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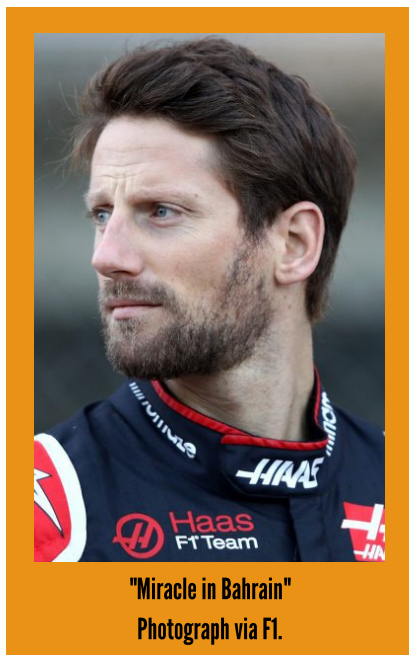
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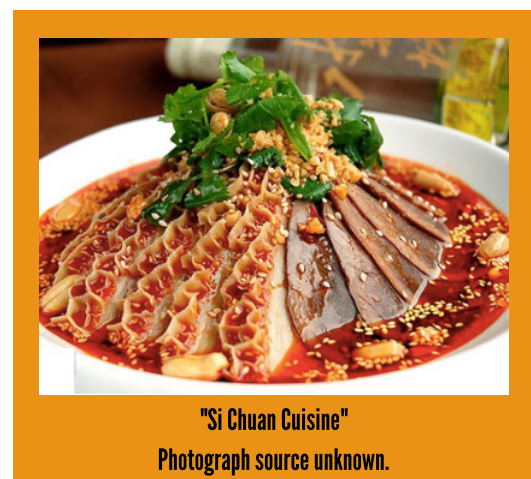
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CANADA'S FLAWED APPROACH TO A FOSTER CARE SYSTEM

BY RILEY STORMS

The stereotype of being nice is not always applicable.

Canada is internationally perceived as the friendly neighbours to the North, a winter wonderland where issues such as racism, discrimination, abuse, and neglect are not everyday problems. Yet, largely due to the lack of media portrayal and education, Canada has its own skeletons in their closet, easily exemplified within its foster care system.

An event in Canadian history that is well hidden from the public's knowledge is the Sixties Scoop. A term first used by Patrick Johnson in 1983 that describes the large-scale removal of First Nations children from 1951-1983. Prior to this grim assimilation of Indigenous cultures, First Nations children only made up a mere 1% of the foster care population. When examined again in the late 1960's, the population grew to being one third of the overall children within the system. This was simply a continuation of Canada's assimilation of Indigenous cultures into the stereotypical western portrayal of a "family." The Sixties Scoop was a repeat of the residential schools, when 78% of these victims were placed with non-Indigenous families; some were sent to different countries as far away as New Zealand. Social workers might have had good intentions going into this event as they believed that it was for the kids' benefit; they saw underfunded low income reserves and believed these kids would be given a better chance if they were removed from their homes. Fast forward to 2016; a census made by Statistics Canada stated that 52.2% of children aged 0-14 within the foster care system are aboriginal. This is an alarmingly high percentage as aboriginal children only make up 7.7% of children aged 0-14 across Canada. There were many ways in which the government could have prevented these radical acts of trauma. The government could have increased funding for these reserves and normalized the idea that every culture and household has a different approach to family and traditions. Just because one's lifestyle is different than the western ideal of a family, does not mean it's wrong.

In addition to the clear trend of disproportionate numbers of Indigenous children within the system, the foster care system creates a natural disadvantage for the children affected. For many children there is a lack of fulfillment for fundamental physical and emotional needs. There is a loss for the nurture paternal love provides for these kids which gravely impacts their lives. There is a considerable shortage of foster parents, forcing social workers to place children with adults who have not been properly screened or approved. This has resulted in the serious maltreatment of youth, when the foster parents are more interested in the paycheck than the wellbeing of the children. Within a Statistics Canada report regarding abuse, there was no specific category regarding foster care but there was a statistic regarding childhood abuse under legal responsibility of the government, 40% of children born between 1980-1999 experienced

abuse. With the foster care population increasing, it is highly likely this percentage has only gone up. Another consequence of uncompassionate and neglectful foster parents is that it leads to multiple different placements, leaving these kids without the ability to maintain strong supportive connections. This detachment from having a stable home leads to future relationship issues and troubles starting a family of their own.

This disadvantage also creates barriers for these kids in regards to their futures. Within British Columbia alone, only 47% of foster kids graduate high school according to the University of Victoria's School of Social Work Professor Deborah Rutman. This statistic can be compared to the 84% of kids who typically graduate that were not affected by the system. As well as this appalling difference in high school graduates, there are increased criminal charges against children within or aged out of the system. It is 1.5 times more likely that those that experienced the harm of the system continue a trend of offences, start criminal activity earlier in life, and spend more time being incarcerated. Due to poor media portrayal and lack of proper education, society simply looks at these kids and sees crime rates and troubled youth. What society does not see is that many of these kids experience harmful environments and abuse from their families, only to be taken from the only home they've known. Foster care also has great ties to homelessness, 40% of the homeless youth population within Canada have had a connection with the foster care system, this includes young adults who aged out in the system, according to the Canadian Observatory on Homelessness.

There is almost no media attention surrounding this issue, there is no information to promote individuals to foster kids, and this must change. This means considering fostering a child if one's family can afford to do so, reaching out to foster care organizations and donating funds, or simply talking about these issues more to spread awareness. These children are being hurt under the protection of the government and they deserve the fundamental care that family and relationships provide.

EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN IN TRAFFICKING CHAINS

BY VANESSA WONG (UNICEF CLUB)

Child trafficking is the process of “recruitment, receiving, transferring, or harbouring of children” (UNICEF Canada). According to a 2002 report from the International Labour Organization (ILO), approximately 1.2 million children are trafficked each year. However, this approximation is likely to be underestimated because the children are hidden away by traffickers. Victims are often afraid to speak up about the crime because they worry about repercussions from traffickers. Traffickers also exploit the rights of these children by making them work in cheap labour to acquire a social, political, or personal gain. Children are most likely to experience some form of mistreatment or abuse that damages their physical and psychological well being, which can be traumatic and have long-lasting effects on their health and development as a child. Hence, UNICEF is working towards eradicating this crime that violates the rights of children and ending child trafficking around the world.

Child trafficking primarily occurs in developing countries, where child migrants are met with traffickers who promise they will help them migrate across borders or assist them in taking refuge someplace else. Traffickers take advantage of migrant children's vulnerability and promise them a “better life” outside their homeland (UNICEF Canada). Traffickers manipulate them; they are either abused or forced into sex trade or marriage (UNICEF Canada). Some children are also sexually exploited, forced into domestic servitude, or placed into labouring industries such as manufacture and agriculture (UNICEF Canada). Though they are told they will be heading to a safer place, children are actually stripped of their freedom and they have no way of escaping the trafficking chain by themselves. Domestic servitude is one of the trafficking chains that refers to a low- or no-paying job involving an employer-employee relationship and usually takes place in a household setting of a third party or the employer. Within this field, children's rights to education, rest, leisure, play are neglected and they are isolated from their family and peers. Although domestic work often equates to the chores children would normally do in their own homes, this form of labour is detrimental to children.

Domestic servitude involves physical or sexual exploitation that will put them at a higher risk of life-threatening danger such as malnutrition, exposure to toxic chemicals, and working with sharp tools without experience (Dubay). However, the notion behind child domestic workers are encouraged in certain cultures with a supposed intention to “help” them understand gender roles and learn skills required for their marriage. To this day, it has been very difficult to eliminate child trafficking from all cultures by the same means and procedures. Just like the general cause behind child trafficking, child domestic workers opt for any job because of their circumstances such as poverty, displacement, and loss of parents, but also feminization, social exclusion, and rural-urban migration. There are organizations that are working towards decreasing and

potentially removing child trafficking from the system in countries where this injustice is prominent.

Organizations such as UNICEF Canada and the International Labour Organization (ILO) work with governments to create laws, policies, and services to protect vulnerable children who are prone to or have been subject to, child trafficking (UNICEF; ILO). UNICEF has been putting effort into the implementation of healthcare, social, and psychosocial services to help children who have experienced, or are experiencing, problems in this chain of exploitation. This includes the help of trained professionals in those fields as well as the support of community members. Some ways that we can help out is through donating to UNICEF, signing the [Child Trafficking petition](#), and purchasing Survival Gift in hopes of reuniting children with their families (UNICEF Canada).

[Click here to see the sources used in this article.](#)

THE IDIOCY OF BIGOTRY

BY AMY VURDELA

Morals and ethics are things that are widely debated on, whether it be the constraints that they hold, which ones should be prioritized, or even whether they should be followed at all. Despite all of that, they are the basis of our modern society and the rules we follow. Moral duty is the basis of how children are raised, yet they are violated by people and laws everyday across the world. Killing an innocent person is wrong, yet somehow it is justified because someone's bigotry is accepted and validated by certain people in power. This may seem ridiculous, outrageous, or even fictitious, but these situations have been happening throughout history to marginalized people for centuries, even in glorified North America.

If you saw someone choking on the street, what would you do? Most likely, you would try to help—but why? You did not choke them per se. It is not because you were responsible for the action, but after witnessing that, you are responsible for the outcome. It is not your fault that the person is choking, as you did not lodge something in their throat. However, if you told people that you watched them slowly asphyxiate without even trying to help, you would be judged and criticized. This is because, in our society, when someone witnesses a person in need, they are morally responsible and obligated to help. It is a principle so fundamental that it is learned in kindergarten: When there is a problem or someone in need, one should help. When a problem is as massive as the ones we are currently experiencing, the way to solve them is through participation in politics.

The reasons people follow morals and believe in ethics can vary. Perhaps then they will be rewarded after death or in life, or maybe they will simply not feel worse about letting someone suffer. However, this idyllic analogy has no place in capitalism or in our current political climate. Some people are breathing toxic air, drinking fatal water, and eating poisoned food—they are hurt by the things they need to survive, while others relish in their luxuries. Money swallows the humanity and morals of the top percent. The top tier of the monarchy still has its roots in our modern world, contrary to popular belief. The generations of people above law, reason, and moral obligation still firmly stay. This hatred and classism harms those who need to be helped.

Being politically active in a place of privilege is helping people, not as their savior doing the most, but as a human being recognizing other human beings. By learning and participating in politics, and advocating for the policies one believes in to change that system one, is being politically active. Generation Z, must recognize we no longer have the privilege to bury our heads in the sand if we are to continue to survive. We must recognize the problems of the past, and ensure that they will not carry on into the future, because if we do not, we will not have a future. Ignoring the privilege and the innate classism that exists in our society is to fail those morals. It causes further detriment to people who cannot afford more sustainable options, and cannot pick up your slack—another reason to vote for candidates dedicated to making safer options

more accessible, and severely limiting the companies causing this massive environmental detriment. Being politically active is recognizing one's limitations, but also recognizing the power that one voice can have with the privilege they possess. It is recognizing that choosing to drive a gas-guzzling car, wear unethically produced clothing, and eat meat, while having other viable options, is to benefit off of a system that simultaneously harms people. To continue a lifestyle that has been proven to be detrimental to the environment is to worsen things. Being politically active is to vocalize and put into action what one wants to see in the future in any way that they can. The recognition that major companies have greater effects on the planet does not mean that one should justify one's choice to partake in these same behaviours on a smaller scale when they can choose differently. Choosing to do nothing is simply a choice to make things worse.

