

# The Pupils' Voice

Your Right to Know

March 2021 - Edition 27

## Euroschool

L'uniforme scolaire	3
Die Reifeprüfung (I)	4
21 Advantages of Lockdown	5

## Entertainment

Influencers	7
Sherlock Holmes	8

## Featured

Fake News	9
Dreams	10
Cyberbullying	11
Horoscopes	15
Me Time	13



Illustration:  
Malvina Lilieholm

## Editorial

Downfall in Happiness	16
-----------------------	----

## Fiction

In the Woods	16
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Illustration: Blanka Herbály

COVID-19 affects all of us

## Having COVID-19 as a Teenager



Illustration: Blanka Herbály

By now we all know we're currently living through a crucial moment in history. By now we all know that in the future, historians will be studying our time carefully, maybe even fastidiously. By now we all know the pandemic is not a joke. Well, that's what you'd expect from everyone but unfortunately, people are still treating this pandemic carelessly and acting as if they are unaffected by it...

Do we need to be afraid?

## Artificial Intelligence

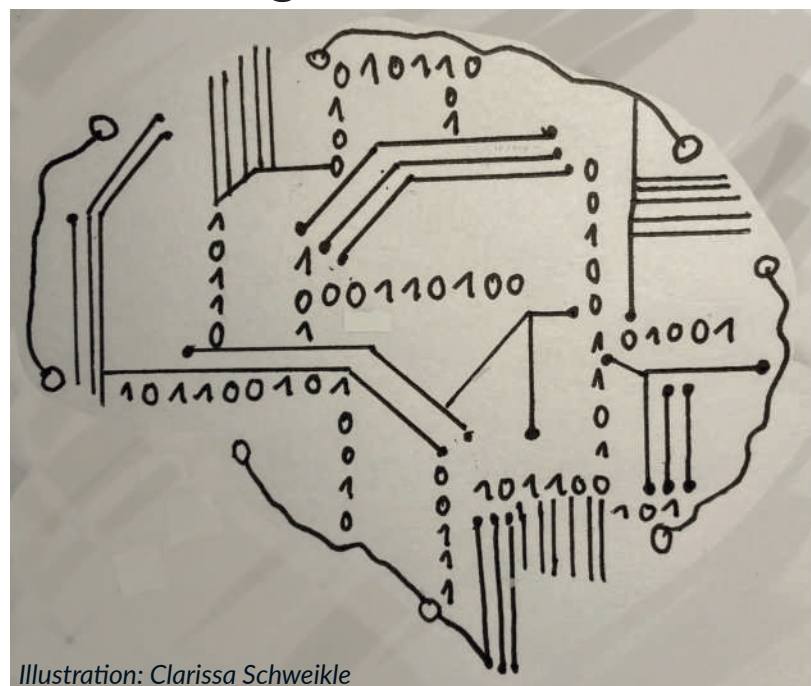


Illustration: Clarissa Schweikle

AI has been the subject of fascination for decades now and has often played the main role in apocalyptic dystopian films like "I, robot". Now that it has progressed far enough for us to see it being used in roles formerly occupied by people, are any of the fears we have legitimate? If so, is it truly ethical to pursue AI?

Page 6 ►

Page 12 ►

## Chief Editor's Column

Jan

Dear readers,

the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic has been omnipresent in our lives for one year now. Unfortunately, the vaccination campaign is progressing slowly and new mutations raise fears of even more deaths. As students, we must continue to patiently endure mask wearing, social distancing and seemingly endless TEAMS video calls. Even though all of us are tired of these measures, they are absolutely necessary, as Ioana points out in her article. Right now, it is simply not the time to back down. Meanwhile, Konstantinos demonstrates in his piece that lockdown and homeschooling also have advantages – let's just hope that we won't enjoy them for much longer!

Nowadays, many teenagers follow the news mainly on the web, especially social media. It is crucial to note, however, that not every source is reliable. In Featured, Blanca and Julia emphasise the threat posed by fake news and give you valuable tips how to stay "informed, not misinformed".

While scrolling through Instagram, you might have already wondered how influencers can afford all the most expensive brands. Well, Sofia reveals that all that glitters is not gold. Read on to find out about empty boxes, photo studios and voice recordings added to prefabricated videos.

If you need some distraction in these pandemic times, why not read a captivating detective story? In the Entertainment section, Eleonora gives us some background information about the most famous detective of all, Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes. Or you sit down in a cosy armchair with a cup of tea to escape to the fantastic world of Cailin's beautiful short story *Into the Woods* (Fiction).

Lastly, I would like to introduce the 13 Stars online newspaper. On the 13 Stars newspaper website, students from all European Schools, among them some Voice journalists, publish their articles on a variety of topics. Make sure to check out this exciting joint project.

As always, do not hesitate to contact us on Facebook, Instagram or via email (newspaper.euroschoool@gmail.com). We would appreciate your feedback and suggestions and are open to guest contribution. I am convinced that this newspaper should be a medium for all students to voice their opinions.

The whole The Pupils' Voice team wishes you a good read.

See you next time – with or without masks,

Jan



## Making the best out of the BAC year

## BAC Committee Elections

In a spectacular display of democracy, the 2021 Bac Committee was formed on Friday, January 29th. Tom Chalabi Prat was elected Bac president by a narrow margin of one vote. A vote that triggered a recount. Similarly, two vice presidents, Lorenz Habsburg, and Iakovia Klotsonis were elected, Habsburg with a one-vote margin. Initial exit polls projected the possible victory of Iliana Nameche. Her heartfelt speech swayed many previously committed supporters of the Chalabi presidency. Giacomo Pino was automatically elected as treasurer with no challenger and gave his speech in a Kanye 2020 shirt, which might be an indication that as treasurer he will follow a policy of fiscal conservatism, although it is too early to say. Thomas Rosser was elected secretary with a "huge majority" (according to Lux II poll worker, Didier Toussaint), an unsurprising result as the only other candidate did not attend the election.

The president-elect will now face the challenge of unifying a polarized school, a fitting microcosm reflecting the world around us. If his Val T endeavors are any indication, the new president will bring transparency and a strong social media presence to the Bac Committee. As the official ballots are kept secret, we can mostly rely on informally conducted exit polls. It's safe to say that representatives of the Greek section voted as a somewhat unified block for Nameche, and there was a pronounced gender split with strong male support for Chalabi. The Danish section had a historic, zero percent turnout.

A common talking point amongst candidates for all positions was making the best of our Bac year despite the constraints of the pandemic. The organization of the Bal du Bac, in particular, came up during many of the speeches. Whether it will eventually happen or not will undoubtedly influence the legacy of this year's BAC Committee. The 2021 Baccom began its operation on Monday, February 1st with especially challenging circumstances as they seek to give the class of 2021 an unforgettable last year with a historically narrow mandate and the limitations posed by an ongoing pandemic.

Peter Domokos



## Effacer les différences ou être à la mode

### L'uniforme à l'école

Après avoir lu Harry Potter, j'ai découvert que les élèves de certaines écoles portaient des uniformes. Les mangas m'ont montré les écoliers au Japon ont la même règle. Je me suis alors demandée « Pourquoi n'est-ce pas le cas à l'école européenne ? ». La direction de l'école l'aurait envisagé, en a discuté mais n'a finalement pas retenu l'idée.

Pour ma part, même si je préfère que tout le monde soit libre de s'habiller comme il le souhaite, je m'interroge sur la raison pour laquelle ces pays ou ces écoles imposent le port de l'uniforme.

Depuis l'antiquité, l'uniforme (qui était d'abord utilisé par les légions romaines) sert à renforcer la discipline et l'ordre et permet de différencier les armées du peuple. Il a été adopté dans les écoles anglaises les plus pauvres au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle et apparaît au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle dans les écoles françaises ; il imite alors l'uniforme militaire : cravate, veste, et pantalon. L'uniforme scolaire permet initialement d'offrir aux enfants démunis des vêtements corrects, mais il permet également d'effacer les différences entre les élèves, riches ou pauvres. Et enfin, il constitue une marque d'identité forte pour l'école : un Gryffondor ne peut ainsi être confondu avec un Serpentard !

Ici à l'école européenne, nous ne portons pas d'uniforme... mais pourtant, si on regarde bien autour de soi, on peut remarquer que quasiment tout le monde est habillé de la même façon : jeans, t-shirt, baskets. Certains aiment toutefois se démarquer, mais on a quand même tous une certaine tendance au conformisme. Même si nous ne portons pas d'uniforme, nous avons une envie à vouloir marquer notre identité à travers notre façon de nous habiller, mais nous le faisons souvent de la même façon pour être à la mode.

