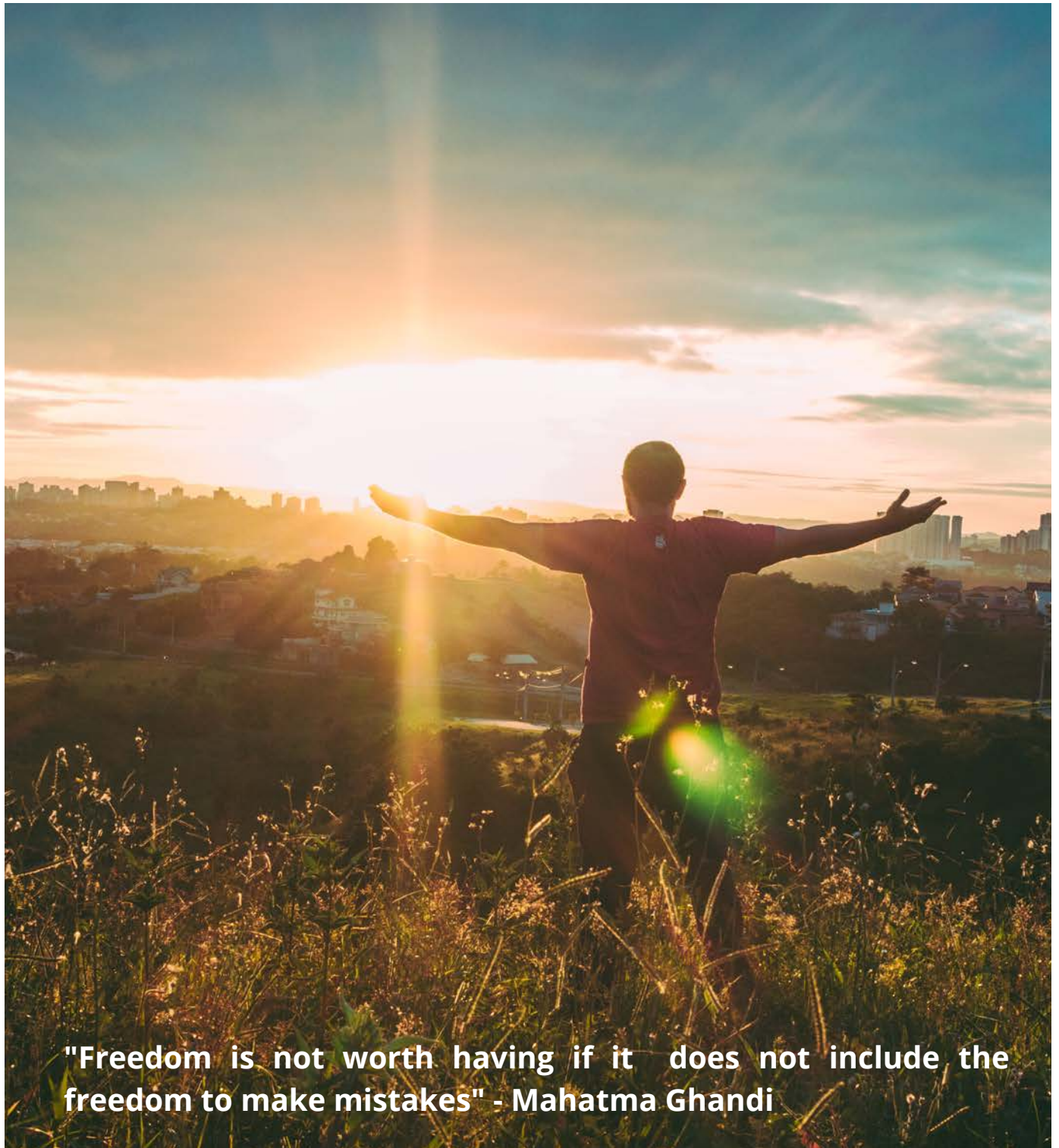


# VOICES

SERIES 1

ISSUE NO. 2



**"Freedom is not worth having if it does not include the freedom to make mistakes" - Mahatma Gandhi**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

# VOICES

---

<b>Editor's Note</b>	01
<b>Hate speech or free speech: Are we free on social media?</b>	02
<b>How has our Freedom changed since the Coronavirus?</b>	04
<b>An opportunity for equality</b>	06



**The tragic and distressing death of George Floyd must catalyse fundamental reformations.** 13

**Do we have freedom in schools?** 16

**The Hong Kong Protests. What are they?** 18

**Freedom for animals – should we keep our zoos?** 20

<b>Should we ever be free to use violence to achieve change, if the change justifies it?</b>	07
	11
<b>The top 10 most bizarre laws of all time</b>	12



---

DESIGNED BY ROSIE BEDFORD

# EDITOR'S LETTER

Dear readers,

I hope that you and your families remain safe, happy and healthy and are making the most of the time at home surrounded by your loved ones. We have been hard at work creating the second issue of the 'Voices' magazine and after the first issue was such a huge success, we hope you enjoy this issue as much as you did the last.

The theme of this issue is 'Freedom', something that we all felt strongly about. The theme resonated differently with everyone and you will be able to see that in the variety of pieces in this issue. From a poem about equality to the freedom of animals to the top 10 most bizarre laws. We hope the pieces within this issue provide some laughter as well as some time for reflection.

Thank you for your continued support.

