

ELLESMIERE EXCLUSIVE



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Beauty Standards

No one is pretty because how can you be something that doesn't exist? No one is pretty because to be pretty you have to be pretty to everyone, all 8 billion people, and that's impossible. There's no issue in saying calling your friend pretty but the issue lies in society, children, being told there is a way you must look, a certain box you must fit it into, all to be called pretty.

You scroll on social media and see an array of videos all of girls who you think are "perfect" and, yes, they may be beautiful but someone else's worth does not diminish your own. Countless corporations on social media are aiming to sell girls a dream, one that promises them to be noticed and for what? To get one more like on their video? Because what better way is there to sell a lipstick then promising the intangible prize of 'prettiness'.

According to a report by OSF digital, 62% of women follows beauty influencers on social media. With each new video, there is a new product you must have. Concealer. Blush. Skincare. You need them. This has pervaded beyond the digital world with shops such as Boots now having "trending on social media stalls".

WRITER'S NAME: ABIGAIL MA

If you then try the products and it doesn't look like the perfect thing you saw on the video, you start to believe you're reason it isn't working.

However, this is an illusion, as it is often impossible, because most of these videos are filtered and edited to present a reflection that we want to see.

A study by dove found out that 90% of girls say they follow at least one social media account that makes them feel less beautiful. But what can we do about this? It may seem impossible to tackle a problem this vast, but it can start by urging social media companies to impose more rules. Removing the manufactured and promoting the natural. Social media bears so many benefits and it can be an environment that makes positive change. However, this is not possible until it is reformed.



|Coming up...

- BEAUTY STANDARDS
- POPE FRANCIS: A LEGACY OF COMPASSION AND GLOBAL IMPACT
- A MINECRAFT MOVIE REVIEW – MEDIOCRITY AT ITS FINEST
- MISS HOSTI INTERVIEW
- THE POWER OF SOCIAL MEDIA AND YOUNG VOTERS IN THE 2024 US ELECTION

Mae Baxter - Writer/ Designer
Abigail Ma - Writer
Sam Henn – Writer



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WORLD-WIDE EVENTS

Pope Francis: A Legacy of Compassion and Global Impact

WRITER'S NAME: MAE BAXTER

Pope Francis
1936-2025

On April 21st, 2025, the world mourned the loss of Pope Francis, the 266th pope. Throughout his time as leader of the Catholic Church, he was known for his humility, compassion, and efforts to address social issues with a more open and progressive outlook. His passing signifies the end of an influential chapter for the Church, and his legacy will likely shape its direction for years to come.

“Just as we need the courage to be happy, we also need the courage to live simply.” – Pope Francis

A New Kind of Leadership: Compassion Over Power

When Pope Francis was elected in 2013, he quickly made a mark as a leader willing to challenge tradition. As the first Latin American pope and the first Jesuit to hold the position, his selection was seen as a significant shift for the Vatican, symbolizing a more inclusive approach. But what really distinguished him was not just his background, —it was his emphasis on humility and service as the core principles guiding his leadership.

Pope Francis chose to reject the traditional displays of power associated with the papacy. Instead of living in the Apostolic Palace, he preferred a simple guest house, and he was often seen using public transportation. His modest lifestyle, a stark departure from that of many previous popes, resonated with people worldwide who appreciated his down-to-earth approach.

“Money has to serve, not rule.” – Pope Francis

His leadership was grounded in the core principles of mercy and inclusion. Pope Francis consistently stated that the Church should not be a place of judgment, but instead one that is healing and welcome. He made significant strides in reaching out to marginalised groups, including LGBTQ+ individuals, divorced Catholics, and the poor, advocating for their full acceptance within the Church. His views on these issues made him beloved among many.

Beyond Religion: Pope Francis's Global Influence

Pope Francis' influence, however, reached far beyond religion. His papacy coincided with some of the most pressing global issues of the 21st century, including climate change, economic inequality, and the refugee crisis. Pope Francis used his platform to speak out about these issues, becoming a powerful voice on the global stage.

Pope Francis also made headlines with his advocacy for refugees, the homeless, and the marginalised. He called for greater empathy and understanding, challenging both the Church and the World to take responsibility for those suffering from poverty and displacement. His influence was felt not only among Catholics, but also in non-religious communities, as his message resonated with all those working for justice and equality across the globe.