Même si nous n'avons pas d'uniforme, le règlement intérieur de l'école nous oblige tout de même à porter une tenue vestimentaire correcte. Pour autant, ce qu'est une tenue correcte n'est pas défini, hormis le fait que « Les vêtements ou accessoires comportant des messages discriminatoires ou faisant la promotion de produits illégaux sont interdits. » L'école pense même à créer des sweats à son image pour créer un sentiment de communauté et de fierté d'appartenir à cette école.

Esther Godefroid



Illustration: Blanka Herbály

## Tous ensemble sauvons la planète !

### Pédaler pour la planète

Avez-vous déjà envisagé de faire partie de la solution, de sauver la planète, de nous sauver tous ? Auriez-vous pensé par exemple à enfourcher votre vélo le matin pour aller à l'école ?

Si vous n'y avez pas encore songé, c'est



Illustration: Leyre Schulenburg

qu'il est grand temps

pour vous de lire cet article... Peut-être que les conseils du jeune gagnant de la première édition du Bike to School Challenge (Benjamin Bouquin - S4FRC - LUX1) vous feront changer d'avis sur le magnifique vélo rouge qui repose en paix dans votre garage, et qui pourrait pourtant s'avérer très utile...

#### Bonjour Benjamin, pourquoi avez-vous décidé de participer au Bike to School Challenge ?

Cela fait longtemps que je vais à l'école à vélo, donc la seule différence pour moi était de calculer les kilomètres que je faisais, puis de les envoyer depuis mon e-mail. Cela avait également l'air sympa.

#### Utilisez-vous votre vélo pendant toute l'année ? Et pour aller à l'école ?

Oui.

#### Même quand il fait mauvais temps ?

Aussi.

#### Votre maison, est-elle très loin de l'école ?

Pas très loin, autour des 7 minutes. Je passe toujours devant la maison d'un ami, pour aller à l'école avec lui (à vélo, bien évidemment).

#### Vous roulez sur le trottoir ou sur la route ?

La plupart du temps sur la route, mais, depuis ma maison, pratiquement tout le trajet se fait sur une piste cyclable.

#### Considérez-vous dangereux le fait de rouler sur la route ?

Pas vraiment, mais le casque est nécessaire, ainsi que les lumières pour rouler le soir. Si c'est une grande route avec beaucoup de circulation (, sans piste cyclable), alors là oui, je roule plutôt sur le trottoir.

#### À votre avis, les conducteurs des voitures sont-ils respectueux envers les vélos, sur la route ?

Ça dépend, mais si nous faisons attention et sommes également respectueux, ils auront plutôt tendance à



nous rendre la pareille.

### **Vous est-il déjà arrivé d'avoir un pneu crevé ?**

Oui, même plusieurs fois, mais pas en allant à l'école.

### **Que pensez-vous des vélos avec assistance électrique ?**

Ça correspond bien au profil du Luxembourg, j'en utilise d'ailleurs pour parcourir de plus longues distances.

### **Y a-t-il un endroit à l'école pour garer votre vélo ?**

L'école a placé des râteliers, dont certains sont couverts. Mais la sécurité n'est pas vraiment garantie. En particulier, il conviendrait d'améliorer la sécurité des plateformes pour vélos.

### **Que diriez-vous à un élève qui hésite encore à aller à l'école à vélo ?**

Je lui conseillerais de se procurer un bon vélo bien adapté, et de s'équiper d'un casque, en prenant toutes les mesures de précaution nécessaires. Enfin, il doit y prendre plaisir et encourager des amis à le faire !

Il ne vous reste plus qu'à prendre part à la prochaine édition du Bike to School Challenge, qui devrait avoir lieu plus tard cette année, lorsque les conditions météo seront meilleures. En attendant, vous pouvez toujours vous entraîner, car votre vélo pourrait attendre, mais pas le changement climatique !

Inés Peyro Nunez

## **Stillstand, Reform und Flickenteppich**

### **Die Reifeprüfung (I)**

1800-1914

In der Vorweihnachtszeit stellen sich alle Schüler der Jahrgänge S4-S6 ihren Semesterprüfungen, die meist kurz als Compos bezeichnet werden. So manch einem Schüler mag der Sinn dieser Prüfungen nach einer durchgelernten Nacht verborgen bleiben. Letztlich haben die Compos jedoch eine Daseinsberechtigung: Sie dienen als Vorbereitung für das Bakkalaureat, dem Äquivalent des deutschen Abiturs. Seit über 200 Jahren weisen Jugendliche in unserem Nachbarland mithilfe der Reifeprüfung ihre Studierfähigkeit nach. Grund genug, um sich der Geschichte des Abiturs zu widmen, in der sich auch die Entwicklung des deutschen Bildungssystems spiegelt.

Im späten Mittelalter und zu Beginn der Moderne bestimmten die Universitäten alleine und ohne festgelegte Kriterien, welche Studenten sie aufnahmen. Im späten 18. Jahrhundert stieg die Zahl der Studenten in Preußen allerdings stark an, da viele

Söhne des aufstrebenden Bürgertums hofften, mithilfe einer Immatrikulation dem rigiden Militärdienst zu entkommen. Als Konsequenz dieses Zuwachses an angehenden (oft ungeeigneten) Akademikern sank das Niveau an den Universitäten. 1788 reagierte der preußische Kultusminister Karl von Zedlitz, indem er ein Abiturreglement ausarbeitete und veröffentlichte. In diesem Dokument wurde erstmalig die Abgangsprüfung in ganz Preußen geregelt. Eine signifikante Aufwertung erfuhr die Reifeprüfung 1834, als in der Hohenzollern-Monarchie ein Reifezeugnis einer höheren Schule als Voraussetzung für eine Immatrikulation festgelegt wurde. Außerdem legte das Kultusministerium den genauen Ablauf der Prüfungen fest.

Im August des folgenden Jahres mussten sich die ersten Primaner den Abschlussprüfungen stellen. In der preußischen Rheinprovinz absolvierten die Schüler zunächst 3 fünfstündige Klausuren in Deutsch, Latein und Mathematik. Es folgten die schriftlichen Übersetzungen deutscher Texte ins Lateinische und

Französische, sowie griechische Texte ins Deutsche (jeweils 2-3 Stunden). Im September standen die schon damals gefürchteten mündlichen Prüfungen in 7 (!) Fächern an. Im Vergleich zu diesem Programm kann man das heutige Europäische Abitur

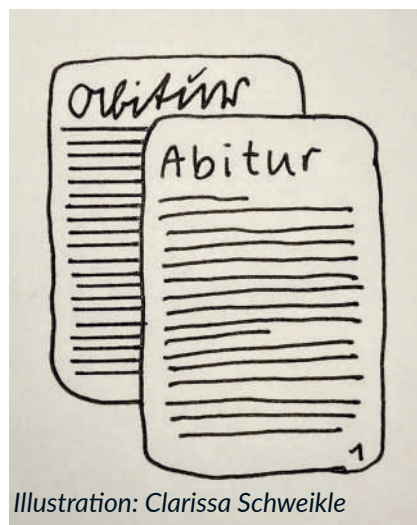


Illustration: Clarissa Schweikle

getrost als Spaziergang bezeichnen! Und irgendwann hatte auch der junge Karl Marx aus Trier den Prüfungsmarathon hinter sich. Er bestand den Vorläufer der Abiturprüfung mit Auszeichnung. Ob er seinen „löblichen Ansätzen“ (Lehrerkommentar) im späteren Leben gerecht geworden ist, hängt sicherlich von der Perspektive des Betrachters ab.

Zweifelsohne war Marx jedoch ein Mitglied einer exklusiven Bildungselite, deren Sprösslingen die Reifeprüfung vorbehalten war. Bis ins späte 19. Jahrhundert lag der Anteil der Abiturienten bei deutlich unter 1 % des Jahrgangs. Meist scheiterte ein Besuch des Gymnasiums für Jungen aus unteren Klassen an dem hohen Schulgeld, das viele weiterführende Schulen einforderten. Selbst 1960 machten die Gymnasiasten lediglich 6 % der Schulabgänger aus. Für viele Mädchen

blieb der Besuch des Gymnasiums derweil ohnehin illusorisch. Erst 1896 legten die ersten Schülerinnen in Preußen ihre Reifeprüfung am Luisengymnasium in Berlin ab. Trotz ihres Abschlusses blieben ihnen die Türen der Universitäten aber versperrt. Zu dieser Zeit durften Frauen nur mit einer ministeriellen Sondergenehmigung studieren.

