

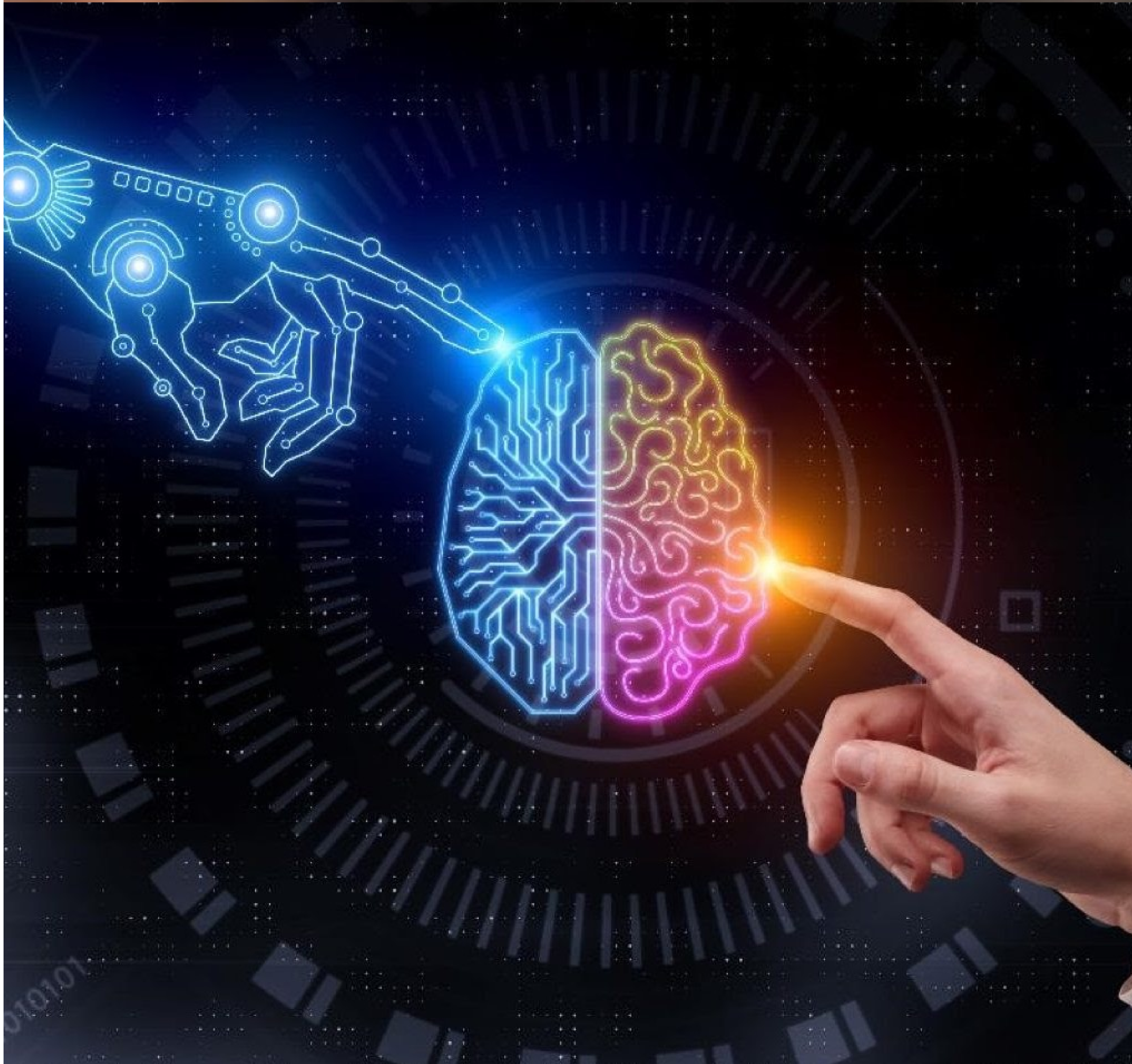


February 2020

Seisen Post

Informing Seisen Since 1974

Articles about sports, nature, communities, health, technology, education, and more...



From the editors

Hi! As we all know, COVID-19 has drastically changed our lives and the disease has spread at the expense of many individuals spanning all across the continents. Amidst this chaos of xenophobia and racial bigotry as well, we hope that this issue highlights some other topics that may pique your interest and lighten your lives. From school events such as the student council elections to discussions on the future of artificial intelligence, we've strived to provide a wide variety of articles. This is the first Seisen-only magazine edition of the Seisen Post, so we hope you enjoy our exploration of new territory and that this issue marks the start of a new era.

We would like to thank everyone that has made this possible, notably Miss Oxley, Ms. Nitu, the Seisen Administration, and last but not least, our wonderful writers, who are not only talented, but globally-minded, creative individuals as well.

Coordinated by Juniors Miffy Hori and Luna Kanagawa, on behalf of the Seisen Post, we sincerely hope that you have enjoyed our first magazine issue.



Masthead

Managing Editors

Miffy Hori (11)

Luna Kanagawa (11)

Reporters

Miffy Hori (11)

Luna Kanagawa (11)

Kaarina Sirkka (10)

Seoyoon Chang (10)

Ashita Gulati (10)

Victoria Migdalski
(10)

Mia Hou (10)

Pearl Dutki (9)

Nidhi Ponkshe (9)

Yi Yao Huang (9)

Yui Kurosaki (9)

Ain Cho (9)

Yujin Kwon (8)

Limie Sanada (8)

Anastasia Ramel (8)

Design

Seoyoon Chang (10)

Mentors

Miss Oxley

Ms. Nitu

If you want to include advertisements or have suggestions on what we can do for the advice column in our next issue, please reach out to 2021homi@seisen.com or 2021kalu@seisen.com.

Special thanks to the
Seisen Administration!

Overview



6 The StuCo Team

Welcoming the new StuCo team



12-13 Nature

The Grade 7 Ski Trip /
The Australian Bushfires



20-21 Technology

The Age of AI / Are We Living in
a Computer Simulation?



7-8 Advice Column

Advice column from IB
students and Seisen alumna



14-16 Community

Exploring stories in
Cambodia / Combating Poverty

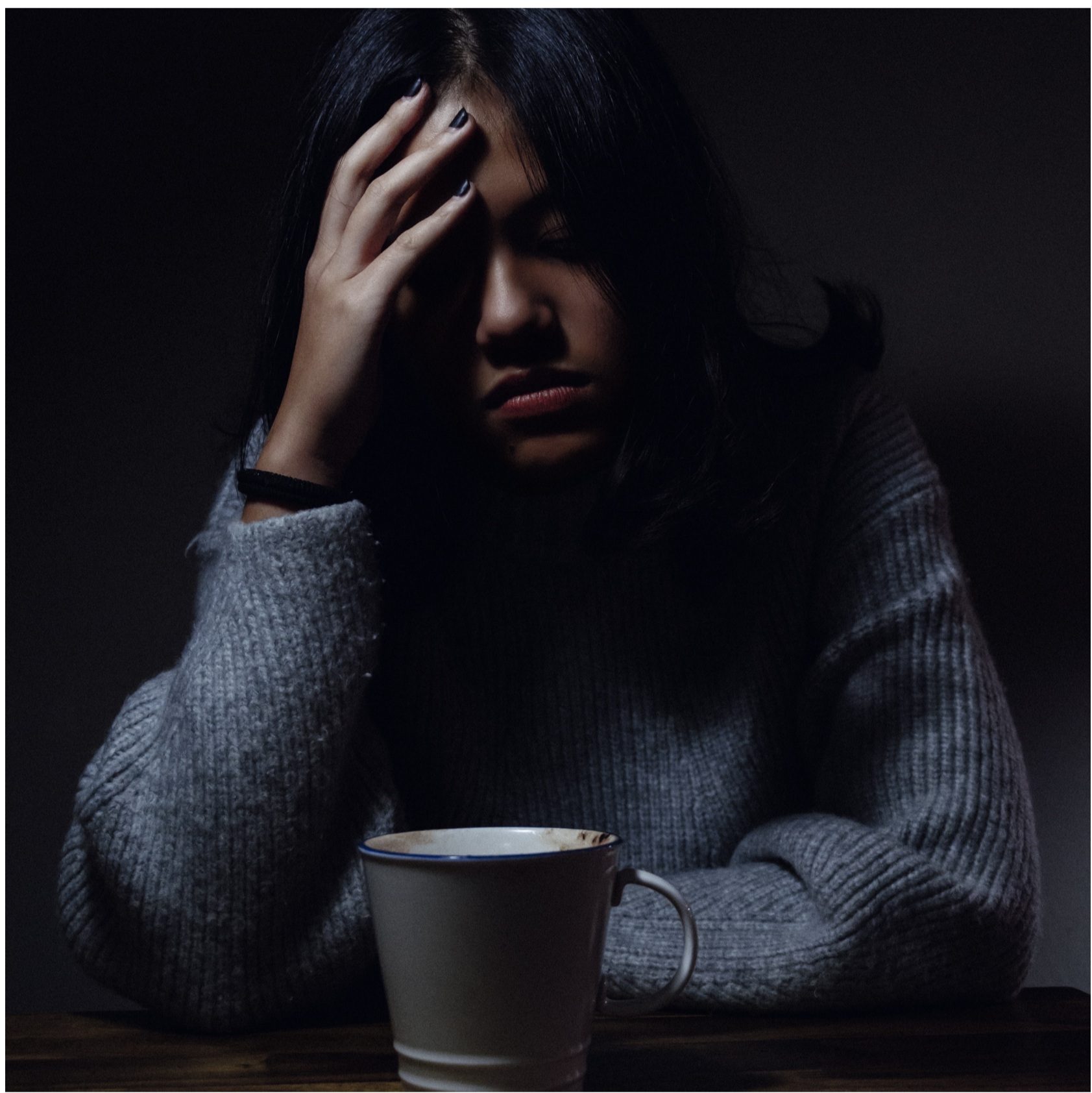


22-23 Education

Japanese History Lessons /
Personalized Education



09 CNN Freedom Project



17 Sleep Deprivation

The effects of sleep deprivation



24 Putting an End to Corporate Greed: Woke Capitalism



10-11 Sports

JV Basketball Tournament / MS Volleyball A-Team Tournament



18-19 Health

The Coronavirus / The Plague



25 The importance of redefining masculinity

Welcoming the new StuCo team

BY LUNA KANAGAWA ('21)

The 2020 StuCo Election campaign was exhilarating: with many potential candidates running for each position, they were undoubtedly all under great pressure. It was seen throughout campaign week that each prospect regarded the campaign with enthusiasm, dedication, and the desire to make Seisen an even better place. With proposals ranging from inviting alumni to the school, retests in all subjects, and movie nights, the competition was fierce and voters had a tough time choosing their favoured candidates, all of whom seemed confident in fulfilling their objectives. With underclassmen and upperclassmen running, the dedication and enthusiasm of Seisen high school students from all grades was crystal clear.



Miffy Hori
(President)



Aisa Takahara
(Vice President)



Debangi Mohanta
(Treasurer)

"We plan to take quick initiative with our never-done-before ideas! We are taking interesting angles to improve your school life!"

"While our goal is to balance investments with the money raised through fundraisers, we plan to use our financial resources to benefit students in the best way possible!"



