

THE DUAL DIPLOMA TIMES

WRITTEN BY STUDENTS AROUND THE WORLD

April 2021

A Call For Change

by Ane López-Zuazo and Irati Acha

“If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor”

Desmond Tutu

The world has achieved the most wonderful advances and seems capable of anything. Therefore, it is frankly shocking that equal rights and a voice for everyone in society are considered a chimera that will never be fulfilled. That is why we need activism: to protect and fight to turn those basic rights into our current society. We have to stand up for our beliefs, we must call for a change.

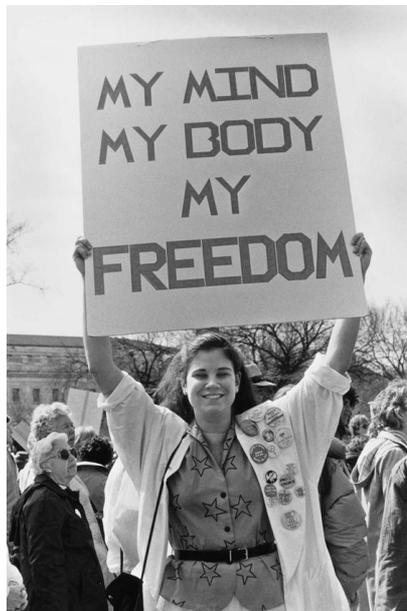
Feminism

To begin with, we will start talking about one of the pillars of activism, one that has nearly always been present: Feminism. Firstly, we should begin with the meaning. I feel obliged to clarify that the misconception of feminism being the opposite of male chauvinism or sexism, is just this, a belief that a person is superior for being a woman. That's completely false.



Bettmann

In fact, the origin of this word comes from the greek “advocacy of rights for women”, and so its main purpose is to get the fundamental rights women are entitled to. However, these last centuries the meaning of this word has changed into becoming a movement that fights for equality on all fields. Today, feminism has become a shield for women in need of protection, a union of strong people, a lifestyle. Women are not the only ones demanding it anymore, however, men are not the only ones oppressing it.



Barbara Alper/Getty Images

To say nothing of beauty standards, another area where women are judged and a trend where women's bodies are treated like clothes going in and out of style. The change in beauty standards over the years is noticeably shown through ancient greek marble sculptures, in which ideal bodies are depicted. In the case of the male statues, there have been few changes in the way the world sees their “ideal body”.

Nonetheless, in the case of the female ones, the change is abominable and women are expected to follow these “rules” of how the female body should look. In addition, because of these, the rate of teenage girls suffering from mental illnesses, especially EDs, is increasing rapidly and abruptly.



Getty

All in all, there are too many topics in which women are considered inferior, are discriminated against or are sexualized and this has to stop. Hence, so as to keep learning and being informed on the movement, you can educate yourself further, or support the movement on these websites:

<https://www.ddiworld.com/blog/intersectional-feminism>

BLM (Black Lives Matter) Movement

Although the movement itself started in July of 2013, it has always been present in the form of the belief that all human beings are equal no matter the color of their skin. The exact Black Lives Matter movement began when a 17-year-old African-American called Trayvon Martin was shot.



Unsplash

Despite the young boy being unarmed, the shooter, George Zimmerman, claimed that it was self-defense and was acquitted. After this, the hashtag (#BlackLivesMatter) was created and went viral, causing the spread of awareness in this issue. Even if that was the spark that led to the foundation of the movement, other important dreadful deaths made the movement more popular. For instance, the demise of Mark Brown marked an essential milestone because it was the case that helped the world see the frequency in which police brutality against people of color occurs.

Firstly, it is key to understand that African-Americans have always been looked down on and this movement, like feminism, demands equality, but also ending of racial injustice and police brutality. In the past, people of color were considered worthless and were enslaved and discriminated against.

Unfortunately, in the 21st century, discrimination is still present, and white supremacy (the belief that white people are superior to other races or ethnic groups solely because of their skin) is still big.

Nevertheless, what triggered the movement in 2020 was the killing of George Floyd, another unarmed man, who was asphyxiated to death by two police officers despite his claims that he was unable to breathe. The police were called by a shop owner claiming that George Floyd had bought a pack of cigarettes with a forfeited \$20 bill. The picture below shows one of these protests in 2020. For more information or to support the movement, [click here](#).

A Call For Change - Continued



<https://sfs.georgetown.edu/sfs-on-topic-institutions-resp-ond-to-the-black-lives-matter-movement/>

The first gay pride march took place a year later in New York and Los Angeles. Right now, there is a monument held, which can be visited online. There are stories told by witnesses of the riots, queer activists, new generations, and photos.



<https://filmdaily.co/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/stonewall-riots-lede.jpg>

CLIMATE CHANGE

In the last few years, society has realized the importance of taking care of our planet because the resources that we are currently using will not last forever. Fridays for Future is a Swedish movement led by Greta Thunberg that wants to put pressure on politicians to take measures on this issue to threaten everyone.



Photo by Markus Spiske on Unsplash

Thunberg started doing school strikes on Fridays because, according to her own words: "Why should I be studying for a future that soon may be no more, when no one is doing anything to save that future?"

This movement became popular worldwide, making teens all over the world organize demonstrations to support the Fridays for Future movement, taking place in Madrid and other European cities.

This movement continues acting around the world, even if it is not as broadcast in the news as it used to be, there are 76 actions taken in America, 109 in Europe, 13 in Africa, 36 in Asia, and 19 in Australia.

While there are still people who do not believe climate change is real, it is a reality: the global temperature has increased 2.1 Fahrenheit degrees since 1880, there are 415 parts per million of carbon dioxide in the air, the sea level raises 3.3 millimeters every year and the arctic ice minimum reduces a 13.1% every year, according to the NASA's data.



https://www.deutschland.de/sites/default/files/styles/crop_story_content/public/media/ima/ge/fridays-for-future-strike-climate-luisa-Neubauer-sustainable-greta-thunberg.jpg?w=280&h=160&crop=1

But what can we do to help? First, keep informed, to be able to form an opinion about something, or to know where the help is necessary. Also, you can donate money to organizations such as Fridays for Future or Greenpeace. But, without spending any more, we should be more conscious about the products we buy, about the kind of transport we use.

It is a very small change to use cloth bags instead of plastic ones, for example, but it is a difference. Small changes, little by little, make a huge difference. If you would like to know more about their actions, here is their website:

<https://fridaysforfuture.org/>

ANIMAL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

The people who support this movement believe that animals are subjects of rights, something that was only applied to human beings until these movements appeared. Their objective is not only to assure animals' wellbeing, they also want animals to be recognized as subjects of law.

To achieve this, different actions have been taken, such as creating political parties like PACMA in Spain, or organizations like PETA in the US.

In Spain, due to bullfighting and hunting (both very typical in our country), this is a very controversial topic that has led to many demonstrations from both sides, from the people who want to stop violence against animals and from the people who breed these animals (like the bulls that are used for bullfighting) and who would lose their job if these events were forbidden.



<https://www.953mnc.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/PETA.jpg>

These organizations are working very hard to elaborate laws to protect animals, avoiding animal testing, and guaranteeing their safety by donations and demonstrations. If you would like to know more about PETA's actions, here is their website:

<https://www.peta.org/>

All in all, we hope that this article has given you further insight into the matter of activism. Nevertheless, there is a matter we need to cover when we are talking about activism: Radical and peaceful demonstrations. A movement demanding any kind of change or rights is often tainted once peaceful demonstrations turn into violent protests. The only accomplishment that these protests get is hate attention from the media and negative publicity. When fighting to attain the aim of the demonstration, we always have to keep in mind how our actions may affect the movement. Moreover, we must look for objective information about the subject we are protesting for or against, to know what we are defending and always being respectful to other people's opinions.

LGBTBIQ+

Gay Pride day is celebrated on the 28th of June all over the world. Now, we find this normal, everyone has seen it on TV, but people have been fighting for acceptance and rights for a long time. The origins of LGBTBIQ+ activism goes back to the Stonewall riots, the 28th of June of 1969 (also, the Gay Pride day is celebrated to commemorate this day). Stonewall Inn was one of the clandestine bars where homosexual and transsexual people could be. Policemen went there often, forcing everybody to identify themselves, and if they found any man dressed up as a woman, they would arrest them and take them to the police station.



<https://geekyapar.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Sevgi-Sevgidir-4.jpg>

For the first time ever, Stonewall's clients rebelled against the policemen, they did not allow being treated as criminals. The police lost control of the situation, making people so upset they broke the inn's windows and tipped the police's cars. Thirteen people were detained and some of them were also hurt. After this day, the demonstrations continued taking place. Furthermore, two gay activist organizations were created: The Gay Liberation Front and The Gay Activist Alliance, both of them promoted the LGBTBIQ collective's visibility and claimed equality and rights.

Fashion, a Form of Expression for Women Over Time

by Enora Stéphan

Fashion is not a contemporary concept. We have always been obsessed by our appearance, and the eyes of others on it. Clothing style constitutes a huge part of this appearance. This answers the eternal need of humans to please others and themselves. Because we are born naked, clothes mainly act as a second skin as we enter into humanity. But fashion goes far beyond the simple pragmatic need of a garment, which offers warmth, comfort, and protection. This is a form of art that allows us to express our deep selves. Fashion reveals who we are. And for centuries, it has been one of the only means of expression of half the population: women.

Indeed, you are not without knowing that women have been, and are still in some societies, considered as specific beings, lower than men, and who have no more spirit than a child. As a consequence, because they suffered from a lack of consideration and rights, women had to find implicit and subtle means to make their voice heard, and express themselves. Fashion was one of these means. The concept of fashion, as we know it today, was born with the willingness of humans to assert themselves in power. Clothing, which had a functional purpose at first, started to be improved, tinted, and sewed in certain ways to mark the tribe, family, sex, and so on... It very early became an element of social distinction. Concerning women, they started to use this tool when more complex structures of societies started to appear, around the third millenary B.C. Societies started to build a more diversified hierarchy, divided between what they considered honorable people (wealthy class, and working-class), slaves, and lower classes. Please consider that the given examples will mainly be about women of the higher classes, because fashion was and is still a luxury.

We observe the direct demonstration of that with the birth of veils. We first noticed it in Assyrian societies to distinguish "honorable women" from the others (slaves and lower classes). It became a symbol of respectability and modesty. Over time, the veil was seen as a guarantee of women's virtue, giving to them the ambiguous role of both victim and tradition's keepers. It was in their interest to give this image to men. Indeed, by looking and acting in an expected way, women have been able to play a dangerous but well worth game to slowly conquer their place in society, as often the counselor behind men's decisions. To adopt a more global perspective, in ancient societies, we can often notice that women tended to use fashion to make multiple religious references, and even portrayed themselves as a religious figure.



We can give the example of Ancient Egypt, where it was very popular for women to look like the goddess Isis, one of the most powerful deities of the Egyptian pantheon. It came by wearing direct symbols associated with the goddess, like black hair wigs, a headdress composed of a circle in the middle, and two horns around it, or wings worn as head jewelry, bracelets, or necklaces. But, you have to keep in mind that Antic Egypt society was one of the only ancient societies that gave relatively the same rights to both men and women. So, to give another example, let's take the Ancient Greek society, where women were considered as eternal minors. Here again, to face this image, Greek women used fashion to try to have a place in the society. It was mainly by adopting an exemplary outfit, to establish an image of absolute piety. Unfortunately, fashion was often not enough, and one of the only means to become freer and have a bigger influence was to be an actual religious figure: a priestess. The most famous one is without any doubt the Pythia of Delphi, who disposed of a great influence, for a woman of Ancient Greece. You can see through these two examples how religion in fashion was used as a means for women to be seen in the best way they could by men, and be in their good graces to obtain what they wanted.

With the end of Ancient Times and the rising of monotheistic religions, societies changed. In the Middle-Ages, women are portrayed as lustful and the supreme temptress by the Fathers of the Christian World. Opposed to that, there was a more delicate current of thought that started to rise: "courtly love". And women are the main subject of it. It consists of the idea that a woman's love, usually one who is a member of the nobility, is earned through seduction, and not violence. Women quickly understood that they had to be the center of this new form of attention to make a place next to a powerful man, and even more.



Fashion, a Form of Expression for Women Over Time - Continued

by Enora Stéphan

So, fashion started to evolve to answer these new seduction standards. Even if beauty has always been one of the most powerful tools that women had in their hands to make a difference in front of men, it is at this time that fashion started to enter into women's beauty service. Indeed, during Ancient Times, the global climate was hotter and both men and women didn't wear many types of clothes. But during Middle-Age, colder times appeared, where bodies started to be covered by more and more clothes. So, fashion had to adapt to meet women's beauty standards expectations.

At this time, we could observe the apparition of garments and long socks, which will become the norm of women's undergarments for centuries, with petticoats, dresses, and surcoats. A lacing system started to appear on dresses to have the thinnest waist and hips possible. Hair extensions, made of horsehair, were used to make complex hairstyles with caps and veils. All these clothes were made of precious fabrics, with embroideries and pearls. The example of the wedding dress of the Duchess Anne de Bretagne (Anne of Brittany), the only woman who was Duchess of Brittany, and then two times Queen of France, perfectly fits this description. The demand for incredible and unique outfits started to rise. The Middle-Ages had set a way to use fashion that will be applied for centuries after that time period.

Women's beauty standards evolved, and so did fashion. Corsets made their sensational debuts to sculpt women's bodies. Women of power and members of the nobility

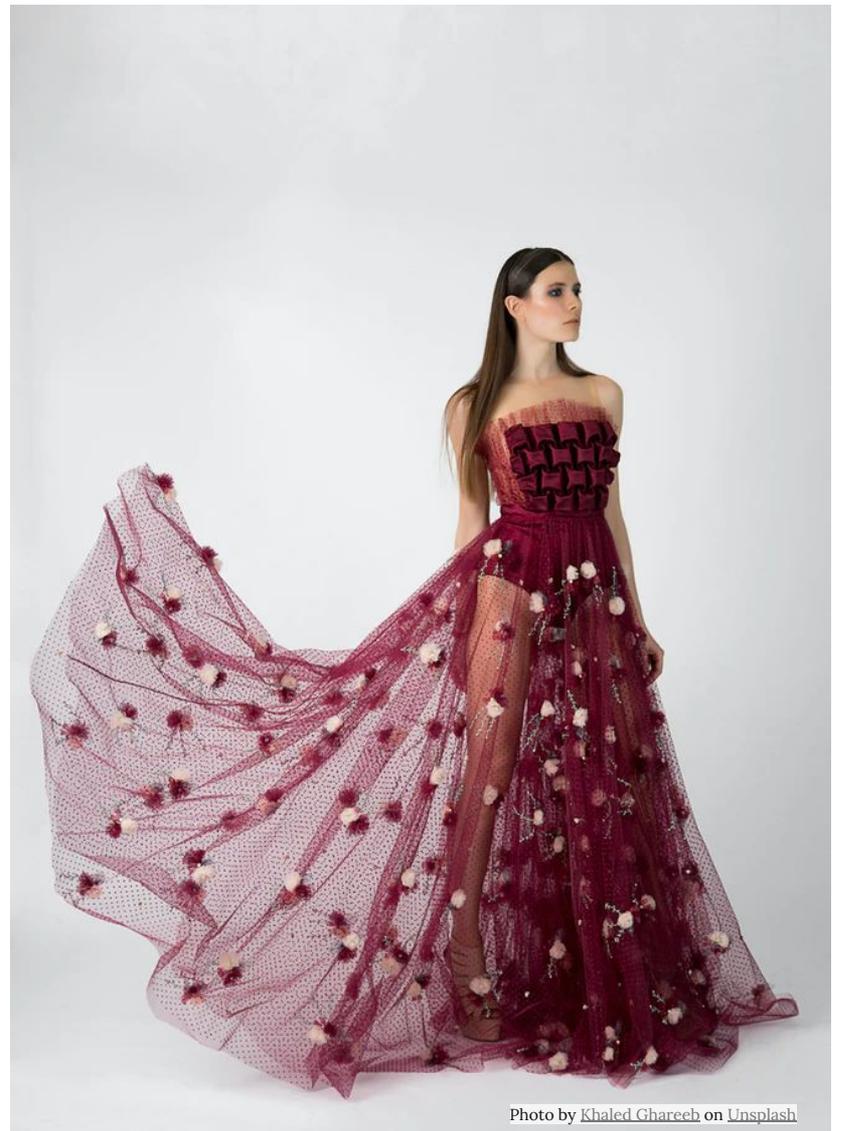


Photo by [Khaled Ghareeb](#) on [Unsplash](#)



Photo by [Laura Chouette](#) on [Unsplash](#)

from all the occidental world, and their colonies, had more and more unique demands and used fashion to make themselves famous and remarkable. Courts of France, England, Spain, Italy, Prussia, Russia, and so many others, were the theatre of this unique and feminine way to approach and use fashion. We can cite, as examples, famous French mistresses as Diane de Poitiers, Gabrielle d'Estrée, for the Renaissance age, Madame de Montespan, or Madame du Barry for the classic period (XVIIth century), powerful queens as Elizabeth 1st in England, Catherine de Medici for Italy, or Catherine II of Russia. These different women of power used fashion to build their own personal and strong image as a monarch. Elizabeth the 1st was the "eternal virgin", who wanted to have the same strength as a man, with her incredible armor that she wore during battles, or Catherine de Medici, with her image of the "eternal widow" with her completely black outfits. Through fashion, these women succeed to fit the beauty standards while imposing their own perspectives. This way to use fashion existed until the end of World War II, during the XXth century. After that, a great period of positive changes for women started to appear, which made fashion not the only means of expression that women had in their hands. It continues to be used, but not for the same purposes as before. For decades, women seem to have won the fight, or at least the main one: being recognized as human beings who can be as worthy as men. But don't forget that women have won a victory, not the battle. And, who knows, maybe fashion has not revealed all its possibilities yet.