It is the job of those with privilege to not only be interested in education, but to actively seek out information and learn. It is important to be outspoken, and to demand truth and transparency—to demand that the people we choose to represent us fulfill their promises on a personal, national, and global scale. If any part of this article has made you uncomfortable, instead of just writing it off, truly think about why you were made uncomfortable. Ask yourself: Why do you feel attacked by the demand for equal opportunities for all?

DESTIGMATIZING NEURODIVERGENCE

BY RIONA SARKER

Throughout history, those with autism, ADHD, Asperger's, and other neural conditions alike have been misunderstood, and as a direct result of that, mistreated. From things as brutal and blatant in their ableism as Nazi eugenics, to microaggressions and slurs, the stigma and negativity surrounding the subject is evident. Neurodiversity is a viewpoint that promotes thinking of these conditions, and other conditions affecting cognitive, social, and attention abilities as naturally occurring variations in the brain—differences, rather than deficits. It recognizes the strengths that come with these differences, alongside the hardships that neurodivergent individuals face in a society that can contradict the way they work. It encourages positivity and openness around their conditions, and helps dismantle the hushed attitude with which their experiences, lives, and conditions are approached.

Neurodivergence is defined as “the range of differences in individual brain function and behavioral traits, regarded as part of normal variation in the human population.” In simpler terms, neurodivergent people are wired differently, which changes the way they understand and experience aspects of life, such as learning, thinking, or social interaction. For example, a main symptom of Asperger's Syndrome is difficulty with non-verbal communication, but rather exceptional ability when it comes to verbal skills. Some conditions included under the umbrella term of neurodivergence are: Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder, autism, Asperger's Syndrome, Down Syndrome, dyslexia, dyscalculia, obsessive-compulsive disorder, and more. Though their names carry negative connotations with descriptors like “deficit” and “disorder” for some of the shortcomings that accompany the diagnosis, a key idea of the movement is that those shortcomings are not all that exist, and that they do not diminish one's worth as a person.

In a society which functions in such a way that makes school, work, relationships, and other parts of life more difficult for neurodivergent people, many people will assume that neurodivergence has always been, and will always be a disability for these individuals. However, this isn't always the case. In fact, neurodivergence being disadvantageous in society is largely due to the structure of the environment the person is in. Take a standard classroom for example. In a classroom, students will sit for around an hour, focusing on one task/subject/topic, and staying engaged with the content for that extended period of time. Classrooms are a space where chime-ins and spontaneity can disrupt a lesson plan; a space where getting distracted, or taking a break or walk risks missing valuable information. For a student with ADHD, working in a classroom like that will be very difficult. ADHD is characterized by a shorter attention span, impulsivity, and overactivity. Put like that, ADHD definitely sounds like a disadvantage. But when put in a different setting, this isn't the case. Back when humans hunted and gathered, the people that would be the best hunter-gatherers would be those with ADHD. Their impulsivity would drive them to chase after their prey. Their overactivity would make them more physically capable to hunt than others. In fact, what we see as a short

attention span is actually caused by the person's involuntary attention being more active than a neurotypical person's, which would also end up being an advantage to a hunter. Involuntary attention is like an instinct, or reflex; for example, a conversation happening in the background that captures your attention once you hear someone you know being mentioned. In the case of the hunter-gatherer, their involuntary attention will be engaged by the sound of animals shaking the bushes as they run past, or the bright colour of berries on bushes. These are traits that benefit survival, but are characterized as a disorder in modern society. Some say that select instances of neurodivergence have not died out—as negative mutations typically do—because they are not negative mutations at all. They are beneficial to life, and that is why they still stick around.

Our society determines a person's value based on their ability to work and make money. The unemployed, the homeless, and the impoverished face callousness and distaste from the rest of the public, and are thought to be leeches and burdens rather than people in a tight spot in need of help. For neurodivergent people, who may have difficulty working within systems that contradict the way they function, this struggle is misinterpreted in a similar fashion, and this can become a great source of insecurity for them. The issue lies in judging the value of a person on these superficial things, lies in comparison; it lies in measuring a neurodivergent person's worth on a neurotypical scale.

We often approach neurodivergence with confusion or a lack of understanding, pity. Not many people understand what it's like, know somebody neurodivergent, or have much exposure to the topic at all. One of the greatest misconceptions about neurodivergence is that it shouldn't be discussed, or that people would do well to ignore it and avoid asking questions, when in fact, if we had asked more questions and had become more acquainted with and accepting of it, many of the struggles faced by neurodivergent people today could be accommodated with more ease. If we are aware of what makes us different, we know how to accept and create welcoming environments for one another.

THE STORY OF NIGHT OWLS

BY LAI WEI

Day and night, light and darkness, indistinguishable madness. There are creatures who lurk in the shadows of night—who have reversed nature's timetable—and are ignorant of clocks indicating the pass of bedtime. Inconsistency is the only constant in the world which they dwell in. This is an article dedicated to all the night owls, as well as other restless souls under the impact of quarantine, or countless other factors in life. Here's to the people who are up late at night.

The Revenge Seekers

After a long and tiring day of school or work, one may choose to recover energy through sleeping. Unlike those people, there are ones who arise as revenge seekers of the night, who refuse to make room for slumber after the many hours of toil. They stay up as late as possible, for the sole purpose of making up for all the time lost during the day, and to enjoy the periodic peace of a darkening sky. As though avenging for the freedom they've once painfully compromised, they have become night owls who battle with weariness, and rage all night long.

Victims of Insomnia

Staying up at night may not always be a choice. Insomnia can affect one's ability to fall asleep and disrupt their daily routines. Victims of sleep disorders go through a pattern of sleepless nights, followed by exhaustion and low mood in the day. An endless cycle of tossing and turning in bed is extremely frustrating. The poor souls who suffer from insomnia are forcefully shut out of sleep at night.

The Working Bees

Busy workers have no time to doze off, and they are most productive when accompanied by the moon and stars. Night is not a time of dreams, but an intense competition with deadlines. The working bees hold ambitious hopes of accomplishing work while others are asleep. It may be to stay one step ahead of others in their field of expertise, or simply a helpless decision to sacrifice sleep in the face of an arriving due date.

The Ones Buried in Thoughts

"What did they mean when they said this to me? I so deeply regret doing that today. Why is this song stuck in my head? What was the thing that my teacher told us this morning? What time is it now? How am I still awake? Why can't I fall asleep?" There are certain nights when unfinished thoughts left by long past or recent occurrences suddenly overflow the brain like a giant flood. No matter how tired one may be in the daytime, at night, their heads are always awfully clear. The ones buried in thoughts are often too overwhelmed to fall asleep at a designated bedtime.

Under the influence of a fast-paced lifestyle within the modern world, nighttime may be a rare opportunity where people can slow down and finally have a little breathing space of their own. When feeling stressed or overwhelmed by various aspects of life, one can seek comfort from the solemn yet gentle atmosphere of the night. That, along with spending time on electronics to unplug from reality, can certainly be tempting. It is a challenge to resist this temptation in order to get enough rest for the upcoming day. Overthinkers can try listening to some calming music or sleep podcasts to distract from thoughts that keep them awake, while those affected by insomnia may seek health guidance from professionals. It is good to be productive, but to the wearied workers out there, be sure to take breaks and rest once in a while! Goodnight and sweet dreams.

THE WORLDWIDE IMPACT OF AMERICAN POLITICS

BY JULIA MOSI

During the final weeks leading up to Joe Biden's victory in being elected as the 46th president of the United States, social media platforms around the globe became flooded with messages urging all Americans to vote. These posts were often unbiased and simply wanted to encourage Americans to understand the importance of democracy. However, many of the messages that filled my own social media pages were trying to educate people on the importance of electing Joe Biden, rather than reelecting 45th president Donald Trump. Personally, I used my own social media platforms to spread awareness for this cause, which generally evoked a positive reaction from my peers and followers. However, with this support also came a wave of criticism for my behaviour. I had many people ask me, "But why do you care so much? We live in Canada, not the United States." These people have a point, we do live in Canada and are not as severely affected by American politics, but these comments are actually rooted in privilege and ignorance. As Canadians, we should be concerned about issues happening beyond our borders. Furthermore, as we are closely associated with the United States on a geographical, political, and economic scale, it is important for us to consider how we are directly affected by American politics.

The reality of the situation is that if Donald Trump was re-elected, it would have severely affected Canadians. The evidence for this lies directly in front of our eyes, seen when examining the last four years of Donald Trump's presidency. Most pertinent of this evidence is Trump's mishandling of Covid-19. There is no doubt that the United States has been suffering due to the way the government has handled Covid-19. As of December 2020, the United States has had over 14 million Covid-19 cases, which has resulted in the death of over 275,000 Americans. This alone has endangered Canadians in many ways. Although we have kept our borders closed to Americans, we have still had multiple cases coming from people travelling by plane into Canada from the United States. No matter how tight we make our restrictions, as long as the United States is struggling with the pandemic, the whole world will still be at risk for further outbreaks. Unfortunately, this pandemic is not a political matter, and the fact that it is being treated like one is extremely discouraging. Nationality aside, all people should care for one another and should want to see the end of Covid-19 all around the world, not just in Canada.

Along with his disregard for the effects of Covid-19, Donald Trump has made it clear on multiple occasions that he does not care about climate change. Trump has refused to accept scientific facts and abandoned international conventions, resulting in catastrophic damage to the environment. On June 1, 2017, Trump ceased all participation in the 2015 Paris Agreement, which was formed to mitigate climate change.

He claimed that he did this with the intention of eventually reentering the agreement, provided he could negotiate "on terms that are fair to the United States, its businesses, its workers, its people, [and] its taxpayers." Trump firmly believed that the agreement would undermine the American economy and stated that the withdrawal would be in accordance with his America First policy. While it is indeed important for leaders to care about the economic well-being of their country, it is when this becomes their entire focus that we see serious repercussions. The United States is a country that has caused severe global warming, and therefore the concept of "America First" can only be pushed so far before the rest of the world suffers as a result. For example, from 1850 to 2011, the United States produced 27 percent of the total carbon dioxide emissions of the world, even as a single country. This number is shocking, and truly highlights the importance of why the United States needs to have a clearer strategy to combat climate change. However, to date, Donald Trump has not even attempted to create any such strategies. Therefore, it is more crucial than ever before that the United States has a president who can shift the focus away from the economy, at least slightly, and begin focusing on the most critical issue we are facing as a society: the rapid destruction of our planet. After all, without a planet to live on, there will be no economy to worry about anyways.