Somya Agarwal
(Secretary)



Ashita Gulati (Communications
Officer)

"We will ensure organization and commitment in our events which will guarantee to make 2020-2021 a memorable year!"

"We want to communicate effectively so that our voices can come together as one!"

Advice column from IB students

BY MIFFY HORI ('21)

Doctor -- Biology & Chemistry
Lawyer -- History & English
Engineer -- Physics & Art
Business (Finance) -- Economics & Math
Business (Marketing) -- Art & Psychology
International Relations -- Languages, Econ, History
Counselor, therapist -- Psychology & Biology



Physics (Lisa): The IB Physics course contains content from quantum and nuclear physics, to kinematics and magnetism. It is a pretty math-y course, but most of your effort in the course will probably go into learning concepts. In terms of HL/SL courses, the HL course just has more content than the SL course. Though you do learn content in the class, a lot of your knowledge will depend on your self-studying skills (having a physics study buddy helps a lot!). You also need to write an Internal Assessment, but in Mr. T's class, you should get lots of practice/time writing it. Most paper questions are a mix of figuring out what a problem is asking for and using the formulas to find it using algebra, explaining the cause and/or effect of a concept or theory, and rearranging equations to solve for something.

Psychology (Erika): I take Psychology HL on Pamoja (a program that lets you take a variety of IB classes online). Though there are teachers and occasional video calls where they teach, the program is primarily self-study. However, instead of going to class for a period a day, I get a study hall, so I have plenty of time to be able to complete my work. Content-wise, there isn't a big difference between Psychology HL and SL, as HL only has to learn one more unit and has to do one extra paper that's honestly quite easy compared to other IB papers. The IA for HL and SL is slightly different as HL has to do a statistical test, while SL does calculations that are much simpler. Overall, if you're torn between taking HL or SL Psychology, I recommend that you take HL as there's honestly not a big difference between the two and the content is quite interesting!

Biology (Nina): It is extremely important to listen in class and ask questions the moment you don't understand a concept. Seisen's Biology teachers are great with their presentations and explaining concepts with visuals as well. I would spend on average 45 minutes studying for SL tests and 90-120 minutes for HL ones. HL topics are often extensions of their respective SL topic so there might be processes from the SL topic in way more detail in the HL one. BIO SL IS WAY EASIER THAN HL. One key tip for biology is to have a good understanding of the "basics" to understand the other topics well. For example, if you don't understand the first few topics about cells or molecular biology, it'll be harder to understand the later topics. Furthermore, using acronyms to remember information and having a notebook or a Google Doc containing all the diagrams is extremely useful!

French/Spanish/Japanese B (Kate): As I am taking Spanish B, I will be talking solely about Spanish. Firstly, if you want to know if it's better to take HL or SL, you're better off asking the teachers. Secondly, as for the class itself, it mostly consists of doing exercises from the textbook or worksheets, vocab and grammar quizzes, and if you're lucky, the occasional round of Kahoot!. The homework load isn't that heavy but its continuous, mostly small things that can pile up if you're like me and don't manage your time wisely. And that brings me to my third point: time management is the most important thing. This is especially true for the mini book assignments.

ESS (Sakura): Personally, I love ESS as it teaches students about issues and concepts that are important right now, such as climate change or global warming. However, if you want good grades in the class, you definitely need to self-study A LOT. That said, most of the information is easy to understand and everything is connected so it is easier to remember certain things (ie: chapter 1 concepts come up in chapter 8 again) In addition because a lot of the concepts are important in current events, you may already have some background knowledge, making studying easier and faster.

Economics (Dara): Economics is quite a logical subject compared to Psychology as it doesn't rely much on memorization. It's more about learning theories and using them throughout the course. However, I think it'd be a really good choice for an HL subject because there isn't much difference between HL and SL. The only major thing is that for HL, the paper 3 exam is full math. The math isn't hard and you can do it even if you're in Math Studies. The drawback is that it is quite a quick-paced course as there is a lot of content so it requires self-study outside of class to keep up and understand everything. You should definitely take this course if you want to pursue an undergraduate degree in Business, Administration, Management, International Relations, Marketing, etc. Honestly, it's not as bad as it sounds so I do recommend it!

Chemistry (Sarah): The IB Chemistry course may be difficult to approach, as the difference between HL and SL is quite evident. HL students are required to cover double the content of SL students. Unlike IB Biology or IB Physics, IB Chemistry course has an almost equal division between memorisation and calculations. Studying for tests cannot be done the night before, as the questions will require practice and being comfortable with the type of question given just like math. It should be split amongst two days, one day for going over the overall topic, and the other day for truly soak the knowledge into your brain and going over the specific areas you need to work on- being able to study independently is key. Thus, for both SL and HL, workload is not strict at all, except before tests. Truly, IB Chemistry is about practice and getting to know how to answer certain types of questions. Utilising any possible external sources is crucial when studying at home (IB Chemistry YouTube videos and IB question banks).

Art (Mimiko): The typical image of taking the visual arts course would be that you are required to be proficient at painting or drawing. I'm here to tell you that there is so much more to it! There are three main focuses of this course: the exhibition, the comparative study, and the process journal. Visual arts is unlike many of the other subjects since we don't have "tests" nor "exams"; it is a self-directed program as you design your own path throughout the two years. This doesn't mean it's a "chill" class! In fact, it can be one of the toughest classes in terms of workload- especially if you are aiming for a top score. My #1 advice is to take this course if you are passionate about art!

English (Somya): First of all, IB English is way more difficult than Grade 10 English; therefore, don't expect to get easy A's. There are significant differences between the IB English SL and HL course. In general, IB SL courses ensure that you are exposed to a range of disciplines while HL courses allows you to spend more time with subjects that you are more interested in. In the case of IB English, the main difference lies in the number of books you read for each class as for SL, you read 9 works while for HL, you read 13. This means that you will spend more time analyzing different texts in the HL class compared to the SL class. In addition, for the Paper 1 exam (which will take place at the end of the year), SL students are required to write a guided analysis on one of two previously unseen literary extracts presented, while HL students must write guided analyses on both in the same time frame, meaning you have to learn to be time-efficient. Lastly, HL students will have an extra assessment component in the course which is a 1200- 1500 word essay. If you are organized and passionate about reading or writing, the IB English HL course is a good choice.

Math (Aisa and Debangi): The main difference between the Math Analysis and Applications class is that in the former class, there is a bigger emphasis on calculus in comparison to statistics. Hence, the Math Analysis class is suitable for students who plan to take subjects that have a high level of math in university such as mathematics (degree), engineering, computer science, finance, physical sciences, or economics. It is strongly recommended that you take the IGCSE Additional Maths class in 10th grade to ensure a smooth transition into HL Math Analysis. Especially in the Math Applications class, it is also very important to be able to apply math in real-life situations. Especially if you are in the HL Math Analysis class, it is recommended that you practice at home from multiple books to get used to solving challenging problems. Teachers also encourage you to collaborate with your peers and ask them questions due to the small number of students taking this class.

Japanese A (Miffy): If you are relatively competent in speaking Japanese, I would recommend taking Japanese A HL, despite the immense difference between the two. Japanese A SL is extremely slow, as opposed to the fast-paced Japanese A HL. When Japanese A HL students were studying their third novel, the Japanese A SL students were still studying their first. Moreover, there are even classes where students do not take any notes. As it is slow, it gives the students the opportunity to understand the text thoroughly, even if you are not native.

Contrastingly, Japanese A HL follows a vigorous curriculum. Students must take thorough notes and learn advanced vocabulary. Voicing your opinions in class discussions is imperative as well. Both of HL and SL students do not have much homework on a daily basis, but rather have long-term assignments. Whichever level you end up choosing, Ms. Ota and Ms. Sato, who are determined to make the class as fun and casual as possible, will be largely supportive and empathetic!

History (Luna): History is a complex and unique subject—rather than an emphasis on memorization and facts like the IGCSE History program, IB History is more evaluation based; rather than having a textbook that gives you all the answers, we take a look at many insightful readings. Our classes honestly feel like less of a class and more of a group discussion, which is really nice. In addition to the IB content, we also discuss many interesting topics including current events and other contentious subjects that are relevant today, ranging from the Hong Kong Protests and China's ethnic persecution of the Uighurs to textbook controversies.

Although the subject is quite heavy in terms of reading and analysis which can be intimidating, the content we read is fascinating, making the reading not feel like a chore. In terms of assessments, the content studied and analyzed in class makes us feel well-prepared for essays and other tests, and we do an extensive amount of preparation in class. The only primary difference between HL and SL is the China unit. Mr. Granger has even mentioned that

it is easier to get a 7 in HL than in SL. I would highly encourage considering HL, as the HL topic and the SL topics really complement each other. TAKE HISTORY!

THE EXTENDED ESSAY (Jenny)

The daunting 4000 word required essay during the stressful times of the IB program is an assignment that I'm sure all of those in the younger grades are dreading about. Numerous stories about the horrors of the EE have surely spread throughout the school for many years. However, to all of those IB newbies, there is no need to fret. Yes, the EE is time-demanding, challenging, and occasionally something to cry over, but it is not as bad as the previous seniors have claimed. Here are a few pieces of advice from recent graduates who have gone through this process.

Start early! You may be tired of hearing this advice from several of your upperclassmen friends or teachers but this is probably the most important. The earlier you start working on your essay, the better. Even if it is just a short outline or collecting resources, the earlier you start doing something for the EE, it will be so much easier. One way you can start early is by attending the extended essay class during the summer before your Senior year. It is not expected that you finish your whole 4000 word essay during the summer classes, but it forces you to get a head start and actually start working on something. One of the most difficult things about the EE is to figure out what area of study and what question you want to investigate in your paper. The summer class gives you the time to come up with a research question and start researching for it. If you are writing an EE in one of the sciences, make sure to have all your materials and procedure sorted before you come back for school. The experiments that you usually do for the EE are more challenging and require you to have multiple trials. To make sure you have enough time to collect data, have everything you need ready so when school starts, you can conduct your experiment. Use your EE day wisely. EE Day is a day during the first few months

of school where you can spend the entire school day working on your EE. Having a day solely for the EE doesn't necessarily mean you can finish writing your essay during that time, but it is a way you can talk to your mentors, finalize your drafts or go to the library to get more resources. Using your day wisely will definitely help your progress!

Make sure you maintain communication with your mentor and keep them updated. Mentors are there to help and guide you with your EE process, so you should make the effort to set up meetings with them and ask for suggestions.

Make sure to have the rubric on you as you write and edit your work. Like any other essay, it is important to know what exactly it is you need to write, and how to write it.

