



2024/2025
Edition 1



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THE END OF THE CHEVRON DOCTRINE

In its recent joint judgement in the cases of *Loper Bright Enterprises et alia v Raimondo et alia and Relentless, Inc. et alia v the Department of Commerce*, the Supreme Court of the United States overturned the Reagan-era Chevron doctrine, massively limiting the discretion of agencies in interpreting legally vague statutes.

It is key to understand this decision in context. The decision is set in the context of similar judgements, which also overturned decades of precedent. One needs to look no further than the recent judgement *SFFA v Harvard*, which banned affirmative action in universities or *Dobbs v Jackson Woman's Health Organization*, which returned abortion rights into the jurisdiction of the states, in effect significantly restricting abortion access for women in "red states." As such, SCOTUS is accused of "flexing its muscles" to serve a partisan agenda.

The decision in this case also overturned years of precedent, severely upsetting the stare decisis [the settled state of things as determined by a previous judgement]. Furthermore, the judgment is widely seen as partisan. Irrespective of the potential partisan bias, SCOTUS needs to adhere to precedent. The preceding case of *Chevron U. S. A. Inc. v. Natural Resources Defense Council Inc.* established a two-step test, known as the Chevron doctrine. First, a court had to determine whether a legal provision is vague. If so, the courts must defer to any and all "permissible" agency interpretations of the statutes those agencies administer.

The rule was used to gut the decision-making powers of federal agencies under the Reagan presidency. In recent times, however, administrative agencies, such as the Environmental Protection Agency or the Federal Trade Commission used the provisions to push for more regulations, often related to environmental protections.

The majority opinion, penned by Chief Justice John Roberts, and joined by the five "conservatives" rejects the Chevron doctrine on the grounds that it interferes with judicial independence as established in the Administrative Procedure Act (APA) and Article III of the Constitution of the United States. First, the Court's majority uses originalist arguments as a basis for its interpretation of the formerly mentioned laws. The majority posits that the Founding Fathers understood the Constitution narrowly and that while agencies can serve as arbiters of fact in legal actions, they cannot be allowed to serve as arbiters of law, as doing so would infringe upon the domain reserved to the judiciary.

Second, in order to appeal to textualist judges on the bench, the majority explains how the plain meaning of the APA grants decision-making powers to the judiciary and points out that there is no loophole for vague provisions, a key assertion of the *Chevron* decision.

The dissent, penned by Elena Kagan, and joined by the two "liberals" wholeheartedly rejects the majority approach on both practical and legal grounds. In the legal sphere, the court focuses on how the judgement interferes with the stare decisis, in which people have already operated for more than 40 years. Another point of the dissent is that the meaning of laws is governed by the legislative intent, which is often unclear. The dissent attempts to demonstrate that the deference given to the courts when an agency interpretation is impermissible, in itself counting three exceptions, is not an "aberration" but an intentional caveat to prevent administrative excesses and, as such, reflects the true intent of the Supreme Court. Furthermore, the dissent argues that, unlike the legislature or the executive, it is not a policy-making body and should therefore defer policy questions to such bodies. Finally, the dissent posits that the Congress's intent, from an originalist perspective, was to give interpreting powers to federal agencies, unless said otherwise. In the practical sphere, the dissent argues that long-standing praxis should be upheld and adhered to for the sake of simplicity. It stipulates that a Court is unfit to determine questions of scientific fact, however these might also be questions of law. Relevant experts, while readily available to agencies, are generally unavailable to courts. Another practical argument is that while a federal agency can only ever arrive at one interpretation of a law it is tasked to execute, hugely localized and semi-independent judges may give contradicting opinions in different jurisdictions, complicating any implementation of relevant provisions while also encouraging "forum shopping".

The decision raises potential problems. While judges at the District Courts previously had to defer to agency interpretations of laws, they are now free to rule however they wish. Furthermore, under the new judgement, judges will be able to define scientific terms which they have had no prior knowledge of. While the institute of amici curiae, typically parties with a stake in the result of a lawsuit who provide briefs to the judges, could help the judges handle the burden, especially given the fact that some of these are prominent scientists, the decision would still complicate matters. As such, this case illustrates how law can impact "real life" and how "abstract legal debates" can determine the policy of a superpower.

Daniel Middleton



BRITISH LABOUR'S PROMISES RING HOLLOW

The British Labour Party, buoyed by a victory born out of a pledge to end “*the chaos of sleaze*,” now finds itself knee-deep in precisely the sort of dubious dealings it claimed to abhor. With a grandiose campaign promise to usher in a new age of transparency and integrity, Keir Starmer promised Britain a fresh start, a turning of the page after years of Conservative scandal. Yet, barely three months into power, Labour appears ensnared in its own web of cronyism, whispering excuses rather than confronting the very compromises that betray its mandate. Without meaningful reform, Labour’s so-called commitment to integrity may prove to be little more than political theater.

Consider this: we have now learned that Lord Alli, a wealthy Labour peer and stalwart donor, has been paying for Lady Starmer’s personal shopping expenses, from clothes to alterations. This disclosure, astonishingly, was not voluntary; it came only after external brands began offering Lady Starmer gifts, forcing the Labour leader to belatedly consult parliamentary authorities. The nonchalance displayed by Starmer’s camp, as though such a “*benefit*” to the prime minister’s family is simply part of the routine, suggests either naivety or, worse, a casual disregard for transparency.