The Beginning of a New Era

by Victoria Prado

Twenty years ago, the world stopped. At 8:45 a.m. on September 11, 2001, The World Trade Center was struck by an American Airlines Boeing 767 and soon collapsed. It was just the beginning of an unforeseen terrorist attack that killed nearly 3,000 people. The United States suffered what is known to be the greatest terrorist attack of its history. The 9/11 attack was not only an offensive attack against the United States of America, but to the whole of humankind. Two decades later, we can see the effects it had on our lives.

The immediate consequence was a death toll of almost 3,000 people. However, these are just the deaths caused directly by the initial attacks. Studies show that many died years after, as a result of the exposure to the toxic dust. 40,000 people suffer from illnesses linked to 9/11, 10,000 have been diagnosed with cancer, others have serious respiratory illnesses and many have mental issues like PTSD, depression, and anxiety.

The economic cost of the physical damage is estimated to \$55 billion, including the buildings, damage to the subway and other utilities, and the medical cost of treating all the injuries. This was just the beginning; the stock market was closed for four days, the Dow fell 7.13%, which was the worst drop at the time, oil prices declined, dollar values dropped, and the airplane industry lost over \$5 billion because, among other causes, because people were scared to fly.

However, the economic consequences and physical damage are just two of the many impacts the fallout of the World Trade Center had on our world. As its name says, international trade was seriously affected, along with tourism and political relationships. Many extremist organizations had already been attacking in many countries like ETA in Spain or IRA in Ireland but Al-Qaeda, which also attacked in other countries, became the most known terrorist organization. The United States was the first to implement politics to prevent these attacks and fight against terrorism, its example was soon followed by other countries.

Furthermore, social changes took place; fear spread in every country, discrimination, hate, and racism arose. Muslims took the worst part as Islamophobia quickly escalated. Even nowadays, some people still think anybody with different ideas is a threat, so we, the next generation, have been left with the necessity of repairing international affairs, and in many cases, the very intranational matters. These are not easy tasks as the Covid-19 makes it hard to communicate and travel. We ought to collaborate to avoid future wars and deaths, which do not make sense anymore.

Finally, yet importantly, in a matter of minutes, millions of people from all over the world were watching the images of what was happening in New York City, this made us release a new era, full of technology, globalization, and opportunity had begun. People felt more included in social matters than ever before. It was not myself or my country anymore, from that day on, it was us and the world against any threat to our freedom.

“America was targeted for attack because we’re the brightest beacon for freedom and opportunity in the world. An no one will keep that light from shining.” - George W. Bush



White rose on 9/11 memorial

Tardigrades, the Incredible Animal

by Diego Nunes

The incredible animal who can survive a world cataclysm.

Tardigrades, also known as “water bears”, are tiny extremophile animals which can measure a half millimeter. They have got eight legs and are known for their high resistance in different life conditions.

The name “Tardigrada” means “slow-moving”.

They are a group of invertebrate metazoans that belong to the superphylum ecdysozoa. This phylum owes its name to a molting process experienced by its species, known as ecdysis. Other species of this phylum are for example arthropods (scorpion) and nematodes (worm).

They live in a film of water that covers the mosses, lichens and ferns. They can be found in every spot of the planet, from the Himalayas to the deepest graves, and from the poles to the equator, as long as there is a film of water.



A fully grown tardigrade can reach the half millimeter, meanwhile the smallest ones only measure about 0.05 millimeters. Some of their characteristics are:

1. They're omnivore, which means that they eat vegetables and other animals.
2. Their life expectancy is 60 years.
3. They have got an external cuticle (resistant film formed by secretion)
4. They shed their skin, and they lack circulatory, respiratory and excretory apparatus.

THE ALMOST INDESTRUCTIBLE ANIMAL

There are over 900 species of tardigrades around the globe. They possess from 4 to 8 claws in each leg.

The tardigrade is an extremophile who can live in extreme conditions and due to this, he's known as “the immortal”.

Tardigrades are known to be impervious to fire and heat, to the lack of water and to radiation. Their survival of the extreme conditions offers hope to the search for extraterrestrial life. But what else do we know about these adorable animals that will see the end of humanity and life as we know it?

Between their capacities, they have this ones:

They can conquer the deepest seas

Tardigrades can live in between -200 and 150°C and they are able to manage pressures over 6 thousand times the Earth's one. Scientists from the Utrecht University (The Netherlands) calculate that they could even survive 10 kilometers under the seabed, an unexplored territory for the human beings.

They don't care about the climate change

A study has revealed details of how they can survive in totally dry environments, even for a decade. They dehydrate almost to death and “resurrect” years later. This process is called “cryptobiosis”.

Immune to X-rays

Tardigrades have a protein which gives them resistance to X-rays. They withstand X-rays and ultraviolet rays 1140 times the human lethal dose. If their DNA is damaged by radiation, they simply repair it. Also, the humans could die with the exposure of 10-20 grays of ionizing radiation, as the majority of the animals, but tardigrades can withstand 5700 grays.

They can be astronauts

In September 2007, the Foton M3 space probe, of Russia and ESA, was launched with a group of tardigrades inside. They survived, and even maintained their reproductive capacity.



HOW TO HAVE A PET TARDIGRADE

Find a place with moss. For example: a forest, a pond or even in your backyard! Make sure the moss you have is damp, you will have a better chance to find one!

Take a sample of the moss and put it in a petri dish.

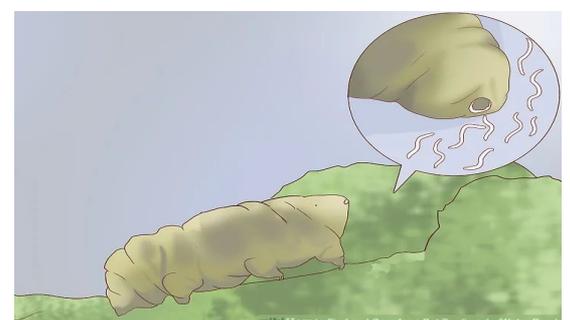
Moisten the moss thoroughly. You must fill the plate with rainwater up to 1 centimeter. This will cause the tardigrades to activate. Leave them there for 8 to 24 hours.



Squeeze the water out of the moss on the plate, and observe it with a microscope. If you see any tardigrade, congratulations! The petri dish can be its new home. If there are no results, try another moss.



Tardigrades eat moss. Feed them once a month. They also eat nematodes (small worms that live in the moss). As long as the moss is moist, you will have this delicacy that tardigrades love so much! Remember to change the dish if it dries!



Wuhan, One Year Later

by Oscar Martin

Back to where it all started. One year after the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, which has killed more than 2 million people worldwide, how did China stop the spreading of the virus? Are the radical methods that were used tenable? Behind the joy of a return to normal life, the virus still points to the anguish and despair of confinement.

Chinese leaders can be proud of the way they faced the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020. As soon as they recognized the seriousness of the crisis, they took a flood of action by rapidly mobilizing the resources and capacities at their disposal. In ten weeks, the Chinese State had thus succeeded in curbing the spread of the virus. At the beginning of April, when most parts of the world were still suffering the ravages of the pandemic, China was already on the road to economic and social recovery.

Moreover, this is not the first time that the Chinese government has had to take drastic measures, and not the only time that it has worked (for example, the public campaigns against air pollution). However, politically motivated campaigns generally serve short-term interests; maintaining their achievements is the real challenge for Beijing. Very often, the end of a campaign of this type is immediately followed by a return to old habits because it is practically impossible to get a substantive change in the methods of the local authorities in such a short time.

Chinese leaders are determined to overcome this obstacle by putting their new approach to mobilization into everyday life and institutionalizing it. To maintain a Covid-19 communication rate at Level Zero across the country, the government has developed a model of action that combines disease prevention and control with a rapid mobilization of local authorities to overcome epidemic outbreaks. Under this scheme, the slightest appearance of a case of Covid-19 triggers contact tracing, mass testing, and the containment of high-risk neighborhoods or cities.

This rigor can be illustrated by the example of the Beijing correspondent of the Italian daily *La Repubblica*, who tested positive on his return to China.



<https://abcnews.go.com/International/wuhan-year-covid-19/story?id=74948623>

He was forced to spend forty days in a hospital room and now he delivers a poignant account of his experience of forced confinement, which confirms the intransigent rigor of Chinese government measures.

But despite these stunning measures, the Chinese government also faces many unforeseen events in the countryside in addition to the suspicions about figures of contamination that would not reflect reality.

Indeed, with only 88,804 cases of Covid-19 since the outbreak began, China appears to be doing better than most countries. But do these figures reflect reality? Despite being the Country where the Coronavirus outbreak first emerged, China seems to be resisting well.

From the outset, it has "only" had 88,804 cases of Covid-19 and 4,635 deaths (as of January 22, 2021) which translates to only 6.37 cases and 0.33 deaths per 100,000 inhabitants.

According to calculations based on data from Johns Hopkins University, these numbers are far from the 1,290 cases and 27.67 deaths per 100,000 population that the rest of the world has on average. Are these excellent figures the result of the policy put in place by the Chinese government to stem the spread of the virus? Or can we question the subject?

Since the virus has arrived in other countries and given titsevolution, the low Chinese figures are fuelling skepticism in the international community.

An epidemiological study, whose results were made public on December 28, gives credit to this mistrust. The report reveals that in Wuhan alone, the number of people infected was estimated at 500,000 cases in 2020. This is "ten times more than the 50,000 confirmed cases in the epicenter city of the epidemic in mid-April," Bloomberg said. In addition, a new outbreak of Covid-19 affected several provinces in northern China and the capital but especially to rural areas as they are poorly armed to apply proven methods.

In north-eastern China, in the provinces of Heilongjiang and Jilin, nearly 4 million people from several communities were blockaded after a surge in Covid-19 contamination on January 10.

"The displacement of an asymptomatic "super contaminator" trader between the two provinces is said to have caused this outbreak, which affects nearly 550 people in total", adds Caixin Wang.

To sum up, the Chinese government has brilliantly managed this crisis, which some people in Wuhan want to forget at all costs: "It is the media that wants to celebrate this supposed first anniversary. We just want to forget all this," said a resident. So, despite some of the likely shenanigans, including the likely falsification of official figures, I think we can take our hat off to the Chinese government, which has once again demonstrated the extent of its influence.

What to Expect From Joe Biden's Presidency?

by Théodore Teissonnière

On January 20, 2021, Joe Biden, 78 years old, became the 46th president of the United States, with more than 80 million votes, which makes him the president with most votes in the country's history. The newly elected president has a lot of work rebuilding a disunited nation that was deeply affected by the economic crisis caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Before seeing what Biden could potentially do in the next four years, let's come back first on his background. Before occupying the highest political function in America, he was the senator for Delaware from 1973 to 2009 and was the vice-president during Obama's presidencies. During his long political career, he gained respect by his will to bring peace to contemporary conflicts, like the Balkan wars in the '90s or the American invasion of Iraq in the 2000s. For this reason, he received in 2017 the Presidential Medal of Freedom by Barack Obama himself, who is the highest civil distinction in the United States. During the 2020 democrat primary, he replaced senator Bernie Sanders and became the official candidate for the party. He selected Kamala Harris as his vice-president, and she would then become the first woman and person of color to occupy this position.

Even if his mandate started only more than a month ago, several actions have already been taken. In fact, on the first day as a president, he signed seventeen decrees in the oval office, including the immediate return of the United States to the Paris climate agreement of 2015, and another aimed at making it mandatory to wear masks in federal public places to counter the health crisis. He also cancelled the country's withdrawal from the World Health Organization under Trump's administration. And finally, on the same day, he announced that the United States would hold a summit of leaders on climate change on Earth Day, April 22, 2021, five years after the Paris agreement.

We can say that the first major foreign political action made by Biden's administration was the bombing of Syria. In fact, in February 2021, an American air raid near the Iraq border targeted pro-Iranian militiamen from Hezbollah, a Shia Islamist militant group, and killed a total of 22 people. This is indeed a response to the rocket attack on an Erbil airport in northern Iraq a few days earlier by the Iranian army. Moreover, we can say that this first demonstration of force aims to show the American stakes in the Middle East region, and more particularly concerning relations with Iran.

We are now going to discuss what we can expect soon in four different fields. First of all, in economics, Biden hopes to create 5 million jobs through a series of large investments directed to benefit different business areas. His proposal, the "Made in America" plan, would put \$400 billion into procurement measures to boost manufacturing on American soil as well as an additional \$300 billion into research and development to remain competitive on an international level.

Then on domestic politics, Biden promised to institute a national police oversight commission within his first 100 days of taking office in response to the national revolts that erupted over violent police killings of George Floyd and other Black Americans all over the country. It's part of a larger plan to help manage immoral police behavior, including investing \$300 million into community policing measures across the U.S. and tasking the Justice Department with investigating possible issues of police and prosecutorial misconduct.



<https://media.defense.gov/2021/Apr/07/2002616037/-1/-1/0/210303-N-NO101-150.JPG>

Within the first 100 days of his administration, Biden has said that he wants to reform the U.S. asylum system and the treatment of people at the border with Mexico, specifically calling for a stop to the Trump administration's Migrant Protection Protocols as well as to the policy of the "cruel" asylum cases, which have caused much criticism because of the inhumane treatment suffered by illegal migrants, especially children.

On the diplomatic field, Biden has said he intends to "pick up the pieces of Donald Trump's broken foreign policy" and discard the "America first" point of view. He wants to reach out to U.S. allies soon after taking office. Within his first year, Biden wants to plan an international summit where democratic leaders will discuss ways to push back against corruption and authoritarian practices as well as expand human rights.

However, We can say that this point remains vague and abstract. It is important to remember that Biden still places the trade tensions with China as the main concern of the U.S. government. He also wants to organize a "climate world summit" in April 2021 to assist nations with high carbon emissions to take climate action. Questions remain about how either a summit would be feasible during a global pandemic.

The president also heads into office with an extensive set of environmental goals proposed through his clean energy plan, which includes getting the country to net-zero carbon emissions by 2050. However, this means that it would be necessary to replace most coal power with solar energy and wind turbines. The proposal calls for a \$2 trillion investment throughout his term to boost reliance on clean energy and sustainable climate practices. Biden also says that 40% of the funding will be used to support communities disproportionately affected by climate change, as marked out in his environmental justice plan.

But, in the end, only time will tell if President Biden will end up fulfilling his promises.

GMF's: Harmless or Harmful

by Maria Torrejón Listan

Advances in biotechnology have led to the creation of Genetically Modified Food. Altered foods are foods derived from organisms whose genetic material has been modified in a laboratory, not in a natural way. Are Genetically Modified Foods a danger to our lives?

If we look back in time, the species was not the same as it is now. Why have they changed? A mutation, that is a modification of DNA, has occurred. This mutation can be favorable, harmful, or neutral. So if we change the genetic material of corn, aren't we bringing forward its evolutionary process? Sooner or later its DNA will have changed. "A lot of naive science has been involved in pushing this technology," says David Williams, a cellular biologist who specializes in vision. "Thirty years ago we didn't know that when you throw any gene into a different genome, the genome reacts to it. But now anyone in this field knows the genome is not a static environment. Inserted genes can be transformed by several different means, and it can happen generations later."

When we eat an Altered Food, it has been tested several times before by experts of biotechnology. Do we believe in science? Do we trust vaccines and medicines? Why don't we hold the idea of eating Genetically Modified Food? It may be true that fear sometimes prevents us from thinking, but we need to be able to control it. Not because you are eating an altered apple, you will die or will get ill.

So, is Genetically Modified Food a danger in our lives? As we see, living beings have their DNA altered all through history, so if it is modified earlier and by adept scientists, there is no danger. Goldberg, a plant molecular biologist at the University of California says that this debate should have ended decades ago, when researchers produced a stream of exonerating evidence: "Today we're facing the same objections we faced 40 years ago."



