

# TY TIMES

*DCC Journalism Newsletter Summer Edition*



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*Edited By Eoghan O'Dea and Peter  
Oliver*

## **So Long, and So Forth!**

*By Diarmuid Whitehead*

Ah yes, the 2020/2021 school year. Love it or hate it, trekking through it is nothing less than an achievement. It's something I'm gonna wear on my sleeve for sure. I mean, we are literally living through history in the making. Lockdown, isolation, working from home, the thoughts alone are pretty overwhelming and, from one survivor to another, I'm proud we made it through! Though there's still a rocky way to go, this past year has been proof that we are more than capable!

As this chapter comes to a close, a new one begins. So why not skim our thumb across the pages briefly? Well, with the rollout of more and more vaccines, hopefully restrictions will be loosened gradually throughout the next few months. Shops are already beginning to reopen once again, meaning there is light at the end of the tunnel for all of us.

This has been a very strenuous and tedious year so I remind you to get some fresh air, take some you-time and look after yourself!

And with that, I bid you, 2020, a farewell and so long and so forth!

# CONGRATULATIONS CLASS OF 2021!

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# HOW MUSIC IS BEING DESIGNED FOR VIRALITY

By Eoghan O'Dea

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In the internet age, big music labels have moved to online platforms to promote their music. Bland, safe and cookie cutter music is now inescapable. Pop artists are now turning their fans into promotion for their new singles. Mainstream music has been turned into a money making machine.

I don't want to sound like an old man saying "music was better back in my day", but I believe that big music labels have stopped trying to make good music, and instead have perfected the art of creating catchy earworms for the sake of profit. While I'm not the biggest fan of The Beatles (The Beach Boys' *Pet Sounds* trumps anything The Beatles ever made), I do admire that they kept evolving their music, and not sticking to the same tried and tested formula.

With the rapid success of TikTok, big music labels are now designing songs for the purpose of using trends as free promotion. Artists like Drake, Billie Eilish and Ariana Grande are starting to make songs with the intended purpose to go trending. I don't think that a song going viral is a bad thing, but I believe that creating a piece of music for the sole purpose of making money is. I think Drake's song "Toosie Slide" is the most egregious offender. The line "It go, right foot up, left foot slide" is basically an instruction on how to dance to the song. Couple these lackluster lyrics with the song's mundane and routine production and you get one of the biggest hits of 2020. Over 4 and a half million videos were made on TikTok that used the song, helping it top the charts and go platinum. All of this exposure from a marketing campaign that used Drake's fans as dancing advertisements. This blatant effort of artificially making a song go viral is just one example of how big labels have stopped trying to make good music.



When music streaming services became hugely popular, radio stations and radio in general began to decline in popularity. With the decline of radio I would have thought that the days of big music labels telling people what to listen to would be over. Instead of a radio station playing the big hits from the big labels, it is the playlists curated by the streaming services that are telling the public what to listen to. The streaming services haven't levelled the playing field for musicians, but have increased the gap between the mainstream and the underground. I think that recommendation algorithms are useful to find music that you might like, but they keep you in a bubble of music you already know.

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I'm not arguing for everyone to go and listen to obscure experimental artists like Merzbow, Xiu Xiu and Tim Hecker (although you should give them a try), I'm arguing against the way music is treated in the mainstream. Big labels treat music as a way to sell clothes, cars and everything in between. The life cycle of a modern pop song is to be promoted everywhere you look and when it's popular, it becomes a jingle for advertisements. This circle of monetisation is how the big labels are squeezing every last drop of money out of a single song. It is how Universal Music Group is valued at over 30 billion dollars and how Warner Music Group is worth 15 billion dollars. Compare this to the average income of an independent artist, which is 12 thousand dollars, and you begin to see one of the biggest problems plaguing the music industry. The fact that an art form has been turned into a multi billion dollar industry is outrageous.



UNIVERSAL MUSIC GROUP

My solution to this would be that people should try to find lesser known artists that aren't getting the same promotion as someone like Ariana Grande. I hate when a song becomes popular and trending because it's backed by a large corporation. I believe that a piece of music going viral should be based on its merit and not by a successful advertising campaign. Streaming services should act as a fair and impartial platform for musicians to attain success. You shouldn't be told what to listen to by big labels, you should discover music on your own.

