



“Fostering community connection, social responsibility, and civic engagement.”

GUN CONTROL UNDER FIRE IN THE US

ROBERT B.

The United States has a high rate of gun-related deaths compared to our European counterparts. The US has 12.21 gun-related deaths per 100,000 people compared to the relatively minuscule 0.23 per 100,000 of the United Kingdom. Most people agree that fewer deaths by firearms are good. However, the methods to achieve this goal vary.

In the United States, gun control is one of the most hotly contested and divisive issues. Gun control divides the two main political parties in the US. The Second Amendment of the US Constitution states that “the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed.” Some could take that to mean that the government does not have the power to regulate firearms. However, others will counter the idea that the government has always controlled what weapons you can possess. For example, after the Revolutionary War, the government would not allow people to own a cannon, and now the government will not let you retain a tank without special permits.

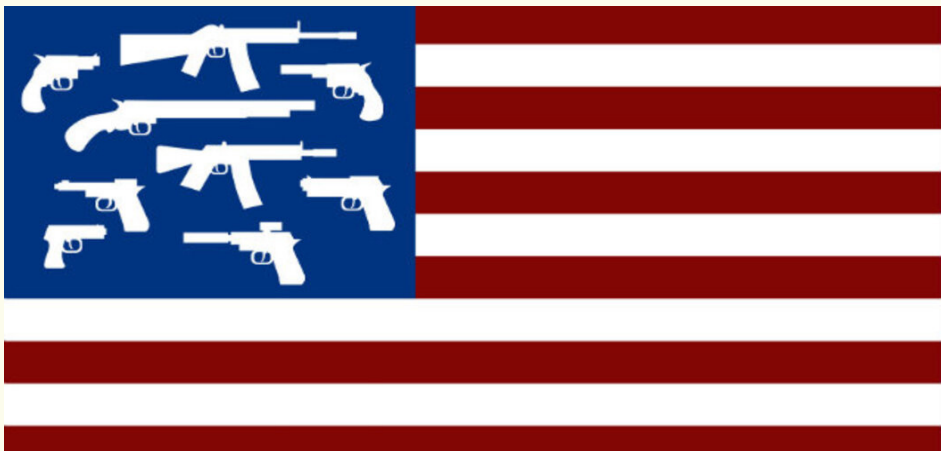


Photo Courtesy of the Brennan Center for Justice

The US has very high rates of gun-related deaths compared to the rest of the world. Given the success of some European gun control systems, people have proposed that a US gun control system could be based on a European system. It is more difficult than it may seem though. One of the best European systems, the United Kingdom’s gun laws, are probably against current US Supreme Court precedents. Given that the UK system outright bans handguns, the Supreme Court would have to block laws that follow suit with the United Kingdom’s laws. The US Supreme Court has said that people can possess a firearm within

their own home for self-defense; a potential handgun ban would contradict this ruling. A ruling from the Supreme Court of the United States in 2008 stated that state governments in the US could not restrict firearm use. Their definition was “home operable for immediate self-defense”; that’s what the government does not have the power to regulate. Given that the main self-defense firearms in the US are handguns, this would pose another difficulty to a UK-style law.

“Does gun control work?” That is one of the most searched terms relating to gun control, and it is a serious ques-

tion. If we look at statistics of the lowest gun deaths per capita of countries, it may seem that harsh gun control laws work, but is that the truth? It could be possible that some gun deaths in the US could be attributed to other things that are not gun control. Could it be possible that something like the overrun of the US mental health system or violent culture is part of the problem in the US? We might never know the cause of the high rate of gun-related violence in the US.

I think that all of us can agree that a lot of gun deaths are detrimental to public safety. Many different types of gun control exist with some being used to limited effect in the US. While some people in the US desire much stricter gun control laws, it will be hard to convince a large part of the population for more regulations. In the United States, gun control laws have been proposed on many levels of government; however, progress is slow and our forward movement may be too late.

TAIWAN & CHINA: STRATEGIC AMBIGUITY

SARAH C.

A tiny country island off the coast of Mainland China, the birthplace of numerous cuisines, and deemed the most dangerous place on Earth. Taiwan was given this contentious title by the Economist in reference to its growing tension with an adjacent and gargantuan power: China. This may seem like a battle between two foreign governments, but the US is heavily and inevitably involved.

Since the 1970s The United States has employed a strategy known as “strategic ambiguity” by traveling to Beijing and agreeing that China was the governing force on the island, yet still not denouncing Taiwan as a country. --Not stating Taiwan is independent but also not acknowledging Taiwan as under the rule of the Chinese government. This dance has kept us safe from any conflict that would be detrimental, but

will it work for much longer?

In April of this year, an aircraft carrier traveled precariously near the island’s coast, and according to the Chinese Navy, “Similar exercises will be conducted on a regular basis in the future.” This seemingly newfound aggression is worrisome for many reasons. Admiral Phil Davidson, the leader of Indo-Pacific Command, told Congress that he worries China could invade as soon as 2027. For the US, it means inching closer to supporting a side, and both options may be disastrous. If we back Taiwan in a possible invasion by China, it’s likely to lead to an arms race between two of the leading nuclear powers on Earth. --And the war simulations have us losing. However, if we step back during an invasion and let China run its course, then seemingly overnight, China will become the leading power

in Asia. This means that the US will lose a large amount of our seemingly delicate hold on global power. The Pax Americana, or the relative peace in the western hemisphere, would be completely destroyed.