Although Covid-19 and climate change are the two global issues with the largest impact on Canadians, it is also important for us not to overlook the recent events that have taken place in the United States since the presidential election. The most recent of these events being the Republicans' attack on the capitol building, which took place on January 6th 2021. This attack, considered by many as an act of terrorism, was provoked as a result of Donald Trump's countless claims of voter fraud and election irregularities. Therefore, by the time Congress began the Electoral College vote count to formalize Biden's victory, Trump had successfully encouraged his supporters to "show strength and be strong." As a result, thousands of republicans began rioting in front of the capitol building, eventually breaching security and storming the interior of the building. These violent actions not only endangered the life of all those inside the capitol building, but also exemplify just how unfit Donald Trump was as a president. Throughout the years, Trump has been known for posting false and unprofessional information on all of his social media platforms, most notably on Twitter, which has bridged an enlarged gap between the beliefs of Democrats and Republicans. It is not the role of a president to be consistently driving a wedge between the people of their nation. Rather, it should be any leader's goal to find collective understanding and success, even in the face of varying opinions and beliefs. This does not mean that people do not have the freedom to stand up for their beliefs, however, what happened at the capitol building was not a peaceful protest, and rather was an unprovoked attack on democracy, caused primarily by Donald Trump. Hence, it is crucial for us, whether or not we are Americans, to reflect on this sort of behaviour and examine if these are qualities we believe our future leaders should possess.

Nonetheless, due to Joe Biden being elected, there is now further hope of these critical issues being acknowledged and tackled properly. Based on Biden's record and campaign, there are many positive things that we can expect from him. First, Joe Biden will help tackle the Covid-19 pandemic in a much more effective manner than Donald Trump did. Biden's plan to combat the Coronavirus, as is described on the Biden/Harris official website, includes but is not limited to: "A decisive public health response that ensures the wide availability of free testing; the elimination of all cost barriers to preventive care and treatment for COVID-19; the development of a vaccine; and the full deployment and operation of necessary supplies, personnel, and facilities." Thus, it is evident that Joe Biden is a much more suitable candidate to combat this pandemic, and will not only aid the United States Covid-19 situation, but will also reduce the risk of transmission to Canada and worldwide. Additionally, Biden has promised in his election campaign to immediately rejoin the Paris Accord, and push other countries to raise their climate targets as well. As mentioned, the United States is one of the leading contributors to climate change, therefore it is critical that Biden take these steps in order to help alter the future of our planet. If these two problems alone are solved, it will pave the way for a more sustainable and healthy world, in which the other pertinent issues within the United States, such as their institutionalized racism, can be properly solved. Furthermore, with Biden as President, the United States will be able to have a leader who is not seeking to divide them and spread false information, but rather has it within his best interest to develop collective growth and understanding within his nation.

As was stated by Pierre Trudeau in 1969, while travelling to Washington to meet with President Richard Nixon: "Living next to [the United States] is in some ways like sleeping with an elephant. No matter how friendly and even-tempered is the beast, if I can call it that, one is affected by every twitch and grunt." This phrase alone came to define relationships between Canada and the United States at the time, and can still be used today to highlight the importance of American politics in Canada. Despite what many individuals may think, our borders do not keep us separated from the effects of American politics. Therefore, we must do our best as Canadians to inform one another on international politics in order to raise awareness surrounding issues like these, which can significantly impact the sociopolitical climate of our own country.

FEELING THE BERN: HOW BERNIE SANDERS BECAME A POLITICAL LEGEND

BY ISABELLA MCDONELL

American politics: a dumpster fire for our entertainment. For the past four years, a belligerent toddler has run amok the White House. This has resulted in over 260,000 COVID-19 deaths, an unemployment rate of 14.7%, social unrest, and amazing primetime news. As Canadians, we understand America is a global superpower. What goes on south of the border inevitably affects us. However, it would be dishonest to claim that this is the reason we watch their politics with such devotion; I believe it is the entertainment factor that truly pulls us in. If you look closely, you can find some committed policy-makers. Bernie Sanders is one of these people. Gaining media attention for his progressive views, Sanders became a household name during his 2016 presidential campaign, but the 79-year-old's notable career began long before that.

Born to working-class parents in Brooklyn, New York, Bernard Sanders developed an interest in politics at a young age. His financial status and mother's health ailments propelled his passion for left-leaning values. As a child, his family lived paycheck-to-paycheck. Larry Sanders (his older brother) told *The Sunday Times* that essentials were plentiful in the Sanders home, but luxuries "like curtains or a rug" were not feasible. Unlike his paint salesman father, Bernie made his way to college, where he had his first experiences participating in protests. Although he graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in political science, his in-classroom preparation did little for his political career. At Chicago University, Bernie participated in a sit-in for integrated on-campus housing. Sanders says this was integral to his interest in social justice.

After graduation, Bernie's journey led him to Vermont. Although Sanders is not a native Vermonter, his legacy lies with the Green Mountain State. After losing a campaign for governor and two senate races, he set his eyes on a new target. Burlington, Vermont was not doing well in 1981. The city was divided by income, and the local economy was declining. At 40 years old, he sought to change this by running for mayor. Being an independent candidate, the probability of a Sanders win was unlikely. Miraculously, younger residents and the working class vote nudged Bernie to a victory. After winning by twenty-two votes in '81, he served three more terms as mayor. He put emphasis on affordable housing and encouraging local businesses, and Vermont ended up having one of the lowest unemployment rates in the country.

Eventually, he decided to take his shot at governor. He failed, and subsequently ran for the US House of Representatives. He failed again, but during the following election, he ran once more. After gaining the National Rifle Association's endorsement (shocking, I know), Bernie won against the incumbent Republican. Outspoken and unaffiliated, Sanders slung criticisms at both Democrats and Republicans. He held power from 1991 to 2006. This is when his career took off. Joining the Senate after a 2:1 victory against near-billionaire Rich 'Richie Rich' Tarrant. In 2010, Bernie made national television with

his eight-hour filibuster. A filibuster is an “attempt to block or delay Senate action on a bill or other matter by debating it at length, by offering numerous procedural motions, or by any other delaying or obstructive actions,” according to the United States Senate website. Sanders was aiming to block a bill that extended tax-cuts from the Bush Administration. This bill also lowered the estate tax threshold for the super rich. Progressives were enraged, especially when the country was just recovering from the ‘Great Recession’ of 2008. This amazing (and quite literal) stand against economic injustice earned Bernie recognition nationwide. Although the bill did pass, the filibuster cemented Sanders’ reputation as a progressive politician. You can watch the full filibuster here: www.youtube.com/watch?v=VLNKNq9soLE

In 2016, Bernie Sanders announced his campaign for president. He ran on ideas like “political revolution” and fighting inequality. Although Sanders did not make it to election day, he showed moderate Democrats that people want change. The campaign broke records by raising \$228 million USD, with over four million donors. Another unsuccessful campaign in 2020 has not hindered Bernie, though. Although he will most likely not run again, he continues to use his platform. With almost 14 million followers on Twitter, you can find tweets disparaging Trump and his cronies. Regardless of his permanent stain in the presidential run, Bernie Sanders has changed politics. He has paved the way for generations of progressives to come. He is a political legend.

APPLE AND THE MONOPOLY THEY HAVE ON OUR GENERATION

BY MONIKA ARCADI

When teens go to purchase a new phone, why is it that the first one they reach for is an iPhone? Gen Z knows that there are likely better options out there, yet they still pay the abhorrent prices for Apple's newest releases. Not only does Apple possess a monopoly on teenagers, it has also become a gateway to subtle classism. From being the first company to produce a phone with full internet access, to their many scandals—Apple has somehow stayed on top. While thought to be the generation of change, why will today's teens not change their consuming practices when it comes to the iPhone?

In 2007, when the first iPhone came out, it was marketed as the only phone to have a full touchscreen with complete internet access. The iPhone took off from there, and due to its user-friendly technology and sleek design, it has stayed on top of the market to this day. However, over the past 13 years, Apple has certainly done their share of questionable things. For example, one of their more recent scandals took place in 2016. Known as "the Batterygate Fiasco," it occurred after Apple "throttled" some of their iPhones by slowing them down and causing them to randomly shut off. In order to make reparations, Apple offered settlements of \$25 to customers whose phones were affected. Although their profits diminished in some markets, everyone accepted their apology and continued to purchase from them, seeing that Apple is still the number one phone brand in both Canada and the USA.

Considering their history, how has Apple managed to possess a monopoly over teenagers specifically? They have this monopoly for three reasons: the iPod, advertising, and the iPhone being a status symbol in high schools. In elaboration: when kids were younger, it is likely that they had a handheld device like an iPod or an iPad. Often, parents purchased these for their kids to watch videos, play games, and develop responsibility by keeping these devices safe. Considering Apple's technology has been consistent with the same app layout and user-friendly interface throughout their 13 years of production, buying an iPhone as your kids' next stepping stone seems logical. Since most kids already understand how Apple products work, they will likely stick with what they know. Additionally, iPhone advertising is embedded everywhere. Most kids have celebrity role models, so Apple pays movie producers to specifically use iPhones, as opposed to any Android. Thus, when teens see their favourite celebrities using Apple products on TV and in movies, it comes as no surprise that they will want the same devices. Another thing to consider is that the iPhone is often seen as a status symbol. Within high schools, the iPhone has led to subtle classism which subconsciously or consciously convinces teens to buy themselves a brand new Apple smartphone. In 2018, out of the 6000 teenagers surveyed, 82% of them had iPhones. What does this mean for the other 18%? These teenagers are subject to blatant classism every day. Maybe making a joke about "the Android friend" can be funny, but the fact is, iPhones are more

APPLE AND THE MONOPOLY THEY HAVE ON OUR GENERATION

expensive, and for some families, they are simply not within their price range. In the past, the quality of Android phones may not have been to the same standard as iPhones, but today, many Androids are superior to Apple's products. The next time you make a joke about poor Android quality, ask yourself if this is actually about the phone, or just your Apple superiority complex inflating because you can afford what others cannot. In the end, a phone should not determine one's value and a high price tag should not determine a product's quality.

Ultimately, it is very unlikely that teenagers will stop favouring iPhones, simply because they are conditioned to buy them. From growing up on Apple, to their advertising and classism, iPhones have the market cornered. However, if you love Apple products, I would suggest that you try to appreciate Androids as well. Instead of viewing them as inferior, view them as they are, as just a phone. The same principle should be applied to people; they are not Apple users against Android users, they are simply individuals who have phones. Next time you plan on making a deprecating joke about Androids, please consider the connotations it has on the less economically inclined. As always, humans come first, so be kind, respectful, and polite.