Lord Alli’s largesse has been long established. With donations exceeding £700,000 to Labour, he has been a loyal supporter. Yet the fact that such private funding extends into the personal realm of the prime minister’s household is profoundly unsettling. We are told that “*all MPs get gifts*,” but this dismissive defense does nothing to alleviate the ethical concerns here. Starmer has personally accepted over £100,000 in gifts since 2019, more than most MPs could ever dream of declaring. Yet his party would have us believe that this isn’t relevant. This is Labour’s new form of “*integrity*” – as long as there’s precedent, the principle doesn’t matter.

The Conservatives, of course, have seized upon Labour’s double standards, and rightly so. It is rich, indeed, for Labour to posture as the moral superior while blithely engaging in the very practices it once decried. The saga of Starmer’s clothing allowance mirrors the murky underpinnings of Conservative controversies, like Boris Johnson’s opulent renovations, which were bankrolled by a Tory donor. Labour, with its lofty rhetoric, would like us to believe that it stands apart. Yet all we see is a similar self-indulgent entitlement wrapped in a different party banner.

The troubling reality is that Labour is entangling itself ever more deeply with private sector interests. Once the party of working-class support, Labour is now fast becoming a party for the well-connected.

Since taking power, Labour has not merely accepted support from the private sector; it has actively courted it. The familiar faces of former senior Labour figures – people like Jacqui Smith and Alan Milburn, now embedded in government – retain their lucrative private sector connections, and this proximity to power reeks of conflicts of interest. It seems Labour is no longer a bastion of reform, but a party all too comfortable with the influence of wealth.

One need look no further than Labour Together, the think tank led by Starmer’s confidant Morgan McSweeney. In a mere 18 months, it raised over £4 million from private donors, directing substantial sums toward preferred Labour candidates. Next week, as Labour holds its party conference in Liverpool, Labour Together will be hosting events with corporate titans like Vodafone, EY, and Uber. Are we to believe that these corporations, suddenly captivated by the Labour vision, have no designs on influencing policy?

The hypocrisy here is staggering. While promising to end cronyism, Labour’s machinery is rife with it, channeled through think tanks, private advisors, and high-level corporate partnerships. For all its declarations about ending sleaze, Labour appears to be adopting the very mechanisms it once criticized. Britain’s reputation on the Corruption Perception Index is already at an all-time low, and Labour’s pretense of reform will do little to arrest that decline. Covid-era contracts exposed a government all too willing to award lucrative deals in the absence of transparency; Labour seems poised to follow that ignoble path.

And where, one might ask, is Labour’s reform agenda? For a party that swore to restore faith in British democracy, its actions are shockingly timid. A few cosmetic changes here and there, some vague promises to close loopholes. But there is no sign of the sweeping reforms necessary to ensure true accountability. Political donations remain unchecked, lobbying regulations are laughably porous, and dark money continues to drip into the system unimpeded. In effect, Labour’s promise to “*end sleaze*” is little more than empty rhetoric, a soundbite designed for headlines rather than substance.

Without substantial reform, Labour is poised to squander the trust it has so audaciously demanded. Starmer’s initial missteps may seem like minor embarrassments, but they are symptomatic of a much larger rot. A government that fails to take its own principles seriously will inevitably lose the respect of the public it serves. The next scandal – and there will be another – will shatter the illusion that Labour is a “*clean break*” from the past. And when that moment comes, Labour will have no one to blame but itself.

Oliver Erben



FORMING THE NEW EUROPEAN COMMISSION

In September, the 27 new members of the European Commission, along with the portfolios assigned to each of them, were finally unveiled by the re-elected president of the EC Ursula von der Leyen. However, the reveal of the names that will lead the primary executive force of the EU for the next five years, came in for a lot of controversy, especially in Czechia.

The formation of the new EC started in July, when the members of the EU's Parliament, voted to decide on who will be the new president of the EC. And even though the vote was very close, the outgoing president Ursula von der Leyen managed to secure the spot for another electoral term.

After the election of von der Leyen, the debates in each of the countries, on who they should nominate for the Commissioner, started. She did insist on the nomination of one female and one male candidate, but almost no country, did so. Many countries nominated their candidate right away, such as Estonia. The Baltic state nominated Kaja Kallas, the former prime minister of Estonia, hoping she would claim the Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs spot, a specific and prestigious role in the EC, which she eventually managed to do. Other countries followed Estonia and nominated their candidate, including Slovakia or Finland.

Consequently, most of the remaining candidates were revealed in August, including from Spain, Croatia, Italy and others. Most importantly, the Czech government unanimously agreed on the nomination of Jozef Síkela (STAN), the Minister of Industry and Trade. The PM Petr Fiala (ODS) said he believed that Síkela could manage a strong portfolio, which Czechia deserved. The political party STAN also recommended the economist and newly elected MEP Danuše Nerudová, while the Czech Pirate party endorsed Marcel Kolaja, a former MEP, but neither of them got any support from Prague. Síkela was chosen to be the official nominee.

However, the Czech nomination was criticized by the opposition, namely Andrej Babiš (ANO). His party said that Síkela is incompetent and was responsible for the European energetic crisis during the summer of 2022. Back then, Czechia held the Presidency of the Council of the EU. When energy prices skyrocketed, Síkela was the one trying to make a deal throughout Europe, to stop the crisis. He eventually managed to do so.

In September, von der Leyen announced all the names, including last-minute changes from France and Slovenia, and assigned all the portfolios. While the Czech government did believe Síkela would get an energetic portfolio, this was not the case. Instead, he received the International Partnership portfolio, which has its own General Directorate and a budget of 300 million Euros.