Während Bildung in der preußischen Politik langsam, aber sicher an Bedeutung gewann, war eine intensive Debatte unter den Gelehrten Berlins über die Schule bereits in vollem Gange. Zunächst prägte das neuhumanistische Bildungsideal Wilhelm von Humboldts die preußischen Gymnasien. Humboldt, der Leiter der preußischen Kultur- und Bildungsverwaltung, maß den Inhalten und Werten der Antike besondere Bedeutung zu und machte sie zum Mittelpunkt des Unterrichts. Im Alltag der Primaner spiegelte sich dieser Schwerpunkt in der Betrachtung „alter“ Sprachen, also Griechisch und Latein, wider. Außerdem trug Humboldts Einfluss dazu bei, dass Lehrer als Beamte und nicht mehr als Geistliche gesehen wurden. Die Bedeutung der Religion, deren Kirchenvertreter jahrhundertlang ein Wissensmonopol ausgeübt hatten, nahm stark ab.

Ab den 1850er-Jahren erfolgte eine Abkehr von neuhumanistischen Bildungsvorstellungen in Deutschland, da viele Schulen sich vermehrt auf formale Ziele konzentrierten. Ein Grund für diese Neuausrichtung war die Beobachtung, dass die meisten Schüler keineswegs von einer altklassischen Bildung profitierten. Der Gymnasiallehrer Hermann Köchly hielt hierzu fest, dass sich der Unterricht häufig auf sinnloses Lateinreden und -schreiben beschränkte. Der allgegenwärtige Nationalismus im jungen Kaiserreich versetzte dem Humanismus in den Schulen schließlich den Todesstoß. Im Jahre 1900 wurden die Oberrealschule und das Realgymnasium dem Gymnasium gleichgestellt. Kaiser Wilhelm II. forderte, man solle „junge nationale Deutsche erziehen und nicht junge Griechen und Römer“.

Die Bildung war nun vollends unter dem Einfluss der Politik. Der Reifeprüfung standen bewegte Zeiten bevor.

*Im zweiten Teil dieses Artikels, der in der nächsten Ausgabe erscheint, erfährt Ihr, wie sich die zwei Weltkriege, die Nachkriegszeit und die Teilung Deutschlands auf die Reifeprüfung auswirkten.*

Jan Hübel

Always look at the bright side of life...

## 21 Positive Things About Lockdown and Homeschooling



Illustration: Blanka Herpály

The coronavirus pandemic has completely transformed our lives. Lockdown, social distancing, teleworking, and homeschooling mean that we don't socialize or spend time with our friends the way we used to. Far worse, however, is that many people all over the world are suffering the serious consequences of this deadly virus, both in respect to their health and financial situation. But have you ever considered the positive aspects of COVID-19? Because there are many. In these first days of 2021, I've put together a list of them.

- 1) You get to spend more time with your family.
- 2) You protect the environment by avoiding unnecessary transport, which causes pollution and contributes to climate change.
- 3) You can wake up later in the morning.
- 4) You don't need to wear hundreds of layers of clothes to go to school on a winter day (especially if you are South European).
- 5) You can be barefoot while attending virtual class.
- 6) You have more time to develop your creativity and imagination.
- 7) You can discover funny things, like your grandma using Instagram or your grandpa streaming on YouTube.
- 8) You gain respect for doctors and what they offer to the world (even though they were not your favourite people to visit before).
- 9) You have more free time for PlayStation.
- 10) You learn to appreciate the small things that make you happy and motivate you.
- 11) You come to understand, more than ever, how important your friends are to you.
- 12) You become an ICT expert.

- 13) Unexpectedly, homework seems a lot easier.
- 14) You get to know your neighbourhood better.
- 15) You realise how much you enjoy hiking in the woods with your family.
- 16) You learn to empathise with people.
- 17) You understand what it is like to be far from your loved ones.
- 18) You mature through a life changing experience, which affects every single person in the world.
- 19) You learn to appreciate the value of positive thinking and optimism.
- 20) You find that you are stronger and more resilient than you thought.
- 21) Last but not least, you can look forward to the first big "after corona" party with all your friends!

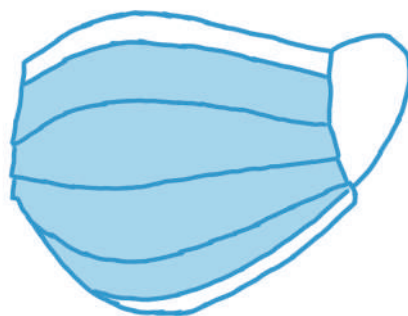
Konstantinos Sortikos

COVID affects all of us

## The Reality of Having COVID as a Teenager

By now we all know we're currently living through a crucial moment in history. By now we all know that in the future, historians will be studying our time carefully, maybe even fastidiously. By now we all know the pandemic is not a joke. Well, that's what

Illustration: Malvina Lilieholm



you'd expect from everyone but unfortunately, it's not reality. People are still treating this pandemic carelessly and acting as if they are unaffected by it. Egotism is rampant among people in this daunting time when we should all be selfless, protecting those who are much more vulnerable than we are.

Perhaps the most disheartening thing about this fact, apart from the careless disregard people have for other's health, is that this negligence is most common among young people - the people you'd expect to be the most involved in helping this pandemic pass. You might ask yourself why this is important now, considering the fact that vaccines have just started being distributed to the general population, but this question in itself would prove to be part of the problem. The fact that we have vaccines does not alter the necessary measures that we have to take.

Another excuse that I have heard in abundance among teenagers when they were confronted with the reality and gravity of their actions was: "Well it wouldn't affect

me anyways since I'm young.". While that again is just blatant egotism to the nth degree, it is also very untrue. Experts have already confirmed this but as it's not believed by many I will confirm and share my personal experience with COVID and how it has affected me and my family.

I tested positive on the 3rd of January and I'm writing this article on the 16th of January. These dates will turn out to be quite important later. I got COVID from my father who contracted the virus from our neighbour. He had met him briefly outside, while standing apart and had a 30 second conversation with him. A few days later my father started feeling unwell and received a text message from the neighbour telling him that he had COVID. Before hearing from him, we were all sure that my father had a cold considering the fact that we had been out on the balcony the night before to watch the fireworks. He was just feeling ill but was not coughing or displaying any of the usual symptoms. Remember to never base it on the symptoms, the virus is too unpredictable for you to be able to determine whether you have it or not.

After my dad found out, we all decided to get tested via a special testing facility that allows you to get tested from home, so we would not endanger anyone else. We found out we all had COVID apart from my mother, so we decided to

self-isolate. My sister and I thought that since we were so young it would not affect us too much, but we were very wrong. I started feeling very, very sick. I didn't have any energy at all and had to lie in bed for most of the day, but I faced an additional problem: I had to attend online school and keep up with lots of schoolwork. The stress of school coupled with my evolving sickness during the first week is probably the reason why I'm still not well now, 2 weeks after I tested positive.

In my experience, this sickness was unlike any other. I didn't have any symptoms like coughing or sneezing or anything like that. I had a fever but only for 3 days. The rest of the time I only had very painful muscle aches and the loss of my ability to smell and taste. That may sound quite manageable, but the real problem with this virus is that it feels like you have completely lost all of your energy. I felt as if I couldn't do anything for a week and a half. I would just lay in bed and sleep. I couldn't focus on anything, not schoolwork, not books nor



movies. It was terrible. Even now, as I'm writing this article, I'm obliged to take breaks every now and then since I'm still very weak.

The loss of my taste and smell felt very bizarre. Everything tasted like nothing. It's unexplainable because when I first heard of this symptom, I thought "What do you mean it tastes like nothing; what does nothing taste like?". To answer that question, nothing tastes really peculiar because it's as if you aren't eating anything, yet you are. I haven't been able to think of a better way of describing it. Overall, it's not a good experience. As of now I have mostly recovered my taste but still not my smell.

In conclusion, COVID is bad no matter how young or old you are. Of course, I'm very thankful for the fact that I got off so easy when I see so many constantly suffering and I am aware that people have it way worse than I did. So, if you are one of those people who say that COVID wouldn't affect them -just stop. COVID is still very serious and people are still dying.

