

# IB VISIONS



**ATHENS COLLEGE**  
Hellenic-American Educational Foundation  
Kindergarten • Elementary • Junior High • High  
ATHENS COLLEGE • PSYCHICO COLLEGE • KINDERGARTEN J. M. CARRAS

PSYCHICO COLLEGE  
INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE  
DIPLOMA PROGRAMME

2021 - 2022



**INTERVIEW:**

**Professor Costas Synolakis**  
President of Athens College

**Tradition  
and Innovation**

**IB DP  
Activities**

**Students'  
Articles**

**The  
Arts**



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# From the Editors

**W**hile I am still familiarizing myself with Athens College, I have noticed that the students, unified though the unique culture of the College, are eager to participate in school activities such as creating the IB Visions magazine. IB Visions is built up through the collective actions, thoughts and aspirations of the students. The epitome of the magazine reflects the students' creativity, innovation and achievements. Serving as the magazine's Chief Editor, I have had the pleasure of working closely with IB students and colleagues to create this year's copy of IB Visions.

I would like to take the opportunity to personally thank my student editors, all the contributors, colleagues and IB DP administrators for their help and support with the magazine. I hope you enjoy the latest issue of IB Visions.

*Athina Foka,  
Chief Editor/ Coordinator, IB DP English Instructor*



**I**magine being on board a train in which you are both the conductor and the passenger. Each station you reach is a milestone in your life. You feel both proud being the conductor and admire these milestones as a passenger. Our rails crossed paths that day in front of the large building standing proudly in the middle of our campus. Rails that were so different and yet harmoniously came together to form a complex system, our school community, to which each rail uniquely contributed. The station masters, our teachers, guided us into selecting the correct paths in this vast railway station that comprised of our school life. Each junction gifted us with fruitful collaborations and timeless friendships which we will use as our compass and our map in our forthcoming travels. Now that we are ready to leave this station behind, our inner conductor feels the exciting clickety-clacks and vibrations of our new academic future, and

*"Innovation is taking two things that already exist and putting them together in a new way."*

*—Tom Freston*

our inner passenger reminisces about all the good times we had at this station, ready to enjoy the journey. As a farewell gift, we would like to present you with our IB Visions magazine, a type of special passenger diary. You see, much like our lives, this magazine is a railway system through which our eager conductors are ready to guide you through a magical journey. Enjoy the ride!

***Athina Babinioti,***  
*Editor, Year 2 IB DP*

**T**his year I had the utmost pleasure of being involved with a long-lasting tradition of the IB Visions magazine at Athens College. IB Visions covers an array of different topics and is the embodiment of the work and the interests of all students in the IB DP. As part of the Academic Integrity and the Editing team, I had the opportunity to read and learn about a plethora of different topics, making this an enriching and insightful experience. With the guidance of Ms. Athina Foka and our team, we were able to create a magazine that we hope everyone will enjoy. Although we faced some difficulties, we were able to overcome them and create a product for which we are sincerely proud of. From articles relevant to this year's theme of Tradition and Innovation to articles covering much of the world of academia and the arts, IB Visions will cater to everyone's taste. We hope that you will enjoy this initiative.

***Dimitris Kotsovilis,***  
*Editor, Year 1 IB DP*

**T**he International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme is the perfect combination of Tradition and Innovation as it accurately combines these two contradictory concepts, bridging the innovative and universal nature of knowledge and learning with the restrictive, traditional method of exams. It provides a spherical type of education that stems from this very balance of opposites. Only when we learn to respect and cherish tradition can we prosper and excel using innovation. This IB Visions issue tackles traditional, innovative topics based on the coexistence and interdependence of these two values. From Black History Month and the Second World War to the modern-day issues of cryptocurrencies and the rights of women, enriched with beautiful artistic and poetic creations, this magazine is the traditional way for students to express their innovative concerns and beliefs. We urge you to hop on this journey towards modernity and innovation while holding on tight to our tradition.

***Dionysis Livanos,***  
*Editor, Year 1 IB DP*



# Interview with our **School's President,** Professor Costas Synolakis, on the Pandemic and our School

By Athina Bampinioti

**D**uring the pandemic, the educational system faced several issues due to school closures as well as the health risk imposed on students and teachers. This interview features our School's President, Professor Costas Synolakis, with whom we discussed how our school handled the coronavirus pandemic. Among other issues, we discussed the support offered to the teaching staff, as well as the President's outlook on the future of education after the pandemic. The IB Visions magazine team would like to thank Professor Synolakis for granting us this interview.





**Athina Bampinioti:** *What measures were taken to maintain the academic level as well as the vision of our School despite online learning?*

**Professor Synolakis:** The School had the technological infrastructure and the experience in asynchronous teaching/learning along with in-person teaching long before the pandemic occurred. The pandemic gave the impetus for the transition to synchronous distance teaching when needed, and our teachers made big efforts, in order to create online classes as similar to face-to-face classes as possible. No lessons were missed at the College, all meetings, and everything that had to be done was done online. The College raised the bar very high and was a pioneer in delivering the School program in full, within the framework of the measures for the pandemic of course. All other schools followed.

*How was teamwork within the School encouraged even though there was no in-person contact?*

Teachers did their best and they were trained on how to encourage teamwork and student interaction during lockdowns when we had online teaching. They created online discussion groups to build student active listening skills and interaction, they developed collaborative group activities, and they continued their counseling role in extracurricular activities. They encouraged students and teams like forensics, drama clubs, etc. to participate in contests, they even created an online art exhibition. All this was teamwork, and the teachers enhanced a nurturing online learning community. We are very proud of our students' achievements through the pandemic.

*How has the teaching staff been supported during these challenging times?*

Training courses were organized for all teaching staff to help them incorporate technology effectively into their teaching practices and methods to acquire all necessary digital skills for interesting and engaging lessons. The Director of Informatics and Digital Education, in the first year, conducted 70 seminars in the organization of the online classroom and all the possibilities provided by the MS TEAMS platform. We added courses on distance education in our existing Continuous Professional Development programs. We even organized courses with Arizona State University that were training the teaching staff of many schools in the USA at the same time. The teachers constantly had technical support from the very well-organized IT Department.

*What was the most challenging aspect of creating a safe School environment in terms of the pandemic?*



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*The College raised the bar very high and was a pioneer in delivering the School program in full, within the framework of the measures for the pandemic of course. All other schools followed.*

To convince the entire College community of the crucial importance of both individual and collective responsibility. To convince them that the measures must be respected by all in order to be effective in order to limit the spread of the virus. To convince all that there is no magic way to eradicate the pandemic, but that there are many ways to weaken it. Vaccination is the most important of these. I am sure we achieved all those to a great extent.

*Did the bureaucracy involved (such as getting everybody tested weekly and following protocol in case of infection) raise any difficulties?*

Of course! But safety comes first. Athens College rigorously followed all measures dictated by official bodies. Beyond those, however, the School implemented and continues to implement additional measures aimed at preventing the spread of the new coronavirus. These measures were adjusted in accordance with new data arising from the pandemic, whilst maintaining an open line of communication with members of the College community on issues directly or indirectly related to this matter. Our school was leading all secondary schools in Greece in terms of safety measures. We sent SMSs to parents at 6:30 am to take the temperature of their kids, and we reminded them that they would not board buses or be admitted to school without temperature checks. All students and staff had to wear masks, all the time, in class and during breaks. Unvaccinated students had to take many self-tests every week. Six times, we offered PCR testing on camps for all faculty and staff and volunteer students. We printed about 60 copies of twenty cartoons from US media (1200 total) encouraging vaccination and posted them on all bulletin boards on the Psychico campus. We remained vigilant and flexible according to the evolution of the pandemic and took measures beyond those of the Government. Tracing the close contacts of those who had fallen ill took a lot of the time of the members of the Direction every day. Informing the parents and teachers was continuous and transparent by all means. We had regular updates from distinguished medical Doctors and infectious disease specialists, who brought to the College family the most up-to-date and valid advice for virus prevention, Dr. Vana Papaevaggelou, and Dr. Panagiotis Gargalianos two times each and I immensely thank them. I also thank the Athens College Medical Service and Dr. Antonis Makris as well as the Covid-19 Committee who convened many times and set the School policy and measures on all the issues of the pandemic.

*What were the School's response tactics in dealing*

*with technical issues (for instance due to extreme weather conditions) during online learning?*

During the lockdowns, we took the opportunity to improve the infrastructure on both campuses. We cleaned up broken or dry branches and updated preparedness exercises in all school units for earthquakes and fires. In summer during the 2021 fires in Attica and Evia, we activated a protection mechanism with the help of guards and craftsmen. The measures of prevention and preparedness for a possible fire on the campuses were dealt with a constant presence on the spot and continuous wetting of the spaces. Surveillance and presence continued on all days when the probability of fire was high. In the recent snowfall, while the school was closed, we went to Attiki Odos to assist two members of the College staff and drive them safe home.

*What values would you say students have acquired thanks to the School's action concerning the pandemic?*

Students, teachers, and parents were confident that Athens College took the right measures and they followed instructions. They were patient they were well informed about what the virus was and how they could avoid contact with it. The pandemic helped students realize how lucky they were when the School was open, and they could have a normal school life with their teachers and classmates. Isolation and distance did not help learning and socialization because, as we know, learning is a social construction. Students missed their teachers and their friends and everything that was taken for granted before. On the other hand, their awareness increased of how our lives are intertwined and how our behavior has an impact on the life of others (Individual and collective responsibility). Older students who were close to graduating possibly understood -I hope- how important it is to have a positive attitude toward learning. This could help them overcome challenges posed by online learning such as, remaining focused during online lessons or maintaining their motivation. A positive attitude toward learning, self-regulation, and intrinsic motivation are crucial in improving performance at school in general but it was especially



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important during lockdowns and distance learning. Our teachers worked hard towards this, and I hope they had an impact on student awareness of these attitudes.

*How does it feel to address the students at our School remotely, instead of coming in direct contact in the theatre for instance?*

It is not the best. But it is a new reality. It is certain that distance communication does not have the immediacy and proximity of live communication. It is difficult as we cannot see the faces up close, distinguish the expressions and the body language which

is feedback in terms of receiving the message from the audience through its reactions. However, it is something we are used to, and if necessary, distance communication offers a channel of transmission of speech and to the extent that it serves practical problems, such as speaking from another city or another country, it is positive.

*Looking forward, what is your take on the way learning and teaching will evolve after the pandemic? Will the technologies we developed to communicate be a stepping stone for a different form of education?*

I can see the hybrid model as an alternative form of education. Blended or hybrid learning refers to the provision of academic programs that combine traditional teaching space and distance learning activities. Technology will support this type of learning which responds to both the traditional learning process and effective distance education as it combines the advantages of both models (students will either have a physical presence in the room or there will be the possibility of distance learning, without losing contact with the teacher or the interaction with classmates). Teachers also now have platforms for storing material or communicating –synchronous or asynchronous– with their students that can extend the space and time of the conventional classroom. They also have many tools/applications to create educational material, which can certainly help students to better understand or resume teaching in their own time for more effective learning. In general, technology is an ally of the teachers, without of course being able to replace them and without considering it a panacea.

# “Out With the Old | In With the New”

## Tradition & Innovation in Education

By Rozy Angeliki Betrosian



Are traditional methods of teaching enough to prepare students for the future? Will students be prepared for the updated model of the work environment? Will they be supplied with tools to cope in their lives? Are innovative ways enough and do they help the students achieve their goals? Tradition and innovation in the field of education have a significant role in the upbringing of students. Through traditional or progressive methods of teaching, educators cultivate the development of the cognitive/academic abilities, and also social-emotional skills that overall shape a young person's approach to life. Traditional patterns of education include

a rigid structure and strict order, while innovative patterns encompass inclusivity and the understanding of students as unique individuals. Moreover, traditional patterns integrate the teaching of emotional intelligence and may even incorporate technology and artificial intelligence. To what extent should we sustain the order and safe organization of traditional education knowing its effects? Following the Covid-19 pandemic, some people consider the implementation of innovative methods urgent in order to limit the ramifications of self-isolation and to encourage a healthy psychological development.

Traditional methods in education have always been present. These methods are teacher centered, as they place the utmost value on the teacher, who will educate students by sharing information. Tradition in education is also characterized by strict regimes and a monotonous way of learning. However, this method of learning has helped many students find a way to approach studying. By learning things by heart, students only obtain short-term knowledge. Traditional educational methods mostly have temporary advantages as they encourage students to develop organizational and time management skills. Could innovative education be the ultimate alternative to traditional education?

Innovative education stands on two pillars: technology and promoting equity through inclusivity. Innovative learning allows students to have a more personal experience with schooling and focuses on permitting students to take initiative, preparing them for their future, and molding them into resilient adults. It is important to note that, innovative education urges students to find creative solutions to problems and teaches them that there is more than one answer, more than one pathway that they can take. A significant component of progressive education includes social emotional learning, thus, helping students cultivate their socio-emotional competencies and guiding them to become well-rounded adults.



According to Cassel, social emotional learning is the process through which one develops their identity, manages, and gains awareness of their emotions, reaches their goals, sustains healthy relationships, has empathy, and learns how to make responsible decisions. Implementing emotional learning enhances the ideas of innovative education, as it encourages students to team build, addresses inclusivity and nurtures resilience in students. Integrating social emotional learning in school curriculums will both produce advancements academically and socially. The rapid development of technology and artificial intelligence have become part of innovative education because they also promote inclusivity. Artificial intelligence follows the innovative education paradigm, from personalized schedules to tools for the visually impaired, for the deaf or hearing impaired and people on the autism spectrum. Thanks to AI, people that took the backseat in education and didn't have equal opportunities, can now be embraced in the community and they can hope for a better future.

Following the Covid-19 lockdowns many students have been experiencing the intensity of academic pressure. This is where

social emotional learning can significantly change the learning conditions for the students and guide them through this transition. The world around us is changing rapidly and innovative education is progressing along those lines and adapting to the new conditions of today. But is tradition just part of the past? The structure of traditional education is very beneficial to students and provides a sense of safety and security. As we move away from the long-established method of education, we should keep those components. Moreover, the goal is to help students become self-sufficient and well-rounded adults. Traditional educational methods place emphasis solely on academics, while through innovative methods promote social emotional and academic dexterities. Tradition ensures a safety net and familiarity while innovation encourages self-expression. Innovative education solves more of the prevalent issues of today. We do not get rid of the old to introduce the new, we just incorporate the new into our old ways as we progress.



Laura Triviza

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# Interview with Stathis Kalyvas

Professor Stathis Kalyvas holds the position of Gladstone Professor, Faculty of Political and International Relations and is a Fellow at All Souls College of the University of Oxford. He was a professor of political science at Yale University until December 2017 in the honorable position of Arnold Wolfers. In this position, he created and oversaw a program on order conflict and violence.

Apart from his academic work, he recently published two books, “Καταστροφές και θριάμβοι” (*Modern Greece - What Everyone Needs to Know*) and “Το Ελληνικό Όνειρο” (*The Greek Dream*).

We had the chance to interview Professor Kalyvas through the scope of our annual theme; *the synergy of tradition and innovation in our school*.

## Interview By Dionysis Livanos

**Dionysios Livanos:** *Our Athens College community has already made acquaintance with you, Professor Kalyvas. In fact, in December of 2021, the Students of Athens College High School had the honor to listen to the presentation you delivered entitled “What do we keep from the Greek revolution for today and for tomorrow?”*

*What indeed should we keep from the Greek revolution for today and for tomorrow?*

**Professor Stathis Kalyvas:** There are many things we can keep, but I would go with three that apply both individually and collectively. First, ambition. The necessity to set ambitious goals that have an “out of the box” quality. The idea of an independent Greek state in 1821 was not only ambitious, it was an unusual claim to make. Second, diversity. The people who launched the revolution assembled an extremely diverse cast of individuals with many different skills and outlooks. Third, a good story. The ability to tell a compelling story in an intelligible way to the powers that mattered was essential.

*Since you spend most of your time away from Greece, what do you think foreigners should gain from this historical analogy of Catastrophes and Triumphs you discuss in your first book?*

The main nonobvious take-away that modern Greek history offers





to Greeks and non-Greeks alike is the importance of picking the right reference set. When you compare Modern Greece to Pericles' Athens, obviously you find the former wanting. But is it the right comparison? I argue that the right reference set for Modern Greece is comprised of all post-Ottoman states; they all emerged out of a common matrix and Greece outperformed the rest. What looks like a failure turns out a success when you pick the correct comparison.

*What message do you believe Greeks should gain upon reading the first book on Catastrophes and Triumphs?*

Positivity and optimism. Greeks have been too focused on bemoaning lost opportunities and celebrating heroic defeats. We need to shift our gaze.

*This year's magazine has the theme "Tradition and Innovation." In a few words, how would you connect this theme with the Greek Revolution and the terms "motherland" and "fatherland" which you also used in your speech?*

I would focus on how Greeks took up the classical tradition and connected it with the idea of liberty which was very new at the time. It was a clever move that did wonders and offered Greeks a new and credible vision.

*Greece is in a period of transition once again in its modern history. In your second book, you present a model of development that will create an influx of foreign investors in our country. What are the prospects of Greece in terms of progress?*

Greece is a country that offers ideal conditions of life, not just in terms of its landscape and climate, but also its everyday life

which is extremely attractive: it is social, spontaneous, lively. We can attract people who will buy into our values and enhance them.


*Having spent many years on the educational systems of Greece, the USA, and the UK, where – in your opinion – does the Greek educational system need to evolve and what changes should be made?*

It needs to place more faith in young people, offer initiatives, open opportunities, allow them to come up with their own vision and believe in it. As it is now, I have the sense that it is constantly second-guessing them and sets them up for either failure or a predictable type of success that is extremely limited.

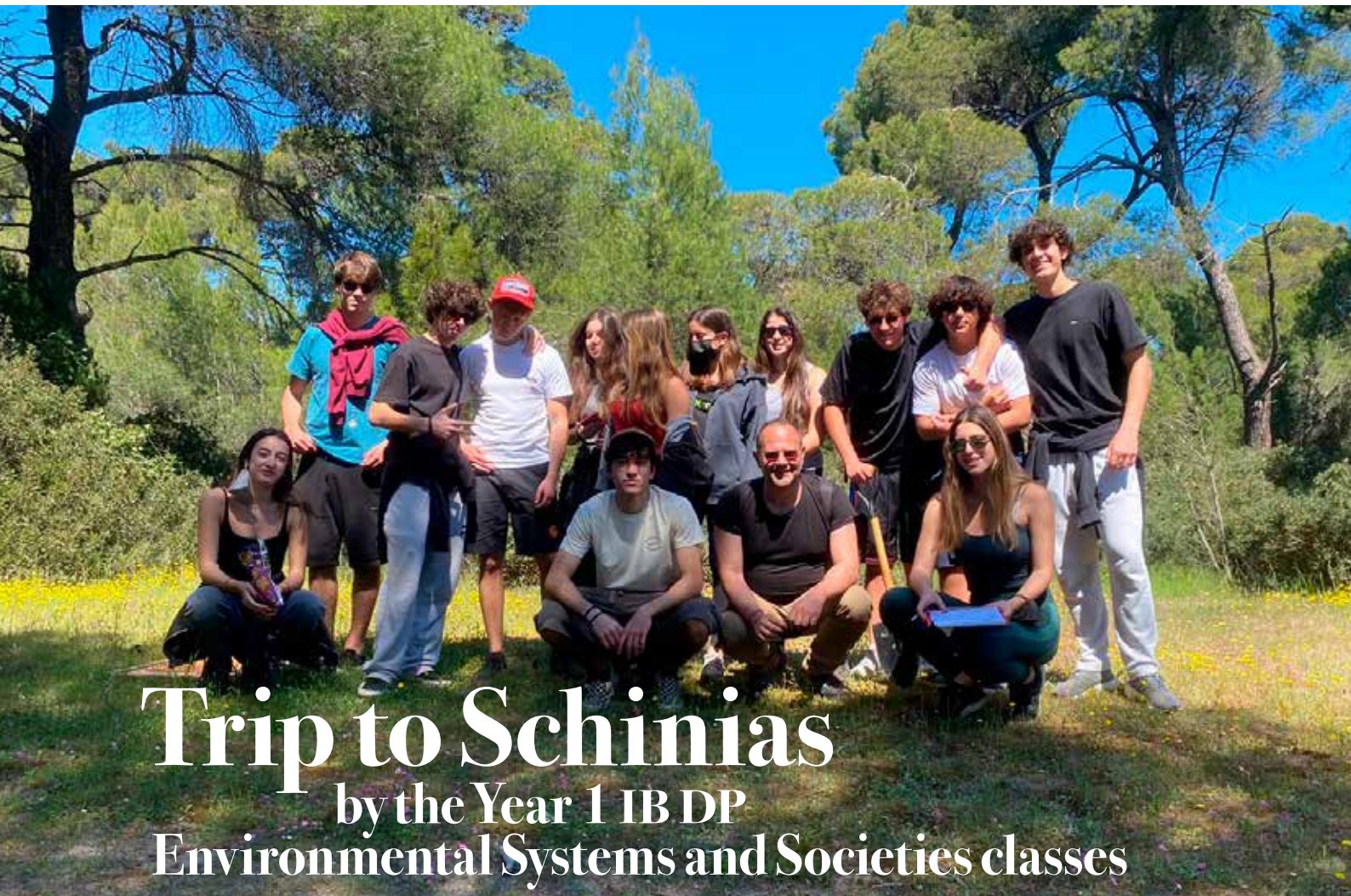
*You recently produced (and may I say with great success), a 7-episode documentary of your book "Katastrofes & Thriamvoi." Do you believe that History and Tradition are better taught through writing or through the use of Technology and image?*

The written word and the visual world are not in opposition; they complement each other. Without the book, I would have never been able to come up with the TV series. The serious work of reflection and research precedes the production work. Otherwise, even the most impressive images will feel (and be) superficial.

*What would you like to say to our readers in terms of Tradition and Innovation?*

Look into the past to find ways to infuse the future with new, unique meaning. 






# Trip to Schinias

by the Year 1 IB DP  
Environmental Systems and Societies classes

By Sofia Moustaki

ONE OF THE ACTIVITIES ORGANIZED this year within the IB DP was an excursion to Schinias. The activity took place on the 14<sup>th</sup> of April 2022. The Year 1 IB DP students who are part of the Environmental Systems & Societies course at standard level, visited the national park of Schinias accompanied by their teachers, Mr. Scilipoti, Mr. Mehrabian, Ms. Roupaka and Mr. Pitoulis. We visited this area to investigate the salinity and plant zoning in wooded beach ecosystems. More precisely, we investigated the marine ecosystem of the area by using quadrats to determine the change in community biodiversity, plant densities, and plant frequencies as the distance increased from the waterline. We used three distinct distances, starting 10m from the

waterline: one at 40m, one at 80m, and one at 120m. We were divided into two teams. Each team, at each distance, had to build a 10m x 10m quadrat to later identify the type of bushes and trees in their respective quadrat, and count the number of each individual under their respective classification. In addition, we were asked to select, randomly, two spots within each quadrat, build a 1.0m x 1.0m quadrat, and repeat the same process, though for smaller organisms. Finally, using a small shovel, we collected a 1kg sample of soil from all six (3+3 because we were divided into two teams) 10m x 10m quadrats. Two weeks later, on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of May 2022, we conducted an experiment in the Biology Labs on the IB campus, where we measured the moisture content, the air content, the relative soil salinity, the pH of the soil and we conducted a squeeze test, to determine the salinity and plant zoning of each quadrat, and how biodiversity changes as we move further away from the waterline of the sea. We concluded that the further away from the quadrat from the sea, the higher the vegetation and the biodiversity. To quantify the biodiversity data of the plants and species we located, we used Simpson's Diversity Index. With these measurements, we were able to form conclusions for the zonation in Schinias. 







PANIGIRI 2022




# Girls IB Show Experience





### By Sofia Moustaki

AMONG OTHER ACTIVITIES that took place this academic year at Athens College, the “Panigiri” also took place on April 9<sup>th</sup>, 2022. Both students from Psychiko College and Athens College participated in the “Show.” The “Show” is a Saturday night event held during our school’s Panigiri where high school students get the chance to perform - either dance or sing - in front of their classmates on the stairs of Benakio building. This year, a group of girls decided to represent Girl’s IB in the Saturday night Show. We managed to create a 5-minute-long choreography. All IBDP Year 1 girls were given the chance to participate. Rehearsals commenced on 26<sup>th</sup> of March. There were three team leaders who created the dances and were responsible for everything that took place throughout the process. Rehearsals were held during big breaks and after school. Overall, the experience was gratifying and pleasant. The experience gave us the opportunity to bond with our and create new friendships. Furthermore, I had the chance to share something enjoyable with my friends. What was terrifying yet exhilarating, was performing on the 9<sup>th</sup> of April. All my classmates and I had never imagined it would be so difficult to perform in front of so many people. Many of us were anxious,

but that brought us closer together. We fought through the struggles and managed to make the most out of our time. The funniest experience was the day before the show when we had the general performance. All groups had a chance to perform. It was the first time we saw each other’s choreography and that is what made it so entertaining. Overall, the whole experience was exciting and fascinating. It was something worth experiencing and being part of. My classmates and I were all grateful for the chance we were given to participate in the “Saturday Night’s Show.” I highly suggest participation for future IBDP students! 







# Asian Minor Catastrophe

By Danai Tsagaratou

THIS YEAR MARKS the 100th anniversary of the Asian Minor Catastrophe as announced by the Ministry of culture in Greece. This is considered a cataclysmic event with enormous importance to the history of Greece as it shaped our relationships with the countries around us and our personal heritage. Specifically, this event refers to the destruction of Smyrna by the Turkish forces. The terrifying blaze that still haunts Greece centuries later is called the Great Fire. This fire

forced citizens to flee their homes as their city was being burned to the ground, destroying most of the city and causing a substantial amount of losses that would forever scar our country.

The students of the HL IB Art class commemorated and reflected on this event through the creation of their own artwork. They embodied the tragic event and the chaos that the citizens underwent by creating an exhibition and bringing awareness to the disastrous tragedy. **V**



Danai Tsagaratou



Julia Kandalepa



Julia Kandalepa

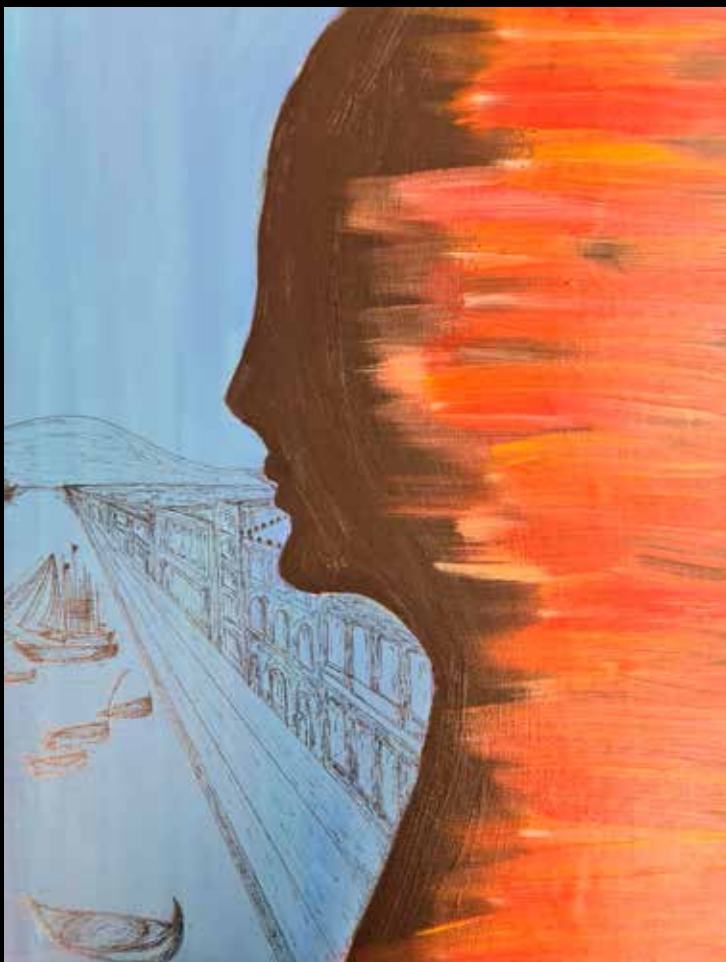




*Anastasia Kyriakopoulou*



*Ellie Jamurta*



*Cecilia Sarantopoulou*



*Anna Gioka*



## AN INTRODUCTION TO THE



# Russo-Ukrainian Conflict

By Dimitris Kotsovilis

On the 25<sup>th</sup> of December 1991, the Soviet flag was lowered from the Kremlin and was replaced by the flag of the Russian Federation. The particular event is rather symbolic but represents the end of an era, the Cold War, and completed the dissolution of the Soviet Union that had started 3 years earlier in 1988 under Mikhail Gorbachev.

This course-changing event upset the balance of power that was established following Axis defeat, that of the bipolar world of power, and consequently the Cold War ended. On the other side, the fall of the USSR meant that the hegemonic rule of the USA was consolidated and brought with it a wave of democratization.