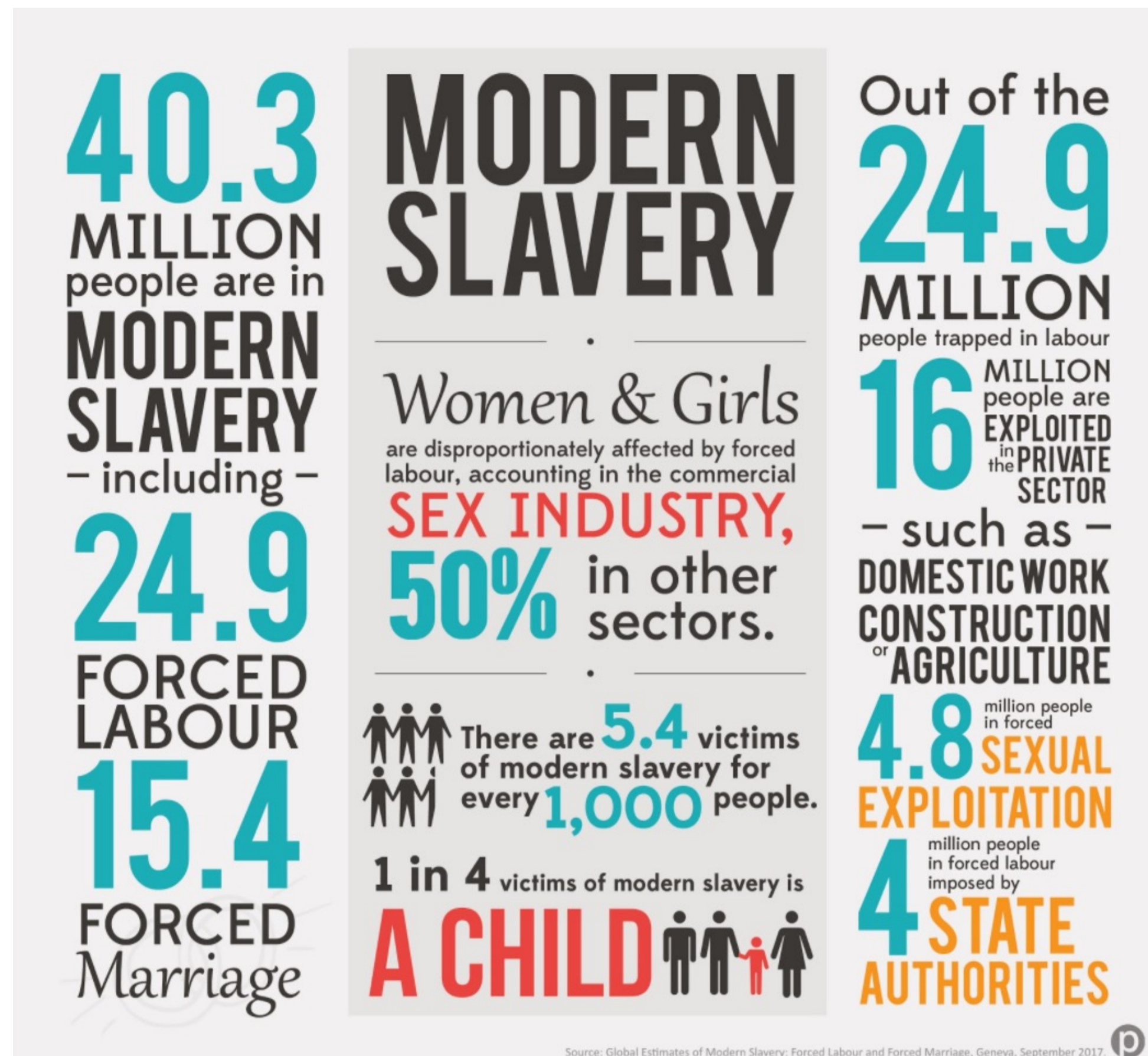
Something that requires as much time and effort as writing the essay, is the tedious task of citations. Instead of citing all your sources at the very end, you should keep track of all your sources with the correct citation style in a separate document. Don't expect your first draft to be the final, polished version. Just like any other essay, your first draft that you write will change and go through many edits till it reaches the completed version.

Lastly, which I believe to be most important, is to make sure that the subject and topic you choose to investigate in your EE is something that genuinely interests you. Writing 4000 words with additional reflections is definitely not an easy task, and it is more challenging if you are writing about something that does not spark joy in you.

Feel free to ask any of the students for advice or if you have any further questions!

Fighting modern day slavery–The CNN Freedom Project

BY NIDHI PONKSHE ('23)



Slavery still exists in our world to this day. A fact that many people are not aware of, but is true.

Slavery still exists in our world today. A fact that many people are not aware of, but is true. Organizations like the CNN Freedom Project help to spread awareness on this issue and find ways to fight modern-day slavery, which can include debt bondage, where a person is forced to work for free to pay off a debt, child slavery, forced marriage, domestic servitude and forced labor, where victims are made to work through violence and intimidation. The CNN Freedom Project Campaign was launched in 2011 by Tony Maddox, CNN International’s current Vice President. The CNN Freedom Project’s mission includes shining a light on modern-day slavery, holding governments and businesses accountable, and amplifying the voice of survivors. Covering more than half of the globe and over four continents, reporters bring the harsh realities of modern-day slavery to the world.

The CNN Freedom Project was introduced to Seisen this year, and the students meet each Thursday. They are planning for the #My Freedom Day Event this March 11. The CNN #MyFreedomDay is a global day of action, involving students from all over the world, to raise awareness of human trafficking and to take a stand against modern slavery. #MyFreedomDay was launched in 2017 and last year, at only the second day of action, students from more than 100 countries participated with the #MyFreedomDay hashtag, generating 1.4 billion impressions on Twitter. It is primarily to raise awareness of forms of modern-day slavery, but there will be a fundraising event on My Freedom Day, with the funds going to an organization that supports the people who are freed from human trafficking.

Articles, videos, documentaries, and initiatives play a huge role in broadening our knowledge on slavery. From sex trafficking and forced labor to migrant workers and child slavery, CNN covers all types of modern-day slavery. Stories from underdeveloped and “forgotten” places like Nepal, Mozambique, and Cambodia, to places masked by wealth and influence, like Italy, Canada, and the UK, are all shared on their website and through News channels. Furthermore, the CNN Freedom Project uncovered many stories that we may have never thought twice about existing. For example, the migrant workers exploited in Italy, child refugees forced to turn to prostitution, the housemaids exploited in Jordan and many more.

Apart from the stories, the Freedom Project also focuses on helping survivors find their voice and will to live again. Survivors from all over have accomplished great things. For example, a former child slave wrote a book about her life, a survivor climbed Mount Everest to raise awareness and a human trafficking survivor ran a record triathlon. Looking at the great ways that the survivors have fought back, there are many things we can do to raise awareness as well. For example, a teacher pranced around the U.S, there was a walk for freedom and California schools were even taught about modern-day slavery. No one says we have to do all this, but even the smallest actions and desire to help and learn can make a difference. One way is by participating in each year’s “My Freedom Day”, where you can talk and express what makes you feel free. Another way is by simply being informed and aware of what’s happening, and shopping mindfully.

As this is our generation that will be affected, it’s our job as the privileged to help and aid those that are not. To spread awareness using our knowledge, abilities, and skills. We should be looking up to those still brave enough to fight after all they’ve been through and to do our best to help them. Slavery is not a thing of the past, and fighting against it will never be either.

SOURCES

Pacific, Peak. “Peak Pacific.” Peak Pacific, 8 Jan. 2018

JV Basketball Tournament

BY PEARL DUTKI ('23)

At the end of every JV basketball season, the seven Kanto teams go head to head, competing for the championship trophy. This year's Seisen team was very strong, consisting of three juniors, four sophomores and seven freshmen, led by the three captains, Kate Narishi, Sushma Miryali and Reina Yokoshi. This season, the Seisen Phoenix JV team had a total of twelve games, zero of which they lost. After a week full of injuries and sickness, the Seisen JV team was geared up to bring the championship home. The JV basketball tournament was to be held on February 15th at ASIJ (the American School in Japan).

Since the JV team was first in the league, they automatically advanced to the semi-finals, where they took on the Yokota Panthers. Earlier in the season, they had a game against them, winning 29-22. From the beginning of the semi finals game to the end, it was very intense, as both teams were very eager to advance to the finals. Although the game was very intense, Seisen was able to remain ahead of them, leading them to their 16-22 win.

After a victorious win against the Yokota Panthers, they forwarded to the finals against the ISSH Symbas. Before the Christmas break, Seisen JV had a game against ISSH, and they had a commanding 29-44 win. Again in January, two weeks after school resumed, Seisen had another game against ISSH. At this time the Seisen JV team was the only the ISSH Symbas had lost to, so they were determined and ready to put the hard work in to win. Thankfully, Seisen came on top, winning 25 to 51!

With this being said, it was time for the finals. With the bleachers filled, and atmosphere of nervousness, the game began. The game was rather slow, however at the end, Seisen came out on top, with a nine point lead. This season was very successful, as they were undefeated and Kanto league champions!



PHOTOS FROM HS BASKETBALL VS. YOKOTA + YIS // MR. BRITAIN

The finale of the MS Volleyball Team: A-Team Tournament

BY YUJIN KWON AND LIMIE SANADA ('24)

In sports, the finals are petrifying, and the players are usually very anxious. The finals represent all of their efforts throughout the year and show their growth throughout the season. The Seisen MS Volleyball A-Team did not differ from this. They competed in the finals against 8 international schools from the Kanto region on Sunday, November 2nd at ISSH.

The team had an early start at 8:00 a.m, with their first match against Christian Academy in Japan (CAJ). However, it was an unfortunate loss for Seisen.

Yuko Suzuki (8) exclaimed that it was “a very close match. Only a 2 point difference.” Nevertheless, the team was able to own their victory in their next match, impressing the coach and A-team members themselves. Despite the difficulties the team faced, such as pressure, lack of communication, and the loss of the first game, all of them were very happy with the results and experiences they earned from the tournament.

For the future, the camaraderie within the MS Volleyball A-Team is what motivated the team to work together even though they may have faced losses and disappointments at times throughout the year. “We were able to understand how to effectively communicate thanks to Ms. Alo’s help, which helped us work together as a stronger group,” exclaimed Lizzy Lu (8). Yuna Lee (7) stated that “our perseverance and stamina strengthened over time”. All in all, the MS Volleyball A-Team did a wonderful job in making the final tournament and deserved plenty of praise and recognition for their dedication.

Great Job A-Team!



PHOTOS FROM MS VOLLEYBALL VS. YIS // MR. BRITAIN

Engaging with nature: Grade 7 Ski Trip

BY MIFFY HORI ('21)

Gliding over the crisp snow whilst feeling the fresh mountain air blowing in your face — this is something you never feel in the streets of Tokyo. From February 4 to February 7, the Grade 7s traveled to Hakuba to ski on the slopes, giving the students an opportunity to unplug, enjoy nature, and break out of their comfort zone.

On the first day, the students were unable to ski due to a lack of snow. Instead, they took the time to settle into their rooms and enjoy the indoors, ensuring the deepening of bonds with their peers. Fortunately, from the second day, they were able to ski under the guidance of their instructors in their pre-made respective groups, categorized by skiing level. When asked about the highlight of the trip, Ami B. ('25) jokingly responded, “It was fun to ski without any adult supervision, although we eventually got lost in the forest.” Furthermore, she reminisced an amusing memory: “As our room was filled with stink bugs, we smashed them all. Little did we know that this will result in the bugs releasing a stinky scent.”

The perfunctory intention of a typical school trip may merely encompass the strengthening of friendships; however, this trip attained more than that. In an era where screen addiction among teens is pervasive, teens are increasingly deeming technological devices as a substitute for engagement with the environment. Perhaps, students being exposed to both positive and negative facets of interacting with nature may have ensued in them seeing nature through a different lens.