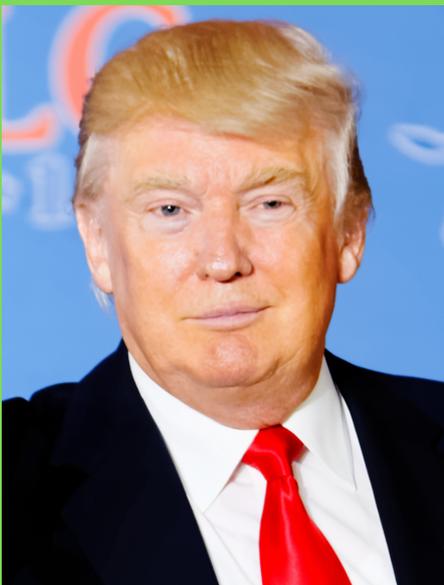
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# WHITE HOUSE DOWN: TERROR, TRAGEDY AND TRUMP

By Peter Oliver

It seems that ever since Donald Trump was elected U.S. President the politics across the pond have taken more prevalence among people here in Ireland with headlines like "Donald Trump Joke Continues". After all Donald Trump is first a celebrity and second a businessman or president. Over the course of his four year term we often called him 'a joke' because of his dramatic showmanship.

However no matter how many Americans claim to be Irish they are far different from us. Donald Trump has always been a showman, he acts like a brash, shouting lunatic because he knows that this appeals to many Americans. In short, Trump sold himself as a brand to get elected. But Trump knew that this group of people wouldn't be enough to get him through the 2016 election. So how did he manage it? Strong economic policies for corporate America and lies to the rest of the country.



He told millions of Americans that by building a wall and stopping people from entering the country, it would somehow keep them safer and benefit them financially. He spread racist views for his own ends and then lied about being a defender of black rights once comparing himself even to Abraham Lincoln.

Trump's first real lie as President set the tone for his four year term. Attendance numbers, of only 300 to 600 thousand, at his inauguration were so low so he ordered photographers to edit the photographs to make it look like there were more people. A pathetic inconsequential lie that set the tone for everything to follow. The only truth about Trump being that he will always lie before losing face.

But Trump's greatest lie came after the American people rejected a second Trump term in the November election. The man who had always stood for law and order now denied the results of a democratic election. Trump claimed that he had won because at the end of the first day of counting he was ahead. He claimed that all preceding counts were fraudulent and "illegal ballots" should be thrown out. His supporters believed his lies as always but in Ireland we saw him at face value, a child throwing a tantrum because he didn't get what he wanted.

This campaign of denial continued for weeks until finally things took a dark turn. On the 6th of January 2021 Trump's supporters stormed the centre of American democracy the U.S. Capitol building after Trump told them if they "don't fight like hell [they] are not going to have a country anymore" in a speech at Washington D.C. Around the world people watched in horror as for the first time everyone realised that the democracy of the most powerful country in the world was under threat.

While Donald Trump eventually called for an end to the violence, he never accepted defeat in the election despite having lost the popular vote by millions. And when I saw him leave the White House for the final time I realised why we have been watching politics in America so closely here in Ireland. It is because the election of Donald Trump as president was the greatest modern tragedy in politics.

So when I think about what Trump has achieved over the four years, I think of harsh racist immigration policies and being the only president to be impeached twice. The greatest truth of his presidency is that he cares only about himself. He caused terror by inciting insurrection and tragedy with his very presence. When I think about what he achieved over his four years I would say, Terror, Tragedy and Trump.



Then in 2020 the coronavirus pandemic began. Trump said the disease was "under control" despite scientific advice saying otherwise. As coronavirus numbers surged in the U.S., Trump continued to claim that in a few weeks the virus would disappear, that people needn't wear masks while experts pleaded with them to do so. For the first time Trump's lies had a huge impact on ordinary people, suddenly people started dying and by the time he was to run for election again, 200,000 Americans had died from the virus.

