

The Student Voice

ISSUE 3

Feature Article: Political Ideologies in Modern Society

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The Student Voice



Image: Pixabay

For the students, by the students.

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January 2025

Remembering David Lynch - the legacy of a true auteur.

On the evening of January 15th, the cinematic world faced the news of a devastating loss. David Lynch, director, and filmmaker credited with producing genre defining classics of the last 40 years, had passed away. Whilst this loss is one of gravity for the industry, it is more vital than ever that Lynch is remembered for his unrivalled filmography; a director that understood the art of the strange and inexplicable.

Lynch debuted with the surrealist classic 'Eraserhead', a black and white landscape of industrialism defining the beginning of his delve into the unsettling reality behind small town suburban America. This scepticism continued further into the creation of 'Twin Peaks', and two years later the film prequel 'Twin Peaks: Fire Walk with Me.' Lynch expressed a deep appreciation for the dark cracks of the cozy American life, finding darkness in light, yet also the light in darkness.

His legacy lives on in every sense, his filmography will keep influencing the industry for years to come. Within the Oxford Dictionary, 'Lynchian' describes a body of work that is 'juxtaposing surreal or sinister elements with mundane, everyday environments, and for using compelling visual images to emphasise a dreamlike quality of mystery or menace.' It is evident that it was not only the cinematic triumph of classics like 'Blue Velvet', 'Mulholland Drive' and 'Wild at Heart' that uphold Lynch's legacy for the future, but the true essence and creation unlike any others in his work that will stand the test of time.

Whilst the loss remains a striking one, it is more vital than ever to remember his words that ring true not only within film, but within every aspect of human life – "In a way failure is a beautiful thing, because when the dust settles there's nowhere to go but up, and it's a freedom. You can't lose more, but you can gain."



David Lynch (Image Credit: Prefeitura de Belo Horizonte, Flickr)

Crime Week: Inside the Minds of Criminologists, Convicts and Cops.

On the week commencing Monday 13th January, Hereford Sixth Form's criminology students were presented with a week of criminology activities, including case application of gruesome crimes, forensic day with the fingerprint analysis, microscopes and fake wounds. The most exciting of the events occurred on Tuesday, where students spent the day at the Courtyard Theatre hearing from specialists in crime.

Ron Pearce, ex chief-superintendent who worked with the Metropolitan Police and West Midlands police, spoke to us about his time as an Officer. Ron spoke about how he progressed with the forces, working in many units such as the CID (Criminal Investigation Department) and his ventures into terrorism prevention. Ron worked with the Royal Ulster Constabulary during the Troubles, where he underwent training in anti-terrorism policing.

Ron, being multilingual and fluent in French and German, spoke about international policing, such as international prisoner escorts from countries such as Switzerland and the Canary Islands. He expressed how his knowledge of languages meant he was prioritized for foreign cases. Ron gave students valuable insight into the day-to-day life of a police officer, expressing the struggles policing can have on your personal and social life, as well as discussing the pride you feel as an officer.

Students heard from Pauline Strong, a specialist in Domestic Violence. Pauline spoke to students about her interest in domestic violence policing



Students analysing their fingerprints (Image Credit: Chloe Clements, Hereford Sixth Form College)

and how she went on to open the first domestic violence Unit in Worcestershire.

Pauline spoke to students about her interest in Domestic Violence policing and how she went on to open the first Domestic Violence Unit in Worcestershire. Students heard in great detail about the attitudes toward DV in the 80s and 90s, and how Pauline learnt to communicate with and support victims by giving them a choice. Pauline also told students about her time in Intelligence units, CID and her specialism in rape cases

Pauline discussed how attitudes have changed today, and students heard the rise in social media and the influence this has on domestic abuse. Pauline referenced Andrew Tate and discussed how the rise in influencers has distorted attitudes of young people against women and girls. Students will find looking at change in attitudes over time helpful as this is covered in their Year 1 studies.



from left to right: Kate Cox, Nicky Taylor, Dave X, Pauline Strong, Ron Pearce, Eliza Harris, Ivan powell

Students then heard from former Forensic Psychologist Eliza Harris, who spoke about her work on the parole board. The parole board is the independent institution that conducts vital investigations into whether a prisoner should be released from prison on parole or be moved to a lower category prison.