The portfolio includes the Global Gateway project, the EU's answer to China's Belt and Road initiative, which boosts trade between China and central Asia. The portfolio assigned to Síkela is therefore a strong one, as the Czech PM wanted.

During October, the new Commissioners must attend a hearing in the EP, where the MEPs will ask them questions regarding their job. Eventually, if the Parliament votes on the approval, the Commissioners are granted a place. If not, the country rejected must put ahead a different name.

Overall, the reveal of the new European Commission was surrounded by controversy and issues. The Czech nomination will hopefully strengthen the relations between Czechia and the EU.

Matěj Prokop Diviš



<https://pbs.twimg.com/media/GXxR-wnWcAAfg3l?format=jpg&name=large>



SHOULD PRISONERS HAVE THE RIGHT TO VOTE?

The right to vote lies at the core of a democratic state and as such, it is protected and cherished by society. But should society protect the rights of those who have broken its rules, or should it protect itself from them?

To decide whether prisoners should have the right to vote, it should first be established if society even has the right to take it away from them. This does not seem like a huge issue at first, as taking away the rights of a person has been used as a regular form of punishment across almost all cultures and over all of history. However, by sending someone to prison, we also take away their rights and restrict their freedoms, for example their freedom of movement or their power of decision making. Even so, there is a line, a line that protects the integrity of every human being and that should not be trespassed, even in the case of punishment.

The reason for prison sentences being used is key to understanding this question. It is not solely meant as form of punishment, but also a chance of rehabilitation. After spending a certain amount of time locked away from society, the prisoner should be able to return to 'normal life' (omitting life-sentences), with the time spent in prison serving them as a preparation for this return. An already excluded individual can hardly be expected to return to society, if such return is being hindered by the conditions they are in. I believe that there is a danger of estrangement and dehumanisation caused by taking away an important human right. Another reason for the existence of prisons is the society's protection from the prisoner. While we can argue that somebody who has been deemed too dangerous to live in society should not be allowed to have any influence over it, this also implies the existence of a "good" and a "bad" vote, the "bad" vote being the one society would want to protect itself from.

It is natural that society fears the decision-making abilities of somebody who has harmed its members, but it should not be forgotten that the decisions of the perpetrator are limited to the options offered in the elections. If society fears a "bad" vote, does that not just point to the fact that there are electable parties that should be feared? Following that, it is not the right to vote that should be taken away from a certain group, but the right to be elected, as everybody should be free to decide who to vote for. It is not up to society to limit the right to vote based on a person's credibility or their political opinions, as this would undermine the foundations and goals of democracy. The question of giving prisoners the right to vote is dependent on why we, as a society, are given it in the first place. There are numerous reasons for this, all depending on our understanding of the question.

One of the reasons is representation of all members of society and their opinions. This raises the question of whether or not prisoners are members of society. They were before they committed the crime, and will be after they served their prison sentence, but for the time they spend in prison, opinions differ. On one hand, it can be argued that by breaking the rules and orders of society, they have excluded themselves from it, at least for the time of their punishment. On the other hand, there is a divide between breaking the law itself and breaking societies rules or ethics, as moral breaches often go unpunished due to a lack of enforceability. People who break society's rules do not necessarily break the law. This means that if we were to take the opinion that individuals who broke societies rules have excluded themselves from it, we would have to take into consideration a much larger group of people than just those in prison, which would prove impossible.

An equal vote for all is also particularly important if seen from the aspect of incentive. The members of society that are elected to be its leaders, should be aware of the fact, that their actions towards social groups can have a massive influence on their career. This is a driving factor for making sure the efforts of politicians are positive towards the whole society and not discriminatory towards any social group. If a certain social group were to be forbidden from voting, the politicians would be free from considering said group in their decision making, which would inevitably lead to a form of its oppression. This is why taking the right to vote away from prisoners poses a serious problem for their safety. They are a group that is especially vulnerable and at the mercy of society, with everything, from what they eat to when they sleep, being decided for them. If politicians lost an incentive towards prisoners, prisons would be at a high risk of becoming underfunded and the living standards in them could radically decrease, to the point of human rights violations. Unfortunately, prisoners have little to no power to change their situation due to their social position, and the situation would have little prospect of becoming publicly known, due to the distant nature prisons have in public consciousness.

Considering the arguments above, I think that prisoners should be given the right to vote. The fact that they have broken the law does not make them any less human, on the contrary, it highlights the erring nature of humanity as a whole. The risk of human rights violations that can be inferred from a lost incentive of politicians towards prisoners is also simply too large to be ignored.

Jessica Holan

THE IMPORTANCE OF *BIX* - A THANK YOU TO MR. BILY

BIX, Biologie v praxi, biology expeditions, whatever you want to call it, is an opportunity we have, as Open Gate students, to explore biology in nature, rather than in books. However, you probably all know this from the emails you receive about these expeditions. So rather than repeating these superficial pieces of information, such as the knowledge of biology, let me help you understand how *BIX* can be important to you, as an individual, from a person who has been attending these expeditions for some time now.