The GAFAM, A Power We Didn't Expect

By Elias Forestier-Depresle

The GAFAM is composed of the multinational companies that generate the most profit and are considered the richest in the world: Google, Apple, Facebook, Amazon and Microsoft. For a long time, politicians, economists, and many more scientists have studied the true extent of their influence in our society. Indeed, it has been ten years since these multinationals have gained influence, and now, they are an important part of our economy as well as in politics and education. So what power do these companies really have?

According to many politicians, these companies are, in a way, the real-world leaders in our society, they are the ones who run the economy and impose market prices, the ones who influence political leaders, the ones who control our communications and interactions, the ones who decide what's best for everyone selfishly. They are the ones who run our lives as they please.

These multinationals really do run your life, even if they make you think that they do not. Did you know that all your information (messages, internet searches, photos, applications, voice recordings, etc) is no longer your property? Exactly, by accepting the terms and conditions of use, one agrees to give all their personal data to the company that owns whatever application, browser, or site they are using. Therefore, your data is constantly being sold for economic purposes, which is why a large part of their income is, in fact, your property. The GAFAM companies are extremely powerful. They influence the prices on economic markets, which is why, even if we try to hide it, they are the ones who make the economic regulation.



As for politics, we know that Jeff Bezos spies on politics. In another example of illegal action regarding politics, Mark Zuckerberg publicly admitted that one of his companies "CAMBRIDGE ANALYTICA", which normally has a completely different purpose, siphoned classified information from millions of Americans who were using Facebook to influence voters in favor of the Republican Party. Francis Fukuyama, Barak Richman, and Ashish Goel once said: "The concentration of power, both economic and political, of digital platforms is like a loaded weapon on a table. At some point, people sitting on the other side of the table are likely to grab it and pull the trigger. (...) No liberal democracy can be satisfied with entrusting such concentrated political power to individuals, assuming that they are driven by good intentions."

We Are Going Back To The Moon

by Alice Cerutti and Anna Rovirosa

Yes, you read that right, we are going back to the Moon and not only that, we are also sending the first woman ever along.

With the Artemis program, NASA will send the first woman ever and the next man on the Moon by 2024. Thanks to the use of innovative technologies they will be able to explore more of the lunar surface than ever before. All the information learned on the moon will then serve for the next big leap, going to Mars.

It has been almost 50 years since astronauts last walked on the lunar surface during the Apollo program, since then the scientific and technological research has progressed unimaginably. For the last 20 years, astronauts have lived and worked onboard the International Space Station 220 miles above. Earth, preparing to further expand its space exploration. The main goal of the Artemis program is to learn as much as possible about the universe and all its elements, including our own home planet.

This Moon mission is fully focused on safety and sustainability. With the powerful Space Launch System (SLS) rocket and Orion spacecraft nearing the end of testing and development, the agency has the foundation needed to send humans back to lunar orbit. They are, furthermore, seeking more testing in order to make the landing as safe as possible.

We get to the Moon, then what? NASA will build sustainable elements on and around the lunar surface to allow its scientists and robots to explore it further than ever before.

All launch facilities are being set at Kennedy's Space Center of Florida, where it is supposed to be launched. The rocket's space launch system is the most powerful in the world, at the time. The Orion spacecraft is going to be the interface of the astronauts between the earth and the gateway, where all the lunar explorations will take place now on. Likewise, during the expedition there are going to be lunar landers that will allow the explorators to travel from the gateway to the lunar surface. In addition, in this mission, astronauts will wear the new artemis generation spacesuit, which will allow them to spend more time exploring in the harsh environment of the space than ever before.

The program takes its name from the goddess Artemis in greek mythology, sister of Apollo, goddess of war and symbol of strength.



The Artemis program patch is symbolic of an arrowhead. The background is silver because in greek mythology Artemis, the goddess of war, derived her weapons from silver.

The Woman on The Moon patch pictures Artemis with simple lines so that she can resemble all women.



Soon Launching...

by Martina Bulgarelli

Soon Launching...

With the global pandemic, life as we know it has changed. But this doesn't mean that the world has stopped completely. Instead, looking for new perspectives and horizons has become one of the most common goals of this generation. In this article you will learn about some of the greatest expeditions that will be held during this year - 2021.

Mars 2020

It is a space exploration mission developed by NASA, with the objective of sending the Perseverance rover on the surface of Mars. The launch was carried out with success the 30th July of 2020 and it has recently landed on the Red Planet the 18th February. This rover has developed from the predecessor Curiosity I, in order to minimise the costs of the long exploration. The main objectives that were stipulated by the space company were four. The first one to determine if life on Mars has ever existed, the rover will study the surface of the planet in search of microbic traces preserved in rocks that have forget the planet. Secondly, to define the climate and the geology of Mars by also taking samples of rocks and terrain that will be analysed once on Earth. This will also be used as a scientific demonstration for the usage of the resources on the environment of the Red Planet. These conditions will constantly be monitored in order to prepare humanity of future expeditions that will involve astronauts. Nasa has also created an initiative to involve the public from home. The rover will have a microchip that contains the names of those who have decided to participate by signing an online form that will then give them a sort of ticket with the logo of the mission.

Soon Launching... - Continued

by Martina Bulgarelli

Tianwen - 1

This is an interplanetary mission by the China National Space Administration that consists of sending a spacecraft in the Red Planet that is composed of a camera, a lander and a rover. The launching date was the July 23rd, 2020 and the landing date will happen on March of 2021. It took seven months of transit and in February 2021, it entered the orbit around Mars. This rover will study the morphology of the planet, study the composition, minerals and types of rocks present on the surface. It will also analyse the carbonate or weathering minerals present in ancient lakes, rivers and landscapes that originated thanks to the presence of water in the planet. It will observe the ionosphere, climate, seasons and the internal magnetic field of Mars.

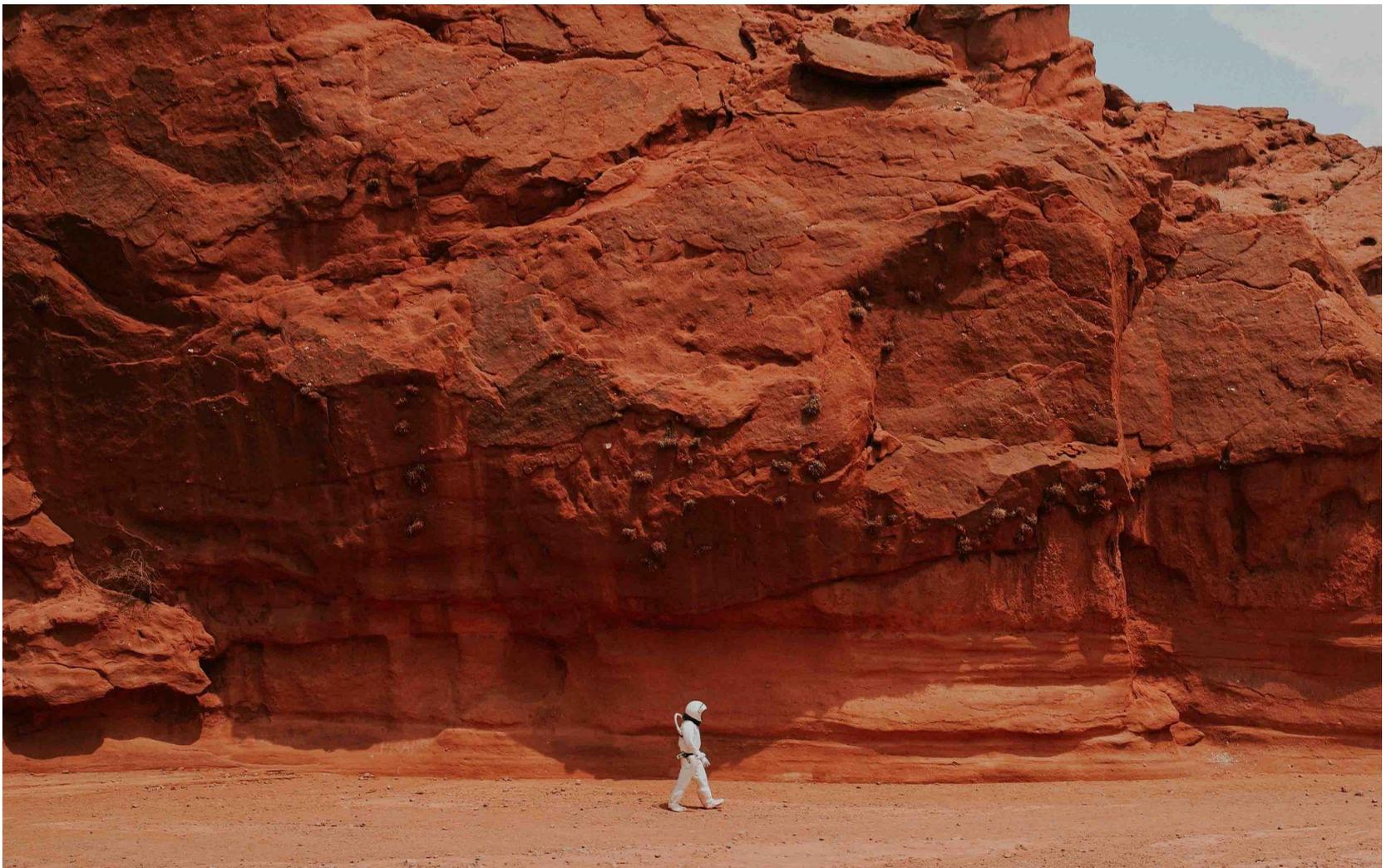


Photo by [Nicolas Lobos](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Hope Probe

The Hope Probe is the last of the three Martian explorations programmed for this year. It was designed by the Emirates, in order to learn more about the diffusion of gasses like oxygen and hydrogen from the planet to space and vice versa. At the end of the mission, hopefully the dynamics of the climate and global weather map will be known. The launching location was the Tanegashima Centre in Japan and the duration of the mission is expected to be one martian year, which is about two Earth years.

The project is focused on Mars because it is the closest planet that could possibly accept human life on its surface, it will serve as a long term and collaborative project for the human race.

Lucy

At last, but not of least importance, the Lucy mission held by NASA, will explore the four Trojan asteroids of Jupiter. This planet has always been very difficult to approach because of the strong winds and difficult atmospheric conditions. By this research, humans could most probably have more information about the formation of the planet, as these are the waste material of the original planets of the Solar System that have bonded together to form alternative celestial structures. The name of the mission originates from the first human being found on earth and from the Beatles song "Lucy in the wind with diamonds". This is the orbital path of the rover.

These missions will have a very important impact on the human race, hopefully a positive one that could open humanity to new survival possibilities, in case planet Earth one day will not be survivable anymore.

JUMANJI LEVEL 2020/21

by Paula De Mercado

March 2020: best known as the beginning of the Apocalypse. That could be a fantastic introduction to a sci-fi film but it was somehow our reality. If you think about all these insane things we have been through, don't you think it sounds like the film Jumanji? (Just kidding, it is always good to add a little bit of drama).

One year after the pandemic arrived in Europe let's make a recap of the past events:

Face masks, hand-sanitizing gel, gloves... No, we were neither heading to surgery nor to a lab, we were just going to Walmart; the only place we could go while, of course, respecting lockdown. That lockdown made you either become a chef or a frustrated athlete.

To not drive ourselves nuts, we had to come up with some astonishing ideas to kill time (apart from video calls or recording thousands of TikToks). One of these attention-grabbing ideas came from the Getty Museum in Los Angeles, which created a challenge that consisted of recreating famous paintings with the objects you had at home. You could see different people reenacting paintings such as The Girl with a Pearl Earring or any Frida Kahlo's paintings with things such as towels, toilet paper, or even with their pets! These little moments of happiness were just trying to cover the fact that it was discouraging to turn on the news and see the rate of Covid-19 deaths and cases skyrocketing.

The uniqueness of the situation made us try to tie bonds with our friends more than ever and drove us to revive some friendships we had forgotten. Maybe you decided to talk to that one friend you met at a summer camp, perhaps you got in touch with some people with whom you had lost touch. Other alternatives were taking up new hobbies, as the thing you sought the most was now the cause for your boredom: free time.

As months went by and Covid-19 cases started to drop, the world was once again trying to go back to the new normalcy as we found ourselves repeating the same sentence: "when all of this is over..." and begging for 2021 to be our savior, because, to be realistic, it was not difficult for it to be better than 2020. Without even realizing it, we ended March and appeared in September. Back to school, college, or work (but with a different reality). Then October, November, December, and voila! Here we have, a new year!

The first thing that was new on January 1st was the departure of the UK from the European Union, one of its founding members, and the first country that had started the vaccination against this dreadful virus was saying goodbye.

Nearly a week after, here in Spain, we were enjoying our last holiday before going "back to normal": The Three Wise Men. We opened the gifts the morning of January 6th and later that afternoon we were shockingly standing in front of the TV as we watched how some US citizens were rioting their Capitol. That had to be a joke. Well, it turned out it wasn't. Thousands of Trump supporters met at the Capitol's entrance, rejecting Joe Biden's victory in the last elections, rejecting somehow their own democracy.



<https://www.cercatoridiatlantide.it/jumanji-the-next-level-la-recensione/>

Moving on from those events, two days after, the storm Filomena arrived in the Iberic Peninsula. If you have watched the first movie of Narnia you can have an image of what Madrid looked like for a week. I had only once witnessed snow falling in Madrid and it was 12 years ago when we just missed one day of school (not a week and a half like this year). But if you thought that this was enough for a year, I admire your way of thinking (keep up the positivity!).

As we were (still) in the same month, an explosion occurred in a street near Madrid's city center on the 20th of January that resulted in three deaths and dozens of injured people. The building that exploded was part of the Church of La Paloma and was the residence of the priests. And right after this, in Granada (Andalucía), a series of earthquakes kept on occurring for a week. We got to see how some people had to sleep in their cars or even do their homework on the street because they were afraid of being buried by their houses.

The list can go on and on, but we would still find the same things: a "catastrophe" followed by thousands of reasons that remind us that we can have faith in humanity. It is encouraging to see how strangers help each other just because they have felt the need to do so. Humans are not perfect, and we should not try to be so as we just have to be better than the person we were yesterday.

All of these misfortunate events were reflected by memes meaning that, if there is something that we, as a society, know about nowadays is to laugh at even in the worst situations. I really enjoyed the meme that compares the situation we are currently living with the game Jumanji, as I introduced before. As most of you may know, Jumanji is a game that appeared in the film with the same name and it is nothing like Trivial or Monopoly. Every time you throw the dice a new threat occurs and as the game goes on, these become more and more difficult each time, and the only way to end the game is arriving at the final square and shouting JUMANJI!

Please, if anyone of you finds the board, please arrive at the final square, shout the name and lock the damn game to help us all. Our fate depends on you.

Women in Politics

by Parvathi Delâtre

Kamala Harris has recently made herself known, because in addition to being the new Vice President, she is the first woman to access this post. But where are the women in politics if lots of people have to celebrate the arrival of a woman to this post?

Kamala Harris did not arrive easily in politics. Her debate with Mike Pence, the previous Vice President, was heard around the world. He did not let her speak, and this is not trivial; he did not hesitate to want to silence her. She replied almost smiling, the phrase "Mr. Vice-President, I'm speaking. I'm speaking." She repeated it almost four times in the debate, changing a few words but the "I'm speaking" was always there. It is an example for girls who have always been told to keep quiet, even if they are right, or when they began to speak before: if a man is speaking, they have to stay silent.

Here is a brief snapshot of women in politics around the world:

As of 2017, only 68 countries have been led by a woman. Some of these countries include Germany, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and Canada.



(State Dept./D. Thompson)

In 2016, only four countries had 50% or more of women in the government: Finland, Cape Verde, Sweden, and France. And four countries had less than 10% in their government, without counting countries where there is no woman in the government: Lebanon, Thailand, Turkey, and Azerbaijan.

There are only 21 women leading a state or a government: New Zealand, the first country to grant women the right to vote (in 1893), Finland, the first country to grant women the right to present themselves to the presidential elections (in 1906), and others : 11 in Europe, 4 in Asia, 2 in Africa, 2 in the Caribbean Islands, 2 in Oceania. The United Kingdom Queen can be added because the Queen is the head of 16 states, even if she does not lead them, and Denmark, for the same reason (but it's only one state). The German Chancellor is the woman who stayed (and still stays) much longer as the leader of a country, 14 years. On the other hand, 16 of these women stayed for 5 years or less, and they all had men before them. While some may believe that equality was already installed for a long time but allowing women to vote and present themselves as candidates is not enough. Women rarely have a good network of contact, because men don't want to accept them in it. Sometimes it is due to the cultural environment too; lots of countries consider it is bad for a woman to want some power. Furthermore, lots of people have the idea men are better presidents than women. Because of this, women do not want to go to politics because of the bad climate for them.

In a subject more concrete, some people have observed women leaders were more able to manage the pandemic crisis, and researchers study this case.