The pressure on Taiwan to participate in events as a part of China has only increased since April. This is shown by the Chinese aircrafts flown in Taiwanese airspace around this time.

War in Taiwan would also mean tremendous detriment to the global economy, particularly the global electronics industry. TSMC is a massive semiconductor chip company, stationed in Taiwan, and it produces 84% of the product in the world.

This international conflict was on stage in the 2021 Olympics over the summer. Taiwan was entered as “Chinese Taipei,” and after Taiwan won gold in badminton, the Chinese na-

tional anthem played, showing again that this conflict transcends a multitude of worlds. The tension between these two powers is palpable, and it seems that there is no way for the US to stay out of it.



Photo Courtesy of Wikipedia



Photo Courtesy of NPR

What would you do if a bus was hurtling at a child down the middle of the road that couldn’t slow down in time? Of course, if you knew there was time, you would use every last bit of your strength to pull the child to safety. Climate change is that bus.

NEWS, PAGE 2

#TeamSeas is an organization that helps clean up garbage in the ocean. Popular American YouTubers MrBeast and Mark Rober created #TeamSeas after fans of #TeamTrees (a tree planting organization) requested them to do so.

LIFE, PAGE 5

September 11, 2001 was a tragic day. That morning was clear and sunny. Then, suddenly disrupting the morning, planes hit the Twin Towers in New York around 9:00 AM, killing thousands. A war soon ensued.

OPINION, PAGE 8

LGBTQ DISCRIMI- NATION



Photo Courtesy of Pexels

SYLVIE K.

This year, citizens have “prided” themselves by thinking that we are moving forward in the fight for LGBTQ+ rights. Some say 2021 was “our best year yet.” Nevertheless, 23 states introduced over 350 anti LGBTQ+ laws. 75 of these laws would prohibit transgender children from playing sports with the gender that they identify as. Furthermore, 40 of the anti LGBTQ+ laws would block gender-affirming medical care. Likewise, at least 69 countries have passed laws blocking people from being in same-sex relationships.

Movement Advancement Project is an organization that works to educate people on LGBTQ issues and tracks laws. Logan Casey, a policy researcher, speaking for MAP said, “This has

been a record-setting year in terms of the number of bills targeting trans youth as part of a larger, coordinated attack.”

Another statement about this issue from the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) states, “[We] saw further entrenchment of influential anti-LGBTQ hate groups in the Trump administration, and a continued appointment of anti-LGBTQ judges to the federal judiciary.”

When Amy Coney Barrett was appointed to the United States Supreme Court it worried LGBTQ+ activists. Justice Barrett is known to have connections to People to Praise, a male-dominated anti-LGBTQ+ group. The Justice also has spoken at events for the Blackstone Legal Fellowship, which is notoriously against LGBTQ+

people.

When the Trump Administration took over they quickly tried to repeal Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972, which had blocked discrimination against transgender students. Since then, there’s been a backlash in American public schools to discourage education about diversity of sexual identity.

Since January, at least 47 people have been murdered in the U.S. because of their sexual or gender orientation.

The Human Rights Campaign, a non-profit that advocates for LGBTQI+ rights, says that 2021 is poised to become “the worst year” for attacks on queer rights in state legislatures across the country. The group, based in Washington DC, says 2021 is “on the cusp of surpassing 2015 as the

worst year” for homo- and transphobic legislation in recent history.

In 2015, 15 anti-LGBTQ bills were enacted into law, the group said.

“As of today, hundreds of bills have been introduced in state legislatures around the country that attempt to erase transgender people [and] make LGBTQ people second class citizens,” said Alphonso David, president of the Human Rights Campaign.

David added that anti-gay measures this year have reached a “crisis level” and encouraged the public “not ignore the responsibility to take action against anti-equality bills at the state level.”



A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION: COP26

SANJAYA H.

What would you do if a bus was hurtling at a child down the middle of the road that couldn’t slow down in time? Of course, if you knew there was time, you would use every last bit of your strength to pull the child to safety. Climate change is that bus. But we haven’t yet begun to move fast enough to get our future generations to safety.

From October 31st to November 12th, a conference called COP26 took place in Glasgow between the nations of the UN to determine how the world should continue in the face of climate change. This conference was a step in the right direction. --A step to save our planet from that bus.

In the first week of the conference, each country listed their current

efforts to prevent climate change. India joined the other largest greenhouse-gas emitters in its goal to reach net-zero emissions.

The second week was dedicated to sculpting a detailed plan for each country on how they would reach net-zero emissions.

Even if COP26 is a step in the right direction, many scientists expressed it may not be enough. Even if every single country met its goal of reducing emissions by 2030, climate temperatures would still increase by 36°F in later years, a terrible amount.