What Happened Next?

Following the death of Pope Francis, the Vatican entered a period of mourning, known as sede vacante, or “vacant seat”. The College of Cardinals convened in May 2025 to elect a new pope. After lots of rounds of voting, Cardinal Robert Prevost was elected as the new pope. However, upon his election, he took the name Pope Leo and officially assumed the position of leadership of the Catholic Church.

The future direction of the Church remains a subject of much discussion. Many are wondering whether Pope Leo will continue Pope Francis's emphasis on social justice and inclusivity or steer the Church toward more traditional doctrines.

The Legacy That Lives on

Though Pope Francis is no longer with us, his legacy will endure for years to come. His papacy was defined by his empathy, his commitment to social justice, and his desire to reform the Church. Pope Francis showed us that true leadership is not about power or status but is instead about service, humility, and mercy, a message that will live with us forever.

“A little bit of mercy makes the world less cold and more just.”
- Pope Francis



REVIEW

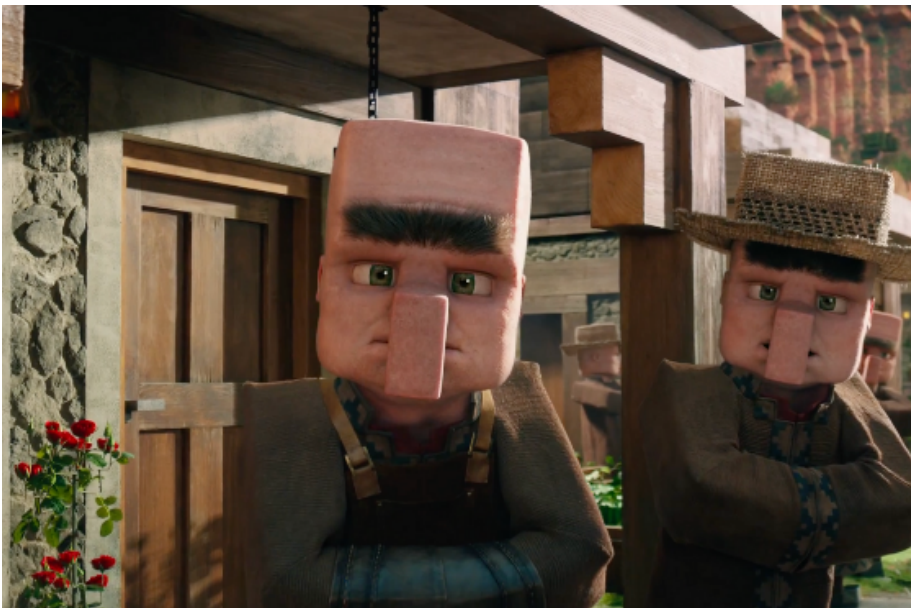
A Minecraft Movie Review – Mediocrity at its Finest

WRITER'S NAME: SAM HENN

On April 4th, 2025, the highly anticipated Minecraft movie was released to cinemas worldwide. It has had huge impacts on the viewing experience and has shaped cinema history- but not necessarily for the better. In this article, I will deep dive into the: impacts of the movie, how it has produced heavy social media attention, and share my own thoughts on the movie itself.

To really understand the significance this movie has for viewers, we first have to take it roots by looking at the ground-breaking videogame Minecraft, which was created by the company Mojang back in 2009. The game has become one of the most famous and recognisable videogames of all times because of its uniqueness and its impact that it has had on fans globally. With over 300 million copies sold and 170 million monthly players, it's fair to say that the game has earned a spot in the videogame hall of fame. Communities have formed because of it, some of social media's most well-known creators started out with content about the game, and the game is and, for a long time will be, a significant part of modern pop culture.

But sometimes these types of masterpieces should be left untouched. Did we really need a Minecraft movie? Did we need to expand this universe? I don't believe so. I do not believe it was a necessary move- especially through the way they have chosen to do it. The movie felt underwhelming and lacklustre. Some aspects of the movie felt sinister and creepy. The CGI animals were slightly unsettling, and it was more than obvious that for the majority of the movie, the actors were surrounded by a green screen.