The first observation that can be read is that women must work harder than men, because of the hostile climate. Women also do it because they do not have the same ideas as traditional men leaders could have, so they must prove their credibility by working harder.

But women leaders do not enforce the rules better than men leaders, and the difference of cases numbers is not due to the gender of the leaders. On the other hand, women leaders have prioritized the results of the crisis for their country's economy and social problems. Sometimes, it is even by fear they must work harder, because the people always judge them harder than they would judge the men leaders.

Finally, not a lot of people know brilliant women in politics throughout history.

- Hellen Keller, who was known to be a blind deaf and mute woman, just fought as much as possible in her life, and wrote lots of political essays.
- Olympe de Gouge was a writer, and she took over the French declaration of men and citizen rights, to make the declaration of women and citizens' rights. She also wrote lots of texts against slavery.
- Ellen Johnson Sirleaf was the first woman to be elected as a leader in an African state.
- Simone Veil was a political French woman, who was in a concentration camp, and who made a law authorizing abortion in France.
- Dolores Ibarruri was a political Spanish woman, general secretary of the Spanish Communist Party. She has invented the slogan "No pasarán!", meaning they will not pass, talking about the "fascists".
- Anna Filosofova was a feminist activist, who created the first movement of women in Russia.

All the women who acted in politics were feminist, because all of them had to work hard to go where they were, and they saw all the inequalities that could be observed in this domain.



Inspirational Women

by Giulia Piselli and Martina Bulgarelli

From old to modern prospective

Nowadays, just like in the past, women tend to have a lower status than men. This is because in older times they could only hold the role of mothers or housekeepers. On the other hand, men, having a different and stronger physical structure, could work and therefore bring home a tangible income. Not only, by having this distorted gender vision, it was also believed that women did not need a well-structured education. This meant that it was very hard for them to gain importance in the social and cultural life of cities. The only way to free themselves from these oppressing rules was to campaign in the streets, gathering the most allies as possible, in order to persuade the government to protect and give them rights regarding marriage, suffrage, equal pay, protection against domestic violence, and abuse. Thanks to these protests, the female gender can now aspire to have many kinds of jobs like becoming doctors, lawyers, astronauts, and business owners. This is why powerful women like Kamala Harris and Amanda Gorman can make a difference in this harsh world.



Jenna Schoenefeld for The New York Times

Enterprising personality and career of Kamala Harris

Kamala Harris is the 49th Vice President of the United States, who is actively working since 2021 alongside Joe Biden. Her importance falls on being the first woman and African American to have this role. She was born in Oakland, California, in 1964 to an Indian mother who was a biologist and a Jamaican father who was an economics professor at Stanford University. When she was in kindergarten, she was enrolled in a public school in a prosperous neighborhood, where she sang in a choir and regularly visited with her family at the Afro-American cultural center. She was influenced by her maternal grandfather, who had progressive views on democracy and supported women's rights. Also, she has always had a strong attachment to her Jamaican and Indian roots. Just to think of the origins of her name: Kamala means lotus in Sanskrit and is another name for the Hindu deity Lakshmi. When her parents divorced, she moved in with her mother and sister, and they all transferred to Montreal, Quebec. She managed to graduate from high school, and she then attended Howard University, which was a historically black university in Washington DC. Here, she interned as a clerk for senator Alan Cranston. She chaired the economics society, led the debate team, and entered Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority; the first established Black Greek Letter Organization for women. In 1968 she graduated in political science and economics from Howard College. She returned to California to earn a law degree from Hastings College in 1989. Immediately after, from 1990 to 1998, she worked as a deputy district attorney in Oakland, managing cases about sexual abuse and drug trafficking. Later on, she served as a managing attorney in the San Francisco District Attorney's Office, and she even became chief of the Division on Children and Families for the San Francisco City Attorney's Office.

In 2003, she worked in San Francisco intending to help first-time drug offenders earning a high school degree and a trade. In other words, she has always been a woman who has fought to make the world better and to bring some justice in a corrupt world. She was elected, in 2010, California's Attorney General. In 2017, she moved her first steps into the United States Senate, where she fought for the rights of the weakest and for those who could not speak for themselves, like immigrants. She also served on the Senate Judiciary Committee. In her senator career, she worked on issues such as cash bail and hunger, providing rent relief, and improving maternal health care. Furthermore, in the last few years, she has worked to preserve Historically Black Colleges and Universities, besides working, in the last few months in disadvantaged districts during the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2019 her autobiography, *The Truths We Hold*, was published, further, right after she announced that she was seeking the Democratic presidential nomination in 2020.

The young but powerful Amanda Gorman

The 23-year-old poet and activist Amanda Gorman has left us all speechless at Joe Biden's Inauguration with her poem called "The Hill We Climb," becoming the youngest to read at this kind of event. This composition is solemn, reflective and humble, and gives hope to a new country, a united and strong one. She was the first to be nominated National Youth Poet Laureate and recently graduated from Harvard College, where she studied sociology. In her work, she focuses mostly on important aspects of society like feminism, oppression, race and marginalization. She aspires to become US president in future elections, and many important and well-known politicians like Hillary Clinton support her. She is a very strong and intelligent lady, whom we should all aspire to be.

Final thoughts

After reading this article, we hope that you will have realized how inspiring, brave, and stimulating these women are. They should inspire you to become a better version of yourself each and every day. Like Kamala Harris once said: "dream with ambition, lead with conviction".



<https://www.elledecor.com/it/lifestyle/a35287661/amanda-gorman-anello-inauguration-day-biden/>

What's the Deal with Green Deals?

by Abril Castillo Camacho

Why do we always talk about the 2030 or 2050 dates when we participate in climate action discussions? Well, the answer is comically easy but needs some background information.

First of all, let us define what climate change is. According to NASA, the simple definition of climate change is "a long-term change in the average weather patterns that have come to define Earth's local, regional and global climates." These changes have historically been slow and natural. But in the last few decades, human activity is provoking radical climate change due to, mainly, global warming.

Global warming is the long-term heating of Earth's climate system observed since the pre-industrial period (between 1850 and 1900) due to human activities, primarily fossil fuel burning, which increases heat-trapping greenhouse gas levels in Earth's atmosphere.

The Mauna Loa Observatory has registered an exponential increase in CO₂ concentration since the 1960s, growing from 280ppm (parts per million) to more than 440ppm. CO₂ concentration is linked to earth temperature, and as this change has been so radical, we have little data on what effects it could have on our world.

CO₂ is the main, but not the only, greenhouse gas. Methane (CH₄) and Nitrous oxide (N₂O) are also incredibly harmful. And where do they come from? According to the World Resources Institute in 2016, most of these emissions come from the Energy Industry. That is why there is such a big focus on them when discussing policies to tackle climate change.

And whose fault is it? Well, most of it falls on developed countries. North America and Europe are at fault for approximately 62% of cumulative carbon dioxide emissions, with Asia coming in third position. These percentages play prominent roles in worldwide discussions and policymaking, as those emissions generated wealth for their countries. This serves as an argument for developing countries that want to reach wealthy economies through industries that use fossil fuels, whose capital is greatly affected by these policies.

Now, having learned all of this, let us go back to my introductory question. Why 2030 or 2050? These dates are used as a limit date to reduce emissions, which have a significant impact on temperature changes. According to scientific studies, if we can almost completely stop greenhouse gas emissions by 2030, the Earth's temperature would increase below 1.5 degrees. If this date is pushed back to 2050, this change would instead be below 2 degrees. And as small as this change may seem, we have no real way to measure all its consequences on life and the environment.

So, how do we fix this? The two main approaches are using renewable sources of energy and less-consuming technology. However, we also need to consider the generational dilemma that this entails.

Governments calculate the money spent on climate policies by calculating the benefits. As this has an impact not only in the present but also in the future, we need to account for future generations. However, these calculations make future generations' benefits less and less valuable the further in the future we go, meaning that we determine immediate benefits more important than tomorrow's, which gives little funding to these policies.

Green Deals, which are being planned or put in action worldwide, must account for all these challenges when deciding on their policies and budget. Although it is not easy, it is necessary to achieve sustainability and ensure the safety, health, and future of Earth and its citizens.



<https://www.iberdrola.com/social-commitment/what-is-european-green-deal>



Some European Green Deal Initiatives include:

- Developing more environmentally-friendly technologies
- Cleaner forms of private and public transport
- Making buildings more energy efficient
- Countries working together to strengthen global environmental standards

INTROSPECTION

WRITTEN BY STUDENTS AROUND THE WORLD

April 2021

The Business Behind Your Insecurities

by Inés Chinchilla

We all want to look similar to beauty standards. We think of this action as a way of attaining beauty, and being loved by society. It even goes further, as we have the internal belief that these particular features are what make a person beautiful. This is represented at its best in social media, a huge exhibitor and idealizer of how fitting into beauty standards will make you happier.

But, this is simply not the truth. Beauty standards are completely subjective and depend on the environment you live in. To see this more clearly we just have to pay attention to how these standards change with time and even in the same generation. For example, models like Kate Moss had the “perfect body” in the 1990s, while in our era, this idealization has transformed into also body types like Kim Kardashian’s. And while they are different, they are both highly unattainable.

Furthermore, it is very important to address that our beauty standards are toxic and extremely political. They feed up the idea that only Caucasian features represent beauty. Therefore, diversity is completely excluded from the equation of the industry and not only in terms of race, but also when it comes to body types.

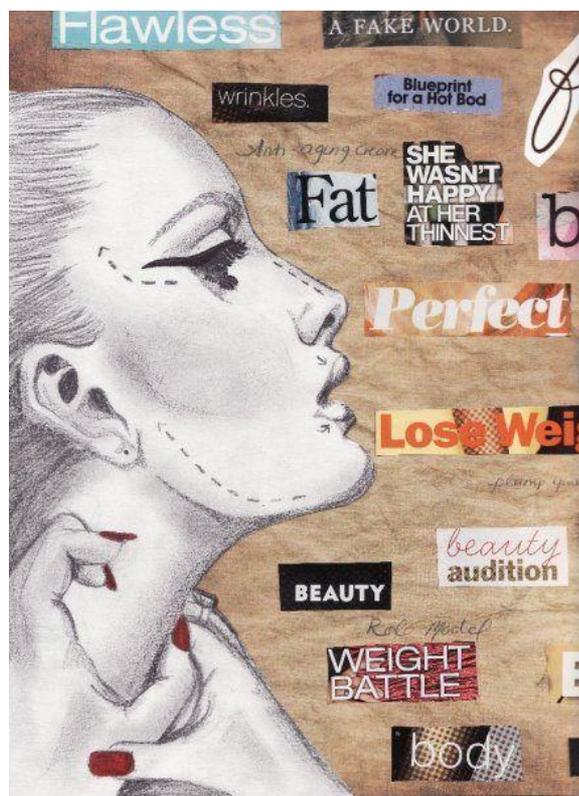
This is the main reason why this industry is so powerful. If they take a few models with very unreachable features (hourglass body, light skin, pointy nose...) and present it as the definition of beauty, we will start having insecurities and we will buy anything they sell to look that way. And not only for vanity and to receive love and devotion, but also because looking “pretty” is a privilege in our society. Fitting the standards can help you have a better quality of life.

All our toxic beauty beliefs are seen on an even higher level in social media, as our image is considered our only aspect of beauty. This also plays an important role in how they try to make us feel empowered. Social media enforces the idea that our power only comes from the way our body looks, which can end up being a form of objectification.

Moreover, this “empowerment” can also be shown as the result of using certain products or clothes, which makes this concept even more beneficial for the industry.

We should treat these beauty standards as we treat TV commercials. They are marketing. Companies are trying to make money from what we want to look like. They don’t jump into trends, they create them. As beauty standards change, the beauty market does too, with new products to help us fix parts of ourselves we didn’t even know we didn’t like. This makes it very difficult for us to love ourselves as we are.

For this reason, it is important to remember that beauty doesn’t equal self-love. Self-love is based on confidence and perception and more aspects



apart from our image. And this is precisely the part where social media makes us misunderstand what loving ourselves actually means.

The “glow-up culture” is believed to be an activity related to loving ourselves. But in reality, is the social media representation of our toxic standards and what we mistakenly think accepting ourselves is. This culture promotes the idea that we need to “grow” and change to deserve our own love and be considered beautiful. And one of its bases is to compare how you used to look, with the way you look after a significant change.

While there is nothing wrong with charting your growth and being proud of it, “glow-ups” also nourish the idea that your old self was not worthy of your love, and normally this growth consists of bringing you forward to beauty standards. This can lead us to celebrate change because it is seen as positive, while it could have been caused by

“Fitting the beauty standards doesn’t always mean you are healthy.”

dangerous reasons, like eating disorders. Fitting the beauty standards doesn’t always mean you are healthy.

Another structural negative point of “glow-ups” is how it is seen as something necessary, because normally they require money, and claiming something as necessary when it is not attainable to everybody is problematic, mostly if people who have artificial glow-ups (plastic surgery) don’t claim them as such, leading people to believe that they can be done in a natural way.

But most importantly, “glow-ups” glorify the result, and loving yourself is a process, is not something that starts when we finally fit the definition of beauty. By glorifying the result of a change in only one moment in time, you tend to forget that self-love consists of self-improvement and self-evaluation, and growing little by little during your whole life.

Unfortunately, this “glow-up culture”, despite being a trend considerably recent, is nothing new. Stories have been showing them for centuries, from tales like Cinderella and The Ugly Duckling to films like Grease, Clueless, The Breakfast Club, The Devil wears Prada... All of them have something in common. The lead character didn’t fit our definition of beauty, but when she changes her appearance, she becomes happier and deserving of love of all kinds.

At the end of the day, it feels like social media is trying to tell us to love ourselves, but only once we’ve changed to fit the standards, so that doesn’t mean that we’re loving ourselves as we are.

So then, what does self-love really mean?

According to Dr. Gabor Maté (an expert on addiction and best-selling author), our lack of self-love is just a representation of our lack of self-compassion, and how we are unable to accept and live with our flaws. This is difficult when society constantly tells us that we shouldn’t settle for who we are and that we should change ourselves, with beauty products and plastic surgery, and trendy clothes and make-up.

But self-love is not just an emotion, and only the intention of feeling it is a signal that you love yourself enough to try to learn how. The insecurities we have are just the way we see ourselves through our own judgements. Don’t let your perception of your own image put barriers between you and the things you want to experience. You will never completely fit beauty standards, and that is the whole point of it, because beauty is a business.

So next time you feel insecure about any part of yourself, think, will anyone be able to earn money if you decide to change it?

The 5 Stages of Grief

by Karel Bergia

Lauren sighed deeply and looked around at the small children laughing on the playground on her right all the way to the couple kissing across the street. She wasn't feeling comfortable, and simply wanted to disappear from that loud terrace, where she and her supposed boyfriend were drinking their coffee.

"We have been talking about this for an hour now. I get it, you don't want me here anymore. Just leave." Lauren said while meeting Chris's eyes once more.

He crossed his arms, seemingly annoyed as well. "No, you don't get it. This is absolutely not what I've been trying to make you understand. I did not say that."

Lauren chuckled unhappily. "That is what you just said. You said, and I quote 'We need to go both our ways. Live new things! New relationships'" she said while mimicking his voice and gestures. She hated being that girl, but this time, her boyfriend had crossed a limit. He had found thousands of excuses to start an argument during their three-year relationship, but none as wounding and straight-forward as this one.

"We went through high school together, spent weeks at each other's places, and now you want to make me think that we should break up on this lame excuse? After everything you did that I've chosen to ignore for the sake of this relationship?"

Chris looked down. She was right, and she knew he thought it too. Lauren shook her head and sighed once more.

"I refuse to believe that you want to end it now. It's not fair for either of us. At least try to think about it for a little longer than two minutes!" she added angrily. She had no idea where this was coming from, given the perfect and romantic evening they had spent together the night before, where he seemed perfectly happy and in love. Denial was the only reaction she could give him at that moment, and she was refusing to let go of such a long part of her life. Lauren stared at him while waiting for his answer, which took a little too long to arrive.

Chris slowly lifted his chin back up to look at her, before taking a sip of his coffee and staring into her eyes. His slow movements were annoying her even more, and she knew he was taking all the time in the world to try and find the perfect sentence to defend his excuse.

"When we got together three years ago, we both knew it wouldn't last until the end of our lives. Keeping the first love is nearly impossible, we haven't been through anything else and I refuse to let our love be my first and my last." Chris finally said, in a soft voice which Lauren usually loved. Hearing those words coming out of his perfect lips made her even angrier.

"So, you are just going to throw everything out, just like that? I can't believe you! I thought we had gone through special things. That's what made me keep going even after those many lows that we hit because of you. I've loved you through your worse and forgave you after you broke my heart multiple times." Despite her anger, Lauren matched his tone of voice. She didn't want him to read into her emotions, because she knew him, and he was just waiting for the moment where he would be able to accuse her of her behavior and validate his point. She took a sip of coffee to try and calm down and closed her eyes for a second before opening them as Chris left an uncomfortable silence between them again.