As time passes, it becomes increasingly more difficult to keep people at home and following the guidelines. Everyone wants to party, go out, and see 100 different people at once and of course, it would be lovely if we could all go back to the way life used to be, but as of right now we can't.

Please be considerate of everyone's health. We're all in the same boat and it would be nice if we all had the initiative to put other people first for once.

Ioana Haratau



We are sorry...

## Dad Jokes

What do you call a factory that sells passable products? A satisfactory!

What do Santa's elves listen to as they work? Wrap music!

I invented a new word today: Plagiarism!

All that glitters is not gold

## Influencers Who Pretend to Be Rich

Photograph: Maia Tanasa



There are those who use Photoshop, those who rent luxury sets passing them off as their holiday, and those who buy empty boxes pretending they are gifts from brands.

Becoming a successful influencer is not a bad way to accumulate wealth. A market survey conducted in 2020 revealed that having 42,575 followers, considering sponsorship deals and advertising earnings, is enough to rack up a small salary - while the influencer marketing industry, in general, is expected to be worth over 15 billion dollars (over 12 billion euros) by 2022. The "virtual influencer" Lil Miquela would earn more than 10 million dollars (eight million euros) a year and is not even made of flesh and blood.

But there is a problem: "becoming a successful influencer" is not as simple as it seems. Being witty, or "personable" online only works up to a point; if you want to enter the Olympus of blue ticks, you need an exaggerated dose of luck, an appearance in a reality show, or some other type of divine intervention. For some, this is where the "fake well-being" industry comes into play.

Vloggers who use Photoshop to place themselves on beautiful beaches or on a shopping spree, to make their audience believe that they are really rich and therefore worthy of attention, are not exactly new. The same thought process applies to Instagram, where people follow rich influencers and celebrities for a daily dose of aspirational content. And you don't need to be truly rich: if you can

What did the Ranch say when someone opened the refrigerator door? "Close the door, I'm dressing!"

Why do trees seem suspicious on sunny days? They just seem a little shady!

If two vegans get in a fight, is it still considered a beef?

Elisa Lazzaroli

project a sense of opulence, followers will come anyway.

And for those not particularly good at Photoshop, there are other ways to achieve this. In September 2020, for example, photos of influencers who had rented a photo studio in Los Angeles set up to look like the inside of a private jet had circulated a lot. For \$ 64 (€ 52) an hour, they could pretend they had booked an exclusive flight and write captions like "head in the clouds" - while boasting that they could afford a private jet. In China, there is an even cheaper option. For only 6 yuan (about 1 euro), you can have a recording of your voice added to a stock video of expensive cars, tropical landscapes and mountains of money, ready to be uploaded to your Instagram stories.

If you search for "empty box" on Depop, you will find hundreds of results. In an interview with Input Mag, an anonymous retailer of designer products said there has recently been a spike in demand for empty boxes from big names - such as Hermes, Pandora, and Tiffany. Her clientele would be mostly influencers. "At first I thought it was because people wanted to keep other things in the house or recycle them as gift boxes for someone," she told Input. "I didn't know they were used for Instagram shots."

While hoarding empty boxes may seem like a nerd thing, according to the seller interviewed by Input Mag, one of the influencers who bought some Pandora boxes from her now has several commercial deals with luxury brands. This facade of opulence is by no means a surefire way to close real deals with luxury brands, according to Scott Guthrie, an independent influencer consultant. "Generally you can understand that — there is always something 'strange'," he said. "The accessory does not go well with the outfit, or maybe there are too many signs of ostentation in the same image."

In these cases, not only is the deception evident, Guthrie said, but it can also be counterproductive to the identity of certain luxury brands. "Creators masquerading as brand ambassadors can harm that particular brand rather than promote it," he explained. For Guthrie, authenticity remains the most realistic route to a fruitful agreement. "A more effective way to catapult yourself into the world of influencers collaborating with luxury brands is to embrace the values behind a certain brand," he said. "It's more important to be creative and innovative with your content."

In the end, pretending to be rich is definitely a cheaper move than actually renting a private jet or buying expensive jewelry — but that doesn't mean it's okay. The truth is, tagging Gucci like that not only leads to some embarrassment, but it could also close any door you were hoping to see open in front of you.

Sofia Coscia

## Sherlock Holmes

### Elementary, My Dear Watson... Or Not?

Everybody knows Sherlock Holmes, the famous detective who has been haunting the streets of London since his first appearance in 1887 in the novel *A Study in Scarlet* by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.

The novel was an instant success leading to the publication of further stories.

You may say that such work is out of date and

only has historical-literary value, especially considering the long list of other detective novels published since then (just to mention a few: the Spanish detective Pepe Carvalho by Manuel Vázquez Montalbán, the Belgian Hercules Poirot by Agatha Christie, the English inspector E. Morse by C. Dexter or the Italian Salvo Montalbano by Andrea Camilleri).

So, why do we still read Sherlock Holmes?

First of all, the plot is not only limited to a crime to be solved, but it gives a colourful and vivid depiction of human weaknesses: In *A Study in Scarlet*, for instance, the reader is led to the solution from the point of view of the offender, sharing his feelings such as hatred, desperation and loneliness. It is not a moral justification, but an extra clue offered to the reader.

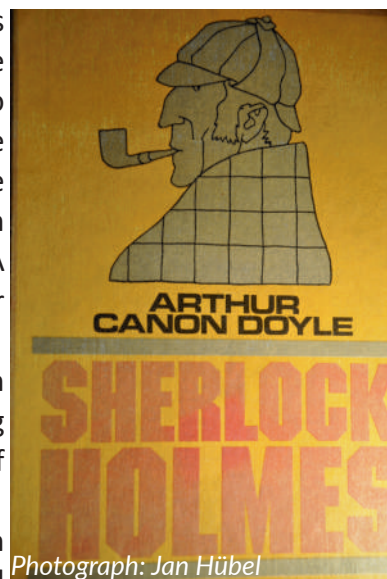
Sherlock's thoughts are always witty and bright.

At the very beginning of their friendship, Sherlock can deduce Watson's former occupation - a doctor during the Afghanistan war- just by examining physical aspects, such as his tan and his peculiar way of walking. His skills of deduction and observation are more than fascinating and often unpredictable.

He is not just a detective. At a first glance, Sherlock is portrayed and labelled as a cynical man, not really supportive or empathetic... just a cliché to overcome.

Plunge yourself into the reading of *The Adventure of the Garridebs*: you may appreciate or criticise its plot, but you certainly won't pass by our detective's deep friendship with his loyal companion John Watson, but....no spoiler on it.

Do read it to the end and you will not be let down.



Photograph: Jan Hübel



Far from just being Sherlock's friend, Watson is a real alter ego, a mirror in which all of Sherlock's feelings and thoughts are reflected and come into existence. Watson expresses his own thoughts, feelings, and fears, reflecting at the same time the interior world of his friend. They are a monad, entrusted with the entire logical deductive process. (Hound of the Baskervilles) Just to inspire some more interest, here are some elements of curiosity and common beliefs...

- Doyle did not like his detective as he said: "If in 100 years I am only known as the man who invented Sherlock Holmes then I will have considered my life a failure".
- When Doyle decided that he had had enough of his character, he decided to kill him. The legend says that many Londoners wore black armbands in mourning. Therefore, the author brought Sherlock back to life.
- The detective has never said 'Elementary, my dear Watson'. In the novels, Holmes says 'Elementary!' and 'my dear Watson' at various points, but never in a whole sentence.
- The most important woman of all novels is Irene Adler, the only person that Holmes might have ever loved. However, she only appears in the story A Scandal in Bohemia.
- "Sherlock Holmes" holds the world record for being the most portrayed literary human character in movies and TV. He has been depicted on screen 254 times.

One last little tip...

If reading detective novels is not really your cup of tea, start with taking a look at the TV series "Elementary" (with Jonny Lee Miller and Lucy Liu - a particularly intriguing series where John Watson is played by a woman, Joan). Or check out the movies "Sherlock Holmes" (2009) and "Sherlock Holmes: A Game of Shadows", both directed by Guy Ritchie, and starring Robert Downey Jr. and Jude Law. And why not start having a glance at the TV series 'Sherlock' (main characters played by Benedict Cumberbatch and Martin Freeman), a very fresh and modern TV transposition of the classic detective novel. I personally started exactly like this and still feel so grateful for that gloomy, rainy day that urged me to be pampered by Netflix...

Even TV series may sometimes help you into the discovery of literary masterpieces.

