanye was nothing of the sort. The mere opposite in fact. Despite the fact that he didn't grow up in excessive wealth, Ye still grew up in the suburbs of Chicago and had never truly experienced gang life. These factors all contributed to the innovation that was his rapping style. A majority of his bars focused on his opinions on society and were deemed as incredibly poetic which quickly made his lyrics stand out in the sea of gang glorification. None can be sure, however, if his divergence from the rap standard led to Ye's break out success, but his success was surely undeniable and incredibly unavoidable. In a matter of years, the Chicago producer had turned into a multi-platinum Grammy winner. He had even surpassed and supplanted Jay Z with a majority of rap critics regarding him as the better lyricist. His boldness and honesty may have been the key to his success, however, it also led to his downward spiral...

Later into his years of success Kanye's view in the public eye waned he was no longer an obscure rapper in Chicago, he was an international star and was expected to be a role model. He was far from that. Ye was heavily scrutinised in the media constantly being referred to as arrogant and overzealous. This, however, was the normal amount of criticism a star of his size would get. All of this changed at the 2009 VMAs. Whilst pop superstar, Taylor Swift, received her award for Best Female Video, Kanye came up on stage and shifted the praise to Beyoncé believing she should have. From then on Ye's image plummeted. Despite this he still gained commercial success, since only a year after he released, what is regarded as, the best rap album of all time: "My beautiful dark twisted fantasy". This was only the start of Ye's staggering fall in likeability.

The true start of Ye's demise is seen by most when he said, "I do". His marriage to Kim Kardashian in 2014 was received with heavy backlash from both his fans and the wider public. Not only did his core fan believe him to be moving away from what first made him special he also married into one of the most controversial families of the last decade. His marriage to Kim was an outrage to the black community as it was now a write off to the Kardashians to appropriate black culture. Now for the first time ever Ye was ostracised by the black community. Once again this did anything but stop him from putting out music, but it was clear that internally and musically he was not the same. Most of his scandal were not treated as severely as they should have because of his musical appeal, but now this was not the case. He moved onto clothing and founded Yeezy in 2019.



Throughout 2020 and leading up to 2021 Ye's mental deuteriation could not be clearer. He would often go on talk shows or on Twitter and spout hateful nonsensical opinions seemingly to gain traction. Many have said it as a cry for help. However, most no longer cared about Kanye. His outbursts were now seen as laughable instead of shocking. This couldn't be more true than when he ran for president in 2020 and suffered a painful defeat. Later that year, Ye had to sign divorce papers, which only furthered his desperation and insanity. Throughout his separation with Kim, he engaged in public feed with both Drake and Pete Davidson, Kim's new lover. It is impossible to say if his controversies are fuelled by his thirst for attention or by the fact that is said to be bipolar. Ye, now once again is a vocal point of discussion because of his opinions on Jews and his liking of Hitler. For the public and the brands, he had deals with, this was the last straw as most brands have parted ways and he has been blacklisted from most events and social medias. We can never truly know what led to his fall, but Kanye's story is cautious tale of what happens when you fly too close to the sun, but even to this day Ye will still see himself as a God.



Spotify Wrapped came out recently and I thought I would ask some teachers what they listened to this year and give some, most likely, unwanted feedback, comparisons and more.

Ms Sharma

Top 5 Artists -> A Boogie Wit da Hoodie, Lil Durk, Lil Baby, Tory Lanez and Drake

No. 1 Song -> In a Minute- Lil Baby

This Wrapped was heavily influenced by the Trap music subgenre that dominates hip-hop today. While critics often label this subgenre of Hip-Hop ‘mumble rap’, specifically Lil Baby, you definitely can’t slate its influence and popularity as many of these artists are currently the most streamed on Spotify. However, this Wrapped is quite generic, even though many people disrespect listeners of incredibly popular artists for being ‘basic’, popular artists are usually popular for a reason. That being said the music on this Wrapped is alright at best – objectively and critically there is nothing revolutionary or particularly special about much of the discographies on this list in general, there are a few objections to this though, most of these artists have a number of very good songs which adds some redeeming factors. Drake’s earlier albums are very good and contradict the sentence referring to this list’s unremarkability. Tory Lanez is the person here with the one of the most skilled discographies and, to



Rating Teachers' Spotify Wrapped

by Samir 10C

to justify this music you wouldn't really know what to say other than 'I like the way it sounds', which is perfectly fine, music is essentially subjective, which makes reviewing it very grey.