He would tell the American people the virus "affected virtually nobody. Of course any negative was fake news and any positive his achievement. He would tell crowds not to wear masks but address them from behind plexiglass. He cares for his own health but not that of his supporters.



# TO SCROLL OR NOT TO SCROLL

By Andrew O'Sullivan

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It goes without saying that technology has dramatically improved over the past twenty years, transforming our daily lives. With people now socialising online, shopping online and even banking online, it is clear to see we are light years ahead of where we used to be. Despite the significant benefits afforded to us by mobile phones, at times it can seem that the bad can far outweigh the good. This is particularly true in the case of teenagers.

As a teenager myself, who spends hours a day scrolling through Instagram and getting lost on TikTok, I understand the mobile phone obsession. Mobile phones and their many different applications allow you to easily talk to friends, see what is going on in the latest news and even get to know new people, without having to face the real world. You can do all these things from the comfort of your own home, which believe me, teenagers definitely find appealing! But any technology that provides such benefits must come with a set of negative impacts also.

Alongside the advantageous side to mobile phones, there is a darker side to this technology. At first glance these effects may not be too obvious but when used incorrectly, they can become harmful. Firstly, social media is one of the main reasons why mobile phones are becoming increasingly important issues. Social media allows you to connect with others all around the world, although, like most things that come with technology, it has a cynical side to it as well. The negative potential for social media is highlighted in this recent study published in the Canadian Journal of Psychiatry. In it researchers observed more than 3,000 12-16 year olds in Montreal over a period of four years. Researchers measured how much time students spent in front of social media, television and computers. The data revealed the more time kids spent engrossed in digital screens, their symptoms of anxiety and depression became more severe.



Additionally, constant developments in cell phones have made it easy for teenagers to access any information. The majority of the things projected on social media and the internet may not be accurate, however teenagers who are naive might take them seriously and become influenced. This might lead them to develop false prestige and try to live up to these unrealistic standards they see on their screens.

Secondly, one of the more common issues that come with this new technology would be cyber bullying. According to a study conducted on 13-18 year-olds by Cox Communications, 15% of children had been cyberbullied online, 10% had been cyberbullied by cell phone, and 5% had cyberbullied another person through a cell phone. Victims of cyberbullying have been discovered to be at a higher risk of getting anxiety and depression. It has never been easier to pick up a phone and type a nasty comment while your identity remains unknown.

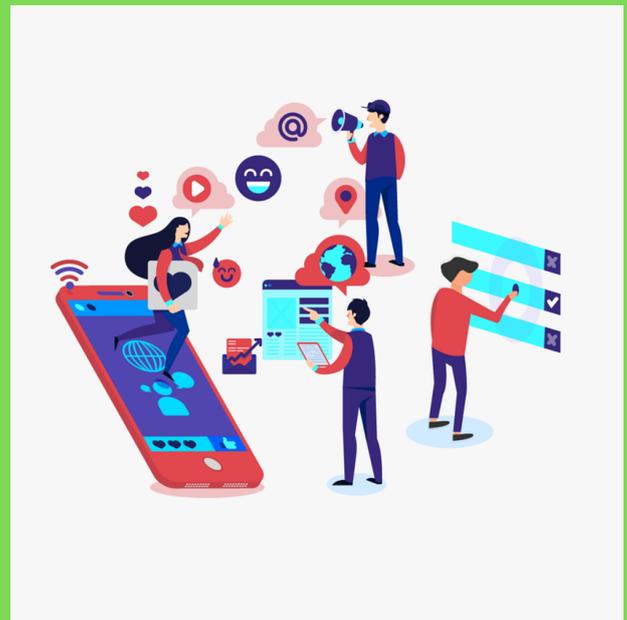
While a lot of problems connected to mobile phones affect mental health, some also affect a teenager's physical health. For example, increased use of cell phones is said to cause vision problems in teenagers. As per a study conducted on 30 medical students, 83% of them were found to have cell phone vision syndrome. The symptoms include stress, redness, burning sensation, blurred vision, and dry eyes.

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With all these worries that come with mobile phones it may be hard to see the light at the end of the tunnel. However, there are solutions to these major problems. When it comes to social media, there is no foolproof way to escape from all the difficulties that come with it.