Perhaps we could learn by looking back at the past. Back in the 1980s, a massive hole appeared in the ozone layer due to man-made chemicals called CFCs which were very often used in commercial products. Quick-

ly, scientists realized that the hole grew bigger every year and eventually predicted that ecosystems would collapse, skin cancer rates would soar, and the world would end. But now, the ozone layer is healing. Why? Because, under this time of pressure similar to ours right now, the world came together and extraordinarily came up with a solution. Over the course of several meetings similar to COP26, they established the Montreal Protocol, which in essence phased out CFCs.

You might be wondering, how did the solution to the ozone layer come together so flawlessly? Well, to start off, the personal nature of the threat is huge. People who have been sunburned know skin cancer is not pleasant. This makes people want to

come to a solution because it affects them personally. Secondly, it was easy for people to switch to a more healthy alternative to CFCs. There were simple, easy solutions that didn’t have high costs. Since then, the ozone hole has been shrinking.

Climate change affects people personally in most parts of the world. They understand the importance of stopping it, and they are driven to stop it. And now all we need is to implement our practical solutions to it. We have the resources. We have the power. We have the capability. And if we keep taking strong steps, keep taking action, we can save our planet from that bus.

Photo Courtesy of the CSPO

TRAVEL BAN LIFTED

On November 8th, the U.S. officially lifted the 18-month travel ban from many countries, including Canada, Mexico, and the majority of Europe. But now, due to the new variant, called Omicron, President Biden has decided to ban travel from southern Africa, where the virus was discovered right before Thanksgiving. Biden’s health advisers say that the new virus spreads twice as fast as the Delta variant. Only 24 percent of Africa’s population is currently vaccinated, which makes people who live there extremely vulnerable to Covid-19. However, the Biden administration has already shipped 275 million vaccine doses to more than 100 countries, and there are more to come.

SEATTLE’S NEW MAYOR

After about 42,000 ballots were counted around November 8th, results show that Bruce Harrell has won as mayor of Seattle by about 59% of the votes, leaving Lorena González, the current council president, with 41% votes. Harrell appointed about 150 people from different professions (such as business, entertainment, and environment) to help form his agenda. Harrell will replace former mayor Jenny Durkan, and he will serve until 2025.

FALCON NINE BLASTS OFF

On November 6th, 2021 at 9:03 p.m. at NASA’s Kennedy Space Center in Florida, Falcon nine, a spaceship carrying four astronauts, lifted off. The crew, Matthias Maurer, Tom Marshburn, Raja Chari, and Kayla Barron, replaced the current astronauts in the International Space Station. The journey took about 22 hours, and they will stay in orbit till April 2022.

OXFORD HIGH SCHOOL SHOOTING

On Wednesday, the first of December, in Pontiac, Michigan, a fifteen-year-old boy named Ethan Crumbley was charged with first-degree murder. Just the day before, he had killed four of his classmates in a shooting at Oxford High School. The suspect had emerged from a nearby bathroom holding a Sig Sauer pistol and began firing randomly at students. The fourth student to be killed, Justin Shilling, age 17, died at McLaren Oakland Hospital at about 10:00 a.m. The other students that were killed are Hana St. Juliana, 14; Madisyn Baldwin, 17; and Tate Myre, 16, who died in a police car on the way to the hospital. Seven other people were injured, including a 47-year-old teacher.

TALKING SCIENCE

SARAH C.

The scientific world never fails to astound me, and it’s my absolute pleasure to share some of these amazing facts and discoveries with the Lakeside community.

Let’s start with an issue that seems to have most of the world wrapped around its finger: climate change. While there have been many suggested ways of combating global warming, my focus today today is sustainable energy. While many forms of sustainable energy are usable, one of the most popular is solar energy, and for years the same question has arisen: why can’t we just cover a very warm place- like the Sahara Desert- with solar panels?

Let’s start by breaking down the basics of how solar panels and energy work. The earth receives a lot of solar energy, about ten times as much as our population uses. Solar panels look like flat gridded screens and are away of converting solar energy to energy we can use in day-to-day tasks.

Each section of a panel (called a solar cell) has two conductive layers on the outer facing sides and a middle made of crystalline silicon. These atoms of silicon are connected to each other each with four bonds, which would be stable if there were not two

layers of this element. One layer has extra electrons, and the other “holes,” or open electron spaces. Electrons wander across these layers leaving one side positive and one negative. The sun’s rays are made up of particles called photons, and when one hits a cell hard enough, an electron is knocked out of its bond, leaving a lonely electron and a hole. The electron will head toward the negative side because it’s negatively charged, and the hole will go to the positive side. The electron is captured at the top of the cell and forwarded through a circuit to be used for power.

Yet even with all of this science-powered energy, a cell only produces half a volt, which is why we string them together.

So getting past all of this scientific jargon, would our energy problems be solved with a desert load of panels? Well, it’s complicated. Solar power is the cheapest electricity source in the world, and we do have solar plants up to 56 square kilometers that are able to power hundreds of thousands of locals. However, these plants get hot. Some of the light that powers solar cells is absorbed as heat. To keep this equipment at the right temperature, fans and water systems must be used, which consume a huge amount

of energy. Also, if the Sahara was covered by solar panels, the heat has the potential to change the area’s climate, weather, and natural ecosystem drastically.