Example of the CGI used in the movie



Aftermath of a cinema after a screening of A Minecraft Movie

The movie has also had other downfalls. One of the most famous ones being the anti-social behaviour in cinemas in reaction to the actor, Jack Black's line "chicken jockey". The trend consists of throwing food, throwing drinks, shouting and screaming, and in some cases, even setting off fireworks. All of this while still in the cinema. Cinema companies worldwide have been forced with no other choice but to issue warnings before screenings of the movie, stating that anti-social behaviour will lead to audience members being kicked out of the screening. The behaviour has caused upset with parents of small children, with some saying that a movie for children should be able to be enjoyed by children without the fear of anti-social teenagers and even adults ruining that experience. Even one of the movie's main stars, Jack Black, had to step in by appearing in cinema screenings to announce to not throw popcorn.

The second issue of the movie is the movie itself. The duration of the film was a total of 1 hour and 41 minutes. The vast majority of that time, however, was spent of the actors being placed in front of a green screen. At times this was also extremely obvious. The cast for the movie was also pretty good with actors such as: Jack Black, Jason Momoa, and Emma Myers being a few. However, this movie was nowhere near any of their best performances. Momoa played an ex-videogame player, who found his success prematurely and has yet to recapture it. The characters' outfits were childish and playful yet felt out of place and not realistic enough to see the characters as real people with real lives. The plot wasn't terrible, but it was generic. The characters went through a mystical portal with a glowing cube to get back home, which was then subsequently broken and meant that they had to go for an adventure to get back home. Meanwhile there is a more than generic villain whose intentions I have already forgotten because the plotting of the movie was so poorly designed. Obviously, the movie ends with a big battle, making it an extremely generic, incredibly mediocre, and an all-around uninspiring movie to watch, which simply wasn't needed.

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INTERVIEW

Mrs. Hosty Interview

WRITER'S NAME: ABIGAIL MA

Around 3 years ago, our first teacher interview was with deputy head teacher Mrs St John but now she has sadly left, Mrs. Hosty has taken over. Already, she has formed many positive relationships with students and is a core part of our school dynamic. The Ellesmere Exclusive team interviewed her so we can find out more about her journey to this position and her life outside of work.

“I absolutely love the warmth, character, and hilarity of the students.”

Why did you want to join the school?

"I was really inspired by the advert, because there were two year 10 students who were part of the advert and felt that what they communicated about the school really appealed to me and aligned with my values. I'm someone who strongly believes in inclusivity, as it's essential for us to be the best we can be. We need to focus on ensuring that we teach and educate people to be inclusive and respectful towards others. Also, I loved the idea of coming somewhere where we had such creative options. I came on a tour, and I saw the fantastic artwork. I thought that was incredible. And of course, I met Mr. Ross, and he spoke so highly of the students and the staff, that I just couldn't not apply."

What has been your favourite part of the school so far?

"I absolutely love the warmth, character, and hilarity of the students. On my second day it was that awful snowy shut down day, but I think that you guys did yourself so proud because you were so warm, welcoming and understanding. It's been just a delight from that moment. It feels to me like a school where I really fit in, and I love it. I just get excited driving to work, looking forward to my days ahead. I truly enjoy teaching my lessons."

How do you balance enforcing school rules but also the students' personal wants?

"I believe that ensuring a systematic approach to student voice is important. When I say 'systematic,' I mean making sure that it's regular and scheduled. I take every opportunity I can to speak with students and listen to their perspectives. We've got to look at student voice holistically and make sure that we capture it in its authentic form because sometimes we need to be aware of the impression it can create. As deputy head teacher, I understand that when I ask students for feedback, I might not always receive completely honest responses. Do we have methods, like using Microsoft Forms or other digital tools, to collect feedback anonymously? Would that make the responses more valid, since students might feel more comfortable answering on their own? That's something I consider."

**What do you like to do outside of school?**

"I love travelling, so this weekend I was just in Berlin. I would advise anybody to go. I went to Berlin to see a band called Blossoms; I saw them eight times last year—I'm a bit of a superfan. Also, I enjoy going to the gym. I'm very into exercise, so I do Pilates every morning, lift weights, and go for runs."

When you were growing up, what job did you envision yourself doing?

"When I was growing up, I did want to be a teacher. I have a letter I wrote when I was seven, saying I was starting my new job as a teacher. Teaching has always been what I wanted to do. My background is that I didn't have the easiest time growing up, and school was very important to me. Looking back, I believe I wouldn't be where I am today if it weren't for some really good teachers. I want to repay that kindness and put into young people what my teachers put into me, because I know what it did for me. I just love working with young people. I think it's really interesting as you get older, and I find the work very rewarding."