**SAVANNAH JOHNSON, FITH  
FORM**



# HATE SPEECH OR FREE SPEECH: ARE WE FREE ON SOCIAL MEDIA?

**DILLY COPELAND, LOWER SIXTH**

The concept of freedom of speech presents an endless series of ethical questions especially when used in regard to social media with many asking: does freedom of speech exist on these platforms? Issues over how, when and if to censor remain an ongoing dilemma for the companies. Although freedom of speech and expression is a key right under the British democratic society, the social media world is dominated by American companies. Therefore, when addressing these companies approach to the idea of freedom, we need to acknowledge the United States First Amendment. This states that congress cannot make any law that restricts freedom of speech. Although this is on a government level, and social media companies are private therefore able to create their own censorship rules, many view this as a fundamental human right. So, where do these companies draw the fine line between freedom of speech and inappropriate content?

An example of the difficulty these companies face with regards to censorship was shown in 2016, when Facebook removed the famous Vietnam war photo which features a young, naked girl running from a burning village as it depicts the horrors of modern warfare. The photo, posted by a Norwegian author, had violated Facebook's standards of nudity on the network. However, the removal of this photo caused widespread backlash with some even directly daring the company to act and resulted in an open letter to Mark Zuckerberg from Norway's largest newspaper. Although Facebook reinstated the photograph acknowledging its 'historical importance', the issue highlighted the extent of control the company has over the type of media its users see. The Norwegian prime minister stated, "Facebook gets it wrong when they censor such pictures. It limits freedom of speech". Incidents such as this, of which there are multiple, cause many to question the possibility of discussing controversial subjects on social media.



In truth, social media companies do have the power to censor their media content. This lends social media to be affected by the concept of 'no platforming'. No-platforming or de-platforming is a form of political activism which removes individuals or organisations from sites if they break the rules, taking away their platform to proclaim offensive or controversial content. The idea is widespread within student life and universities, inciting a huge amount of debate over its effect on free speech, as we live in a society that needs to be incredibly cautious when it comes what opinions are deemed acceptable. There is also debate with the effectiveness of no-platforming within all forms of social media, from Tik Tok to Facebook and Instagram, and its alarming effect on the idea of free speech. There is a valid argument that de-platforming does not work since offensive speakers will not disappear by merely denying their invitation to speak and it can be argued that individuals should be free to express their opinions anyway. On the other hand, others have argued that no-platforming could make free speech easier by reducing harassment online. It is also argued that this is necessary action from the companies to protect its users. From this point of view, we can see how a level of control is important in the protection of these companies' millions of users, especially those who are young or the victim of hate and harassment.

Overall, the issue over the extent of censorship on social media provokes the question of who ultimately decides what is acceptable and what is not? Since these companies have the overall decision of what to censor, to an extent, we aren't fully free to express certain opinions on these sites, even when it comes down to addressing key issues such as modern warfare. The concept of no-platforming is becoming increasingly prominent and although it does have positive effect on reducing hate and harassment, it could possibly have a negative effect on free speech. However, a level of control is arguably also important in creating sites that are trusted and safe for their users.



# HOW HAS OUR FREEDOM CHANGED SINCE THE CORONAVIRUS?

**ABBIE DELLER, LOWER SIXTH**

This time last year, I played tennis matches, performed in concerts, went out with friends and looked forward to going abroad in the summer holidays. One year on, I've only been able to play tennis with my family, seen three friends in person, and have no idea where I am going to be able to go over the summer – if anywhere. Our freedom has been stripped away in a flash, and none of us had any idea it was going to happen until just a few days before. But how has our freedom really changed, and what will the impact be long term?

Of course, there are the obvious and direct restrictions on our freedom which have made a huge difference in our day to day lives. We have to socially distance from everyone outside of our household (although the new rules will allow this to change for some people), we can't enter another person's house, and these are just a couple of the unfamiliar new measures. However, there are an even greater volume of indirect consequences of this on our freedom.

It is all well and good to say that life will return to normal when the coronavirus is under control as most of our freedom will return, but

unfortunately it is not as easy as this. Many people have been severely mentally affected by the loss of their freedom. One effect of sending the country into lockdown has been that some people are now too afraid to go out, for fear of infection. So, although the external restriction on freedom is beginning to be lifted now, this internal fear could prove just as restricting, showing how it will take some people an extremely long time to recover the freedom they used to take for granted.

Life will also not return to normal for the vast number of people affected financially. In April alone the number of people claiming unemployment benefits increased from 856,500 to 2.1 million due to losing their jobs. Although the furlough scheme has clearly made a huge difference by allowing the government to subsidise about 7.5 million jobs, there is no doubt that many people have been hit incredibly hard by the sudden lockdown. The loss of their previously steady salaries has undoubtedly led to loss of freedom as now so many more people are struggling to pay rent and mortgages, let alone afford everyday essentials. This shows us how there will be a long-lasting impact on people's freedom for long

after the current restrictions are lifted.

However, in a different way the limits on our freedom are nowhere near as high as they would have been if this pandemic occurred just a few decades ago. Can you imagine not being allowed to leave the house, apart from for exercise and to get food, and the only way to contact friends being to call them on the only phone in your house, which your parents were probably using for work? Before the 1990s even email and mobile phones were not widely used, let alone texts and social media. Therefore, lockdown before the 1990s would have been entirely different from what it is like for us today. The freedom to contact people, even if it is not in person, is second nature to us, however it is only when we think about what lockdown could have been like, that we can appreciate the freedom we do have to stay in touch with the outside world.