Eliza is currently a chair with the parole board and it's her job to conduct investigations on prisoners who are applying for parole and look at multiple different factors to determine if they are to be released from prisoner. Parole board members look at public safety, the prisoners outlook on their crime, their rehabilitation, and how they have conducted themselves in prison. They may hear from the prisoners themselves and take time to look at the index offence and the prisoner's life leading up to the offence to determine triggers for the offender and how they would safely manage their behaviour upon release.

Students heard a very different perspective into criminality, hearing from reformed criminal Dave. Dave spoke about his violent childhood, where he spent the majority of his life suffering with alcoholism and drug addiction. The impact of his addictions led Dave to a life of violent crime, committing assaults and GBH (grievous bodily harm). Dave was eventually arrested for a serious and served two years in HMP Gloucester. Students heard about the prison conditions in the 70s/80s, where Dave described how prisoners 'were not treated as humans' and felt one of the ways the prison services could improve would be to treat prisoners as human beings.

Dave posed the question of nature or nurture to students, which is a heavily debated psychological topic which asks whether humans are born evil or made evil.

This ties into the year one content of criminology, where students analyse theories of criminality and look at biological theories, such as Lombroso's theory of criminality, individualistic theories such as Eysenck's Personality theory and Bowlby's maternal deprivation theory, or sociological theories such as Merton's Strain Theory or Left and Right Realism.

Dave X gave insight into how life has been since he made the decision to reform his life and learn to understand himself. Dave has been over 30 years sober and has taken an interest in the study of Criminology, where he takes classes to better understand himself and the violent crimes he committed whilst young.

Students heard from former CID Officer Ivan Powell, and county lines specialist Donna Hutcherson. Ivan worked for West Mercia Police, and Donna is still an active investigator.

Donna Hutcherson explained to students about how county lines operates and the warning signs of vulnerable children who have been recruited to help operate county lines. County lines refer to the distribution of drugs from minor and major cities. For example, drugs that are trafficked into Hereford often operate alongside Birmingham. County lines are very complex and often run under one individual who is the head of the line. They look to recruit young people to traffic, store and supply their drugs. Donna explained 'cuckooing' to students, which is where drug gangs target a vulnerable adult and use their home as a place to run their drug business from.

Ivan Powell chatted to students about a case very close to home. Powell was the lead officer on the Joanna Dennehy case, who murdered three men in Peterborough before travelling to Hereford and committing two brutal attempted murders on the streets.

Students heard about Dennehy's psychopathic traits and the critical and intense nature of the investigation.

As Dennehy's first murders were committed in Cambridgeshire, it was vital that Cambridgeshire police linked Dennehy to Hereford, and alerted West Mercia Police about the potential threat; thus showing students the importance of intercommunication across forces

Throughout the day, criminology students were able to see inside the roles of many different careers within the criminal justice system and enhance their studies. A huge thank-you to Nicky and Kate for organising a fantastic week for students!



Dave X using student volunteers to demonstrate life inside a prison cell (Credit: Hereford Sixth Form College)

Political Ideologies in Modern Society:

Anarchism

Throughout British history, the country has maintained a government mostly based on a two-party system which has purely evaporated itself into the political spectrum of this country. But with all the “lies”, a combination of parties and an instability regarding the continuation of the Conservative Party leadership, this makes me wonder how anarchy could impact modern-day society?

First of all, I believe that this is very unlikely. For centuries and throughout societies, we have always had some form of government reigning authority over the populous of a country, from the pharaohs of Ancient Egypt to the modern leaders of today. We have always had a governmental authority to respect, and a governmental authority to maintain. Yet all this certainty of a government really makes me think, what would happen if the United Kingdom were to turn anarchistic?