One of the most exciting parts of these expeditions is travelling and how your perspective on it may change. Most of you have probably heard of the common *BIX* trips happening during the school year, for example hiking in our National Parks. However, your range of opportunities extends immensely when you attend a few Czech ones. Just this year students my age are travelling to Guatemala for a once-in-a-lifetime experience, being able to snorkel with stingrays and sharks and hike up the tallest mountain in Central America. Travelling abroad with *BIX* not only gives you the memories you will remember forever, but also changes how you view travelling, so you are prepared to plan similar trips. Many of us see travelling as a vacation with our families in hotels, where you stay by the beach the whole time reading. However, *BIX* can teach you how to enjoy learning about the country in a fun way and exploring more than just the pool by the hotel. It also helps us to not be as scared to go and visit a new place in nature, as it becomes more natural after doing so with *BIX*. In this world and time camping is viewed as something the older generations did when it was not as common to spend time travelling in 4 star hotels. It can also be viewed as an uncomfortable experience since you sleep in the woods, brush your teeth outside and wash yourself in the river. However, *BIX* helps break that pattern of thinking because you try out these experiences on your own and then you no longer think of it as something 'disgusting' but a fun time with your friends. These memories are something you cannot pay for and they are something that guides you for the rest of your life. In a world where camping is becoming viewed less as a fun activity and more as just a more affordable way to travel, it is important to try it out for yourself and break the pattern of viewing camping as something negative.

On a similar note, it teaches you a skill many teenagers do not have in this generation, and that is to be able to survive in nature.

Even though living in a time where the whole world relies on technology has its advantages that help us in everyday life, it makes us too comfortable. Be honest, if you were put in the forest with just the necessities, would you be able to survive or even build a tent for you to sleep in? These are all skills I, for example, did not have before attending *BIX*s, but let me help you understand why they are so important to have and more so, why it is so important to be able to be present and enjoy nature without all that technological help. Firstly, being able to stay off our phones for a few hours in this generation seems somehow impossible, but when you have no signal, it forces you to do so. This then assures you that you are able not to be on your phone and can help you in the future, knowing you already achieved it before. Also, staying at home and lying in bed is way more normalised than being out in nature, which must stop, since being in nature has many benefits, such as an improvement in mental health and some sort of physical activity. Secondly, it helps you develop independence and critical thinking, as you are forced to overcome different obstacles, which can be bad weather or not bringing the right clothes to keep you warm at night. These skills can help improve your personal life but also can be useful later in your adult life.

Lastly, *BIX* makes sure you have the opportunity to experience things on your own. In this moment many teenagers are raised in a way where they are being looked after every minute. *BIX*, however, lets you explore new places with new people, and experience new things. It may sound unusual but it is healthy to have these weekends, where you can come up against some obstacles and dangers without your parents always being there to help you. Even when they mean it in the best possible way, to protect you, you need to have these times for character development. Also, many teenagers are, without realising it, eliminate since you have the same expectations to be able to cook over an open fire and build a tent for them to sleep in. Over time you become more independent and durable and again are able to break the pattern of being too comfortable.

The *BIX* expeditions have a lot to offer, other than just learning about biology and making new friends. The character development you receive from attending these events is immense. Therefore, I encourage you all to sign up for one *BIX* or at least try camping and see how it benefits you for yourself. Lastly, with this article, I would like to thank Mr. Bílý for allowing me, and many other students, to learn how much we love spending time in nature and gain skills many do not have.

Andrea Grossová



F1 2024 SEASON: THE YEAR REDBULL FELL

Formula 1 is one of the most prestigious motorsport events in the world. With that, it is no surprise that it is surrounded by quite dense portions of drama. One of the hottest topics of this season is the struggle of the almighty Red Bull team, with their driver duo Max Verstappen and Sergio Perez. But let's not get ahead of ourselves, there is a lot of explaining to do.

Let's start with how things have been in the past, the 2023 season to be exact. Red Bull has been dominant all season long, commonly finishing in the first two positions as a team, with a quite comfortable 20 second gap in most races. To put this into perspective, a 20 second gap in F1 is as if you were running a 200-meter sprint and while you ran through the finish line, the second person was only half-way through the track. Usually, cars finish around 2 maybe 3 seconds after each other, sometimes even less, so it comes as no surprise that 20 seconds is considered dominant. To continue this, during the start of the 2024 season, Red Bull has seemed to continue their dominant trend. However, things have changed in the blink of an eye, as so far in the season, with six more races to go, we have had 7 grand prix winners from 4 different teams. This is where the basis of the drama comes from, what exactly happened to Red Bull? There are a couple key aspect in speculation, including the car itself, the team and even some theories of all this being a strategy.

Let us have a look at the facts first, as that is the only thing we can know for sure. The first thing we know for sure is that Red Bull is struggling, even though all their fans are saying it is not true, and the other teams are getting just lucky, Red Bull is struggling. Just think about it, why would they throw away a constructor's championship, which they already have as of the race in Singapore 2024, for essentially no benefit? Red Bull has shown a steady decline since a quite famous race in Las Vegas in 2023, where Max Verstappen has won against all odds.

Ever since then, except for the start of the 2024 season, they have been struggling quite noticeably, with the breaking point being Miami 2024, a maiden win for Lando Norris from McLaren, who is a big contender for Max Verstappen's spot. But we will talk about him later. So, they are struggling, but why? Many potential reasons, it is never easy to say. It might have something to do with the departure of Adrian Newey, the former Chief technology officer of Red Bull, or the departure of Red Bull's sporting director Jonathan Wheatley. Both have undoubtedly had an impact on the team's performance, but we will have a look into that later as well.