Although these conditions make solar paneling the desert seem near impossible, science never gives up hope. A rather surprising new development in solar is the use of mirrors. Already in use in a solar plant in Morocco, these reflective surfaces shine light into a sort of receiving energy tower. The change in environmental heat could still prove dangerous to native animals, but it should cause less of a change in climate, and the heat will allow it to produce into the night. This solar energy site, called the Noor Power Plant, is set to cover 30 square kilometers of the Sahara, just as scientists wanted.

All of this innovation, this passion for global progress, should give us all hope in our capacity for climate action. Being greener, being informed, and listening to science may just save us after all.



Photo Courtesy of the World Economic Forum

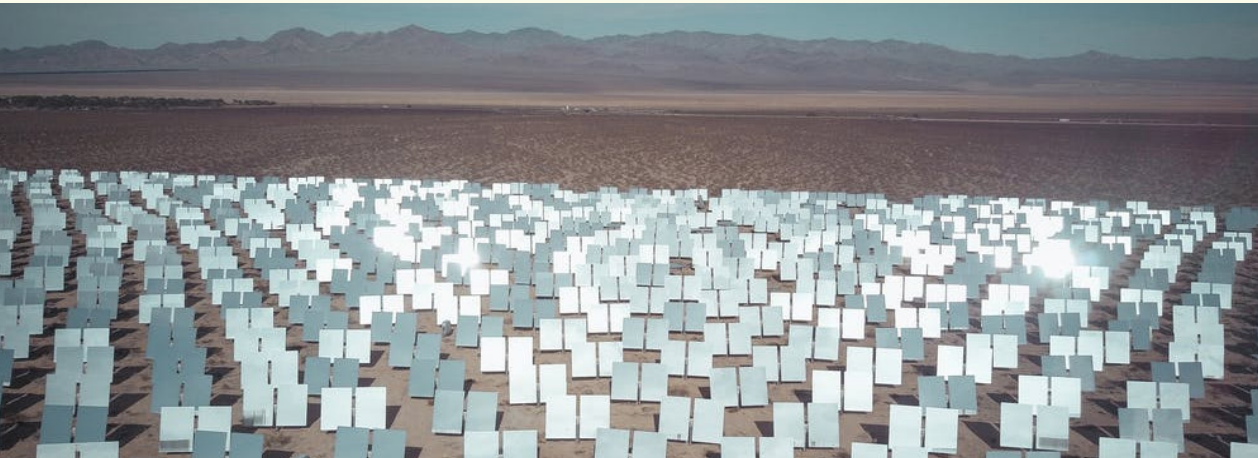


Photo Courtesy of Pexels

COUNTRY SPOTLIGHT SWITZERLAND

AVANI K.

Think about Swiss cheese. Did you immediately start to think about Switzerland as well? Swiss cheese does indeed originate from Switzerland. However, the truth is that there are many more cheeses than just Swiss cheese from Switzerland. In fact, there are many more interesting things that come from or are done in Switzerland than you may think. For example, did you know that one of Switzerland's biggest mountains, the Matterhorn, has been made into a ride in Disneyland?

The Matterhorn is a mountain of the Alps bordering Switzerland and Italy, boasting an incredible height of 4,478 meters. On July 14, 1865, a seven-member team of climbers made the first climb to the top of the Matterhorn, but unfortunately only three lived to tell the tale. In 2015, 150 years after the first climb to the top of the mountain, a team of guides retraced the steps of the first climbers by placing hundreds of glowing red lights along the mountain's ridge. The result was a temporary light show that was meant to recognize the climbers who made that original climb and the lives lost during their journey.

One of Switzerland's most impressive feats is being able to stay neutral during World War II. Staying neutral during World War II was tough, but it was especially hard for Switzerland because Switzerland was surrounded by Nazi Germany at the time. Switzerland's plan to

stay neutral during World War II was divided into two parts. The first part was to blow up any roads, bridges, and tunnels that the enemy could use to enter Switzerland. The second part of the plan to stay neutral was to build secret bunkers everywhere from under someone's house or inside a mountain, so that if Nazi Germany did invade, the entire population would be able to live in those bunkers. Even today, the bunkers are still all over the place in Switzerland, and you can actually go on tours to see them.

Two exceptional foods that are made very well in Switzerland are Swiss fondue and chocolate. Some of the best chocolate brands ever, such as Lindor and Nestle, are based in Switzerland. Swiss chocolate is different from other chocolates because it's a lot creamier. The Swiss chocolatiers meticulously make the chocolate, and are considered the best chocolatiers ever. Another iconic food from Switzerland is known for its Swiss fondue. Fondue is melted Swiss cheese and you use bread to dip into it.

Now that you know at least one more interesting fact about Switzerland, I invite you to do more research into Switzerland. This information is just the beginning of what you could learn about Switzerland. If you dig deeper into the vast world of the internet, you would find many more interesting facts than what I just shared with you. A few more topics that you could research are Swiss clocks and watches.

ADVICE COLUMN

CAILEEN W.

Welcome to the Lakeside Leo Advice Column! Feel free to send an email to me at CaileenW27@Lakesideschool.org or fill out our monthly form in *the Daily* if you have any questions or need advice.