"You can't keep putting everything that is wrong with our relationship on my shoulders. I did bad things, but we managed to get through it. We discussed, tried to find a compromise and you forgave me. All of this is in the past, and what I'm putting you against isn't half thought, as you seem to believe." He finally said, this time raising slightly the tone of his voice. Lauren could feel he was angry with her speech, and she knew it was the moment for her to switch things up.



Lauren looked down as his words felt like someone had just cut her heart in half. 'Half-broken relationship', this is what he had called their love, and their entire story. He was the guy who had loved her the most, who helped her through dark times, as she had done for him as well. And now, it seemed like it was over. A deep, empty feeling filled her heart, it felt a lot like those feelings she used to have when depressed before meeting Chris. That thought only crossed her mind, but it paralyzed her. She just couldn't become the shell she used to be for years because of her childhood traumas. Chris was the first one that made her feel loved, and the fact that it could be over gave her goosebumps. Without noticing it, Lauren stayed silent for a while, lost in her thoughts.

Chris's voice brought her back to reality, and suddenly she was caught up by the many people and families laughing and enjoying themselves around them, on the terrace and the playground.

"I'm sorry Lauren. I still love you, and it's going to be hard for me as well to go through this breakup. Maybe we'll get back together at some point if we feel like it, or if we both are too lonely..."

Lauren opened her mouth as she heard those words, feeling a regain of hope, but suddenly realized the meaning behind them. She had a completely opposite and unexpected reaction, which confused Chris since she laughed lightly while looking at him. Lauren took a sip of her coffee and was the one who took her time to respond this time, leaving him confused and impatient.

"I'm not a second choice, Chris. I'm not the girl who'll stay and wait for your moments of loneliness while crying in the dark every night. I deserve better." Lauren said calmly while staring into his eyes deeply.

She grabbed her bag, stood up, and without giving him a chance to answer, left the terrace and crossed the street. She heard a vague "Lauren, let's talk!" behind her, but didn't stop nor looked back. For the first time in a very long while, she was feeling light and free of any responsibilities. She had accepted the end of the relationship, and she knew it was the right decision. She wouldn't have been able to keep up with getting her heartbroken and fixed once more. As Lauren walked past the couple on the bench, she chuckled lightly and realized that even though she had managed to grieve this relationship in the course of an hour, her ex-boyfriend was still in the denial phase.

Story Notes: This fiction relates what we call "The 5 Stages of Grief." It is a very common expression to explain the five emotions people usually go through when grieving a loss, commonly: denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance. My article relates those stages, and as I didn't want to write a heavy story with loss as the subject, I decided to explain it through a romantic breakup. Our main character has to accept the fact that she has to move on with her life, leaving with the grief of a past relationship, as well as the happy moments she experienced thanks to it. Grief is essential when losing something or someone, and I believe that those 5 stages are accurate as to what goes on in one's mind during the process.

First Aid Course

by Estíbaliz García

Introduction:

Medical emergencies are thought to be rare, but are they really? There were over 131 million visits to emergency departments in 2011 in the United States. That makes an average of more than 358904 visits a day. A medical emergency is defined by the Merriam Webster Dictionary as “a medical specialty concerned with the care and treatment of acutely ill or injured patients who need immediate medical attention.” In the face of medical emergencies, not many people know what to do, that’s why this article will give an overview of them. Being confident will reassure the people in need of help, and will set everyone up for success.

Emergency plan:

A way to prepare for a medical emergency is by making an emergency response plan, which should include several possible risky scenarios, so as to get the resources needed, and what to do in those cases. The supplies can be organized in an emergency kit. These are usually located in accessible places in houses, cars and businesses. The ones that are found in workplaces are more generic, but private ones normally include the following: medicines (it might include special ones members of the family use), flashlights, bandaids, gloves, masks, prescription glasses, or contacts (in the case of someone in the family needing those).

What to do in an emergency:

Anyone present when a medical emergency occurs should be prepared to help. The first thing to do is to assess the injury, and then check if the person has a pulse, is breathing, and other factors that depend on the wound. If emergency services are needed, it might be helpful to direct the ambulance towards the injured, but only if the wounded are left with someone else. It may also be useful for the medical staff if someone who was present when the injury happened went to the hospital, or if they told them all the details.

Cuts:

The size of a cut doesn’t determine the amount of bleeding, so all of them should be taken care of. If there is excessive bleeding or the wound is in the abdomen or the chest, urgent care is needed. The first thing to do in these cases is to call emergency services while pressing the wound constantly for several minutes.

If the cut is smaller, the course of action should be a little bit different. First, the hands that are going to touch the injury should be washed to prevent infection. Then, the wound should be pressed with a clean cloth or bandage for about ten to fifteen minutes at most. If it is still bleeding, then a provider should see it. Once blood stops going out, it is important to take a closer look and clean the wound without applying soap directly. If any of the debris or dirt is embedded in, and it is impossible to get it out, a doctor should take over. The next step is to apply antibiotic ointment,

and dressing the wound if it is big enough or extra protection is needed. As the wound heals, it should be supervised and searched for signs of infection. Should the latter happen, a health provider should be informed as soon as possible.

Concussion:

After a head injury, a concussion, which is a traumatic brain injury, might develop. Normally, it lasts for a small period of time, days, or a few weeks, but sometimes it can cause long-term problems. The symptoms include a persistent headache that isn’t lessened by painkillers, dizziness, sickness, memory loss, balance issues, a sudden mood change, confusion, vision problems, or difficulty in maintaining consciousness. If a concussion is suspected, that person should go to the hospital to be checked by professionals.

Fainting:

Passing out for a small amount of time is known as fainting. It can be caused by many things, some of which are standing up too quickly while having low blood pressure, not eating or drinking enough, being too hot or too long under the sun, having extreme negative emotions, feeling lots of pain, taking drugs or drinking too much alcohol. Fainting itself is not a cause of worry, but if someone has fainted several times recently or doesn’t know what caused their fainting they might want to visit their doctor. If someone has fainted and does not wake up after one minute, has fallen and been hurt or is having a seizure, Emergency services must be contacted.

Fainting can not always be foreseen, but noticing some of its symptoms can help to prevent it. These symptoms include feeling dizzy, being cold but sweating at the same time, having slurred speech, sickness or having sudden vision problems. Should these symptoms appear, several things can be done: lying down with the legs raised or sitting with the head between the knees, drinking water, eating, or breathing deeply.

Asthma attack:

People who have asthma may have an asthma attack. It is important for them to have an asthma action plan, and their family and friends should have it as well. Symptoms of an asthma attack may include worsening of previous conditions, not feeling any better after using a reliever inhaler, being too breathless to speak, eat or sleep, faster breathing, lower peak flow score, or stomach or chest ache.

When an asthma attack happens, that person should do the following, provided that they aren’t on SMART or MART treatment: be sitting upright and taking low and steady breaths, remain calm and take one puff of their reliever inhaler every 30 to 60 seconds. If they don’t have their inhaler, or after ten puffs they don’t feel any better, they should call for an ambulance. When going to the hospital, it is important to have their asthma action plan or a list of the medicines they take. Even if an asthma attack is controlled and the person doesn’t go to the hospital, they should visit a doctor that same day, or shortly after.

Allergic reaction:

Allergic reactions can be mild, but they can also be life-threatening. Symptoms might include fainting or feeling lightheaded,

breathing difficulties, vomiting, wheezing, fast heartbeat, clammy skin, confusion and anxiety, an itchy rash, swelling or stomach pain. If the person has a known allergy, they should have an auto-injector or an EpiPen, which must be administered in the face of an allergic reaction. Unless the person is unconscious, pregnant or having breathing difficulties, the person should lie down. Even if the person starts feeling alright, emergency services should be called upon.

Heart attack:

If a heart attack is suspected, the person should go to the hospital as soon as possible. Symptoms of a heart attack include persistent vice-like chest pain that doesn’t go away with rest, pain in the arms, neck pain, jaw pain, back pain or stomachache. The person should be comfortable until an ambulance arrives. Sitting them down is a good idea because it will ease the strain on the heart and prevent them from falling down to the floor.

Seizures:

Seizures rarely require emergency medical attention, unless it is their first one, lasts too long, occurs in water or harms the person. Any bystanders should stay with the person until the seizure stops and they are awake, and they should turn them to the side to help them breathe, put something soft under their head and time the seizure. Under no circumstances should they attempt to intervene, or try to stop the seizure. When the person wakes up, they should be told in very simple terms about what happened.

Panic Attack:

A panic attack happens when someone becomes really anxious and frightened. Usually, this affects their ability to think clearly. Other people can help by staying with them and keeping calm, offering medicine if they know the person normally takes it during panic attacks, asking them what they need and providing it, speaking in short and simple sentences and being predictable.

Emergency Services:

When there is a need to call emergency services, all the information must be given quickly but completely. It should include the location, the type of injury, the cause if it is known, the state of consciousness in which the injured person is, their age and gender, their name if it’s known and any other relevant information that they consider as important. In the United States, the emergency services’ number is 911; in Spain, France, Italy and other countries in the European Union and outside, the Emergency services’ number is 112. A list with the Emergency number of all countries can be found at this link: https://travel.state.gov/content/dam/students-abroad/pdfs/911_ABROAD.pdf .

Conclusion:

To sum up, medical emergencies are no joke, and people’s life is at stake. A proper response can save a life, and that’s why everyone should be informed about basic medical care. Everybody should always have their identification and a list with important details for doctors to know if something happens to them. Emergency services are a great resource to use when they are needed. Finally, in the case of an emergency, just remain calm and remember the steps to follow.

The Law of Attraction

by Natalia De Pedraza

Some of you may have heard about the law of attraction, but could you explain what it really is? What is the so-called “law to obtain anything you wish for?”

The law of attraction is defined as the philosophy suggesting that positive thoughts bring good results into a person's life, while negative thoughts bring unwanted outcomes. Therefore, having an optimistic attitude towards life will get you anything you want. Nevertheless, this can be difficult sometimes when life gets tricky, so what can we do to remain positive?

Every change starts at first inside ourselves, and in our mentality; to bring the law of attraction in this field, you

can do affirmations (phrases to repeat that you believe and bring into your life). Here are a few that may help you:

“I am worthy of all the great things that are going to happen to me”.

“I am increasing confidently towards the life I desire”.

“I do not chase, I attract. Everything I deserve will simply find their way to me”.

“I am committed to my results: every day I get closer to my goal”.

Indeed, you cannot not rely on the law of attraction to do everything, but it will for sure help you in the long term until you achieve your accomplishments/goals.

The Absolute Alternatives for the Gym

by Anna Muntada Bajona



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2SH208gkL0w>

Are you thinking about getting fit, but at the same time don't like going to the gym because you find it boring? Don't worry, in this post, we will go through two ideas to trick your mind and body to keep them healthy, while you are having the best of times.

At first, we have AERIAL SILKS; these consist of two tissues that are hung from the ceiling and you can either do drops, splits or sequences. I highly recommend trying this out because, although you are a beginner, everything at the start is very paced for people that have little strength. Yet, what I find surprising about this is that you will gain muscle unconsciously since it is such an entertaining and motivating activity that you don't even notice when you are doing so. Indeed, you will surely soon find a gratifying and amusing relationship between your teacher and mates, as they will support and cheer you at every success you reach. Now, let's recap, because if it's the case that you find yourself lost, as you don't know if that is an accessible activity for you or not, don't be afraid to search for information go to your local aerial silks studio and ask for timetables, levels, and accessibility.

On the other hand, we have SKIING. Maybe this one is not that accessible for everyone. I certainly do think that it is also such an exciting sport to practice with friends or family because laughs and falls will be guaranteed. As for many sports, it needs a specific gear, but in this case, these are the must-haves: skis, boots, helmet, glasses, gloves, pants and anorak. Don't panic if you think that there's no way that you can gather up all those materials since you could reach out to the rental store or any relatives of yours that you think could probably lend you the materials for a couple of days.

In conclusion, these two sports look and are so exciting, but one thing that you should bear in mind, is that you have to always hear your body to prevent any injuries, as both sports include a risk part. At last, that I want to give you to prevent any injuries, is to warm up before starting the activities.

The Art of Not Caring: Stoicism

by Jesmean Kaur

"We are more often frightened than hurt, and we suffer more from imagination than reality," said Seneca...

Seneca was a scholar belonging to the movement of Stoicism, which started in ancient Greece and was then further popularized in ancient Rome. This philosophy has its own uniqueness and distinctiveness because it guides you to find calmness, presence, and resilience in life without being affected by external issues.



<https://dailystoic.com/what-is-stoicism-a-definition-3-stoic-exercises-to-get-you-started/>

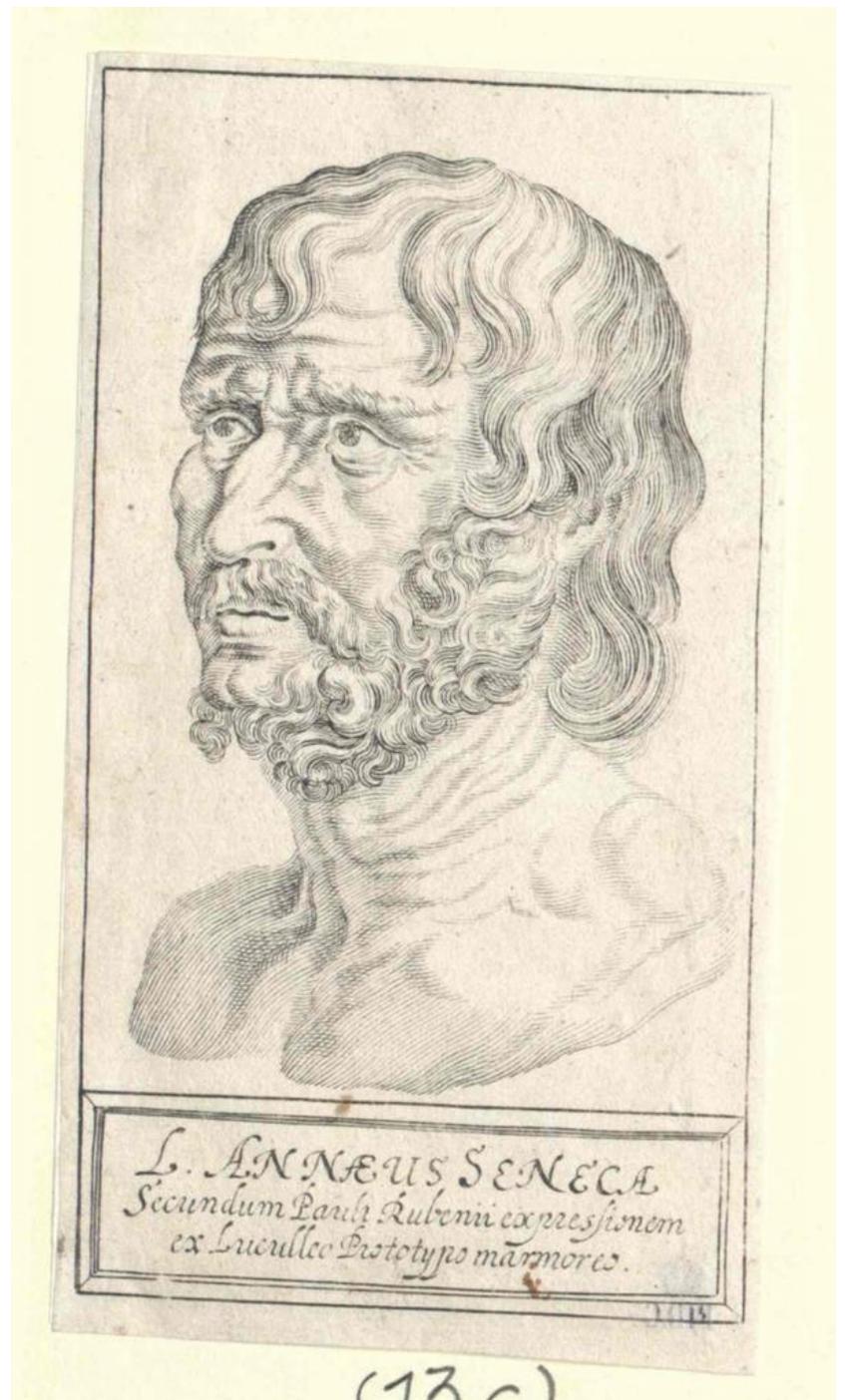
In fact, Stoicism affirms that the only things we can control, as human beings, are those which appertain to our internal domain, such as judgments and interpretations of what is good and wrong in life. For this reason, every human being should focus on these matters, excluding outside circumstances. Stoic ethics consist of different values. According to Stoics, it's not the events that disturb us, rather the way we think about external events. Outer situations may influence us directly; however, the experience of it is conceived by our mind. For instance, we believe that we shouldn't face certain events such as poverty or illnesses, yet, this means that we still reject the reality of nature: bothersome events can happen to everyone, and no one can be excluded from the universal ways of change.