It is a good idea to start with the car, ideally without getting too technical. Both drivers have been reporting issues with the car, quite major ones that is. It started with Checo (Sergio Perez, this is just a nickname) reporting issues with tire degradation and understeer, as well as overall instability of the car. To understand this better, imagine driving a car that does not have any tire grip (tire degradation), when you try to steer, the car simply does not turn (understeer), and when it finally does turn, the second you move the steering wheel back it just spins around like in the movies (instability). This is quite difficult to drive, and Checo has been reporting these issues a lot. This has affected his performance in the races as well, commonly not making it out of the first session of qualifying, which is kind of like an adult running a 50-meter sprint against toddlers and losing. Simply put, the issues have had a great impact on Checo from the very beginning.



<https://www.skysports.com/f1/news/12475/12876500/red-bulls-f1-2023-dominance-ted-kravitz-explains-why-the-rb19-is-so-strong-after-another-1-2-in-miami>

Not for Max, however, he seemed to be doing fine. It was not a "20 second gap" fine, but he was still quite competitive and on the podium (top 3) most of the time. Until one race weekend, he was not fine, the problems came to him, with Checo even mentioning that Max is now in the same problematic boat as him. It all seemed to happen in a matter of weeks, which is pretty uncommon. There are two options, either the teams around have improved so much Red Bull could not keep up, or Red Bull themselves have made a mistake in the development. The decision between these two is, quite sadly, impossible, as even the most knowledgeable of people in the technical area have no idea what happened. The fact remains, Red Bull does not have a dominant car, which has helped them massively in the past.

With that, two questions arise. Firstly, how is it that Max noticed the problems so much later? Very simply, it is a known fact that Max is a lot better driver than Checo, so he was able to "keep it on the road" better than Checo simply due to his skills. Secondly, if Max is so good, why do the struggles affect him so much recently? Again, very simple, it is kind of like trying to win a long-distance race with your legs tied together. You can be however good you want, but your chances of winning are slim. This is shown mainly with Max's radio messages and media briefings, where he quite commonly criticizes the car and the team's decisions, describing it as "trying to save what is left of the strategy". Both Red Bull's drivers are unhappy with the current state of the car, and they make it very clear, with Max even getting fines and hours of public service (yes, a full-grown man driving cars in circles going 320 km/h is doing public service) for the explicit language he uses, but that is for another discussion and another topic.



<https://www.mirror.co.uk/sport/formula-1/leclerc-imola-ferrari-verstappen-norris-32845983>

To add to the team's issues, their stars left the team at the beginning of the season, namely Adrian Newey and Jonathan Wheatley. Wheatley has made big contributions to the team and has helped to build them up mainly in the part of the skill of their drivers, but we will focus on Newey. His departure ties closely to the car's issues, even though many people deny this fact. Newey, as the main person behind aerodynamics, has often been described as 'the person who can see and bend air', which is obviously a big contributor to the technical abilities of the car, so it is a given that with his departure, Red Bull will struggle. While it is a factor, many people, me included, believe that the personnel changing is not making this big of a difference.

To conclude, in short, what is the problem? Sadly, there is no answer, it is a combination of the things mentioned above, together with Christian Horner's, the principal of the team, problem with personal life, but I recommend you look that up yourself, because I can't write about that here.

Now for the future, what is going to happen? There are two questions that arise. Is Red Bull going to make a comeback, and is Lando Norris winning the championship? The first question is easy to answer, as there is no way for us to know. They might, and they are promising big upgrades in the next race, but only time will tell. There is also the theory that they are sabotaging themselves to gain more wind tunnel time. To put it simply, they want to finish second or third this year to have more research for next year, as finishing lower gets you more wind tunnel hours and more potential development in return. This is mainly to balance the team's advantages. I find that theory unlikely, but again, only time will tell. As for the driver championship, while I do wish to see Lando as the world champion, it is in my opinion unlikely. Lando would have to be perfect in the next 6 races, however, he is a very inconsistent driver. In addition, his teammate Oscar Piastri would have to greatly help him with slowing Max down. I would like to finish off with a quote I saw online regarding this exact issue, although this will probably only be for people who are more interested in F1. "Y'all want Piastri to be Bottas while Norris can't be Hamilton." And with that, I hope I have moved your mind a little closer to F1. Seriously, try watching a race, it is really fun.

Jakub Kubín



POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION

Being a parent is exciting but also really challenging, many parents and especially mothers are overwhelmed after birth and do not know what to do. It is normal to be a little scared and have a feeling of doubt, especially if you are a first-time parent. However, if your feelings include extreme anxiety, sadness or loneliness it can be signs of having postpartum depression.

Postpartum depression (PPD) is a mental state, a type of depression that women experience after recently giving birth. They experience a period, whose duration can vary from one week to one year, when they have difficulties feeling something else than sadness or feeling worthless. There are many different symptoms, for example: feeling on the edge, loss of energy or appetite, crying for no reason, difficulty thinking or focusing, trouble sleeping, feeling guilty, lack of interest in your baby or even thoughts of suicide and of hurting your baby.

It is common to face problems after giving birth, having a baby and becoming a first-time parent. They must adapt their lifestyle which is already difficult, but when the other partner has postpartum depression, it is extra challenging for the couple to keep going and don't give up. Depression of any kind can strain a relationship badly.



<https://womensmentalhealth.org/posts/canadian-task-force-recommendation-on-screening-for-postpartum-depression-misses-the-mark/>

This doesn't only have an impact on the parents but also on the baby. When his mother is in this state and doesn't want him, he easily becomes neglected. She does not take care of him. She does not feed him properly, pay enough attention to him or do anything else. Afterwards the baby can have trouble with sleeping, eating, temper tantrums have a higher risk for developing any disorders or impaired social skills. There will especially be problems with bonding and establishing deeper emotional connections.