Although, there is a way to reduce them. By simply making your account private, whether it be on Twitter, Facebook or Instagram, you are blocking out the possibility of random people following your account. Therefore you can have fun posting pictures with the knowledge of who is seeing them. However, cyberbullying is a bit more difficult to stop. Again, setting your account to private will limit the amount of strangers with access to your account. Therefore reducing the chance of hate and nasty comments being sent to you. Although, if you are being cyberbullied by your classmates or people you know in real life, speaking out about the issue to a person you trust is vital. Whether it be a friend or a family member, they are there to help. Finally, concerning the physical effects mobile phones have on teenagers, the solution seems at first quite simple- limit your screen time per day. Although this seems quite easy to the casual user, people who have addictive tendencies towards their devices may find this harder to achieve. However, some steps you can take to limit the time you spend on your mobile phone would be to pause to think before picking it up, getting rid of distracting apps and analysing your phone usage to set limits.

Don't get me wrong. Mobile phones are a great tool and enable us to do things that would never have been possible only a few years ago. Although, when they are used in the wrong way, problems can occur. Maybe technology's dramatic improvements have actually opened the floor to new problems instead.



# FIGHTING WORDS

By Ella McCourt and Maidie Mason

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Recently, one of our 5th Year students, Ella O'Neill had her piece chosen for the Fighting Words competition which was featured in a special "Irish Times" supplement.

Ella wrote a powerful and heartbreaking short story called "Dear Callum". It centres on a young girl named Maddie, who lost her friend to suicide. The story is written as a collection of letters Maddie was writing to her friend Callum, as a coping mechanism.

TY Journalists, Ella McCourt and Maidie Mason, interviewed Ella about this terrific achievement.

*What inspired you to write this piece?*

"A friend of mine was going through a hard time, and she was talking about her mental health and how she was feeling". Ella then went on to say that her friend is now in a much better place. She told us this made her think about "what people's friends and families go through after someone takes their life."

*What are you most proud of from this piece?*

"The Fighting Words supplement is something I applied for in first year. It's something I've wanted to achieve so I'm proud that it got published this year and that I was chosen out of so many people who applied."

*What encouraged you to write this story?*

"I did the fighting words summer camp over the summer; it was a week long course where I could send the volunteers there work I had written and they gave me feedback and really encouraged me to write more." She added "it was a very positive experience."

*Is writing something you wish to pursue?*

"Yes, I would like to pursue a career in writing whether it's journalism or being an author, I would love that."

*Where were you when you found out your piece was chosen?*

"I was in English class; my sister messaged me and said my mam had gotten the call that my piece had been chosen, so that was very exciting."

We are delighted that Ella's writing has been recognised in another terrific supplement from Fighting Words. We look forward to reading more of Ella's work in the future!



# POLITICS SOCIETY

By Mr. Clarke

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Last December, Mr. Creevey's Politics Society held a debating competition between two teams of TYs on the subject of lockdown and school closures. The quality of argument and rhetoric was superb on both sides, but the judges (Anthony Creevey, Michael Clarke & Councillor Adrian Henchy) found a clear winner. Arguing against the motion that schools should be closed during level five restrictions, the winning team comprised of Diarmuid, Robben, Taibat, Katelyn and Michael.

As the school year draws to a close, Mr. Creevey and the Politics Society rounded off a fruitful two years by hosting the debating teams again in a socially distanced manner. Lunch was provided, and a good time was had by all as the members of the Politics Society reminisced on two years of weekly get togethers with Mr. Creevey and a trip to Stormont and Dáil Éireann.



From left to right standing: Katelyn Callan-Shaw, Taibat Rasheed, Robben Barnes, Diarmuid Whitehead, Michael O'Brien, Alex Connelly, Rory Kellard and Dylan Whyte.

From left to right sitting: Jack O'Connor, Senan O'Reardon, Eoin Moran, Jack Pender and Dillon Byrne.