TOOTHBRUSH > IPHONE 12

BY ANASTASIJA PETROVIC

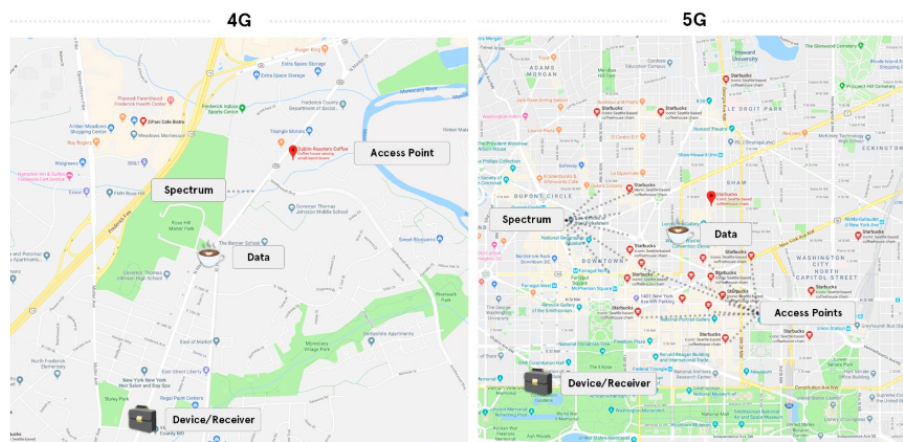
“The 5G world will be a collaborative ecosystem, and the role of what each of us will do in that remains to be thought through,” says Borje Ekholm, the President and CEO of the Ericsson Group (a company working on creating technology concentrated around 5G, IoT and automation technology). What doesn’t the iPhone 12 have? Trick question! It has it all! Right? You have your Ultra Wide cameras, iPhone 5 shape and “5G speed OMGGGGG.” Can you believe that spelling! G+G+G+G+G=5G

Yes, Apple has finally adopted 5G and with that released the shiny, new iPhone 12. But hold on a second—this “is 5G, iPhone style.” However, we already have 4G. I don’t know about you, but I want to not drive a car. I want to program a car. Just imagine how many experiences and how much time can be saved in a world in which transportation isn’t a concern. The innovation that would drive! Heck, you could prevent 3 million+ people from getting in car accidents per year. Today, the largest change we are seeing is in the number in front of the letter ‘G.’

Yes, I can agree that it seems meaningless to simply keep increasing the signal symbol at the top of our screen. I mean, we were just debating on the advantages and disadvantages of 4G, and earlier this year, the craze of 5G began. Under the circling media views, 5G and even 4G are viewed as evil entities out to destroy the human race. How true is this? Honestly, there are a bunch of hurdles to overcome before we start using driverless cars, but we’ve solved problems before, and we can solve this one.

The main problem that can be addressed right now is establishing a clear definition. Once we really understand the entirety of the term “fifth-generation network,” we can then evaluate its applications. Who wants coffee? At this point, most of us thrive off of coffee, and enjoy going to coffee shops frequently. Yet, the coffee shop you see as you run to your bus stop in busy downtown Vancouver is way different than your local go-to.

Local coffee shops are equipped with lounge chairs, tables, and outlets—cozy, spacious, familiar. In cities, it seems as though there are more coffee shops than people. All walking distance, embracing the in-and-out lifestyle. Your coffee is your data,



going from work to the coffee shop. The roads are the spectrum—wireless waves carrying your data between your device and the cellular access points. Big coffee shops are your cell towers—those structures that transmit 4G. Small coffee shops are small cellular access points, transmitting 5G.

Let's get technical!

The ONLY difference between 4G and 5G is in wavelength. 5G is powered by millimetre wave technology. These waves measure between 1 to 10 mm, and therefore move data 600x faster than 4G (10 gigabits/1250 megabytes per second). You can now view hundreds of photos of the math answers that your friend, who also was sleeping during the online call, sent in less than one second. This technology's outcome, if applied in the world, would disrupt how everyone engages with wireless. So more coffee, faster?

Fast Coffee, Big Dilemmas.

In the 1970s, the 5G equivalent at the time was power lines. Low-frequency electromagnetic fields were emanating from them all the time, and a shocking 1979 study suggested that children who lived near the powerlines developed cancer. Around the same time, in the midst of the Cold War panic, televisions and even household items were dubbed as 'dangerous.' In today's world, the devices are different, but the fears of regret in terms of using these devices are the same. The stakes are high. But what is happening behind the protests, clickbait, headlines, and conspiracies?

The Pearl Street Power Station.

Thomas Edison built the first power plant fired by coal, which sent electricity to 85 buildings. People were initially afraid of Pearl Street Power Station, and parents would not let their children near the lights. The difference here is that we have been using a form of wireless technologies for decades, and 5G is just another wireless technology. Like television, tradeoffs include these unanswered questions:

1. "It's (5G) everywhere, and I feel the effects of radiation." 5G is still not being used widely. How many people do you know that personally surf over a 5G connected phone or 5G connected tablet? Even if that number isn't zero, it is still minuscule compared to the number of people around you that use 4G, WiFi, 3G, 2G or even Bluetooth earbuds. Hence, the wireless technology you are exposed to today has (almost) no 5G radio waves, but it does have a lot of radio waves from other technologies.
2. "5G technology helps spread COVID-19!" We all have to have heard this one somewhere, right? Whether it be from your grandmother or on random posters that were everywhere early-pandemic. 5G has no chance of becoming a technology that leads to the spread of COVID-19. If you're going to accuse some technology of spreading the virus, then the candidates will be cars and aircraft. If 5G had been broadly deployed in these tough COVID-19 days, our home-based experience and remote contact would have been much greater.
3. "A 5G device is much more harmful than the 4G and older." The main goal of a wireless communication device is that it should be able to deliver higher speeds while using less energy. The bottom line is that modern wireless devices are getting better at transmitting and receiving information so that, in the vast majority of

situations, an older “G” device uses more watts of power than a 5G device. Most of the 5G complaints on social media are sent from devices that radiate with a higher power than that of a 5G system.

Addressing The Problem: Miscommunication.

How do we know to differentiate between fact and fiction? 5G is a new topic, and it's scary, just like Thomas Edison's Pearl Street Power Station. To really understand the essence of this exponential technology, we need to know what it is. You're probably thinking, “Alright, but what the heck is “iPhone 5G?”

Toothbrush vs iPhone 12

Here is what you came for! The toothbrush is referring to smart toothbrushes that use “general” 5G technology. The iPhone 12, well... Uhm, it's referring to Apple's 5G.

General 5G

We all recognize 3G and 4G—they're the mobile networks we're using right now. You see them at the top of your phone screen, and they're giving us access to the Internet. But let's add on another G. 5G is marketed as the strongest and fastest connection. South Korea already launched 5G networks last year, as well as suppliers in China, the United Kingdom, the United States, and Germany. More 5G phones, just like the iPhone 12, are on the way. Samsung released the first one in 2019, bringing commercial 5G to life. Wait, what about the toothbrush?

\$250–300 dollars for an at-home dentist? Sure! At first thought, it does seem meaningless, and it did during the 2016 Consumer Electronics Show (CES). Fortunately, then came 5G and AI that's 100x better. Colgate and Oral-B are both launching new smart toothbrushes: the Colgate Plaqless Pro and the Oral-B iO. Colgate's Plaqless Pro claims to have a first-of-its-kind optical sensor technology that



senses biofilm build-up in the mouth and offers real-time coaching through the Colgate Connect App.

I'm sensing the competition here. Oral-B's iO toothbrush offers a smart pressure sensor to detect and direct users to brush within the maximum pressure range, and a smart display that provides coaching and inspiration during your brushing session. The Oral-B iO App says that it uses an artificial intelligence analysis of thousands of reported brushing sessions to make its brushing recommendations. Finally, there was also a toothbrush that uses radio frequency vibrations to loosen and clear plaque and tartar. The Silk'n ToothWave is not available in the U.S. yet, but it claims to be the only toothbrush that can remove stubborn impurities attached to your teeth.

iPhone's 5G (What's so great about it?)

"We've yet to really see how 5G usage affects performance long term, but a morning using 5G didn't cause any major concerns. We will update this review over time as we use the iPhone 12 Pro more and in various use cases—especially on 5G—but so far, we've not seen any indicators that this phone will struggle to make it through the day on a charge," states an excerpt from [Apple iPhone 12 review](#) by Stuart Miles.

"There's 5G. Then there's 5G on the iPhone." What differentiates your work from that of the super cool personal dentist? Apple states they've utilized 5G, but iPhone style. The battery life is stated to be better; apps will use less energy and custom antennas for 5G.

"So far, we've seen amazing real-world speeds, along with improved call quality, battery life and coverage around the world. This is 5G, iPhone style."

What? There isn't anything wrong with this!

Which is which? There is a lot of confusion surrounding what 5G is, as well as what the 5G, iPhone style is. Of course, everyone wanted to jump on the iPhone 12 bandwagon, but what does that mean for the rest of the 5G world? This isn't just another G, this is another revolution coming our way. To best help transition into the future of 5G, we need to first have a clear picture of what the heck we're talking about, and second of all, what is the difference? *Hint: "Toothbrush vs. iPhone?"

TL;DR:

- 5G technology has started a revolution that everyone needs to join in order to advance.
- 5G is a technology that will transform lives by giving us faster download speeds, lower latency, more capacity, etc.
- Apple has distanced themselves from the so-called "General 5G." Does this complicate things? How do we define the problems surrounding 5G, when there are two versions now?

COMPOSING MUSIC, FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF A SELF-TAUGHT COMPOSER

BY JULIE WU

When boredom creeps, nothing seems to be able to fill the void in my mind except for music. As a 17-year-old self-taught composer, composing music wasn't a decision that I chose. I didn't wake up one day and decide that I was going to be a composer. It was more of the feeling that music chose me, and forced me to do certain things that I'd never dreamt of. Sometimes, sleepless nights consume me entirely, and melodies bug me incessantly unless I've written them down somewhere. Other times, I find myself experimenting with different things using FL studio when I should've been doing schoolwork instead. That being said, even though music does bring great joy into my life, music can also be quite an annoyance sometimes.

The initiative to compose is almost always triggered by a sound, an incident, something in the environment, or a memory that carries a subtle but deep-seated emotion. Based on my personal experience, ideas that come into my mind are usually the ones least expected. I would argue that the inception of an original piece is mainly based on the "waiting." It is through the "waiting" that the musical ideas from one's subconscious mind will slowly seep into one's consciousness. For instance, my first musical composition, "Memento," was based on the fact that I started crying after visiting the grave of a loved one. It was through the intense emotions I felt while crying that allowed the gate of my subconsciousness to open up. Before I knew it, I had a myriad of melodies in my mind that I didn't know where to put. I never consciously planned them. They were just there when it happened, and it felt right to write them down. Hence, this is an example of how the act of composing can be triggered.

To incorporate the millions of melodies and ideas I had in my mind, all into my very first composition, would have been a disaster. I needed to approach my first composition with a general plan. It might not have been the best plan, but it certainly is better to have a plan than to have no plan at all. The first thing I needed to do was to establish the narrative of my piece. What is my piece going to be about? What is the message that my piece wants to convey? Who is it for? With those questions in mind, I knew immediately that my piece was about reminiscing about a loved one who was no longer there, and that the piece was dedicated to him. The message was about accepting the pain of one's past in order to move on. This is an example, but what is important to note is that any piece needs to have a story and a purpose. In other words, the story is the root where the music grows from, and it's mandatory that a music piece has some kind of narrative to it, even if the narrative is shallow.