Nonetheless, we have the opportunity to have action despite the existence of uncontrollable events; we can act, judge, and create our own opinions. We should stop thinking that only good things need to happen and accept that the most disruptive events can occur in our lives. From a Stoic point of view, this shouldn't frighten us since it is an occasion to accept reality and stop opposing the inescapable. This reasoning will lead to inner peace since how we feel is caused by our personal experience. Also, our thoughts are unreliable since the human being has the habit of exploring the potential outcomes. It can be dangerous as a person might overdo it and think about possible scenarios, usually negative, in an irrational way based on the assumption. Sure they can happen, yet, a thought is always and only a thought.

Another trait that only humans have is that they can meditate on earlier events for a lifetime, thus, staying always worried until death releases us. Humans let memories bring the pain and fear back when they currently are only our thoughts: the present is all we have now, and staying only in it will let us live free. However, it doesn't imply that memories are unworthy or that we should never plan or predict our future. The main concept is that past and future cannot affect us since they do not exist; the present is all we possess.

Furthermore, as human beings, if we look back at history, we realize that all the disturbing and frightening events, such as war and pandemics, had already occurred in history. Therefore, they repeat themselves over and over again in every epoch; in fact, Marcus Aurelius stated, "Look at the past - empire succeeding empire - and from that, extrapolate the future: the same thing. No escape from the rhythm of events. This is why observing life for forty years is as good as a thousand. Would you really see anything new?"

Stoicism isn't about evading life, yet, evading being damaged inwardly because of it. We shouldn't concentrate on how bad things are; instead, on how we can go through them without unbalancing our inner peace. We need to see bad moments as an occasion in which we can become powerful, and unconsciously we will stop fearing them.



FICTION

WRITTEN BY STUDENTS AROUND THE WORLD

April 2021

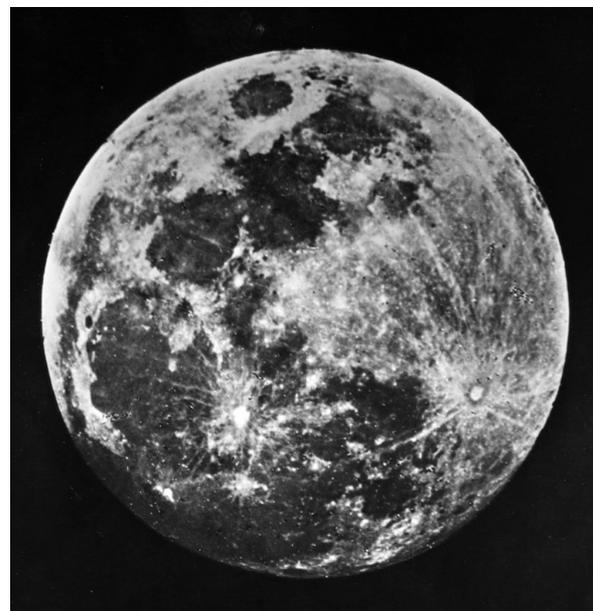
Our Moon

by Estíbaliz García

The round shaped Moon glows in the dark sky every night,
a lot more than the brightest star, with all her might.
Only in one moment does she get out of my sight,
and that is when the Sun rises to win her fight.

Ancient cultures believed she was made out of cheese,
now we know she isn't, after nights in the cold breeze.
She bears to stand all alone night after night, geez!
And to her friend the Sun she'll never fail to tease.

So gracious, so vast, so perfect, that is our Moon,
and if you can't see her now, you will see her soon.



Adulthood

by Sarah Prunel

A strange period, between childhood and the great age.
Time where you stop seeing our magic world, the Earth
You're taken away by the waves, the waves of "being busy".
You no longer search the dove but rather the fire

Preferring offices and their clever computers
To the silence and calm of nature.
You cease to look to each person as marvels,
Better seeing the glass half-empty
Than half-full.

I don't want to become an adult.
I want to continue to read fairy tales,
To continue to believe that words are more powerful than
wars,
To continue to believe that our world is wonderful.



<https://psychhelp.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/iStock-682424594-1.jpg.webp>

Questions

by Estíbaliz García



I was in a meadow, the sky was blue and the grass bright green. It was very peaceful. I started to turn around myself, grinning so much that my face ached. I was really happy and comfortable there, more than I had ever been before. I kept turning, and it was almost as if I was dancing with myself. My white dress floated around me, giving me an eerie feeling. Suddenly, all that happiness became fear. Something wasn't right, and not knowing what it was made it worse. I started sweating. I wanted to run away, but every direction I looked at I could not find anything but grass. I started running towards a random point on the horizon. The feeling of being chased was increasing. But when I looked back, there was nothing. I was frightened. I felt so alone...

All of a sudden, I opened my eyes. I wasn't in that horrible meadow anymore; therefore, it must have been a dream. I felt a sharp pain in my arm, and when I looked, I saw an almost empty vial attached to my skin. It seemed to be a drug.

I looked at my surroundings. I was in a plain gray room, with no furniture except the chair I was seated at, which was metallic and had been pinned to the ground. I had manacles around my wrists. Right in front of me, there was a door made of the same metal as the chair, without any openings. To my left, there was a window, but it was very narrow, covered with bars, and at a considerable height. Even if I could stand up, which my manacles didn't let me do, I still wouldn't be able to reach it. As I gathered all of this information, I realized that I didn't remember having entered the room; my captors must've used the drug to bring me here. That was the only thing that made sense. What didn't make any sense was why I was there. What interest would the criminals, because that's what they must be, have in me? After all, I was the youngest child of a small family, which consisted of my parents and my brother. I was in the last year of high school, and I did not stand out in the good things nor the bad ones. You could say that I was just in the middle of everything, a basic girl with a normal life.

I was thinking about all of this when a masked person approached me, set a sandwich in my lap, and left. I didn't even have time to see my captor well, and although the gestures and their way of walking were familiar to me, I couldn't place it. I ate the sandwich quickly because I was starving, and I kept reflecting on the meaning of my strange dream. When the light from the window began to dim, I decided to sleep. Nightmares had left me; it was a dreamless night.

When I woke up again, the door was opening, and three figures appeared through the doorway. They were none less than my parents and brother. Seeing those familiar faces made me very happy; I finally felt safe. That thought lasted only for a moment because I realized that they were not planning to move a muscle to help me. I shouted their names, but they just looked at me with pity. I could not understand what they were doing there, because, unlike me, they weren't restrained.

After an endless minute, my father broke the silence: "Lucy, I'm really sorry, but we had no other option." He addressed me directly, and, by the look on my mother's and brother's faces, they knew what was going on. I was the only one who had been kept in the dark about what this conversation was going to be about. "We just want to do what's best for you and since your illness has progressed..." What kind of a joke was it? I had no illness, and I hadn't gotten worse. Nothing made sense.

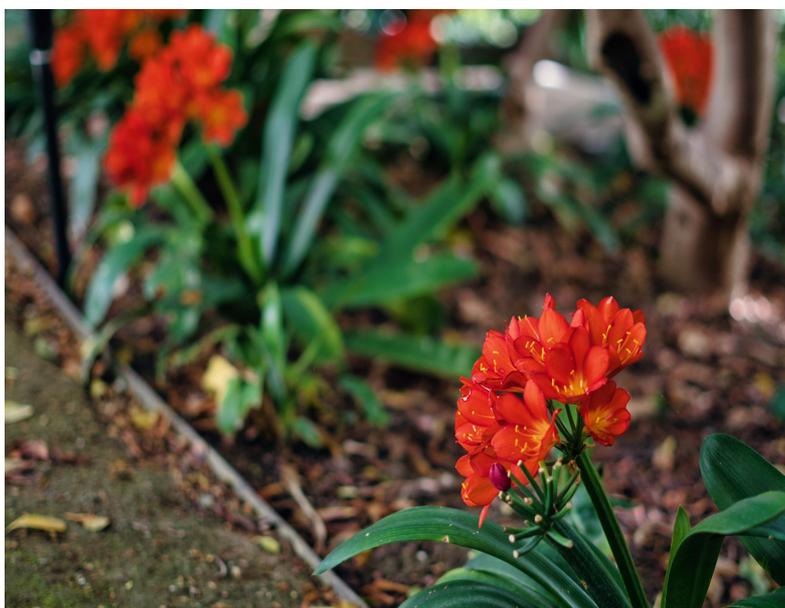
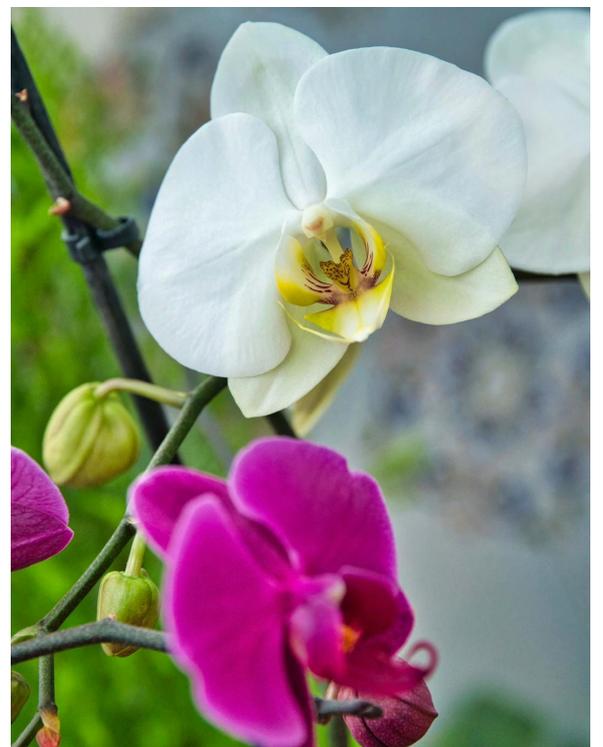
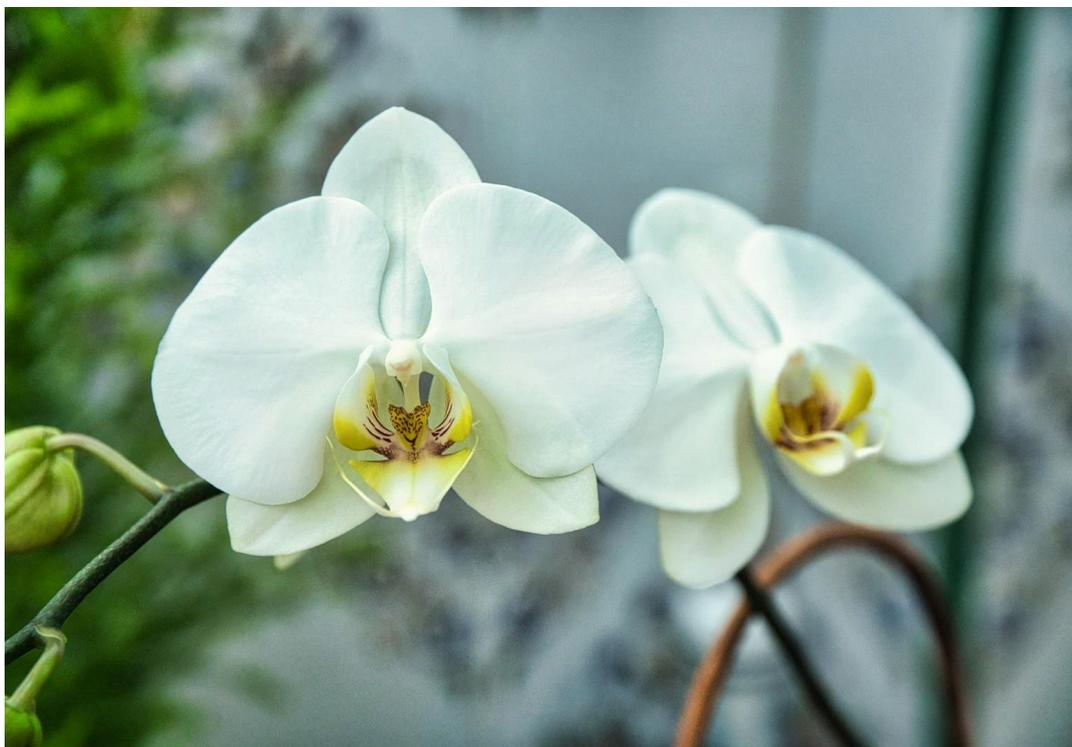
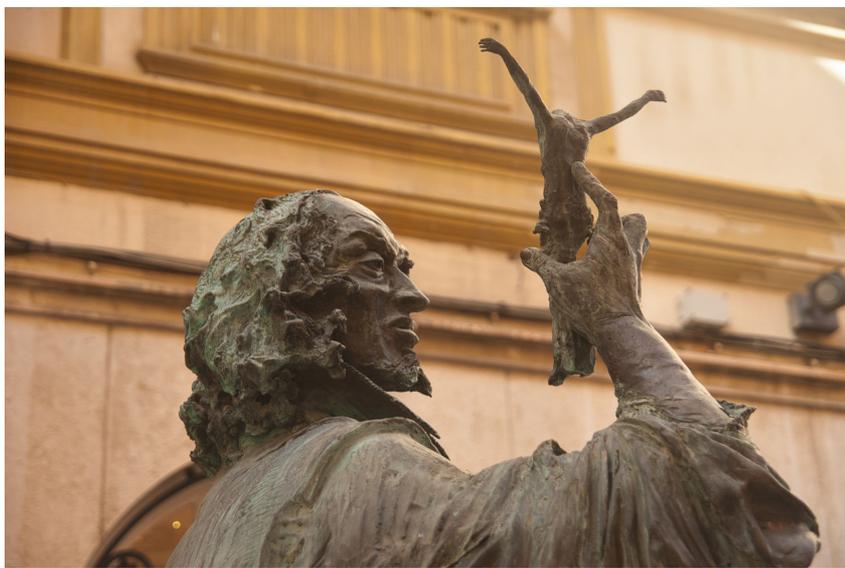
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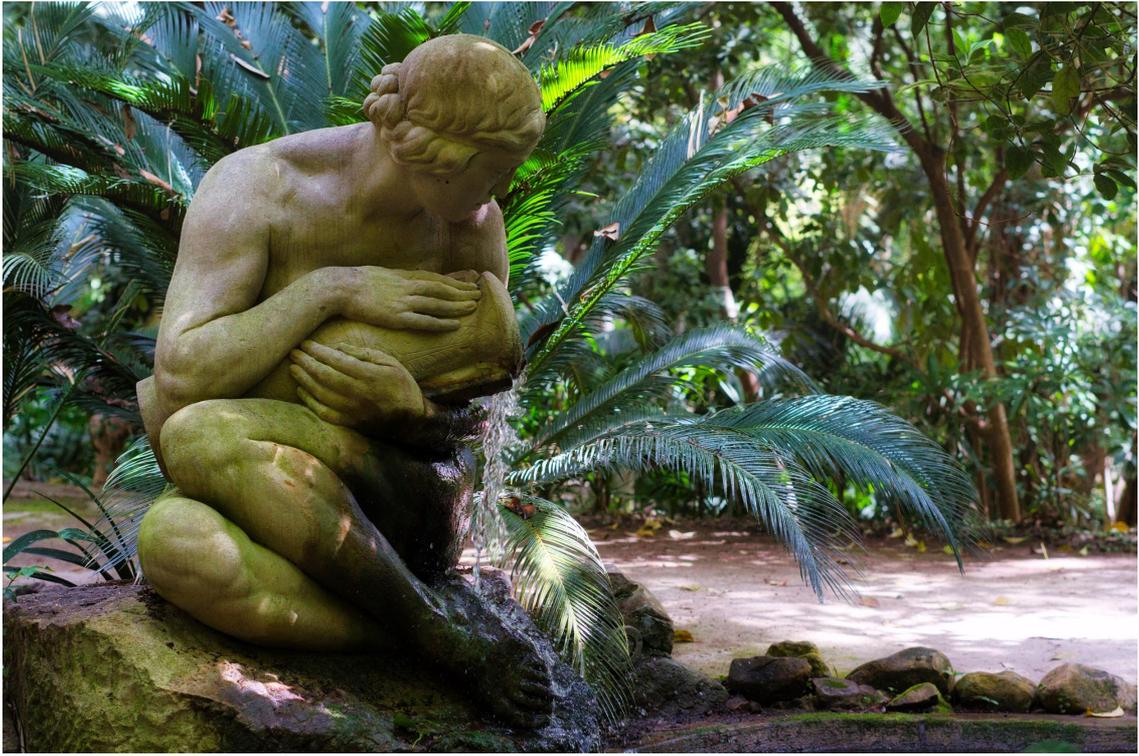
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Memories From Málaga

photographer Luis León





ENTERTAINMENT

WRITTEN BY STUDENTS AROUND THE WORLD

April 2021

The Curious Case of J.D Salinger

by Inés Chinchilla

When you hear the name of the author “J.D Salinger”, you may think about the teenager with a red hunting hat wandering the streets of New York and complaining about everything. That could be because Holden Caulfield is his most famous character and *The Catcher in the Rye* his most famous (and only) novel. But this curious author has a lot more to offer.