PHOTOS FROM THE GRADE 7 SKI TRIP // MR. BUCKLASCHUK

The Australian Bushfires

BY ANASTASIA RAMEL ('24)

Since June 2019, a blazing fire started in Australia by what scientists assume, global warming. An estimated 19 million hectares of Australian land has been said to be on fire, affecting an estimated three thousand homes. Even though the fire started from the southeast coast, the fire has affected almost all parts of Australia, New South Wales and Victoria being the states being severely affected.

In New South Wales, more than two thousand homes have been lost, forcing those who lost their homes to find shelter elsewhere. However, after the heavy rain in this state, aiding the process of putting out the fires, there seemed to be a relief to some. Hopes of easing the fire before it gets worse have risen.

In Victoria, the fire already burnt 1.2 million hectares in Victoria and claimed three lives by January 9th.



PHOTO BY MATTHEW ABBOTT

Since the Australian fires made a huge impact within the nation, state and federal authorities, alongside other international volunteers, have been working on plans, to put out the fire and evacuating citizens at the same time.

There have been deaths on those who were working on easing the fire. By January 9th, four firefighters and three US crew members lost their lives when they were working as an air tanker.

One water-bombing plane lost their contact with the officials as they crashed in the Snowy Mountains in the state of New South Wales.

Exploring appalling untold stories in Cambodia: Why we need to use privilege to serve communities

BY MIFFY HORI ('21)

I never thought I would spend my summer holidays helping school students learn English, especially in another country like Cambodia, when I could have been holidaying in Phuket enjoying the comforts of a five-star hotel and the cool ocean breeze.

The entirety of the experience has changed me in ways that I would never have anticipated, especially living comfortably as a young, healthy, educated woman in Tokyo. Today, I look at the horrors of the world through a different lens, seeing not solely the tragic events superficially, but instead, empathizing with those who are left to horrific circumstances. It has been 44 years since the Khmer Rouge seized control of Cambodia. Yet, why is the country's recovery being ignored by the rest of the world? Approximately half of the Cambodians do not have running water, electricity, food, nor sufficient shelter, and barely make \$50 a month, \$1.61 a day. In Japan, this is barely a bottle worth of tea from the vending machines. While most of us put no thought into slipping our change into vending machines, for Cambodians, that sum of money is the daily income. Furthermore, 46% of the Cambodian population is classified as "multi-dimensionally poor," with its GNI per capita among the lowest in the world. In addition to prevalent and physical dire poverty, the population suffers from psychological trauma due to Khmer Rouge and government corruption. The Khmer Rouge brought a great deal of violence in the late 1900s, leaving millions traumatized. This trauma has led to adults being unable to properly care for their children, showcasing the immense repercussions of the war. So what can I do for the Cambodian children? Very simply, shower them with love—something they seldom or never receive. The predicaments of Cambodian families are not inexorable. We can continuously love the children to quell the cycle of toxic parenting caused by Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), enabling them to genuinely love their future children.

Now, I can assume that you are sitting here thinking: this is another typical calamity or tragedy. Before my trip, I was culpable of this too. Due to the normalization and constant portrayal of ongoing terrors across the globe, especially in third-world countries, in the media, we have developed a tendency to turn a blind eye. We are immune to bleeding children, starving communities, and bodies decorated in gun wounds.

Hearing the victim's narratives and the pain in their voice snapped me out of this numbness. Now I know that the plight of the Khmer Rouge is not an issue to discuss in the past tense. Its effect is still very much extant and plaguing Cambodia, with the everyday person having to worry about safety and basic human necessities.

In contrast, what have you been recently concerned about? Your grades? Your exams? Your future? The Cambodian children, many of whom are younger than me, have been through a lifetime of agony, one which I cannot even fathom. Have you ever felt like a burden to your family to an extent that you felt obligated to escape home and become a monk, simply out of the shared preconceived notion that asking for help would impose stress and pain upon your family? Has your mother ever attempted to murder you? Have you ever witnessed your mother's hand being chopped off by her cousin, have you had to pick up the remains of her fingers in the middle of the night at the age of 5? I felt ashamed for not doing enough. The least we can do is to serve these people in any way possible.

Brokenness, poverty, and desolation are three words that stand out to me when seeing their day-to-day hardships at home. We responded with humility, gratitude, and modesty. This trip enlightened me about how vital it is to find long-term ways of giving back to the community, whether it be to a populous suffered the devastations of war or to the elderlies who sit in the nursing home around the corner from my house who are most likely lonely.

Starting our trip in Phnom Penh, the capital of Cambodia, we visited the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum and the Killings Fields. From 1975 to 1979, the lives of up to 2 million people were taken by the brutal regime in power, the Khmer Rouge, led by Pol Pot. Pol Pot acted upon his fanatical scheme to create a rural classless society in his twisted attempt to lift Cambodia out of poverty and turn it into a utopian society. Hence, they systematically and bloodily eradicated those who represented

the "old society": intellectuals, merchants, Buddhist monks, former government officials, and former soldiers. The Khmer Rouge came to a halt in 1979 when the Vietnamese troops deposed the Khmer Rouge by annexing Phnom Penh. The 14,000 inmates, painted as innocuous, were brought to Tuol Sleng to be interrogated, where they were tortured to impose false confessions, and then transferred to the Killing Fields, where they were executed and buried in mass graves of silent screams. There were a mere 7 survivors.

Tuol Sleng showcased the torture devices such as electrocuting and drowning the prisoners' heads submerged in water and the raw unembellished photos of brutality. Sauntering around the Killing Fields, we witnessed the notorious "Killing Tree." This is where laughing executioners—a sign of indifference to prevent themselves from becoming victims—bashed infants' heads against the trunk of the tree before their parents, as they watched in pain and futility. We were also informed that loud music was played over



PHOTO FROM
NICOLE SHIN

a loudspeaker to mask the cries of the victims. Visiting the two sites shed light on how the Khmer Rouge plays an immense role in affecting today's socioeconomic status of Cambodia, whether it is through the destitution, or the parents and grandparents suffering from PTSD. Learning the plight of the Cambodians and the pain experienced by such brutality was a constant reminder of how fortunate I am. Such sadness I witnessed provided the catalyst to reinforce my purpose for visiting Cambodia, to help the children.

The days after my revelations, we were lucky to visit two villages on the outskirts of the city center to spend time teaching English and play games. All the students were eager to learn, walking several hours to get to school. When my friends and I alighted from the van to step foot into the village, the warm glow permeated every part of their body, their eyes lifted upwards. Just the simple sight of us, something out of their routine, was enough to make them be full of the joys of spring. Some children exclaimed, "Teacher!" Others pushed their way through the crowd of well-wishers to embrace us. The contagious warmth rushed through the students and to us.

We were also given the unique opportunity to visit the homes of their families, where we witnessed a severe contrast to the happy-go-lucky students at school. Visiting homes of families and hearing the stories of their life was appalling. One of the families we visited was Sona and Soni, two sisters aged 17 and 14 who are currently living alone without a guardian. Their parents are divorced, and although it is only human nature for parents to battle over child custody in the process of a divorce, in this case, neither of the parents wanted the children and abandoned them. This left the teenage girls under the care of their grandmother. Their grandmother, however, recently passed away, and when the father was informed of the grandmother's critical condition, he returned home, accompanied by his new family. Although he pledged to stay, he ultimately fled again.

With no income, Sona had no choice but to leave school, where she had been seen as a high achiever, to supplement remuneration for survival, as well as to keep Soni in school. She worked at the border of Thailand for a few months, with work being too difficult, she ultimately quit and returned to be with Soni. She is still yet to find a job.

Another family we visited was Tavan and Chan, cousins aged 15 and 10 respectively. At a young age, one of Tavan's uncles took his own life, whilst her other uncle was killed. Her father also abandoned his family and fled with a neighbors' cow, precipitating his mother to commit suicide. As a result, Tavan was left under the care of her grandmother. A few years later, however, the grandmother lost her life to tuberculosis. Tavan had no choice but to live alone. Soon after Chan's parents opted to coercively take Tavan and live in Thailand to work against her will as they were in debt, Chan was left alone. Fortunately, the devout Cambodian teachers were able to get into contact with the parents and convince them to bring Tavan back. While the parents did bring Tavan back home, they left the two children to live alone. However, a few months later, Chan's parents took Tavan again, where she is currently. Chan, a mere 10 years old, lives alone.

These circumstances are not uncommon. Many parents abandon their children, leaving the grandparents to care for and provide a home for their grandchildren. Once the grandparents die, the children are left alone to supplement income, precluding them from attending school, prohibiting them from being able to gain opportunities to better their lives. Although it may appear that the blame falls on the irresponsible parents, this is a direct result of the Khmer Rouge. In many instances, the grandparents, who suffer from PTSD due to the Khmer Rouge, could not love the parents. The parents, as a result, cannot love the children and often flee to Thailand as an escape.

The plane from Cambodia back to Japan was silent—words could not do justice to what we had witnessed. As cliché as it sounds, how privileged are we? How selfish are we? And what are our justifications for acting so egotistically? Nothing. We have everything.

While most of us put no thought into slipping our change into vending machines, for Cambodians, that sum of money is the daily income.

How do we combat the devastating effects of poverty?

BY ASHITA GULATI ('22)



PHOTO FROM MUHAMMAD MUZAMIL

I notice a soft knock on the glass window of my car. Outside is what looks like an older sister and younger brother, both under the age of 10, holding out their hands and nodding their heads sideways; “please”, they say. By this time, I had known that these children wanted a few rupees (Indian currency). I looked towards my parents as if were to ask them, ‘what should I do?’. The traffic light was going to turn green soon. I quickly dug into my bag and pulled out a few candies, placing it onto their trembling palms. “Thank you”, they said, taking a moment to smile at me. After returning them with a smile, the two kids moved onto the next car, asking for money. The man didn’t open the window. The traffic light turned green, and the children were left behind on the road.

I hadn’t always given candies, I would be lying if I said that there weren’t any times when we ignored them. I was 13 back then. I am 15 now, asking myself why I hadn’t given more at the time.

To get closer to an idealistic society where people can afford 3 full meals a day, a shelter for safety, or even a clean glass of water, how do we ensure these basic necessities of life for the global population? We mention, discuss, and speak against the tragedies faced by many who are unable to live and pursue their dreams. We talk about the importance of spreading kindness, love, and joy, but we are too egotistical to act upon it and make it a reality. Consider these facts: UNICEF claimed that 22,000 children die each day of living in extreme poverty. The World Poverty Clock, counting the real-time estimate for poverty, depicts that 8% of the world’s population is living in poverty right now. As global citizens, we each have a responsibility to contribute and sustain an environment where everyone can live in safe conditions.

The United Nations devised a list of goals to achieve by the year 2030, in order to construct an environment that is sustainable and safe for human beings worldwide. The first goal listed is the eradication of poverty in both, developing and developed nations. The UN affirms that increasing employment and work opportunities is fundamental to ease monetary concerns that cause the inability of a family to cover the costs of daily commodities. Creating new job positions or allocating additional space for employment is extremely significant for the poor to contribute to the economy, and increase funds/services for the citizens. This would require certain skills and additional training, but it would surely suppress the cycle of poverty amongst many families.