This Western narrative reflects the accepted view in contemporary media. For the USA and its allies, such an event reflected the victory of the capitalist system of governance, while for many Russians including a KGB spy in Eastern

Germany, Vladimir Putin, was “the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the 20th century” with “Tens of millions of our fellow citizens and countrymen found... beyond the fringes of Russian territory.” For Russia and many supporters of the Soviet political and economic system, their country was humiliated, and it opened a wound that the Russians (whether we are talking about the Tzars or the Soviets) had attempted to close for centuries. For the first time in its modern history Russia was unprotected, its buffer zone was destroyed, and the Northern European Plain was not in the hands of puppet states, but of ex-So-



*December 25, 1991. The last time, the Soviet flag flies over the Kremlin at Red Square in Moscow. The flag was replaced by the Russian flag.*



viet states aspiring to be integrated into the European Economic Community and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). The “West” expanded its sphere of influence in what Russia perceived as its legitimate area of control. In 1997 Czechia, Hungary and Poland joined NATO, and in 2004 the EU. In 2004 the Baltic states which were former USSR states in addition to Slovakia, and Slovenia joined the EU and NATO, followed by Romania and Bulgaria in 2007. Consequently, in just a matter of 15 years, the dynamics of Europe had shifted completely. NATO and the EU were at the Russian border, a reality that 15 years before would have been considered an alternative reality in politics. The changes in its sphere of influence made Russia feel menaced, having lost its status as a superpower.

At the same time, while Europe was changing, Russia changed internally as well. The economic destitution of the 1990s crippled the Russian economy, and under Yeltsin the country barely grew, while a demographic time bomb was ticking. Meanwhile, the loss of considerable amounts of resources along with the privatization of the industries resulted in unrests and a vacuum of power which led to the rise of Vladimir Putin. The new charismatic leader offered Russia a new image on the world stage, accompanied by the renewed economic growth of the 2000s and a period of détente with the West. Progressively, Russia became more integrated within the European community, but for many elites and Putin himself, such integration would prevent Russia from realizing its potential. Russia was not with the West. It was its own entity that allowed the nation to, at times, work with or oppose the Western Civilization and would not allow

itself to be controlled by the interest of the USA. Such a perception, accompanied by a sense of idealism and glorification of the past, is at the core of today’s Russo Ukrainian conflict. Such views were manifested in the 2008 invasion of Georgia, an ex-Soviet republic with a pro-western agenda that aimed to become a member of NATO and the EU. Nonetheless, the nation of barely 3.7 million individuals could not stand a chance against the Russian army. The political apparatus of the Kremlin was in a position to obliterate any pro-Western agenda, by occupying South Ossetia and Abkhazia, two contested regions of Georgia up until today. The event was more symbolic, but it was a reminder to any aspiring ex-Soviet republic that any further integration would be met with fierce opposition by Russia. Its zone of influence would not shrink anymore and would not sacrifice territories for good relationships with the West.



*The 2008 invasion of Georgia. Russia is occupying South Ossetia and Abkhazia.*



Taking into consideration the aforementioned historical context, the Russo-Ukrainian conflict is a manifestation or rather a continuation of Russian foreign policy that has been progressively realized since the early 2000s. But why would Putin invade a country such as Ukraine? Ukraine is a country of approximately 44 million people and is the largest European country by land area after Russia. This eastern European country is characterized by its extensive plains that have rendered the country a powerhouse in wheat, barley and yeast production and has always been a significant population center with many settlements springing along the banks of the Dnieper. The country has always been characterized by the constant struggle between East and West and a significant Russian minority. However, to understand the implications of today’s armed conflict, a more in-depth analysis of history will provide us with a more holistic image of the situation. For Putin, Ukraine is not only of geopolitical importance but of historical and nationalistic importance as well. The country was the birthplace of Russian civilization with the Kievan Rus being the first significant Russian state in world history before the Mongol

For Putin Ukraine is not only of geopolitical importance but of historical and nationalistic importance as well





# “ THE NARRATIVE WAS THAT RUSSIANS AND UKRAINIANS WERE TWINS THAT WERE SEPARATED AT BIRTH AND NEEDED TO BE UNITED. ”

Invasions that followed. It was where the basis of Russian culture and traditions was established. Nonetheless, progressively, the center of Russian civilization moved to the northeast, with the duchy of Muscovy becoming the nucleus and the predecessor of Modern Russia. The power shift led to a cultural distance between Moscow and Kyiv, which despite sharing the same doctrine of Christianity had different languages and traditions. In addition to this, the country was split between East and West, a division still visible today with the Eastern part of the country being more pro-Russian and the Western part of the country more Pro EU. In the 15th and 16th centuries, Russia once again expanded opting for offensive realism to secure its national integrity which led to conquering vast parts of the East and the West. Ukraine, with its large plains, was an easy ground for invasion for European powers whether it was the Ottomans, the Polish, the French or the Germans that threatened the Tzars, and Ukraine became of utmost importance to the Russian state, thus leading the Romanovs to conquer Ukraine in an attempt to secure its buffer zone but also to spread its culture and consolidate its control. In the 19th century, under Catherine the Great, the Russification of the country occurred in which a plethora of mechanisms were used to make sure that the Ukrainians also known as Ruthenians during this period did not get their independence. The narrative was that Russians and Ukrainians were twins that were separated at birth and needed to be united. As time passed, cities such as Kharkiv, Odesa and Sevastopol became Russian urban centers and the Ukrainian identity became more and more suppressed, showcasing an ideological dimension behind such foreign policy decisions.



*The new world configuration after World War I.*

Following WWI, the same concern rose amongst Russians. Ukraine which held a significant amount of the economic output of the country became independent under the Treaty of Brest Litovsk, a treaty that humiliated the Russians and their morale, but was of great importance for the establishment of Bolshevik control within the country. The fear of a separate Ukrainian identity became a topic of great discussion amongst political leaders in the country. The Russian civil war that followed the October Revolution slowed the Russian response towards Ukraine, but the independent country was absorbed into the Russian sphere of influence only a few years after its inception, a development of great importance for the viability and the autarchy that the USSR was striving towards. Ukrainian identity was once again suppressed, some historians would argue that the deliberate suppression of Ukraine, especially under Stalin, had elements of Genocide as manifested in the



*1932-33 The Ukrainian Holodomor (hunger in English) costs the lives of millions of Ukrainians.*

Great Ukrainian famine, also referred to as a Holodomor that cost the lives of millions of Ukrainians. The country was in a state of misery and the WWII further accentuated the acute situation in the country where an array of confrontations between the Nazis and the Soviets took place. The victory of the Soviet Union consolidated its grip over Ukraine, which saw its borders expand

to acquire territories to its West, which had been either under Polish or Austrian rule for centuries. Under Khrushchev, a policy of appeasement was thought of as the best when dealing with Ukraine, thus Russia conceded Crimea and afterwards made sure that Ukraine became a model socialist republic enjoying high standards of living and having a diverse economy. However, the failure of the political and economic system of the Soviets slowly led to the stagnation of the republic, while the Chernobyl nuclear accident further exposed the cracks of the Soviet Union.





## Europe in the interwar era

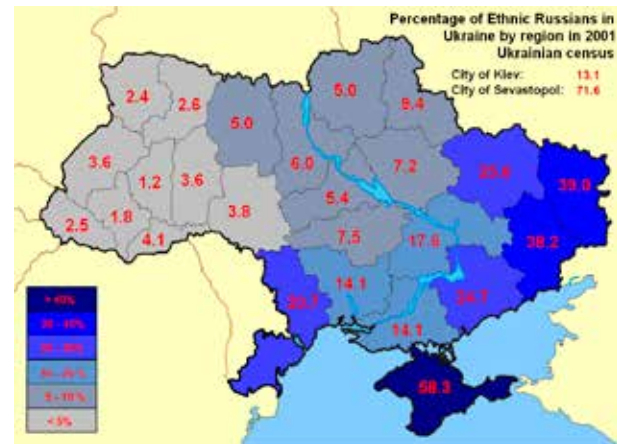
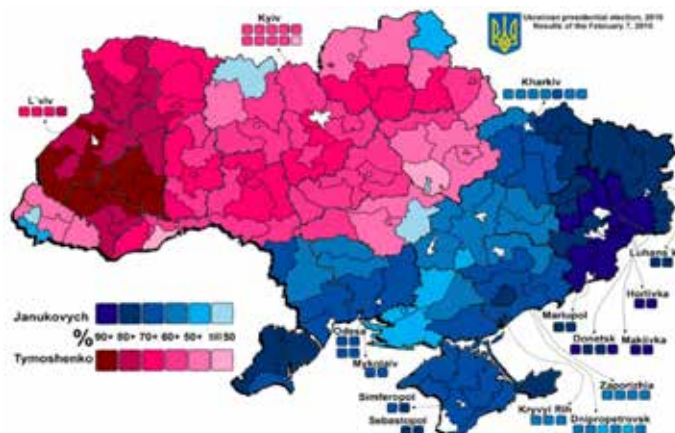
The fall of the USSR had profound ramifications for the country which now stood alone on the geopolitical scene. The equilibrium between Pro EU and Pro Russian Ukrainians was fragile and one political decision would lead to greater instability within the country. The 1990s for Ukraine was a period of finding its own identity and trying to become independent from any foreign intervention and by the dawn of the 21st century the country had made steps towards European integration. Such a path proved to be dangerous for the country as it did not only upset Russia but also the South and Eastern provinces in the country with Russian-speaking majorities. The status quo of the early 21st century with



**Tymoshenko vs Yanukovich.**  
An indication of the power struggle between Pro EU and Pro Russian forces.

Ukraine stuck between two great powers proved to be a difficult equation for Ukrainian politicians. By 2013 the country had made considerable steps toward the EU and NATO, but the country was extremely polarized. This is apparent in the clash between Tymoshenko and Yanukovich in the elections that was an indication of the power struggle between Pro EU

and Pro Russian forces. At the elections during this year, Yanukovich won, reassuring Russia that Ukraine was not going to become another breakaway region that would become part of the West or, so they wished. In a series of protests in Kyiv and other cities known as the Maiden Revolution named after the central square in Kyiv, violent demonstrations occurred, with the protesters demanding economic cooperation with the EU and the oppressive police forces of President Yanukovich trying to suppress them. The militant action of protesters put pressure to the Ukrainian system and a new political struggle rose that made Moscow worried. The Maiden revolution facilitated the path of Ukraine towards an EU future, a possibility that worried Putin and which was realized when Yanukovich fled the country. Following his resignation, a pro-EU government was elected and the EU-Ukraine bilateral agreement for economic cooperation was signed. These developments prompted Russia to act. According



**Percentage of Ethnic Russians in Ukraine (2001).**

to Putin, such policies were only propaganda by the USA aimed at dividing the Slavic world and he proceeded to annex Crimea in 2014 while supporting Russian-backed separatists in Donetsk and Luhansk, which are predominantly Russian thus further fostering instability within the state.

2014 was a reminder for Ukraine, a reminder that cost the lives of thousands of civilians, and led to territorial losses for the country, while representing a symbol of Russian dominance in the region. Ukrainian leaders understood that a balanced relationship with Moscow would be the only way to move forward similarly to Azerbaijan, as Russia was not afraid to invade them as it did in Georgia and Crimea. However, despite Russia thinking that they had won over Ukraine, the truth was far from that since the foreign policy of Russians alienated the Ukrainians who in turn demanded European and NATO integration fearing expansionist policies by their neighbor. Ukraine's will was manifested in the elections of 2019 with an actor who was not tied to the Ukrainian oligarchs appearing on the political scene in the country. His goals were simple: end the war with Russia and foster closer European integration and a possible NATO membership. These demands made him the leader of the country and he assumed office in 2019, hoping to change the course of Ukraine's history.





*Volodymyr Zelenskyy's goals were simple: end the war with Russia and foster closer European integration and a possible NATO membership.*



*On February 24, 2022, Vladimir Putin declares war against Ukraine.*

The political maneuvering of President Zelenskyy was not as successful as he had hoped as his rapprochement with NATO proved to be a dangerous step for his country since increasing Russian insecurities made war a possibility. Putin would not allow Ukraine to become the next host of NATO troops. For Putin himself and for his political party this had to be avoided at all costs, even by force. This perception that ties back to the previous historical narration of Post Cold War Russia, is the driving force behind this invasion, leading Putin to create a plan for his biggest accomplishment yet. Thus, from December 2021 troops started to amass along the Belarus-Ukraine border and the Russo-Ukrainian border. Despite diplomatic endeavors by the West and particularly by French President Emmanuel Macron, Putin was not convinced about the intentions of the West and he proceeded with his plan. By calling upon the protection of Russian-speaking minorities in Ukraine and the Nazification of the country, Putin attempted to legitimize his campaign. On the 22nd of February 2022, Putin recognized the separatists in Luhansk and Donetsk as independent states and on the 24th of February 2022, Putin declared war against Ukraine.

The response to the invasion varied across the world but the majority of the countries supported Ukraine, a country that was illegally invaded by its neighbor with whom it shares cultural and historical ties. The West imposed some of the harshest sanctions against Russia, leading to a depreciation of the Russian ruble and a boycott against Russian oli-

garchs who were seen as the variable that kept Putin in power. As of the 5th of April 2022, Russia has met little success in its invasion of Ukraine, with the majority of Ukrainian cities, including Kyiv, Odesa, and Kharkiv under Ukrainian control. Consequently, many strate-

gical analysts have argued that Russia has failed to reach its strategic goals. The struggle for the port city of Mariupol along the Azov Sea and for Kyiv, a symbol of the political independence of the country is a clear indication that Putin's war has not turned out the way that he wanted with a huge cost of civilian innocent lives. In recent days Ukraine has

been able to push Russians out of the greater Kyiv area, who now concentrated their efforts in the Donbas region of Eastern Ukraine and Southern Ukraine. Nobody knows the outcome of the war. As of now millions of Ukrainians have left for neighboring European countries, Russia's economy is in recession due to tariffs that have caused worldwide inflation and the West and NATO are more united than ever against the Russians. The war is still unravelling at the moment and it will take days, weeks, months, or even years before we learn its outcome.

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THE RUSSO UKRAINIAN  
CONFLICT IS A  
MULTIFACETED  
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OF IDEOLOGICAL  
AND GEOPOLITICAL  
CONSTRUCTIVIST  
APPROACHES IN  
TODAY'S WORLD.

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Putin's ambitions have been the debate of political analysts. Some have argued that he wants a pro-Kremlin Ukraine, others a divided Ukraine with the South Eastern Provinces making Novorossiia, a pro-Kremlin puppet state while others point to the international recognition of Russia's sovereignty over Crimea and the independence of Donetsk and Luhansk as a possible desired outcome, but these are speculations. For Putin, the victimization of Russia as a narrative, in conjunction with his idealistic perception of the Soviet World and his competition with the West, have been determining factors for one of the major events of Europe and the World in the 21st century and it will take another generation before the scars and the ramifications of such an event can be examined. The Russo Ukrainian conflict is a multifaceted issue which is an expression of ideological and geopolitical constructivist approaches in today's world. Putin's plans for the restoration of the imperialistic borders of Russia

is a relic of the past but it will take a firm and collective approach by the international community to stop such a development. The fall of the Soviet Union created a new reality, a reality that Putin and many Russians felt unjust and disastrous. The dissolution of the Soviet Union and the symbolic lowering of the Soviet flag on the

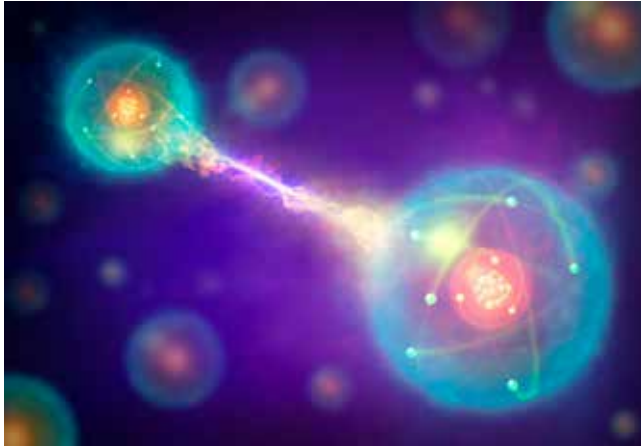
25th of December 1991 was the catalyst for this chain of events that we are witnessing but the history of the Russian Federation has yet to be written. V

### Ukrainians attempting to push back Russians



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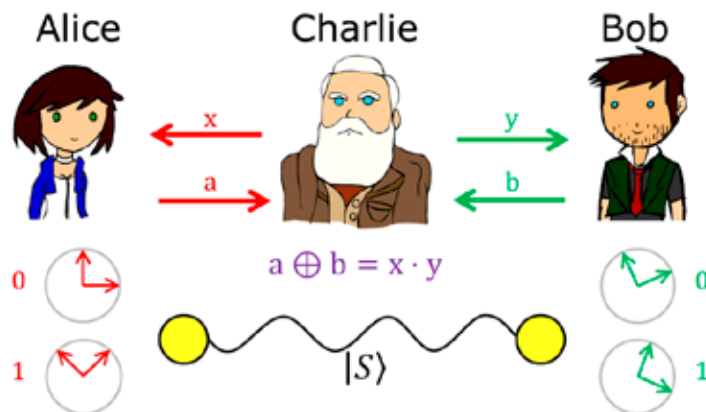


# What is Quantum Entanglement?

By Stavros Klaoudatos

Quantum Entanglement. We hear about it in movies, see scientists talk about it, but what is it? The quantum world, that is, the world of tiny things is a really weird place, home to many counterintuitive phenomena. Unsurprisingly, Quantum-Entanglement conforms to this pattern. Einstein famously referred to it as “Spooky Action at a Distance.” Today, nearly eighty-seven years from Einstein’s publication that introduced this idea, we have taken millions of measurements and have built frameworks to model the universe that make this abstract and counterintuitive phenomenon somewhat easier to comprehend. Now it is our time to use these tools and explore the idea that was once thought of violating **locality**.

Quantum Entanglement refers to a correlation between two particles. Essentially, it is the idea that we can “stretch” such a correlation throughout space-time. The best way to explain what this means is with an example. Let’s talk classical scales for a moment. Suppose there are three people, Alice, Bob, and Charlie. Charlie invited Alice and Bob to



his house to give them each an interesting gift. He had two envelopes; one contained a check for one million dollars while the other for ten thousand dollars. He told them that both envelopes are identical and that there is no way of finding which cheque they had, other than by opening them. Assuming everything Charlie said was true, the two envelopes were **entangled**. They were correlated! After their little meeting, Alice had to

leave the planet for a business trip to Mars. A few months passed, and neither Alice nor Bob had opened their envelopes. On a Friday evening, Alice decided to open her envelope. The second she opened it, she learned what seemed like two pieces of information:

1. She received the \$1.000.000 check
2. Bob received the \$10.000 check

This is where things get interesting. How could she learn information about Bob at what seemed faster than the speed of light? If Bob had opened his and had sent a signal traveling at the speed of light, it would’ve taken a lot more than a mere second. Did they violate locality?

The answer is no. According to the Standard Model of Physics, our current description of the Universe, locality is a fundamental law that states that it is impossible to send a signal faster than the speed of light. But then how did Alice come to that information so fast? It all lies in the choice of words: “what seemed like two pieces of information.” Alice and Bob both measure the same exact system. The correlation between the two envelopes never ceased to exist. The system, the two envelopes, and their contents were simply stretched across spacetime. It was entangled in a way that upon measuring one of its aspects we get full knowledge about the other.

This is the intuitive side of entanglement, the classic analog of the “spooky” version. It is time to introduce uncertainty, spins, and objects found in them, to quote





Marvel, “Quantum Realm.” The logic seems to vanish in these scales. In our classical, deterministic systems, complete knowledge implies the ability to predict future states and calculate past ones. This definition stops making sense when the framework switches from absolute to probabilistic, meaning the outcomes of our measurements are no longer deterministic, but rather the probabilities of the outcomes are. In Quantum Mechanics, complete knowledge of a composite system can imply complete ignorance over the constituent systems. This is the idea that the mind behind General Relativity was unable to comprehend. Such a system

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IN QUANTUM MECHANICS, COMPLETE KNOWLEDGE OF A COMPOSITE SYSTEM CAN IMPLY COMPLETE IGNORANCE OVER THE CONSTITUENT SYSTEMS.

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is an entangled one called a **singlet**. Complete ignorance means that there is a 50-50 chance, thus you have no useful information regarding the outcome of a measurement. In this system, we have **complete knowledge**, with the Quantum Mechanics definition of the **composite system**, but no knowledge regarding the individual **subsystems**. There is nothing new to be learned about the composite system when at the same time we know nothing about the subsystems.

With that, we have just gotten a glimpse of what quantum entanglement is all about. It’s all about knowledge. It shows how the complete knowledge of a system can coexist with complete ignorance over the individual subsystems. It shows how a single event, which is a measurement, can be stretched throughout space and time, but most importantly, it shows us how strange the Quantum World truly is. To quote Richard Feynman, the father of Path Integrals, the mind behind the Diagrams we still use to compute quantum interactions:

*“If you think you understand quantum mechanics, you don’t understand quantum mechanics.”* ▣



Julia Kandalepa



Julia Kandalepa

# Quantum Theory



## Schrödinger's Cat

By Evangelia Kommata

Quantum theory, in simple terms, is a fundamental theory in the field of physics which elucidates physical properties such as the behavior and nature of matter and energy at the scale of atoms and subatomic particles. Quantum theory is difficult to comprehend, especially without having adequate knowledge on the topic. In order to highlight the difficulty in comprehending Quantum theory, the Austrian physicist Erwin Schrödinger devised a thought experience in 1935, known as Schrödinger's cat.

Quantum theory is quite perplexing. It states that a quantum entity, such as a particle or an atom, does not have a reality that can be held down until it is measured. Until then, its attributes, such as momentum are encoded in a mathematical entity called a wave function. This wave function gives a range of possible outcomes if you make a measurement. As the idea progressed, an obvious question arose. What does the entity do before that?

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IF THE COPENHAGEN INTERPRETATION IS CORRECT, THE ATOM, AND THUS THE CAT, ARE IN A STATE OF BEING SIMULTANEOUSLY DEAD AND ALIVE PRIOR TO ANY MEASUREMENT.

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Quantum theorists in the Danish city of Copenhagen attempted to give an answer to this question. Niels Bohr and Werner Heisenberg devised the Copenhagen interpretation, which became the most popular response in the 1930s. The Copenhagen interpretation explicates that before the measurement, there is no definitive reality. The object is in an indeterminate condition known as a superposition.

Superposition is present in quantum physics because a feature of a system can simultaneously exist in several separate quantum states. For instance, a feature possessed by electrons when it comes to quantum physics is spin, which is a kind of intrinsic angular momentum. When a magnetic field is present, there are two possible spin states that the electron may exist in. These two are spin down and spin up. Until measurements are taken, each and every electron has the chance of being in either state. The specific spin state can only be observed after measurements have been made. In real life, everything has a definite value. For example, a coin facing up is either a head or a tail. One might not know on which side the coin landed without looking, but one can be sure that it



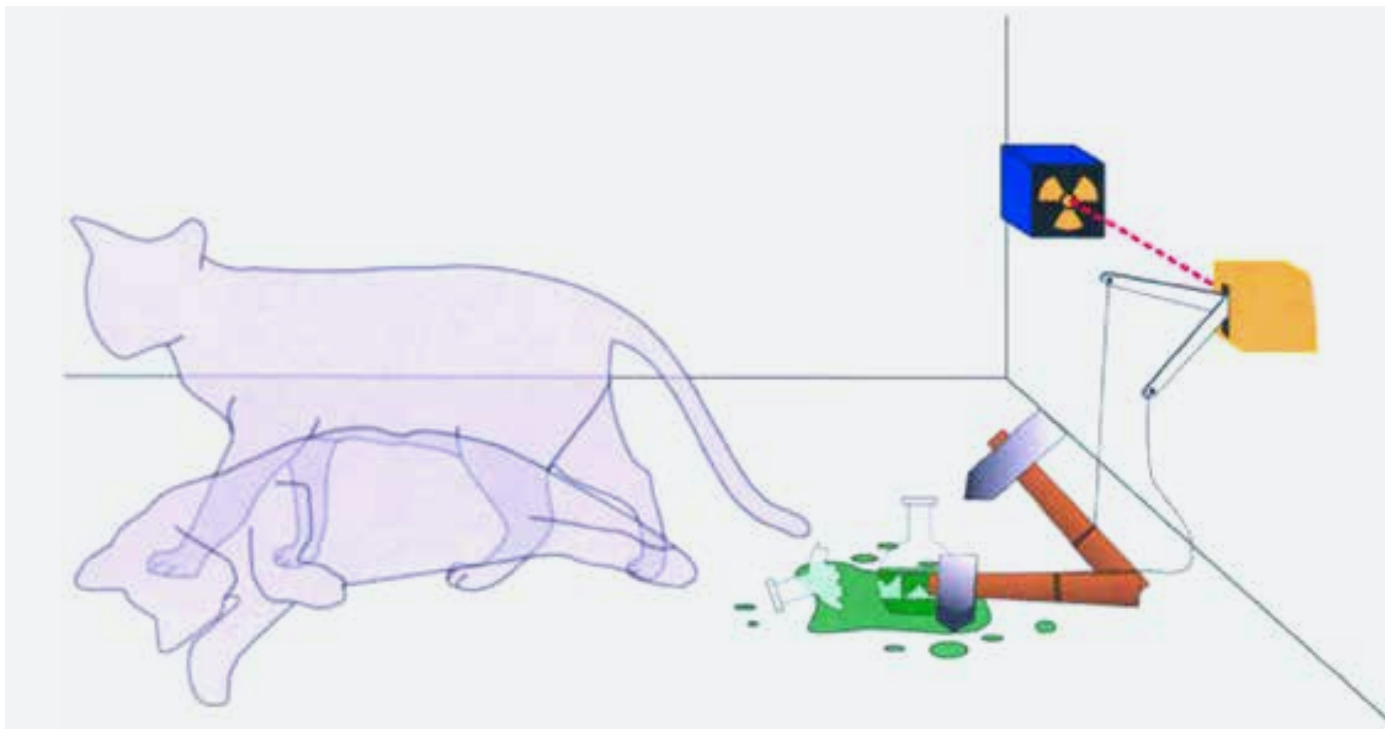


Figure 1: Schrödinger's Cat Thought Experiment

must be one of the two. When it comes to quantum physics the situation is different. There is no existence of material properties of things until their measurement. Therefore, quantum physics does not align with our everyday life.

Schrödinger's thought experiment testing this theory investigated what occurs when a quantum object interacts with something familiar. He put a radioactive atom, a vial of poison, and a cat inside a box. The radioactive atom, governed by quantum laws, can either decay or not decay at any given time. It's impossible to predict when the time will come, but when it comes, the vial will be broken, the poison will be released, and the cat will be killed.

If the Copenhagen interpretation is correct, the atom, and thus the cat, are in a state of being simultaneously dead and alive prior to any measurement. The absurdity of speaking of a cat, both dead and alive was supposed to demonstrate that the Copenhagen interpretation was deficient in some way. Nevertheless, the experiment significantly influenced ways of thinking about quantum theory, such as the Many Worlds Interpretation, which

states that the various possible realities of a quantum object crystallize into different parallel universes at the point of measurement.

Schrödinger's test was a thought attempt, not a genuine attempt. As a result, it was incapable to supply any logical proof. The Cat of Schrödinger isn't indeed a logical hypothesis. Schrödinger's fair utilized it as an instructing device to highlight how certain individuals confused quantum hypothesis. The objective of Schrödinger's fanciful cat test was to illustrate how fundamentally misguided judgments of quantum hypothesis may lead to absurd comes about that don't connect to reality. As a result, accepting Schrödinger's thought about how the universe really works is inaccurate.

All in all, the point of Schrödinger's experiment is that the experiment has no distinct and concrete solution. There are multifarious interpretations that suggest multiple different solutions. The most known ones are Copenhagen's interpretation, the Many Worlds interpretation, and the information interpretation. V

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## 6 Feet Apart

By Nasia Giakoumakou

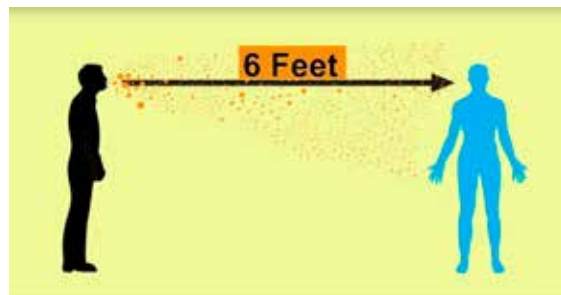
**C**ystic fibrosis (CF) is a progressive, genetic disease that causes long-lasting lung infections and limits the ability to breathe over time<sup>1</sup>. In cystic fibrosis, mutations have occurred in the cystic fibrosis transmembrane

conductance regulator (CFTR) gene. The CFTR protein is a chloride channel that controls the passage of chloride and sodium ions, across the cell's membrane, in cells of lungs and other organs. The CFTR protein, however, malfunctions due to mutations in the CFTR gene. Thus, exchange of chloride ions in and out of a cell is not possible. The absence of chloride ions and their ability to attract water to a cell's surface has damaging effects in a cell. This causes the mucus, which is usually a thin and gelatinous fluid made by mucous membranes and glands to protect epithelial cells from foreign particles and chemicals through mucociliary clearance<sup>2</sup>, to become thick and sticky. The thick mucus created in the lungs, clogs the airways and traps germs which can cause infections, inflammation, respiratory failure and other complications. In the pancreas, the mucus in people with CF, does not allow the release of digestive enzymes that are used to absorb nutrients from food and as a result, the body lacks the nutrients it needs for proper function. In the liver, the mucus can block the bile duct, which is used as a secretory passageway, causing liver disease. In this way, lives of people suffering from CF are very hard and their life expectancy is lower than of other people.