Therefore, although we do still have a small amount of freedom which has made the restrictions much more manageable, the coronavirus has caused a huge change in not only the day to day freedom we took for granted, but also in the mental and financial freedom and too many people are experiencing a loss of this. This shows us that the impact of this pandemic on our freedom is much greater than is originally thought.

---



# AN OPPORTUNITY FOR EQUALITY



**PHEOBE ESDAILE, V FORM**

We need to put a stop to police brutality,  
Because who do you call when the murderer  
wears a badge?  
Something needs to change drastically,  
Because an equal world should not be a fantasy.

We need to put a stop to systemic racism,  
Which is still innate in our social structure.  
The colour of your skin should not determine  
your career or your future.

We as more entitled white women and men  
should not be applying emotional labour,  
Instead we should be educating ourselves,  
We should be amplifying the voices of black  
people.  
We should be **ACTIVELY** anti racist.  
Because that is the only way we will achieve an  
equal world.

We as a generation have an opportunity,  
An opportunity to change the world for the  
better.  
An opportunity for justice.  
An opportunity for equality.  
Don't waste it.





# SHOULD WE EVER BE FREE TO USE VIOLENCE TO ACHIEVE CHANGE, IF THE CHANGE JUSTIFIES IT?



**HENRY THORNTON,**  
*UPPER SIXTH*

History is defined by change. Without change we would all be in a very different place. Yet when it comes to achieving societal change, should we ever be free to use violence to achieve it? Of course, in the majority of cases we will never be free to use violence under any circumstances, because the nature of the State is to maintain law and order. Violence threatens this, so is rarely allowed. Yet before establishing when we should have the freedom to use violence, first we should establish what freedom is.

This is a question with many answers. I will focus on two of them, positive and negative freedom. Negative freedom is the 'classic' freedom idea, one of

following one's desires unconstrained. John Stuart Mill is the most influential advocate of this idea. He sets out his idea as follows:

**"The only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of the civilised community, against [their] will, is to prevent harm to others. [Their] own good, either physical or moral, is not sufficient warrant"**

What this means is that you can constrain someone's actions, but only to protect others, thus justifying the existence of laws. The

inclusion of 'a member of a civilised community' is also significant. What Mill means by this is that freedom should only apply to those who are mature enough to do so. Yet this was written during the 1800s. Instead, I would argue we should judge whether someone is 'a member of the civilised community' not based on their characteristics, but based on whether the society they live in can be considered civilised. I would also argue, that among other things, democracy is a key part of this, and nor should simply an absence of violence become synonymous with a civilised society.

Positive freedom is the freedom to control

**Above**  
Liberty Leading the People French: Eugène Delacroix, 1830

oneself. Often judged via one's ability to live their life in the most rational way possible. As similar as this sounds to just being a counterpart and inverse to negative freedom, there is a significant difference. The difference can be demonstrated in the example of a drug addict. They are not positively free, because they are not acting in their own best interests, yet they are negatively free, because they are following their desires unconstrained. As with negative freedom Rousseau (who advocated positive freedom before Isaiah Berlin made it cool) would tell us that the ability to live one's life in the most rational way possible, is also dependent on civilised society. Thus we begin to see the importance of a civilised society in being free.

The French Revolution(s). Aside from demonstrating the French's rather unique ability to instigate regime change as often as modern Britain has elections, it also reflects an interesting example as to whether violence can be justified. The first revolution led to an end of an absolute

monarchy and to the beginning of democracy (though often limited and highly vulnerable to change), as well as the deaths of 17,000 people (only officially) throughout the ensuing violence and repression. Yet this is hardly the hallmark of a civilised society. Suffice to say, the revolution did not exactly lead straight to a civilisation. It also reflects one of the problems with using violence to achieve change. By using violence, you leave an open invitation to the same in kind from those who disagree with your change. What makes one dictator more legitimate than the dictator who takes his place (assuming neither received any democratic mandate). The Second French

Revolution (1830) provides a much more interesting discussion, not for the impact on France but for its impact on Britain. The Great Reform Act (1832) increased the total electorate by 217,000 and also addressed some of the 'peculiarities' of the British electoral system. For example, before the Act the fairly sparsely populated region of Cornwall returned 44 MPs, whilst the City of London (population of more than 100,000) returned 4. It is clear by the proximity of events that British parliamentarians were influenced by the events in France. This shows the effect of the threat of violence. If we accept the notion that the threat of violence is equivalent

**Below**  
The French Revolution





**Above**

The British House of Commons in the 1830's

to violence itself (since a threat of violence in exchange for action, will often lead to violence if the demanded action is not undertaken) then we find the violence in the Second French Revolution having a very positive impact in Britain, this positive impact showing that the change did justify it. However, the Third French Revolution showed... well very little as we're all still waiting for it (only a matter of time I'm sure). Yet so far, we have based the above arguments on the principle that violence is the only way of achieving meaningful change. Of course, there is democracy, but

we'll come back to this later. Instead I want to talk about the effect of strikes and peaceful protests. Let's take German history now. And yes, I have started talking about strikes yet stopped talking about France. In 1920, there was a right-wing coup (known as the Kapp Putsch) which attempted to overthrow the relatively new Weimar Republic in Germany. How was it stopped? Not by force, the military refused to act against it as many former soldiers were involved. Instead, the Civil Service refused to follow any orders from the leaders of the Coup and the unions ordered a general strike bringing the country to a halt and causing the