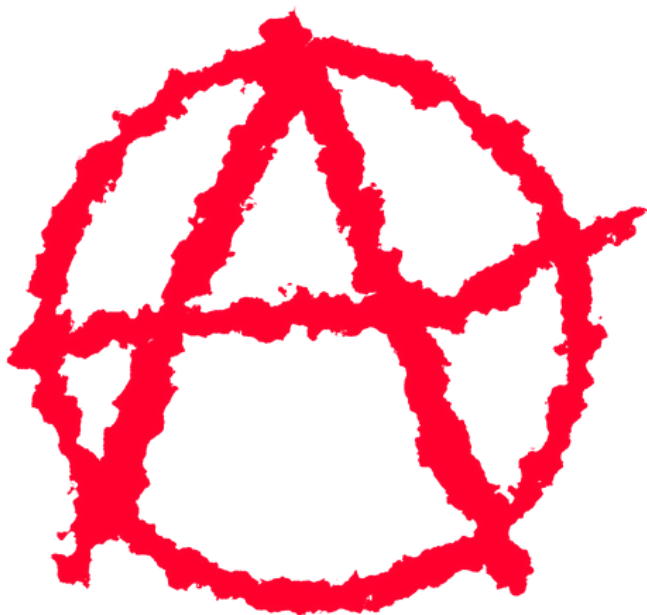


Image by OpenClipart-Vectors from Pixabay

With the utter depletion of a governmental authority that anarchism provides we would be left to fend for ourselves with nobody to govern us.

This may sound ironic but I think that this country would see a humongous struggle for power in the event of anarchism. I believe that in this society, the desire for a sense of power will become inevitable, maintaining itself in the blood, and spirit of at least one individual to ravage anarchism until its dying days. Thus, I would suggest that anarchism can never really happen, yet this is all determined on one's interpretation of society itself.

I believe that with anarchism also comes instability. With no governmental authority, we have no body running the country. With all that we will get a rise in confusion and instability. Therefore, society may wish to venture back into a nation with this governmental system to feel security, stability and a sense of comfort which anarchism could remove. Once again, this is all dependant on another's views of anarchism.

Anarchism, in itself, may be considered very unlikely to occur in the modern United Kingdom but as an enjoyer of politics in itself, I feel a sense of joy and excitement in chatting with friends regarding political topics and recent events. Wherever you may stand on the political spectrum, the power to converse and talk about these topics proves much benefit to us all.

The Philosophy Segment: The Relationship Between Artificial Intelligence and Philosophy

As 'Deepseek' battles with the US' 'ChatGPT', the relationship between artificial intelligence and the world becomes closer intertwined. The 'philosophy of artificial intelligence' aims to understand this relationship and the implications AI has for knowledge, ethics, consciousness and the challenges AI imposes on society.

A quote a lot of us have heard online is "I want AI to do my laundry and dishes so that I can do art and writing, not for AI to do my art and writing so that I can do my laundry and dishes," (Joanna Maciejewska) however there are ethical debates on both sides

The first question to consider is "Can a machine think?" This highlights the relationship between 'thinking' and 'consciousness.' To answer this question, philosophers often draw upon the 'Turing Test' which, in summary, requires an evaluator to judge a conversation between a human and a machine; If the evaluator cannot tell them apart, the machine passes. One side of the argument surrounds what we do if, potentially, one day AI exhibits sentience or a conscious and what we do from there, what rights does the AI have? However, this is often seen as an improbability or something which only exists in Sci-Fi films.

The other side of the debate surrounding the ethics of AI include arguments such as AI having a bias and the responsibilities that developers have in eliminating biases in AI technology, the environmental impact that AI has and if AI generated art, music and writing should be considered 'real' art?