The process of composing a music piece can be both tedious and adventurous. When I first started composing, I never really knew exactly where my piece was headed. Oftentimes, I get stuck with one melody and end up dozing off into this nebula of uncertainty until another idea clicks. Composing music is a lot of work, and it takes a lot

of patience and commitment. On the bright and adventurous side of composing, this tedious process did teach me a lot about myself as a composer. Throughout the process of composing, I experimented with different music styles, and I found out that I really looked up to certain composers such as Erik Satie, Claude Debussy, Ryuichi Sakamoto, and John Adams. Debussy is known for his colourful watercolour-like style. Ryuichi Sakamoto is famous for his Asian music, and Erik Satie and John Adams are well-known for their minimalistic approach in music. By looking up to those composers as my inspiration, I was able to incorporate some of their styles and techniques and mold them into my own composition.

Where the narrative is the root of the flower, having the necessary skills, tools, and experience are what allows the flower to bloom. Even though no one taught me how to compose, I realize that participating in piano competitions and music theory classes has undeniably provided me with enough musical knowledge for me to be able to compose. Having a basic understanding in music theory and concepts such as rhythm, melody, chord structure, and harmony can certainly help to ease up the process. However, it is important for me to emphasize that 80% of what I do when I compose is mainly based on improvising and exploring, and that I wasn't following a certain path, since there was never a "correct" path for me to follow. The beauty of composing is that it has provided me the opportunity to explore my imagination and allow my intuition to guide me.

As a young, self-taught composer, I am only able to bring my personal views into light. That being said, I think it's crucial for every composer to establish a narrative while composing, as well as to have some tools and basic knowledge of music theory. I would say that the most important step for a composer, which may also be seen as the hardest step, is to be able to share his or her work. Every piece shared is a piece of one's identity unveiled, and it definitely takes a certain amount of vulnerability and courage to be able to do so. Hopefully people can take my writing as an inspiration and start allowing their love for music to guide them.

HOLLYWOOD A-LISTERS & THE POKER PRINCESS

BY SUHANI HANS

Who is Molly Bloom? Some may know her as a professional skier ranking third in North America, others may know her as a soon-to-be lawyer, or perhaps she is best identified by her more notorious title of the “Poker Princess.” Bloom’s real-life is a fascinating true story that reveals a window into the high-stakes world of Hollywood poker, where a single hand could be worth more than most people make in their lifetime.



Early Life

Molly Bloom was born April 21, 1978 in Loveland, Colorado. She had a strong passion for skiing from a young age, which inspired her to train for the Olympics. At the age of 12, Bloom was diagnosed with scoliosis and was rushed to the hospital for emergency back surgery. Even after doctors had advised against skiing, she began her training one year after her surgery. By the time she was in college, she had made the U.S. ski team and ranked third in North America. During the 1998 Olympic qualifying run, Bloom suffered a serious fall which forced her out of the sport she loved. Bloom pursued university, completed her Bachelor of Arts degree, and planned to go to law school. Prior to pursuing law, she decided to take a gap year.

The Hollywood Experience

Bloom moved to LA where she worked as a cocktail waitress. It was at this time, she met Darin Feinstein, who would soon introduce her to a network of powerful and influential people. She began working as his assistant, describing Feinstein as an unpleasant and crude employer. In her memoir, she recounts an experience in which Bloom purchased bagels for Feinstein as per his request; however, when she brought the bagels to him, he rejected them, screaming “These are poor people bagels!” referencing that they were from a Black-owned bagel shop. One day while working for Feinstein he said to her, “I’m going to need you to help me run this poker game,” asking her to purchase food and set up music for the underground game. This was the beginning of Bloom’s tumultuous journey to becoming the “Poker Princess.”

Feinstein’s games were held in the notorious Viper Room, where many famous bands got their start. It was frequented by Hollywood stars, and was once co-owned by Johnny

Depp. Bloom, unsure of what to expect of her boss's unusual request, arrived with a cheese platter and mixed CD. Much to her surprise, she walked into a room filled with Hollywood A-listers such as Tobey Maguire (the original friendly neighbourhood Spiderman), Leonardo DiCaprio, Ben Affleck, and Matt Damon staring back at her. A report later came out that Leonardo DiCaprio, a close friend of Maguire's, never bet his own money and was only invited to lure other billionaires into the game with his star power. Apparently, Maguire would stake DiCaprio, meaning they would put up cash for DiCaprio to play, covering his losses but also getting a share of his winnings. Leonardo DiCaprio is worth hundreds of millions of dollars, yet he didn't want to put up the \$5,000 buy-in. Another story was one night, Matt Damon came as a guest of his buddy Ben Affleck. That night, Damon lost around \$50,000 and didn't have enough money to cover it, so Affleck wrote the check.

Bloom soon caught on to the fact that her boss was running illegal high-stakes poker games with some of Hollywood's elite. She recalls her thoughts at this moment, stating "It just occurred to me instantly: This is a massive opportunity to build a network...Who gets that opportunity? I lived across from a cornfield when I was growing up. And so I really wanted to stay in the room." Bloom's business savvy worked in her favour, as she soon began working regularly at Feinstein's weekly games—contacting the players, managing spreadsheets, keeping track of the wins and losses, as well as managing the buy-ins which were set at \$10,000. Bloom also received over \$3,000 to \$30,000 in tips after every game.

Bloom's increasing involvement in his games soon became an annoyance to Feinstein, leading him to fire her. However, Bloom was one step ahead—through her work with Feinstein, she had gained a thorough education on running underground poker games for the elite, and had all their contact information. She began hosting her own weekly games with a \$10,000 buy-in at luxurious hotel rooms, such as the Four Seasons, Beverly Hills Hotel, and the Peninsula. She had exclusive delicacies catered, and gorgeous women bartending. It was very important to Bloom that she remained as close to the right side of the law as possible—her only income from the games came from her tips, as she avoided raking (taking a percentage) in order for her business to stay "legal."

Many players from Feinstein's games followed Bloom and joined her solo-owned games, including an unnamed individual referred to as "Player X" in the 2017 film *Molly's Game*, played by Michael Cera. Player X has been identified as Tobey Maguire, and was known to be a cruel and vitriolic player, winning almost every week. Bloom recounts an experience with Player X where he asked her to "Bark like a seal who wants a fish" for a thousand dollars. When she refused, he went on to say "What's wrong? You're too rich now? You won't bark for a thousand dollars? Wowwww ... you must be really rich." When newcomer Houston Curtis accumulated over \$1 million in debt, Player X coerced him into an extremely unjust deal, offering to cover the debt but taking 50% of his wins until he could repay it. Bloom was appalled by the lack of morality in Player X's deal and approached him about this, pointing out Player X's illegal raking, which further enraged

him. Eventually, as Bloom had done to Feinstein, her game and players were stolen from her by another player. She found this out after receiving a call from Maguire himself, explaining that the game would be taking place at a new venue, followed by him saying "You are so f*****." This marked the end of Molly's Game in Los Angeles, inspiring her to start fresh in a bigger pool—New York.

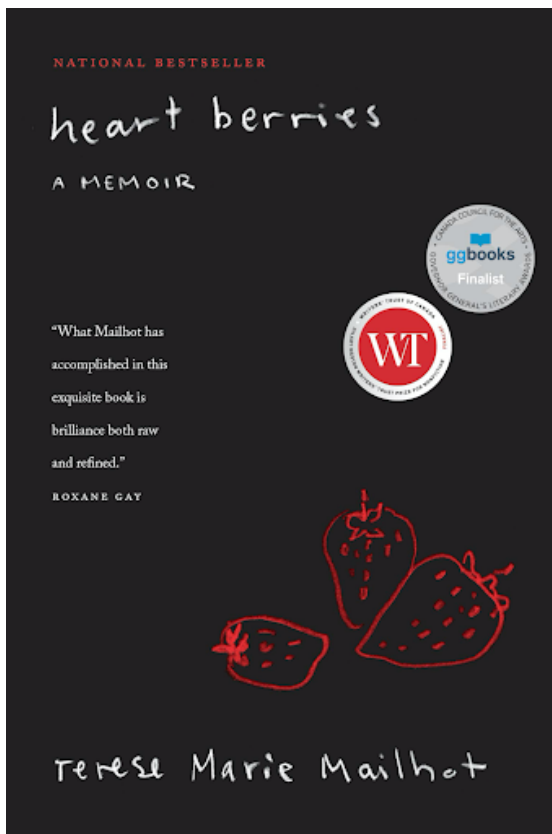
The New York Game

The stakes of the New York game proved to be even higher than they had been back in Los Angeles. Bloom quickly assembled an array of thoroughly vetted players, from Wall-Street billionaires, to celebrities such as baseball player Alex Rodriguez, to members of the Russian mafia. Bloom increased the buy-in to \$250,000 and was hosting several games a week. She began experimenting with a variety of substances—Xanax, Adderall, and Cocaine, to name a few—to stay awake to run her games. In one year, she had accumulated over \$4 million through tips. As the stakes continued to rise, she was often stiffed by the losers who could not repay what they lost during the game. She recounted the night she saw a player lose the most she had ever seen, stating "I saw someone lose \$100 million in a night." Due to this uncertainty and fear of losing her game, she began taking a rake in the pot, which was the moment she crossed the line into criminal activity. Bloom's driver had set up a meeting with friends of his who said they wished to become players; however, when she had a meeting with them to vet them, she found out they were part of the mafia and wanted a portion of her profits in return for protection. After Bloom refused, one of the men broke into her home and robbed her at gun-point, then beat her nearly to the point of death.

The End of the "Poker Princess"

The FBI, as a part of a large mafia sting operation, discovered Bloom's poker scheme during the investigation and raided one of her games in 2011. They seized all of Bloom's assets and earnings and she fell into severe debt. She decided to reinvent her life; she got clean from her drug addiction and moved back home with her mother. She decided to write a novel to tell her story and to help pay off her debts. When meeting with publishers, they offered her large sums of money for the secrets and identities of the stars involved in her games, but Bloom was adamant that she would not share anything that was not already public information. This resulted in her getting a much lower advance for her novel. Two years later, after returning to Los Angeles to finish her novel, Bloom was arrested by 17 FBI agents and taken to court with charges of money laundering and illegal sports gambling, among other counts. However, Bloom was only sentenced to one year of probation, 200 hours of community service, and needed to pay a \$1000 fine. After writing her book, which became the hit movie Molly's Game, she is focused on learning from her experiences and uses social media as a platform to inspire female entrepreneurs.

NEVE'S RECENT READS



Heart Berries by Terese Marie Mailhot

Content warning: Themes of mental illness and trauma.

Terese Marie Mailhot's memoir, *Heart Berries*, is a collection of essays, written as stream-of-consciousness memories, and read like pure poetry. Wading through clouded recollections of her youth, Mailhot describes growing up with a tumultuous family on the Seabird Island Indian Reservation in British Columbia, trying to navigate motherhood and stormy relationships—all with the weight of a dual diagnosis of PTSD and a bipolar II disorder, even ending up hospitalized due to her mental illness.