collapse of the coup just four days later. Now we have established that change through violence and peaceful means can have positive impacts, it leads us to the question of when to use violence and when to use peaceful means: one may argue when peaceful means fail to produce the change. Yet this has both questionable validity and dangerous consequences. This is shown through universalism (the idea that to establish if something is right or not, imagine what would happen if everyone did it). Do we really want 48% of the country to rise up in arms to keep us in the EU because 'peaceful

means failed'? Thatcher once said 'in a democracy nothing but nothing justifies a resort to violence'. But surely the tyranny of the majority (the idea of the majority pursuing interests at the expense of the minority) disproves this? If the minorities' interests are not reflected in democracy or even harmed via repressive laws supported by the majority, then surely, they have justification in using violence to effect change to stop this. But this too sets a dangerous precedent, again as shown by universalism.

Everyone always thinks their cause is justified. Therefore, by accepting violence for one cause, we accept violence for any cause. Let's say hardcore do-or-die Remainers were to rise up and violently overthrow the current government. Then a Remainer, who normally hates violence due to it being undemocratic, accepts this case of violence 'because the cause justifies'. By this principle, ISIS would be correct to also launch violent attacks. Therefore, the use of violence once could very well lead to the collapse of civilised society, which, to return to Rousseau and

Mill once more, would leave us lacking freedom. Therefore, in a democracy we should not be free to use violence to achieve change. Yet what happens when we are not in a democracy, thus not in a civilised society, therefore lacking freedom anyway? Can violence still be justified? I believe that the answer to this is found in utilitarianism, as set out by Bentham:

'Subjects should obey Kings ... so long as the probable mischiefs of obedience are less than the probable mischiefs of resistance' Utilitarianism is the model of reasoning based on the principle that the decision which gives the greatest net happiness, or the least net unhappiness, is the correct one. When applied to trying to justify violence, the answer to its justification is found in the effect of the action. To put it simply, do the means justify the ends? For example, let us take the actions of the German Resistance during Nazi rule. Germany was no longer democratic, thus positive/negative freedom no longer applies. I think it is fairly clear that the amount of happiness



which would have been caused by the German resistance deposing Hitler, justifies any unhappiness their actions may have caused. So, to return to the original question, should we ever be free to use violence to achieve change? In a civilised society never. Because then we give rise to any violent cause or movement and give them the go ahead to circumvent the very thing which keeps us free, which is our ability to make our own laws and choose our own leaders. But in an uncivilised society it is dependent on the outcomes of the means and the ends. Often freedom itself may be the end. Therefore, we cannot definitively state that violence is never justified.

# THE TOP 10 MOST BIZARRE LAWS OF ALL TIME

**SASKIA STEPHENSON,  
LOWER SIXTH**

*With this edition on freedom let's take a look at some of the most ridiculous laws of all time. Yes, I promise these global laws are all FULLY legal. Perhaps, knowing about these weird, wacky and bizarre laws will help you next time you are travelling abroad, and you may even escape a trip to jail!*

after 6pm in a public place on Thursdays. People are not quite sure what is more astonishing – not being able to fart on Thursdays or not being able to fart after 6pm. Remember to avoid the baked beans then!



2

**1,2, 3, Cheesseeee**

The classic line every grandparent tells their grandchildren before the cringey photo is quickly snapped and taken. There is no need for you to ever hear the

dreaded and awkward words again if you go on a family holiday to Milan in Italy, as smiling is a legal requirement unless at a hospital or a funeral. No more long faces but big cheesy grins! I can't help wondering how Posh Beckham copes...



3

**Here's the gum plan...**

According to the Singapore Statues Online it is officially illegal to sell gum, because if you are caught the fine can be as high as \$100,000 or TWO

years in prison.



4

**Can I use your loo?**

In Scotland if someone knocks at your door and requires your loo, you have to let them in. So next time you find yourself dying for a pee in Scotland, just knock on the stranger's door!



5

**The Suspicious Salmon Act**

Did you know that in the UK according to Section 32 of the Salmon Act of 1986 it is illegal to handle a salmon in suspicious circumstances... poachers beware!



1

**A farting fiasco...**

Now this law could be considered extraordinary as it is officially illegal in Florida to fart



6

**Why did the chicken cross the road? Who knows but it is illegal!**

In Quitman in Georgia it is illegal to let your chickens cross the road. Apparently, it is so owners have control of their chickens at all time.



7

**You forgot my birthday?!?!**

In Samoa it is illegal to forget your wife's birthday and you may even get a jail sentence... you will be getting a lot more than the silent treatment...



8

**Darling, call the electrician the light bulbs gone again...**

In Australia's second most populated state it was illegal to change a light bulb unless you were a licensed electrician! Taking your light into your own hands brought a fine of up to ten Australian dollars. Don't panic with the updated 1998 Electricity Safety Act, it is now legal to change a lightbulb!

*Q: How many Australians does it take to change a lightbulb?*

*A: One to change the bulb and fifteen to stand around and say "Good on yer, mate!"*



9

**No flushing...**

This law is beyond odd as not flushing is often considered disgusting and extremely unhygienic! However, in Switzerland it is illegal to flush a loo after 10pm in apartment buildings as it is classified as noise pollution! How smelly...