Doctors argue why women develop PPD. They say that all these physical and mental changes happen because of extreme drop of hormones estrogen and progesterone in their body after birth. However, new baby stress, family history of mental illnesses, changing family roles or marital strife can also contribute to its development. Sadly, this illness is not really preventable. But it can be treated with anti-anxiety or antidepressant medicines, psychotherapy or support group participation. It definitely helps to know the warning signs and symptoms to stop it before it reaches its greatest extent. We must also take into account that not every mother's doubt about a newborn is a sign of PPD. There is also a thing called 'Baby Blues'. It is a period of time, but unlike PPD it is approximately 2 weeks, where the new mother fears having a newborn and feels a little anxiety. But it is a 'natural/healthy anxiety' of something new.

Unfortunately, every year, approximately 1 in 7 (15%) of new mothers have their lives impacted by this horrible illness. Many people condemn these women because of terrible behavior towards their kid, but they just do not know anything about PPD. These women did nothing wrong to deserve this. That is why our society should raise awareness of PPD among as many people as possible.

Eliška Bastařová



OG CHRONICLE INTERVIEW: MS. BERRISFORD

Donna Berrisford started her third year at OG. Not only does she teach English, History and Geography, but from this school year she is also a member of the staff advisor team at OG Chronicle. Hobbies, travelling and much more, that was what we talked about in another OG Chronicle's teacher interview.

Was teaching always your dream job?

No, when I was younger, I wanted to be an archaeologist.

That links with history (the subject you teach)...

It does, yes, and also because I liked Indiana Jones.

How did your teacher career start then?

Well, I did not decide after I left university. When I was younger, I had various different ideas about what I might do, for a while I did not have an idea and then after I left university I worked for a charity for a year and that was when I decided I would like to go to teaching because I wanted to work more with young people and be in a job where I did not have to sit at a desk all day.

You teach English, History and Geography. Were those your favourite subjects at school?

I really liked English and History and I also studied a lot of philosophy and ethics, so they were my initial priorities and interests.

How long have you been living in the Czech Republic?

I am going into my third year, but I was here before for four years.

So, in total six/seven years. At what level is your Czech then?

It is very bad, but I am having lessons. In fact, Ms. Larsen and I just had our Czech lesson. It is progressing, very slowly. Because the grammar is really hard.

What are the Czechs like?

There is a cultural difference which takes some getting used to. I think the main thing I notice is people do not immediately appear as warm and friendly, I think you have to get to know people a bit more, whereas in the UK people will smile at you when you go to a shop and they will maybe make a little bit of conversation. One thing I notice here is people just let you be, they do not interfere in your life.

You are from Nottingham, United Kingdom. How would you persuade me, as a tourist, to visit your city?

If you like history we have castles and caves underneath it, you can explore those. Of course, you have Robin Hood and the forest and all of that. There is quite a nice area called Lace Market which is this old industrial area which is famous for the lace so you will find lots of bars and restaurants there.

Okay, I will give it a go, someday...

I mean, I would not say it is the top spot if you visit UK, but if you have some time there...

You left your home, you left Nottingham, you left the UK. Was it because you wanted to discover the world, see what is out there?

Yes. I like to travel and after teaching few years in the UK I took a year off to travel. I went to Southeast Asia and Australia, and I decided I want to live abroad. That is when I started applying for jobs at international schools. The first job I got was in Prague – that is why I came here!

You mentioned it already, and I read it on your profile on the OG website. In 2015 you stopped with everything and went on that one-year journey through Asia and Australia. Was it your idea and how was it, overall?

It was my idea, I wanted to do it for a long time, but I had to save up enough money, I could not work for a year. It was great, one of the best things I ever did, and I am glad I did it when I was a little bit older because I had a different perspective on it if I would have done it after finishing university. I have a funny story about Australia. I went on a trip to see the waterfalls. I bumped into a student I used to teach at my first school in UK. She was on her gap year with her friends and of all the places to meet randomly that was quite a surprise.

Ondřej Galyaš



Photo by Ms. Berrisford

MAKING MUSIC MORE ACCESSIBLE

During the summer, I attended a summer school program in Boston's Berklee College of Music. The entire experience was absolutely wonderful, the city's beautiful architecture, all the music you would want in one place, and an overabundance of musicians to play that music with. The reason I am talking about it here, though, is because of an event that happened on the second day. We were having a jazz jam session where people were randomly picked to play together. After getting picked, I noticed that our pianist was blind. On stage she said that she could play by ear, so I did not question it. And while we did not play anything life-changing, we played competently, especially the girl, who had no trouble latching onto what we were playing. You may say that that is obvious given that she can hear, but even still, it was a pleasant surprise for me, as someone who had not yet played with any blind musician. This made me think about what tools exist out there in the world that have helped accommodate musicians who have some form of disability, and how much they have helped these people express themselves in this wonderful medium.

The first type of musician that people will think of when thinking about disabled musicians is the blind musicians. This makes sense, given that Ray Charles and Stevie Wonder both fit that mark and are not only the most popular disabled musicians, but also some of the most popular musicians ever. The arc of music technology development has usually made it easier for independent artists to record, produce, mix, and release their music in the comfort of their homes, all from their laptops. However, this change has actually not been as beneficial to blind musicians, who rely on physical touch to ascertain what they are doing.