Eleonora Gobbi

### The dangers of fake news

## The Bad News About Fake News

Now, it is true that the internet has empowered people in many ways, but as Peter Parker from Spiderman says: "With great power comes great responsibility".

Nowadays, news travel in a matter of seconds. With social media and the internet anyone can spread any type of information regardless if it is truthful or not. Unlike newspapers, which have an editorial that factchecks articles, the internet does not. Additionally, social media posts can gain lots of momentum, becoming viral regardless of their accuracy. Consequently, as users of social media, we should be aware of the dangers of fake news.



We are constantly bombarded with 'disinformation', but we don't notice it. In fact, we often are part of the problem. According to a survey done by CNN, 31% of surveyed teens said that they had shared a news story and later learned it was fake.

But why is fake news dangerous? First, it puts democracy and its values at risk. Fictitious news create confusion and misunderstanding about many important social and political issues. Moreover, they create mistrust in society which, in turn, create polarization and panic in the masses.

For instance, at the beginning of the Corona pandemic, thousands of posts with misinformation about the spreading, causes and symptoms of Covid-19 were posted online. These false news created confusion and panic about the disease. Furthermore, people could not tell the truth from the lies. In fact, fake news about Coronavirus were posted at such a massive scale that Facebook had to delete 7 million posts with misinformation about Corona in August, reports NBC News.

In another way, fake news can be strategically released around election or politically tumultuous times. In history class, propaganda comes up all the time, and it can seem like something of the past. However, this is not the case. This type of news is used as propaganda. For example, during the 2016 American election a series of fake news articles were released and then spread on Twitter and other social medias. These posts featured articles with headings like "Pope Francis Shocks World, Endorses Donald Trump for President" and "FBI Agent Suspected in Hillary Email Leaks Found Dead in Apparent Murder-Suicide". More importantly, both candidates expressed in multiple speeches that they felt fake news hurt them a lot in their campaign.

Despite all the bad news about fake news, we can still stop misinformation from affecting us and our society. We should adopt healthy skepticism about what we see online. Think about where the post came from, and question why it was posted. Was it to inform or provoke? Most importantly, check the source! It is good to stay informed, not misinformed.

Blanca Morillo

Sweet dreams!

## Dreams



Photograph: Julie van Rossum

*Everyone has dreams: some are complicated and incomprehensible; others are remarkably simple even if this is unusual...*

What kinds of dreams exist? Why are dreams so often incoherent? When do we dream?

There has been lots of research about dreams, their reasons, and purposes. Dreams are a mystery. Let us try unveiling some of their secrets.

Firstly, you must know that sleep is a multiple phase cycle. The two principal ones are slow sleep and rapid eye movement sleep (REM).

- Slow sleep is the period when all body activities are slowed down
- During REM, the brain waves show an accelerated

rhythm, like the waking phase. It is pretty paradoxical considering that when the body is sleeping it is supposed to rest. The heart rate and breathing become faster and more irregular than during slow sleep. The eyes are also active. Some sleepers have extremely rapid eye movements (hence the name) that can be seen, especially in children. The body temperature also becomes irregular and adjusts to the ambient temperature.

Dreams start after more or less 2 hours of sleep. At that time, you enter the REM sleep period lasting 15-20 minutes. According to researchers we dream about 1 hour 40 minutes per night, which is about 20-22 days a year!! Of course, not all our dreams occur during the REM period. Though it is during this phase of sleep that 90% of dreams take place.

If you wake someone up during a REM period, the person is more likely to remember their dream than awakened outside this period.

It is the pre-frontal part of the brain that mostly manages the coherence of the information we receive (reasoning, visual attention and memory). As this pre-frontal part is resting during REM sleep, the brain is unable to differentiate between what is true or not. Our dreams are most of the time illogical, and their narrative, incoherent.

Several types of dreams exist. So, which kind of dreams do you have the most?

**1) Recurring dream**, a type of dream that repeats itself over and over, which are similar, one after the other but with a few elements changing from time to time.

**2) Nightmare**, bad dreams. The impression it leaves upon waking up is negative, letting the dreamer stressed. They can be our worst fears or the everyday concerns that we struggle to deal with.

**3) Premonitory dream**, this is more common than you might think! This type of dreaming is when you dream of future events.

**4) Lucid dreams**: The dreamer knows that they are dreaming in lucid dreams. This awareness leads to wishes: like floating in the air, moving an object by thought, creating/transforming an object, teleporting to another location...

Why do we dream? Why can't we control our dreams? What are dreams for?

These questions are still a mystery to all of us.

Do you want to know more about dreams? You can always read about the phenomenon of sleep paralysis, a terrible and scary experience, marking for days or more the dreamers having gone through it.

Evdokia Stefanik

## The disinhibition effect

## Why People Are Meaner Online

During the pandemic, the internet traffic skyrocketed by more than 40% and it became all the more clear what effect this has on communication. People on the internet seem to be meaner, ruder and much more aggressive and extreme. This can be explained with what we call 'the online disinhibition effect' or the "loosening of social inhibitions because of the anonymity of the internet".

First described by the psychologist John Suler in his books *The Psychology of Cyberspace* and *Psychology of the Digital Age: Humans Become Electric*, 'the online disinhibition effect' leads to people sharing things on the internet that they would fear in a normal social setting. This can lead both to people having unusual acts of kindness, inspiring others; or to rude language, destructive criticism, threats and hatred being spread at a much more extreme level. What causes this disinhibition?

Firstly, for the most part you can keep your identity hidden online, and people only know what you tell them. You can therefore separate your actions online from the real world as well as from your identity and persona, thus creating a sense of detachment and removing our sense of responsibility. "People don't have to own their behaviour by acknowledging it within the full context of who they are", since they have created another personality online. This is called 'dissociative anonymity'.

Secondly, in those cases in which your identity is not hidden, such as social media platforms or via email, the internet still provides 'physical invisibility'. Without the presence of eye contact or body language, the two things that our communication has been based on since the beginning of times, it is difficult to express yourself fully and to really understand what the other person is trying to communicate. Not to mention, your responses are not in synch with or made considering the body language of the person receiving it; it is much easier to say something mean if you do not have to look the person in the eye and see their reaction.

To make it even easier to feel disconnected from the conversation you have online, you also have 'asynchronicity': you don't have to respond immediately, this allows you to engage and disengage whenever you want. Essentially, this means that you don't have to deal with someone's immediate reaction. You can send a message and run away after sending it, and maybe then come back when you feel like hearing the response. You

can also take your time crafting your response.

Furthermore, it is hard to see other internet users as real people. When you read another person's message you unconsciously assign a voice to that person, maybe an image, maybe a behaviour, up until the point that the conversation is really more of your fantasy. This phenomenon is called 'solipsistic introjection'. The person who you are talking to becomes more of your creation, a character that is based very little on what they are writing, and much more on how you perceive and read those words, your expectations and wishes. You become the author of your own play. It maybe even begins to feel like the conversation is happening in your head, instead of in reality. It can even feel like a conversation with yourself (and let's be honest, we all tend to be much more critical and mean when talking to ourselves- imagine if you criticized others the way you criticize yourself!).

Moreover, online interactions are seen as a fantasy, a world stripped off of the demands and responsibilities of the real world. This is called 'dissociative imagination'. You start seeing online life as a game, a social experiment even, you find a sort of sadistic humour in pushing people's buttons and seeing their reaction. And once you leave the screen, you leave your game-identity behind without any remorse, after all it is just a game, why should you feel responsible?

Finally, the lack of a clearly defined authority figure online gives even more leeway for hate to occur. Usually, everyone on the internet has equal opportunity, regardless of their status in real life and the net itself is engineered with no centralized control. In real life, you sometimes fear saying something and being punished, you do not snap at or insult your teachers for instance. But online, these lines are blurred, the minimization of authority leads people to think of others as peers, and we are then much more willing to misbehave or insult.

Keeping all this in mind, the real question would be how could the internet not be invaded with hatred? It has created the perfect environment in which haters feel safe enough, behind their anonymity, to leave hurtful comments. They feel disconnected enough from the receiver of these comments to be able to dehumanize them. They do not feel the natural empathy and guilt they would feel having to face that person and acknowledging the fact that they are a real person and not part of a game or social experiment.



