

CULTURE VULTURE



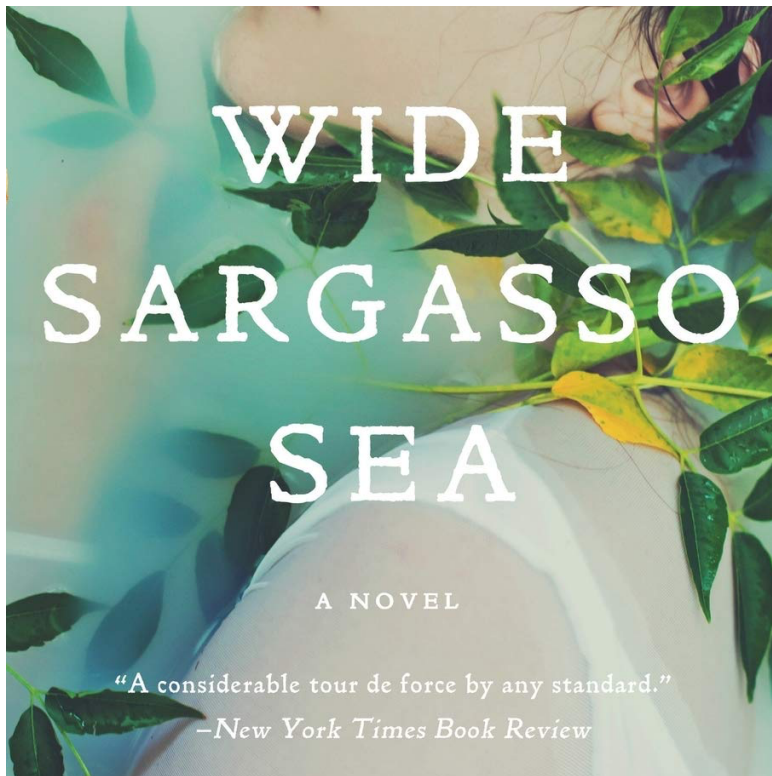
Reflections on the end of 'Succession' & where to head next.

Molly Shillinglaw shares comments on the shows end and recommends similar favourites.

Just under a week from now, the first episode of the final season of HBO's corporate drama *Succession* will air, signalling the end of Jesse Armstrong's beloved series. For those that aren't fans, the show entails the lives of the Roy family members as they fight between each other in attempts to inherit the chair of the global media company headed by the family's patriarch, Logan Roy. Last month, creator Jesse Armstrong announced that the show would end with season 4, evoking mixed feelings within the shows fanbase. It has been said that it is good that the show is ending on its own terms rather than dragging out just because it is popular however, many relate to the majority of fans who will miss the show and its characters. The shows actors have also expressed their thoughts; Sarah Snook has said she feels 'upset' to say goodbye to the character of Shiv Roy as she apparently didn't find out the show was ending until the final read-through; Brian Cox, however, has said he is 'totally fine' with the show ending whilst also taking the opportunity to bash co-star Jeremy Strong for his method acting. This is a continuation of his recent feuds with Strong whereby he has explicitly criticised his acting philosophy by which Strong has used to embody the character of Kendall Roy. Whilst the shows ending has certainly upset many fans, television encompasses a large amount of entertainment in which rich people argue so, here are some of my favourites.

- *The White Lotus* (2021-present): An anthology social satire that follows the lives of both guests and staff at a luxury hotel chain. Workers are pitted against guests and poor against the rich; as their holidays progress, darker complexities emerge which disturbs the idyllic scenery of the white lotus itself.
- *Severance* (2022-present): Less wealth and power than *Succession*, but more a dystopian, black-comedy commentary on the boringness of corporate life. Office workers have their work memories separated from their life memories so that they can be ultimate weapons utilised by the workforce, inciting conspiracy
- *Billions* (2016-present): Very wealth and power. Tells the story of two men as they enter a ego-driven race to wealth whilst one attempts to prosecute the other for illegal tactics used to get ahead in the hedge-fund business.