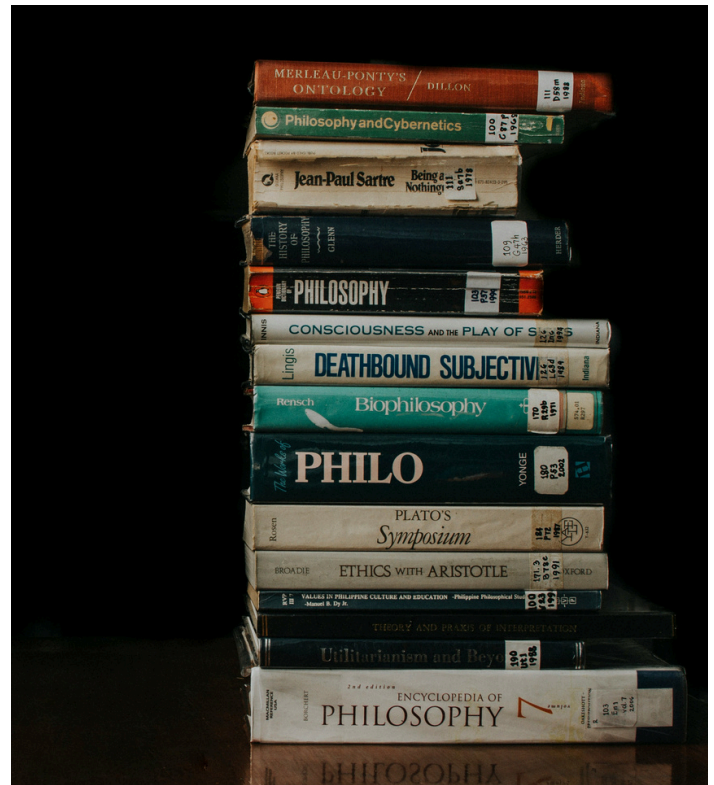


Photo by Karl Raymund Catabas on Unsplash

AI servers produce electronic waste and are large consumers of water, a resource which is becoming scarce in many places, begging the question if AI programmes such as ChatGPT are worth the environmental damage?

Finally, can it be argued that AI art takes away from and discredits the effort and creativity humans have? Many would argue no, and that AI makes the creative industry more accessible, helping people to develop skills or, for example, be able to add a front cover to their book without having to pay for an artist. However, therein lies another problem. In an already impossible to break through industry, AI is creating less opportunities and taking money away from artists who have spent years working on their skill when AI art often noticeably makes errors when generating art (infamously being unable to draw' hands).

AI can be an incredibly useful tool and its prevalence in society is continuing to grow, however there are many ethical and philosophical debates to be had about how we use AI whilst still ensuring the creativity and differences in human beings is still valued.