In cystic fibrosis, genetics play a crucial role as the disease can only develop if two copies of the defective CF gene have been inherited, one from each parent. If a person has inherited only one copy of the defective CF gene, then he only carries the CF disease but does not



*The thick mucus created in the lungs, clogs the airways and traps germs which can cause infections, inflammation, respiratory failure and other complications.*



suffer from it. Many genetic tests can detect the most prevalent CF mutation and aid in the diagnosis of cystic fibrosis. Diagnosis of CF entails a number of steps starting from newborn screening and then, a sweat test to measure the amount of salt in sweat, which will be very high if the person has CF, genetic tests to check if the defective CF gene is present and finally, a clinical evaluation is needed.

Although the types and severity of the symptoms are different for each person, some common symptoms for people with CF include recurring chest infections, coughing, shortness of breath and damage to the airways (bronchiectasis), difficulty of putting on weight and growing, yellowing of the skin and the whites of the eyes (jaundice), diarrhea and constipation.

Unfortunately, no cure has been found for CF but, other treatments help people with CF control their symptoms and have better life conditions. The following are common treatments that help people with CF: medicines to treat and prevent lung problems, such as antibiotics for chest infections and medicines in order to make the mucus thinner so, that people with CF can cough it up, exercise to help clear the mucus from the lungs, techniques to clear the airways, proper diets and nutritional advice which is needed as people with CF have issues with digesting their food and need extra calories to avoid malnutrition and finally, in severe cases of CF, a lung transplant may be necessary if the person's lungs do not work properly and the person has difficulties in breathing.

Another difficulty for people with cystic fibrosis is the risk of cross-infection. The thick mucus in the lungs of people with cystic fibrosis can trap bacteria and lead to infections. These infections are highly dangerous and can even be life threatening. That is why people with cystic fibrosis must stay apart from each other since they get infections that most people do not get easily and can pass these germs to others with CF. For this reason, the "6-foot rule" has been established in order to ensure that CF patients stay apart from each other and do not put themselves at risk.

For the past two years, we have all been suffering from the pandemic of covid-19. From the

1 "About Cystic Fibrosis." Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, <https://www.cff.org/intro-cf/about-cystic-fibrosis>. Accessed 29 Jan. 2022.


2 ibid





*It is advised to stay 6-feet apart from others.*

beginning of the spreading of the virus, a rule has been set regarding social distancing and more specifically, it is advised to stay 6-feet apart from others. The quarantines and social distancing have made us live a life that is similar to how people with CF have to act around each other as they really want to spend time with one another and be close to each other but, their disease prevents them from being “free.” Likewise, we have to stay apart from people that we love in order to protect them and ourselves from the virus. It has been hard to adapt to this lifestyle but, we are now more able to understand the suffering of people with CF. People with CF, though, had to follow this “rule” from the beginning of their lives and cannot “escape” from it. We understand how difficult and limiting it is for them as we also struggle and find it really hard to social-distance during this pandemic.

In conclusion, Cystic Fibrosis is a disease that affects thousands of people worldwide and makes them suffer from many severe symptoms. As no cure has been found for this disease, people with CF can only get treatments to alleviate their symptoms. One of the many struggles people suffering from CF have to face, is following the “6-foot rule” and staying apart from other CF sufferers. While fighting this disease, people with CF need others suffering like them in order to feel less alone. Emotional support from each other is very important as it can provide strength to people with CF. In our struggles with Covid-19, we are able to feel closer to people with CF, understand them, and feel for them. This temporary suffering of ours has made us better comprehend the permanent struggle of people with CF. 

“WHILE FIGHTING  
THIS DISEASE,  
PEOPLE WITH CF  
NEED OTHERS  
SUFFERING LIKE  
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*Julia Kandalepa*

## The James Webb Space Telescope:



## An Out-of-This-World Christmas Present

By Stefania Vasileiadou

Scientific curiosity gets the best out of the human mind. Whether it be to answer a timely question or to simply scratch an itch, humans have been observing space since the dawn of civilization. To aid in the diversification of their observations, scientists have been using space telescopes, optical satellites operating remotely in space without interference from the Earth's atmosphere. Unsatisfactorily for some, however, telescopes cannot tell us everything that we would like to know about the universe. NASA's Christmas gift for 2021 has come to revolutionize contemporary astronomical findings with the James Webb Space Telescope.

The James Webb Space Telescope's predecessor, the Hubble Space Telescope, is estimated to decay in the next 10-20 years, thus, astronomy was in dire need of a new system to succeed it. Yet to remain up to par

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*The James Webb Space Telescope's predecessor, the Hubble Space Telescope, is estimated to decay in the next 10-20 years, thus, astronomy was in dire need of a new system to succeed it.*

with scientists' aspirations, the new system also had to surpass Hubble's observational capacity. The 18 hexagonal, gold-plated mirror segments of the Webb Telescope are highly capable of capturing infrared light – something the Hubble cannot do to a satisfactory extent. According to physical principles, starlight is caused by the emission of electromagnetic energy at different wavelengths. As light travels towards our solar system from farther galaxies, it is stretched from shorter, visible, or ultraviolet wavelengths to longer, infrared wavelengths due to the expansion of space. But what is it that made the Hubble unable to capture these wavelengths? Quite simply, it is too hot. Warm objects emit thermal radiation at infrared wavelengths. The absence of a cooling mechanism for the Hubble allows for its mirrors' glow to overwhelm the sought-out cosmic infrared rays.



The seemingly minuscule engineering upgrade of adding a cooling mechanism to the Webb telescope will do so much as to potentially yield information about the genesis of the universe. Optimally operating at 45 °K (-230 °C), the now most powerful telescope ever created can see the birth of stars and planetary systems inside dust clouds opaque to the visible light spectrum. However, the delivery of these images will not be presential until the tedious process of the telescope aligning its mirrors and reaching its orbit is finally over. The telescope was launched on 25 December 2021 from the Guiana Space Center on an Ariane 5 rocket. Contrary to most telescopes, the Webb orbits the center of our solar system instead of the Earth. More specifically, it is orbiting the Sun at the 2nd Lagrange Point (L2), located just 1.5 million kilometers behind the Earth. L2 is ideal for Webb as it facilitates easy communication with the Earth and simultaneously protects it from the light and heat emitted by the Sun and the Earth. Webb successfully reached L2 on 24 January 2022. It is now in the process of completing several science and calibration tests, recently having fully aligned its primary imager. The full capacity of the telescope will not be demonstrated until a full 6 months have elapsed since its launch. However, a few images have started being delivered in the meantime as a product of the testing procedures.

Anticipation for the James Webb Telescope is not low-caliber. Astronomers have declared the commencement of a new era of discoveries that will exceed all expectations. The infinite propagation of electromagnetic waves in collaboration with the Webb's technologies will mediate a trip back in time, just a few hundred million years after the Big Bang. The Webb will see right into stellar nurseries, areas of outer space within dense nebulae where the contraction of gas and dust creates new stars. This will answer a series of questions on the formation of galaxies and the planetary systems within them. However, the list of the Webb's capabilities goes further on; the atmospheres and weather conditions of exoplanets will be estimated as well. In the lucky case of the habitability conditions being met, a planet similar to Earth could be found. The scientific potential is uncontestedly insane and could likely exceed all expectations. In fact, after completing "fine phasing" on March 11,



Iro Mavrou

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**The seemingly minuscule engineering upgrade of adding a cooling mechanism to the Webb telescope will do so much as to potentially yield information about the genesis of the universe.**

the telescope captured a picture of a star called 2MASS J17554042+6551277 which featured other galaxies and stars in the background that were unidentifiable by NASA. This verified that the future of Webb has a lot in store for astronomers.

Even for those who are not particular physics enthusiasts, this news must still incite a feeling of anticipation. The future of astronomy has a lot to offer, even though it paradoxically investigates the past. Although one may argue that this serves no genuine purpose, the intellectual capabilities of humans shall not remain unexploited. It is merely our duty to explore, investigate, and invent. ▼

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## Weight loss explained

By Romanos Hatzipanagiotou

Weight loss is a decrease in body weight resulting from either voluntary (diet, exercise) or involuntary (illness) circumstances. Most instances of weight loss arise due to the loss of body fat, but in cases of extreme or severe weight loss, protein and other substances in the body can also be reduced. It has been one of people's main concerns in the last decades, both for aesthetic and for health reasons. But why is it so important to lose fat and what are the risks of obesity? Why is most advice we hear in social media and irrational diet and workout plans worthless? Why do different people get store fat in different ways? Why is it so hard for so many people to lose fat? What is the right way to lose fat? These are the questions that will be answered in this article, based on science instead of marketing and unscientific promotion of wrong methods.

### Why do so many people find difficulty in losing fat?

The reason for so many people having difficulty in losing fat is because they listen to questionable advice from people who either do not know or who specialize in one aspect but fail to view health, diet and exercise holistically. Some of the main factors negatively affecting our weight loss journey are lack of sleep, not staying hydrated, eating a lot of high glycemic index foods like carbohydrates (especially rice, pasta, and bread) and not exercising regularly.

### Why is it important to lose fat and maintain both physical and mental health?

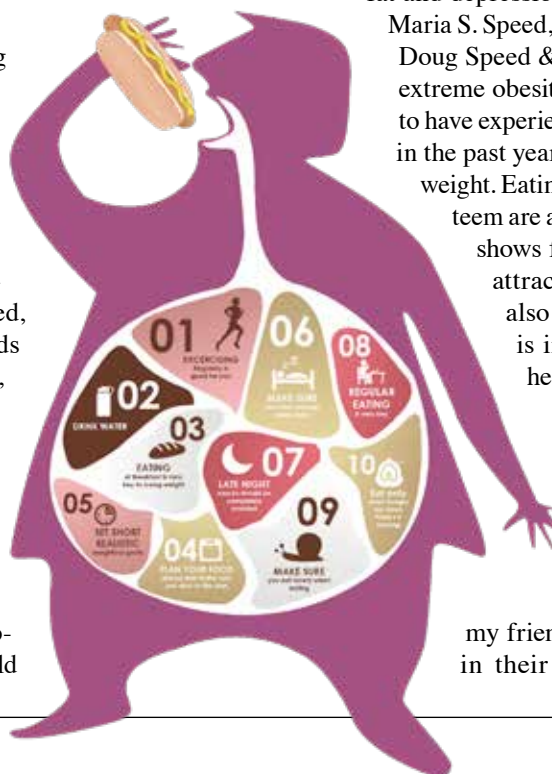
For a start, obesity and a high percentage of body fat introduce plenty of health risks, many of which have the potential of being fatal. Some examples would

It is important to lose fat to live a long, healthy and happy life.

be type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke, fatty liver diseases, sleep apnea, metabolic syndrome, some cancers, kidney disease, osteoarthritis, gallbladder diseases, pregnancy problems, and of course, psychological problems both in terms of the way one views themselves and as in terms of unstable hormonal production due to obesity directly affecting the mood and one's psychological behavior, also supported by the World Obesity Federation. Several comprehensive reviews have suggested that between 20% and 60% of people with obesity, especially more serious obesity, suffer from a psychiatric illness. These percentages are greater than those seen in the general population something which can also be found in the report concerning the psychological effects of obesity from David B. Sarwer PhD, and Heather M. Polonsky, BS. Previous research suggests a relationship between excess body weight and depression, an example being the article Investigating the association between body fat and depression via Mendelian randomization by Maria S. Speed, Oskar H. Jefsen, Anders D. Boglum, Doug Speed & Soren D. Ostergaard. People with extreme obesity are almost five times more likely to have experienced an episode of major depression in the past year as compared with those of average weight. Eating disorders, anxiety, and low self-esteem are also highly correlated to obesity. This shows fat-loss is not only important for an attractive body and physical health but also for its effects on mental health. It is important to lose fat to live a long, healthy and happy life.

### Why do different people store fat in different ways?

To answer the question, "why, if I eat something, e.g., a type of fat or carbohydrate, I might store a lot of fat, while my friend might not have any consequence in their monthly weight measurement?"







## Genes load the gun, diet and lifestyle pull the trigger

DR. DINICOLANTONIO, Associate Editor of Nutrition and British Medical Journal's (BMJ)

we need to refer to a specific, extremely important hormone, no other than insulin. Insulin is a hormone responsible for the regulation of blood sugar levels and metabolism, which directly affects the extent to which fat is stored. However, if you are one of the people who produce insulin at a much lower level than most people, and you don't gain weight easily, you should not use this as an excuse to not eat healthily and not exercise because even if a bad diet does not have an immediate consequence on your weight and percentage of fat, at least while you are young, food is not just food. Food is the fuel we use to stay energetic, active and healthy. Just as you would not use the worst, cheapest kind of fuel in a 1-million-dollar car, why use unhealthy foods for your body? View your body as a Lamborghini not a junkyard car.

The ideology of "food is just food" needs to stop immediately. The food we put in our body gets delivered to all the cells in the human body and affects the way we express the possibilities encoded in our DNA. The foods we consume, even have the potential of turning on and off certain genetic markers which hold a major role in our health, more of which can be found on the article concerning Intergenerational Inheritance of High Fat Diet-Induced Cardiac Lipotoxicity in *Drosophila* written by Maria Clara Guida, Ryan Tyge Birse, Alessandra Dall'Agnese, Paula Coutinho Toto, Soda Balla Diop, Antonello Mai, Pier Lorenzo Puri & Rolf Bodmer. In fact, one of my favorite quotes is "genes load the gun, diet and lifestyle pull the trigger" said by Doctor DiNicolantonio. High glycemic index foods like sugar and carbohydrates raise the insulin levels in the body, resulting in storing of fat. the pancreas secretes insulin, which directs the muscle and fat cells to take in glucose. Cells obtain energy from glucose or convert it to fat for long-term storage. Like a key fit into a lock, insulin binds to receptors on the cell's surface, causing GLUT4 molecules to come to the cell's surface. This is seen more analytically on the NIH's study on how insulin stimulates fat cells to take in glucose published in 2010. The reason approximately 1 out of 4 people don't gain weight so easily is because they produce insulin in a much lower level than the average person. When a food is consumed of a high glycemic index, blood glucose levels rise, so

### “ VIEW YOUR BODY AS A LAMBORGHINI NOT A JUNKYARD CAR ”

Insulin  
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fat is stored.

more insulin needs to be produced to regulate it, which means more fat will be stored. If the same amount of fat had been consumed without carbohydrates and sugar, it would have been used by the body releasing double the energy of carbohydrates and wouldn't have been stored. Therefore, sugar is the problem, not healthy lipids like those existing in avocado and fish.

*Why is most advice we hear in social media and crazy diet and workout plans worthless? What are some of the biggest myths?*

The reason for most diet and fitness advice existing in social media are most likely to be wrong is mainly because of lack of awareness and the very extensive level of corruption in the industry. With that said, corruption and lack of awareness have caused a lot of myths to be adopted by people. Some of the most popular myths include that balanced increase of fats increases carcinogenesis, that calorie deprivation and decrease of calories has a positive effect in what is the clearly hormonal problem of obesity, that dietary salt leads to salt and water retention, and many more.

Deprivation and decreasing the number of calories burnt and a healthy fats like olive oil doesn't solve the hormonal problem of obesity, rather they increase it and make it worse. The most common instructions of dietitians that we hear everywhere had never really been tested with clinical research until quite recently. Let's not forget that only well-designed, independent, clinical intervention studies (where strict monitoring and group comparison is performed) can reliably show causes, simple correlations prove nothing. In 1993 in the USA, it was decided to make a very expensive, very long, well-designed public research that aimed to prove the benefits of the low-fat diet and the conventional wrong diet that was and still is promoted. 48,835 postmenopausal women participated and were monitored very strictly as one group ate unlimitedly (38% fat per day where 40% of them were saturated) and the other ate "healthy" (20% fat, lots of fiber, 5 servings of fruits and vegetables and 6 servings of cereals a day). Compliance was very good. The researchers expected to find a significant reduction in diseases in participants that ate healthily. After almost a decade of the intervention, the conclusions were: No significant difference in the incidence of colorectal cancer and cardiovascular events. Greater risk for breast cancer in those who ate "healthy" (20% fat, lots of fiber, 5 servings of fruits and vegetables and 6 servings of cereals a day). No significant weight reduction in those who ate "healthy" (although in the end they ingested 361 calories per day less than in the beginning and even though they reduced fat by 29%). Those who ate unlimitedly had not gained weight, although they ingested more calories and fats than the others they ate "healthily".



*A diet high in antioxidants may reduce the risk of many diseases.*

### *What are the steps that must be followed in order to lose fat the healthy way?*

Losing fat “the healthy way” essentially means reversing hormonal hunger to pathological hunger. Hormonal hunger is essentially when the ‘hunger hormone’, ghrelin stimulates our appetite by signaling to our brain it’s time to eat. As well as making us want to eat more food, it also promotes fat storage. Ghrelin is produced in the stomach with smaller amounts secreted by the brain, small intestine and pancreas. Pathological hunger is a reference to “normal hunger”, which means eating when we actually need food, mainly for energy, and not because we are “used to it”. This way, you will not be hungry just because you need another dose of insulin but because you actually need the food to function. The main step is for a short period of time to reduce complex carbohydrates and sugar and after your hormones get balanced keep a low amount of these foods in your diet. Once you do that, the sugar levels in your blood will significantly drop in the first few weeks along with insulin levels which will drop a lot as well. After some time of eating less sugar and carbohydrates (mainly carbohydrates that are made with flour) you will see that you are able to eat fats and all other foods without any gain in weight. Exercise is strongly advised as well. Exercise is very important for the human body as it has positive effects in all aspects of health. Exercise will boost your mood by producing endorphins and other “hormones of happiness”, it will help in weight loss through boosting your metabolism and drastically help the immune system by lowering some of the body’s primary makers for inflammation, supporting the lymph system which balances fluids and produces white blood cells to fight off infections, helps to reverse negative biochemical trends and improves our resiliency at virtually every psychological

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level. For this purpose, both resistance training and weightlifting and cardio are needed. In addition, it should go without saying that a balanced diet, hydration, and many hours of sleep are needed as well. Eating fruits and vegetables, good meats and good fats is necessary for the body to properly function. Drinking enough water and sleeping 8 hours a day are also extremely important.

With all that said, this article aimed to inform and consult on the right way to lose fat. In my article, I went over the reasons it is so important to lose fat and what are the risks of obesity, why most advice we hear in social media and crazy diet and workout plans is not useful, the reason why different people store fat in different ways, why it is so hard for so many people to lose fat, what is the right way to lose fat, mentioned and debunked some of the main popular myths around fat loss and what is a basic plan to losing fat the healthy way (of course more specific advice needs to be taken by each person individually with their doctor). V

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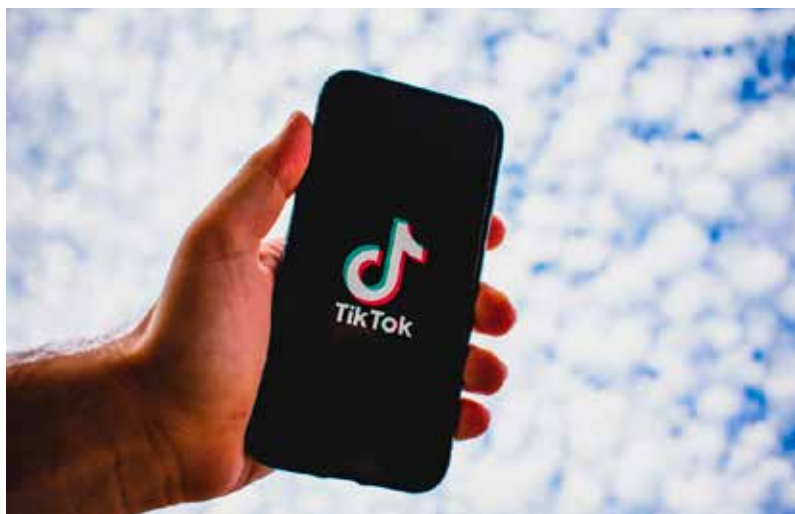


# The Creative Seduction of

By Alkis Toutziarides

When was the last time you turned on your phone to relax and scroll through a few videos on TikTok, then looked at the time and realized that you spent much more time on the app than you had wanted? This is what is commonly referred to as creative seduction: a way to keep users on a platform through its intelligent content algorithm. This strategy is proving to be effective as, recently, it reported having passed the 1 billion user mark and having surpassed both Instagram and WhatsApp on daily usage hours per user. Therefore, this is a topic worth exploring, especially today, as more and more social media platforms are adopting some form of short video content. Eugene Wei, a tech blogger, accurately describes the algorithm in one of her interviews, “When you gaze into TikTok, TikTok gazes into you.”

However, what makes it different than other platforms like Facebook? Firstly, the algorithm always knows how the user reacts and is able to adapt according to his preferences to keep him in the application. Moreover, you do not know what video the app is going to show you, and, being lost, you scroll endlessly without any true objective. Therefore, you become the perfect victim of seduction without even realizing it. In addition, the barriers to entry are low because the videos that users create are usually just from their phones, without expensive equipment. In conjunction with the “For You Page,” the main feed in which “random” videos are selected, the potential of a video becoming viral excites people and attracts active clients who, in contrast to Facebook, contribute to this self-sustaining social media platform. Another significant difference is the inclusion of special e-commerce features for sellers and advertisers. In detail, TikTok has collaborated with companies like Shopify and offers special features that no other app has. For instance, advertisements directly redirect users to the seller’s site and are integrated into the main feed, seamlessly seducing potential clients. Lastly, gifts and donations to creators further encourage this vital self-sustaining element of the




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*The hashtag “#tiktokaddict” has over 500 million views and governments have already started proposing regulatory measures to fight against the negative effects of such issues.*

*China is a typical example with the 40-minute limit on app activity time per day for children under 14 years old.*

platform, helping it grow exponentially over the last year.

On the other hand, there are many concerns regarding the extent to which this platform is unregulated. The hashtag “#tiktokaddict” has over 500 million views and governments have already started proposing regulatory measures to fight against the negative effects of such issues. China is a typical example with the 40-minute limit on app activity time per day for children under 14 years old. Knowing that the more a person uses the app, the more the software can adapt to his preferences, creates a dangerous expectation that the more one scrolls, the better the content is going to get. Thus, it is easy to immerse in a vicious cycle that is fueled by the stimulus of increasing satisfaction that may not always be true.

In conclusion, TikTok’s creative seduction is one of the main tools that the platform uses to increase its global presence and conquer the leading spot in an industry that is characterized by the motto “winner takes all.” Is it going to continue to skyrocket or are regulatory measures going to thwart its progress? Only time can tell... 

# FASHION VICTIMS

or

# Followers of Fashion?



By Kalliopi Antonatou

Fashion tends to concern a major percentage of the population in last decades. It is doubtful whether people who follow these trends are fashion conscious. Once we become obsessed with the trends and don't enhance our personal style, we immediately become victims of the fashion industry. A follower of fashion considers whether the latest creations are suitable for their body-type and appearance. If so, yes indeed they not only like the piece of clothing, but they can embrace it. On the contrary, a fashion victim feels the pressure to belong and buys clothing without considering any of the above factors.

Have you ever asked yourself if you follow the trends because you like them, or you simply want to fit in? We often make assumptions about a person based on their clothing. For instance, their economical background or their personality. For this particular reason, many people choose what the majority purchase as a safer option so that they are "included" in social groups. According to new research by Stanford legal scholar Richard Thompson Ford, dress codes appear to have been used for centuries to maintain distinct social positions and hierarchies. Looking back, fashion and style have historically fulfilled a second purpose: expressing new values of individual autonomy, rationalism, and equality. Having said that, once people lose track of their characters, they can become slaves of fashion. Our taste and style, therefore determines our personalities, implying that we have become fashion victims.

Two factors that lead to someone becoming enslaved to fashion, are the beauty standards promoted through

the media, and commercials made by influencers. A significant number gets influenced by the beauty standards that we see on the internet, which are not realistic to reach, since these pictures have undergone edits and modifications. Influencers - the role model created by society - advertise clothes to convince individuals to dress according to the accepted attire. For instance, there are dress code for lawyers, for teachers etc., thus these professionals resemble these dress codes. It is a human characteristic to crave acceptance, and by no means

should this behavior be judged, but it should be made clear that the media unconsciously affects the way that people view themselves, and consequently this has an impact on the way in which people dress.

Fashion Industries after all, aim in making profit. Consumerism is a goal that is manipulated by ad techniques which ultimately victimizes someone who is under the impression that they will reach the unrealistic standards by buying the product. How many times have you bought a piece

of clothing that you never even removed the tag? A possible reason of why we purchase many unnecessary items of clothing, which remain in our closets forgotten, is due to advertising that easily persuades the modern consumer. It is crucial to draw the line to avoid becoming an over-consumer. Dressing according to your character is a risk worth taking, because our dress code can be

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INDUSTRY

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*Two factors that lead to someone becoming enslaved to fashion, are the beauty standards promoted through the media, and commercials made by influencers.*

used as a means of expressing our mood at the time. Every time you see an advertisement, remember that the purpose is to manipulate you to economically support them by buying the product that apparently is going to make you belong. Should you buy the product if it suits you, but don't fall into the trap of purchasing a good to reach a standard.


Fashion affects our psychology since the way we dress reveals more than just our taste, it also affects our personality and how we feel. Colors such as black, can reveal that a person is classy and chic, but can also reflect a person's mood which may be melancholy. Light colors that are mostly worn during the summer often demonstrate bliss and happiness from within. Moreover, we set trends to promote a current ideology, for example it is fashionable to wear active-sets during the day. Individuals try to maintain a healthy lifestyle and avoid the fast food development. Be as it may, by following the trend a person states that they are active and care about wellbeing. Another example that proved the importance of fashion during a crisis was the business suit which marked a shift from the status-based luxury of earlier aristocratic administrations during Europe's Age of Enlightenment. Wearing the same clothes as everyone, apart from social class, was a manner of demonstrating new values of the day, such as sensibility, logic, and gender equality. Moreover, it is still trendy for women to dress in suits to represent the female dynamic in the work industry and give prestige to women. Nowadays, women are equally important in the work field, and by following the trend of wearing suits, they demonstrate their independence and power.

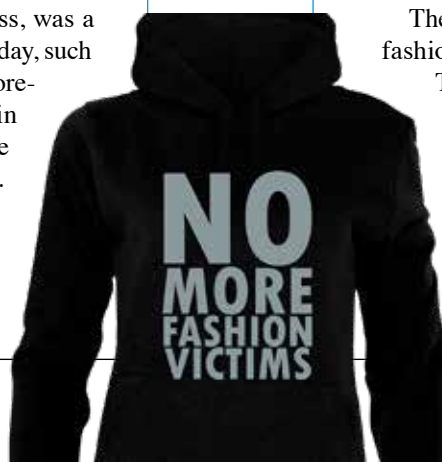
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PROMOTE YOURSELF  
NOT THE INDUSTRY,  
DRESS CONSCIOUSLY!  
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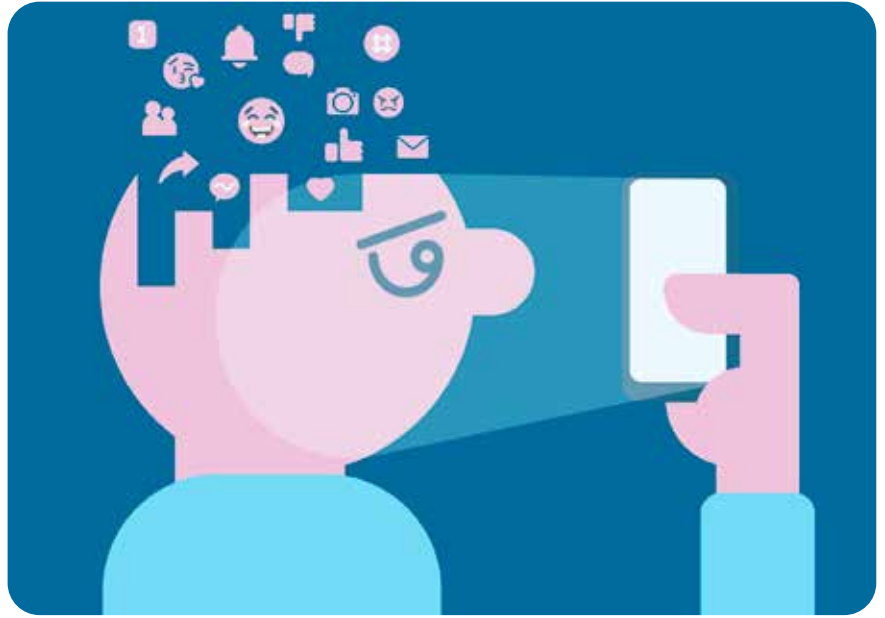
*Julia Kandalepa*

The role of fashion is significant in our life, while fashion is a tool of expression and a form of art. Trends have an impact in society and direct a generation towards development. By dressing fashionably, the aim is to promote ourselves. It is crucial when following the trends to not get influenced by media but rather to choose to embrace our personality.