Therefore, raising awareness to enforce productive employment programs is the first step to reaching the goal for 2030. However, increasing employability is only possible if an adequate level of education is provided for children and adults to build skills such as critical thinking or communication. India, for instance, implements a compulsory right where children are allocated free education from the 1- 8th grade. Despite this law, the quality of education remains weak in rural areas due to the reduced salary and lack of experienced teachers, as well as poor infrastructure and environment of the school. In addition, children are subjected to child labor to earn money for the family, thus decreasing the reliability of the education system. Hence, the state or non-profit organizations should establish social protection services, a regulation written in Article 22 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in order to ensure the security of an individual, mentally and physically. Social protection can be provided through the implementation of public services and social programs for those in need. This includes supplying sources of education for children, monitoring the families’ needs, providing meals, or even gifting toys during the Christmas season. Ensuring these policies will allow a child to focus on their education and live in appropriate conditions, allowing them to pursue a life without poverty in the future.

2019 marks the 28th anniversary for the annual event of the international day for the eradication of poverty, following the global campaign, #endpoverty. This year, the theme of the campaign was: ‘Acting together to empower children, their families, and communities to end poverty.’ Since poverty can heavily impact a child’s emotional and social development, it is important to help contribute to eliminating such issues, while considering the consequences that could arise as a result of poverty.

The UN has asserted that if the world does not take action now, 167 million children will be living in extreme poverty by 2030. So, why should we wait until the last minute? Raising awareness is undoubtedly significant, however, it is meaningless if we are not taking any action alongside. We often make impulsive purchases because we simply like to buy things, not because we need it. At the end of the day, we end up asking ourselves why we purchased those things. Despite being aware of these actions, we still neglect the many issues pertaining to poverty. Although we may not be in positions of power to control the legislation laws or regulate the policies to combat such issues, we are capable of giving. Even if it is to give a small piece of candy, these simple deeds can make a substantial difference to the world.

Be the change in society, help the people in need, and stop being close-minded.

SOURCES

World Bank. “Going Above And Beyond To End Poverty: New Ways Of Measuring Poverty Shed New Light On The Challenges Ahead.” World Bank. 17 Oct. 2018. Web. 25 Dec. 2019.

In, Log. “11 Facts About Global Poverty.” DoSomething.org. n.d. Web. 25 Dec. 2019.

India Today Web Desk. “What is the rural education scenario in India and how can we change it?.” India Today. 5 Aug. 2019. Web. 2 Jan. 2020.

The effects of sleep deprivation

BY AIN CHO ('23)

Have you ever pulled an all-nighter for school before? For most students, sleeping past 11:00 PM has become a common routine. Most days, people seem to overlook the concerning consequences. People nowadays rely on coffee or some red bull as a solution to their fatigue, but this actually causes more harm than good, such as addiction to the substance or a standstill to their growth and development. According to Stanford Medicine, "Sleep deprivation increases the likelihood teens will suffer myriad negative consequences, including an inability to concentrate, poor grades, drowsy-driving incidents, anxiety, depression, thoughts of suicide and even suicide attempts. It's a problem that knows no economic boundaries." Here are the negative effects of lack of sleep.

Poorer Grades

There are many factors that prevent teens from getting the right amount of sleep that they need. It may be ascribed to the use of technology, the amount of caffeine intake, the enormous workload, extracurricular activities, or the early school start times. The utmost factor is the stress they receive from the demanding workload and expectations from school, leading to students pushing themselves too hard just to finish an assignment or prepare for a test. Despite the common belief that if you hustle, you can succeed, sacrificing sleep to get better grades leads to a higher chance of getting bad grades. According to the American Psychological Association, research involving more than 3000 high school students showed that students who often get C's, D's, and F's usually sleep 25 minutes less and went to bed at about 40 minutes later than the students who reported were getting A's and B's. Studies have shown that teens should be getting roughly 9 hours of sleep each day. Therefore, students that don't get 8-10 hours of sleep, lose their ability to succeed dramatically. Students will have trouble learning and processing information, coping with stress, and staying focused at school.

Teenage Depression and Anxiety

According to the Children's Health Council, research has shown that each hour of lost sleep, can be associated with a 38% of an increased feeling of hopelessness and sadness, and a 58% increase in suicide attempts. This research had been experimented on around 28,000 high school students. According to the Children's Health Council, "Another study found that high school seniors were three times more likely to have strong depression symptoms if they had excessive daytime sleepiness."

Behavior Issues

People, most likely, have had a first-hand experience of the lack of sleep affecting their moods and behavior drastically the next day. Those that don't get enough sleep are often more probable to be irritable, short-tempered, and vulnerable to being aggravated with common annoyances, such as getting out of bed or waiting in line compared to those that get enough sleep. A study at the University of Pennsylvania found out that people that only get around 4.5 hours of sleep every night for a week, and often report being stressed, unhappy, angry, and mentally exhausted. After the subjects returned to sleeping in the normal routines, they reported back that there was a drastic improvement in their moods.

Health Decline

The best medication for a never-ending cold could be sleep. According to the NHS, you can boost your immunity just by changing your sleep schedule. Prolonged lack of sleep can leave you vulnerable to viruses that cause common colds or the flu, and therefore, increase the likelihood of getting sick. Also, according to Healthline, if you are To conclude, if you are struggling to keep your New Year's resolutions of raising your GPA, losing weight, being happy and having a healthy lifestyle, the first step could be to get enough sleep for your body.

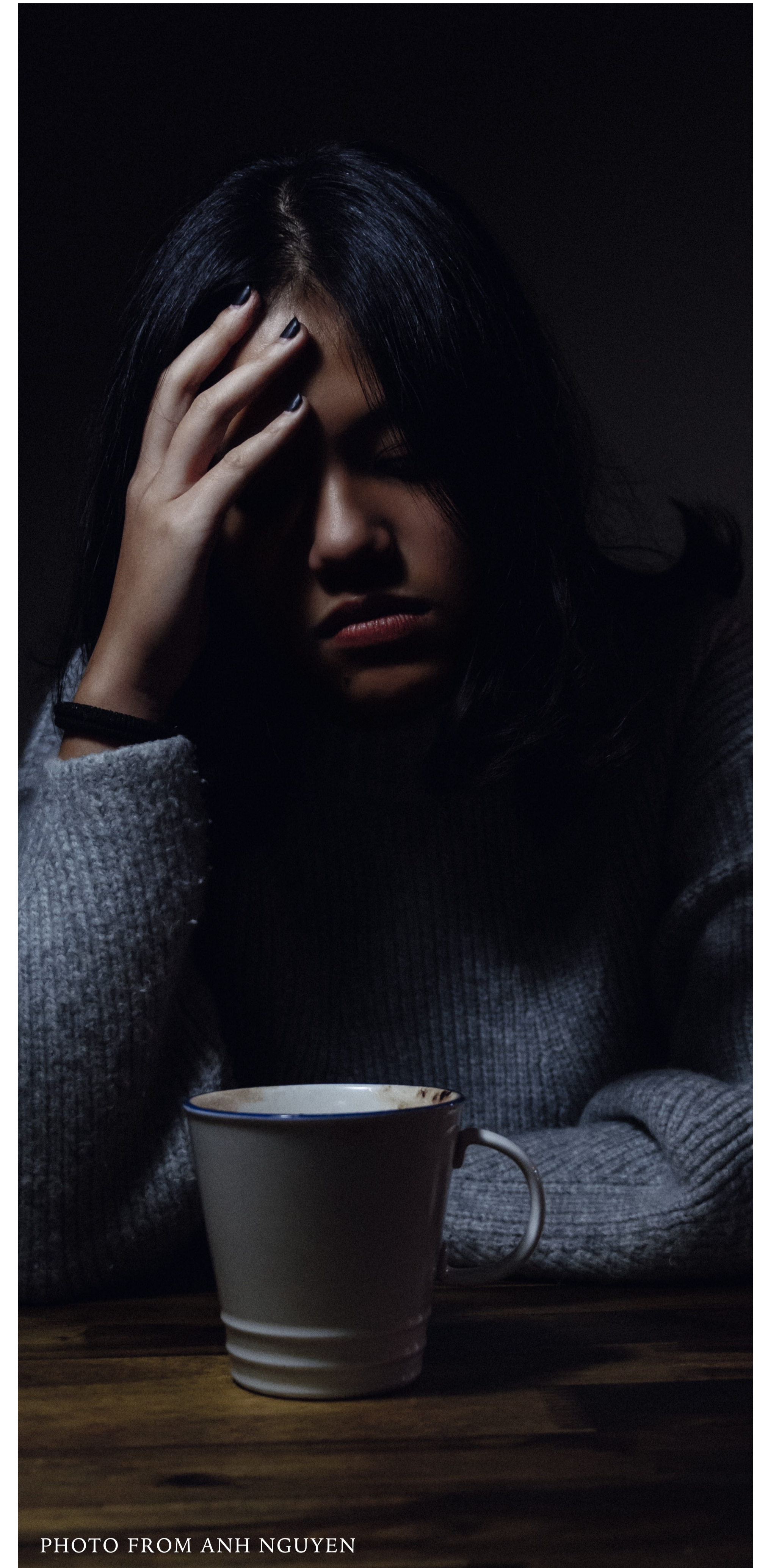


PHOTO FROM ANH NGUYEN

SOURCES

Fletcher, Jenna. "Why Is Sleep Important? 9 Reasons for Getting a Good Night's Rest." Medical News Today, MediLexicon International, 31 May 2019.

Gregoire, Carolyn. "5 Scary Health Effects Of Sleep Deprivation During The Teen Years." HuffPost, HuffPost, 31 Jan. 2018.

"Sleep Deprivation and Deficiency." National Heart Lung and Blood Institute, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

"Why Do We Need Sleep?" National Sleep Foundation.

"Why Is Sleep Important for Our Physical and Mental Health." TYLENOL®.

All about the Coronavirus

BY YI YAO HUANG ('23)

Everyone should have heard of the Coronavirus. Not only has Wuhan already been locked down, but also many countries have already taken extreme measures such as imposing travel or trade restrictions. However, is every news posted on social media true? What exactly is it? How can you prevent being infected from it?

WHAT IS CORONAVIRUS?

Coronavirus is pneumonia that originated in Wuhan, China in December 2019. This is one of the 6 types of coronavirus that infects humans. The United Nations World Health Organization (WHO) identified the pathogen as a new coronavirus and has named it 2019-nCoV (2019 new coronavirus). In addition to China, cases have also been confirmed in Japan, Thailand, South Korea, and India. Research results show that this new coronavirus belongs to the same species as the virus that caused SARS between 2002 and 2003 in China, but the new coronavirus has a lower death rate than the SARS.

WHERE DID 2019-nCoV COME FROM?

According to WHO, the outbreak is most likely from animals, although some misleading theories blame the virus outbreak on bats and others on snakes. The first case of this disease emerged in the Wuhan South China Seafood Wholesale Market. However, now the phenomenon of “people-to-people” has appeared. Two new victims in Guangdong have not been to Wuhan but instead were infected after their respective family members obtained the disease.