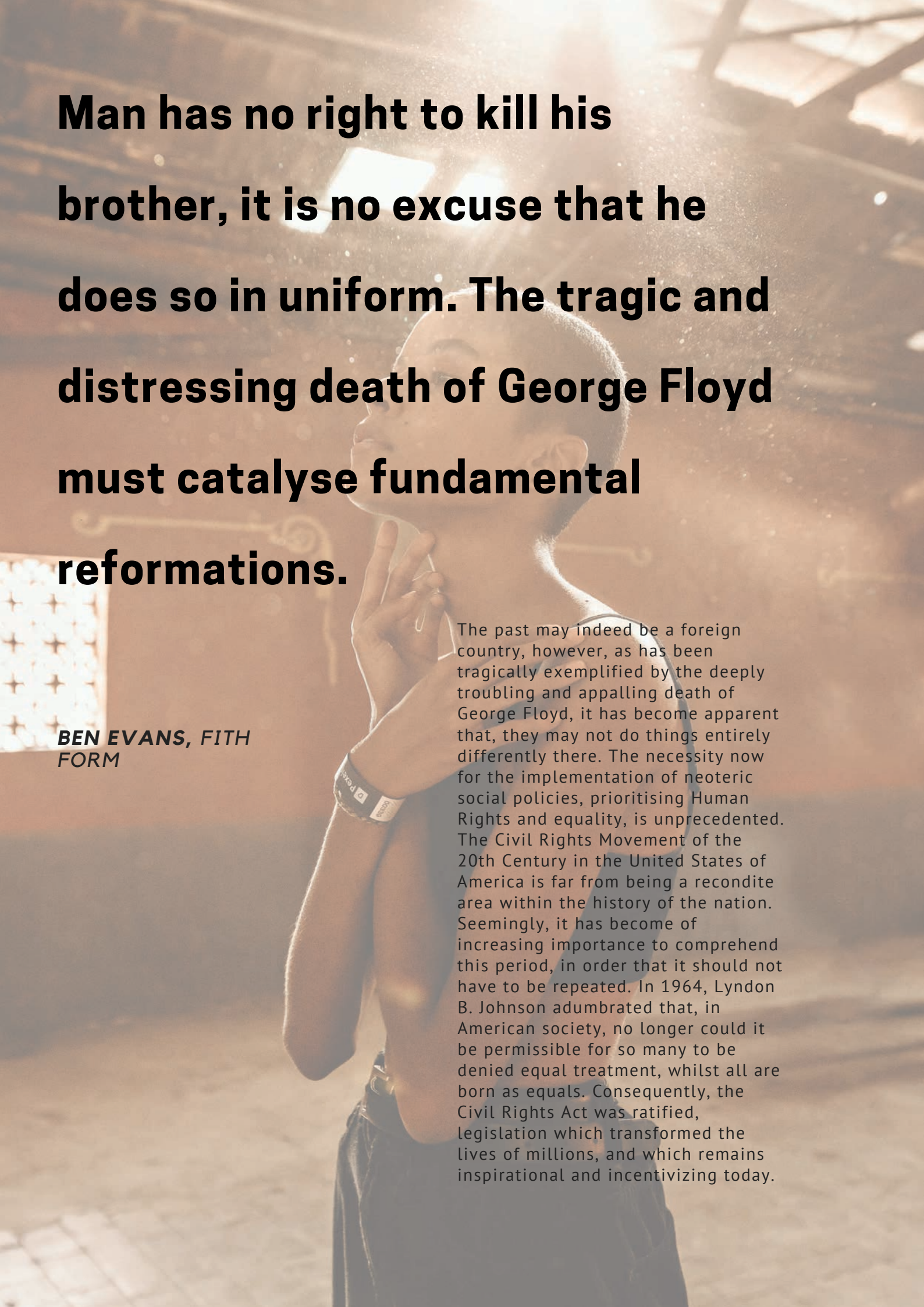
10

**Honey remember to reserve my burial spot!**

In the French town of Sarpourenx it is a legal requirement to pre-purchase your burial spot as the town has had people wantonly dying and expected to be

buried! The mayor said people who ignore this will be severely punished. How you severely punish the dead is still unclear...





**Man has no right to kill his brother, it is no excuse that he does so in uniform. The tragic and distressing death of George Floyd must catalyse fundamental reformations.**

***BEN EVANS, FITH FORM***

The past may indeed be a foreign country, however, as has been tragically exemplified by the deeply troubling and appalling death of George Floyd, it has become apparent that, they may not do things entirely differently there. The necessity now for the implementation of neoteric social policies, prioritising Human Rights and equality, is unprecedented. The Civil Rights Movement of the 20th Century in the United States of America is far from being a recondite area within the history of the nation. Seemingly, it has become of increasing importance to comprehend this period, in order that it should not have to be repeated. In 1964, Lyndon B. Johnson adumbrated that, in American society, no longer could it be permissible for so many to be denied equal treatment, whilst all are born as equals. Consequently, the Civil Rights Act was ratified, legislation which transformed the lives of millions, and which remains inspirational and incentivizing today.

In 1998 in the United Kingdom, the implementation of the The Human Rights Act, proposed by the Labour government of the time, further enhanced the role of justice in influencing our lives. It is of enormous importance that our society continually recognises the momentousness of fairness, and acts in order to ensure that this principal underpins our decisions, and the way in which we treat others. From his extensive and forensic examination of the modern Criminal Justice System in the United Kingdom, David Lammy MP deduced that, “BAME individuals still face bias, including overt discrimination, in parts of the justice system”. As Sir Keir Starmer QC MP noted, the recommendations for the future of the Criminal Justice System proposed in the concluding segment of the Lammy Review, which was published on the 8th of September 2017, are yet to be completely implemented.