Promote yourself not the industry, dress consciously! 



# The effects of the toxic world of SOCIAL MEDIA



By Ariadne Mavrantoni

Whether we like it or not, we live in a world where social media are part of our everyday life. In 2022 almost everyone has an account on Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok, Twitter or Facebook, especially during these difficult times we are living. According to the

Washington post, the average teenager spends nine hours per day on a social media account, without even realizing it. Therefore, social media play a pivotal role in our everyday life. Even though such platforms have numerous advantages such as being able to communicate with friends and family, they also have enormous disadvantages. Being a teenager is hard enough as it is, but with social media it becomes even harder. Social media can create unrealistic expectations, mental health problems and a community where everyone is allowed to write a hate comment without any consequences.



When scrolling on our “feed” we see stories and posts of every person we are following living their best life and having fun, we see pictures of people somehow looking always perfect. That is when we start questioning ourselves, “why don’t I have a body like that?” “Why isn’t my life perfect?” “What do I have to do to

be like them?” Without even realizing it, we have allowed social media to have a negative impact on our sense of self-worth, our confidence, and our well-being. The truth, though, is that everything we see on social media regarding appearances and relationships is mostly fake. Most of the pictures that we admire are photo-shopped and the right filter and snappy status update can present an image of a life much better than the one that has been authentically experienced.

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Social media can be as harmful for our mental health as smoking and drinking is for our body. One of the disadvantages of social media platforms is that they allow cyber bullying, meaning the users are able to establish or propagate destructive rumors and use harsh language, which may leave people emotionally broken. According to security.org twenty-one percent of





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THE NEXT TIME YOU CATCH YOURSELF NOTICING EVERY IMPERFECTION IN YOUR LIFE BECAUSE OF SOCIAL MEDIA OR READING A NEGATIVE COMMENT ABOUT YOU, REMIND YOURSELF THAT LIFE IS NOT PERFECT, THAT'S WHAT MAKES IT AMAZING.

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the teenagers using social media have been bullied during 2020. Behind a screen everything is easier, everyone can write a hate comment without thinking about the negative impact it will have on the receiver. Even if there are a thousand positive comments, one negative comment can rip us apart and break our self-esteem.

The next time you catch yourself noticing every imperfection in your life because of social media or reading a negative comment about you, remind yourself that life is not perfect, that's what makes it amazing. If everything was perfect all the time, we wouldn't be able to enjoy it and appreciate it. Pain is inevitable but getting through it is empowering.

V

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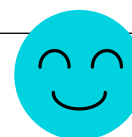
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“Numb Vision” -Julia Kandalepa 2020



# A global victim of the pandemic



By Amalia-Christina Toutziaridi

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed all we once knew. It has spread turmoil across the globe, led to the exclusion of entire societies, shut borders, and led to the closure of entire industries and most importantly schools, all in just a few months. Locked up in our homes, our mental health has incessantly been tested, while its care is no longer considered a luxury; dealing with mental health issues is no exception.

Stress, fear, panic, sadness, anger: these are just a few of the emotions that one may feel during these challenging times. We must understand, however, that it is normal to feel this way. Even the most resilient of us have seen our mental reserves depleted, our strategies no longer effective, and our strengths abandoning us. Difficulties that would once be manageable have turned into challenges seemingly impossible to handle.

Anxiety disorders are on the rise as people with high anxieties cannot resort to strategies to combat their negative emotions because of the restrictive health measures. Notably, the prevalence of anxiety increased by 25% globally<sup>1</sup>, whilst there was a 15% increase of people making use of substances to combat stress in America<sup>2</sup> when compared

Even the most resilient of us have seen our mental reserves depleted, our strategies no longer effective, and our strengths abandoning us.

to 2019. Besides, 82,6% more Japanese women than in 2019 ended their lives due to the anxiety caused by factors related to the pandemic<sup>3</sup>. But what has caused such a surge in anxiety disorders and suicide rates? Access to a hospital emergency room has become more difficult because of fears of virus transmission, whilst contact with friends and loved ones who once provided security is restricted or even prohibited. Concurrently, the ability to escape from the area where the person feels trapped is often impossible.

Without all these helpful strategies, one may find oneself trapped in a vicious circle of stress that can eventually lead to panic attacks—meaning rushes of intense mental and physical symptoms, such as a racing heartbeat, sweating, nausea, chest pain, and a ringing in one's ears<sup>4</sup>. In addition, limitations of social contacts and activities, remote work, as well as the annihilation of movements, have reduced our options for entertainment with significant consequences on our mood. What is more, in a daily life bombarded with news about the seriousness of the condition and the potential long-term consequences on our everyday life, we are left with pessimism and despair. The latter, as mentioned in a recent Global Burden of Disease study, particularly seems to affect women and young people, given they have a significantly higher risk of suicidal and self-harming behaviors.

Examining the above with numbers, we find that there was an increase in difficulty in sleep by 36%, in food by 32%, while 12%<sup>5</sup> more people than before resorted to sub-

1 "Covid-19 Pandemic Triggers 25% Increase in Prevalence of Anxiety and Depression Worldwide." *World Health Organization*, World Health Organization, <https://www.who.int/news/item/02-03-2022-covid-19-pandemic-triggers-25-increase-in-prevalence-of-anxiety-and-depression-worldwide>. Accessed 15 Mar. 2022.

2 Elfein, John. "COVID-19 and Mental Health." *Statista*, Statista, 11 Feb. 2021, [www.statista.com/topics/7106/covid-19-and-mental-health/](https://www.statista.com/topics/7106/covid-19-and-mental-health/). Accessed 15 Mar. 2021.

3 Su, Zhaohui, et al. "Mental health consequences of COVID-19 media coverage: the need for effective crisis communication practices." *Globalization and Health*, vol. 17, no. 1, 2021, p. NA. *Gale In Context: Global Issues*, [link.gale.com/apps/doc/A650588219/GIC?u=acoll&sid=GIC&xid=1087286a](https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/A650588219/GIC?u=acoll&sid=GIC&xid=1087286a). Accessed 15 Mar. 2021.

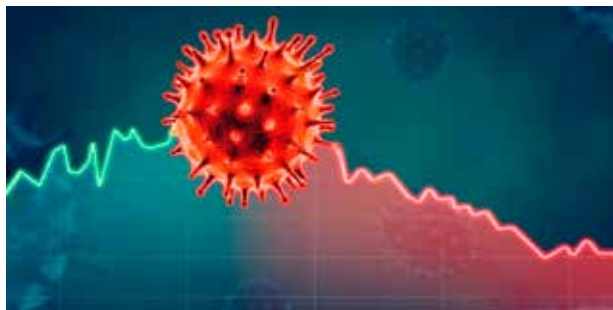
4 "Panic Disorder." NHS, NHS, [www.nhs.uk/mental-health/conditions/panic-disorder/](https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/conditions/panic-disorder/). Accessed 10 Mar. 2022.

5 "Society is under psychological strain." *Post [South Africa]*, 1 July 2020, p. 12. *Gale In Context: Global Issues*, [link.gale.com/apps/doc/A628137208/GIC?u=acoll&sid=GIC&x-](https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/A628137208/GIC?u=acoll&sid=GIC&x-)



stance use. In addition, the incidence of chronic diseases has increased by 12% compared to previous years. All these statistics are alarming and show that it is imperative to take action now more than ever. Although we have not been in lockdown the past year, the impact of the pandemic continues and will continue to affect us for years to come. But how can we eliminate or, at least, ease the mental toll caused by the health crisis, that is covid-19?

Firstly, it is important to go out and appreciate nature to get a daily dose of exercise, relaxation, and vitamin D. Additionally, we can call a relative or friend with whom we have not spoken in a long time; maybe this pandemic is the right time to get close again to people we have lost contact with. Let us also explore and take advantage of the range of opportunities for meaningful social networking, self-care, remote education, telemedicine, and more that exist on the internet. If there is one good thing that came with COVID-19, it is the growing resources available on the internet. These tools will certainly not offer well-being, sleep, or an end to poor mental health on their own, but they are tools we can learn to use intelligently in combination with other methods. Finally, it is vital to take breaks

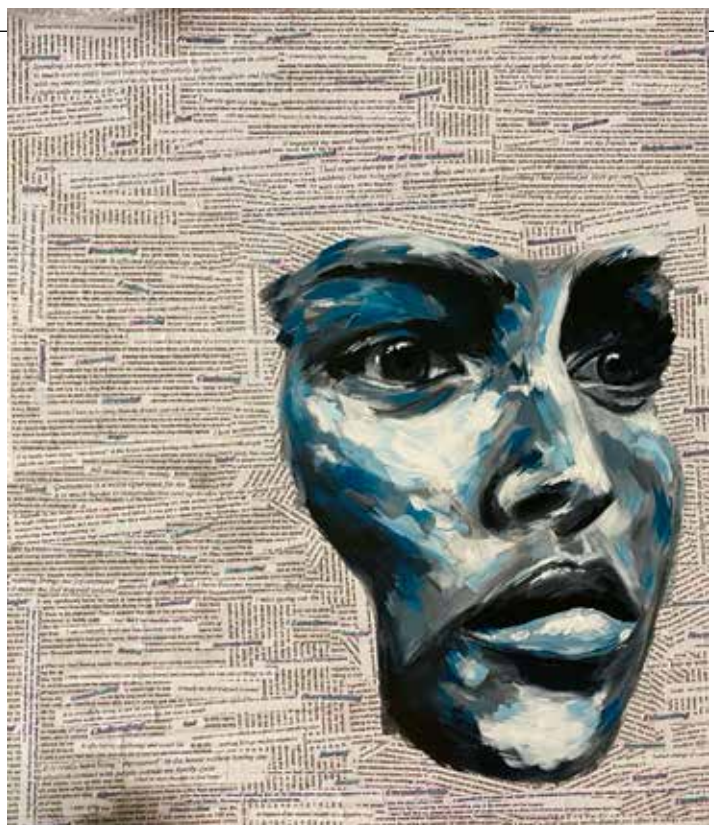


from watching, reading, and listening to the news bulletins. Instead, we should seek information from reliable sources at specific times of the day, not continuously. Repeated viewing of potentially unpleasant information can upset and disturb us.

455 million cases, 6.1 million deaths<sup>6</sup> later, 800 days since December 31st, 2019—marking the first reported case of COVID-19—and our routine is far from what it used to be. Despite mask mandates gradually getting lifted, and industries beginning to reopen, our mental health continues to be a global victim of the pandemic; our reality has changed, and it is here to stay. We must acknowledge that it is normal to feel stressed, scared, or overwhelmed at times and get the care we need not only for pre-existing but also for newly developed mental health conditions. The unprecedented spiral that is the pandemic has shed light on the importance of our mental health—which was considered secondary up until 2 years ago. The abovesaid should act as a wake-up call to all governments to step up

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6 COVID-19 Data Repository by the Center for Systems Science and Engineering (CSSE) at Johns Hopkins University [github.com/CSSEGISandData/COVID-19](https://github.com/CSSEGISandData/COVID-19).



*Insurmountably Lonely- Julia Kandalepa (2021)*

Although we have not been in lockdown the past year, the impact of the pandemic continues and will continue to affect us for years to come.

mental health support services, but also to us to take care of our loved ones, and most importantly ourselves! In the words of Michelle Obama, “It’s time to tell everyone who’s dealing with a mental health issue that they’re not alone, and that getting support and treatment isn’t a sign of weakness, it’s a sign of strength.”

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# The Beginning of Change

By Modesti Markou

**M**e too. Two simple words with a profound meaning. Women among us have finally found the voice to speak up about their traumatic experiences with just two words. However, it is difficult to find the courage to break their “guilty” silence as they unfairly carry the burden of their past even though they are the victims. On the contrary, the perpetrators have a clear conscience and gain strength while the victim weakens. The objective of this phrase is to support women in regaining their strength by assuring them that they are not alone.

The #MeToo movement is a social movement that emerged due to the persistent harassment, both sexual and mental, towards women. The phrase #MeToo was formulated by Tarana Brooke in 2006 in an effort to empower women and help them voice their past experiences. The popularity of the movement grew in 2017 when Alyssa Milano on Twitter uploaded that “If all the women who have been sexually harassed or assaulted wrote ‘Me too’ as a status, we might give people a sense of the magnitude of the problem.” As a result, women who had endured any form of violence

and harassment started sharing their experiences on social media in order to raise awareness and motivate other women to disclose information about what they underwent.

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A significant percentage of the women that suffered from these experiences, unveiled on social media that, shortly after the event, they started blaming themselves. The EU Fundamental Rights Agency conducted a questionnaire to find out the feelings of 17,335 victims of harassment. The results illustrated that 45% of the victims were angry while 36% were embarrassed. The difference of only 9% of the women who answer “angry” and “embarrassed” shows the victim-blaming culture

that dominates society. The victims, in an effort to comprehend why and how it happened, wonder whether they provoked the perpetrator, whether they did something wrong, or whether they gave the wrong impression. However, these thoughts of the victim stem



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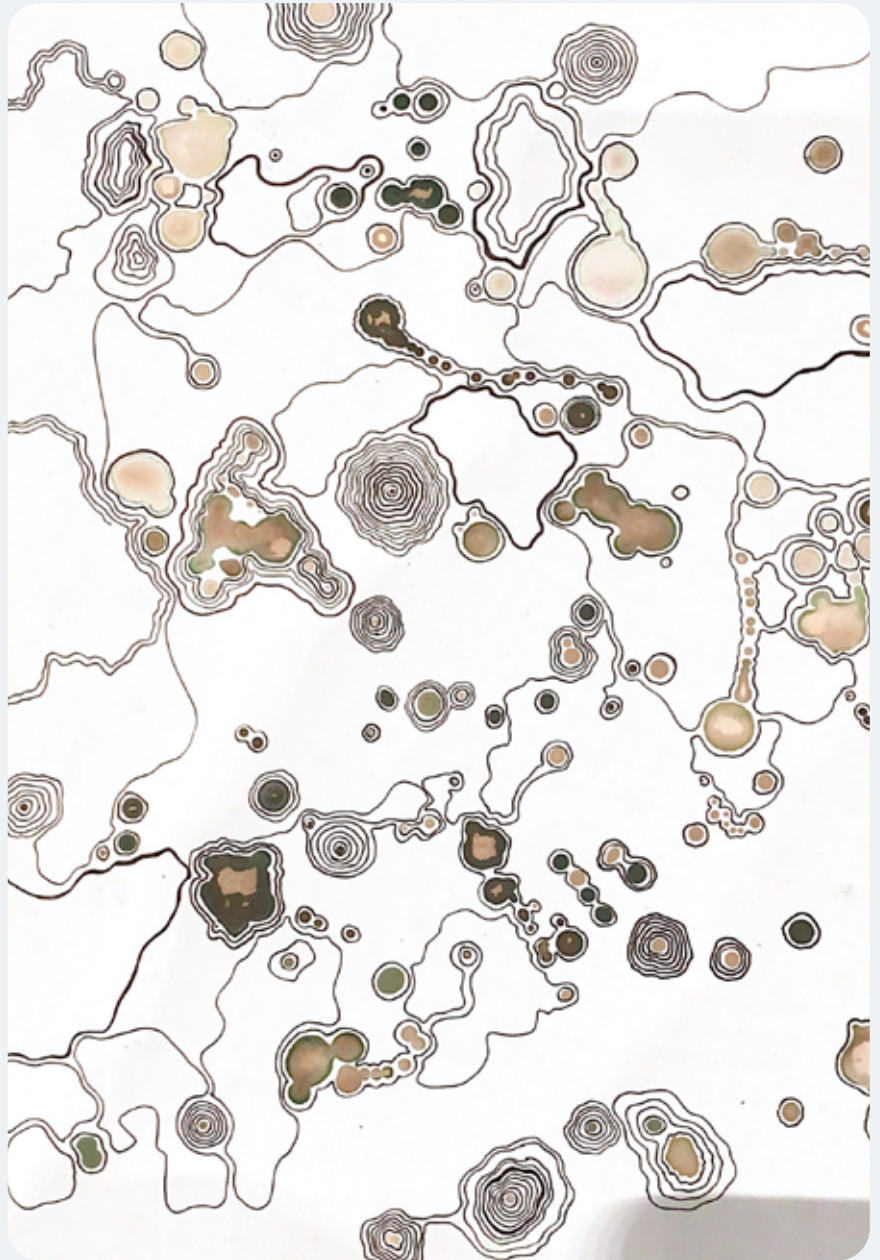
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from society's reaction to harassment and assault which promotes blaming the victim and justifying the actions of the perpetrator. This ideology is a product of sexism, misogyny, and patriarchy that try to undermine women's role in society and strengthen the social status of men. This phenomenon is not constrained within a certain city, country, or continent, but it is a global issue that affects a great percentage of women.

Globally, the frequency of sexual and sexual harassment, according to UN WOMEN, accounts for 30% of women aged 15 and older. The data demonstrate that women around the world are discriminated against and are often unable to have access to justice even though they are entitled to these fundamental human rights. The burden of gender norms and roles leads to a lack of women's and girls' opportunities while being disregarded by society as sometimes they are considered to be storytellers. Yet, the truth is only one and, once the perpetrator is proven guilty, it cannot be disputed or forgotten. As Emile Zola said, "Truth and justice are above and beyond everything for the greatness of nations depends on them".

The movement #MeToo tries to confute the effects of stereotyping. Like Malcolm X, a human rights activist stated "I'm for justice, no matter who it is for or against. I'm a human being first and foremost, and as such I'm for whoever and whatever benefits humanity



Julia Kandalepa

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as a whole". This approach should be adopted in every society as it is crucial for justice to be blind to stereotypes and deal with each individual without prejudice.

"MeToo" are two words that are spontaneously used in everyday conversations. However, in this case, they have a deeper meaning. A meaning that carries intense emotions. A great amount of strength is required so that the victim can articulate these two words as they are afraid of judgment and disbelief. However, society must support the victims and stand against the perpetrators in order to prevent these actions from occurring. By doing so, society at large can prosper and progress and we, the teenagers of today and adults of tomorrow, can have an indisputably bright future. We must ensure that in the future the words #MeToo are only used spontaneously in everyday conversations. ▼



# Has the #METOO Movement really gone too far?

By Marialena Petropoulou

Every 68 seconds an American experiences sexual assault and 90% of these victims are women, according to the RAINN (Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network) organization. In the past 5 years, the #METOO movement has gained enormous recognition and has played a significant role in tackling the issue of sexual harassment. The term was created in 2006 by an American advocate for women's rights named Tarana Burke who started using the phrase in the social media platform Myspace. Her initial goal was to enhance the sense of solidarity amongst women and acknowledge their stories. Burke was one of the first people willing to raise awareness on the taboo topic of sexual assault and although it instantly received backlash it compelled society to discuss it. The phrase regained popularity in 2017 following the accusations against the movie producer Harvey Weinstein. The actress Alyssa Milano recognized the severity of the allegations and urged other survivors to use the hashtag #METOO and support each other. In less than one month, over 12 million people had used the hashtag.<sup>1</sup>

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission has defined sexual assault as “unwelcome sexual contact of any kind, requests for sexual favours, and other verbal or physical conduct of sexual nature without the consent of the victim”. Through #METOO society has

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taken huge steps towards addressing issues of sexual harassment but there is still a long way to go. Although there are people who argue that the movement has become redundant, the shocking statistics would disagree. According to the World Population Review, an estimated 35% of women worldwide have been victims of sexual assault at least once in their life. In fact, less than 40% of these victims have sought support from their environment and less than 10% have reported the crime to the police.<sup>2</sup> On top of that, studies have shown that 10% of victims are male and contrary to common misconception the #METOO movement recognizes these cases as well. Generally, women have been the most verbal supporters, but it is imperative to understand that neither gender nor sexual orientation prevent harassment.

The most significant issue that #METOO wishes to tackle lies in these figures. Accurate statistics are almost impossible to calculate due to the reluctance of victims to address the issue. Society has often disregarded and looked down upon the topic of sexual assault. Prior to the #METOO movement, it was impossible to raise the issue without experiencing humiliation and contempt. In most cases, victims do not callout the perpetrators or seek legal support. As it is an extremely sensitive experience, victims often lack the strength to speak up. Almost 94% of women who have been subjected to such events suffer from post-traumatic stress, more than survivors of any other crime.<sup>3</sup> They are afraid of how their family

1 “Me Too: Sexual Harassment Awareness and Prevention.” Maryville Online, 16 Sept. 2020, online.maryville.edu/blog/understanding-the-me-too-movement-a-sexual-harassment-awareness-guide.

2 “Rape Statistics by Country 2022.” World Population Review, worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/rape-statistics-by-country. Accessed 24 Feb. 2022.

3 “Scope of the Problem: Statistics | RAINN.” RAINN, www.rainn.org/statistics/scope-problem. Accessed 24

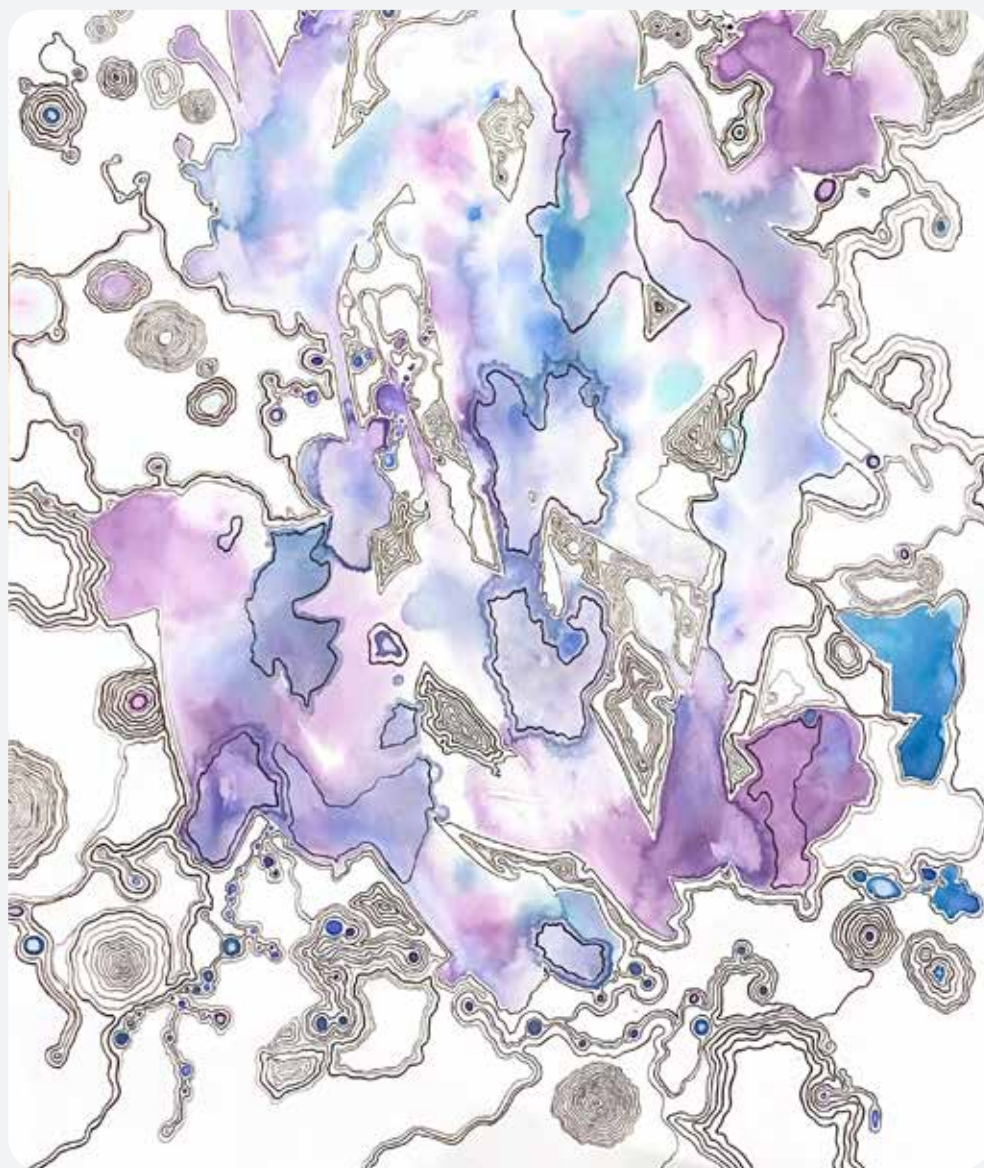


and friends might react and they want to avoid embarrassment. Furthermore, society often shifts the blame on victims and holds them at fault for the crime. This toxic culture of victim shaming prevents them from reporting the attack and obliges them to remain silent. Finally, the most common reason for their hesitancy is the reaction of the perpetrator. Most women want to avoid reprisal from assaulters who hold powerful positions in their close environment, the workplace, or society. When dealing with issues of sexual assault, there is a tendency to ridicule and doubt the victim instead of investigating the crime. Victims are terrified of losing their jobs, their reputation, and their societal position. This is where #METOO comes in. The movement eliminates these stereotypical responses and creates a safe environment for victims to express their stories without facing social ostracism.

#METOO has been incredibly effective in achieving this reality. Its widespread use has broken the stigma of sexual assault and changed the previously established norms. Research published by Yale PhD Candidates Levy and Mattson, proved that “this is a social movement that changed the behaviour of large shares of the population.”<sup>4</sup> The development of a strong community allowed victims to come forward and eventually the reporting of sex misconduct rose by 14%.

Nevertheless, #METOO has become one of the most controversial movements of the past decade. It has created severe divisions, mostly between male and female populations, and has caused social turmoil. There are still people who argue that it ‘has gone too far’ and that it is fundamentally flawed. The most common argument used against it are the cases of false allegations. Some parts of the population criticize the

Some parts of the population criticize the #METOO movement and argue that it allows people to falsely report others for sexual assault and ruin their careers on pointless accusations.



Julia Kandalepa

#METOO movement and argue that it allows people to falsely report others for sexual assault and ruin their careers on pointless accusations. Although this phenomenon exists, studies by the Home Office prove how there is no concrete evidence supporting public anxiety on the frequency of such cases. Out of the reported incidents of sex crimes, only 2% to 6% are found or suspected of being false.<sup>5</sup> Meaningless unrest over wrongful allegations has overshadowed the true impact of the #METOO movement and people remain under the impression that innocent people endure consequences more frequently than actual victims. Moreover, a lot of people criticize victims and raise the classic question of “Why speak now?” They consider their hitherto silence of victims suspicious and use

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4 North, Anna. “Me Too Movement Increased Reporting of Sex Crimes, Study Finds.” Vox, 11 Dec. 2019, [www.vox.com/2019/12/11/21003592/me-too-movement-sexual-assault-crimes-reporting](http://www.vox.com/2019/12/11/21003592/me-too-movement-sexual-assault-crimes-reporting).

5 “Here’s the Truth about False Accusations of Sexual Violence.” Research at The Open University, 30 Nov. 2017, [www.open.ac.uk/research/news/false-accusations-sexual-violence](http://www.open.ac.uk/research/news/false-accusations-sexual-violence).



this question to support the argument that their story is fake. As mentioned earlier, before the #METOO movement, some women viewed sexual harassment as an inevitable part of their routine and others feared the impact on their profession, their relationships, and their reputation. Hence, the argument that #METOO and the victims exploit the sensitive topic of sexual assault to falsely target people does not stand.

Strong opposition has not obstructed the vision of the movement and through continuous struggle its supporters have established significant changes. #METOO highlighted the urgency of the matter and the need for effective anti-harassment policies. Consequently, the legal sector evaluated existing laws concerning the trial and imprisonment of perpetrators. For example, the International Labour Organization drafted and adopted new standards in one of its conventions, while the founding of Time's Up Legal Defense Fund (TULDF) increased legal representation for 4000 survivors of workplace harassment.<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, the movement successfully prohibited the use of nondisclosure agreements (NDA) that silenced victims. In the case of Weinstein, his assistant signed a settlement which banned her from revealing the producer's behaviour for almost 20 years. Finally, in September 2018 California, New York, and New Jersey forbid such agreements for incidents of sexual misconduct. Formal mechanisms also recognized the importance of monetary support and compensation. Following a case of sexual assault, the Michigan State University created a settlement fund of \$500 million, the biggest amount ever provided for such an incident.<sup>7</sup> Most importantly, the #METOO movement affected our perception of sexual harassment. This progressive era exposed the reality of this phenomenon and encouraged more people to take action, while it also re-established the idea of gender and power. Women, who are viewed as a minority in positions

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- 6 North, Anna. "#MeToo Movement: These 7 Facts Show Its Impact." Vox, 4 Oct. 2019, [www.vox.com/identities/2019/10/4/20852639/me-too-movement-sexual-harassment-law-2019](http://www.vox.com/identities/2019/10/4/20852639/me-too-movement-sexual-harassment-law-2019).
- 7 North, Anna. "#MeToo Movement: These 7 Facts Show Its Impact." Vox, 4 Oct. 2019, [www.vox.com/identities/2019/10/4/20852639/me-too-movement-sexual-harassment-law-2019](http://www.vox.com/identities/2019/10/4/20852639/me-too-movement-sexual-harassment-law-2019).

of authority, were given the chance to hold powerful figures accountable and demand repercussions.