Wide Sargasso Sea by Jean Rhys

Grace Jappy reviews the unofficial prequel to Jane Eyre

Wide Sargasso Sea is often described as a prequel to *Jane Eyre* and although it definitely is, in other ways it is very much a self-contained novel in its own right. One doesn't need to have read *Jane Eyre* to enjoy it or appreciate it. Set just after the emancipation of the slaves in the Caribbean, the main character of the book is Antoinette; a young Creole girl who has lived her whole life in the Caribbean.

The book is structured in three parts. The first part of the book concerns Antoinette's childhood on an estate that was formerly a plantation. This describes her difficult relationship with her mother and her unsettled sense of where she belongs. This mainly stems from her friendship with a little girl she used to play with and grew up with, however it is later made clear that they are no longer allowed to be friends because of their different backgrounds. She's grows quite isolated and throughout this first part there is a sense of the Islanders restive, creating a scene of an unsettled community.

Part two is when Antoinette has grown up and is married to an Englishman, Mr Rochester, who's come out to the Caribbean to seek his fortune, but soon realises there's no easy wealth anymore after the end of slavery. This leaves him unsuccessful and unhappy and ultimately this is what jeopardises their marriage. The characters of Antoinette and Mr Rochester share the narrating, alternating

throughout. As their varying depictions of events highlight their emotional separation, Antoinette tries to find an allies in her servants, and it is at this point in their disintegrating marriage in which Mr Rochester decides that she's mad. The only course of action he sees as reasonable is to try to contain her and control her.

Part three is the shortest part and is set later again in Thornfield hall. This is where the overlap with *Jane Eyre* becomes clear. Antoinette, who's been renamed Bertha by her husband, is incarcerated in the attic but is plotting her escape or her revenge, and that's how the book ends, with a likely outcome that those who have read *Jane Eyre* will know about.

The book themes a lot around class. There's an overall focus on money and then slavery, and the colonialism and post colonialism of the Caribbean. It also concentrates on the effects on a society that tries to form after these changes. As well as this there's insight about marriage despite being in quite a pessimistic view. However, the main question that stands out would be the manipulation of the perception of madness, the nature of madness and the courses of madness, and our approach towards it.

The book is very rich in lots of ways. As a sensuous book the sounds and smells beautifully evoke an idea that you are there experiencing it. Jean Rhys is able to conjure an incredibly attractive landscape, setting and period.

But as well as this book being a great book it has got a fantastic back story. Jean Rhys was publishing novels in the 1940s to moderate success, but then nobody had heard from her in ages and it was assumed that she had died and had been forgotten about. However, Diana Athill tracked her down and Jean Rhys was very much alive and living in Devon as a recluse and alcoholic. Diana went to see her as she had heard about this novel and wanted to recover it. It was only once she got there when she realised that it was all stashed in supermarket bags under Jean Rhys's bed. Diana Athill had to get all the papers, which were in no particular order, and try to sort out which were intended for the book and in what order they went. To an extent she had to refashion the book, making her very much party to creating this novel which was later published in 1966, and is still widely regarded as classic book.



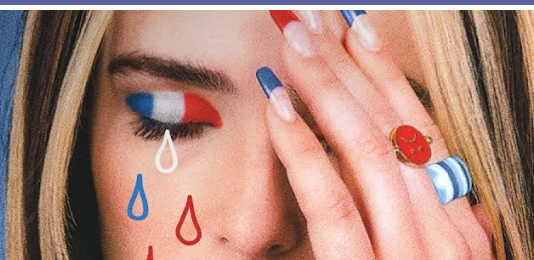
LAST WEEK'S SONNET:

Shake it Off - Taylor Swift

Can you guess the pop song from the Shakespearean sonnet? Correct answer in next week's Culture Vulture!