Wrapped Rating: 5/10

Mr Ahmed

Top 5 Artists: Young Thug, Gunna, J Hus, Lil Baby and Skepta

This Wrapped, in my opinion, is much more diverse than the first one due to the two British artists in the lists: Skepta and J Hus. Some of the most influential rappers in the UK music scene over the past decade, both with overall very good discographies and hit songs. These artists add a distinctive feature to the list, making it a much better listen. I have mixed feelings on Gunna and Young Thug, the slurring of words and sometimes even stuttering lyrical style of much of their music works incredibly well with the beat, creating flows that sound natural. The overall discographies of both of these artists seem very similar to each other, seamless transitions between features and other guest rappers are very common on their songs. However, when I listen to songs that use this style of Trap, I find that the music blends together and it all sounds the same. It gets a bit boring to listen through a rapper's albums when there is no significant variety or diversity in musical styles in their work. Lil Baby just brings it down for me.

Wrapped Rating: 7/10

Top Places to Visit in London at Christmas

by Nathaniel 10A

Christmas in London, arguably the best time of the year to visit the capital, when streets put up bright festive lights, shops decorate storefronts with Christmas trees and restaurants begin to bring out the pigs-in-blankets. Despite the obvious Christmas decorations in some areas of the city, many people tend to forget just how many festive places are hidden in the heart of London. Below, I've compiled a list (in no order) of what I think are the best places to visit in London during the Festive period.

Trafalgar Square

Trafalgar Square is home to the biggest Christmas tree in London. Every year, as a token of gratitude to the people of London for their assistance to Norway during World War 2, the Norwegians follow the tradition of donating a Christmas tree to the UK, which is placed in Trafalgar Square, opposite the National Gallery in London. This tradition has been going on for 75 years, with 2022 being the 75th year and the tree is lit in a festive ceremony at the beginning of December each year. I think its quite a nice way to start the festive month of December and certainly worth visiting.



Hyde Park

Hyde Park is home to Winter Wonderland, probably one of the most popular festive attractions in London. Winter Wonderland is packed with activities for everyone. From crazy rides to its beautiful ice-skating rink and from endless food stalls to its spectacular Santaland, there's no reason not to visit! Winter Wonderland runs from mid November to early January (this time it ends on the 2nd of January 2023). I would say that Winter Wonderland is probably the best 'festive' place to visit in London, though its very popular and is packed and fully booked most days.



Top Places to Visit in London at Christmas by Nathaniel 10A

Streets of Central London

A classic! Examples of the best streets in Central London include Oxford Street, St James Street, Regent Street and Coventry Street. I think you should visit at least one of these if you want to get into the festive ‘mood’.



Ice Skating



Ice Skating is a very popular (and very hard) activity and can be done at a range of different places. One example is the Natural History Museum, which has a huge Christmas tree in the middle of the rink and pretty Christmas lights on the trees everywhere around it. I visited the ice rink at the Natural History Museum last year and I have to say it was an amazing experience even though I can't ice skate! Other popular Ice-skating spots include the Winter Wonderland Ice Rink, Canary

Wharf's Ice Rink and Somerset House Ice Rink.

Twitter Takeover

by Daniel 10A

Elon Musk's takeover of twitter unofficially started on April 14 of this year but was officially finalised on October 27 when he acquired enough shares to begin running the company. In the few months since his takeover, twitter has been embroiled in many controversies – most of them easy to blame him for. Be it naivety about the amount of people willing to play for a blue checkmark or crossing the border between free speech and hate speech, twitter under Musk has basically done it all.