Heart Berries is just under 130 pages, but packs a punch that sinks into the reader's stomach long after they've finished it. It is a lengthy read in terms of content, with certain parts better read twice to completely understand the story, as the order of events depicted is not chronological either. Reflecting the effects of Mailhot's trauma and her repression of particular memories, the book is written much in the same way and allows you to read between the lines in order to understand the story. It is raw and heartfelt retelling, and paints a vivid image of Mailhot's life as an Indigenous woman—the blurring of love and hate, and the painstaking road to healing and justice that has been paved by entire nations of Indigenous peoples.

CLARISSA'S ALBUM PICK OF THE MONTH

"Pony" by Rex Orange County.

Starting the new year off strong with my favourite album to play under the street lights, in the dark, with rain pouring. This album is made by Rex Orange County, an artist from Haslemere, United Kingdom who creates indie pop and alternative hip hop music. Even though this album has already been released for about a year, all of the songs are beautiful masterpieces. Each one has a deeper meaning and really hits deep into the hearts of the listeners. One unique aspect of his songs is that the main instrument being used is the piano, which is interesting, since most bands base their melodies off of the guitar. The trumpet and saxophone add variety to the music, as well. Many people might recognize his two popular songs from the past, "Best Friend" and "Sunflower." These songs are great, but his latest 33-minute album truly pushes new limits. It covers the topics of how the artist, also known as Alex O'Connor, tackles issues and events he's been faced with throughout his life. Having recently ended a long-term relationship, he focuses on love as a major theme of the album. One can also notice the slight change in the lyrical choices song after song as the tone slowly changes, and it gradually begins to tackle the anxiety surrounding not being able to achieve desired dreams. Everyone should give it a chance and listen to it when they have the time.



Song Analysis

1. "10/10"
The most upbeat on the album; talks about the artist's experience with life, and advice he would give to those younger than him.
2. "Always"
This talks about his feelings for his girlfriend, and has an incredible trumpet accompaniment. One of his most wholesome songs.
"Laser Lights"
3. "Laser Lights" has great rap and jazz influences. Again, it is also about love, and the struggle of being awkward when having to socialize with other people.
"Face to Face"
4. Looking at the lyrics, it is easy to determine that Alex is talking about the joys of living with his girlfriend.
"Stressed Out"
5. The yawn in the intro of the song fits perfectly with the title, "Stressed Out." Being one of the sadder songs in the album, it talks about the idea of people always taking advantage of each other, hence making one feel stressed out. The background vocals are quite enjoyable.

6. "Never Had The Balls"
My favourite off the album—"Never Had The Balls" talks about the concept of confessing feelings towards someone, and emphasizes how difficult that might be. The melody makes me feel like I am in a coming of age movie. A nice breather after the previous song.
7. "Pluto Projector"
Want a song that never fails to make you cry? Well, "Pluto Projector" does just that! This song was dedicated to Alex's girlfriend, and revolves around how he feels when he is with her. It is very romantic, and is great to listen to when you want to lie on the floor and stare at the ceiling while crying at 3am.
8. "Every Way"
The piano part in this song is the most therapeutic thing I have ever listened to, and it makes me feel safe. This whole song feels like a great big hug.
9. "It Gets Better"
The suspension in this song builds up slowly as the song moves along. The chords sound like what an ending of a movie soundtrack would sound like. The acapella in the background is a great add on too.
10. "It's Not The Same Anymore"
This song is by far the saddest on the album, and will definitely leave listeners feeling melancholy. "It's Not The Same Anymore" also fits perfectly with how life is like now. COVID-19 has changed so much of our lifestyle so listening to this song hits differently now.

Songs of the Month

Genre: Indie Pop

- "Bedache" by Christian Leave
- "Constantinople" by Fishing in Japan
- "Wraith Pinned to the Mist and Other Games" by of Montreal

Genre: Alternative Rock

- "Before the World Was Big" by Girlpool
- "Lost in Translation" by The Neighborhood
- "Love Me" by The 1975

Genre: Rap/Hip Hop

- "Nights" by Frank Ocean
- "BLEACH" by BROCKHAMPTON
- "Surf" by Mac Miller

Genre: Rock

- "Heaven or Las Vegas" by Cocteau Twins
- "This Must Be The Place (Naive Melody)" by Talking Heads
- "Bulls On Parade" by Rage Against The Machine

Genre: R&B

- "Ashamed" by Omar Apollo
- "Tunnel Vision" by Rina Sawayama
- "Meet Me in Amsterdam" by RINI

Genre: Pop

- "Tattoos Together" by Lauv
- "courage" by Ruel
- "Claudia" by FINNEAS

RAIN FASHION

BY MAKENA THOMAS

It's only January, so our glorious spring showers won't start for at least four more weeks. However, it's important to prepare for those humid yet refreshing days. Living in Vancouver, we know that our rainfall isn't exactly seasonal, so it's important to always be prepared for an exceptionally wet day. Obviously, there are some must-haves, such as an umbrella, rain boots, rain jackets, and darker pants. Today, I'm going to help you with your inevitable clothing needs by putting together a couple outfits, and showing you that practicality can still be cute.

Rain boots

Although not always necessary, rain boots are still an essential item to have buried in your closet. Hunter boots are a popular and trendy brand here in Vancouver. Their boots are a tad pricey, as they range from \$55-\$150, depending on the style and type. However, they're made from an exceptionally durable material, and are worth the investment. It's quite easy to order them online on the Official Hunter Boots site, but you can also find Hunters in DSW, Hudson Bay, Sport Chek, SoftMoc, and a few other shoe stores. There are also several cheaper boots that will function just as well. Western Chief rain boots range from \$25-\$40, and can be easily ordered online or found in any Walmart. Sloggers rain boots are approximately \$35, and can be ordered off Amazon or found in Walmart and Home Depot.

Raincoats

You don't live in Vancouver if you don't own a raincoat. Now, I'm not going to bore you by listing the notoriously famous and costly raincoats in all the downtown stores. Instead, I'm going to name a few affordable options in case you need one in preparation for our inevitable showers. The basic Columbia rain jacket is priced at approximately \$60 depending on where you purchase it—I'd recommend the official Columbia website over Amazon, as prices there can fluctuate. They also have a Switchback rain jacket which sells for \$40. The Fisoul rain jacket is only \$36, and can be ordered off Amazon or found at your local Walmart. If you're willing to spend a little extra, the basic North Face rain jacket is valued at approximately \$120, but consistently goes on sale for as low as \$60. They can be found on the North Face Website or in-store, but I'd recommend checking thrift shops around Vancouver to find the best price. Charles River Apparel has raincoats that range from \$35-\$75. They can be ordered off Amazon, or found at Walmart.

As we transition from winter to spring, it's smart to keep a rain jacket and an UMBRELLA stuffed at the bottom of your bag. Don't underestimate the ever-changing temperatures by wearing six layers either. Keep an eye on the weather app to ensure whether you really need an undershirt, shirt, sweater and jacket, or if just a shirt and jacket will suffice. Keep in mind that these are just my personal recommendations, buy whatever rain jacket you want! But please—remember to buy one.

MIRACLE IN BAHRAIN

BY KARINA ION

The entire motorsport world collectively held its breath when on the opening lap of the 2020 Bahrain Grand Prix, French Haas driver Romain Grosjean had a horrifying crash into a barrier.

Hitting the exposed Armco barrier (think a much more reinforced version of a steel fence) at a speed of 220 kph, the Haas car split in two and caught ablaze in perhaps the worst incident F1 has seen in years. It was definitely a moment where a lot of people thought, "Oh God, he's not making it out of there is he?" Thankfully, in a beautiful combination of technology and miracle, Grosjean was able to pull himself out of the car and escape with minor burns to his hands and ankle. The race resumed and Grosjean was taken to the local hospital to recover.

Now the biggest question facing Formula 1 enthusiasts is how on earth did Romain survive? And how much has safety truly improved in recent years? Even five years ago, the chances of a crash like that being fatal were much much higher than we can even think nowadays. So what exactly makes Grosjean's crash special?

The Frenchman hit the Armco barrier at a speed of 220 kph, with the sudden deceleration amounting to about 53 G (or gravitational forces) straight onto his body, but mostly his head and neck. If you've ever been driving (or been a passenger) at about 60 kph and suddenly had to slam the brakes to a stop, that very unpleasant feeling you get amounts to about 1 G. Most people pass out at around 5 Gs (F1 drivers train meticulously to be able to withstand the G forces they get in corners), and miraculously Grosjean didn't. I say miraculously because, if he didn't, the chances of him being pulled out before sustaining severe or even fatal injuries were slim. Apologies for the morbidity.

Upon impact, the Haas car split in two, the rear end with the engine and gearbox ripping away from the front with Grosjean inside the Monocoque (a carbon fiber safety shell within the car to decrease chances of severe injury or death) which lodged itself into the barrier. When he hit the barrier, a fuel leak enveloped the safety cell in a fireball, and from an outside view, things were looking grim. Grosjean spent around 18 seconds in the fire before pulling himself out with a little help from the medical car personnel. To summarize how every piece of this puzzle fit together, I made a list of the main factors of Grosjean's survival.

The Halo

Introduced in 2018 to many complaints (mostly about the aesthetic aspect of the cars), the purpose of the halo was to prevent from flying debris, other cars, or anything, really, from hitting the driver in the exposed cockpit. Many complained that it was hideous and took away from the excitement of Formula 1 being the incredibly dangerous sport that it continues to be. Although many complaints would be silenced throughout the season as it prevented quite a few injuries (See Charles Leclerc Belgium

2018 which perhaps could've been a fatal incident), not all were silenced until the Bahrain race. Because of the way the Haas got stuck in the barrier, if the car was sans Halo and just exposed cockpit, the worst case scenario would be that Grosjean got decapitated by the torn metal barrier, and best would be that he was knocked unconscious in a burning car. Neither sound particularly pleasant do they?

The Monocoque (Survival Cell)

An essential part of an F1 car, it's pretty much a carbon fiber cocoon that keeps a driver safe from debris that might pierce into the cockpit. Upon impact, the car is designed to crumple around the chassis and monocoque. In a case such as Grosjean's, it's by design that the car split the way it did. As the front end of the car wrenched itself into the barrier and stopped completely, the rear end—which holds most of the car's mass—continued at full speed and ripped off. The monocoque was as vital to Grosjean as it is to any other driver in the event of a crash, keeping his body protected from severe injury.

Increased Technology in Firesuits and Fire Protection

Gone are the days when Juan Manuel Fangio (World Champion 1950, 1951, 1953-1957) raced his Formula 1 car in a work jacket, slacks, and a polo shirt; the drivers of today wear full body racing suits made of Nomex, a lightweight and incredibly fire resistant material tested at 600 to 800 degrees celsius, and even the thread that holds it all together must be equally resistant to fire. The undergarments, gloves, and shoes that drivers wear are also pretty much fireproof. Because of the engineering and design that went into the suits, Grosjean was able to spend 18 seconds in the inferno while trying to escape without suffering any major burns, or anything worse.