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# DISCRIMINATION, HATE AND BULLYING ONLINE

By James Weller

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We all know the racial, discriminative, and hate online. It even goes as far as death threats sometimes. At the start of March, an eighteen year old male from Kerry was proven guilty, for sending twenty private messages to ex-England and Arsenal forward Ian Wright, which had racial content. He sent them after he lost a FIFA tournament online, and he had Ian Wright on the game. He wasn't satisfied with Wright's performance in the tournament, but it was an online game which Wright had zero control over. Social media companies have been too soft on combating this. There are ways to reduce racism online, which is to educate the public. Also social media companies need to be stricter when banning people and ban some words.

English and Premier League referee Mike Dean has received death threats in the past month for making two bad decisions in football matches. People don't think. Referees have families and they are human like us. Mike Dean has been affected badly by this and has asked to not referee the next game/games. I agree that he made two bad decisions and you can disagree with them, and I do, but when it comes to death threats, it ends. It's not just him receiving abuse. Lee Mason who was in the VAR room on the day has also been receiving a lot of abuse and again death threats. Do these people know who they are? This has to stop. Now.

Death threats have been going on for ages, and police do most of the time, take action, but online there has to be more to combat it. Companies must take more responsibility when it comes to dealing with racial and discriminative behavior online. Whether it's Snapchat, Instagram or a game chat, action has to be taken. The online game Rocket League has a very good way of dealing with this. The first time you type something discriminative, you get banned for 48-72 hours, the second time you get banned for a week to a month, and the last time your account gets permanently banned. This is something I'd like to see Instagram, or Snapchat do. If someone ever gets a death threat, no matter how big or small, if you know the person or not, no matter the age, companies should act.



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Racism is one of the worst types of discrimination. We are a fifth of the way into the twenty-first century and we are still talking about how to reduce racism. I have seen some bad comments made towards different types of groups. Social media must act on behaviour like this because it adversely affects people. Racism is basically bullying someone which itself is a big problem. Since when was it okay to bully someone, or more bizarrely treat people of a different culture, skin colour, gender, race differently? Social media companies need to ban some words from appearing on their displays. I've seen on some games, you are not able to type certain names or words. Which is what they need to do on Instagram, Snapchat and other social media sites. Footballers get a lot of racial abuse. I can name possibly twenty of the top of my head, who have been affected in football matches or online. Whether it's chants or messages. People say/type without thinking. This affects people's mental health and the people typing would most likely not want the same said about them.

I don't think racism is ever going to end. A lot of people are stuck in their own beliefs. However, we can certainly reduce it. The best way is to educate people on the effects of racially abusing someone and that everyone is equal. Social media companies must now stop working on the newest update and finding new filters and focus more on how to stop/reduce racism online. As I said filter out or block the racial words. Obviously, there is still going to be the emojis and some words that you can use. But it is a start. Also, if someone uses racial language, ban them permanently because then they might just think before they speak.



However, another reason racism will not end is because of some Rappers/Singers. There are a bunch of songs that use the 'N' word and other racial slurs in their song, which does not help at all. Let's say a twelve-year-old listens to his/her favourite artist, and they say a racial thing. Kids being kids and most of the time they don't understand what some things mean, will start to say things like that. For example, if the artist is referring another person to one thing, a kid is going to start saying that when they are outside to their friends. Then their friends will say it.

So, let's take stock. It is never okay to be nasty to anyone online. It is never okay to use racist, homophobic or discriminatory language to someone's face, and it is definitely not okay to say it online.

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# 'JAB AND GO' IS A HOLY SHOW!

By Ella McCourt

The boss of Ryanair, Europe's largest airline, Michael O'Leary, is no stranger to a good scandal, with his loose tongue it's no surprise. Now it seems he's promoting rule breaking flights abroad... during a pandemic.

Ryanair's most recent advertisement included an image of a syringe and a bottle branded "vaccine," alongside the slogans, "book summer," "vaccines are coming" and "jab & go," along with promotions for budget flights.

The Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) said it has received almost 2,000 complaints about the advertisement, believing it to be misleading and irresponsible for Ryanair to claim restrictions will be lifted and everyone will be vaccinated by summer.

The watchdog agreed with the complaints, saying it was "likely that consumers would interpret the phrase 'vax and go'/'jab and go' as an unequivocal endorsement of vaccinating and travelling unconditionally."