Dear Leo, how do I stop my friends from hating me?

Signed, Anonymous

Dear Anonymous,

Problems with friends can be really difficult! I would recommend politely asking your friends about the issue to make the situation easier to understand. Once you know the reason behind the disliking, it will be much easier to act upon the situation from there on. If you understand their reasons, try your best to improve upon them to become a better friend. However, if you believe their reasons are inadequate, try to distance yourself from them. If they hate you because of something small or unreasonable, you should recognize that you're more important than an unhealthy friendship.

Lakeside Leo Advice Column

Dear Leo, how do I know if I like someone? I think I may, but I'm not sure.

Signed, Anonymous

Dear Anonymous,

Dear Anonymous, you should think about your feelings towards this person. Does being around them make you happy? Do you constantly think about them or want to be around them? If so, you may have feelings for them, but it's up to you to decide if it's platonic or romantic.

Lakeside Leo Advice Column

Dear Leo, what should I do if I think my friend isn't comfortable with my sexuality?

Signed, Anonymous

Dear Anonymous,

Dear Anonymous, try talking it out with your friend! Make sure to have a trusted adult or close friend supporting you in case the situation spirals out of your control or becomes unpredictable. Make sure to speak respectfully and politely, but don't try to pressure them to "be comfortable." All people are different, and some things can be difficult to accept when raised in a certain way.

Lakeside Leo Advice Column



Photo Courtesy of Pexels

#TEAMSEAS

TURNING THE TIDE ON OCEAN POLLUTION

ELYSE C.

#TeamSeas is an organization that helps clean up garbage in the ocean. Popular American YouTubers MrBeast and Mark Rober created #TeamSeas after fans of #TeamTrees (a tree planting organization) requested them to take an action to help the environment.

#TeamSeas was launched on October 29th, 2021. #TeamSeas picks up trash found in oceans, seas, beaches, and rivers, either manually or using a trash-eating robot created by The Ocean Cleanup. The Ocean Cleanup is also an organization that cleans up the ocean. Its creator, Boyan Slat, was swimming in Greece when he saw that there was more plastic than fish, which inspired him to start a trash cleaning organization. The trash collected from the cleanup is either recycled or disposed into the proper disposal location.

The Ocean Cleanup’s mission is to remove 30 million pounds of trash by the end of 2021. They have already collected over 21 million

pounds of trash, and the numbers are increasing rapidly.

This is important because we need to clean trash in our oceans, rivers and beaches. If we don’t, species that live in oceans and seas could go extinct! Trash and plastic are harmful to ocean creatures because they might mistake it for food and eat it, which can strangle, choke, or poison them.

21+
MILLION POUNDS
OF PLASTIC
REMOVED

This organization not only has a goal of cleaning up trash, but it also inspires people to be better. People from all over the world are still donating to #TeamTrees even though their goal has already been reached.

I first learned about this organization in my science class, and I was shocked. The dedication these people have is amazing. I was inspired by them and had an idea to do a school fundraiser! If you would like to help organize it, please contact me at elysec29@lakesideschool.org. If you are interested in donating, go to teamseas.org and help keep our planet clean!



Photo Courtesy of UNESCO Bangkok

RECIPE ROAD

WINTERTIME EDITION

CAILEEN W.

As the winter chills creep around the corner, there’s nothing better than a warm mug of tea and time with family. Here are a few cozy comfort recipes from Tasty.com that will hopefully warm up the frosty season!

Butternut Squash Soup

- 2 teaspoons butter
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- ½ cup onion, chopped
- 1 potato, peeled and cubed
- 1 stalk celery, chopped
- 1 carrot, sliced
- Salt, to taste
- Pepper, to taste
- 2 lb butternut squash, peeled, seeded, and cubed
- 6 cups vegetable broth
- 2 cups water

- 1 bay leaf
- 2 sprigs fresh thyme

Melt the butter in a large pot over medium heat, then add the garlic and onion and sauté for 1-2 minutes until the onion is translucent.

Add the potato, celery, carrot, salt, and pepper. Sauté for 3 minutes.

Add the butternut squash, broth, water, bay leaf, and thyme and stir. Bring to a boil.

Cover and reduce the heat to low. Simmer for 25-30 minutes.

Remove the thyme stems and bay leaf.

Use an immersion or countertop blender to blend the soup until smooth.

Let cool for 2 minutes, then serve.

Enjoy!

S’mores Bars

- 1 cup mini marshmallows, divided
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 3 cups wheat cereal
- 1 cup graham cracker, chopped
- 2 bars chocolate, chopped, plus more to top

Microwave ½ of the marshmallows and butter in a bowl, stirring every 15 seconds until fully melted.

Add cereal and graham crackers into the bowl and mix until well coated. Let the mixture cool to room temperature.

Add the chopped chocolate bars and mix just until combined.

Line a baking dish with parchment paper and pour the cooled mixture into the pan.

Press into the edges of the pan and top with more chocolate pieces and remaining mini marshmallows.

Cool in the refrigerator for at least 2 hours. Cut and serve.

Enjoy!



Photos Courtesy of Pexels

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DOES HOMEWORK WORK?

EMMA S.