Extraction Tests and Technology

Ever since the halo was added, there were concerns that drivers wouldn't be able to pull themselves out of the car as easily as they did when the cockpit was exposed. To combat any issues with this, the FIA began mandating extraction tests, where a driver must be able to get out of their car from a fully seated position with the safety belts on in less than 5 seconds, all while wearing their full race kit and helmet. In a case where it is safe to do so, a driver must also be able to put their steering wheel back on within 10 seconds. This was undoubtedly helpful as, apart from being stuck under the barrier and somehow having to maneuver his way around it, the rest of the extraction was routine for Grosjean. This means he spent almost no time undoing his belts and such, instead using that vital time to push his way out of the car.

The Medical Car Personnel.

F1 is affectionately referred to as “the circus” because of the way the event and all those participating move from city to city (and country to country). One very important part of the travelling circus is the medical car. A gorgeous Mercedes AMG C63 S—modified for all the needs of the world's fastest ambulance, and driven by South-African Alan Van Der Merwe, a previous Formula 3 champion and the Medical Car driver since 2009. In the passenger seat was Dr. Ian Roberts from Britain. Since the crash happened on the opening lap, the medical car was still following the pack, meaning that the two men were able to get to Grosjean in seconds. One of the most memorable moments of the whole Grand Prix is likely Dr. Roberts pulling Grosjean down from the barriers while the Marshals—usually volunteers from each location specializing in safety and security, who were also a vital part to the whole operation—were trying to extinguish the fire. Van Der Merwe was barely even able to pull the pin on his fire extinguisher by the time Dr. Roberts pulled Grosjean out, said the medical car driver in an interview after the Grand Prix. Every single first responder on the scene showed incredible bravery, and Grosjean, upon being released from the hospital, went to thank each and every one.

NO HOOPS, NO HAPPINESS

BY MAKENA THOMAS

Athletics are rejoiced worldwide. Billions of people are die-hard sports fans and/or committed, hard working athletes; sports bring a great deal of joy to so many people. Though the link between sports and early childhood mental health is sometimes overlooked, it's clear that they have an especially large impact on younger children. In fact, children's mental health in general is rarely addressed until their teen years, and even then, the discussion is limited, even though 70% of all people with any type of mental illness showcase symptoms way before the age of 18.

During these atypical times, we've become more familiar with the connection between a child's happiness and the sports they play. Most parents in New Westminster sign their kids up for activities, such as soccer, hockey, and lacrosse, because it's healthy, fun and encourages the children to socialize. Due to the pandemic, many sports have been cancelled or postponed for the season. Those currently running are prohibited to play games, and seldom practice. Teen athletes in New West have also lost a significant amount of playing time and scholarship opportunities due to the drastic COVID-19 measures.

Typically, the topic of young children's mental health is rarely discussed compared to teenagers'. However, recent circumstances have resulted in an increased decline in children's mental health. Without practices and games, they're not only getting minimal exercise, but also seeing friends much less. In addition, they're plagued with concerns about bringing the virus home. Even if children do see friends at school, they may be hesitant to hang around them. This causes a surge of many negative emotions, such as loneliness, anxiety, and stress. Young kids who have rarely experienced these overpowering feelings in the past will presumably act out in countless disruptive ways.

Teenagers are also at risk of similar outbursts and emotions, as their stress levels are through the roof. If a younger sibling or friend is experiencing frequent nightmares, mood swings, avoiding spending time with friends and/or family, is consistently quiet, or their diet is increasing or decreasing significantly, it's crucial that you talk to them. It's estimated that less than 20% of youth battling mental illnesses receive proper help. If you have younger siblings, cousins, or even family friends under the age of twelve, now is the time to reach out. Approximately 1.2 million Canadian children are currently living with one or multiple mental illnesses. Imagine the impact this past year has had on all these children, as the vast majority have been cooped up in their rooms. Borderline lockdown has been in place for close to a year and everyone has struggled mentally. However, it's crucial to remind younger children that everything will be okay and that they're safe and loved. The trauma correlated to the pandemic may become a major issue in the near future if we aren't there for others.

CLASSIC + RED VELVET CINNAMON ROLLS

BY YVONNE ILAO // @GOURMETNOWAY ON TIKTOK

Who would've thought cinnamon rolls could get any better? By using red velvet cake mix, elevating this NWSS Cafeteria favourite has never been easier.

makes 9-12 (the red velvet recipe tends to make 12)

Classic:

- 3/4 cup warm milk (whole or 2%)
note: milk should be just barely warm to the touch, about 90°F
- 2 1/4 tsp active dry yeast
- 1/4 cup granulated sugar
- 1 egg + 1 egg yolk, room temp
- 1/4 cup unsalted butter, melted
- 3 cups AP or bread flour, plus more for work surface
- 3/4 tsp salt

- 2/3 cup brown sugar
- 1 1/2 tbsp ground cinnamon
- 1/4 cup unsalted butter, softened to room temperature

Cream Cheese Frosting:

- 4oz cream cheese, softened
- 3 tbsp unsalted butter, softened
- 3/4 cup powdered sugar
- 1 tsp lemon juice (can be substituted with vanilla extract)

Classic Cinnamon Rolls:

1. In a large bowl, allow yeast to activate in warm milk for 5-10 mins, or until bubbling. Whisk in sugar, egg, egg yolk, and cooled melted butter. Add flour and salt. Stir until a ragged, wet dough forms.
2. On a well-floured work surface, knead the brioche dough until smooth but slightly sticky. Form into a ball and place into a well-oiled bowl. Proof in a warm place for 1 to 1 1/2 hours or until doubled in size.
3. Meanwhile, combine brown sugar and cinnamon in a small bowl. Line a 9x13 baking pan with parchment paper.
4. Punch down dough and place on a well-floured surface. Roll into a 14x9 in. rectangle. Spread softened butter over dough, then evenly sprinkle on cinnamon mixture.



(red velvet)

Red Velvet:

- 1 1/4 cups warm water
note: water should be just barely warm to the touch, about 90°F
- 2 1/4 tsp active dry yeast
- 1 15.25 oz box red velvet cake mix
- 2 1/3 cups all-purpose flour

- 1 1/2 cups packed brown sugar
- 3 tbsp ground cinnamon
- 1/2 cup unsalted butter, softened to room temperature

5. Starting from the long end, tightly roll up the dough. Place roll seam side down, then cut into 9-12 2 in. pieces using floss or a serrated knife. Place into the prepared pan. Cover with a towel and let rise in a warm place for 30-45 mins.
6. Preheat the oven to 350F. Bake on the middle oven rack for 20-25 mins or until lightly golden brown.

Red Velvet Cinnamon Rolls:

1. In a large bowl, allow yeast to activate in warm water for 5-10 minutes, or until bubbling. Add cake mix and flour and stir until all flour is incorporated into a ragged dough — this can also be done in a stand mixer using the hook attachment. Do not knead or overwork the dough or it will get very hard to work with.
2. Place the dough into a well-oiled bowl and cover with a towel. Proof in a warm place for 1 to ½ hours or until doubled in size.
3. Repeat steps 3-6 of the classic recipe, instead rolling out the dough to a 12x16 in. rectangle. Bake until the filling is bubbling and the rolls are puffed and brick red.

Cream Cheese Frosting:

1. Beat cream cheese, butter, powdered sugar, and lemon juice until fluffy using a hand mixer or stand mixer.
2. Spread onto hot cinnamon rolls using an offset spatula or butterknife. Serve immediately.

SI CHUAN CUISINE

BY LECIA ZHU

Although China is one country, it has different cultures and dialects spoken that vary in different provinces and even some cities. This leads to a wide variety of culinary styles. Sichuan cuisine is one of the eight most well-known cuisines in China. It's known for its specialty in spicy food with a tingly-numbing sensation and the perfect addition of spices to create flavorful and fragrant dishes. The tingly, numbing sensation comes from a spice called Sichuan peppercorn, which is used in most dishes in Sichuan cuisine.

The most famous Sichuan dish would be Sichuan Hotpot (火锅). Hotpot is a soup base continuously cooked in a pot with the ingredients cooked during the meal. Condiments are prepared in each person's bowl according to their own tastes, and ingredients are dipped in to add flavor. Though hotpot is a dish enjoyed throughout China, the signature spicy soup base with Sichuan peppercorn, as well as the condiments used, are key elements to this well-known and favored dish. There is also a variation of hotpot where ingredients are cooked on skewers, called "Chuan Chuan Xiang" (串串香).

In a typical restaurant in Sichuan, signature dishes like "Kou Shui Ji" (口水鸡), which, directly translated, is Saliva Chicken, "Fu Qi Fei Pian" (夫妻肺片), "Ma Po Dou Fu" (麻婆豆腐), "Shui Zhu Yu" (水煮鱼), "Shui Zhu Niu Rou" (水煮牛肉), and many other dishes are always the go-to menu items, if available. Dishes are usually split into different groups when ordering. There are cold menus like Fu Qi Fei Pian, warm menus like Ma Po Dou Fu, soup based menus like Shui Zhu Yu, signature dishes of each restaurant or chef, and sometimes desserts like "Dou Hua" (豆花). Usually, restaurants offer a free plate of fruits after the meal, so desserts aren't as often enjoyed after the meal, rather treated as a snack or eaten during the meal.

In China, there is a lot of street food and snacks to be eaten while on-the-go. Though larger portions can be made in restaurants, stalls and small shops are found selling small portions that often don't take very long to make, which is a reason for their immense popularity. They are perfect for tourists, as they can buy one of each to taste and enjoy!

Ci Ba Kuai (糍粑块) is a snack made from lightly seasoned rice with peppercorn, shaped into blocks, then fried. (right)



Dan Dan Mian (担担面) is a spicy noodle soup topped with ground pork, chives, and seasoning. (left)

Tu Tou (兔头) could be described as exotic and delicious, but probably not by the majority of the people who read this article. It directly translates to rabbit head, so google an image at your own risk.

(from top to bottom)

Fei Chang Fen (肥肠粉) is a spicy noodle soup topped with pork intestines, which add a chewy texture.

Tang You Guo Zi (糖油果子) is fried glutinous rice balls sprinkled with sesame seeds; it's also called 天鹅蛋, which directly translates to Swan Eggs.

Bing Fen (冰粉) is a dessert made from a jelly substance, topped with brown sugar and peanut crumbles.

Due to the pandemic, I was not able to visit Sichuan, China as originally planned, and did not get to enjoy all the food there. Many of the dishes and street food listed above were some of my own favourites, and are highly recommended. All in all, I hope this makes you want to visit Sichuan, China in the future, and taste its food for yourself.