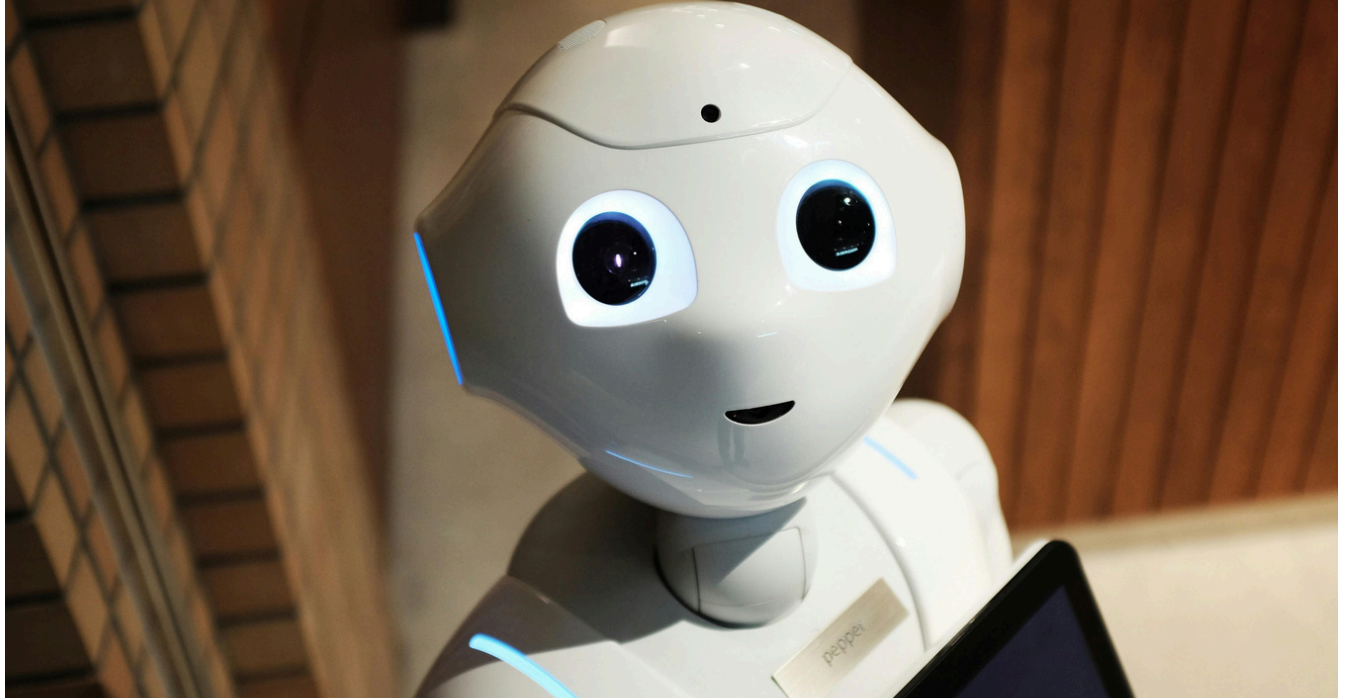


Photo by Alex Knight, Pexels

Exciting News!

The Student Voice has launched their Instagram!

We will be bringing you regular news updates, exciting events and accessible local reporting!

Find us on instagram and stay updated with everything local!

Drop us a DM and tell us what's important to you and what you would like to see covered next!



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HSFC COMMUNITY

LITTER PICK

TUESDAY 11TH FEBRUARY

FROM 13:00 - 13:30 | CHURCHILL GARDENS

Current students, we need your help! If you attend our litter pick, you'll receive a free meal voucher from the Diner!

To reserve a slot, email Deputy Principal, Phil Tranter:
PJT@hereford.ac.uk

Gloves, bags and litter picks provided!

SUSTAINABLE FASHION WORKSHOP

Thursday 27 February 2025

2 hour workshop in partnership with Hereford College of Arts

Email Chris Bird at CEB@hereford.ac.uk to sign up!

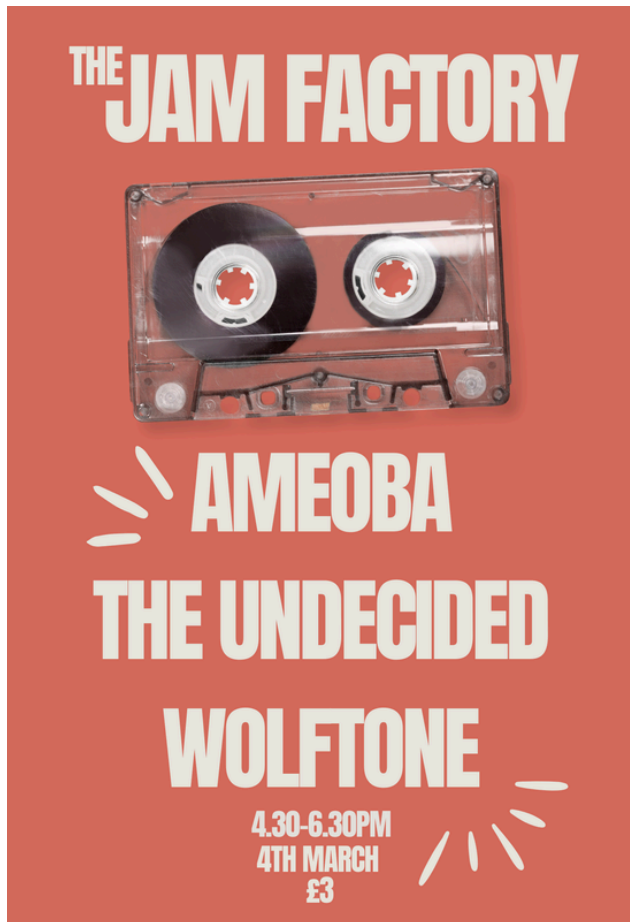
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SAVE OUR PLANET!

CITIZENSHIP FAIR

Tuesday 11 February | 13.45 | T005

Join us on a tour campaign presentations and learn more about interesting subjects such as Knife Crime, Cost of Living Crisis, Voter Apathy, Defibrillators Availability and more!



The Music of HSFC

Upcoming performances at the Jam Factory in Hereford! Get your tickets on Jam Factory's website before they sell out.