The checkmarks

One of the first revolutionary ideas Elon Musk introduced was the addition of the checkmark for everyone – for the low, low price of \$8 a month you too could be certified like your favourite celebrities or companies and feel the great, great sensation of realising you've been swindled because all twitter verification ticks were not born equal. The ticks that were paid for had explicit statements underneath them outing you as a twitter blue subscriber for which you would be endlessly mocked in the replies to anything you said. The problem, apart from the fact that these were practically useless, was the fact that impersonation accounts are MASSIVE on twitter with some even garnering hundreds of thousands of followers and being used as evidence on national news by people who were almost definitely fired shortly afterwards. One such account was one impersonating a pharmaceutical company and a rather large one at that called Lily Mai. The account proceeded to tweet



Twitter Takeover

by Daniel 10A

out that insulin was now free – something that massively panicked investors that clearly didn't bother to fact check such a ridiculous announcement and instantaneously began to panic sell their shares, costing the company literal billions of dollars which will soon be coming out of Elon Musk's pockets when they sue him (he'll cover it with those \$8 checkmarks anyway).

'Free speech'

Elon Musk has always been somewhat of a free speech advocate (unless you're one of the people booing him when he came on stage at a Dave Chapelle show that is) and as part of his advocacy he decided to unban all previously banned twitter accounts, ignoring the entire point of banning those accounts in the first place because some guys who troll post on reddit think it would be cool. This came perfectly in time with Herr Kanye West's total mental breakdown (which I implore to read Zedaine's articles about) meaning Musk had his first target for unbanning. Of course, only a few days later Kanye's account had to be banned again after he decided to tweet out a swastika, but still Elon Musk has never genuinely denounced Kanye or his actions but instead continued to tweet about how good friends they are and how much fun they had together (good for you Elon we're all very jealous)





The Origin of Christmas Season

by Edwin 10C

We celebrate Christmas basically every year, with very few exceptions, but we don't often think about how the festival came about. Like most celebrations, Christmas began centuries ago. The term Christmas comes from the words Christes Maesse, which mean Christ Mass, as the festival originated from religion before becoming a household constant. 'Christes' is Greek for Messiah, while 'Maesse' is a celebration of the Eucharist.

A large amount of festive additions to the holiday of Christmas came about in the 4th century. The term Christmas became popular and Christmas Carols began to make appearances. As well as this, the 10th century was also an essential time for the making of modern-day Christmas as carols and nativity scenes as decorations rose to fame in Northern Europe at this time.

In regards to gift-giving, this vital holiday practice can be traced all the way back to the birth of Jesus himself. When Jesus was born, he was visited by the Three Magi, also known as the Three Wise Men or Three Kings, who gifted him gold, frankincense, and myrrh. This show of generosity has carried on to modern day, where we give friends and family, and even strangers in need, gifts of all sorts to show our appreciation and love for them.



The Origin of Christmas Season

by Edwin 10C

Christmas trees joined the roster of Christmas necessities all the way back in 723, where an English missionary in Germany felled an oak tree at which pagans were performing a sacrifice to the god Thor, and proclaimed a nearby evergreen as their holy tree. The tradition of evergreen trees being holy continued in Germany for many years, until the 19th century, when the tradition migrated with many Germans. Specifically in England, Christmas trees were popularized by the royal family, namely, contrary to popular belief, the German wife of the current king, King George III, and not Prince Albert. By 1848, Christmas trees were common in British households.

Finally, the date. The date of Jesus' birth was discussed for many years, but in the 4th century, around the same time that many Christmas traditions arose, Saint Augustus delivered a sermon, explaining that the birth of Jesus took place on December 25th. As this was the Winter Solstice, he believed that the following days becoming longer was a sign that Jesus had appeared on our shortest and lowest day to lift us up.

Overall, despite many years separating the Origin of Christmas and Modern Day, when you look at it, not much has changed. Many traditions still remain the same and the beauty of it all is yet to change. Have a Merry Christmas!



Controversy in Qatar:

A Brief Overview by Victor 10H

FIFA World Cup in Qatar has been off to a great start; many breakthroughs, incredible goals, and desperate teams have led to one of the most exciting World Cups yet. From having Spain knocked out by the underdog Morocco, to Brazil getting eliminated in the round of 16 (something that hasn't happened to this contender since 1998), it seems like the only aspect to the World Cup is the worldwide teams playing against each other.