Homework: some people hate it, some people think it’s fine, and there are the small few who love it. Let’s look at the benefits and disadvantages of homework.

Homework has many advantages. One of homework’s advantages is that it is good for information retention and practicing skills that have been taught in class. A Boston University psychologist, Jane Bempechat, says that, “In some subjects, like math, worksheets can be very helpful. It has to do with

the value of practicing over and over.” For this to be achieved, the homework has to be worthwhile and somewhat challenging, instead of just busy work. Homework can also help you understand what you are struggling with, so you can ask the teacher for assistance. Not only will this help you gain a better understanding of the material, but it will also help practice self-awareness and self-advocacy.

However, homework does have its disadvantages. For starters, too much of it can cause stress and take away the actual value of it. Stanford research

shows that the benefits of homework start to deteriorate at 2 hours. Around 56% of the students in this study said that homework is their main cause of stress, and only 1% said that homework doesn’t cause any stress. Stress can do many harmful things to the body such as cause mental health issues, cause sleep deprivation, cause high blood pressure, and cause heart disease. Large amounts of homework can also take away from time with friends, family, and hobbies, which are all cherished and important in our day to day lives.

In conclusion, I think that homework is beneficial, as long as we don’t have too much of it. We can minimize the stress in numerous ways, including having more study hall time, having time to do homework in school, having a time estimate for how long an assignment will take, and using that to try to keep homework between 1-2 hours collectively. However it’s achieved, it’s important to have balance with homework.

CELLOS: AN ALL-ENCOMPASSING ORCHESTRA INSTRUMENT

JOSHUA H.

Orchestra. When you hear this word, what do you think of? Well, by the time you finish this article, I hope that the word you think of is “cello.” Cellos are probably the most adaptable orchestra instrument as they can play in so many different registers and styles and also play many different parts of a piece, like the melody, harmony, or bass.

One of the biggest reasons why I love the cello is all of its registers. One example of its reach over many different registers is the fact that it can play the violin’s highest string. Sure, there are instruments with a few more registers, but the cello plays each one of them beautifully. Just consider that all you need to know is how to read a few different clefs, and you can almost play the whole orchestra with the cello. Its sound is also the most vibrant in the

orchestra and its melodies are rich and warm, which makes you want to keep listening. The cellos usually take up less than one fifth of the orchestra. Even so, they can be the loudest, even louder than the violins, which rely on having big numbers to create a loud sound, considering they usually take up about half of the orchestra.

Cellos are versatile and can play a melody, a harmony, or a bass in a group setting. Soloists who play the cello sound fabulous too. My favorite professional cellist, Yo-Yo Ma, is able to manipulate the sound of the cello, creating smooth shifts, resonant vibrato, and a crisp tone quality to put one into a trance.

Here is a quick runthrough of my comparison of the cello to it’s orchestral counterparts. Cello is better than the bass because its sound is more vibrant

and it can play higher and lower parts, whereas the bass mainly only plays the... bass. The cello is better than the viola because it, again, has a more deep, loud sound, and it can play deeper, better. Lastly, cello is better than violins because its sound is so much more resonant, and deep, unlike the high pitched violin. Also, cellos can play melodies and bass parts of an arrangement, while the violins usually only play the melody or higher pitched parts of a piece. Overall, cellos cover a vast range of pitches, tones, and sounds that outdo all other instruments.

Now, I can’t speak for everyone, but many people, even non-cello players, agree that cello is the best instrument. For example, a poll by TwoSetViolin, a popular YouTube channel, recorded that the cello is the best orchestral instrument. Overall, cello is the most

versatile instrument and, therefore, I believe that cello is the best orchestra instrument.



Photo Courtesy of Pexels

PATRIARCHAL NAMING TRADITIONS

KARISHMA K.

Patriarchy is a system in which males are superior to all. That’s pretty self-explanatory. Patriarchy exists in the smallest ways in our society. Have you noticed in old books that women stay home while the men go to work? Or how no woman has ever been elected president? I could go on and on about this, but really what I want to inform you about is one specific way patriarchy rears its ugly head in our society: surnames.

In our society, surnames are usually passed down from the father, but this isn’t the case for every culture. In Iceland, the last name of a child is usually based on the father’s or the mother’s first names, and in Shang-

hai, many children are taking their mother’s last names. Some Spanish-speaking countries take both the father’s and the mother’s last names, though they put the father’s name first. When people who have both surnames move to a country where it is common to have one, they have a few options. They could keep both, use another one completely, or choose one to use. Or if they are married, they could take the name of their spouse or add a “de” and connect the two names.

Families are changing. There are more unmarried and same-sex couples, so it is becoming more common to pass down the mother’s last name. For same-sex couples, there

isn’t one father and one mother, so they don’t have a stereotypical tradition or one naming tradition to follow. For unmarried couples, 19.5% of unmarried mothers have their children take their name because they are more present in their children’s lives. Some counter this by saying that in cases where the mother spends more time with the kids, the kids should get their dad’s last name to still stay connected to him.

Another reason that many choose to use the mother’s surname in some form is to continue her family’s legacy, which is a choice that is made by many people no matter how “traditional” their family structure is.