THE SYMPTOMS

The symptoms of this virus include fever, cough, shortness of breath, and difficulty breathing. Although the fatality rate is 2 to 4%, it can even cause death. The virus is mostly infected by elderly, as opposed to young, healthy, strong people.

Social media is spreading misinformation about the dangers of getting infected. The best way to get information is from reliable sources like WHO.

HOW TO PREVENT THIS VIRUS

Yuan Guoyong, an expert from the Chinese Health Commission, recommends that if you want to prevent this disease, it is very important to “wear a mask”. However, masks are running out in Japan right now. With limited access to masks, people need to pay more attention to the hygiene of the mouth, nose, and eyes. Therefore, washing your hands after going outdoors can also help prevent the virus.

In addition, experts suggest that you should avoid contact with live animals, thoroughly cook meat and eggs, and avoid contact with anyone with cold or flu-like symptoms.

PHOTO FROM NATURE

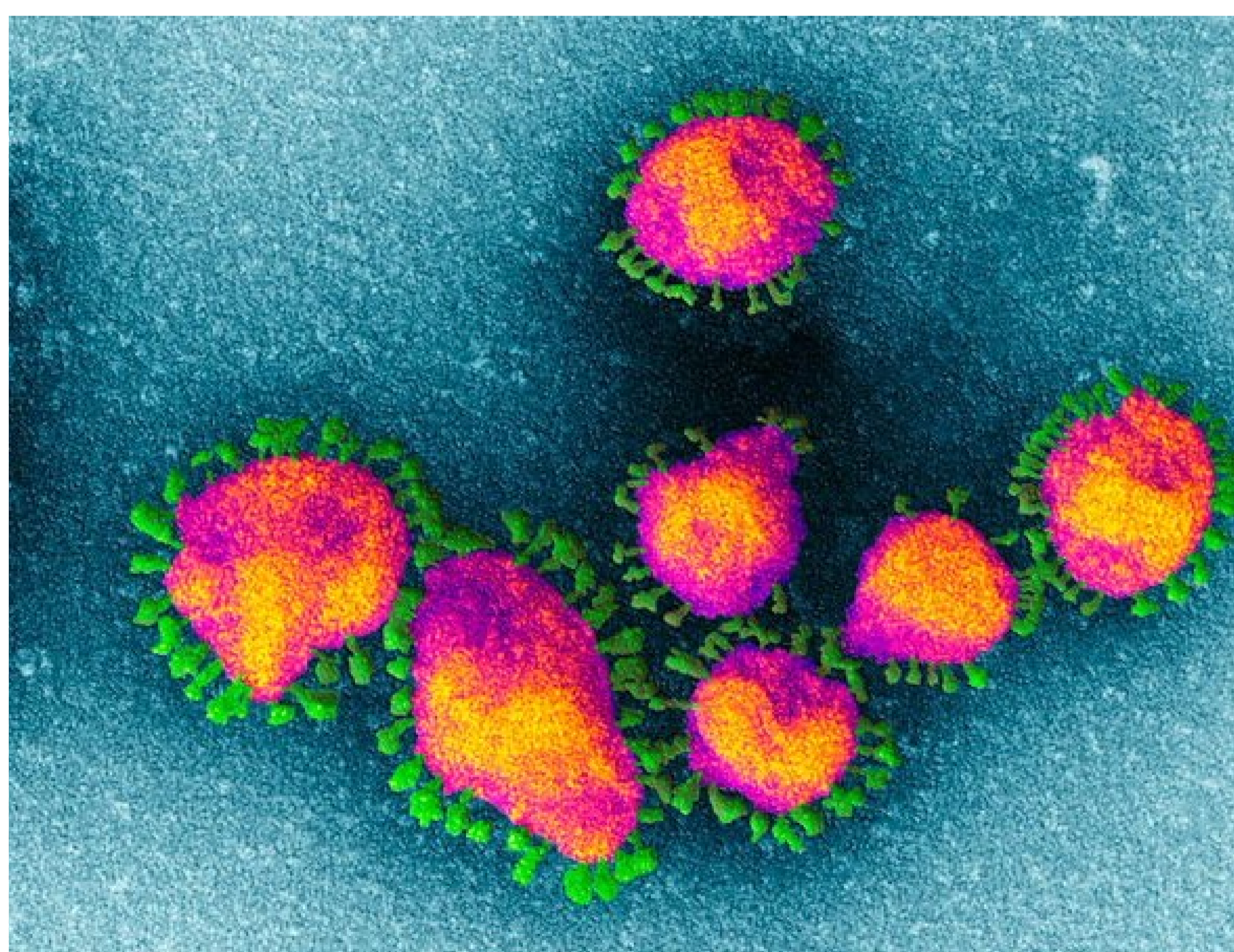


PHOTO FROM AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE - GETTY IMAGES

Should we be worried about the plague's comeback?

BY KAARINA SIRKKA ('22)



PHOTO FROM GETTY IMAGES

The black death is estimated to have wiped out more than half of the European population in the 14th century. This past November, a hunter in China was diagnosed with bubonic plague after catching and eating a wild rabbit. Twenty-eight people who had been in close contact with the hunter are now in quarantine, according to the local health commission.

The plague diagnosis came about a week after the Chinese government announced two other people had contracted pneumonic plague in Beijing - the infamous plague that triggered the Black Death, which wiped out millions of people in Europe in the 14th century.

This is not the first time China has encountered a Plague outbreak. In the 1910s, there was an epidemic in Manchuria (now north-east China). At the time, parts of China were occupied by foreign powers. Both the Russian and Japanese empires claimed they could manage the plague in Manchuria better than China, which showed China that disease could be a “security disaster” as it “legitimated colonial meddling,” said Miriam Gross, who studies public health in China and is a professor at the University of Oklahoma.

When the founder of modern China, Mao Zedong, came to power in 1949, he made disease control a priority. He put in place several policies to control the country’s rampant disease. One of his most famous and unusual proposals was the “Four Pests Campaign,” where Mao called for rats, flies, mosquitoes, and sparrows to be eliminated. The rats were to be killed to control schistosomiasis, which is sometimes translated in English as “plague” although it is a different disease. However, this ended up leading to the slaughter of millions of wildlife, which disrupted the country’s ecology and contributed to a mass famine in which millions of people died.

Ultimately, the plague ended up shaping many key events in Chinese history, which only serves to add to the seriousness associated with the disease. With words like “bubonic plague” and “black death” circulating in our headlines in East Asia, some may wonder if the plague is coming for Japan next - and if so, what kind of damage it could cause.

Fortunately, we’re in the clear: not only is the bubonic plague incredibly rare in Japan, but it’s also treatable. So this means there’s essentially no chance we’d ever see a pandemic here like the one in Europe in the 14th century.

The Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention has also said there was an extremely low risk of it spreading.

“Unlike in the 14th century, we now have an understanding of how this disease is transmitted,” said Dr Shanthi Kappagoda, an infectious disease physician at Stanford Health Care. “We know how to prevent it... We are also able to treat patients who are infected with effective antibiotics, and can give antibiotics to people who may have been exposed to the bacteria [and] prevent them [from] getting sick.”

If there’s no reason to worry about contracting the plague, why are we so shocked that the plague has reappeared? These days, the plague is hardly the biggest health risk facing many countries. In 2017 alone, 219 million people caught malaria and 435,000 people died of the disease. By contrast, between 2010 and 2015, 584 people died of the plague worldwide, according to the World Health Organization. While the plague can be deadly if untreated, patients can be easily saved with antibiotics. Nevertheless, this still interests scientists and historians, who are continuing to make discoveries about the Black Death, despite it occurring hundreds of years ago. Greatrex from Hong Kong University, said the plague continues to be characterized by its history. “You hear of the plague, and instantly you think of Black Death which ravages Europe, it has that enormous historical baggage,” he said. “It’s where lots of our ideas about what it means to have an epidemic comes from.”

An Artificially Intelligent future—utopia or dystopia?

BY LUNA KANAGAWA ('21)

A world where medical diagnoses can be made in moments by robots. Where labour productivity increases tenfold. On the face of it, a future dominated by Artificial Intelligence, or AI, boasts an efficient, phenomenal future: a utopia. But that same innovation-filled fantasy comes with its frightening consequences. In the same world, amongst many other negative possibilities, may exist a feared “robot takeover”, and an inevitable division between the world’s two technological superpowers, China and the United States.

In 2016, the Google-acquired program AlphaGo, a computerized “player” of the strategy board game Go contested against the publicly acclaimed Lee Sedol. To spectators’ surprise, Lee, who is respected as one of the highest-ranking Go players globally, lost 4 out of 5 games. Surely, this was a great victory for DeepMind technologies, the developers of AlphaGo and the Artificial Intelligence community. The program, using an algorithm called “deep learning” contains a database of historical games, and uses prior strategies to mimic neural networks of the human brain. However, the victory of such deep learning architectures was also met with a certain anxiety: the game Go requires extensive knowledge of abstract strategy and is also rooted in intuition. If Artificial Intelligence could outsmart the capacity of the human brain’s complex aspects, could AI outclass us in general intelligence, becoming what is referred to as “superintelligent”, and consequently, surpassing humanity? Brought into vogue by notable figures such as Elon Musk and Steven Hawking, the notion of AI growing to put humanity at risk is growing increasingly popular. Considering the current and future capabilities of the simulation of human intelligence, a concern is that unnoticed flaws or bugs in a system could be disastrous: imagining the possibilities of autonomous “robots” inadvertent actions is out of our reach.

The existence autonomous robots that hold equal or superior cognitive and psychological to those of the most-intellectually capable humans is a vision well into the future.