#METOO has successfully eliminated the prevalence of toxic stereotypes and behaviours targeted at victims of sexual assault. Nonetheless, the fight is not over. Acknowledgement and reporting of sex crimes has soared but justice is not necessarily being served. To this day, prosecuting and incarcerating perpetrators remains difficult. In the United States, approximately 9% of rapists are taken to court and merely 3% end up in jail. This allows 97% of assaulters to avoid punishment and walk free.<sup>8</sup> Unfortunately, legal capacities are insufficient, and the criminal justice system fails to charge perpetrators and impose any meaningful consequences. As a result, it is essential that we continue to push for change and demand justice. Governments and the international community must take proactive measures to prevent the frequency of this phenomenon, to ensure that victims receive appropriate treatment, and guarantee that perpetrators are held accountable. v

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# The Royal Pardon

By Eleni Athitaki

**S**upremacy/superiority: the misconstrued belief that allows people to behave in -socially-excluding ways whilst having internalized the notion that they are pardoned from the consequences. Whilst the aforementioned statement may not be the dictionary definition, it does capture the essence of the word when bestowed upon specific social groups. The question as to who is responsible for rendering them such, arises. What aspect of colloquial life allows for the cultivation and the enactment of atrocious or criminal acts which can usually be accredited to a false sense of superiority? Why shall young girls walk with keys between their fingers, their phones ready in the palm of their hand, and the instinctive urge to run, to sprint at the faintest sound of footsteps behind them? Why should they be afraid and reminded that the world is a tough, unsafe place and that the only way to remain unscathed is by not wearing provocative clothing – deemed promiscuous by their abusers.

Do not wear so much make up. Have your guy friends walk you home. Do not hail a cab. Text me when you get home. These are some of the rules that society has appointed so as to -theoretically- keep girls safe. You were asking for it, people exclaim when the guidelines you followed so religiously failed. Do not blame the victim they say, and yet continuously do not assign blame to the people responsible. People who believe that they do have the right to pester and follow and whistle at and violating women, young girls, and boys. The royal pardon which they do hold knowing that it will exonerate them on the grounds that unless enough physical evidence is found lawful measures cannot be taken.

As far as preventative action is concerned, something as simple as a restraining order which only requires a judicial decision -no court, no jury - cannot be materialized unless the worst has already happened. If their handprint isn't branded on your skin or your body hasn't been violated, they are unable to help you. Once you carry the badge of a survivor and the wounds of a fighter, then and only then will they apologize and then

## Why

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Julia Kandalepa

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they will pity. Too late. All investigations opened – after the fact, of course. Too late.

The washing away of other people's sins is a solitary process; it doesn't have to be. This line of thinking - the dominant (at least for now) - led to the rise of a movement that gave voice to victims everywhere.

According to the Guardian 97% of women are affected by the unmentionable cruelties and the whispers and the excessive and offensive catcalling. "Not all men," is their response, which may be true, but another objective truth is that it's almost all women.

Accountability, a wonderful word for people who have unwillingly been subjected to abuse worldwide. The "Me Too" movement brought about social change. Arraignments and indictments increased. The echoes of the victims that - until recent years - had been shoved into catacombs so as to no be heard were finally sprung free. The shaming of victims became taboo which led to the coming forward of even more people who unfortunately had suffered the same fate and were too afraid to speak up out of dread of being accused of lying. The people who were abandoned crying out for help in the dark finally saw the light.

The unconvincing fact that in order for the wounded, scathed, voices of women to be noticed, protest and signs had to be organized and created so as to pressure the police and politicians to look into matters and to ascribe them with value, is unfortunate. Social change, however, (at least according to history) is only brought upon by the union of people and the uniform demand for the alteration of societal standards for an extended period of time. So, even if the protests have ceased, women urge you, I encourage you to keep fighting for this cause. 

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# The White Ribbon

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## *The symbol of men's opposition against gender violence and femicide*

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By Orestes Mikelakis

*2021 ended with the sad record of 18 femicides. The intense publicity and the analysis of this social issue by the mass media shed light on several issues such as the legalization of the term “femicide,” the statistics of gender violence in Greece, and the necessity of a holistic approach to the problem.*

The adoption of the term highlights homicides that were previously disguised as ‘honor crimes’ or ‘crimes of passion.’ But in fact, they are crimes based on deeply entrenched social beliefs and gender stereotypes. Women are still in some cases in male dominated societies considered to be inferior, subservient to male authority, and can be ‘punished’ and ‘controlled’ through violence. Although the term is not legally established

▲  
White Ribbon campaign was created in Canada in 1991. Men wear white ribbons as a pledge that they will never commit, condone or remain silent about all forms of gender-based violence and discrimination.



in Greece, it is reflected in the Istanbul Convention, which defines gender-based violence. The phenomenon of femicides, according to the International Health

Organization, constitutes the most extreme form of gender and sexist violence.

Analyses as to the causes of this development come down to a basic component, patriarchy, an entrenched collective consciousness that runs through society from family, school, work, public life, media, and pop culture. Patriarchy, an abstract and for many an obsolete concept due to women's conquests in contemporary society, is reflected in attitudes, behaviors, prejudices about gender stereotypes, and particularly about women. These entrenched perceptions create a framework of tolerance, disgrace, and social devaluation of gender discrimination.

Education on gender equality and individual rights is the only way to change these attitudes and perceptions. School and family are the pillars on which a long-term action plan can be launched. From infancy, children must form a relationship of equality and respect between them. In this context, young boys will co-construct and ‘reinvent’ a new culture of ‘masculinity’. Still, in our time, stereotypes of men that portray the expression of emotions as a weakness and the use of violence as a means of imposing, solving problems, or managing difficult emotional situations prevail.

In this new “culture of masculinity,” violence against women must be redefined not as a women's issue but as a men's issue. It was towards this end that the White Ribbon campaign was created in Canada in 1991. Men wear white ribbons as a pledge that they will never commit, condone or remain silent about all forms of gender-based violence and discrimination. The campaign, which turns thirty years old this year, aims to inspire men to become part of positive change for society. This education, awareness-raising, and information campaign is aimed at schools, universities, social organizations, women's associations, women's unions, etc. Greece, with 34 prominent representatives supports the European White Ribbon Campaign. The increase in cases of gender-based violence in our coun-



try has prompted this movement to gain greater momentum. Men are part of the problem and we must become part of the solution.

The white ribbon is a symbol of men's opposition to men's violence against women. Every year, White Ribbon encourages men and boys to wear a white ribbons, starting November 25th, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women. White Ribbon Campaigns focus on educational work in schools, workplaces, and communities.

The adoption of the White Ribbon campaign by every school community will contribute to an active dialogue both within the school community and within the family and society. The various actions that could be implemented, in the context of school lessons, clubs, or associations, should focus on issues such as sexist language and jokes in schools, the workplace, the media, individual attitudes and behaviors that contribute to the problem. In turn, forming a healthy male role model free of violence in any form

If a patriarchally structured society is a key component of the problem of gender discrimination and violence, education is part of the solution. Through the White Ribbon campaign, responsible, active citizens will be formed who will be critical of anything that challenges a society of equality and mutual respect. For example, the entertainment and music industry, which is aimed at young people, promotes in certain types of musical expression, extreme standards and attitudes that reinforce racism and gender discrimination. Sexism, verbal denigration, victim-blaming




Julia Kandalepa

Pledging  
for a better  
Tomorrow



and responsible citizens starting from the school community. In the face of the major problem of gender-based violence, we young people can counter the promise 'that we will never commit, condone or remain silent about all forms of gender-based violence and discrimination. Let's make a white ribbon, wear it or give it to a classmate, a teacher, our mother. With a promise that not only will we not apply it, but we will support it against all forms of violence. It is a small beginning to cultivate a culture of empathy and support, a culture against violence towards women. The actions that will complement the white ribbon campaign each year will help to end the tolerance and cover-up of such phenomena.

2022 has been designated as the *European Year of Youth*. As Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education, Training and Youth, Marija Gabrielle, says: "The aim of the celebration... is to fundamentally change the way young people act, to stand up for what they believe in, by getting involved in new ways. This year wishes to honor and recognize the commitment of young people." Let our commitment be a pledge to participate in every way possible in the elimination of gender-based violence and discrimination. 



and name-calling towards women, and aggressive masculinity with the use of violence against women are themes in the lyrics. Such a culture not only does not contribute to changing attitudes but perpetuates patriarchal norms.

The school aims to foster the values of respect, equality, and a sense of duty to society. To form active

# World History

## A Lens to Understand Reality

By Dimitris Kotsovilis

History is the cornerstone and the basis of our society, a field of study that in many ways shapes the world we live in today. It resembles the patterns of a living organism: changing according to the narrator, evolving, and constantly characterized by its continuity. History is the connection of humanity with its ancestors and the past. It affects the day to day lives of billions of people around the world, including my own. History, and in particular world history, gives to an individual a new perspective of the world around us. It broadens their horizons and can help them create a more holistic image of the world we live in today. An individual studying world history can understand and appreciate its lessons and realize how profoundly it has shaped the reality of 2021, a year that has come with unprecedented changes both in our society and in our ways of life that has been disrupted by the recent outbreak of the novel Coronavirus.

To begin with, these past months have been characterized by a plethora of race-targeted attacks in the USA. We all watched news footage of the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement, with seas of

*We all watched news footage of the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement, with seas of protestors filling all major streets in the country and worldwide.*

protestors filling all major streets in the country and worldwide. These protests which were sparked by the horrific killing of one man once again brought to the spotlight the problem of racism. A scourge of the modern era that despite the many efforts to eradicate it in combination with a more accepting and liberal society, still affects the lives of the many millions of African Americans. These recent developments were not something new, and it is with the study of world history that we can truly comprehend the fight for racial equality and against segregation, that stems back to the days of colonization, slavery, and imperialism. Through the lens of world history, we can understand that this systematic segregation and discrimination derives from the 17th and 18th century, when European settlers who arrived in modern day America and more specifically in the State of Virginia, wanted to create a profitable colony. The lack of gold led to a shift in an agricultural-based economy focused on tobacco, for which a lot of cheap labor was needed. This led to the creation of the Atlantic slave trade which marked the beginning of the inhumane mistreatment of African





Americans and the root of the underlying racist perceptions that they were inferior to Caucasians. The slave trade can help us trace racism back through history and explain the discriminatory laws that came after it and continued to take effect after the USA's inception and the civil war, such as the Jim Crow laws. Despite the many movements including the Civil Rights Act of 1964, organized by Martin Luther King Jr. the ideas and mentalities that formed and were carried through history are still embedded in the institutions of even the 21st century United States and are still prevalent amongst certain groups.

This pivotal example of how history can shape our modern-day reality is not the only case in which world history helps us understand social phenomena and other events. History can also help us understand positive and healthy progressions in society as well. In the era of this global pandemic, vaccines have brought hope once again and many people speculate that the end of this crisis might be approaching. Millions of people worldwide are being currently vaccinated with vaccines produced by many different companies such as Pfizer®, Moderna® and Johnson and Johnson®.

An interesting point can be made when looking at how historical events from the early 20th century have led to technological advancements in the field of medicine, that contribute in this global effort to prevent the spread of dangerous and too often fatal diseases. In order to understand how this part of history affects our lives, we have to go back to the late 19th century, when King Leopold, the King of Belgium at the time, during the conference of Berlin for the scramble of Africa, annexed he himself the entirety of what is today the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). Although, the atrocities committed by the Belgians cannot - and should not - fade into history, the outbreak of an epidemic in the nearby British Colony of Uganda, led to the creation of the Prince Leopold Institute for Tropical Medicine, an institution examining tropical illnesses and diseases.



*In the era of this global pandemic, vaccines have brought hope once again and many people speculate that the end of this crisis might be approaching.*

This institute despite the dark past that surrounds it can be attributed to major technological advancements in the field of tropical disease and has helped humanity as a whole to understand the perplexing science of virology. This research facility has produced many of the world's greatest scientists. It is fascinating to see that the majority of this institute's graduates were later employed in Janssen pharmaceutical including the chairman of the company himself Paul Stoffels, a subsidiary of Johnson and Johnson®, which is now one of the main providers and creators of the COVID-19 vaccine, many of us are counting on for a return to normality. From these events, it is quite astonishing to see just how World History, affects our daily lives so many years later, and continues to pave the way for our future.

To summarize, history, is responsible for some of the major current events that have occurred in recent months. Events that took place only centuries ago, are still affecting our daily lives to this day. It is amazing to think about how the dark legacies of colonization, slavery and imperialism amongst other things are still responsible for the major events that take place in the 21st century but also how the history of science and innovation can help pave the way to a brighter tomorrow. World history is not a series of past events, it is the present and it is the future. The Black Lives Matter Protests might end up playing an instrumental role in the fight against systematic racism; although there is still a lot to be done. Furthermore, the COVID 19 vaccine, made possible through hundreds of years of scientific progress can help save lives.

In conclusion, world history can affect to a great extent our understanding of the world we live in today with two primary examples being how the history of racial practices still influence our society today and how medical history can lead to solutions in today's medical emergencies. Though it is imperative to comprehend that not everything is black and white, it is important to acknowledge all the developments that came from history and to recognize the significance and the impact that world history has and will continue to have on our everyday lives.

## THE STORY BEHIND

# Black History Month

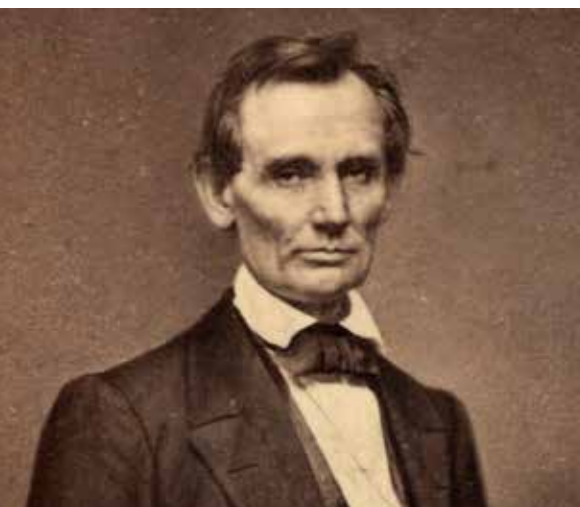
By Melina Salaka

President Abraham Lincoln approved on February 1<sup>st</sup>, 1865 the addition of the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the United States Constitution which ends slavery in all States



As an educational foundation built on Hellenic and American values and ideas, our school has greatly honored the traditions of the American society and has celebrated its culture through multiple actions and functions. The history of the United States has been part of the curriculum taught ever since the Foundation opened. For the past decade, our English department has made significant efforts to inform and educate students about the importance of the history of African Americans. A prime example of our school's efforts is following Black History Month. Black History Month, commonly referred to as

African American History month, which begins on February 1<sup>st</sup> and ends on March 1<sup>st</sup>, is an annual observation that originates from the United States and has been celebrated globally for numerous decades. Its importance has only become greater throughout the years. Its establishment mainly arose from two reasons: recognition and significance. Its main aim is to recollect the important events and figures in the African American diaspora and acknowledge their historical significance in the United States. Now let's explore how Negro History Week came to be what we know today as Black History Month.



The history behind this celebration begins half a century after the formal abolition of slavery through the addition of the 13th Amendment to the United States Constitution, which President Abraham Lincoln approved on February 1<sup>st</sup>, 1865. According to the amendment;

*“Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction.”<sup>1</sup>*

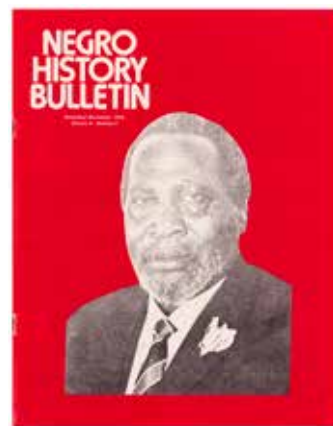
<sup>1</sup> “13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution: Primary Documents in American History: Introduction.” *Library of Congress*, 1 Aug. 2018, <https://guides.loc.gov/13th-amendment>.



Carter G. Woodson, a historian, in September of 1915, founded the Association for the Study of African American Life and History, referred to as the ASALH. The association mainly aimed at informing the global community about the Black life, history, and culture and promoting and researching the successes of the African Americans and people of African descent. The founder of the ASALH initiated the first Negro History Week, on 7<sup>th</sup> of February 1926, which eventually led to Black History Month pursuing his desire to broaden and enrich the study and knowledge of African American history, all year long.

It has been said that February was selected to enclose the birthdays of two prominent figures that greatly affected African American history. Namely, Abraham Lincoln, whose birthday was on February 12th, and Frederick Douglass, whose birthday was on February 14th. Another reason that influenced this choice was tradition. After Lincoln's assassination in 1865, his birthday had become a celebration of the president and his impact. Similarly, Douglass' birthday had become a celebration of the figure after the 1890s. Woodson was well aware of this tradition and the history behind those days; hence he carefully chose to build the Negro History Week around those dates. The historian aimed at reforming the study of two figures into the study of a race, as he believed "that history was made by the people, not simply or primarily by great men."<sup>1</sup> He is eager to make this week a reminder to the public to extend the knowledge on Black history and not just the actions of the two great men nor the formation of a new tradition. Furthermore, he desired it to demonstrate what students learned all year.

The Association, ASALH, decided a theme for the yearly celebration and provided material to the public



and institutions. In 1937, the Negro History Bulletin was established, mainly focusing on the annual theme that had been decided. The Negro History Week rapidly grew in the following decades, and it inspired many nationwide to form

1 "Feb. 7, 1926: Carter G. Woodson Launched Negro History Week." Zinn Education Project, 10 Feb. 2022, <https://www.zinnedproject.org/news/tidh/carter-woodson-black-history-month/#:~:text=More%20importantly%2C%20Woodson%20believed%20that,producers%20of%20a%20great%20man.>

*Black History Month was initially recognized by President Gerald Ford in 1976. He called the public to "seize the opportunity to honor the too-often neglected accomplishments of Black Americans in every area of endeavor throughout our history."*

history clubs, performances, and lectures and organize local functions or celebrations. During the 1960s, as the Civil Rights Movement was taking place within the country, the awareness of the black identity and the desire to inform the masses about Black history grew. As a result, the Negro History Week evolved into Black History Month, first adopted by educational institutions.

Black History Month was initially recognized by President Gerald Ford in 1976. He called the public to "seize the opportunity to honor the too-often neglected accomplishments of Black Americans in every area of endeavor throughout our history."<sup>2</sup> He designated February as Black History Month, similarly with Woodson, and inscribed a specific theme.

In today's society, Black History Month has become a way to honor the contribution of African Americans to U. S. society and history. For this year's Black History Month, the theme is "Black Health and Wellness,"



exploring "the legacy of not only Black scholars and medical practitioners in Western medicine, but also other ways of knowing (e.g., birth workers, doulas, midwives, naturopaths, herbalists, etc.) throughout the African Diaspora. The 2022 theme considers activities, rituals, and initiatives that Black communities have done to be well."<sup>3</sup>

2 Noblerl. "Facts and Information." Vanderbilt University, Vanderbilt University, 27 Jan. 1970, <https://www.vanderbilt.edu/bcc/bhm-history/#:~:text=In%201976%2C%20President%20Gerald%20R.of%20endeavor%20throughout%20our%20history.%E2%80%9D.>

3 "Black History Month: Exhibit." Library News & Events, 18 Jan. 2022, <https://library.ucsd.edu/news-events/events/black-history-month-exhibit/>.

# & Futurism & Politics

## A brief summary of the futurists' active political participation in fascist Italy

By Mathilde Catsamba

In the words of German artist Martina Fischer, fine arts, literature, music, cinema, and theatre very often mirror the politics of a society. Art has always prevailed in personal and cultural expression and has been a means for artists to convey their own messages and address major issues the world faces. It is without a doubt, therefore, that artists can and have become political in their works. The early 20th century movement of Futurism, which developed in Italy and later spread to the rest of Europe and Russia, was a case in point.

Futurism is regarded as an iconoclastic social movement. Represented by revolutionaries, like Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, Umberto Boccioni, Giacomo Balla and others, it sought to break away from tradition

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Martina  
Fischer



Filippo Tommaso Marinetti

and form new ideas and artistic techniques. It was centered around dynamism, technology, and violence, expressing fascist ideology.

Marinetti, the “impresario” of Futurism, led the movement that glorified war and found

violence necessary for Italian grandeur, as mentioned in his work of 1909, “The Founding Manifesto of Futurism.” Marinetti had an active presence in politics at the time. He worked together with the leader of Italy’s Fascist Party, Benito Mussolini, often composing



Filippo Tommaso Marinetti.  
*Vive la France.* 1914–15 | MoMA



Filippo Tommaso Marinetti.  
*The Dirigible.* (1915) | MoMA





**Filippo Tommaso Marinetti and other Italian futurists in front of Le Figaro, Paris 1912**

his speeches, and receiving the appointment to the Accademia d' Italia from the prime minister in 1929. However, Mussolini took no particular interest in futurist art: he exploited the artists' talents because of the popularity and influence Futurism and particularly the Manifesto had on the people.

Members of the Futurist movement formed volunteer groups when Italy entered the first World War. This act highlighted the political dimension of Futurism, considered to be a nationalist movement supporting the fascist party. In 1918, Marinetti also founded the movement's own representation in politics, the Futurist Political Party, which expressed ideas of the leader's Manifesto, only to be merged with Mussolini's fascist organization two years later.

The artistic movement of Futurism cannot identify fully with the political movement of Fascism. However, these two share common traits for parallels to be drawn. Apart from the futurists' participation in politics, they expressed their beliefs and opinions through their art. Paintings of the era depict moving forms characterized by dynamism and violent scenes of war, anarchy, and sometimes militarism, that makes up a part of the basic ideology of fascism.

Having fully endorsed the fascist regime, Futurism "fell into oblivion" after World War II ended. Its influence was evident on the people and the political situation of the era. It characterized the art movement, and after the 1960s, placed it in the centre of attention of art historians and literary critics.



**The funeral of Anarchist Galli, Carlo Carrà (1911)**



**Umberto Boccioni Elasticity, 1912**



**Umberto Boccioni Simultaneous Visions, 1912**



**Giacomo Balla Designing the Future, 1917-18**



**Giacomo Balla Fireworks, 1916**

# BIAS TURNED TO PROFIT

By Nasia Koutsi

The cognitive approach of psychology studies how we process information scientifically and it is, perhaps, one of the most invaluable fields of psychology. Studies on such a broad subject have led to a wide array of conclusions about cognition and its processes ranging from the reliability of one's memory to the processes by which we think and make decisions.

Among the topics investigated by this approach, one of the most interesting ones is that of thinking and decision-making, as well as the biases in thinking that all humans use. What is even more intriguing is how businessmen and vendors are able to exploit these biases to maximize their profit.

There is much finesse in the art of advertising and selling, much more than we, the buyers, can perceive. Even the simplest of interactions that we might perceive as normal can be carefully premeditated. Even the way that a product is presented can have an effect on our “buyer mentality”.

To better explain this, it is best to refer to an example. In this example, the main focus is a company, the product of which is hot sauce. This same company wishes to optimize sales and appeal to buyers more, since rumors have been going around that their hot sauce is weak tasting. They want to achieve this without sacrificing any more of their resources to manufacture other products. So, they decide to rename their existing product. Instead of ‘hot sauce’, they label it as ‘authentic Mexican hot sauce’ and begin supplying it to supermarkets and stores once more. This new and revised name adds credibility to an already existing recipe. A potential buyer that may have previously been told the ‘hot sauce’ did not have a strong or distinct taste would

*There is much finesse in the art of advertising and selling, much more than we, the buyers, can perceive. Even the simplest of interactions that we might perceive as normal can be carefully premeditated. Even the way that a product is presented can have an effect on our “buyer mentality”.*

**AUTHENTIC  
MEXICAN  
SAUCE**



now feel more inclined to purchase it, despite it being the same product as before. It is, after all, ‘authentic Mexican sauce’.

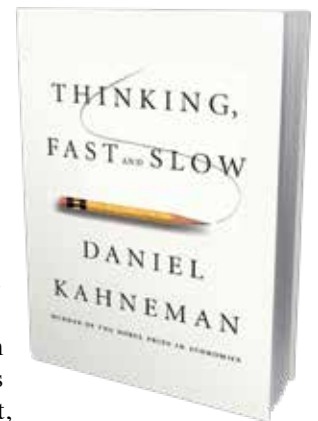
How does this tactic relate to biases in thinking and decision-making? This is what cognitive scientists refer to as the framing effect. This term is used to describe the impact that the context in which something is placed may have on

humans, as illustrated by Nobel Prize Winner Daniel Kahneman in his dual-processing model described in his book “Thinking Fast and Slow” in 2011.

In his theory, Kahneman explains that there are two systems of thinking that humans utilize: System 1 and System 2. System 1 is based on instinct. It is fast, impulsive and it generates a great feeling of confidence within us about our decisions, despite it being more prone to error. System 2, on the other hand, is slow and effortful. It is deliberate and detailed; far more tedious than System 1, but much less prone to

error. Although System 2 is more correct, humans tend to use System 1 more. This is because we are cognitive misers. That is to say, we focus on the evident piece of information and avoid doing an effortful analysis of all incoming information. Thus, we rely on heuristics: mental shortcuts that are characteristic of System 1 thinking. It is these heuristics that render us vulnerable to bias and by extension, marketing tricks.

To elaborate on the framing effect further, there's a reference to be made to Kahneman and Tversky's research on biases of thinking and decision-making. The two researchers conducted a study in 1986 aiming to test the influence of positive and negative frames on decision-making. They gave participants a scenario about an outbreak of an unusual Asian disease





which was expected to kill 600 people. Participants were then presented with different alternatives. The first half of the participants was given two positively framed alternatives and the second half was given two negatively framed alternatives. All alternatives were of the same essence; they proposed the same things but with different wording. Participants were then asked to choose between the given alternatives. From this, Kahneman and Tversky found that an overwhelming percentage of participants chose the alternatives framed positively, or rather the more positively framed of the two.

They concluded that positive and negative framing can affect a person's choice. The choice framed positively is preferable to the choice

framed negatively because of a built-in human instinct that deters us from making choices that might lead to loss. Returning to the previous example, this would mean that the new label that frames the company's




*The framing technique could then be applied in marketing and advertising as its effect could increase if we're presented with a choice under a limited time frame.*

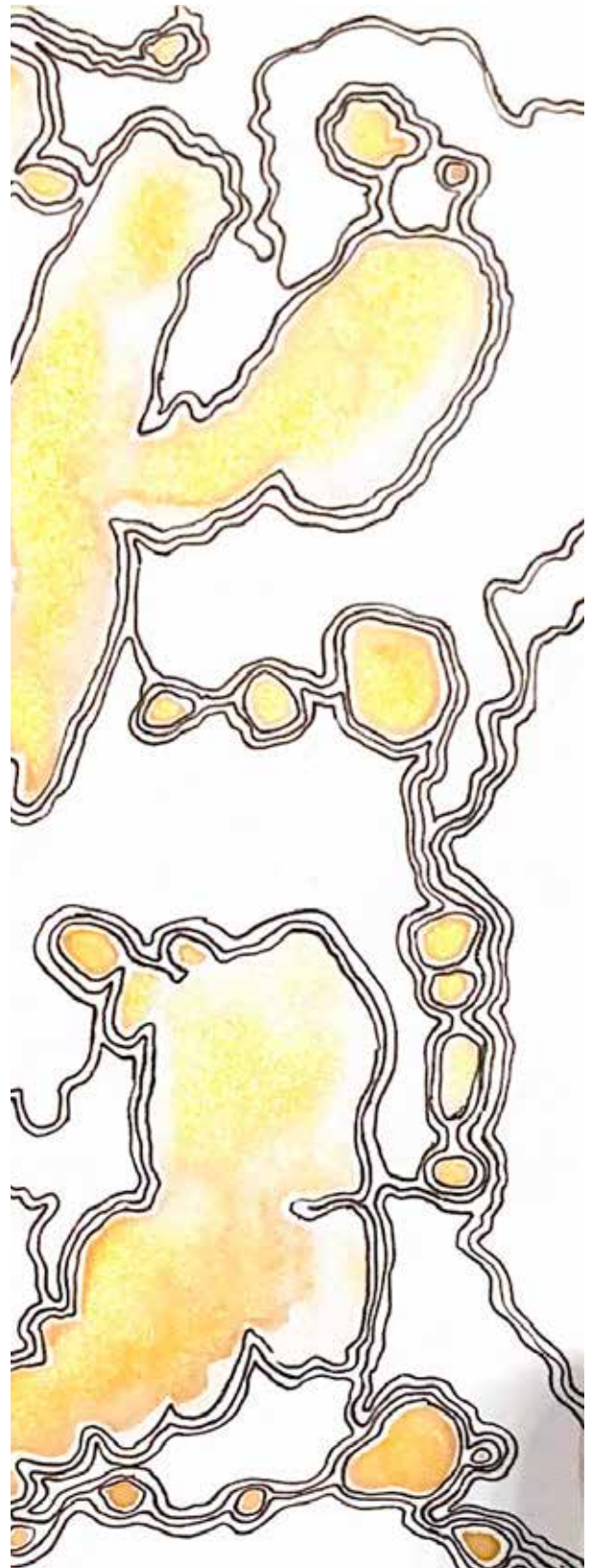
hot sauce as something 'authentic' is more favorable to a buyer who is looking for a strong and spicy taste.