In conclusion, there are different ways that parents choose their children’s last names, and many cultures do it differently. In my opinion, it’s really up to the family. Families do not need to take the father’s name, they should have a choice. It is unfair and sexist to always take the father’s last name. I do think that merging last names or creating a new last name is a good option because it satisfies both sides. It resists patriarchy and gives the child each parent’s last names, so it is equal to the parents.

CRITICAL OF CRITICAL RACE THEORY



Photo Courtesy of Dalas News

NAINA S.

Recently, the media has been mentioning new education bills that are being introduced into state legislatures which prohibit the teaching of critical race theory. The phrase “critical race theory” has been tossed around by politicians and news anchors alike. However, one of the most unclear topics in these heated debates remains; what does the term critical race theory really mean, and what would happen if it were banned from schools statewide?

Critical race theory “teaches that racism is embedded in systems and structures in the U.S. — such as legal institutions — rather than just being the product of individual prejudice,” according to KERA News. So, not only are people racist, but the very systems of our country are racist, too. For example, the Declaration of Independence states that “all men are created equal,” even while the founding fathers themselves owned slaves.

Some people insist that critical race theory is hurting children, making them feel guilty for crimes committed by their ancestors. Front and center in this argument is Republican representative Steve Toth, the author of the first of two anit-critical race theory bills passed in Texas. He claims that “we don’t need to burden our kids with guilt for racial crimes they had nothing to do with.”

However, educators such as Salandra Grice, author of *The Conscious Educator*, claim that K-12 students are actually not learning about these topics. “Critical race theory is not being taught in K-12 schools,” she said. “This is not what we do. What are y’all talking about?” Another critic of this bill is the Texan Democratic representative Vikki Goodwin, who says this bill is a “solution to a problem that doesn’t exist.”

But if this bill outlaws the teaching of something that is not even part of the state curriculum, then there is really no harm in these bills passing, right? Wrong. The first of the two bills passed in Texas, House Bill 3979, states that teachers can’t be “compelled to discuss a particular current event or widely debated and currently controversial issue of public policy or social affairs,” and if they do, they cannot give “deference to any one perspective,” meaning that every time a teacher brings up a topic that includes two sides, such as the killing of Ahmaud Arbery, they are required to defend both or all sides of the event, no matter how messed up one side’s reasoning may be. This vague language has both frightened and enraged educators, who are worried about how to share accurate information on current, controversial events such as billionaires’ taxes with their students without losing their jobs.

Renee Blackmon, president of the Texas Council for Social Studies,

addressed this problem. “We’ll have principals in conservative communities who don’t want a backlash and will put in place blanket expectations of ‘Don’t talk about anything controversial in your classroom,’” he said. “That way they’ll feel like they’re safe from community reproach-and then teachers are on eggshells.” It is not only the teachers who would face repercussions, however. The prevention of discussions on controversial topics could also hinder critical thinking in the younger generation, as they are spoon-fed only the sweetest snippets of American history.

HB 3979 also prohibits teachers from giving students credit or extra credit for participating in lobbying or public policy internships. This is because some believe that it “inappropriately” places students on a path to activism. However, many civic groups state that this kind of work “prepares students to be engaged citizens and connects what they’re learning in the classroom to the real world.” Recent years have seen a decrease in new voters, and this will increase the margin as younger people receive less experience in participating in their government.

Governor Greg Abbott signed HB 3979 into law on June 15, 2021 but declared that more needs to be done to ban the teachings of critical race theory from reaching the ears of Texan students. So, Republican and

Texan senator Bryan Hughes authored Senate Bill 3. SB 3 would require at least one teacher and one campus administrator at every school to undergo a civics training program. In addition, this bill states that teachers cannot be forced to discuss current controversial topics in the classroom. If they do, they must not show any political bias. Republican representative Dan Huberty expressed concern over the law. “We’ve heard from teachers that are scared to now teach social studies. We’ve heard from teachers that are now saying, ‘I could be sued,’” he said.

In conclusion, though many argue that it isn’t the responsibility of this generation’s children to learn about vile acts of the past, anti-critical race theory laws are putting pressure on teachers. These recent bills make it difficult for teachers to discuss and have their students critique controversial topics. This has unintended consequences of suppressing students from becoming politically engaged in their communities. They are bad for both students and teachers alike and should not hold power over school curriculums.

AFGHANISTAN WAR: BIDEN WAS RIGHT



Photo Courtesy of Sebastiano Tomada

ANNAPOORANI L.

September 11, 2001 was a tragic day. That morning was clear and sunny. Then, suddenly disrupting the morning, planes hit the Twin Towers in New York around 9:00 AM, killing thousands. A war soon ensued.

At first, the war was about pulverising Al-Qaeda and keeping America safe, but eventually it became the longest in U.S. history. Recently, President Biden ended it. After U.S. troops withdrew, the Afghan government collapsed and the Taliban took over. Biden was heavily criticized for the collapse. But was this criticism truly deserved? I think not.

Yes, it’s true the Taliban took over.