However, as much as they would like you to think otherwise, Qatar is far from an ideal society, as is every other country in the world. There are many controversies that come with Qatar's hosting of the World Cup, including but not limited to human rights abuses of immigrant labour, Intolerance of certain groups of people, notably of LGBTQIA+ group, and suspected bribery to get to the top of the World Cup Host List. Although these topics will be discussed, the question of whether these are exaggerations and prejudice towards Qatar, or whether they are genuinely true and something should be done about it are up for strong debate, which this article will omit. Whatever faction you choose to side with is purely your choice.

Immigrant Labour and Their Rights Abuses

Qatari Citizens make out a measly 10% of the country's population, and the other 90% are migrant workers, particularly from South Asia. These people are attracted to work for the advertised high wages that working in Qatar gives you. However, the problems arise before you've even left your own country. Having to pay an upfront fee in order to be able to work, all the money that needs to be paid is expected to come from the worker's pockets, including the flight to Qatar, transportation and other daily costs. There have been allegations of employers taking away workers' passports and holding on to their wages, known as wage-theft. However, we must also consider that cases like these tend to be extreme, and many leaps forward have been made by Qatar in the last half-decade. An example is the abolition of the infamous kafala system, where you had to have an in-country sponsor, usually your employer, who is responsible for their visa and legal status. There is still much to catch up in Human rights for Qatar, as the number of migrant deaths in the construction of the World Cup infrastructure remains in the thousands and is still climbing, a generally uncontested number.

Corruption amongst FIFA

There have been many accusations of corruption amongst FIFA officials. It has generally been concluded that had Qatari oil money not been involved, the USA would've gone on to host the FIFA world cup. This choice also makes more sense, as there is a huge number of advantages to hosting in the USA. Firstly, the US has a colossal population of 326.7 million, and since few of them actually play football to any large extent (baseball and American Football are only a few examples of very popular sports there), it allows for football to be brought into a myriad of households. On the other hand, Qatar only has a population of roughly 2.4 million, where football is already the primary sport. An extremely hot climate, sometimes reaching 50 degrees Celsius, makes football matches a

very hard thing to do for the standard 90 minutes. For these reasons Qatar's hosting of the World Cup makes little sense for me, and many have simply pointed their fingers at FIFA officials trying to line their pockets with the sport. At the time, FIFA's then-chairman, Sepp Blatter, supported the bid, but now says it was a "mistake" to award the World Cup to Qatar.

Intolerance towards LGBT

For context, Homosexual acts are strictly illegal in Qatar, and could be punishable by death. By far the most hotly contested issue in the Cup, there are two distinct sides to this argument. One side argues that 'Sport should be open to all', after an incident at the one-man protest for LGBT rights of Qatari authorities having the protestor 'surrounded and interrogated'. The other side insists that people of LGBT nature should remain 'respectful of the host nation', told to fans travelling from England and Wales. Despite Qatar's statement of 'everyone is welcome', the chief executive of Qatar 2022 stated that laws on Homosexuality will not change and that visitors should 'respect our culture'. This ties in with Qatar's ban of alcohol and its' strict laws on public behaviour such as swearing. Ultimately, this all stems from the 'Sharia Law', a body of religious law that forms a part of the Islamic tradition.

Conclusion

FIFA World cup Qatar 2022 is absolutely riddled with controversies, not limited to what has been discussed here. Qatar has been blessed with huge oil and natural gas reserves off its coast and its' government have realised that, thanks to action against carbon emissions, oil money will not last forever. This led to many investments being made around the world, adding to their portfolio of London's famous 'Shard', Canary Wharf and France's PSG being partly owned by Qatar. Through this, we can conclude that Qatar probably used this money to gain the right to host the World Cup before it was ready by international standards.