The truth and history of racial inequality and prejudice is not pure and simple. In actuality, it is incredibly complex and convoluted, and overall, attests to a societal failure to progress, which has been accompanied by the most adverse of implications. The immense struggle for social justice has dominated the development of the modern world throughout the past four centuries. Motivated by a desire for a greater degree of equality, innumerable governments have been forcefully or democratically altered or overthrown in countless nations by vast quantities of people. In many respects, observing the vociferous demonstrations presently occurring across the United States and world is inspiring, and in other ways, it can be terrifying. The distressing death of George Floyd is incontrovertibly indicative that, our full attention and





energy must be continually applied to the cause of racial justice, and to the elimination of prejudice, to which, our world must not become indifferent. Racism is both ubiquitous and implacable, and thus, pellucid and authoritative confrontation of such oppression is indisputably requisite. In a manner commensurate with the gravity of racial injustice, a governmental and societal response to this tragedy is vital. In order to prohibit the recurrence of these problems, extreme racial prejudices must be contended with by means of reforming our educational and legal systems. As Malcom X stated, "Education is the passport to the future, for tomorrow belongs to those who prepare for it today." Furthermore, the legal repercussions of the deplorable transgressions filmed on the 25th of May must be condign.

No action endorsing justice is nugatory. No voice expressing a desire for egalitarianism should be unheard. Countlessly, complacency and tergiversation have proved to be deleterious, and thus, it is imperative that they are avoided. We must, as a progressive, global society rooted in values of the utmost strength; principals of fairness, democracy and equality, of which we are proud, stand up for what we know to be right, and do what we know to be right. A peaceful step forward along a city, town or village street in the name of justice, is a step closer to achieving it. The consequences of the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom attest to this contention. Those who, by their acts of racially motivated violence, have made so many across our society bitter, have also made us wise. These abhorrent occurrences of racism are repellent, and also revealing.

Politically, we must act multilaterally, in a unified manner guided by common principals of morality, civility, and correctness, in order to defeat this evil. It is true that things fall apart, and that the centre cannot always hold. However, we must, and will, rebuild. Let us capitalise upon this opportunity to strengthen the bonds between us, and to express a crucial opinion: this will not be a society where prejudice is acceptable, or where injustices will go unnoticed.

At a time characterised by great difficulty, tumult, and uncertainty, faith in our leaders, trust in each other and hope are vital. Propinquity in the dynamic between people and government is essential for effective democracy. In order to create the Great Society that Lyndon B. Johnson sought to form, we must act constructively and collaboratively. Aristotle remarked that, "Men come together in cities in order to live, but they remain together in order to live the good life." Let us ensure that, this modernising society is one accommodating for and supportive of all people, one which provides a good life for everyone, regardless of social-class, race, religion, gender or sexual orientation. The day when our world will be free from the oppressive nature of prejudice, is the day that a truly Great Society will have been constructed.



# DO WE HAVE FREEDOM IN SCHOOLS?

SAVANNAH JOHNSON, *FITH FORM*



Freedom: the power or right to act, speak, or think as one wants. How does this apply when we are in a classroom and school environment? In a school full of pupils, the idea of freedom resonates differently with every single person. For some, freedom means being able to wear their own clothes, for some it means having their shirts untucked or being able to wear their hair down. For others it has a more serious meaning such as having a platform to speak out about issues that matter to them or having a longer amount of time to do work or assignments. Despite the variety in what it means to individual pupils, there are arguments and evidence for both whether we do or don't have freedom within school.

When deciding our GCSE options, we are given the choice of what subjects we want to take on top of the compulsory core subjects. But the options we have to choose from are limited. Additionally, in some schools, the necessity to take a language as one of the options has caused upset with some pupils, specifically those who struggle with languages or strongly dislike them. It has been queried why pupils are being made to take a subject that causes them stress and annoyance as opposed to having another subject option that they enjoy or that will benefit them in the future.

While we are given the freedom to choose our options, can we really call this freedom with such a limited array of subjects to choose from? The concept of uniform is one that every pupil will have something to say about. Although some pupils are of the opinion that having a uniform saves a huge amount of time deciding what outfit to wear or buying new clothes, which arguably is a completely valid point, the fact that we don't have the option to wear our own clothes takes away the freedom of choice in the first place. For most young people clothes are a major form of expression, something that every human being should have the right to do, to be able to express themselves freely with no judgement. One would argue that taking this form of expression away is taking away the freedom for pupils to express themselves. In the classroom, we are given the opportunity to contribute something that we feel will add value to the lesson by putting up our hand or asking to speak. The opportunity to add our views towards a specific subject gives us the freedom to be able to express how we personally feel or what we personally think about the specific subject being discussed.

Focusing in on Bradfield particularly, platforms such as the



'Pupil learning council', 'College forum' and specifically this magazine give pupils a significant amount of freedom to discuss the issues or particular aspects within the school that they feel need to be modified or changed. I have personally been involved in these platforms at Bradfield and have seen the positive effect that giving pupils the freedom to share how they feel has had. Not only does giving pupils a freedom to speak about how they feel play a huge part in creating a successful communication system between pupils and the staff, it also helps to create a better lesson and school environment, owing to the fact that changes are being made by the pupils, for the pupils.