Jerome David Salinger was born into a Jewish family in New York, January 1st of 1919. He grew up not being a great student and ended attending various colleges, some of them in Europe.

While he was studying in Columbia University, he met Whit Burnett, a professor and owner of *Story Magazine*, who would turn out to be decisive in his writing career by supporting him and publishing his first short stories in his magazine.

At the same time, when he was 21, his romantic life was starting to take off. He met in New York’s “Stork Club” people like Truman Capote (future American writer) and Oona O’Neill (the daughter of Eugene O’Neill, a literature Nobel prize winner) when they were both only 16 years old. Oona and Salinger started having a romantic relationship shortly before they met. They were each other’s first love and spent almost a year together.

Tragically, during that same time, the country was facing a war, and even though Salinger could have avoided the military service because of a heart condition, he decided to join it, convinced that war would provide him with some ideas and life experience for his writing. He was determined not to look back to war with regret for not having participated, just like what happened to authors like F. Scott Fitzgerald, one of his biggest influences.

But, this period of his life ended up being devastating for him. After being trained, he was sent to fight on the Normandy Landing, and the experiences he had in war shaped him and marked him with a lot of trauma, including being hospitalized for having a nervous breakdown.

During the time he spent in the military service, he kept writing letters to Oona, but shortly after he left, she married Charles Chaplin, 36 years older than her, and they would end up having 8 children together. The letters they both shared have never been revealed to the public and are kept by their families.

And of course, in this period, he continued writing and sending short stories to magazines in the US. In 1944, before the landing, he published a story called “Last Day of the Last Furlough”, in which it is mentioned that the little brother of Vincent Caulfield, Holden, is missing. After this, he decided to give this eccentric character a whole novel.

He came back to New York married to Sylvia Louise Welter, a German nurse he would soon after divorce. And in 1951, *The Catcher in The Rye* was published, obtaining some positive reviews and providing Salinger with significant notoriety. When he published it, he made clear some requirements, like never writing a summary on the back of the book and never making a film of it. Today, this book is part of almost every mandatory reading in US schools and it became popular for how well it represented the American youth and how it has helped to shape it.



<https://www.townandcountrymag.com/leisure/arts-and-culture/reviews/g340/salinger-movie/>

Despite being now a consolidated classic, this novel hasn’t been an issue without contention. Our dear Holden Caulfield, who wanted to know where the ducks went when the lake froze in winter, inspired criminals like John Hickley Jr. (tried to kill Ronald Reagan), who claimed to be obsessed with him, or Mark David Chapman, (killed John Lennon), who, when being arrested, had a copy of this book and said that the explanation of the shooting could be found on that pages. They were in some way, inspired by an extreme interpretation of the character.

And the popularity of this novel also had consequences on Salinger’s life. Struggling to handle fame because of the post-traumatic stress disorder he suffered from the war, he decided to move to a retreat far from society in Cornish, New Hampshire, where he lived until his death in 2010, making very few public appearances in the meantime.

His particular way of living also made it difficult to maintain a stable personal life. He married Claire Douglas and had two children, Matt and Margaret. But he ended up divorcing her and having other relationships with women normally a lot younger. Both her ex-lover Joyce Maynard and her daughter have said in public declarations that he was extremely selfish and misogynistic.

Apart from that novel and the short stories he had already published in his early years, his lifework is completed with three collections: “Franny and Zooey”, “Nine Stories” and “Raise High the Roof Beam, Carpenters, and Seymour: An Introduction”. A total of 13 short stories, all of them connected with each other, as they narrate the experiences of each member of the Glass Family.

On June 19th, 1965, he brought out “Hapworth 16, 1924” which was the last thing he ever published. But he never stopped writing. All of his unrevealed work is safeguarded by his family and some of it is scheduled to be resealed in the next few years. Clearly, apart from all his curious contributions to American literature, we still have a lot to expect from this enigmatic author.

The Driver's License Phenomenon

By Claudia Pagan Guillén

A song was released on January 8, 2020 that has topped all the global charts. But how has one song achieved these records in less than a week? And who is Olivia Rodrigo, the teenager who has revolutionized the music industry?



The artist of this success is Olivia Rodrigo. A 17-year-old American actress, songwriter, and singer. She was known thanks to her role on the Disney Channel series "Bizaardvark". But, really, her fame grew with her role in the series "High School Musical, The musical: The series". A Disney Plus series in which in the institute of the film "High School Musical", the theater group meets to carry out a version of the film, but between song and song the feelings, emotions and doubts of the adolescents are shown.

In that series, numerous songs were written, among others "Just for a Moment" (co-written by Olivia Rodrigo and Joshua Bassett, his partner in the series); they started his career in the music industry.

Her first single, "Driver's License", released by a Universal label called Greffen Records, is the one that has caused such a sensation on the networks. It ranked as #1 on more than 20 charts. In addition, it has a platinum record in Canada and a gold record in the United States, among others. In less than a week, the song had more than 67 million plays on Spotify and the video had more than 20 million views in less than 24 hours. But, what is the story behind? This is where the debate gets interesting.



In terms of music, according to the many vocalists and producers who have made videos reacting to this song, the vocal ranges it uses and the notes it reaches are almost inhuman. The producer Blake McLian highlights the musical structure of the work, because, as he says "it gives the audience what they want to hear," verse by verse, chorus after chorus, it creates tension, which the public expects to break, but never does. Until the fifth verse in which, faithfully, breaks with a change of music and rhythm. ("red lights, stop sings ...")



The meaning is what has really caught the public's attention, or at least the meaning that has been given to it.

All the "fandom" of the series went crazy when the song came out, because what is a song born of heartbreak and refers to a broken heart, there have been numerous speculations around the person who caused it. Indeed, Joshua Bassett, her friend and partner in the Disney series, and now, her possible ex-boyfriend.

He, for a while now, has been seen with another Disney star, Sabrina Carpenter. The phrases "You're probably with that blonde girl" or "she's so much older than me" just seems to make sense with the description of Sabrina Carpenter.

But now... what is really causing such a furor on the networks?

The same day that Olivia announced that she was releasing a new single, Joshua, on his Instagram, also announced it. And the song was called "Lies, lies, lies." When they started listening to "Driver's License," they realized there had to be something related and the title of his song and the lyrics of her song.



A week later, "Lies, lies, lies" was published and the fans began to see a relationship between the two music videos. But, not only because of that, but one week after the publication of the J.Basset song and two weeks after the publication of the O. Rodrigo's song, Sabrina Carpenter released a new song called "Skin".

On this single, she could be said to be responding to "Driver's License." There are phrases like: "Maybe blonde was the only rhyme" or "Don't drive yourself insane."

Wow ... after all this information, where does all this musical hubbub take us?

Due to the times, the lyrics and the references, one begins to see a certain advertising strategy to give fame to these actors / singers. Because how is it possible that in less than two weeks Sabrina Carpenter, record, produce and perform a song? But above all, how is it possible that in Joshua Bassett's video there are references to Olivia Rodrigo's video, when the video hadn't even been released?

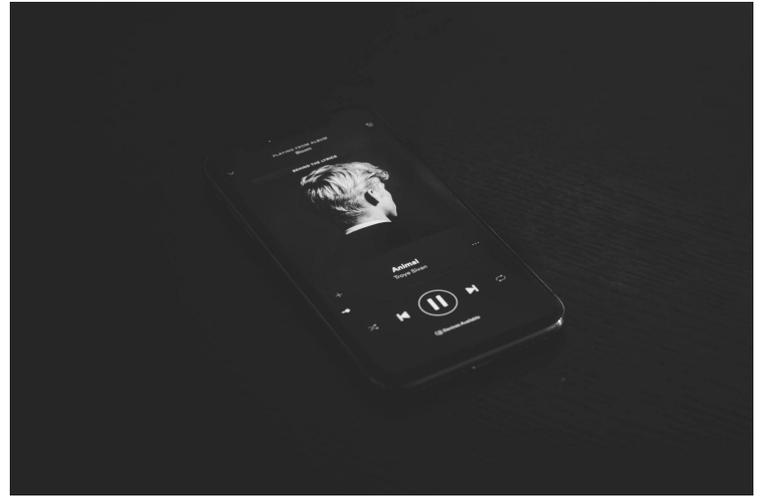
It is not known for sure, but Disney may have played with all of us. Although, what cannot be denied is that "Driver's License", musically, the melody and the lyrics, would have left us just as shocked without all this publicity stunt.

The Dual Diploma Times Hot 60

by Irati Acha

For most of us, music has been our support during this crazy year. As all of us are so different, and all of us have different music tastes, here is our playlist:

1. El Mismo Aire (Pablo Alborán, Camilo)
2. This Is Me (The Greatest Showman's Cast)
3. Let It Go (The Piano Guys)
4. Desperado (Rihanna)
5. Drivers license (Olivia Rodrigo)
6. Lettre à une femme (Ninho)
7. Comerte Entera (C. Tangana, Toquinho)
8. Calamity (ZAYN)
9. Si, ah (Frah Quintale)
10. Giornate vuote (Frenetik&Orang3, Gemitaiz)
11. Imagine (John Lennon)
12. Islands in the Stream (Dolly Parton, Kenny Rogers)
13. Heather (Conan Gray)
14. Tú Me Dejaste De Querer (C. Tangana, Niño de Elche, La Húngara)
15. Beautiful Beautiful (Punch, GLABLINGO)
16. J'ai mal (Pt. 2)(Aya Nakamura)
17. Un Año (Sebastián Yatra)
18. Into You (Julia Michaels)
19. Desde las Alturas (Guitarricadelafuente)
20. Falling (Harry Styles)
21. Lonely (Justin Bieber, benny blanco)
22. Riptide (Vance Joy)
23. When The Sun Goes Down (Arctic Monkeys)
24. Achilles Come Down (Gang of youths)
25. Every You Every Me (Placebo)
26. The Bitter End (Placebo)
27. Twenty Years (Placebo)
28. You Don't Care About Us (Placebo)
29. Wrong (Depeche Mode)
30. no body, no crime (Taylor Swift, HAIM)
31. Pleaser (Wallows)
32. Canada (Lauv, Alessia Cara)
33. champagne problems (Taylor Swift)
34. Skin (Sabrina Carpenter)
35. Chasing Cars (Snow Patrol)
36. Ghost Of You (5 Seconds of Summer)
37. Body (Jordan Suaste)
38. Perfectly Imperfect (Declan J Donovan)
39. The call (Regina Spektor)
40. Nightlight (We Three)
41. Broken (Jonah Kagen)
42. Different Eyes (Marco Tamimi)
43. Antes De Los Veinte (Morat)
44. Dieciocho (Dani Martín)
45. La Llamada (Leiva)
46. Soldadito marinero (Fito y Fitipaldis)
47. Mi lugar (Sinsinati, Álvaro de Luna)
48. Puede Ser Que la Conozcas (Marwán, Jorge Drexler)
49. Lady Madrid (Pereza)
50. Guantanamera (Guitarricadelafuente)
51. Sixtinain (Guitarricadelafuente)
52. Rápido, Brusco, Violento (Juan Magám, Boni & Kelly)
53. Gol (Cali y el Dandee)
54. Amnesia (5 Seconds of Summer)
55. This Town (Niall Horan)
56. 2004 (Anthony Amorim)
57. Catch & Release (Matt Simons)
58. If I Could Fly (One Direction)
59. The Story (Conan Gray)
60. Párteme la Cara (C. Tangana, Ed Maverick)



Shadowhunters, a Bittersweet Show Inspired by Demons

by Miriam Sánchez



Alec and Magnus

Shadowhunters is an American supernatural drama television series developed by Ed Decter, based on the popular book series *The Mortal Instruments* written by Cassandra Clare. Some of the actors starring in the series are Katherine McNamara, Dominic Sherwood, Harry Shum Jr., Alberto Rosende, Mathew Daddario, Emeraude Toubia, and Isaiah Mustafa. The series launched on January 12, 2016, on Freeform, and it has four seasons.

The starting point is not revolutionary and is clearly influenced by the *Harry Potter* and *Twilight* sagas (the book series was born as a fan-fiction of Draco Malfoy trying to be a better person in an alternate reality). It takes some liberties in terms of adaptation. However, that is not exactly a bad thing, as the books are not perfect and are riddled with some unnecessary details.



Isabelle and Luke fighting to rescue Clary

A girl named Clary Fray finds out on her eighteenth birthday that the world is full of magical creatures: there are warlocks, demons, and she comes from a long line of human-angel hybrids who hunt down demons: Shadowhunters. She will be involved in a supernatural fight where an attractive young man, a Shadowhunter like her, will teach her how to survive.

It is a teen series and very dedicated to that audience, that is why the script is sometimes dull and lacks dynamism. And the performances, apart from Harry Shum Jr.'s one as Magnus Bane, a character that has personally amazed me, are not natural nor show the chemistry between the characters. Katherine McNamara is remarkably girly and dumb like Clary, Dominic Sherwood is a handsome boy like Jace.

Nor does the adult cast help, who with a single scene makes it very clear that they would never be hired to star in a series for people their age: Maxim Roy as the mother is embarrassing. Katherine McNamara is remarkably girly and dumb like Clary, Dominic Sherwood is a handsome boy like Jace.



Clary and Jace

Finally, the effects are quite well done for TV and it is entertaining watching it. In my opinion it has a plot and characters that are moderately funny and creates an unknown world that somewhat makes sense, so I would recommend it if you are bored.

TRAVEL

WRITTEN BY STUDENTS AROUND THE WORLD

April 2021

Building Bridges

by Albert Brulles

PCR Test 72 hours before, Antigens Test 2 hours earlier, and at six in the morning the first flight from Barcelona to Amsterdam and then, after two hours, another eight hours flight that will take me to Minneapolis and from there, an hour drive to Oronoco, a village very close to Rochester, Minnesota.

This will be my second exchange program. The first one was in France three years ago. And it must have been positive because I am doing it once again.

To enroll in an exchange program, you don't need to be a professional speaker of the country's language. I had never studied French before and, after six months living there, I went back home with a French proficiency in reading and speaking and with an advanced level of writing.

Stuart Webb, a professor of applied linguistics at the University of Western Ontario in Canada, has studied the process of language acquisition, concluding that typically, native speakers know 15,000 to 20,000-word family's roots in their first language.

Webb says the most effective way to speak a language fast is to learn the 800 to 1,000 words that appear most often in a language. Reaching 800 words, you can understand 75% of the language. He states that the key factor is "how often the words we learn appear in the daily use of the language we are studying."

If we go further, as the American linguist at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, M. Kenneth Locke Hale, also known as Ken Hale, claimed, "a person masters a language only when he really knows all the culture around him."

And this is what happens to the majority of language students. They study languages in school, high school or language academies, spending years and years studying, but only a few of them end up having a high level in that language. And this is what happens to the majority of language students. They study languages in school, high school, or language academies, spending years studying, but only a few of them end up having a high level in that language. However, the most challenging thing to improve in any language with a local accent, and understanding well the local interests.

An exchange program allows you to make this cultural immersion needed to internalize a language.

We could summarize its benefits in three: linguistic results, cultural results, and human results (the most important one).

Being fully integrated ensures that the child will return home almost bilingual, with good intonation and pronunciation. Also, and out of the ordinary, children integrate and permeate their new culture easily and want to go to another country once they return home. And finally, there is a high probability that two children of the same age from two different countries and ways of living, but spending a year together, will build a strong relationship and will share memories forever. They are building a bridge that will cross borders and not only during the exchange period.

After the exchange program finishes, the children and their families are able to visit each other, spend some time together, for example, on vacation, and get to know each other's country. Moreover, children who have participated in exchange programs will grow up with international bonds that also help them improve as people. Because only by improving ourselves will we be able to improve the world.

A Weekend in London

by Louise Dugast

After a year of lockdown, we all need some vacation time, therefore I invite you to follow me through this trip to London. I will give you all my good advice so that way, you will know what to do and where to eat while exiting the beaten track and the major tourist circuits. Keep this in mind for when travel will be allowed again!.

For those who love sport and more precisely football, these tours are made for you:

Wembley Stadium:

Wembley Stadium is a 90,000-seat stadium in Wembley, in the London borough of Brent (north-west London).

The Wembley Stadium Tour lets you explore behind-the-scenes of the UK's largest sports and entertainment venue – taking you deep into the heart of the stadium to those areas usually reserved for the biggest names in sport and music.



A Weekend in London - Continued

Arsenal Stadium:

In the heart of the home of the legendary English club Arsenal, discover the changing rooms, the edges of the pitches, the dressing rooms, and the offices of the leaders, an inevitable visit for all football fans, I highly recommend.