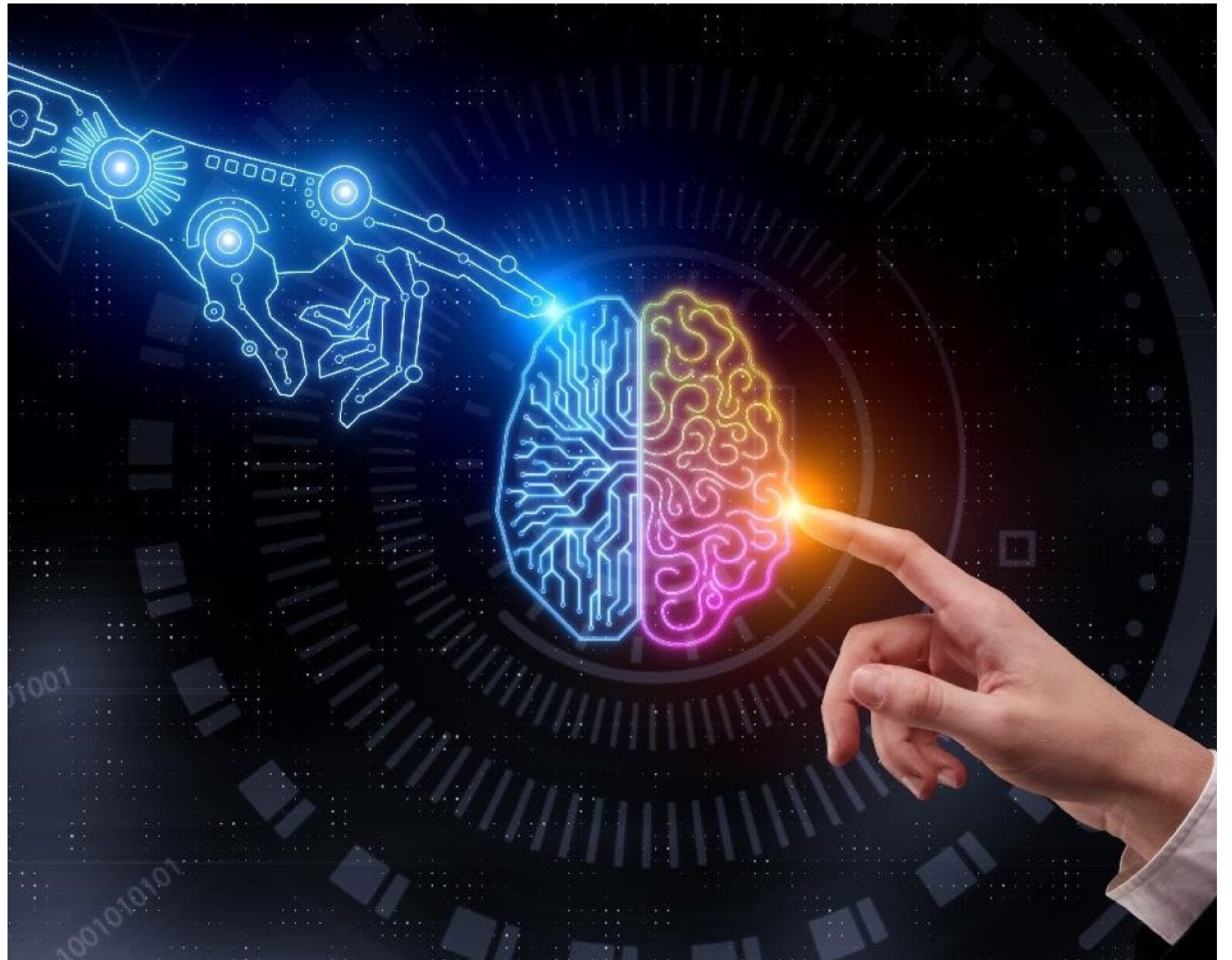


IMAGE BY PESHKOVA

But what about now?

The AI “arms race” between global powerhouses, namely the United States and China, according to Forbes, shows “no signs of thaw”. In 2017, Xi Jinping announced China’s dedication to draw level the US’ in terms of AI by 2025, and lead the world by 2030. The United States, an undoubted leader in technology, is predicted to produce promising innovations. While nations such as Russia, the UK, and Israel also invest fanatical amounts of dedication into AI development programs, China and the US are making unignorable names for themselves in this regard. The US, driven by a 2019 executive order from President Donald Trump expressing the necessity for the United States to “Maintain American Leadership in Artificial Intelligence” appear to be adamant that they will not be surpassed by fellow go-getter. On the other side of the globe, Chinese entrepreneurships currently lead AI innovations in China in aspects ranging from intricate individual-recognition to autonomous vehicles.

“In the Age of AI, where data is the new oil, China is the new Saudi Arabia”

—Kai-Fu Lee, a Taiwanese-born American advocate for and developer of Artificial Intelligence

As enforced in the PBS documentary *In the Age of AI*, this “political paradox of capitalism (taking) root in a communist state”, the one-party nation that thrives economically and technologically could be formula for power and an unprecedented.

The argument of Artificial Intelligence is not a matter of whether or not it should continue to progress—this is inevitable. The controversies are more based on forecast: will AI transform our world into a utopian paradise or dystopian chaos?

Are we living in a computer simulation?

BY VICTORIA MIGDALSKI ('22)

During an interview at the Code Conference in 2016, SpaceX founder and CEO Elon Musk stated that there is a “one in a billion chance that this is base reality.” In other words, Musk believes that we are almost certainly living in a computer simulation.

The simulation theory is a very modern construct, born from ancient roots. It proposes that everyone and everything around us in this universe is all part of an elaborate artificial facade from a computer simulation created by a superior entity living far into what we perceive as the future. Put into simpler terms, this theory posits that humans are basically an advanced version of *The Sims*, which is a video game franchise where players create virtual people called “Sims” and help navigate their lives and satisfy their desires. According to the hypothesis, we are trapped in a pseudo existence like the Matrix.

Musk is not alone in this argument; several renowned scientists and philosophers, namely Neil deGrasse Tyson and René Descartes have expressed their support for this seemingly ridiculous hypothesis as well. The most notable advocate of the simulation theory is Nick Bostrom - a Swedish Oxford professor and director of the Future of Humanity Institute. In his paper titled *Are You Living In A Computer Simulation?* Bostrom states that at least one of these propositions is true:

The human species is very likely to go extinct before having the technological capability of running such advanced simulations.

Humans are extremely unlikely to run a significant number of simulations of their evolutionary history for moral reasons. We are almost certainly living in a computer simulation.

Bostrom argues that if humans manage to survive extinction for long enough to simulate a universe that is indistinguishable from our own and have no legal restrictions or moral compunctions against running these simulations, the probability of the so-called “post-humans” running ancestor simulations is close to 1.

Although this theory does seem pretty absurd, it is not one that can be easily written off. In a span of only 50 years since the digital revolution in the 1970s, innovators have successfully developed photorealistic 3D simulations as well as devices with the capacity to learn and mimic many basic characteristics of human intelligence. If technology continues to progress exponentially as it stands currently, the possibility of future humans creating a simulated reality cannot be ruled out entirely.

Moreover, Musk hopes that we are living in a simulation, as “if you assume any rate of improvement at all, then the games will be indistinguishable from reality,” or the equivalent, that “civilization will end.” In other words, if we are indeed living in a computer simulation, this indicates that humanity will manage to survive.



PHOTO FROM SHUTTERSTOCK

However, a question asked by skeptics when considering this theory is how humans in a simulation are capable of having abstract thought. Despite the complexity of this question, this can be answered using the assumption of substrate independence. According to Nick Bostrom’s paper, the idea is that “mental states can supervene on any of a broad class of physical substrates” and that “provided a system implements the right sort of computational structures and processes, it can be associated with conscious experiences.” This means that human consciousness does not only happen in the brain. With the right computational structures and processes, assuming that the technology for this is available, conscious thought can happen anywhere, such as in the silicone-based processor inside an advanced computer created sometime in the future. In short, everything we are thinking, feeling, and perceiving at this exact moment could very well be processed and sent from a computer.

If someone created our entire existence in a computer simulation, would that make this entity God? As can be seen, the simulation theory is undoubtedly one of the most difficult hypotheses to contemplate as looking into any part of the theory could lead to a rabbit hole of questions. In addition, the theory is capable of completely altering one’s perception of the world. All in all, it may be possible that you, me, and everything in this universe is actually part of one giant computer game— the world may never know.

SOURCES

Nick Bostrom’s Simulation Paper: “Are You Living in a Simulation?” Simulation-argument.com. 27 Aug. 2019. Web. 8 Dec. 2019.

Elon Musk on Simulation Theory: “Is life a video game? | Elon Musk | Code Conference 2016 - YouTube.” [Youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2016-12-10). Web. 10 Dec. 2019.

What Japanese history lessons leave out; How Japanese education encourage hatred towards its neighboring nations

BY YUI KUROSAKI ('23)

Why do Japanese people often fail to understand the origins behind its neighboring countries' grudges against them over the course of history? It can be said that this is due to the fact that the majority of the content that antagonizes Japan regarding the 20th-century history is extracted from Japanese history textbooks taught in Japanese public schools. The fact that the Japanese textbooks studied by the majority of the nation's youth lack in context of the history between its neighboring countries bring concerns that it would never work to stop encourage hatred toward nations such as South Korea and China in Japan unless revised and fixed as contents that they block out commonly are of events that makes Japan look bad.

In Japanese history classes, years of history are taught hours of lessons, and it is undeniable that Japanese history textbooks are heavily biased in terms of incidents that have occurred through the 20th century regarding Japan and its neighboring countries. One example is the Nanjing massacre, a bloody massacre that has occurred over the time span of two months during the Japanese invasion of Nanjing, China. Though there is controversy over what happened regarding the number of deaths and the cases of rape, some Japanese including a Japanese author Nobukatsu Fujioka even denies the whole incident altogether. Fujioka, who is noted for his efforts at removing wartime atrocities committed by Japan during world war two from Japanese textbooks writes on the Nanjing massacre that; "It was a battlefield so people were killed but there was no systematic massacre or rape," and that "The Chinese government hired actors and actresses, pretending to be the victims when they invited some Japanese journalists to write about them." Alongside far-right nationalists

like Fujioka's claims on the massacre, history textbooks used in Japanese public school's history classes are said to lack sufficient context of the incident. "It turned out only 19 of the book's 357 pages dealt with events between 1931 and 1945." said Mariko Oi, who experienced Japanese high school history education, recalling the shortage of education she had received in school regarding the relations between Japan and its neighboring countries. The fact that Japanese high school students only read a single sentence on the massacre while children in China are taught in details of not only the Nanjing massacre but other numerous amounts of crimes Japan has committed during of World War Two is frightening, considering the fact that the two nations' knowledge and perspectives on the same historical event differs to an unconditional rate which can stir up hateful debates on their accuracy.

The same situation has occurred in the history of Japan and South Korea. Though there are many noticeable differences between the interpretation of historical events between Japan and South Korea, one of the most talked-about among both nations is the topic of violence and rape that has occurred amidst the Japanese occupation of South Korean Peninsula during world war two. I asked my father, who spent more than a decade of his life in a Japanese public school if he was able to recall anything of the historical events evolving around South Korea and Japan specifically of the topic of violence and rape, he said, "the thing is, I remember that we definitely were taught about the Japanese colonial invasion of South Korea, but it was only a tiny fragment of the event that we actually learned. Before meeting my wife who is from South Korea, I would have never imagined such brutal acts being done by the Japanese soldiers at the time." This highlights how Japanese



PHOTO FROM FLICKR

textbooks are made to fabricate and deny many violent crimes that the country has committed during the war and how Japanese people are quick to believe them without a doubt. This makes young people who are oblivious to these debates on the different narratives of history in different countries struggle to understand the complaints and protests China and South Korea make against war atrocities as Japanese youth are simply not taught about what those countries are fighting for.

The dislike shared among some of the Japanese population against South Korea and China can be said to have embarked due to the nation's educational system, in where history textbooks are written in a way that veils crimes committed by the Japanese soldiers in its neighboring countries such as South Korea and China during the period of World War Two. If no changes are made regarding the context of history textbooks that are used in Japanese public schools, it will continue to encourage anti-Korean or anti-Chinese sentiment in Japan as it is the children, the future of Japan, who are taught from these textbooks that promote nationalist views on historical events from the past, which is why the textbooks should be fixed as it is whether the Japanese history textbooks will be revised or not determines future relations between Japan and its neighboring countries.

Homeschooling, an excellent option for personalized education

BY SEOYOON CHANG ('22)



PHOTO FROM KELLY SIKKEMA

In Japan, children from ages 6 to 15 are required to receive some form of education for a total of 9 years (elementary and middle school). Similarly, in most US states, education is compulsory until the age of 16. In the US, while approximately 56.6 million students (2019) receive primary or secondary education in public or private schools, 1.69 million students are homeschooled (as of 2016). While the number of students being homeschooled may be incomparably low as to the students attending public schools, this number is increasing worldwide. At first glance, we may think of homeschooled students as either gifted or shunned from fellow students. However, there are many more reasons for parents to choose to select homeschooling over public schooling.