<https://www.fastcompany.com/91025338/the-quest-to-build-more-accessible-music-tech-for-blind-and-visually-impaired-artists>

While studios with analog machines and physical knobs were tough but understandable to work within, the digital displays of computers and tablets are a lot tougher for blind users to navigate. As Athan Billias, president of the MIDI Association once said: *"Eye candy has very little meaning to Stevie Wonder."* As a result, music programs such as digital audio workstation Reaper and notation software MuseScore have been making gradual efforts to bring in more accessibility options. These include integrations of screen readers, such as NVDA, more communications through MIDI instruments to these programs, and high-color contrast modes.



<https://www.attackmagazine.com/features/long-read/how-the-music-tech-industry-is-adapting-to-better-accommodate-musicians-with-accessibility-issues/>

What may be more surprising to the public is that musicians who are partially or almost completely deaf also have tools that can help them. Kikarazu is a Deaf DJ, with a capital D, as he was born without hearing, and he uses sign language. But he can DJ due to a combination of technologies, the backbone being the SUBPAC, a piece of music tech that interprets low frequencies into physical feedback. This allows him to quite literally feel the music, and though he himself has described that it has taken work to get used to it, he also described his discovery of it *"as if I had been asleep for most of my life."* Even in his gratitude for what he has, there is still a bit of frustration, particularly for the inherent barriers of deaf people interacting with technologies that have an assumption of hearing from its users.

It may seem absurd for developers of music technology to try and develop solutions for problems that will affect so few of their users, however as product manager for Arturia, Pierre Pfister explains: *“Designing new software with accessibility in mind is a challenge but it also forces you to make better interfaces for everyone, not only relying on beautiful graphics.”* There are many things abled musicians take for granted in software and technology, which makes it more difficult to design more accessible interfaces. A lot of disabled musicians often cite one of their biggest wishes to be that accessible technology gets built with their input and help, so as to get as close as possible to ideal for them. That is a long battle, but the fact that it is being considered is a step forward.

To list every piece of accessible music technology would be exhausting, but there are still a couple that I want to mention that are interesting to me. Drake Music is a UK charity focused on making music more accessible to disabled people through education, advocacy, and building technology. Among their projects are things like the Touch Trombone & Oboe, instruments that emit sound on one click of a button, and Mi.Mu gloves, developed by a team led by musician Imogen Heap, which translate hand gestures into musical expressions. Soundbeam is a similar project, using ultrasonic sensors to detect movement and play musical notes based on distance from the sensors. This is specifically helpful to people with severe physical disabilities, and the project often provides devices in special education and to elderly people. In terms of projects that mostly include disabled, the Paraorchestra is one of the most notable. Its mission statement is *“reinventing the orchestra for the 21st century”*, and while that does include modernizing their sound, as the name suggests, it also has a major focus on including *“disabled, deaf, or neurodivergent”* musicians in its roster.

However, even with all this innovation and all these great projects there is still the lingering question of whether this is even close to being enough to actually spark change.

The biggest sticking point that you can leverage against all that I have mentioned in this article is that while the technologies are built to be accessible, there are other factors making them inaccessible to the average disabled person, the biggest being cost. A 2019 US Census showed that disabled people are over twice as likely to live in poverty compared to non-disabled people. It is all well in good to create accessible technology that helps disabled people, but advancements need to push to make them affordable or at least obtainable to disabled people through other charitable projects that help distribute these devices to disabled people.

As was already mentioned, the best thing that these devices and software in this vein can do is work with and for disabled people, because otherwise developers are mostly likely shooting blind on a subject they have very little understanding of. Though the tone in this paragraph is negative, I do believe that things are moving in the right direction. The recent announcement by famed producer Jack Antonoff, who has produced for Taylor Swift and Lana Del Rey, that he will be working on opening studios in LGBTQ+ youth centers to make them more accessible to those who do not have the means to work in them makes me hopeful. It shows that there is an interest in helping people become musicians and artists, even with all the barriers that they face. Which, to be fair, mostly exist because of the habitual ignorance of these minorities of people in the educational space and the lack of economic help they receive, not because they are wholly incapable of making music.

Ivan Pavlovec



EXPLORING THE HOUSE IN CLARKE'S *PIRANESI*

Never-ending halls that stretch to places unknown to men. Statues, of all sizes, with faces somehow familiar and comforting, yet distant with their cold bodies from stone. Conducted by powerful elements such as Tides, which represent a threat along with rebirth through their strong currents or Rainfall, which provides the indispensable freshwater. It is a shadow of the real world, where life and death coexist in harmony, unity and repletion.

"The beauty of the House is immeasurable; its kindness infinite."

A fantastical world full of horror, mystery, magic and hard reality. That is the extraordinary universe Susanna Clarke creates for her novel *Piranesi*. The main character is named after Giovanni Battista Piranesi, an Italian graphic artist and architect of the 18th century. His fictitious depictions of colossal, intricate and vast structures in his series of prints titled *Imaginary Prisons* remind us of Clarke's description of the 'House.'

"Once – it was about four or seven months ago – I saw a bright yellow speck floating on a gentle Tide beneath the Fourth Wester Hall. Of course, it is possible that it was a part of a type of sea vegetation that I have never seen, but I am doubtful. The texture seemed wrong. Its surface repelled Water, like something meant to live on Air."