To conclude, in all aspects of life there has to be limitations on the freedom we are given, if there wasn't, we would be living in a very different world, a world full of crime and chaos. The same applies within a school. For every person the freedom they feel they are given is completely different, depending on their individual personality and their attitude towards school. While we are given freedom in some areas of school, there are other areas where our freedom is limited. Freedom is

personal to every individual and not something that can be measured, for this reason, it would be extremely difficult to come a definitive conclusion on whether or not we have freedom in school. But, what I can conclude is that we are given our voices for a reason and that is one thing that we should always keep in mind, if you believe that you or anyone around you deserves more freedom, then use your voice to speak up and speak out.



# The Hong Kong Protests. What are they, why did they happen and what is happening at the moment?

**THEO MCCLUSKEY,  
FAULKNERS**

*Around 360 days ago, Protesters filled the streets of Hong Kong. Why? What has someone done so wrong that thousands of people feel the need to march, possibly risking injuries and jail time?*

## July 9th 2019

A new law is proposed to Hong Kong. This law would mean that criminals could be taken from Hong Kong to Mainland China, Macau and

Taiwan to face trial. The reason for this is unclear from the sources I could find; however one conclusion was that China was trying to take Hong Kong back, one step at a time.

## Why does this law seem so bad to the protesters?

In 1980, a new law was passed in response to the British leaving and the riots that were taking place at the time. The rioters had one clear message “We are not China; we are Hong Kong”. However, it could not be as clean-cut as that. The politicians decided on a compromise when creating the law. The law said that we are 1 country. To the Chinese this would satisfy their wants, but to appease to Hong Kong, they also said that they were two systems. Put simply, they are 1 country, but Hong Kong has different laws,

flags and is mostly free from Chinese rules. However, this new law felt like it broke the 1 country 2 systems bill, and this was a step too far. Rioters filled the streets in the second biggest protest in the history of Hong Kong. The 1st of July march, an annual protest for freedom of speech and equality for all (among other things) had their largest turnout yet, with 550,000 people joining.

## June 12th and July 1st

Protesters block politicians from entering the legislative building to discuss and debate the law. The police arrive and the protesters proceed to attack them with rocks and metal barricades. For the first time, but most certainly not the last, the police use tear gas to disperse the crowds



## August

A large amount of Chinese militarized police arrive on a bordering city to Hong Kong. People suspect that they will soon attack the protesters and interfere with the new law and the debate. 8 days later, the Hong Kong police use water cannons for the first time. The water is often laced with pepper spray for an extra sting and dyed the colour of the clothes which the protesters wear.

## September

With little hope for a quick end to the protests, the government give in and withdraw the legislation. But the protest had also added onto their demands. Now, they wanted everyone who was imprisoned due to the protest, no matter what they did, to be released, for much more democracy in future elections and laws as well as investigations into police brutality. When the government refused, the protest got more and more violent.

## November

People gather inside Universities and camp there. The police and protesters fight in the most violent clash yet. On the 24th November, however, there is good news as many pro-protest politicians get into government. However,

the leading parties are what is called pro-Beijing (against protesters) and only around half of all of them are elected by popular vote.

## Spring of 2020

Due to the outbreak of COVID-19, the protests lose much of their steam, and now even though the bulk of the protests are small gatherings about activists being arrested, they are soon broken up. The legislative realises this and is soon to make a law that means that while the security of the country is a very high, the freedom of speech and freedom to protest is at an all time low. Some people say this further infringes upon 1 country, 2 systems, as this law was thought up by China. This is likely to be in place by the end of the Summer.

## Conclusion

Two people have died, 2,600 people were injured, and 420 people are imprisoned. The original law has been abolished, however now Hong Kong may be facing a security crisis. There is little hope that the protests will reach a peak higher than before due to the techniques used by the police, but whatever happens, these protests will be a significant event in History.