Public schools, which typically offer free education, can provide different benefits for a child, with one example of allowing children from various backgrounds to interact with each other, creating a diverse student body. There are many different academic opportunities that can appeal to one's interests and academic strengths, as well as extracurricular opportunities, from participating in sports competitions to joining school clubs. Beneficial for parents as well, public schools are funded by the government and are cost-effective, generally only requiring families to pay for textbooks and lunches.

So why homeschool in the first place?

Oftentimes, there are many students in a single class, public school curriculums are usually geared towards teaching the 'average' student, teaching the identical material to every student in the classroom. Not only can this restrict the academic capabilities of an individual, but this also disallows the school curriculum to meet the interests of each student.

Sir Ken Robinson, an education adviser, claims that school curriculums are hindering the growth of students' creativity, disregarding the talents of individual students by setting a 'curriculum hierarchy', emphasizing several subjects over others. Such examples include placing mathematics and languages while the arts are on the bottom. Rebecca Spooner, a second-generation homeschooler, stated in her blog (Homeschoolon.com) that she decided to homeschool her children because they can develop at their own pace, surround them in a safe environment, and build strong ties between the entire family. Other reasons for choosing to homeschool instead of public schooling include school violence, discontent with the school curriculum, conflicting values and morals (such as religion), or to satisfy the child's specific needs. With homeschooling, parents are more involved in their child's education through the choices they make, children can invest time in subject areas that they are interested in and discover their talents early, and students do not have to feel the pressures of trying to conform to a specific crowd, and can enjoy learning with their parents while strengthening bonds with their local community.

For many, however, the choice of homeschooling can be hard to commit to. While homeschooling may prevent students from facing bullying and peer pressure, provide personalized learning, or tighten bonds between the parents and child, homeschooling has its downsides. For children, there can be a lack of exposure with others of similar age and they may find it difficult to adjust to the school environment. However, this depends on the individual, as oftentimes, homeschooled children will still interact with people outside of the home environment, such as in social groups and churches. There may be a lack of opportunities for the student, as in this case, the parents and child have to seek and fund opportunities themselves, whereas public schools usually provide academic and extracurricular opportunities, even supporting their students with counselors.

Homeschooling is becoming a popular option for parents concerned with their children's safety and education. In spite of this, it all comes down to whether the child can view their achievements proudly, regardless of how they received their education. Thus, it is important for us to consider the different forms of education we can offer to the young and that there is no definite right or perfect way of educating a child. After all, school is just a part of one's journey; for many, if they can reflect upon their educational experiences with positivity, then that may just suffice for a successful education.

SOURCES

Ray, Brian. "Research Facts on Homeschooling - National Home Education Research Institute." 2019. Web. 22 Nov. 2019.

Marion Lewis, Contributor Blog Writer. "The Many Great Benefits of Home Schooling." HuffPost. 9 Sept. 2016. Web. 22 Nov. 2019.

Peritz, Ingrid. "Sir Ken Robinson on how schools are stifling students' creativity." The Globe and Mail. 7 Sept. 2017. Web. 22 Nov. 2019.

Woke capitalism

BY MIFFY HORI ('21)

“Woke capitalism”—an incipient movement within the corporate world in which corporations are entailed to pursue social justice—is what our broken society is in dire need of. At the 2020 World Economic Forum in Davos, this was a predominant theme throughout the conference. Indeed, Tim Wu, a professor at Columbia Law School, asserted in the *New York Times* that even Phillip Morris, the world’s largest tobacco manufacturer, is “dedicated to a smoke-free future”. A group of next-generation “change-makers”, from Naomi Wadler, a 13-year-old anti-gun advocate, to Greta Thunberg, a 17-year-old climate activist, made their debut and took center stage at this forum to contribute to the fledgling social movement. This is the public’s response to the long-held greed by corporations and politicians—the need for these traditional stakeholders to fulfill their social responsibility has never been greater.

Mark Zuckerberg, Bill Gates, and Steve Jobs are few of a manifold college-dropouts who later became multi-billionaires, with the founding of tech giants Facebook, Microsoft, and Apple, respectively. Concurrently, in recent years, there have been many much-hyped start-ups hoping to once again capture the imagination of investors. However, there have been ensuing misfires, notably the Theranos and WeWork debacles.

In 2003, Elizabeth Holmes, a Stanford dropout, founded Theranos, a start-up that promised unprecedented comprehensive blood tests that merely required a drop of blood. Yet, she, who was formerly believed to change the world, becoming the youngest self-made female billionaire in 2014, was indicted with federal wire fraud charges in 2018. Despite receiving a \$600 million funding, she made fraudulent claims about the technology, deceiving ample investors, doctors, and patients.

In 2019, the spotlight was shed upon Adam Neumann, the founder and CEO of WeWork at the time, a co-working space company. WeWork’s fast-growing success can be ascribed to the newly-recognized merits of co-working, as well as Neumann’s profound confidence and charisma. Once deemed to be the most valuable startup worth \$47 billion, operating in 528 offices across 29 nations, is now heading for bankruptcy at an unparalleled pace. Despite the putative prosperity, the September 2018’s release of public filings prior to the Initial Public Offering (IPO) emanated concerns and suspicions among investors and analysts. The public filings confirmed not only the high-risk business model but also the speculations swirling around Neumann’s character. Behind the veneer, Neumann was a walking disaster. A former employee testified about his arbitrary attitude: “No one wanted to get in his way; you would either get berated or humiliated or asked to do some impossible task”. He hosted lavish parties after announcing a mass layoff and purchased a \$60 million company jet despite losing \$1.6 billion that year. What’s more, he had the company pay him \$5.9 million to utilize his trademark, “We”, based on third-party appraisal, and attempted to smuggle marijuana in his private jet into Israel, misleading the pilot and crew into international drug trafficking. Neumann’s avarice and egocentrism consuming the entirety of his conscience.

While much media attention has been devoted to sensational stories of venture capitalism gone awry, a conspicuous manifestation of the pervasive greed to find the next Facebook, Microsoft, or Apple, there are forces at work set about to enforce a more benign form of capitalism. The adherence to woke capitalism at the heart of the business is what distinguishes prosperous start-ups from Theranos and WeWork. The motive of a corporation should not merely be pecuniary, but also encompass social responsibility, including volunteerism, the welfare of employees and the sustainable protection of the environment that is based on certain ethical principles. Nevertheless, both Holmes and Neumann turned a tactful blind eye to their respective social responsibility and succumbed to egotism and cupidity.

Establishments have been increasingly responded to this social movement. In the recent DAVOS 2020 forum, household names were seemingly becoming “woke” to climate change. Critics may deem this as a classic example of “all talk, no action”; however, a stimulating conversation is progress in itself from unmitigated denialism. Furthermore, politicians are turning into catalysts for this pivotal phenomenon, with this being an ongoing pre-eminent tone in the 2020 US Presidential elections campaign. Crowded Democratic primary season candidates, from Elizabeth Warren and Bernie Sanders to Andrew Yang, have encompassed this into their vision. While the former has addressed the perpetual economic disparity by targeting private equity firms, banks, enterprises and the affluent, the signature policy of the latter has been the universal basic income proposal, a constituent of his “human-centered capitalism” vision. Although the US continues to be more divided than ever, woke capitalism is something we all can endorse.



PHOTO FROM MARIA OSWALT

The importance of redefining masculinity

BY MIA HOU ('22)

In the ever-evolving political landscape of today's society, we see numerous traditional structures being continuously challenged, with issues ranging from sexuality and gender identity to race and gender equality growing to be further acknowledged in rapid succession. Although the world seems to have grown in some ways for women - with more options available for them than ever before - one question that has yet to be posed is what it means to be a man. Feminism, defined as a range of social and/or political movements that aim to establish political, economic, personal, and social equality of the sexes, has done well in developing an environment where young females can receive equal opportunities to males in school, work, and daily life. The goals for feminism in recent years have been largely focused on raising awareness about the societal struggles women today face and challenging them, but with this surge forward for girls, it seems as though the male aspect of gender justice has been overlooked. As Michael I. Black, a writer for the New York Times, wrote in his essay titled *The Boys Are Not All Right*, "To be a girl today is to be the beneficiary of decades of conversation about the complexities of womanhood, its many forms and expressions. Boys, though, have been left behind. No commensurate movement has emerged to help them navigate toward a full expression of their gender. It's no longer enough to "be a man" — we no longer even know what that means."

Girls are being told that they can do anything they set their minds to, whether it be reaching academic, athletic or personal goals, or fitting into feminine and masculine molds - but while there are many ways to be a girl, there is, seemingly, only one way to be a boy. One way to see this is how children are being conditioned - children's toys now are still distinctly categorised into girls' and boys' toys. But while girls now are being encouraged to play with either, boys have been more strictly confined to their own toys and told that they are weak or called slurs if they play with girls' toys. Barbies, for example, have begun to release lines of dolls that are engineers, scientists, and other stereotypically masculine careers. But while toys marketed towards girls are encouraging girls to be whatever they want, boys' toys are still extremely limited, with few male toys being depicted in traditionally feminine roles.



PHOTO BY JONA FRANK

The gendering of children's toys have left an impact on boys around the world - in a survey conducted on teenage boys where they were asked to select traits that they believed were inherently masculine, the trait that was most selected was, unsurprisingly, strength, with 81.3% of participants selecting the trait. Traits such as kindness, caring and communicative, on the other hand, remained a smaller group, with less than 25% of participants selecting them. When we limit traits such as these, and categorise these as feminine, we risk teaching young boys that their value is in their physical strength and activeness, and prevent them from displaying traits such as kindness and communication, that are essential for human survival.

In the same survey, boys were also asked if they felt there was a social pressure to conform to masculine molds, and over 75% admitted that they felt there was pressure in society to be masculine, even if they didn't necessarily conform to that pressure themselves. When asked how the pressure to be masculine had limited them, many boys gave responses such as "It's difficult to ask others for help," or "I feel as if I can't show my feelings, otherwise I risk being perceived as weak."

Humans, biologically, are created to depend on each other, and to feel emotions. But when we look at how young boys feel they're being limited, we find that they are being taught to repress some of the most essential qualities of being human. One comment mentioned that, "As a more feminine boy, I feel as if I don't get as much respect from people, unless I make an effort to be masculine. Although people aren't necessarily bullying or bothering me, it still feels like there's a disconnect between me and my peers because I'm not a super masculine person. It's also difficult for me to talk about my feelings or communicate, at least with my male friends, and as a result, I can't really process my emotions."

Masculinity, as a whole, has been a topic that is rarely discussed. As a result, teenage boys are confused on what it means to be a man - and without proper conversation, boys are being limited on who they are and how they're allowed to act in order to be respected. As people advocating for gender equality, it is important to acknowledge both sides of the coin and be able to see that we cannot push forward one group without deserting the other. The goal then, should not be to push back women but rather to spark conversation on what it means to be a man, and expand the definition of masculinity to empower young boys in reaching their own goals and to be themselves without fear of ostracism.