What is Strep A?

by Riley 10W

Strep A is a contagious bacterium that is normally found in the throat or on skin. While most people carry it without getting seriously sick, Strep A has become more prevalent of late after children have been dying of it. It is easily caught through people mixing in close proximity and via sneezes and coughs. Symptoms can include skin infections, muscle aches, high temperatures, rashes and sore throats. These symptoms tend to be mild, however Strep A can cause more serious illnesses, such as scarlet fever. Scarlet fever causes flu-like symptoms as well as rashes and swollen neck glands. Another more serious illness that can be caused is invasive group A streptococcal infection (iGAS). This is very rare but can be fatal and urgent medical help is required.

Strep A affects not only children, but adults can catch it too. It is treated with antibiotics and doesn't tend to last very long. The UK Health Security Agency advises "Anyone with a high fever, severe muscle aches, pain in one area of the body and unexplained vomiting or diarrhoea should call NHS 111 and seek medical help immediately".

The Year 9 Draw Off

by Thomas 9A



Last month, I was awestruck by the amount of money that Children in Need managed to raise; a staggering £35 million this year. This national event inspired me to organise my own fundraising appeal in school, specifically for Teenage Cancer Trust as the figures of this mammoth of an illness is colossal and I'm desperate to even make a miniscule difference to extinguish it.

My initial idea was to get students to compete against each other in a head to head style drawing competition due to my personal love of creativity and drawing as an outlet, the entry fee was £1.50 with all of the proceeds going to charity. The interesting twist was that I set up a random item generator on my phone which would be a prompt. I 'pitched' my idea to Ms Quinn who approved and agreed to help me with the Draw Off as I called it. I gathered a group of judges from my year and I created a poster to advertise my event around the school. We then had a meeting to discuss when, where it would happen and who would contend. It was all ready and then all we needed were competitors, Ms Quinn mentioned it in assembly whilst I went around year 9 form rooms to take names of who would like to participate, the extra prize of a box of chocolates enticed the majority of people as well as house points. In total I got about 15 competitors, a good number of people, Rhaeniel in 9B was also kind enough to donate £15 before the event which was a huge help to the cause, so a special mention to him.

Then on Wednesday last week, we commenced the draw off, everyone paid their entry fee and got underway with the prompt, Snow Globe.

The Year 9 Draw Off

by Thomas 9A

It was really exciting to see everyone's different styles from a realistic perspective or more of a fluid, squashy cartoon style. Five finalists which won their 'heats' went through to the final the following day. The finalists were Zack from 9B, Evan from 9A, Daniel from 9A, Qarnayn from 9A and David from 9A too. For the final, the contestants were to interpret TWO completely random prompts, which were rather strange: wallet and milk. Even though it was such an unordinary combination it was interesting to see how different people would adapt to such a niche criteria. The main theme I predominantly saw was the production of milk making money however there were a few out standers such as pieces involving cows. After the 7 minutes were over, it was time to judge, amazingly the votes were down to the wire, Mr Jones had the casting vote between Zack's drawing and Evan's drawing. In my opinion, Evan just about edged Zack with his fine detail and how clean his aesthetic was. The winner was ... Evan! He claimed the chocolates and snatched the points for Abbey (we need them! I can guarantee the judges were from all different forms, it wasn't rigged!) Thanks to other kind donations from Ms Marriott and my parents I ended up raising an incredible £80!!

In conclusion, Thank you so much to all involved and all the money will help families have a nicer time this Christmas.



Chinese Protests in 2022

by Martin 10E

Black and white feel

The Chinese Protests in 2022:

Introduction: From Guangzhou to Beijing, for the past month the Chinese state has been hit with protests across the country. In over 10 cities, major demonstrations have occurred, with some even calling for Xi Jinping, the Chinese president, to step down. These protests commonly use a blank piece of paper as a symbol for the brutal censorship of the “Surveillance State” that the Chinese government have created. In this article we will be exploring the origin of said protests and where they may lead to in the future.