If you are interested in running the shops to find the most fashionable clothes in English fashion, these places are for you:



Picadilly/ Covent Garden:

Picadilly is one of the most famous places in London. In the heart of the city and at the crossroads of three major thoroughfares, it is lined with elegant buildings, boutiques, and luxurious hotels. This ever-moving square, teeming with life, is located in the Soho district, the touristic and youth place by definition.

Covent Garden is a charming and enchanting market in the heart of London. Between pastries and craft markets, you can attend a violin concert while enjoying an aperitif under the halls of the old flower, fruit, and vegetable market founded in the 16th century. Do not hesitate to take a break at Bella Italia, a delicious Italian restaurant, where the best pasta carbonara is made. Or at Steak and Co., where you can cook your meat at a table and enjoy it your way, accompanied by butter and salt scented to the demand.

But fashion fans can also visit Harrod's, Hamley's, Primark, or Hardy's sweatshop, stores at the top of the trend or downright delicious!



Notting Hill/Portobello Road:

Notting Hill is one of London's most famous neighborhoods, is situated in the North West near Hyde Park. It is a very lively neighborhood that you may know from the film "Love at Notting Hill" starring Julia Robert. Then explore Portobello Road, the world's largest antique market with over 1,000 dealers selling every kind of antique and collectible but also streets with colorful houses, an atmosphere you won't find anywhere else.



For those who are searching for a little bit of nature, the English capital has nothing less than nine royal parks, nature reserves, and botanical gardens, not to mention the River Thames and its canals:

Hyde Park:

Hyde Park is one of the most famous and biggest parks in London city, separated by the Serpentine river with Kensington garden it's a natural haven for everyone who goes there. Located in the north of the City district, the park has more than 4,000 trees and several museums, bars, and restaurants or memorials such as the one in honor of Princess Diana. You can also practice a lot of sports such as tennis, swimming or cricket.

A Weekend in London - Continued

St James Park:

St James's Park is the oldest of London's nine royal parks, Buckingham Palace to the west, Downing Street, Horse Guards Parade, and the Cabinet War Rooms - from where Winston Churchill led operations during the war - to the east, are near the 23-hectare park and are a must to visit. With the surrounding area, there are authentic and exude a serene and elegant atmosphere. Thanks to its flowery walkways and lake, it is an ideal place to walk in the heart of the city.

If we want to discover the wealth of this city, you can visit the dozens of museums and monuments that count the English capital:



Tower Bridge:

The Tower Bridge in London, like the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco, is one of the most famous bridges in the world. Recognizable at first glance, its structure made up of two towers, connected by a footbridge, and an apron that rises to let the ships pass is a true jewel of Victorian architecture of the late nineteenth century. Its Gothic architecture makes it one of the symbols of England, just like Westminster or Big Ben. You can also visit a museum located in one of the towers of the bridge relating to its design and construction.

Tower of London:

The Tower of London is a historic tower in the city center. It was originally a fortress, a royal palace, and a prison. Its advantageous position near the Thames allowed the enemy to cross the river. Since 1971 it has also hosted the jewels of the crown. You can visit the entire building and admire some places that have hardly changed. A bubble out of time! If you want to take a break, don't hesitate to eat at Sargeant's Mess, a British restaurant in front of the Tower with a view of the Thames, you will enjoy classic English dishes such as fish and chips or an English breakfast.

But the list of all things to do is so long that I can't go into detail here so don't hesitate to take a tour of Chinatown, Buckingham, Big Ben/Westminster, Little Venice, Tate Modern. Also, know that the vast majority of London museums are free so enjoy it!



10 Secret Treasures of Madrid

by Irene Fraga

London, Paris, Rome are all popular cities in Europe, but in my opinion, one of the most beautiful is Madrid. This is the capital of Spain, but also is a place where food, culture, history, and art are joining. Here are ten things to do when you visit Madrid.

1. Squid Sandwich and Rastro Market

Everyone in Madrid has gone, at least once, to the center to eat a squid sandwich. If you do not know what a squid sandwich is, by the end of this paragraph you will certainly have an answer. It is composed of two pieces of bread with breaded squid. People usually eat this in winter, but you can consume it whenever you want. After enjoying your squid sandwich, you should go to the Rastro Market. It has mostly second-hand things, and who knows maybe you find something interesting.



2. The Statue of the Fallen Angel

As the name indicates, it is a statue of an angel. The creator was inspired through a verse of "Paradise Lost" of Milton John. Something that only a minority knows is that this statue is 666 meters from the sea. Although this is not true, some people say that this is a unique statue with a representation of the demon in the world but it is true that there are only a few ones.



3. Visiting the Kilometer 0

In the heart of Madrid, we can find kilometer 0. People from all over the world take a photo with the plaque found on the ground. This is the starting point of all Spanish highways. Therefore, all the visitors coming to Madrid are interested in the famous plaque, even locals, and always take a photo when they go to the center. The secret? Take only a photo with your feet on the plaque.

4. Visiting the Retiro

The Retiro is a very big park in the center of Madrid. It has a lake, playgrounds with swings, and places to eat something. It's fantastic going there to skate, ride a bike, or even to take a boat ride on the lake. You do not want to miss it, because it has all those many things to do, that you could end up taking weeks discovering it.



5. Prado's Museum

Prado's Museum is one of the typical excursions for Spanish children. It is one of the most visited museums, not only in Spain but also in the world. It has pictures as: "The Annunciation", "The Garden of Earthly Delights" and "Las Meninas". Hours of art just in one magnificent building.

6. The Capricho Park

This is another of the best places in Madrid to visit, where you can relax and take time enjoying the beauty surrounded by nature. Is not only a normal park, it also has a bunker that was made to protect people during the Civil War. You could also enter to visit it with a guided tour. Maybe it is not the most famous place in Madrid, but you will definitely not regret having visited it. The best moment? In Spring, when almonds trees are blooming.

7. The Sabatini Park

Composed of nature and a palace, we can find the Sabatini Park. The constructor of the palace was at first Sacchetti and then later Sabatini. The construction of the park was stopped during the civil war but in 1950 the park was opened to the public. At sunset, the park intertwines with the sunset creating a mystic and marvelous atmosphere, and indeed very recommended. Even better if you can listen to a concert at the candles' lights!

8. The Debod Temple

Madrid has a lot of places to enjoy, but it also has constructions inspired by other civilizations, like the Debod Temple. It was taken from Egypt in the year 1968, a chapel in honor of Amon. Art students from all Madrid came here for its beauty. At sunset, when the lights are on, and the sky is of colors, it is the best time to visit it.

9. Gran Via

Gran Via is the best place to go if you want to buy objects of all kinds. It has a lot of shops, and places to eat. Therefore, it is really recommended to go, it is not necessary to buy anything because to enjoy it, just going and looking at everything: people, ambience, and one of the most famous streets in Madrid. One of the more visited shops here is Primark, which has no less than five floors.

10. Eating cocido and savories from local restaurants

The Mediterranean diet is one of the best. In Madrid, it is typical is to consume cocido (a traditional Spanish garbanzo-based stew), the croquetas, and other pastries that you can try in local restaurants. You probably you do not know where to eat it, but you can start from one of the oldest restaurants in all around the world, Casa Botin, which has more than 100 years of flavor and charm.

Into the Unknown

by Clara Correa



As the travel expert I aspire to be, I have been to many places and discovered uncountable cultures allocated all around the globe. However, this past year I was dragged into the most eye-opening trip I have ever been on. Rome, Paris, London... all of them beautiful and unique in their own way, but there is no point of comparison. It was positively epiphanic. Last year, I was honoured with an invitation from the Spanish Government to explore the depths of my own house.

First, I'd like to start by showing off the most surprising discovery I made: other people were living there. The first contact with the natives was good. I was also able to find fauna and flora. It mainly consisted of two plastic orchids and a dog. They had the habit of walking it around their neighbourhood every once in a while. The exact amount of repetitions isn't clear, but I found a relation between the number of promenades and the toilet paper rolls they got from the supermarket—it is still a mystery to me why they thought it would be the first thing to run out—.

All the same, I wasn't pleased yet. It seemed to me that I was playing the easy mode. I had heard stories of great heroes who managed to get through months of living completely alone in a 50m² apartment. In order to follow the steps of these men and women, I limited the contact with the autochthonous and refused to go out in the garden. Now, this was the real deal. I was excited to try new things, so much that I can say I tried them all: Once I had seen every single movie in the Netflix catalogue, I tried starting a bullet journal and reading more, then I began playing the guitar and reorganized my bedroom, took French classes, became a TikTok influencer and sponsored an endangered iguana from the Amazon Forest. I also tried to do sports, but the coach's videos were so captivating I always ended up watching them in bed while eating chips and motivated to start... the following day.

When the summer came, I had to go back to normal life: new destinies awaited me. I headed the Costa Brava, one of the world's most gorgeous coastal sites. Even though, while at the beach, I couldn't help thinking about it over and over. Those things had been there for me all that time. How did I not see them? I guess that's just one more unanswered question for the list. One thing I know for sure: I will always be willing to dive with my eyes wide open into the unknown.



From Google Images and Pinterest

A Culture That Will Always Be With Us

by Marie Pomes

Culture is specific to each civilization, it brings values and customs to each one, different certainly, but particularly important for each country and people. If we separate, there will be a loss of identity. Our culture is our root. However, times change. So how can we remain faithful to a culture that is centuries old, which does not necessarily suit us? The tradition of the Kumihimo 組紐 perfectly illustrates all the paths that culture can take over the centuries, especially in ours.

But what is the Kumihimo?

Japanese Kumihimo is the art of weaving silk threads. In ancestral Japan it was used for religious ceremonies, to make ornaments, but above all and mainly for belts, of samurai or priests, holding their armors or kimonos. Four forms of kumihimo exist since ancestral Japan. Although practiced in different ways, the principle remains the same, knotting yarns together to give them a unique shape and making a braid that is extremely resistant, so that even a katana would have difficulty cutting it. The threads are attached to weights and are manipulated with movements of circles or semicircles to tie the yarns.



However, this exercise should not be just about knotting threads. A special philosophy is involved. Indeed, these yarns preserved the life of the samurai by holding his armor. Those in charge of making these belts, were aware that they had a life in their hands. No mistake was allowed, or the belt would no longer hold the armor which would kill a samurai on the battlefield.

What is so special about it? What is its secret?

We have to abandon ourselves to this practice if we want to succeed, we do not control it. Indeed, it is the liberation of the mind that causes us to let our fingers go. The constraint, the force, the anger will make a twisted, irregular result. Indeed, no pressure must be exerted, except the regular pressure of the weight at the end of the thread.

The principle of Kumihimo is quite simple, the threads intertwine, twist, and unwind to intertwine again. It seems harmless, a simple weaving exercise. But it is symbolic of human relationships but more generally of life. Each knot can be seen as a moment in life. The past is then so close to the future and the present so ephemeral. In a way, they form the loop of time. The threads run through our fingers like a breath of wind. Indeed, while weaving, if we respect this philosophy, we feel our torments or doubts leave our body by gliding through our fingers. This creates an emptiness in our mind, which allows us to let go. This art is like the materiality of destiny, Man must be aware that the own threads of his life are being woven and that he has no control over them. The only thing he can do is to live his life in peace so that it is pleasant. It is by accepting his condition that Man will find his freedom and show humility in the face of this superior force. Of course, this is only one interpretation among many, but one realizes that when one practices Kumihimo with this in mind, it is easy to lose control and to free oneself from many useless thoughts.

A Culture That Will Always Be With Us - Continued

What is its place today?

The Kumihimo has a place in actual trade. Today we no longer make samurai belts, but ties, watchbands, as well as jewelry. A kumihimo also adorns the container of the tea ceremony. It adapts to the today's envy.

It is also used in medicine. In Japan, Mrs. Tokoro teaches Marudai weaving to people with physical disabilities to strengthen coordination thus allowing partial or complete healing and avoiding after-effects. In Cologne, Germany she has also used this weaving with mentally handicapped children. This allows the children to focus on one thing and thus the work helps them to stay focused and improve their condition.

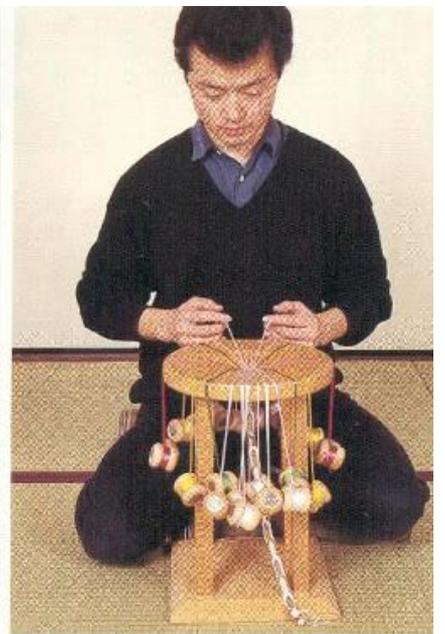
The philosophy also remains, to take the time to take the time and to refocus on ourselves by accepting that we cannot control everything. This thought will be present in all times, past, present, and future. So how can culture disappear?

Mass commercialization is the reason. Indeed, if we take the example of the Kumihimo, the results will be just as obvious. Indeed, this practice has been westernized. Instead of the silk threads that are usually found, we find plastic pearls, cheaper. However, the practice is the same because it ensures a solid product, but the necklaces and bracelets created are mass-produced in factories, on a line, to produce and sell as much as possible, at a lower cost. You will agree that in this case, the Japanese thought of working on oneself, reflection, letting go and humility, has disappeared. This is how a philosophy disappears and its meaning is forgotten.

You do not choose your culture, and if you do not understand it, how can you not change its meaning and thus kill a culture?

In contact with other cultures. Globalization can kill traditions, but it also makes it possible to bring in other traditions, to mix them by making them accessible. Everyone can thus take from each culture an aspect that he finds interesting, enriching, and applicable to his own life. Culture is part of the spiritual heritage. As long as culture is respected, preserved and not distorted, then it can inspire and bring something to anyone.

Changing culture does not mean losing it. It is also essential that it evolves, otherwise there is loss. If it does not adapt, how can it remain important in every era? The only thing that must remain is its philosophy and the lessons it brings. Culture is part of us. But above all, it is important to ask why. Why this or that thing is! To do this, we must slow down and take the time to observe. It is by asking these questions that cultures will endure, whatever their form.



SPORTS

WRITTEN BY STUDENTS AROUND THE WORLD

April 2021



Valencia CF and Atalanta battle in the March 10 UEFA Champions League match at an empty Estadio Mestalla in Valencia, Spain.

PHOTOGRAPH: UEFA

Football and the Pandemic: Best Enemies?

by Louise Dugast

In December 2019, the world was hit hard by an unprecedented pandemic. All over the planet, our lives have been put on hold. But more than that, societies and habits have been disrupted. Sports, and more precisely football need to adapt to this situation in order to continue.

For months, players have been kept off the fields all over the world. Soccer players, whether professionals or not, from all countries have had to change their regular habits. Much more than a colossal loss of money, it was mainly the TV channels that lost for the clubs and countries. Indeed, those who had bought the broadcasting rights for several million dollars. Some TV channels will even have to give up the airwaves due to a lack of budgets; it is also the case of the small clubs which cannot find the funds for a new season.

After the general lockdown, some countries decided to resume the matches because of the European competitions. Nevertheless, the "post lockdown" is a far cry from what we have known before. Matches now take place without or with a very small number of supporters. A ban that does not meet with the unanimous approval of supporters. Many of them attended demonstrations of discontent, especially around stadiums, during the Champions League final which took place in Lisbon on the 23rd August. A lot of matches had also been cancelled because of the pandemic, on one hand because of the high numbers of cases in each team, but also because of curfew as it happened in France or in Italy.

Many soccer players were hit by the COVID-19, driving them away from the field. One of the most famous is Zlatan Ibrahimović, a Swedish player playing for AC Milan. On the 24th of September Gary Lineker, one of his close friends, former international player, and consultant for the BBC announced to the world the positive test results of the player. He was therefore placed in quarantine but did not fail to make people talk about him as usual and encourage people to respect barrier gestures.

"The virus challenged me, and I defeated it. But you are not Zlatan, do not defy the virus. Respect the rules, distance, and mask, always," he says in Italian, filmed on a terrace overlooking Milan, before putting on a mask himself.

Fortunately, the Swedish recovered very quickly and regained his performances. He scored a double as soon as he returned to the turf. Other players have been affected by the virus, like Neymar (PSG), Callum Hudson-Odoi (Chelsea) or also Blaise Matuidi (Juventus).

But Covid-19 also shows us beautiful actions, such as Barcelona star Lionel Messi and his trainer Pep Guardiola donating one million euros each that will be split between the Hospital Clinic in Barcelona and another medical center in Argentina to fight against the virus.



A stadium in Rennes, France practically empty due to Covid measures.

Important Note: A portion of this article was accidentally left off the January 2021 issue. It has been reprinted here in its entirety.

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