The framing technique could then be applied in marketing and advertising as its effect could increase if we're presented with a choice under a limited time frame. For instance, it is not unusual to have vendors or salesmen approach us either physically or online to make us certain offers; offers that may sound enticing at first, such as "Get this faster and more efficient WIFI network for half the usual price today!" It is also no wonder that the offers usually last for a limited amount of time or that the vendors insist on getting a final answer right away.

When we are made an offer on the spot, our System 1 thinking is immediately activated on instinct. What we know about System 1 thinking is that it may be fast and energy-saving, but it is also prone to error and based on sometimes inapplicable past experiences. So, if we are forced to decide right at that moment, it is most likely that we will handle the situation using System 1 and decide. This may influence us to agreeing to the offer.

For this reason, vendors insist on us replying in a limited amount of time. If we take a longer time to answer, it is possible that we might go over the decision using System 2 which is more deliberate and elaborate and would most probably lead to a different decision than System 1 would. Vendors and salesmen essentially do not want us using our System 2 thinking, because we are then much less vulnerable to biases such as the framing effect.

Biases in thinking and decision-making, like in any mental process, are plenty. The cognitive approach to psychology has so far proved effective in identifying patterns in our mental processes and drawing conclusions that can be used in other practices such as business & management and marketing. Finally, it is important that we keep researching and that consumers become aware of marketing techniques that trigger cognitive biases so that they can protect themselves. 



*Julia Kandalepa*

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## PROCRASTINATION AND THE IB DP

# Not a good mix

*If you do not want  
to end up falling  
flat on the ground,  
do not mix these two.*

*This mix is not  
a cool explosion  
like Mentos  
and Coca-Cola.*

*Read on*

By Marianna Madianos

*"Just one more episode, and I'll do it!"*

*"After tomorrow's exam."*

*"This weekend, for sure."*

*"Right after dinner."*

*"I'll just take a quick nap so that I can be fully focused."*

After many excuses, a couple of emails from Ms. Athina Foka, and a dozen texts from Dimitris later, I finally sat down to write this article. Writing is a complex skill. And writing an article for the school magazine, for the first time, with the possibility that the whole school could read it and judge you for it, trust me, it's an excellent reason to procrastinate and delay it quite a bit.

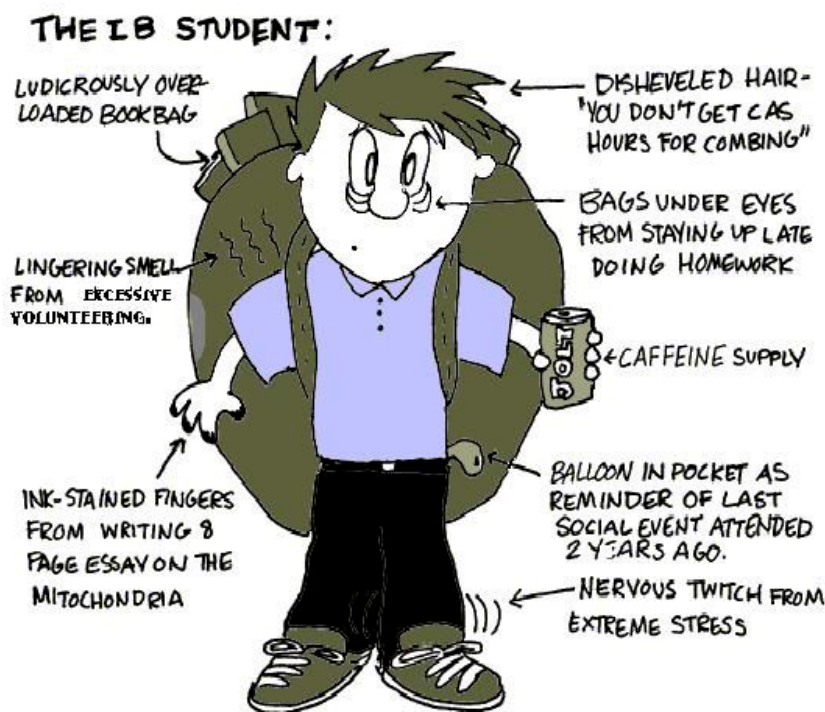
Whether you procrastinate because (a) you love the thrill of the adrenaline rush when you are working last minute, (b) you are avoiding a task that you find difficult or do not like, or (c) you are indecisive. The truth is that when you are in the IB DP, you just cannot afford to waste your time procrastinating. Whether it is for reasons a, b, or c, you are wasting precious limited resources: time, money, and opportunities. Let me remind you of something, even when you are in the IB, the day still only has 24 hours!

*"Procrastination is like a credit card:  
it's a lot of fun until you get the bill."*

*- Christopher Parker*

**So, how do you avoid  
procrastinating?**

As we are all headed to college soon, I decided to consult the experts on success during the college years. I chose the top eight pieces of advice from places such as Princeton and Dartmouth.





## Top 8 Tips for Beating Procrastination in the IB DP

**1. USE A CALENDAR** and create a timeline/schedule. Visualizing every deadline that is coming up will help you prepare for it in advance.

**2. CHOOSE YOUR CAS ACTIVITIES WISELY.** We know that CAS can seem like a burden to juggle on top of the six subjects and the ministry classes. But if you choose your activities to be enjoyable and satisfying, you will be looking forward to them, and as a bonus, you will get to write amazing reflections. Remember that by doing CAS activities, not only will you be giving back to your broader community, but you will be developing important life skills.

**3. IDENTIFY TIME WASTERS.** We all know how Instagram and Snapchat can magically manage to get your attention for hours while it feels like it was just a five-minute break. Identify the moments in which the internet is making you waste time. Are you texting classmates while doing homework? Did searching for something for your essay lead you to browse irrelevant websites? Get rid of all potential distractions before you begin working, so you do not end up sidetracked in the middle of your task. Then, focus on work and use social media and the internet as a reward for staying focused and accomplishing your goal.

**4. PRIORITIZE.** In IB DP land, activities and projects are many and varied. Some are hard; some are super hard, some require creativity, some require focus and silence. Make a list of things that you need to accomplish every day. Plan for the week and make a To-Do list. Then stick with it! You should consider those things you cannot control and work around them. The day you know your sister has basketball practice and you will be home alone, plan to solve those math problems and study the biology definitions. Prioritize sleep because procrastination will be very difficult to fight when sleep deprived. If you are tired when you need to work, take a 20-minute power nap, but a real nap, not “relaxing” while scrolling on social media.

**5. START YOUR DAY ON THE RIGHT FOOT.** Snoozing a few times and running late to catch the school bus will make you start the day in the wrong mood. Instead, schedule your day from the night before, and when the alarm goes off, just “rip off the Band-Aid”, do not prolong the pain.

**6. TACKLE SMALL AND EASY TASKS FIRST.** Starting with a more manageable task will give you a sense of achievement that will inspire you to keep going. With regards to big, challenging projects, divide the work into smaller, more doable tasks and start doing little by little. Of course, the opposite might just work better. For some of us, getting the difficult stuff done first, gives us a great sense of accomplishment, and then, everything else seems easier and takes a shorter amount of time.

Let me remind you of something, even when you are in the IB, the day still only has 24 hours!

**7. DO NOT MULTITASK.** While we all believe that we are great multitaskers, multitasking reduces efficiency and performance. Studies show that the IQ of multitaskers drops similarly to the drop of someone’s IQ who did not sleep the night before. In addition, juggling multiple things at once means for sure we will make mistakes. Therefore, it is best to fully devote your attention to one task before moving on to the next one.

**8. TAKE BREAKS AND REWARD YOURSELF.** It is important to take mental breathers from school-work every 30 to 45 minutes. Schedule a 5 to 15-minute break, ideally by changing scenery, stepping away from your desk, listening to music, drinking some water – doing anything that takes your mind off of what you are doing that allows you to relax. During the week, organize your academic and other obligations around your fun and entertaining activities. Try rewarding yourself when you get something done, especially if it is a big important task.



Scan the QR Code to read  
*Princeton University's Principles of  
Effective Time-Management for  
Balance, Well-Being and Success.*



Visit Dartmouth's  
*Academic Skills Center  
to learn more  
tips on Time Management.*

Whether you are an early bird or a night owl, in order to succeed in IB we need to avoid procrastination. Not procrastinating means we should put social media away, focus on following our work as planned, and reward ourselves for our hard work, whether that involves fun activities (even CAS activities!), spending time with friends and family, or even watching **just one episode** of your favorite show on Netflix because we are teenagers after all.

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# TEENAGERS IN THE PILOT'S SEAT

By Elesya Abazi

Everybody agrees that being a teenager is really stressful. How stressful? From one year to the next, it feels like you're handed the controls of a fighter plane, while everyone else decides to use their parachute and jump off.

You're that fighter plane. And those who jump off seem so preposterously certain that you'll do just fine with the controls. The responsibility makes your anxiety double and triple.

Your parents often show up with imaginary pilot clothes, recalling the time when they were handed those controls in their earlier life. They did just fine, and so will you, is the implicit suggestion.

Then the teachers show up with all kinds of manuals, as if learning the switches and the buttons and the lights in the cockpit is easy and all it takes is discipline. But cockpits never remain the same, technology evolves. And so do people.

Owning the controls is tough. And the reality is that our teens do not have it all figured out. If they are good, they can begin to steer the wheels. But most will learn this through trial and error.

## Prepare for turbulence

But here is how we will take ourselves in a safe place. We have to accept a few fundamental truths:

**TRUTH ONE: *It is okay to not know what you want to do, or to have a plan for a lifelong career plan.***

The best pilots do not chase cloud after cloud. And do not overthink each cloud's chemical composition to make decisions. They just know the direction and improvise. That should do it!

**TRUTH TWO: *You do not need to worry about other people's opinions.***

You're all alone on this plane – the plane of your life. You think you carry a million passengers and that you need approval from each for every turn your plane makes. But you cannot really pilot by collective decisions. Just do what you feel is right. And so, the plane flies.

**TRUTH THREE: *You can create a worthwhile future while enjoying the moment.***

Being handed the controls means terror and frustration, yes. But after some time, it also means freedom, and responsibility, and joy. The joy of doing it right. We need to think about the future

Being a teenager is really stressful. How stressful? From one year to the next, it feels like you're handed the controls of a fighter plane, while everyone else decides to use their parachute and jump off.



Systems checked. Lets get airborne.

in order to create it, but we can actually do this most effectively when we focus primarily on the present.

If you have forgotten these truths, you are not alone: every single teenager/pilot I know, at some point confided that “everyone but me knows what they want to do with their lives.”

Not true. Nobody among us knows 100% how to use those controls. And sometimes, those of us who really seem certain, end up recognizing that our certainty was manufactured, a pose. A temporary marker to keep away expectations, and the fear of letting others down. But every plane is different. We need to “de-dramatize” that feeling of impending doom, and let our teens know one bad decision now will not ruin their life forever. But we also need to impart that, yes indeed, some of the decisions teens now make are important - and should be given proper care and attention. The whole exercise of career-building from a nascent stage adversely affects the young minds in the following ways:

**1.** The fact that grades heavily influence the career stream students can or cannot choose puts pressure on them to score well. As a result, the focus is on getting good grades instead of acquiring knowledge. Or being truly curious about those switches.

**2.** When students are not able to score well, they are overwhelmed with feelings of extreme sadness and hopelessness. For those who don't succeed, fearing the future, self-doubt and insecurity can become commonplace. In the worst cases, the pressure to perform well throughout the academic journey builds anxiety in students and leads some to eating disorders, depression and in some cases, even suicide.

**3.** When they do score well, they run the risk of becoming biased and opinionated, robbing



them of further opportunities to explore. Some - half-way through their effort - realize their success is not in sync with their interests and aptitude. They feel stuck and some fail to talk about it.

**4.** But for some, indeed this journey of risk and exploration brings on self-confidence and the joy of having their dreams fulfilled through sustained work. But such feelings of accomplishment don't last forever. Resilience and humility must follow every success. Otherwise, nothing is truly left of this journey other than bragging rights which in turn, expire soon, leaving the students eternal strugglers in the same loop.

## *So how do we fly?*

### **Tips to handle life direction pressure**

**T**o navigate our fighter planes, we need to know that first and foremost, these planes must fight an enemy of a very particular kind: our deepest insecurities. To face them, we need to create the conditions that inspire young minds to flourish by enabling them to build confidence, resilience and grit.

- To normalize 'not knowing' is crucial. Finding a suitable career path takes quite a bit of introspection.
- Children should be encouraged to investigate their dreams instead of being told what those dreams are. Parents should always be empathetic and open to their child's perspective.
- Children often feel powerless when bombarded with career choices. If they feel confused, career assessment tests can help gauge their interests, skills, values and personality they relate to, thereby helping them make an informed career decision. Students can use the test results to further formulate and clarify their career goals and direction.
- Students should be inspired to have a career action plan that helps them identify short-term and long-term goals. This will reduce unnecessary pressure as students will focus more on the current trajectory rather than on the results.
- From an early stage, the focus should be on building effective social and emotional competencies and capabilities of children so that they can overcome complex challenges and hurdles that life may throw at them.

## **Every plane is different ...and the controls change all the time**

But one thing remains the same for all. There is a person, a young person, with great many talents and a steering wheel of a fighting plane in his hands. Undaunted



*"Torn" – Julia Kandalepa*

by shuffled decks, insecurities and fears, resilient and versatile, this person has the greatest weapon in their hands - a weapon lacking in most of their elders: they have time to try, time to correct course, time to fail and raise up, time to dive and time to raise their gaze to the sky, time to learn the switches and buttons on their cockpit, those that have been and those that will be (and invent some along the way), time to make a million mistakes and time to dream on.

✓  
*We have  
the  
greatest  
weapon  
in our  
hands:  
time*



*Happy flying!*

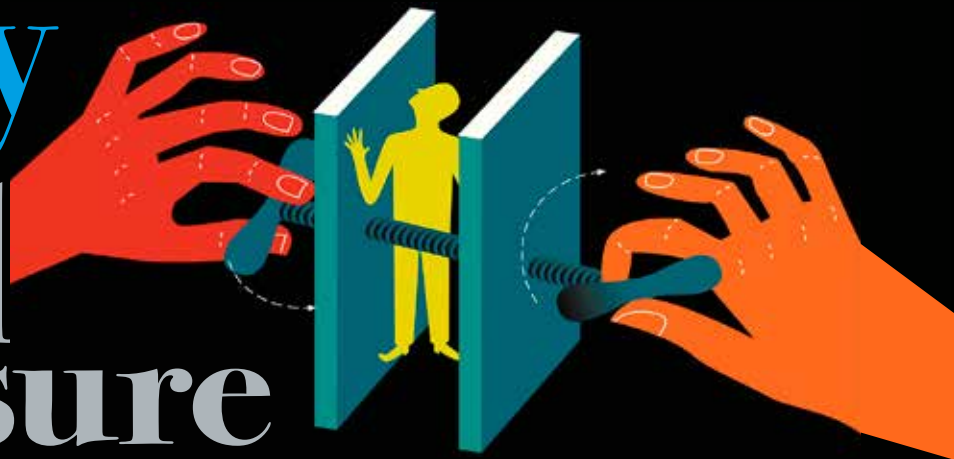
Looks like a perfect flight already.



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# Anxiety due to school pressure



By Christina Afentouli

**S**tress and anxiety? Two words that we often use to describe a moment or a feeling. We use them a lot without really realizing the meaning behind them and the impact they have on people's lives. But where does it all begin? When do people start to experience anxiety and stress?

## Academic Life:

The starting point when people and in particular teenagers begin stressing is during school and especially the final years of school life. The main reasons are the rigorous and loaded schedules, the enormous amount of homework, and various other factors like social and academic scheduling.

## Social Life:

Many teenagers suffer from anxiety under social circumstances at school. While some of these difficulties present strong growth possibilities, they must be handled with patience. Moreover, while most students believe that their friends are one of their cherished components of school life, they may likewise be a wellspring of stress. Worries about not having an adequate number of friends, relational debates, and pressure are only a couple of the numerous ways young people may be anxious during school. Indeed, even students with stronger personalities and stronger self-esteem may encounter nervousness while managing these difficulties alone.

Moreover, another crucial factor is overscheduling. With an end goal to give their children an edge or to give ideal formative encounters, many guardians are forcing their children to participate in an excessive number of extracurricular activities. As

▼

*Students should not over pressure themselves in order to do more things. They should stick to what they are comfortable with in order to achieve their goals successfully.*

children become teenagers, school extracurriculars become considerably harder to keep up with. With all the homework and activities that teenagers take on daily, school is making it hard for the students to stay away from overscheduling themselves.

Finally, another reason why students may face stress and anxiety during school is bullying. It often happens nowadays, and one reason is that bullies can be anonymous and enlist other bullies to make their target miserable.

In conclusion, students should not over pressure themselves in order to do more things. They should stick to what they are comfortable with in order to achieve their goals successfully. ▼



"The noise in the city/ in my mind", Julia Kandalepa



# A BRIEF YET INTUITIVE DELVING INTO THE REALM OF CRYPTOCURRENCIES

By Anastasis Moraitis

Imagine a world where digital monetary transactions between humans were being carried out independently of banks and other centralized institutions. A world where total anonymity provides yet maximum security. A world where no third-parties are involved, and humans are entitled to their own freedom and will regarding their transactions. Is this world attractive or is it repelling? Is this freedom controlled or will we be proven too naive to surrender to this majestic illusion of power? We cannot be certain about it but a delving into the concepts of blockchain technology and cryptocurrencies might provide a clearer image.

Reminiscing our financial history as a civilization, one could understandably distinguish four types of transactions that were developed successively. The first one originated in Mesopotamia (6000 BC), though some will argue that it started earlier, when the Phoenicians introduced the method of bartering. Bartering is more closely defined as the direct exchange of goods and/or services between two parties. Although it was proven to be successful for a significant number of years, it possessed a fundamental flaw: the double coincidence of “wants.” In simpler terms, bartering relied on the unique condition where both parties would be interested in exchanging a certain good for another one. This notable problem was resolved through the second stage -- the use of metals as currency. Gold, silver, and bronze acquired value, as precious metals, that could be aligned with the interests of the majority of the people. In a seemingly emulous attempt to subdue the practical weaknesses of using metals as a currency, the third stage introduced the concept of paper money. It was at that time that banks made their appearance and took the initiative to print paper money in exchange of gold (a process which was halted in 1971 – the ending of the Barter Woods system). Building on the model of the third stage and utilizing the innovative schemes of the Internet, the fourth stage

▼  
*In wake of the 2008 global financial crisis, the renowned Bitcoin was created with the purpose to alter the pre-existing standards, promote the idea of decentralized (not controlled by governments and banks) finance and introduce a way for the people to control their money themselves.*



introduced cards and forms of digital payment, which enthralled the attention of the globe and are now widely used across the world. Though this idea is perceived as flawless, it would be imprudent of us to neglect the fact that it is solely based on the administration and supervision of centralized institutions that have proven to be sensitive to financial upheavals, extreme inflation and corruptions a plethora of times throughout the course of history.

In wake of the 2008 global financial crisis, perhaps the fifth stage was born. The renowned Bitcoin was created with the purpose to alter the pre-existing standards, promote the idea of decentralized (not controlled by governments and banks) finance and introduce a way for the people to control their money themselves. The idea was deemed to be so revolutionary and intriguing that inspired the heyday of blockchain technology. Blockchain technology relies on the connection and combination of different digital blocks, each block containing a collection of records, also known as a ledger, and all blocks together generating a massive open database. Every time a transaction happens on the blockchain, the transaction is verified and validated through all blocks and finally

stored in the blocks' ledgers. Once it is stored in the ledger, the record is very unlikely to change as it has already been validated and a unanimous consensus between all existing blocks has been reached. This process evinces that this massive database created is vastly secured and really controlled by the users and not some external force that imposes regulations and rules and therefore, taxes.

In the past years, this idea has been further developed and increased in popularity as investors are starting to explore its utilities and valuing its future potential. Cryptocurrencies like Ethereum, Polygon, Solana utilize even more advanced blockchain technology that enable them to process transactions faster and keep a more organized digital ecosystem. Some advantages of advanced blockchain technology include NFT (digital art) commerce, creation of smart contracts (algorithms stored inside the blockchain) and applications in the Metaverse. While all these sound very appealing, it should be noted that blockchain technology undergoes a theoretically preliminary stage that requires a lot of problems to be solved before it is accepted by society and widely used. One of the main concerns of society is the scalability and volatility of cryptocurrencies that haven't yet reached a stable zone.

Hence, the idea of cryptocurrencies stems from the controversial blockchain technology whose future remains unknown. In these types of cases, the lot falls onto us and our approach. We could either keep a conservative mindset and reject this idea from the start, subjugating to the stability of tradition, or be tolerant to an evolutionary mindset that satisfies open-mindedness and dissolve ourselves into the unconventionality of innovation.

In this dilemma, Thomas Jefferson responds:  
"Malo periculosam, libertatem quam quietam servitutem"

*"I prefer dangerous freedom  
over peaceful slavery"*

also interpreted as

*"I prefer the tumult of liberty  
to the quiet of servitude."*



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# BEWARE... NUDGES!

By Sofronia Efrosyni Voudouri

Have you ever noticed that every supermarket has chewing gum and other low-cost snacks near checkout? Have you ever bought one of these, even though you never planned on buying anything at first?

Have you ever noticed that some coffee shops often recommend pastries along with their coffee, presenting it as the tastiest combination? Have you ever succumbed to that temptation?

How are the above examples related? Well, they are both what we call "**nudges**," small features purposefully placed in one's environment to affect their behavior in a way to favor somebody else. Nudges are also defined in the context of a relatively new area of Economics, called "Behavioral Economics." This area studies consumer behavior from not only the perspective of economics, but also from the perspective of psychology, by analyzing the unconscious mentality of the consumers. Consumers are not the "perfect" actors the Neoclassical economic



Julia Kandalepa



theory assumes they are; they are not always fully rational, fully informed and selfish. Humans' behavior is unpredictable in a myriad of ways, and with behavioral economics, economists attempt to predict a consumer's behavior by also considering their psyche.

The term *Nudge* (usually meaning poking someone to get their attention), was used in the context of Economics by Richard Thaler, who received the Nobel Prize in Economics in 2017, partially for his work on Behavioral Economics.

What is special, however, is that this change in the consumer's behavior is achieved without offering financial incentives, imposing sanctions or limiting their choices! In the first case, the nudge may favor the supermarket, as customers tend to buy more chewing gum if it is placed in front of them during checkout. In the second case, the nudge is implemented by the coffee shops, in order to encourage customers to pay an extra amount of money to buy something along with their coffee. In other words, if you answered yes to any of the questions asked before, then you have previously been affected by nudges. But even if you didn't, it is almost certain that your behavior has been influenced by a nudge even once in your lifetime (if not many times more!) since nudges are everywhere!

Nudges are an integral part in this area of Economics, but they also extend far beyond them, in everyday life scenarios. Some governments around the world also use nudges to affect citizens' behavior in an indirect and desirable way. Here are some of the most remarkable ones:

In the United Kingdom, each household in some neighborhoods was given two bins: one for regular garbage and one recycling bin. However, the recycling bin was a third bigger than the regular bin, which prompted people to fill it more, thus recycle more! The aim of this policy was to encourage citizens to recycle more, and it was achieved by the nudge.

In Guatemala, the government sent text messages to taxpayers before the deadline for their tax payment, informing them that 64.5% of their fellow citizens had already paid their taxes; this was also an effective measure to increase in-time tax payments, and a 43% increase in payments was made in just 11 weeks!

In some schools in the United States, the canteens only displayed the healthy food to students, keeping the unhealthy snacks in cupboards. As a result, sales of healthy food in these schools were increased by 18% on average.

Finally, the American grocery store "Pay & Save" placed colorful arrows on the aisle floors, leading



▼  
*Nudges are a clever way to influence people's choices, and if they are carefully designed, they can be very effective.*

shoppers to the fruit and vegetable sections. The experiment's results showed that customers followed the arrows out of curiosity 9 times out of 10, often buying fresh products; sales skyrocketed.

All in all, nudges are a clever way to influence people's choices, and if they are carefully designed, they can be very effective. However, nudges and behavioral economics approaches also present some drawbacks. More specifically, since human behavior varies, such areas cannot lead to systematic, unifying theories. Moreover, different behaviors are met in different target groups (e.g. different nationality, age, gender); thus, not all nudges are effective

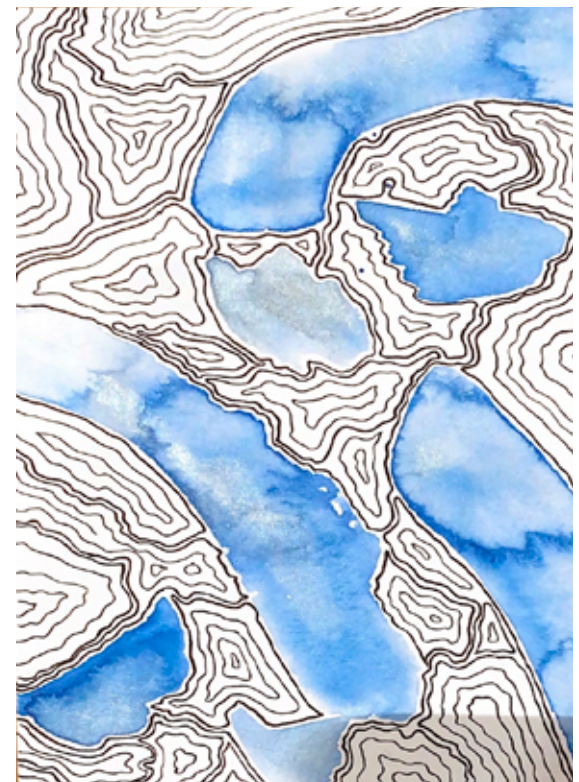
for all customers. Lastly, studies concerning nudges can be rather unreliable, since results are self-reports of decisions made within a few seconds. However, the above do not prevent nudges from having an effect on human behavior and being used by governments and businesses worldwide.

So, next time you visit the supermarket or proceed to any payment... beware of nudges! ▼

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Julia Kandalepa

# HOW DID THE ECONOMIC RECESSION OF 2007 AND 2008 AFFECT GREECE?

By Georgina Kyriakopoulou

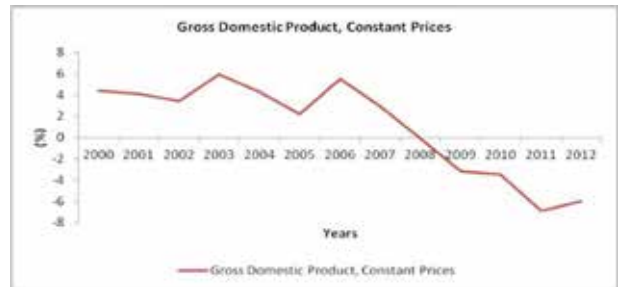
The severe contraction of liquidity in the global financial markets, the increasing unemployment and the inability of borrowers to repay their mortgages, resulting to the collapse of the US housing market, the failure of several commercial and investment banks and insurance companies, were the major effects of the global financial crisis of 2008. By 2007, the conditions for what was going to occur in 2008, known as global financial crisis, were already present. Due to the low interest rates, all participants in the economy, whether they were companies, banks or individuals, became over-borrowed by borrowing money at low interest rates.

In 2008, the bankruptcy of Lehman brothers spoiled the beginning of a catastrophic economic crisis. This was caused because of the excessive risk taking by Lehman by borrowing funds to invest in subprime mortgages. As the borrowers could not repay, and the values of the houses were decreasing, Lehman were not able to liquidate the mortgages by selling the loans or the houses mortgaged and pay their lenders who were other financial institutions. The collapse of Lehman brought the collapse of or severe difficulty to other financial institutions which were not going to receive from Lehman the amounts owed.

One of the most affected countries was Greece. More analytically, in Greece, between 1999 and 2007, public wages were increased by almost 50%, faster than most of the countries in the EU. Also, in 2001, Greece adopted the single currency and the aim was to converge economically and socially with the other unions. Meanwhile, excessive borrowing took over the country. Greece also hosted 2004 Athens Olympics and collected debt. The debt in Greece kept accumulating till the point where the country was no longer able to repay its debts. The country, having no other choice, was forced to ask for help from the IMF in order to get massive loans to pay up her debts and in return Greece was asked to apply austerity measures which lead to multiple issues.

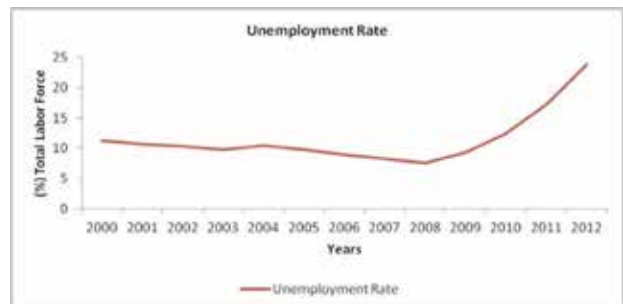
To begin with, unemployment was one of the major impacts this crisis had. Unemployment is all about people losing their jobs and not being able to fulfill their or their families' basic needs to live. The employment increased for the period 2008-2012 from 12% up to 25%, more than double. Having defined unemployment, this socially impacted a lot of people. Many people were affected mentally, and this increased the number of suicides as people could not sustain themselves or families. Unfortunately, the rise of unemployment lead to the economic recession and as a result salaries were decreased.