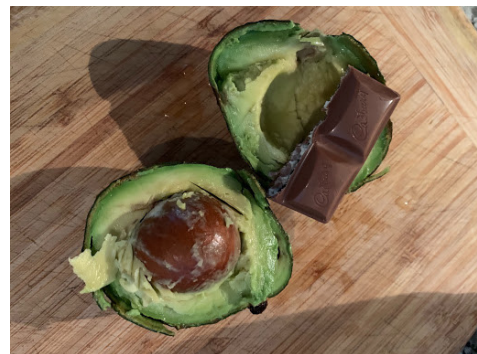
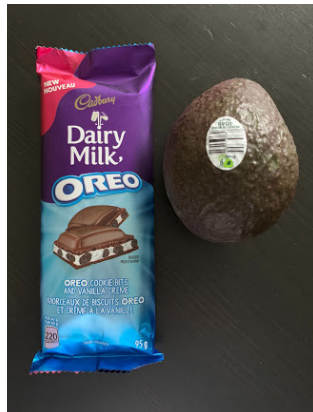
WEIRD FOOD COMBINATIONS

BY CLARISSA TANG

In every issue, I will be testing out and reviewing weird food combinations. It will usually be a competition between two groups, and at the end, I will pick a winner. So, without further ado, let's get to it!

1. Avocado and Oreo Chocolate

Comments: Believe it or not, this combination tasted amazing! The muted flavour of avocado mixes very well with the sweetness of the chocolate. Since there are oreo bits in the chocolate, the texture has a certain crunchiness, which is great with the mushy texture of the avocado. A great mix! I would give this a **9/10**.



2. Banana and Bacon

Comments: This did not taste as good as I thought it would. The sweetness of the banana and the overpowering saltiness of the bacon did not fit well together. It was a bit too crunchy, and the overall flavour was not tasty at all. A solid **5/10** from me.

Winner: Avocado and Oreo Chocolate

See you next month for more amazing food endeavours!

WORD SEARCH: 2020 WRAP-UP

Words can be found vertically, horizontally or diagonally, forwards or backwards.

A M N O I T C E L E P R A O P A Q E G N
 Y R E B I G O C I B U S T R F H U T F A
 T U C K S A Z W A P G O O Y E L A D O U
 J I T L T E L I N H X T P C N B R I H T
 R O G R E T T A M S E V I L K C A L B E
 K S B E N H U B O S A E F P O W N E V G
 O P Y A R S Q R T O S M K R E G T Y M S
 E H I L O K A S V F Y E O A T K I W C O
 N B U S H F I R E M I N S N P Y N R E A
 A R V D R M S N L C A I P V O V E B N L
 I E J O E B Y A G V W C D E U L O S R I
 L X D A D Z H C I R S C U L J K I E P M
 A I K F R O O R E K U A L O C U S T S O
 P T E W U V U O P T R V P A S E R A H E
 V O S G M S N Y M D A B E N I O D P Q S

Black Lives Matter
 Brexit
 Bushfire
 Coronavirus
 Election

Kobe
 Locusts
 Monoliths
 Murder hornets
 Protests

Quarantine
 Tiger King
 TikTok
 Vaccine
 Zoom

				2				
8	9						1	
1			6		9	5		2
		8		9	4		5	7
2								9
		5		8	2		6	1
6			5		8	9		4
5	1						7	
				6				

SUDOKU

Each row, column, and 3x3 box (defined by the bold borders) must contain the numbers 1 to 9.

Difficulty level: medium

Answers can be found on page 46.

SHORT STORY: THE NEW YEAR'S DAY BLACKOUT

BY RICHARD KIM

Our car pulled up to the port as the clock hit eleven forty, and the wooden boarded floors were already filled with tons of people. I was sitting in my silver Subaru legacy, tapping on the dash when a familiar finger tapped my shoulder. I turned to see Aaron, a shy Cuban boy who was sitting in the back seat. Aaron has been my best friend for years, but he's so annoyingly cautious.

"What? Aaron, are you still scared from what happened this year?" I groaned as he gave me a small nod. "Look, if you really don't want to go out and talk to our friends then you can stay here, but that's all in the past. So, you can sit around worrying, but I'm going to go and have some fun," I consoled Aaron, who sighed as he got out of the car. I gave a small fist pump as I pushed the door open, revealing the crowded docks.

"AARON! Where did you go?" I shouted, not being able to spot him. I started searching the crowds, scanning from side to side, man to man, woman to woman, white shirt to rainbow hoodie. I couldn't believe that I lost him just after I convinced him to leave the car.

"Oh my gosh, he would have been so much safer in the car!" I thought to myself, as I slapped my forehead repeatedly with frustration. I was really starting to worry when he popped up in front of me.

"You were right, this party is awesome! There are so many soda options, and the party took over the whole pier so you can do karaoke and get Thai food. Thanks for convincing me to get out of the car!" Aaron was jumping up and down with glee, his arms full of cotton candy, soda, and toys. I was stunned that he was so nonchalant about going off on his own, and got so many things in the small time I'd been freaking out.

"This kid is like the freaking flash." I chuckled as I unlocked the car.

"Put that stuff in the car," I ordered Aaron as he skipped happily to the parking lot where my car sat. I was about to go after him when something grabbed my arm. I turned to see a beautiful, raven-haired girl gripping my arm, gently tugging me towards the water.

"Hey Sky, are the rest of the guys down by the water?" I asked her, as she tugged me harder.

"Yes, our friends are by the water under a tent, let us go to them. They're waiting, and I told you that I hate being called that," Sky signed, her delicate fingers moving quickly from tons of practice, just slow enough so I could decipher them.

"I don't know, it is perfect for you, with those beautiful blue eyes of yours." My joking flirtation earned a hard punch to the shoulder, which basically meant that she thought I was an idiot.

"Alright I'll leave you to deal with A-a-r-o-n, but he is a troublemaker," Sky signed to me as she ran to the shadows of the beach.

"She's perfect," I thought as I sighed blissfully, stuffing my hands in my pockets as Aaron popped up in front of me again.

"Dude, your car is so messy! The cars in the parking lot have lots of great stuff. Also, I might... have accidentally started a fire," Aaron declared, smiling nervously, pointing to a small fire burning in the parking lot from a pool of oil.

"Aaron, what the heck!" I quickly grabbed my coat and tried to smother the flames. I jumped on the fire with my jacket, the cinders burning me before the fire was put out.

"Are you okay?" Aaron stopped the oil at its source, which was a bottle of oil that had spilled from a hotdog stand. I glared at him before grabbing him and dragging him towards the beach.

"Let's just go hang out with our friends before we get in more trouble..." Aaron and I had almost made it to the sand when all the lights on the pier shut off, rousing a chorus of shouts coming from around the party.

"Sky! Where are you?" I shouted, trying to find my way in the dark as Aaron tapped in ASL on my arm.

"Calm down, we'll find her and the others," I decided, ignoring his tiny fingers tapping, wandering in circles frantically. Aaron was gripping my arm tightly, trying to stay connected, tapping the same message over and over.

"Stop moving~ stop moving~ stop moving."

"I don't want to stop moving! I don't want to lose her again! And stop talking to me in ASL!" I was starting to hyperventilate as I tried to find her; images of Sky getting kidnapped or drowning plagued my mind. I was about to really worry when another hand joined Aaron's—not even needing ASL to calm me down, I knew who it was.

"Hey, I'm right here, the others are safe. I can take care of myself, don't worry," Sky tapped, before fireworks were set off from a nearby boat and she pulled me into her embrace, and my mind cleared as I melted into her. I looked up as the fireworks lit up the sky with a rainbow of colors.

Red.

Green.

Gold.

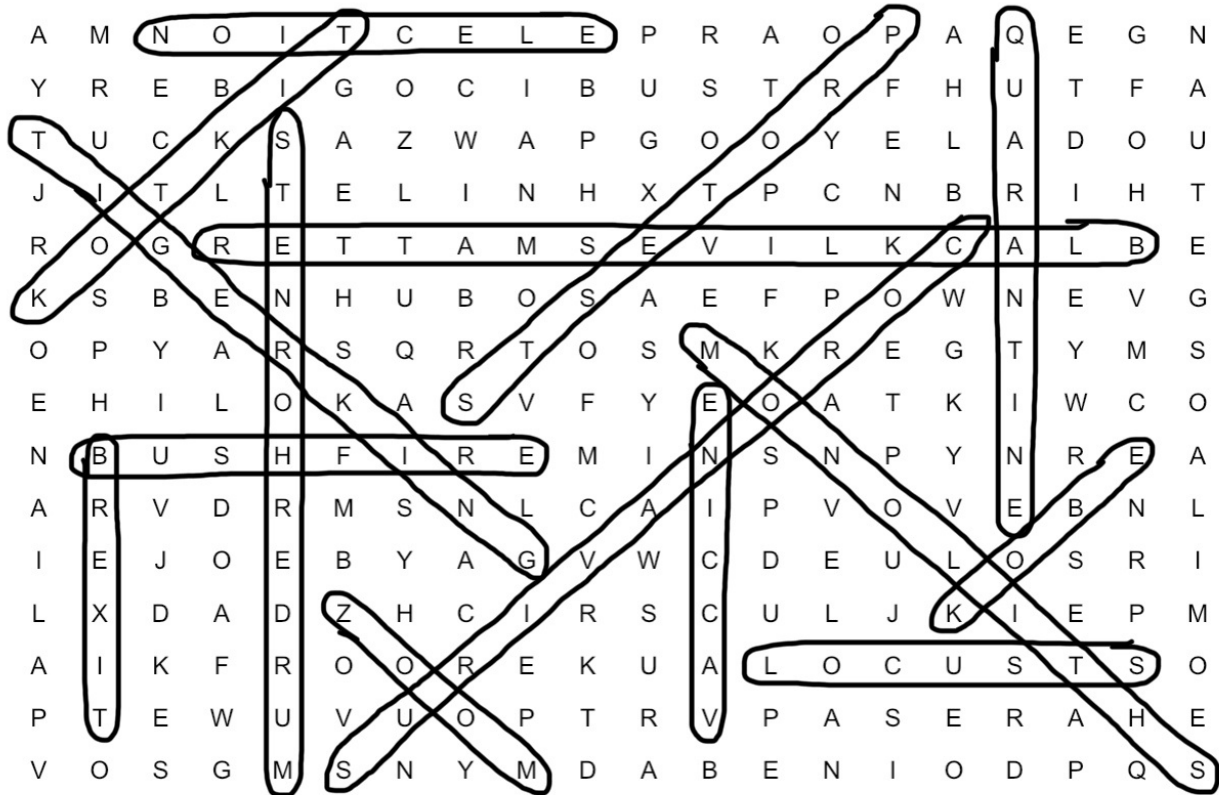
Blue.

I watched all these colors ascend before exploding into supernovas, painting the cloudy night sky. As I watched all of this, I felt Aaron join the hug, and I knew that this year would be a lot better than the last one.

"Thanks for bringing me back to earth," I tapped this message on Sky's arm.

"You got it, Barry," and that's all she needed to say.

ANSWER KEY



7	5	6	8	2	1	4	9	3
8	9	2	4	3	5	7	1	6
1	3	4	6	7	9	5	8	2
3	6	8	1	9	4	2	5	7
2	7	1	3	5	6	8	4	9
9	4	5	7	8	2	3	6	1
6	2	7	5	1	8	9	3	4
5	1	9	2	4	3	6	7	8
4	8	3	9	6	7	1	2	5

A MESSAGE FROM THE STUDENT PRESS

Thank you for reading the January edition of NDUB Student Press!

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