O kiss unfaithful, were it I was blind
that thou couldst not thy suffering impart -
or art thou but a cuckold of the mind,
the false creation of a wary heart?
My eyes are clos'd, but still my vision's clear;
my stomach turns to see the shameful scene
of my disloyal but beloved dear
cavorting with some loutish libertine.
Sick jealousy, thy tortures are perverse!
Thou goad'st the righteous to their cold demise;
they'd rather let frigid seas immerse
them whole than face adulteresses' lies.
No matter what transgressions I've espied,
I'll strive to look upon the brighter side.

NOT OKAY



Mostly Okay: The message of Not Okay

Miss Ramsay looks for the meaning behind 2022 film Not Okay

From the opening moments of cynical 'zillennial' film *Not Okay*, you are told one thing - you will not like the main character. Zoey Deutch (*Set it Up*, *The Outfit*) throws herself into the role of protagonist Danni Saunders; a twenty-something friendless Photo Editor, who is never seen without her OTT phone, long neon nails and chunky coloured-clay rings, that are reminiscent of the lockdown Instagram business pages.

The film follows Saunders in her obsession with Dylan O' Brian's (*Maze Runner*, *Teen Wolf*) Colin - a Pete Davidsonesque influencer, who is never seen without his vape or cloud of weed following him in a nod to TikTok's worst e-boys. This obsession starts a pretty innocent (questionable) idea: a fake writing retreat in Paris which will a). Make Colin obsess over Saunders as she becomes more clouted, and b). Allow Saunders to overtake work rival Harper, and start a profession as a 'serious' writer.

Things go south when a terrorist bombing hits Paris, and Saunders - instead of coming clean about her lies - decides to plunge forward into trauma-based influence over the social media generation. As I said at the start of the article, Deutch does not play a redeemable character, and director Quinn Shephard does not try to give her a neat redemption arc. Instead, as Saunders lies spiral out of control, the true message of the film comes through.

What follows is an anti-gun-violence, anti-terrorism, anti-influencer, anti-online-hate social commentary, which ends in a powerful speech by anti-gun activist Rowan (Mia Isaac) that is both moving and poignant - her previous viral campaign had been claimed as Saunders' own (a comment on white voices covering up black lived experiences). Confused at times - the film will ultimately make you cringe, gasp, laugh and - most importantly think - about what is not okay in society today. Available on Disney +

Mrs Cherriman suggests:

The Girl Crying in her Latte - Song by Sparks

The song is both happy and sad but great fun. Typical of Sparks, a great band which a huge back catalogue to check out. You could also look at the video on YouTube which is excellent and features award winning actress, Cate Blanchett who recently starred in the film 'Tar' and is a fan of the band. Interestingly, Cate Blanchett featured in the video of a Massive Attack (nice local reference) song some years ago. This song has recently been released and an album of the same name will be released by Sparks in May. Enjoy!



Soundtrack to the week:

This week's soundtrack to the week has been built by editors and readers. If you would like to have your say, follow the QR code on page 5!

MONDAY: Recommended by

Charlie Williams

Zombie - The Cranberries



TUESDAY:

Recommended Grace

Jappy

The Love Cats - The Cure



WEDNESDAY:

Sad Songs in a Hotel Room - Joshua Bassett



THURSDAY:

Recommended by a student

The Boys Are Back - Zac Efron & Corbin Bleu (HSM3)



FRIDAY:

Vegas - Doja Cat



SATURDAY:

Recommended by a student

Before He Cheats - Carrie Underwood



SUNDAY:

(You Make Me Feel Like) A Natural Woman - Aretha Franklin



WANT TO GET INVOLVED?

As the weeks progress, we are hoping Culture Vulture will become jam-packed with student articles, recommendations and reviews. If you would like to make your own creative suggestion, or have a piece of work that you would like to see in the next magazine, scan the QR code.



Alternatively, if you would like to contribute an article, film, album, book or podcast review, or have an itching to write a features piece about a current cultural affair, email either theysham@gordanoschool.org.uk or pramsay@gordanoschool.org.uk with your idea and they can point you in the right direction. Who knows - you may see your name in print!

Make sure to encourage your tutors and friends to get involved, and let's make creativity central to the Gordano Sixth Form experience!