*The decrease of the GDP's value during the years of the economic crisis*



As the reliability of Greece to the financial market and the lenders was almost extinct, Greece's debt made banks default because debts lost their value. Therefore, Greek banks had to become recapitalized so the Greek state eventually put up the money. Of course, this money that the Greek state paid, had to be claimed from the Greek tax payers. The amount contributed by the Greek government in order to restore the health of the Greek banks was almost 500 billion euros. In this new landscape many banks had to merge or close resulting to only four systems banks in Greece.

*The rapid and sudden increase of unemployment rate during the recession period*



The 2008 economic crisis showed that despite the fact that there were institutions that were monitoring the economic system, they were still organizing their duties ineffectively. This meant that institutions needed to be restructured and reformed in order to prevent any similar situations in the future. This crisis was catastrophic for almost all Greek citizens and ever since, the journey for recovery has been tough. Till this day, a lot of improvements have been made and the Greek government is trying to overcome this "financial" disaster as soon as possible. 

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# 4poems

by Marianna Maridi

Poem , Marianna  
Maridi Artwork,  
Julia Kandalepa

sunk  
in a mind  
unaware that it was born to die  
confined  
to an eternal recurrence  
of who am I

falling  
because we're born to die

we're born and we die  
two breathing lungs,  
controlled by a single mind

to merely live is  
the most brutal of deaths  
it is to be slowly be dying  
to be alive is to be heard, it is--  
- to never be dying  
from being an interchangeable shadow  
a soul confined to an acreage of flesh

to become a voice



the voice whose  
sound  
the sound whose  
echo  
just for a moment



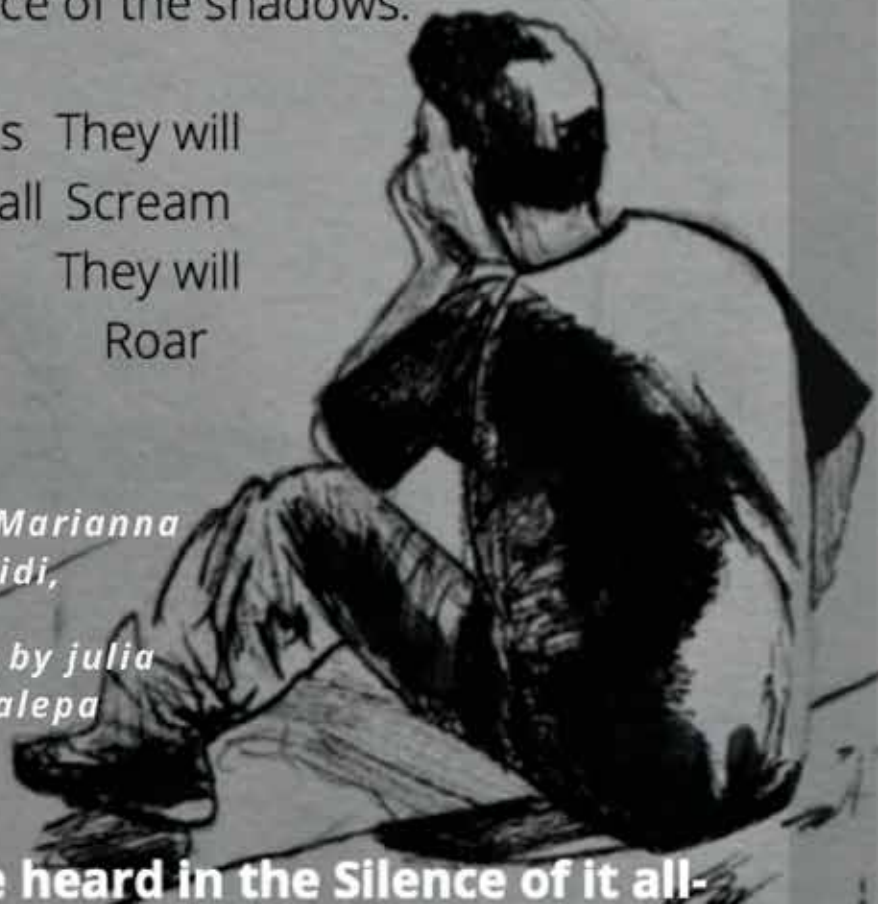
outlives the Silence of the shadows.

Because the words They will  
they will outlive us all Scream  
They will  
Roar

# *Silence of the Shadows*

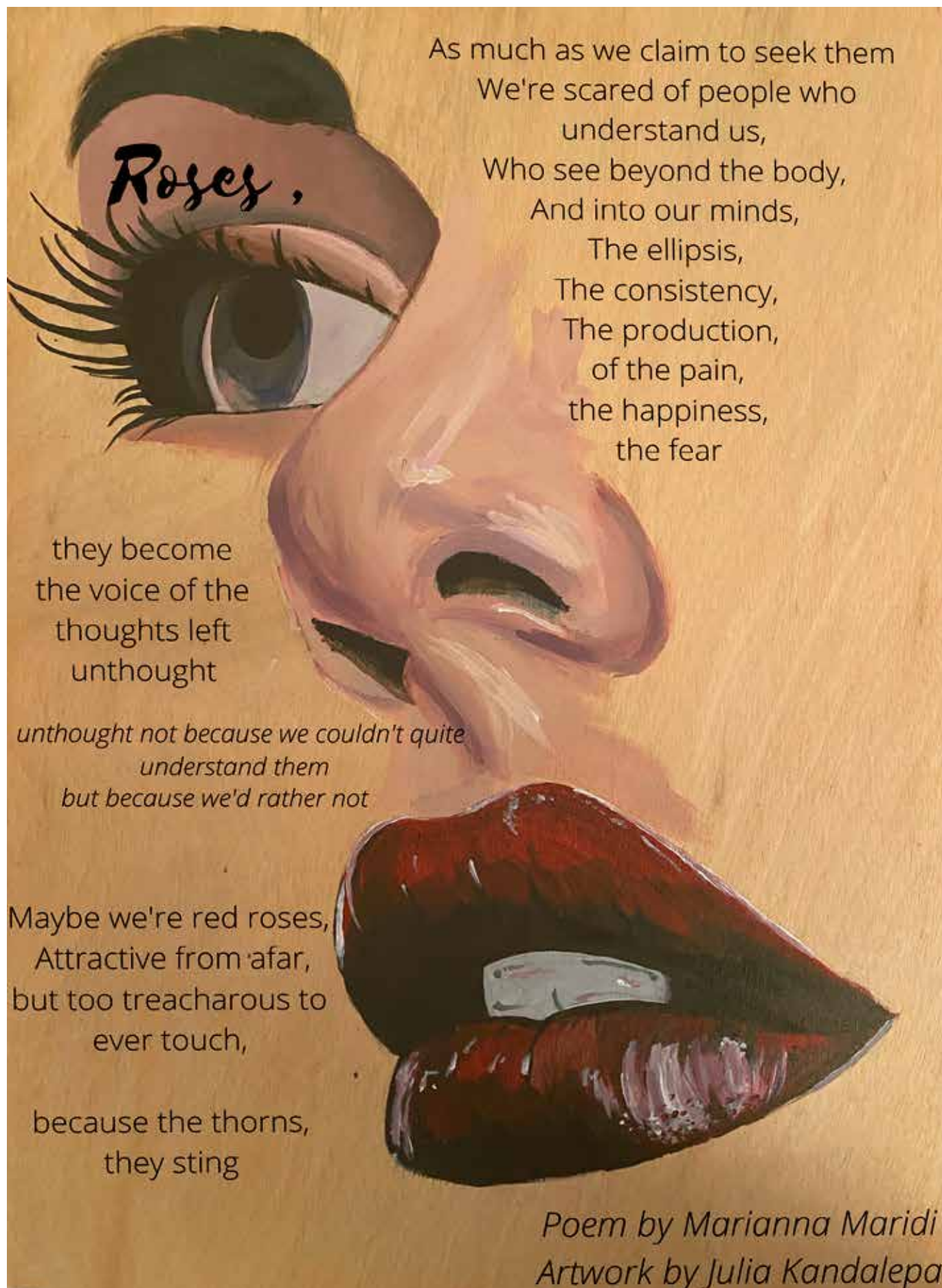
*poem by Marianna  
Maridi,*

*artwork by julia  
kandalepa*



only if they can be heard in the Silence of it all-





As much as we claim to seek them  
We're scared of people who  
understand us,  
Who see beyond the body,  
And into our minds,  
The ellipsis,  
The consistency,  
The production,  
of the pain,  
the happiness,  
the fear

they become  
the voice of the  
thoughts left  
unthought

*unthought not because we couldn't quite  
understand them  
but because we'd rather not*

Maybe we're red roses,  
Attractive from afar,  
but too treacharous to  
ever touch,

because the thorns,  
they sting

*Poem by Marianna Maridi  
Artwork by Julia Kandalepa*





# Obey

It wasn't your own finger  
you used to press against my lips  
It was my very own.  
Because you were afraid of my voice  
and you taught me to fear it too.  
You were never strong enough to  
smudge the red off my lips  
But you know  
I sure as hell  
Was

Poem by Marianna Maridi  
Artwrok by Julia Kandalepa



# “ASSASSINATION AND MORALITY; CAMUS’ JUXTAPOSITION”

By Christina Kokkali

Albert Camus was a French writer, philosopher, and novelist whose works are famous for exploring questions on existentialism, the themes of life, death and suicide, and human fate. Absurdism dominates most of his works since he always emphasizes the irrationality, and the little meaning life has. In addition to his philosophical education, which constituted the basis of many of his views, Camus was also influenced by the political context of his era, and his own experiences. He started his career as a political journalist, he later joined the French Resistance during WWII and became the editor in chief of the political journal *Combat*. One of his less known works, “The Just Assassins” [“Les Justes”] communicates Camus’ knowledge and passion about politics, even though the play takes place in a time long before his own.

“The Just Assassins” is a highly political play, based on true events and personas, and narrates the story of a group of Russian Socialist-Revolutionaries who assassinated the Grand Duke Sergei Alexandrovich of Russia in 1905. Camus examines the historical and political dynamics of the Russian Revolution, the event that guided the 6 assassins to their terrorist act. He also raises important moral dilemmas. Was the assassination of a person whose authority was against social wellbeing, just? Should one kill for the sake of revolution? Should one kill a person to save thousands?

Camus’ characters believe that the Grand Duke must die, for the revolution to flourish, because his rule enslaved the Russian people. [“*Stepan: Freedom is still a prison as long as there is still anyone in chains on earth. (...) I could not stop thinking about Russia and its slaves*”]. Camus said himself that “all the characters did actually exist and behaved as written in the text.” He only tries to make realistic the things which really happened. He narrates every detail of the preparation of the terrorist attack, his writing indicates that he understands and sympathizes with his characters, yet he never apologizes for their actions. Thus, the reader will never understand if Camus shared the ideals of the six protagonists. This is what makes it more absurd. He writes about terrorism, bombings and hierarchy and simultaneously character-



✓  
“The Just Assassins” is a highly political play, based on true events and personas, and narrates the story of a group of Russian Socialist-Revolutionaries who assassinated the Grand Duke Sergei Alexandrovich of Russia in 1905.

izes the terrorists and the bombers as just. His juxtaposition creates many question marks which again, solidify the presence of the aforementioned moral dilemmas. The author’s existentialist perspective on the importance of

life rises again since murder and justice are both controversial issues. If life is meaningless, murder must be too. Murder, is “the unjustified killing of one person by another.” The revolutionaries justify their action because the target was a murderer himself. [“*Stepan: We will kill that murderer*”]. However, whether the assassination’s justification is valid, is a question one cannot answer objectively. Justification of any kind is subjective. Therefore, the perception of Justice as a notion is subjective. Who determines what is just and what is not regarding issues that are generally stated? If murder is justified, is it no longer murder? No. It is still murder. But according to Camus, a justified murder could be just.

In the modern world, there are many cases of murderers who were justified, and faced no charges. A pertinent example is the one of a woman killing her rapist, even though there are many cases of women who faced criminal charges after the murder of the man who sexually molested them. The question is whether that woman is innocent; although she takes violent action, she maintains a sense of morality. This is what Camus wants to convey to his audience. He tries to understand whether it is possible to commit a crime yet maintain a sense of Justice; a theme which renders the play contemporary and vital even though it was written in 1949. ✓

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# TAKEN FROM THE FIRST CHAPTER OF THE NOVEL "TOMORROW"

By Athina Babinoti

*In a world full of envy, full of injustice, full of greed, full of misery, I never thought that I would be able to find love. LOVE, this is what is missing from this world. It is the year 2180. Humanity has devastated our planet to the bone... after World War IV and the Great Nuclear Explosion, today Earth's air is so toxic that people have to use an oxygen mask in order to remain alive. Oxygen usage depends on a citizen's social class. First Class citizens' usage is limitless, while Second Class is controlled and allowed to use only a few bottles per month. This way the state guarantees oxygen for the rich and also controls the masses. Since no-one can out in the open, people communicate via machines. This is the world we created. Our greed for power has made life a luxury for some. Being born in the Second Class today is a long death sentence- you know that you will have to sacrifice yourself for your family, your kids, you just never know when...*

## – CHAPTER 1–

*"Fellow citizens. We all know that we are going through hard times. We are facing an "oxygen crisis." Yesterday I was informed by the Department of Science that the resources for creating artificial oxygen are becoming less every day and that if we do not take extreme measures, humanity will indeed have an expiration date."*



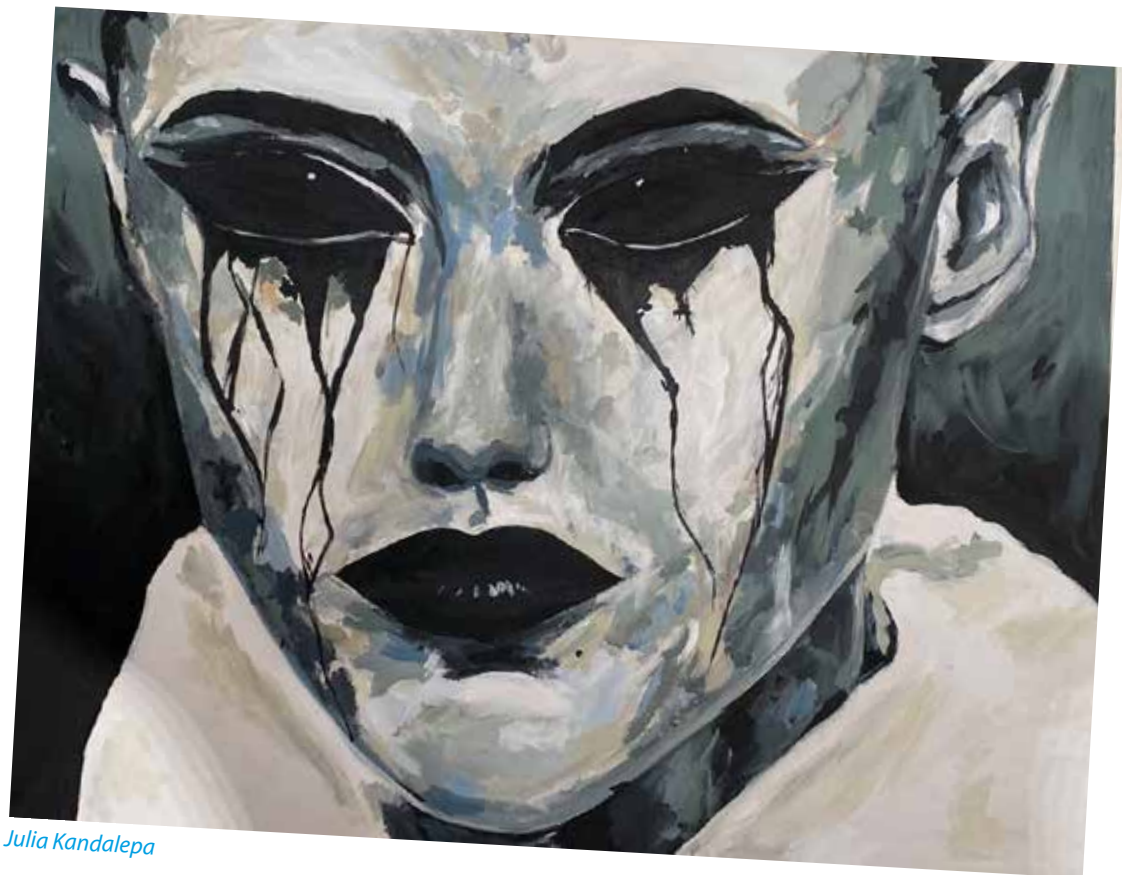
The main square is the jewel of our city. It is a rectangular made out of cement buildings and steel fire escapes. Black, grey, and white. It feels like being in an old film. Every time that the Mayor has to make an important announcement the square is divided in two by a special rope, the so-called Class Divider, and despite the fact that the Second Class has more members than the First Class, the latter was granted more space and plenty of food and drinks, in the only consumable form, injections.

As the Mayor's robotic voice echoed through the street, the divided audience remained silent. It was a rather warm day, but the coolness of the Second Class's misery could penetrate your skin.

The First Class members were enjoying the nice weather sitting on their velvet chairs- they were sure that what would come out of the Mayor's mechanical lips would not affect them. The Second Class members were depressed... their skin was pale due to the lack of nutrients; they were all thin - one could see their bones though their flesh. Some had already started crying. They knew that what was lying ahead could only bring death closer.

I took a look at my Father. Despite the fact that he was about to sentence hundreds of people to death he





Julia Kandalepa

stood there all firm and cynical. Sometimes I wondered if he had a heart, but then I remembered all the times he would hug me when I was younger, and every doubt would fly away.

**“Today, I announce in front of every citizen of our beloved but tragically injured society the reduction of oxygen bottles from fifteen to nine a month per Second Class family. For families with more than four underaged children, two additional bottles are to be allowed. If the family is incapable of paying for the oxygen bottles, the state will offer two free bottles for every member of the family. It is sufficient enough to cover your basic needs. That is all. Thank you.”**

And so the battle began. Second Class members started shouting - increasing the speakers' volume to the fullest and typing protest messages. Some took off their masks and terminated their lives as they preferred to die there and then rather than to keep on living this nightmare that was their life. What life was that? I could never imagine having a limit in life, not being sure whether I will make it until tomorrow and observe another sunset in the toxic, yet beautiful sky. The First Class members shook their head in approval and agreement, celebrating the new amount of oxygen that would be offered to them. They were whispering - limiting the speakers' volume and placing them near each other's ears - criticizing the Second Class' reaction. They didn't know any better. They did not have the emotional capacity to compre-

▼  
*It was then that I truly realized that the real problem in our society was human greed and not lack of oxygen.*

hend the magnitude of the repercussions of my Father's decision.

I knew for a fact that the lack of oxygen was not a real problem. About a month ago some scientists had paid a visit to my Father, to inform him that they had found a way to produce enough oxygen for everyone. However, due to their excitement and ambition for another promotion, they made the mistake to say that in the living room where I was reading my book. He gave them a frightening look and demanded their discretion in his most formal and frightening voice. He showed them his office door and started walking in that direction.

I thank God that I was smart enough to pretend that I was buried in my book, as I felt my Father's look penetrating my skin. I kept on reading as if I had heard nothing. So, in his speech, I was expecting him to deliver good news, but instead he decided to lie - something I never understood and will never understand. It was then that I truly realized that the real problem in our society was human greed and not lack of oxygen. Not only did he lie to his people about living in the hardest of all situations, but he also deliberately gave an abundance of oxygen to the First Class members, who have done nothing to deserve it. “They were born to deserve it,” that was my Father's excuse, while in fact he was letting greed and power conquer his body. He seemed as if he had no control over his actions. “How can a person be so cruel and inconsiderate? How can he let people die? How could he sleep at night knowing that there are people who

die because of him?" I thought once again to myself - then even more than ever.

However, I reminded myself of Father's character. Not once has he brought flowers to Mother on Valentine's Day. Not once has he asked me about my feelings, or has he tried to console me when I am sad. Some nights I would stay awake and think of all these people who are forced to give up their life so that their children can stay alive more than themselves. I was terrified simply thinking about death and knowing that there are people who will die when they could be saved made me even more petrified. I would hug my covers with all of my force and cry silently; then, more than ever did I need my Father's shoulder to cry on, but I was reminded that this did not exist in my family, which made me cry even more.

After the living room incident I sometimes thought of him as a murderer, but I would then force myself to banish this thought, because it only made me even more terrified. But after having heard his speech, I am not sure if I will be able to sleep ever again. As for him, I'm sure he will continue snoring as always. When I heard those words echo through the main square, an immense wave of emotions hit me and mentally threw me off my chair; the rest of my body had learnt not to listen to my feelings when in public - it was one of the requirements of being the Mayor's daughter. Anger? Frustration? Fear? Sadness? Devastation? What must one feel when they realize that their Father indirectly kills innocent people? "Kills." "Kills," echoed in my mind. After all, maybe he was a murderer.

Being the Mayor's daughter, I had never truly experienced the suffering of others; all I could do was use my imagination, fueled by the few speeches I had attended, where the Second Class would unite and show its suffering face, begging for mercy. My reality as a First Class member was quite different. First Class members all lived in special houses that included filters that detoxicated the air inside, so they were not obliged to wear this special gel that kept the toxic air out of our skin pores. My Father's advisors even had oxygen ventilators in their houses, so they did not have to wear a mask in their house. In our house, apart from all these luxuries, we had also created a garden where gardeners grew edible and healthy food for us. We could also drink water that was not contaminated and eat like people used to, through our mouths.

The Second Class members, on the other hand, lived in filthy ghettos, where families were crammed in minute apartments, gasping for air and justice. They held their breath in order to make sure that they would have enough oxygen for the days to come and worked for almost nothing in the city's factories, where - quite ironically - oxygen bottles and special gels were manufactured. They had to keep their oxygen mask on and wear the special gel all the time, if they wished to survive, which meant that their survival was more expensive than that of the First Class members. They

▼  
*"Afford life," I thought to myself. Our ancestors have fought for the right of life so much that depriving someone from it today so that you can satisfy your greed can only be considered a crime, murder in cold blood.*

could not eat nor drink, as it required taking off their mask, and had to take all the necessary vitamins and nutrients, as well as keep hydrated, through special injections. Most of them had never felt water touching their lips, nor had they ever tasted chocolate. Children had to drop out of school and work in the factories in order to make sure that their family would be able to afford oxygen and thus afford life...

"Afford life," I thought to myself. Our ancestors have fought for the right of life so much that depriving someone from it today so that you can satisfy your greed can only be considered a crime, murder in cold blood. I never agreed with the ways of my Father, but I had no other choice than obey, nod and agree - or at least, pretend to agree.

Why is life like that? Ever since I was young, I always wanted to ask him that very question, but every time I entered his office, the terrifying look in his eyes made me freeze and regret even walking in there. I would give him a kiss to satisfy his need for affection and walk straight out of his office. Once I dared to ask my mother - who deep down is also tormented by that very question, but the years of pretending have made her the perfect wife for my Father. She grabbed my hand and dragged me to my room. "Never say that again in here!" she whispered - but would have shouted if she could. "Life is like that because we humans have embarked on the ship of greed and injustice. Times are hard but your Father has managed to offer us a great life despite our situation. So forget that question and just continue to smile and agree with him." And so this is what I did, up until the day love hit my heart's door.

I was lost in my thoughts when I saw him. He was hugging his mother and his little sister, trying to console them. I could barely discern his beautiful lips under his mask. His brown curls were falling perfectly over his eyes that were burning with anger and frustration. He seemed rather tall, but his body was ravaged by hunger and adversity. Yet, even at that time of disaster, when pain and despair were engraved on his face, he was still beautiful. To this day I cannot explain how I knew that, but his soul seemed pure and innocent, he seemed loving. I instantly felt connected to him. It was just like our hearts had escaped our bodies, the cages that were keeping them from being united, and were now one. I instantly felt my heartbeat rising, then the butterflies flew in my stomach and my cheeks blushed. An unexpected wave of happiness and anticipation hit me, and a smile was drawn on my face; it was impossible to stop. Even though I was in public, and that smile could carry many consequences, I could not control my body anymore. Love had taken over. My mind and my soul travelled to another dimension, one with no toxic atmosphere, where he and I were the only people - maybe this is how paradise is. It felt as if we were flying, as if we were dancing with the wind. I guess this is what they call love at first sight. ▼




Is it because we are trying to survive, or because we are trying to live? Nowadays, people are so caught up in pleasing others and achieving impossible expectations that they end up forgetting their own ambitions and goals. Unfortunately, we exist in a narcissistic and self-centered society, which drives individuals to neglect their dreams in order to be able to survive or rather to fit the ideal image of a citizen. Even though most of us acknowledge the situation and believe in self-investment and growth, we tend to prioritize comforting the masses instead of comforting our own selves from our fears and insecurities. We keep avoiding the fact that maybe life is more than just surviving or achieving. Maybe it's just about dreaming, hoping, trying. There are so many people around the globe that are forced to abandon their true aspiration by being controlled by their superiors. Employees mistreated by their employer, sons and daughters underestimated by their parents and trapped in their impossible expectations, husbands or wives abused by their partners, students who lost the path to their dreams...

I had written a poem some years ago and now, reading it again, I believe it perfectly represents some of these feeling and thoughts people might experience because of forgotten aspirations and fallen dreams.

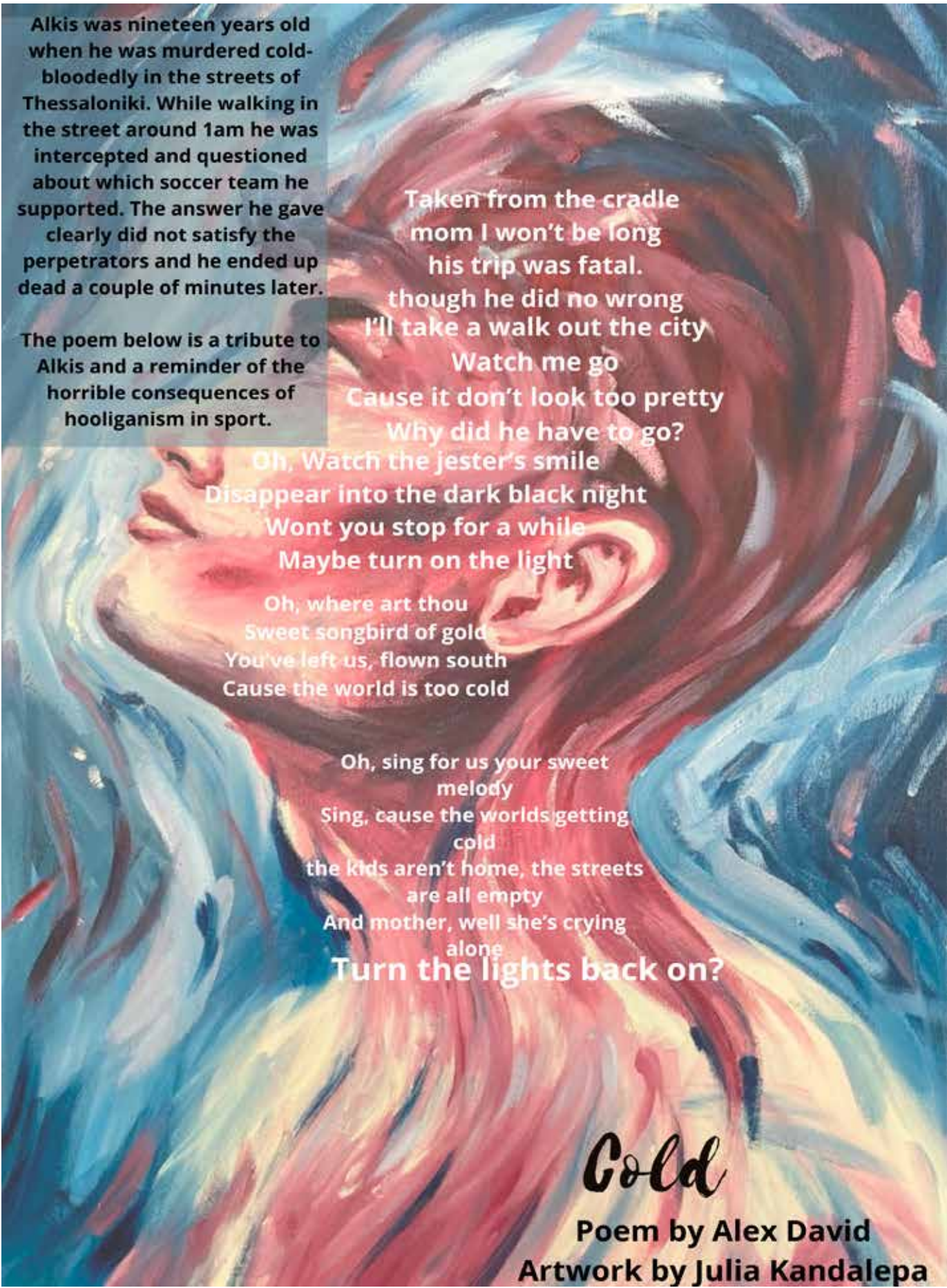
# Fallen

poem by Marianna Lyberopoulou  
Artwork by Julia Kandalepa



I scattered all my dreams in a burning pile  
And silently watched them as they went a mile  
How I hope I could have saved them instead  
For now, all my dreams have washed up dead  
It wasn't always like this  
There used to be SALVATION  
But the perilous pounding of a thousand bangs Turned my dreams  
into a mountain of dents  
And any experienced climber knows  
That any mountain is surmountable  
It seems to me however, they know nothing at all  
For they scattered all my dreams in a burning pile  
And silently watched them as they went a mile  
How I hope I could have saved them instead  
For now, all my dreams have washed up dead  
It wasn't always like this  
There used to be SALVATION  
But the perilous pounding of a thousand bangs Turned my dreams  
into a mountain of dents  
And any experienced climber knows  
That any mountain is surmountable  
It seems to me however, they know nothing at all  
For the mountain of pain is a giant ten feet tall  
I wonder if the bangers feel any shame  
After all, for the burning of dreams  
They are the ones to BLAME  
They take a troubling toll on one's self-esteem  
So, you see I had faith once  
Faith in my dreams  
For how would anyone survive without such peace?  
It is impossible; never-before seen  
A hopeless fool who couldn't dare to dream





Alkis was nineteen years old when he was murdered cold-bloodedly in the streets of Thessaloniki. While walking in the street around 1am he was intercepted and questioned about which soccer team he supported. The answer he gave clearly did not satisfy the perpetrators and he ended up dead a couple of minutes later.