“I think I want young people to believe in themselves, more than anything.”

Since we are a creative school, how do you personally balance academics and creativity in school?

"I think it's about ensuring that these opportunities become part of the culture from Year Seven onwards. I don't believe in trying to force everything into Year 11. Instead, we need to create a culture where activities like going to see bands or school trips are integrated into our daily routine. We can't do these things all the time, but it's about maintaining that balance. Life is like a big pie chart with many different slices, and we can't just focus on the parts we enjoy. We need to contribute to a variety of activities. While some students might love the creative side, others might not, and we can't all do what we want all the time. Discipline and balance are essential."

Message for students:

"Seneca was a Greek philosopher and he says, "our imagination is often worse than reality."

There are lots of things that I think I can't do, but the reality is I can. I think I want young people to believe in themselves more than anything, and know that if they want to do something, they shouldn't tell themselves they can't and they shouldn't worry about it. That's a Susan Jeffers quote "feel the fear and do it anyway".

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WORLD WIDE EVENTS

The Power of Social Media and Young Voters in the 2024 US Election

WRITER'S NAME: MAE BAXTER

In 2020, nearly 60% of young voters got most of their political news from social media. By 2024, platforms like TikTok, Instagram, and X have become key places where politics, misinformation, and voting conversations happen. Is social media really helping young people get involved, or is it just creating hype? With millions of Gen Z engaging in online political discussions, it's clear that social media is more than just a place for trends — it's shaping how elections are won and lost.

For many young people, including me, traditional news can feel overwhelming, boring, or confusing. Long articles don't always grab our attention. Social media makes politics easier to understand with short videos, memes, and quick updates. For example, TikTok offers engaging, bite-sized videos that can make political news feel more immediate and relatable. It's not just about staying informed — it's also about entertainment. Watching a funny meme or a quick clip makes politics part of our social experience.

“Meeting young voters where they are... has become a key campaign strategy.”

Platforms like TikTok and Instagram have changed the way young people get involved in politics. Whether it's through viral dance challenges, humorous memes, or influencer posts, politics isn't just about long speeches anymore. It's been integrated into pop culture. Influencers and even politicians are jumping on digital trends to connect with young voters. Kamala Harris, for example, has used TikTok to reach out to young audiences. Meeting young voters where they are — on their feeds — has now become a key campaign strategy.

Politics today is also about virality. Viral memes and celebrity endorsements can turn political engagement into a cultural event. From the Bernie Sanders mittens meme to Billie Eilish and Taylor Swift encouraging voting, pop culture and politics are now intertwined. A single TikTok or Instagram post from a celebrity can lead to thousands of new voters registering — like Taylor Swift's post that brought over 35,000 new registrations in one day. Campaigns are now doing Instagram Lives, Twitter Q&As, and participating in TikTok trends to



stay relevant. These online efforts make politicians seem more accessible and help young voters feel connected to the process.

“Is [social media] a tool for informed voting or will it continue to fuel division?”

However, social media also has its problems. Misinformation spreads fast — deepfakes, fake headlines, and misleading videos make it hard to tell what's true anymore. Echo chambers are another issue, where people only see opinions that match their own. Therefore, although these spaces can build strong political communities, they can also lead to misinformation and increased division.

How it affects the UK?

This influence isn't limited to the US. In the UK, social media's role in shaping voter opinions is growing, especially with a general election coming soon. British politicians are also using Instagram Q&As, viral TikToks, and influencer partnerships to make politics more relevant to young voters. But just like in the US, misinformation and polarization are concerns there too. The challenge is whether social media can be a tool for informed voting or if it will continue to fuel division.

Despite these challenges, young voters are proving to be a powerful force. In 2020, voter turnout among 18-29 year-olds was the highest it had been in decades, and social media played a big part in that. From viral calls to action to content that makes politics feel more relatable, young people are now showing a surge in interest in politics.

As future elections approach, one thing is clear: social media isn't just changing how young people consume political content; it's shaping how they vote and think about politics. Whether it's a trending TikTok, a celebrity Instagram post, or a viral hashtag, social media's role in politics is only going to grow. The big question is: will young voters continue to use these platforms to create real change?



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