While Giovanni's prison was imaginary, the place our protagonist Piranesi finds himself in, becomes a reality. The place is a refuge with no windows nor vision of the real world. A place that makes you lose your knowledge, your memories and eventually yourself. Not even the trees remain in your mind, because the House does not have Trees. As we dive into the book, we realize that Piranesi is the one who lost himself among many others, that now lie within the abandoned Halls. They all lost the person they were before, before the House, before everything.

"The World feels Complete and Whole, and I, its Child, fit into it seamlessly. Nowhere is there any disjuncture where I ought to remember something but do not, where I ought to understand something but do not."

Despite that, the House gives Piranesi independence and isolation from the outside world. He doesn't wish to leave as the new world he lives in gives him the fulfilment he needs. He collects his food, water and materials for clothes or tools, and he finds his purpose in the scientific exploration of the House and in his visits to the Dead. Piranesi finds comfort and peace in the detachment from the dangerous and treacherous 'Other world.'

On the other hand, our character is a principled scientist, whose strong, curious mind only follows facts and analyses data. He doesn't believe the plain words of others and is even willing to question his own conviction for the sake of truth and justice. Thanks to this, he can overcome his ignorance to the events happening around him and finally see the reality he has been entangled in.

"My last thought before I fell asleep was: He is dead. My only friend. My only enemy."

But even when his mind is on the correct path to truthfulness, the environment he is enclosed in makes it impossible to act. His isolation becomes an obstacle and his only path to the outside world becomes the essence of his dilemma.

"It is my belief that the World (or, if you will, the House, since the two are for all practical purposes identical) wishes an Inhabitant for Itself to be a witness to its Beauty and the recipient of its Mercies."

"If I leave, then the House will have no Inhabitant and how will I bear the thought of it Empty?"

The story of *Piranesi* and the House portrays the sublime world in a graspable way in which a man can see all its glory simply by looking at the statues, but without experiencing the reality of its grandeur. This shadow seems to be the absolute divine in the eyes of Piranesi as it satisfies his needs and brings him happiness and purpose. The novel first implies that this world is enough and there is nothing greater than the House, since it represents the magnificence of art and nature. However, as we follow Piranesi's journey and explore the dark secrets of the people involved, the House suddenly brings us a sense of uncertainty and even fear. Piranesi's change in approach to his position shows us how the loss of reality and identity can lead to a search for meaning, freedom and break from isolation. This exploration of reality and lost knowledge reveals the importance of perception.

Piranesi is not a detective book, as the mystery behind Piranesi's confusion is already palpable in the first parts, making it frustrating for the reader to endure the slow unravelling of the whole story. This feeling is rooted in Piranesi's innocence and gullibility with which he often misses the clues around him. Yet the gradual investigation of his origin gives the story an eerie, almost horror feeling of uneasiness and wonderment about the characters from Piranesi's past and present. In the end, the enjoyment we feel from the progression of Piranesi's reminiscence or rather of the person he was before, can be overpowered by the inescapable power of the House.

Julie Hoffmanová

FUTURE NBA GOAT?

A center for the San Antonio Spurs, Victor Wembanyama is a French NBA player, standing at an outrageous 7'4 (224cm) despite weighing "only" 95 kg is already dominating the best basketball league in the world with his unorthodox playstyle. This young star was the 1st overall pick in the 2023 NBA draft. Drafted from a French HS club "Mets99" with huge things expected from him. Many have compared all this hype around him to an arguable GOAT (Greatest Of All Time) of this sport – LeBron James. But the real question is, did he match, or even exceed this level of expectations? Can he save this almost mediocre team? Let's look on his stats for the last season.

Key Statistics:

- averaged 21.4 points per game; 30th best in the NBA
- 10.6 rebounds per game; 8th best in the NBA
- won *Rookie Of The Year*
- 3.6 blocks leading the NBA
- made the *All-NBA Defensive Team*
- led the Spurs to the playoffs



<https://www.endorsco.agency/talent/victor-wembanyama>

In conclusion, Vic had a bright start to his career, showing everyone he is worthy of the hype and even the comparison with famous LeBron James. Even though his current team is in a rebuild mode, meaning they are not a serious contender for the NBA championship yet, I think only time will tell us if he really is cut from the same cloth as LeBron or even Michael Jordan, and if he is going to be truly one of the greats.

Danny Smíšek

LOVE BITES

The blood seeps into the cloth of my shirt
painting it with burgundy hues.
You say, "I bite because I love".
Your words cut deep,
like a dagger straight to my neck.
My darling, is love supposed to hurt so much?
Your teeth, they only bury themselves deeper,
bruising my skin,
they hold me in place,
until you give me your next request.
For I am yours to love and to command.
The red droplets stain the ground,
my body feels like it is about to give out.
The heart that fuels all my veins
can no longer provide more blood.
Pumping the crimson life around
is too hard of a task
when it can only beat to the pain you provide.
As my eyelids drop,
I can finally say
"I know what love feels like now, thanks to you."

Nela Králová

MEET ME IN YOUR GRAVE

Iwant to feel your bones
on mine 'cause darling
if we cannot live for each other
we might at least lay in the same grave

I promised you many times
that I will wait for you
till the end of time
but Death already stands in my shadow

My love, I am so tired
it has been so long
maybe you are just a distant dream
nothing but a fantasy

I slowly lose myself when I remember
your eyes that were the prettiest
shade of blue
I prayed that I would never

have to see tears dripping from them
and God took mercy on me
I am the only one
who suffers

Andrea Kočová



Words have the power to change the world, so we've been choosing them carefully for eighteen years.

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