Origin: In late November, the first protests broke out in the Xinjiang province in the city of Urumqi. Earlier in the month, a fire broke out in an apartment which led to the death of 10 people. It is believed that the fire trucks and other personnel that had come to remedy the situation were blocked by fences, tents and other barriers which were installed due to the country’s “Zero-Covid policy”. This led to a multi-hour delay where the fire was not extinguished and as mentioned previously, 10 people died. This was very much the straw that broke the camel’s back. For months, in large cities such as Beijing and Shanghai, the markets had been closed and people weren’t allowed to leave their homes, this was often prompted by just a single covid case causing city-wide lockdowns. In horrifying scenes, seeming like an image straight out of a dystopia film,



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Toxicity in the Music Industry

by Ronnie 10H

Toxicity in the music industry has always been a very prevalent issue but has become increasingly apparent in recent years, with critics becoming progressively more condemnatory and artists beginning to turn on each other themselves. The music industry was originally founded on the basis of the absolute love of singing and through artists trying to express themselves through their work, though that heart-warming reasoning has been lost throughout the years.

Nowadays, the music industry is more of a business rather than a platform for people to promote their individuality; with record labels only taking on those that they think will be 'appealing' to the public, and true talent getting denied because of external factors such as where someone is from, their race, how much money they have, et cetera. Though every industry needs a balance between business and the aim of the industry itself, it is evident now that business prevails most of the time when dealing with music. Record labels are so fixated on only accepting specific types of individuals that a lot of new songs are beginning to sound the same.

Looking specifically at the rap industry, we can see that it has always been an extremely competitive field as there are a magnitude of worthy competitors and artists within it. However, rap culture has become known for putting down your peers and declaring yourself above others. An example of this is within Nicki Minaj's, one of the most popular female rap artists, song 'Parody', which states the following: 'It must hurt to sell ya album off PayPal [...] I mean, look at you now h**, you just tragic [...] these goofy b****s, stupidity personified'. These lyrics illustrate how, like many other rap artists, their songs are mostly about put-



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ting down other creators and promoting negativity.

Another issue in regard to toxicity within the music industry is the critics. As we progress further into the 21st century, critics have been allowed to say very vulgar things – to the point of bullying -- and be absolutely ruthless when it comes to rating an artist's piece of work. An example of this is Lana Del Rey, arguably the most influential artist in modern-day pop, who was atrociously attacked online by critics and harassed in real life after her release of 'Ultraviolence', (2012), which debuted at number one and sold over 182,000 copies in its first week. After including the lyric '*He hit me and it felt like a kiss*' in the title track, she was accused of 'glamorizing abuse' - something of which Del Rey confirmed was not the case.

Overall, the music industry has proved to be a very toxic environment which only the strongest can survive in. It didn't always use to be like this, and perhaps one day there may be a reform to assist artists in safely expressing themselves without intense backlash or denial of their work.

World Cup: Round of 16

by Adriel 10W

As seen with the previous games which have taken place in the World Cup, the Round of 16 matches have been full of surprises, with underdog teams such as Morocco being able to win against the match favourites, Spain, in an intense penalty shootout. The Moroccan goalkeeper, Yassine Bounou, was able to save an impressive 3 penalties, securing Morocco's place in the Quarter-finals.

We also witnessed our favourites, the English team, score a seemingly easy 3 goals against Senegal, comfortably controlling the game with a high press and controlled possession.

World Cup winners France were also able to secure a 3-1 victory against Poland. Poland were down 3-0 in the 98th minute, and received a penalty at that time. Despite the hopelessness of their situation, their undoubted best player, Robert Lewandowski, was able to score the penalty, who left the pitch with the satisfaction that he never gave up to the last minute despite a crushing defeat.

All in all, this World Cup has been 2018 one full of twists and turns, and I'm sure there is certainly much more to unfold.





BEST OF THE BETHS

Thank you for reading this edition of the newsletter!

For this month, we had a shorter period to get this issue out but our team rose to the challenge and we were still able to get in some fantastic articles from a range of different voices. This edition featured articles about scandalous controversies to cheerful articles on the true meaning of Christmas.

We hope you enjoyed!

Please let us know what you liked about this article and what you would want to see more of in the next one:

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**If you celebrate it, have a Merry Christmas!
And if not, have a wonderful and relaxing
break!**

-Regards from the Newsletter team