# FREEDOM FOR ANIMALS – SHOULD WE KEEP OUR ZOOS?

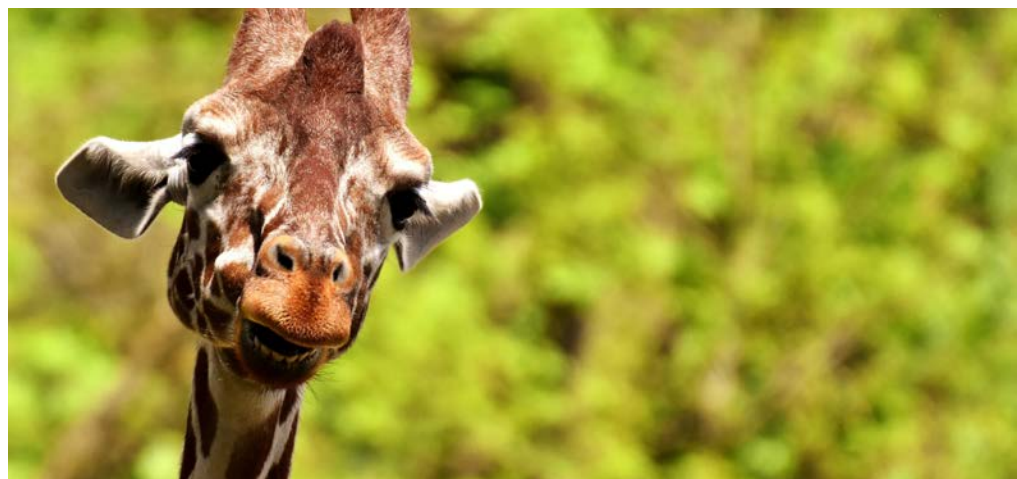
ROSIE BEDOFRD, *LOWER SIXTH*



Just this morning I was scraping off my scrambled eggs from the pan and I happened to tune in to the news. This was just as economic vulnerability of our Zoos was being mentioned on the BBC. Whilst I was peppering my eggs they discussed how the lack visitors during lockdown is devastating for the zoo industry. I have to admit, I did experience a small feeling of satisfaction. The impending liberation of these captive animals actually seemed like a possible idea to me! I might also have to mention that I am famous in my family for partaking in heated arguments about animal rights against my two brothers. Soon after, my excitement had parted and I myself was scrambling round the kitchen and getting ready for school. However this idea stuck with me for a while and I began to think about our zoos' place in society today. I am going to address the matter of zoos in the UK as this excludes breeding programs. Breeding programs usually exist in the species' natural environment and therefore can correctly be defined as efforts of conservation.

The freedom of animals is a moral discussion that is often addressed by animal rights activists and the circulation of the horrors occurring in worldwide zoos are often successful at reminding us of the harm that can sometimes be inflicted. But I do also recognize that for a vast number of people the abolition of exotic animals and zoos in the UK would mean that their children would not be able to see these fierce, magnificent and 'wild' animals. Education is a certain positive aspect brought about by zoos. By seeing these animals, it can act as a stronger incentive to protect their habitats and

species. I can sometimes forget the important role that zoos play in inspiring young children to protect their glorious globe. Although I am trying to strike a more uplifting note I couldn't ignore in my research that it is unfortunate to see that '41% of the animals on display had no signs identifying their species – the most basic of information' (discovered in a government funded study). Despite nearly half of UK's zoos slight lack of educative influence, they redeem themselves in the pure fascination that we can all agree can be enough for a child to ask their mum or dad to adopt a giraffe for Christmas.



I will begin with the obvious issue with the problem of spatial deprivation inside zoos. UK Zoos simply cannot provide sufficient space for each animal, no pen—no matter how humane—or drive-through safari can compare to the freedom of the wild. In addition to this, the attractiveness of breeding baby animals for petting profits can lead to a surplus of animals which cannot be supported financially. This often leads to either the animal's execution or it is sold to circuses. For example, Noah's Ark zoo near Bristol has recently admitted to loaning animals to the owner of a controversial circus.

The charismatic yet controversial Joe Exotic entertained us on Netflix and exposed the trade and captivity of big cats in the US for being a fierce competition to maximise profit. In my mind it removed the assumption that all zoos protect and conserve endangered species and highlighted the reality of the larger issue of the illegal animal trafficking that is happening worldwide. The most appalling part of the whole documentary for me was seeing a snow leopard crammed into the back of a man's hot van in Florida as he had just decided to purchase a big cat. I thought how is this legal? What shocked me was how such a supposedly

developed country like the US could have such relaxed laws and little control over such an overt neglect of animal welfare. I think that this TV show reveals that the interconnection between zoos and illegal trafficking is too strong to believe that they do not contribute in some form to each other. Obesity, premature deaths, behavioural problems are also the general rule of thumb for our incarcerated animals. I'm afraid that the lions and tigers that you see pacing, are actually suffering from extreme anxiety and depression and this is a sign of their psychotic illness. African elephants live more than three times longer in the wild than they do in our zoos. Currently there is a welfare concern for every elephant in the UK and unfortunately only 16% of them are able to walk normally. What is also notable which I stumbled across in this government-funded study was that 75% of elephants in UK zoos are in-fact overweight. This is a reflection of our failing effort of keeping our animals healthy in captivity. Here I would argue that the cost and damage for our exotic animals is too great to continue zoos.

So now I ask if we cannot guarantee that a universal responsibility can be adopted to care more for

these animals, with higher minimum standards, should we really be supporting this outdated way of capturing our wildlife? As Joe the Exotic exclaimed; "You Know Why Animals Die in Cages? Their Soul Dies." Perhaps we could look at a more updated way of enjoying the beauty of nature that exists around the world instead of settling for an experience that is at such expense to these species. Should we not be using our incredible technology to create virtual safaris for example? Instead of seeing these imprisoned animals we could maybe create a similar experience only without the exploitation. Maybe in the future a part of the profit generated by a virtual safari could be invested in conserving the species, which would be a more sustainable and long-term approach.

#### Below

Woodside Wildlife Park in Lincolnshire, which performed badly in its most-recent inspection.



© © Glen Mirkkin

I believe that unless we are certain that we can provide appropriate conditions for each and every animal that we capture we should not let our entertainment override the suffering that is being inflicted on our exotic species. If we are going to remove these animals from their natural and suited environment, we have to make sure that standards are replicated and ensured. Unfortunately, it is not impossible to transfer climate, apply appropriately sized cells, and guarantee that these animals will not suffer at an expense or our profit. Instead, I propose that perhaps we should learn to value their presence in their original environment and dedicate the investments that we fund for our zoos for actual conservation and protection in their homelands. This might include raising the understanding of protecting species against poachers and traffickers and forming a longer-term approach to preserving animals for our younger generations. And the question still stands, will we be seeing a rise of technology based 'zoo' experiences in the future?

**ROSIE BEDFORD, LOWER  
SIXTH**