The poem below is a tribute to Alkis and a reminder of the horrible consequences of hooliganism in sport.

Taken from the cradle  
mom I won't be long  
his trip was fatal.  
though he did no wrong  
I'll take a walk out the city  
Watch me go  
Cause it don't look too pretty  
Why did he have to go?

Oh, Watch the jester's smile  
Disappear into the dark black night  
Wont you stop for a while  
Maybe turn on the light

Oh, where art thou  
Sweet songbird of gold  
You've left us, flown south  
Cause the world is too cold

Oh, sing for us your sweet  
melody  
Sing, cause the worlds getting  
cold  
the kids aren't home, the streets  
are all empty  
And mother, well she's crying  
alone  
Turn the lights back on?

## *Cold*

Poem by Alex David  
Artwork by Julia Kandalepa





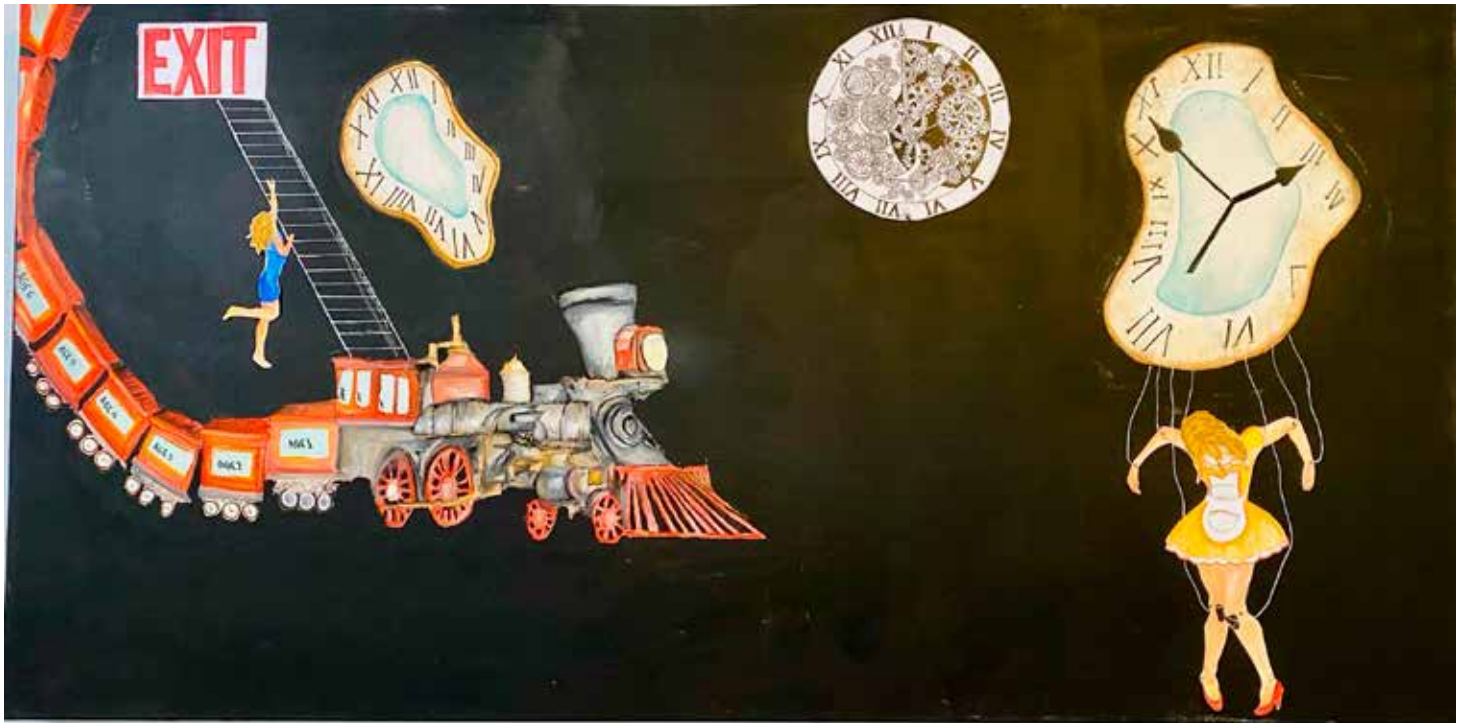
# Clouds

IOANNA  
MOURIKI

I find myself walking on the sidewalk, gazing at the big blue sky when I get that cool shiver in my chest, or maybe it's warm, I don't know. My eyes slowly follow the direction of the perfectly shaped clouds moving so quickly, it must be windy up there. They lead to the endless horizon of an upside-down ocean; I like to think of it that way sometimes. My eyes reach the point where the sky, meets the enormous mountains, that feeling I long for, that cool or warm feeling in my chest is starting to fade away, my gaze is still upwards though. I start feeling frightened as heavy lights are disturbing my sight. "No!" I groan and that's when it happens, numbness. I take a deep breath as I feel the last bit of my soul being slowly drowned out of my body. My sight is now faced downwards, towards the nearly destroyed sidewalk and my feet standing on it. As I look around I notice that everyone does the same, their gaze is directed to the ground I can almost see their faces, it's peculiar or maybe just ordinary, I don't know. Looking closer there is an object in their hands; it emits a strong blue-ish coloured light on their faces. I find myself totally and utterly confused. I reach for the pocket in my dark blue jeans and the exact same object appears in my hand, the screen opens up and suddenly everything turns blue. Or it might be yellow, I don't know. The blinding light from that flashing screen almost causes me to lose my sight, I wouldn't be able to look at the clouds then. I keep walking, although I'm not sure where my feet are taking me, but the blue light has captured my attention and makes me feel obligated to look at it. I keep walking and at some point, I find myself in front of the tall grey door of my house, it's dark outside and I question how fast time had gone by today. When did the sun go down? When did the moon come out? While I was gazing at the sky and the clouds it was still day. Maybe it was that blue-ish light that caused me to lose the sense of time, I don't know. What is time anyway? I'm confused again.

Days pass and the clouds are still moving so fast; I now start to think that maybe that's how time flows; quick like the speed of the clouds on a windy day. Now it's morning, I'm still on my bed but I don't have much until the blue-ish light catches me again. I'm heading to work as the first sound comes out of the uncanny object, I try to ignore it. It rings for a second time and I again take no notice. Then a third, a fourth, a fifth time. I feel the sound of its ring getting louder every time. It is almost unbearable. I'm feeling weak now. I take it out of the pocket of my dark blue jeans and the light appears again. It is so hard to resist to it, so appealing, so oddly seductive. I suddenly look up and find myself standing in front of the green door of my office. I think I lost the sense of time again, I don't know. The day passed calmly, I tried to finish off as early as possible, to get away from all the noises and all the lights of the city. The walk is always exhausting, but I can be reminded of the smell of the flowers, the sound of the wind in the trees, the view of the clouds in the sky and the feeling of werifesteria while I'm wandering longingly in the forest. I'm here. I take my shoes and my socks off, close my eyes and take a deep breath. It is a moment of absolute peace, until- no it can't be. How is it even possible? I hear this bizarre sound once more. My mind is filled with thrill and fear as the sound is getting louder and louder, it is now unbearable or maybe just bearable, I don't know. I take the uncanny object out of my pocket and before the blue-ish light reaches me, I close my eyes. "Make it go away!" I scream at the top of lungs, and I throw it as far away as possible. It shatters. I can breathe again. I can feel again. I sit down, below a tree, look at the big blue sky and gaze at the perfectly shaped clouds. It is windy once again.





Anna Gkioka

# “THE TRAIN”

By Anna Gkioka

**H**ave you ever heard the sound of a train? A train that runs on the rails and the engine sounds like a heartbeat, like a clock. I hear this alarming sound every day. I live on a train that never stops, it just runs constantly, and I hear it, I see it, I feel it running. There are many travelers on this train. As am I, a traveler, out of many. My parents got off the train a long time ago. Nobody knows what and how the outside is, and nobody wants to know but everyone is near the exit someday. Every year I change a wagon and every wagon is different.

**Wagon 16.** My name is Ophelia. I am 16 and I want to stop the train. The constant sound of the rails, the constant fear that each wagon I step in, could be the last. The thought that I have to live in it, haunts me. Or at least it haunted me. It stopped scaring me one cold day when the danger of my actions led me close to the exit. There I saw a young boy with a wide back and brown hair staring at the exit. He was physically here but mentally somewhere else. To this day I still don't know what he was thinking. I touched his shoulder; he startled and turned his head. I, then, stared at a hurt soul with lonely eyes. I sat beside him. The only thing I could hear was the sound of my teeth chattering from the cold and nothing else. The boy gave me his coat

▼  
*I live on a  
train that  
never stops,  
it just runs  
constantly,  
and I hear it,  
I see it, I feel it  
running.*

but kept silent and stared at the exit still. He asked me why I was here and once I told him that I wanted to stop the train he simply said it's impossible. I didn't say anything else because I didn't want to admit the truth, so I changed the subject and asked him the same question. "I, too, have come to stop the train, but unlike you I'm planning on stopping it just for me," he said but kept his head turned. I asked his name. "Odysseus" he said boldly. "Similar to the one from Homer?" I asked but he didn't reply so I kept talking. "Well my name is Ophelia and I have to announce that you are no longer a lonely traveler. Now you have me and it would be selfish of you to leave me alone. I know you are not selfish, otherwise you wouldn't've lent me your coat." He gave me an almost invisible smile that warmed me that cold day and answered back "No, nothing like the one from Homer's Odyssey." After that we became best friends and he was the only color I had in my life. Everyone else on the train was boring and grey. He was nothing like that, he was blue, similar to the sea that can be both calm and mysterious but at times deadly. I would talk, and he would listen. I would paint, and he would write. Life was good, and the train was no longer my concern.

**Wagon 18.** This wagon is quite different. The walls are darker, and the people are serious and quiet.



Ody said that everyone is older and mature, but I didn't understand why maturity demanded silence. But, what is more surprising with this wagon is that this time we have the ability to choose which wagon will be the 19th for us. Usually there was only one wagon but now there were countless. Ody told me that I should choose a wagon that would make me an artist, but that meant that I would have to leave him, something I was not ready to do. For the first time he became bold and serious with me and told me that we can no longer be friends. Was I too annoying? Did I do something wrong? The next day he entered wagon 19.34 and never turned back. When it was my time to choose, I was too depressed and chose a wagon with the most people on it, the most popular but boring one.

**Wagon 28.3.** Loneliness is a very mysterious thing. I am in a wagon that has the most travelers and yet I have never felt more alone in my entire life. In the last years I had to make many choices, and each was without a thought, I kept moving along with the crowd, without a purpose. I would just move like a clock or a train. My job is to repair old clocks. Those clocks which managed to stop time. I haven't painted in a long time. Everything is grey and the only thing I have is my thoughts, but they keep taking me back to wagon 16 and that cold night that became warmer when I saw his smile. But these thoughts haunt me now.

**Wagon 34.6.** The only thing I hear now are

the rails, the train, the clock. Or at least I used to. I was ready to enter a new wagon, accepting my fate and knowing that it would be grey once again. But for the first time in a long time, I saw colors. Somewhere in the crowd I saw the color blue. He didn't see me at first but when he realized who was he smiled as if he found hope and he hugged me, but I didn't hug him back. I was sitting awkwardly trying to avoid his eyes, knowing that if I stared at them, I wouldn't be able to look elsewhere. We sat down and talked. He talked to me about his life and the mistakes he

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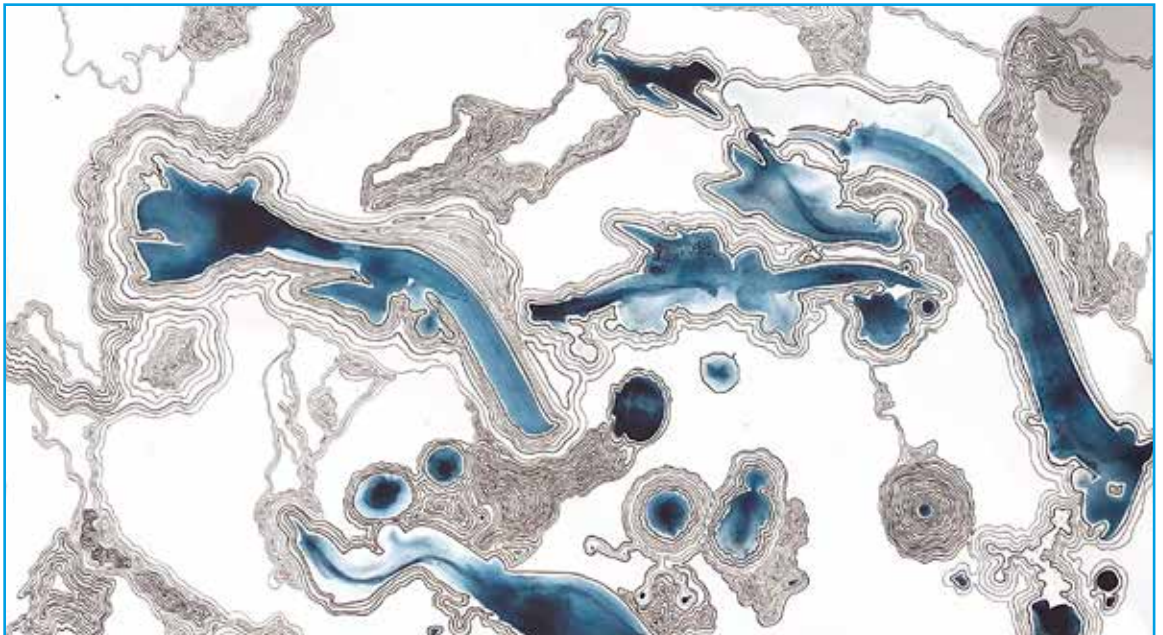
*The girl who made the possible impossible and made me love life and overcame her addiction with time. A girl innocent and sweet and as she would say, yellow. I fell in love with that girl until the day she stopped the train.*

made that led him to be in this wagon with me. But as we talked, I was serious, and he became more distant. "You've changed" he said and then gave me a book.

I held that book and Ody for the rest of my life. I kept it until the day I finally did stop the train. This book that was named after me and Odysseus kept me company. Not Homer's Odysseus. Then one day I woke up and saw the train stop in front of me and realized that he was right. The train doesn't stop, it just stops for you. But I don't care because on the ride I didn't hear the rails anymore. I spent my life with my best friend. I talked, and he listened. He wrote, and I painted.

**H**ave you ever heard the sound of the train? The train that runs on the rails and the engine sounds like a heartbeat, like a clock. I hear this sound every day. I live on a train that never stops, it just runs constantly, and I hear it, I see it, I feel it running. I am a lonely traveler who hated life and wanted to be on the train because it was impossible to love life. I kept telling myself "Jump, jump now, nothing's stopping you, you are alone, and you will keep making mistakes." But then a hand touched me and reminded me of the definition of the word "friend." She reminded me of what life is, and I kept thanking the train for not going faster and forcing me to be with her. I tried letting her go and let her make her own choices, because I thought that was what she wanted. It was the hardest time of my life. But then I found her, and I reminded who she was. The girl who made the possible impossible and made me love life and overcame her addiction with time. A girl innocent and sweet and as she would say, yellow. I fell in love with that girl until the day she stopped the train.

▼



Julia Kandalepa

# VERDER INC.

By Aspasia Bazakidou

COMING SOON!

**VERDER**  
THE DIMENSION  
OF IMAGINATION

*Because we care  
about you*

One day posters had mysteriously begun appearing in all the major cities around the world.

COMING SOON!

The posters read.

VERDER: THE DIMENSION OF  
IMAGINATION

‘Because we care about you.’

‘It’ll just be another “groundbreaking” app,’ Charlie’s wife said reclining on the sofa, pointing to another one of the mysterious posters visible through the living room window. Veruca had been unfazed by the ad at the time, just like all of Charlie’s friends had been. ‘Just another app with boring functions wrapped in an assortment of bright colors to distract you until the new “groundbreaking” app comes out. You wait and see.’ Charlie found the slogan of the new app particularly phony. ‘Because we care about you.’ He didn’t trust “Them” one bit, and he made a point out of that to anyone who would listen.

Soon the new app finally launched, only, to Charlie’s and Veruca’s surprise, it wasn’t just an app. It was everything; an entire universe with unlimited possibilities accessible only through a Verder headset, which could suddenly be conveniently purchased at even the smallest gas station. It was an entire alternative reality controlled by one big tech company. Charlie and his friends talked about how pathetic anyone who bought the headset must be, how insane they must be to flock to another reality where they’re probably observed and definitely defenseless. Then one day Auggie’s company gave out headsets to their entire staff because the new virtual reality was “a more practical workplace.” Afterward, Violet bought a headset to collect data for an article he was writing. Charlie’s boss bought one for his wife, and Veruca bought one for Charlie to poke fun at the boss. At first, nobody had taken their purchases seriously, but Charlie felt ill-at-ease by the forces at play nonetheless. The Verder kept expanding, more people bought their headset, and, somehow, the world seemed to gradually leave all their doubts behind.

Before he knew it Charlie was the only one at work who had not joined the Verder dimension- now he was missing out on important meetings and opportunities. His wife was constantly on Verder and the rare moments when she wasn’t all she did was talk about it, about how all her fantasies were coming to life, about how much

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better it would all be if he was by her side. His friends didn’t come to play basketball anymore because they preferred the comfort of Verder Fitness. Congregation was different now that Father William was only present as a hologram. The church seemed empty- everyone joined through Verder, but alas, Charlie couldn’t see them because he hadn’t bought the augmented reality glasses. Jump into Verder, go to work in Verder, meet friends in Verder, play games in Verder, find love in Verder, be what you want, do what you want, when you want. Everything was in Verder, life was in Verder, and Charlie felt alone on the other side. He didn’t understand how or why everyone just abandoned reality, abandoned him. But most importantly, and even though he’d deny it if anyone were to ask him, he felt curious. Sometimes he thought about trying it just once, but then squashed the idea faster than it had popped up in his mind, almost ashamed he ever had it. On one fateful night, however, as he lay sleepless in bed, he allowed himself to entertain the idea, and Vee was sound asleep, and nobody would ever find out and it would just be for a moment anyway.

He plugged in the headset. ‘Just for a minute to see what the fuss is all about,’ he told himself. ‘Just for an hour.’

When Charlie lifted the headset off his face, the first cracks of sunlight were peeking through the shutters. He froze in place; how could it already be morning? His hands flew to the headset still resting at the top of his head and as his stomach twisted with guilt, he threw it across the room. Mortified about how quickly time had gone by, he snuck back into bed with his wife, promising himself he would never touch that cursed piece of plastic ever again.

The weeks to come were no different from the routine Charlie had followed for most of his adult life, and yet he couldn’t shake the feeling that something was missing. He had travelled to a world oozing with life and people and returning to the abandoned “real” reality was making him depressed. Unbeknownst to him, he had been imprisoned, unable to reach the level of satisfaction only Verder could now provide. He knew what he needed. Just one more time, just to prove to himself that it wasn’t as great as he remembered, that he’d just gotten carried away by everyone else, that that headset was nothing more than an unimportant time-sucking machine.

After Vee had fallen asleep, Charlie put the headset



on once again. *A moment of disquiet, everything goes blurry, trying to take the headset off, and then... vibrant colors, everywhere.* He took his hands off the headset. Why had they been there in the first place? He couldn't remember. All that mattered was that he was flying now, he saw things much more clearly than from the ground. It's all okay. It can be, here in Verder. In Verder, they care about you. In Verder, "They" want to make everyone's dreams come true. For Verder, "They" have been subsidizing headset costs because They want everyone to have equal opportunities. In fact, the Verder store on Charlie's way to work had been offering discounts all week.

When he first bought his headset, he kept it a secret from his wife. He did not use it; he didn't even touch it. He felt silly for buying it in the first place. Then he thought about that feeling, about how he could belong to a group again. He'd already bought the headset and Verder wasn't so bad anyway, so why not? He put on his headset, and he went to work, and he went out with his friends, and he told them all that he was just borrowing his wife's equipment for the day. Then he did it all again the next day, and then the day after that, and soon he was telling his wife he was considering buying a headset for himself because of a conditional promotion at work. There was no promotion, but Charlie told himself that with all these new opportunities there was bound to be one soon.

Veruca was delighted that her husband was finally jumping into Verder. So delighted, in fact, that she began suggesting romantic trips to Paris, Seoul, Morocco and Atlantis. Charlie accepted after little protest about the dangers of Verder and travelling in false realities and after every trip his protests grew even weaker. He was finally beginning to realize that he was never really reluctant about Verder, and that he was just pretending to be to appear more sophisticated to his friends. He never *truly* had any problem with Verder! Why would he? It was the dimension of imagination, after all, and he had never been happier than he was in Verder!

Veruca's most recent proposition had been trying the newest Verder Feature: Verder Home. Charlie had agreed immediately. All their friends were on there already- it felt as though he hadn't seen them in weeks. Charlie and his Wife put on their headsets. The Verder world slowly fell into place around them. What a glorious feeling.

Hours flew by, and they were still online. Charlie was getting quite hungry, but nobody else seemed to realize how long it had been. Verder Home really did feel, exactly, like, home. He turned to Veruca. 'I'll go get dinner started. Don't be too long!'. He gave her a peck on the cheek and smirked. 'See you on the other side!'. She smiled calmly and whispered defeatedly: 'Oh, Charlie, no, there is no other side. This is it.' Charlie laughed awkwardly at her admittedly strange joke as he tried to take his headset off. But he couldn't. As the panic and



Julia Kandalepa

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guilt began settling in his stomach like they did the very first time he jumped in Verder, a warm feeling suddenly washed over him. He felt the attraction, the life, the satisfaction of Verder more deeply than he ever had and for a moment he felt inclined to stay. But suddenly, just as fast as all those emotions had come racing, they left, and control returned. He felt warm tears trickling down his face. 'Vee, what did you mean by that?' he heard himself whispering. No reply. Charlie looked around the room. All his friends had the same defeated expression as Veruca plastered on their faces. His initial doubts and suspicions about Verder were coming back to him and even though it was the first time in so long that Charlie could finally think for himself again, he felt unable to do anything other than look up at the infiniteness of the *Dimension of Imagination!* and scream at the top of his lungs: 'Let me out, let me out, please let me out, PLEASE, PLEASE,' but nobody around him heard him because they were far too weak, and the ones who did listen from up above would never set him free; their role now was simply to observe as Verder turned into their biggest success yet. Charlie sat down with his head in his palms, tears streaming down his flustered cheeks, frantically contemplating his situation.

The warm feeling circulated through him again. Oh and it was so warm, unlike any feeling he'd ever had before, and all he had to do was accept it and it would never go away. He loved that feeling. And this Verder home, really did feel so much like home. He thought about how much They must care about him to build him such a nice *home*. He felt so safe, then, knowing someone cared for him, that he forgot what he was anxious about before. Here, he was protected. Perhaps he should stay a little longer.



# ENGLISH B STUDENTS SPEAK THEIR MIND



AS PART OF THE ENGLISH B HL curriculum students have to explore different text types. They learn how to adapt each text type to the target audience, while also working on the language skills that will allow them to deliver a text that is appropriate in both style and language.

ON WEDNESDAY 13 APRIL 2022 English B HL students (group 1-2) took part in a mini activity. Each student prepared a speech on a topic they felt passionate about and delivered it to their classmates, teacher and guests. The topics of the speeches covered global

issues (from world hunger to the prejudiced treatment of all Russians following the war in Ukraine), human rights issues (from how women find their voice to child labour) and a vast array of other contemporary issues (from social manipulation to dyslexia).

GUESTS WERE PARTICULARLY IMPRESSED by the commitment of the students, the scope of their interests and the delivery of their speeches. The award for best speaker at the conference went to Irene Protopapadaki who spoke passionately about the prejudice faced by musicians.

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

## What is **music** after all?

By Irene Protopapadaki



Music is art, the ultimate art form. Music is magic! We can't see it or touch it, but it touches us in ways we'd never have imagined possible. If you think about it, music is one of the most important things in the world. Can you imagine your life without music? We can't even watch a simple film or go to a party without music... So, if music plays such an important role in our daily lives, the question is: why are people so prejudiced against musicians and music itself?

When I was about fourteen I decided I wanted to become a musician myself. I had been playing the guitar for a little over a year and it was my most favourite thing in the world! As my classmates were socializing or studying for school, I was playing the guitar. I even started waking up at 5:45 so that I could play before school. The only time I wasn't playing was when I was listening to music. I started off with Vivaldi and Bach and worked my way up to Metallica and Iron Maiden.

At first, people thought this "musician thing" was just a phase, hoping it would soon pass. But as time went by, I just got more and more obsessed with music, so people figured I was quite serious about my ambitions. That's when everybody got REALLY worried. "Are you nuts?!" people would ask. "How are you going to make a living?!" You'll end up playing on the street!" It took some time, but my friends, family, and teachers eventually got used to the idea of my wanting to be a musician once they realised how good music was for me. They couldn't ignore the fact that since music became a part of my life, I was happy all the time and I



started to have confidence and believe in myself.

However, when I mention my professional aspirations to people who don't know me, they look at me as if I told them I wanted to be... an alien! After the initial shock is over, most of them, especially grown-ups, ask what else I'm going to study, apart from music. This is a question I never quite understood, why do people assume I'll have to combine my musical studies with something else? I mean, they'd never ask an architect what they do besides architecture...

Music is a full-time job; it can be MUCH more than just a hobby. A musician works just as hard as a doctor, a lawyer, a businessman, or any other professional. I think that when people hear the word "musician" they picture some sort of lazy person that sits around in their garage all day, waiting for inspiration to strike. And that could not be further from the truth. Musicians work VERY hard to produce the kind of sound you hear at a concert or when you turn on the radio. They don't just wake up in the morning and sound like that, it takes hundreds of hours of practice, swollen fingers or sore throats, and many, MANY sacrifices. In fact, I believe music to be even more than a full-time job... it is a way of life. An incredibly arduous way of life.



*If music plays such an important role in our daily lives, the question is:*

*why are people so prejudiced against musicians and music itself?*

I think the reason why most people underestimate music as a profession is that it doesn't necessarily guarantee a good and stable salary. But let's be honest here... is there really any profession that does? There are people who have graduated from medical school and work at a fast-food restaurant (not that there's anything wrong with that). After all, if you do something you don't enjoy, you'll never be any good at it, and... what's the point?

Don't get me wrong, I'm not saying it's a bad thing to have music as a hobby and do something else for a living. But only if that's what you truly prefer, and not what society has made you believe is right.

Music has existed ever since the beginning of mankind and nothing is ever going to replace it because we simply can't live without it. So that makes musicians some of the most important people in the world, as they are the ones behind it all. So instead of telling them what they have dedicated their lives to is "just a hobby" and making them feel mediocre, let's support them and thank them for the tunes we whistle to when we're happy, the songs we cry to when we're sad, the music that makes us who we are.

Thank you for your attention.



*"Mist", Julia Kandalepa*

# Atropos: the third of fates

Poem by Eftychia Christodoulou

Artwork by Iro Mavrou



The threads of fate  
are pulled  
by harsh, calloused fingers.  
They latch on to the  
dismembered fabrics  
at their lowest point  
tensing until their tips are white  
and their blood has fled.  
They move downwards in  
choppy motions  
until the blood crowds around  
them again  
tentatively at first  
and then trickles out  
caressing the skin  
carrying it across the threads  
as they emit their anguished  
cries.  
The fingers pull and  
the crimson threads tense and  
steam  
until they  
  
break  
leaving a cacophonous melody  
behind.



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