Illustration:  
Leyre Schulenburg



It's everywhere, from Google Maps to autopilot

## Artificial Intelligence - Do We Need to Be Afraid?

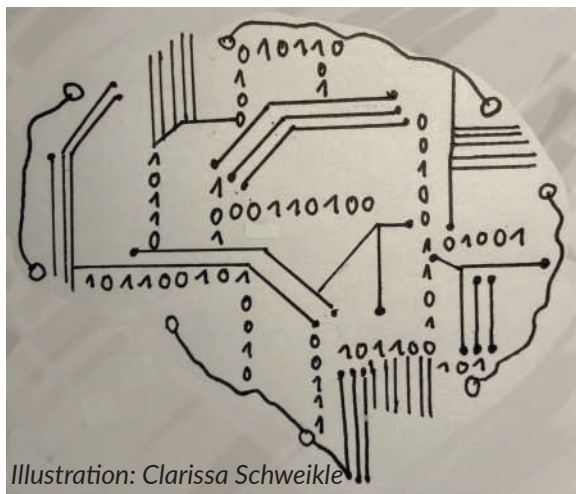


Illustration: Clarissa Schweikle

AI has been the subject of fascination for decades now and has often played the main role in apocalyptic dystopian films like "I, robot". Now that it has progressed far enough for us to see it being used in roles formerly occupied by people, are any of the fears we have legitimate? If so, is it truly ethical to pursue AI? It will allow many advances. Cures to cancer, overcoming world hunger - there is quite literally no limit to what it could do. So far, it has been used to explore space and help with the effort to find another livable planet, detect diseases in crops and several things that undoubtedly will improve the world. But perhaps the fact that it can do the undoable is what makes it so frightening.

The main fear people have is of AI-based machines taking over the world and killing off humanity in the name of efficiency. Nowadays the fears are often more realistic but not that much different...

Will they steal our jobs? The short answer is yes but also no. For now, most companies are introducing AI or modern technology to work with people which is usually welcomed as it often makes a job easier. Most sources say that although AI can and will be doing certain jobs for us in the future that does not mean there will be no jobs for us. We have seen society evolve and replace people with animals and technology many times in the past and usually this comes with a need to develop more businesses and therefore create more jobs. An article in Forbes states "AI is not a job killer, but a job category killer". So yes, AI most likely will take over certain domains such as ticket sellers, cashiers and even transport. Some think that the increased productivity will create jobs for people, but other studies show that 30-40 % of repetitive or "lower education" jobs will be taken over by technology. Time alone will tell.

Bias is another concern that has been widely debated as AI becomes increasingly embedded in daily life. AI is a computer programme, it just does what we tell it to do, but it does not have our capacity for reflection, nor does it have our, or any, morals. So, what happens if, when giving it instructions, something is not clear or contains some underlying prejudice. This can cause the system to act in a biased way, whether that bias is ethnic, racial, religious, etc. Unfortunately, this is not a thing of the future. In 2015 Amazon saw that the system it used to hire people was not hiring women. How can we prevent bias in technology and avoid these situations? That problem lies with us. AI is not independent; it does not just develop biases. The only way to put a stop to this is by being careful when coding AI algorithms and ensuring that the data it is fed is completely clean. Technically it is possible for AI to be completely unbiased and companies have already started finding resources to diminish the threat. IBM's AI Fairness 360, for example, analyses datasets for biases. Google's What-If comes up with possible situations to warn of any negative effects. Since companies have already risen to the challenge of trying to solve this issue perhaps by the time we are fully dependent on AI for making decisions bias will be a thing of the past.

But what happens if it all goes wrong? Will machines become more intelligent and deem humanity useless? Will AI be used to decide who lives or dies, who gets fired or hired? What happens when its intelligence means that we as mere humans are unable to understand their decisions? How long will it take before we are completely out of our depths and at the mercy of lifeless machines? Some sources say that technology will not be more intelligent than us for three to four decades. Others such as Tesla say five years. Some might say that the time has already come. The thing is with a lot of these wild hypothetical situations: they are possible. One of the most dangerous usages of AI today is in social media algorithms. Facebook, for example, has been widely responsible for spreading QAnon conspiracy theories. They examine and interpret all their users' online actions to determine what information is likely to interest them and to ensure that it reaches them. 60% of new QAnon members were radicalized via Facebook. The anti-vaxx and anti-mask movements which put everybody in danger have also benefited from the algorithms behind Facebook. This spreading of misinformation and the promoting of extreme-right groups is dangerous - it led to the storming of Capitol

Hill in January 2020 and could lead to a lot worse. Of course, this is not the only way the use of AI is unethical - after the murder of George Floyd, facial recognition technology was being used to track down protesters and arrest them even though the right to protest is enshrined in the US constitution.

But what can be done about this? Most experts say that to ignore these issues is simply foolish. Instead, companies developing the technology need to follow policies that protect its users. After the BLM protests, certain companies like IBM and Amazon stopped all work related to facial recognition technology. This demonstrates that companies can and will take public opinion into consideration. In October 2020, the European Parliament passed one of the first regulations on AI. Several "guiding principles" were decided: "a human-centric and human-made AI; safety, transparency and accountability; safeguards against bias and discrimination; right to redress; social and environmental responsibility; and respect for privacy and data protection." On top of this, "high-risk AI" (AI that can make its own decisions) must be over-seeable by a human so that they can disable the technology in the case of malfunction. A study carried out by the EU stated that for AI to be ethical it must be: "lawful - respecting all applicable laws and regulations; ethical - respecting ethical principles and values; robust - both from a technical perspective while taking into account its social environment". We are only at the start of the journey to ensuring safer technology but as people we often forget that we have a direct influence on the companies producing AI - when something is widely perceived as dangerous if we stop buying, they will stop producing. Combined with safety policies implemented by governments and private companies alike, this could be our chance for a safer future with safer technology.

We have taken a quick look at some of the opportunities and threats offered by AI. It could easily turn into the nightmare we imagined but we cannot ignore all the good it will bring. We know it can improve society so why not use the fears we have and put them to test. Why not lobby corporations to work together to ensure that all threats are eliminated. Is this realistic? Hopefully. One thing that we can be sure of is a future where AI is more prominent in society. We already use it every day with facial recognition, tracking systems and more. As a society we must accept that the negative aspects need to be managed. Perhaps one day these fears and faults will be history and we will have learnt from the mistakes of today.

Olivia Tourn

### How to enjoy your own company

## The Importance of "Me" Time

We, teenagers, don't have an easy life. We are stuck between childhood and adulthood, figuring out who we are and who we want to be. However, this ongoing process of "finding ourselves" is very hard when we must be our parent's children, and the school's students. When is it the appropriate time to just be us?

The short answer to that question is after secondary school, at university or wherever you end up going after you graduate. Because, as my dad says, "life after high school is when you are most selfish, you only focus on yourself". This type of selfishness is not bad, we need it. As young adults we need that time to focus on our future, our careers, and on shaping ourselves into strong and independent young adults.

Now, why am I saying this when I'm writing for a secondary school's newspaper?

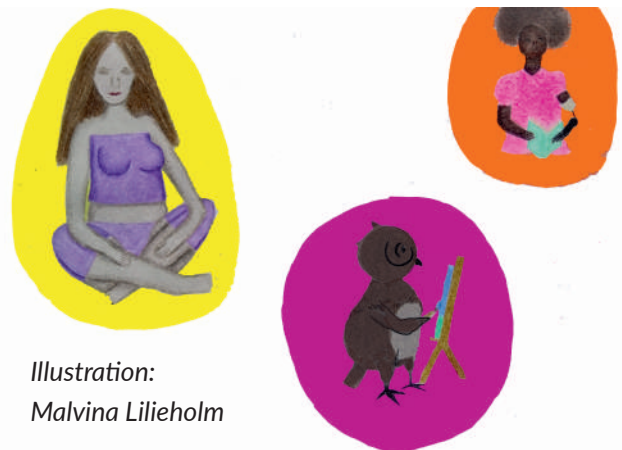


Illustration:  
Malvina Lilieholm

Well, there are things that as teenagers we can do just for ourselves; because life should be more than just school, family and friends. It is extremely important that we learn to be with ourselves and enjoy our own company.

To do this one must cultivate their interests and turn them into hobbies. Everyone has things they like but not everyone has hobbies they regularly do. As silly as it sounds, having hobbies is super helpful. Not only in the social scene—by facilitating conversations and by enabling friendships, but also for our minds. For instance, if you enjoy history you might like museums, documentaries and biographies more than you think. The most important thing, however, is that you are open to try new things. You never know whether a new activity is going to change your life. For me an injury that kept me from running, introduced me to yoga, an activity I now do every day; the lockdown in March introduced me to Ted Talk podcasts, tennis and old films.