It is now known that, yes, the vaccine stops you people from being affected by the COVID 19 virus but it doesn't stop those same people from spreading it. This means that if people start to travel abroad as soon as they receive the vaccine, they could still be spreading the virus. Overall, this would be an incredibly selfish thing to do and Ryanair should not be encouraging it.

Following the backlash, the airline agreed to retract the advertisements but said they don't agree with the ASA's decision, claiming the advert is factual and accurate and calling the claims 'baseless'.



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The aviation industry has been very hit hard by the coronavirus pandemic, with airlines such as Flybe and Virgin Australia collapsing. It's not surprising Ryanair thought it should try to convince people to travel to save their own backs, it just was not in good taste whatsoever.

Has Europe's largest airline taken it too far this time? If you ask me, no. With all those low prices and on time flights, Ryanair will always be a go to for Irish people. It's just a shame the top dogs in the company don't always use their thinking caps. At times like these, we as a nation should finally start to see the beauty in our own land and consider holidaying from home. It's just not worth risking your own and other people's lives for a cheap trip to Spain.



# WHAT IS THE “KIDS THESE DAYS” EFFECT AND WHY SHOULD IT STOP?

By Emma Carroll

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“Kids these days are always on their phones.”

“Kids these days are too ungrateful, we had it harder than they did”.

Older people seem to love complaining about the younger generation. It’s not a new phenomenon either. From Aristotle’s belief that young people “think they know everything” to a piece written by the editor of a popular 18th century French magazine which regarded the youth at the time as “effeminate, self-admiring, emaciated fribbles”, it’s clear that the elderly have always had something to say about young people, especially teenagers.

This phenomenon is known as the “kids these days effect” and in my opinion it needs to stop.

Firstly, why do older people like to complain about teenagers anyway? Are their complaints genuine? Does old age just make people grumpy? Thankfully, this question has been answered by a study from the University of Santa Barbara.



The survey began normally, with the scientists asking a random group of adults to rate the respect, intelligence and reading habits of young people today. Much like Aristotle, they thought that young people were ill-informed, unintelligent, and generally worse than their own generation.

The researchers then asked the participants to rate themselves on the same traits. When they put the two sets of responses together a pattern emerged. The participants who rated themselves highly rated young people as worse and the participants who rated themselves lower gave the young people better ratings.

A co-author of the study, John Protzko, noted that “people who aren’t very intelligent or aren’t very well read or don’t respect authority, they tend not to think that kids are so bad”.



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Nathaniel Sharping explains that “we tend to judge others more harshly in areas where we excel. An ardent reader, then, will be more likely to deride someone else’s reading habits.”

But doesn’t that prove today’s young people are worse than previous generations?

It doesn’t. Nathaniel Sharping also said that “our memories of what we were like as children can’t be trusted”.

So, an elderly person who grew to love reading may forget that they hated books when they were a teenager. Another elderly person who learned to follow rules as they matured will forget that they were a rebellious young adult who was always in trouble for something.

In short, people forget how they grew to become who they are today, using their current skills as a benchmark when they judge others, even younger people who haven’t had much experience as they did.



Now that we know why the “kids these days effect” occurs, this is why I think it should stop.

Firstly, it’s hypocritical. Elderly people who criticise teenagers for speaking up about causes that matter to them (such as LGBT rights and movements such as Black Lives Matter) are forgetting that they once stood up for their beliefs too.

Some of them may have participated in movements such as the Northern Irish Civil Rights Movement in the late sixties, standing up for the rights of Catholics who were being discriminated against. They are now complaining about something very similar to what they were doing when they were young.

Secondly, it’s very demotivating. I don’t know any of my peers who dislike the elderly for any reason, which is why it’s upsetting that some of them have such negative attitudes towards teenagers.

Thirdly, it could lead to antisocial behaviour towards the elderly. Teenagers are bound to become annoyed about the unfairness of the “kids these days” effect and some vulnerable young people may choose to act on their anger. Of course, this is a very extreme scenario as most people don’t want to hurt others, no matter how they feel about a situation.

So please, don’t judge my generation so harshly. Try to remember what you were like at our age. Everyone grows and changes over time and we will too.

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