After a tough day at school or even just when I need time with myself, I know I have these “tools” under my sleeve to make me feel better. For example, knowing that I have my athletics team waiting for me after school, the book I am reading on my nightstand or the new yoga class I want to go to, in the back of my mind gives me a sort of self-satisfaction, adding excitement to my life. It really makes all the difference.

For many of us, leaving this school won't be the first time we'll experience being new and meeting people by ourselves. But for all of us, it'll be the first time on our own. Having hobbies are tools for you to feel less alone, release stress and meet new people. Moreover, hobbies are an extension of our identity, providing us with self-expression for the rest of our life.

So, next time you are bored or have some free time, try something new. Be open to whatever opportunity life brings you to express your interests and meet new people. You will never regret it (even if you look as stupid as I did the first time I tried yoga!).

Blanca Morillo

### The results of the Trump presidency

## Trump Affects Us All

Donald Trump is the 45th American president. By now, everyone on the planet knows who he is.

What was interesting with this man, who started out as a millionaire thanks to his father and climbed his way to president of one of the most powerful nations of the world, is that he made controversial comments and actions which did not really affect us.

During his mandate, Donald Trump has spread misinformation and caused conflict. He appears to have ruined many international relationships, starting with Cuba, and peaked when he made the US leave the Paris Agreement. He also focused on minorities, using his favourite political tool (Twitter) to spread fake news. The biggest project of his campaign, the wall between Mexico and the USA was yet another way of expressing his hatred for the Mexicans.

The interesting thing about all of this is not the abhorrent racism and the unsustainable decisions, but how he has got us used to all of this. He has/will be impeached twice. The first was when he threatened the Ukrainian government for intel on his political opponents son. The second, more recent, is about him motivating his supporters to raid the Capitol. If any other president of a democracy of this level did either of these, the consequences would be immediate and terrible. The first impeachment did not have such a

big impact on his image, and the second probably won't either.

Why is that so? There is a simple explanation.

The 45th president of the United States has simply got us used to such behaviour. He has shifted the scope of what we consider as

acceptable to a frightening extent. Years back, when President Bill Clinton began an affair with 22-year-old Monica Lewinsky, he almost had to resign. When the Watergate scandal took place, Nixon and other government officials were forced to resign. After careful consideration, it is easy to see that the consequences of all of Donald Trump's actions are by far worse than these two scandals. His mandate was not shortened because he has progressively used the US citizen, and the people all around the world. The famous “grab them by the” was rather huge at the start of his mandate. By now, he has said numerous infamous rude phrases that some might argue they are worse than that. But these did not really shock us as we were drowned in them.

The other thing that has kept Trump in the Oval Room are his supporters. The ones that would never miss any of his speeches, those that wished they could have stormed the Capitol. These people have blind trust in their president. They do not admire him or like his ideas, they love him. It can be argued that the relationship between Trump and his followers is like a guru and his followers. Getting his fans to raid the Capitol, the symbol of democracy, is just a step away from making them do far worse.

Donald Trump is dangerous. He has made racism, sexism, and all forms of intolerances more acceptable through his acts and words. He has tried to justify the unjustifiable. If his followers were not a minority, his influence on the country would be terrifying. During his mandate, he has shut down the country to get his wall built, he has encouraged hate, he has spread fake news... Under his jurisdiction, there was need for protest for equality (BLM) and thousands have died because of the pandemic. At the time I write this article, there will soon be more deaths from Covid-19 than in the second world war in the US. Hopefully, the transition of power from Trump to Biden will happen smoothly, even by our new, Trump affected standards.

Illustration: Malvina Lilieholm



Shaun Ferrand



# March 2021 Horoscopes



## Aries:

This month, watch out for any irrational behavior. Make sure you work hard, focus on improving yourself, and keep a level head.



## Taurus:

You may have some hardship coming your way soon but try not to be overwhelmed. Do all that you can and stay active but accept the things you can't change and keep moving forward.



## Gemini:

You will find yourself having strength this month, so this is a good time to remove anything that isn't working in your life anymore. You have the power to decide which path you take.



## Cancer:

You are good at putting your emotions aside so you can help those around you. This is good for the people you help, but not for you. Try confronting any of your past hurt to help you move forward.



## Leo:

Any hard work you have put in will pay off this month. Try not to get too comfortable in this success and continue to work hard so you can reap even more benefits in the future.



## Virgo:

Your friends and family will be of great importance to you this month. If there is bad blood, this is a good time to mend relationships so you can be hopeful about your future.



## Libra:

If you manage your time correctly, you will be having a lot of fun this month. Try not to become disappointed in yourself when things don't go your way.



## Scorpio:

A lot of action and movement is coming your way, Scorpio. Don't let any simple disagreements become larger arguments, as change is in the air. Voice your opinions in a calm manner in order to protect yourself and to stay true to yourself.



## Sagittarius:

The world is your oyster this month, Sagittarius. You might be faced with some difficult decisions so be discerning and only make a choice that truly speaks to you.



## Capricorn:

You have been on the up and up for quite some time now. This month, many new opportunities will present themselves, so don't shy away from trying new things.



## Aquarius:

This month, take time to relax and reflect on all that has happened. You deserve to take it easy and enjoy life for a little bit.



## Pisces:

Watch out for your imagination this month. You can sometimes make circumstances appear much better than they actually are and you can sometimes excuse inexcusable behavior. Look after yourself and try to look at situations from a neutral standpoint.

Deidinn Collins

## The paradox explained

## Standards of Living, Downfall in Happiness



Illustration: Brina Gulič

More money, more houses, more cars. Since 1988, standards of living haven't stopped improving. This should mean more happiness, right? Well, you're wrong.

One of the explanations for this might be the constant search for happiness through consumption encouraged by ads. This is the wrong search

for happiness. Consumers are promised more happiness with each supplementary bottle of Coca-Cola, pay raises are said to be the source of happiness to employees. The reader might identify with the answer: All two are absolute lies. Not only are they ridiculous, but they are repeated day after day through various ads of different sorts. We consume, consume and consume again and again, but with still no result. As if we were forced to consume, as if that was the only thing we ever knew and ever will know. At some point, technology arrived. Glamorous phones appeared, "smartphones" they call them. Technology was the new revamp to society, the sci-fi but in reality, offering a new form of happiness. A new shining light to our lives, or maybe not? On the contrary, it has become worse and worse as years go by. The American Academy of Pediatrics released a study a few years ago showing the negative effects of screening time on children and teenagers. They include behaviour issues and psychical health disorders, caused by excessive screen time

Another reason may be bureaucracy and its link to a lack of hope. In a modern society, bureaucracy had been expected to disappear or to be handled by machines. It's 20 years past the twentieth century and humanity is nowhere near abolishing bureaucracy. The same old administrative and outdated complications have continued despite the technological advancement. Moreover, these same problems have caused a slump in the individual's motivations. The low-paid secretary doesn't see himself earning a higher position, with all these paper works. With no larger goal to aim at and politicians continuing to deceive the public, the average worker spends eight hours a day working in a working place he hates from within his heart. The core of the problem remains in his ascension as a person and as a professional, to only stay at the plateau he has been stuck to for the past ten years. A mental burden hat is not rare but hard to carry.

Finally, personal lives have been almost abolished. Since every

work has been revolutionised following the industrial revolution, society has focused too much on the professional life instead of the personal life. Even more than society, individuals are to blame. Many sacrifice what they love in order to pursue a professional career. But like everything in life, it's all about balance. An unhappy worker will be half as productive as a happy worker. An employee's performance probably worsens if he keeps getting yelled at by his manager. How is the employee supposed to be happy if he does not like what he is doing eight hours a day, is not appreciated by his boss and has nothing to aim for, none of "Sky is the only limit"? This society is a sick society that needs to realise its lack of emphasis on real happiness: Unhappiness causes uncountable suicides among young and old people.

Kai Iliev

## Short story

## In the Woods



Illustration: Malvina Lilieholm

In a forest next to a small village near the mountains, were two young women on a stroll. Probably around seventeen, maybe younger. Both sharing the same looks. With bright blue eyes and brown locks, neatly falling to their waists. Walking through the woods, and briefly stopping to breathe in the fresh air, taking in the beautiful landscape before them; the tall far away mountains in the horizon; the snow covering the bare branches of the trees. The only visible difference between these two young women were their facial expressions. One of them rather relaxed, and obviously at ease. The other seemingly anxious, with shoulders hunched back stiffly.

The two women stood up to continue their morning walk. "May I show you something I have been working on?", one of the girls asked. "What if we are seen? You know what will happen to us if we are found practicing

here!". "We won't be, I promise." Soothed the other girl. After a short pause the other woman answered. "Alright then go-ahead Karolyn." The women named Karolyn stood up and reached out her hands. Then gestured them in a circular motion. Nothing happened. "I promise I could do this trick just a few weeks ago." Whispered Karolyn.

"It's alright Lynn, patience is key. Steady your breathing and relax your posture. Like this." She stood up and exactly mirrored her twin sister's movements, reaching out her hands and waving them in a circular motion. The trees began to sway, almost singing to the tune of the wind. All the Snowflakes fell from the trees in unison, slowly and steadily. The heavy snow softly dropped on to the ground in a neat pile. She dropped her hands to her sides calmly and turned her head. "Alright now try again. Remember to even out your breathing and relax." Karolyn nodded her head slightly with determination and stood up. She repeated what she had done once before, but this time something happened. The wind began to blow softly. Then the wind started to whistle past their ears, until all of the snow from the pile her sister had made, was lifted off the ground. "Karolyn darling, calm it down or you are going to lose control." The wind turned in to a small tornado, getting bigger and bigger as Karolyn started to get more and more frustrated. "Karolyn! You can't do this! Stop it now, or you are going to get us killed!" "Quinn... I can't stop it. Help me!" "Karolyn, just relax and let go."

As Karolyn turned her attention, so did the mini tornado of snow. Karolyn was petrified that she would hurt her sister and was becoming more frantic by the second. She didn't know how to let go... or what part of her powers she had to use to stop herself from hurting Quinn. With impending danger imminent, Quinn was becoming impatient. The snow filled tornado soon turned into a string of snow, levitating into the air. At this point Quinn was grasping firmly onto a tree nearby for dear life. The wind was gale force by now and Quinn was on the verge of being picked up and blown away. The snow string made its way towards her, and wrapped around her neck, choking her. "Karolyn!" Quinn managed to choke out of her. "Quinn!" she half sobbed; half begged. Quinn was beginning to pale and was sweating. "Please." she shrieked, knowing her life was in danger. She knew her sister wasn't enough in control to save her, so she had to take matters into her own hands. A blinding purple light shot out from Quinn's hands and hit Karolyn

square in the chest. Karolyn dropped to the floor and fell unconscious...

Laying on the ground next to Karolyn was her sister, gasping for air. Praying that her lungs would grant her some oxygen. Quinn was still holding on to the tree she had been holding beforehand. Her vision was slightly blurry, and she felt faint, but she used the tree as support to rise to her feet.



Illustration: Blanka Herbály

She managed to get up and stand without falling down, which considering Quinn's state was quite an achievement. All Quinn was seeing was the world spinning around her, slowly spinning while she was stuck right there. It occurred to her just then that Karolyn had been with her. Quinn turned around too quickly and fell on the ground. She spotted Karolyn next to her, lying motionless in the snow. "Karolyn! Oh no!" No matter how much Quinn yelled, or sobbed for Karolyn to wake up, her sister's eye lids would not open to reveal her brilliant blue eyes. "What should I do? I have nowhere to go! Where do I bring Karolyn to get help?" It was impossible for her to think straight, she was still in shock. She had never used her powers to hurt someone, let alone on her sister.

A few seconds into Quinn's mental fight to find a plan, the pair of blue eyes opened wide with fear. "Quinn! Where are you? Did I hurt you?" Karolyn belted out in a frantic fluster. Quinn, relieved crawled across the cold ground to get to her sister. "No. No you didn't." Quinn soothed at her side. Karolyn began to cry. "It's alright Lynn. No harm, no foul." Quinn smiled "I did cause you pain though!" cried out Karolyn. "I almost killed you!" "Hey!" Quinn answered seriously. Neither one of them could resist the urge to laugh at what just happened. So, they laid there... laughing.



# 18 Pupils' Committee ESL1

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Any suggestions?  
Straight to our letterbox next to B001  
(Lux 1)!

Welcome to the 2020-2021 school year! This year despite the circumstances (wearing super cool masks like in the picture) we are very excited to represent each one of you as students at the European School of Luxembourg I.

The members of the PC are:

Co-Presidents: Georgia Anderson & Diogo Sousa Cabral Fernandes

Vice-President: Léo Doineau

Executive Advisor: Hugo Gällstad

CoSup Reps: Ben Kehoe, Erik Lemmens Sjöstrand

Conseil Représentatif: Paulina Den Otter, Georg Poensgen, Jan Piaskowy

Treasurers: Valeria Masheva, Jason Hart

Public Relations: Isabella Jimenez

Secretary: Marta Gilotti

IT: Henri Ahola

Poster Designer: Yolanda Villanueva

Leisure: Catherine Cook, Fredric Jacob, Lourenco Porto, Ines Boutayeb, Alex Immonen

## INTERVIEW TO THE CO-PRESIDENCY: DIOGO & GEORGIA

How has it been like being a president of the PC so far while living this COVID situation?

It's been a rather challenging experience. Obviously the position of president is never an easy one but this year especially, it has been rather hard to deal with the coronavirus situation. This is actually one of the reasons

why we decided to be Co-Presidents this year, as we already expected it to be quite hard.

Are you positive about events being able to happen throughout the second half of the year?

While we are trying to think of events to do in this situation, it's a bit hard although we have come up with a few ideas you might see popping up eventually, so keep your eyes peeled. Obviously, we really hope that the vaccines that are being announced will be effective, and with a bit of luck and some good planning, we might be able to pull off "normal" events by the end of the year, but we'll have to wait and see.

What are your aims as PC in order to make the year bearable after all?

One of the things that the coronavirus situation brought on is a feeling that all days are the same, as no events break them up. We hope to be able to organize certain "special days" so that this feeling doesn't last. Our first attempt at this is the PJ DAY which hasn't yet happened at the time of writing, but which we hope you all remember at the time of reading. If you have any proposals though, make sure to contact us!

Can you give your personal advice to students in order to motivate them this school year?

In one word, innovate. We can't have much of what we used to do, so we must all find new ideas on what to do. Try to break up with your days and make every single one just a little different. The only way we'll get through this is if we all get out of a daily routine. Wish you all the best for this school year!



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Straight to our letterbox next to A201 (Lux 2)!

Any suggestions?

# Pupils' Committee ESL2

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19



*The Pupils' Committee is a non-profit association that represents the interests of the school's students within the administration. The members of the committee are democratically elected at the beginning of the school year and meet each week in a meeting, to discuss what we want to do in the school to improve our quality of life in the school environment and to have fun thanks to the events that are organized throughout the year.*

The ideas that all of us, students of the European School of Luxembourg II, have are listened to and discussed within the Committee and then with the administration. Here are some of our projects for this second semester of the school year!

- **Free feminine hygiene products:** We want to make feminine hygiene products available in the girls' bathrooms in order to make life easier for all the girls at school, who will be able to use the products as soon as they need them.

- **Installation of solar panels at school:** We are organizing meetings to discuss the possibility of installing solar panels so that we can produce our own energy and therefore be more eco-friendly as a school. (Can't wait to have a shining roof)

- **Installation of water fountains at school:** Expected for several years, unfortunately water fountains have not yet seen the light of day in our school, but we are continuing to do everything possible to have them installed. It has been a long time coming, but we are

actively working towards achieving this goal!

- **Bike stands:** We are in the process of making sure that more bike stands are installed at school (it's actually a good thing that we need more bike stands because it proves that a lot of students come to school by bike, which is really great!)

On a less serious note, we also thought about some events we could do at school to enjoy ourselves despite the lack of discos and 16+ parties. Due to the health crisis, we cannot organize parties like we did in the past so we want to make up for this as much as possible with other events. For the moment, we will mainly talk about "themed days", for example days when we come to school for example dressed in a certain theme. We have done a Halloween Costume Competition and a Christmas Dress Up Day so far! We are planning to make the next theme on movie characters... stay tuned!

We also wanted to thank you for your support in buying the school hoodies, we hope you will love them! We are expecting to launch production soon and the hoodies will be distributed in school, so stay tuned for that too.

If you have any suggestions we can bring to the Administration, or the theme of our next spirit day, or any other question, you are free to contact us via Instagram, by e-mail or directly on our website (<https://pupilscom-mamer.eu/>).



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# The Pupils' Voice

Your Right to Know



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