But the U.S. shouldn’t have been fighting Afghanistan’s civil war. By the time Biden came into office, many U.S. troops and Afghan civilians had died. Withdrawing from Afghanistan was the right thing to do, and what happened after the U.S. troops left wasn’t abandonment of Afghanistan. The U.S. gave Afghan troops every chance to fight, spendings billions to equip and train them. But as soon as the U.S. left, Afghan troops fled without a fight, and we couldn’t afford to have any more soldiers lose their lives fighting a war that had started before they were born. Whether we let the war go for 20 years or 100, the troops would still eventually fail.

Plus, President Biden had made sure to tell the Taliban that they had to

abide by certain rules and act like a real government in order to be respected by the international community. So far, girls are allowed to go to school, and there has been a lot less killing compared to when the Taliban was last in command.

Finally, by the time we withdrew, the war wasn’t about Al-Qaeda anymore. Yes, the war had started out to avenge those killed on 9/11, but when asked recently if he would keep pouring billions of dollars and thousands of lives into the war in Afghanistan if Al-Qaeda, the reason the war was started, didn’t exist, Secretary of Defense Bob Gates responded with an unequivocal “Yes,” because by then the war wasn’t really about Al-Qaeda anymore. It’s true, the war was helping out Afghan-

istan, but it was also costing lives, and money that could’ve been going towards things like pulling kids in America out of poverty. The war in Afghanistan cost us around 2.3 trillion dollars, and it could have cost us more had Biden not ended it. Also, when the war ended, more than 2,400 U.S. service members had died and 46,000 Afghan civilians had died. War has a cost, and the one in Afghanistan cost too much.

The war needed to be ended, and Biden was the one to end the war, to prevent more from dying, to prevent yet another president from having to deal with this problem. It was the right decision to pull out of Afghanistan and stop further bloodshed.

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KICK MONEY OUT OF SOCCER

SPORTS

THE LAKESIDE LEO

RAEYE S.

We all know that professional soccer is a game played throughout the whole world, filled with the top athletes on each team. But do we really know why each team is as good as they are? Well, it’s really simple. Money.

Money has been and continues to be a big benefactor of the soccer sport and over the past couple of years, the issues with money and soccer have worsened tremendously.

For those of you that are new to soccer, let me tell you a little bit about how money is involved in soccer. Clubs use most of their money to sell merchandise, and this is one of the biggest ways they make money. Have you ever been to a professional sports

game? You can usually find stands set up around stadiums that sell the team’s merchandise. Many famous players from their teams help them gain publicity by selling their jerseys or other tailored merchandise.

The second way money changes the game has to do with recruiting athletes. The players can make money for themselves by getting signed to a certain team using a contract. Sometimes, these contracts are for a year or shorter; however, there are temporary transfers that help a player switch teams while still keeping their contract with the primary team. You might ask: how do people make money in soccer? One way they make money is by having advertisement contracts, as mentioned above. This is a big part of

skilled soccer players’ income. They also get paid by their club, and they usually get paid during their off-season, which is when they aren’t playing soccer. The money the player gets varies depending on the contract they receive.

Now comes the question: does money ruin soccer? I believe that money does ruin the sport of soccer. The reason for this is that money hides the talent of soccer. We all know people such as Ronaldo, Neymar, or Messi, but we don’t really look at the hidden talent that may be in lower clubs that have less money. For example, PSG (Paris Saint Germain) is one of the most well-known clubs and holds some

players in the hall of fame. Messi, Neymar, and Mbappe are all outstanding players, but would they be without the status of their club? PSG sits as the seventh highest-making club, making approximately \$612 million per year. If we compare it to a club like Nimes, which makes \$14 million yearly, it is easy to see the difference in their power due to income. In fact, I didn’t even know about Nimes until researching this topic.

Money impacts publicity, income, and even the players on a soccer team. If money were to be taken out of the equation, I think we would be able to enjoy the good fun and suspense from soccer.

THE END OF AN ERA

KENJI C.

As Yuli Gurriel grounded out to end Game 6, the Braves won the World Series.

This defeat promptly ended the Astros’ season and possibly the “Invincible Astros” era. Gerrit Cole, a star pitcher, and George Springer, a key player, had left the year before due to free agency. Many big names such as Justin Verlander, Zach Grenike, and Carlos Correa will also be up for free agency this year. There is concern among Astros fans whether or not the team will be able to re-sign them. However, there is a glimmer of hope, as many of their young stars such as

Jose Altuve, Yordan Alvarez, and Alex Bregman will be back next year. Additionally, many of the team’s young prospects have continued to grow, and people have started to see a lot of potential in the near future.

The Astros’ story to the top is an impressive one, from 2009-2014, they failed to snag a record over 500. They made a rapid and explosive jump to the top though, and in the last five seasons have reached the World Series three times! In comparison, the Seattle Mariners have never made it to the World Series. Many questions still remain about whether the Astros will be able to maintain their success with most of their stars leaving. Will they



abruptly tumble to the bottom?

With all that being said, Jim Crane, the Astros’ owner, still has a firm belief they will be able to keep Carlos Correa and some of their other

Photo Courtesy of Twitter

stars. In a recent interview he stated, “I think we have a chance, I never count anything out.”

THE COACHING ENIGMA

AMBER D.

Have you ever heard of Dori Monson? He’s the host of a popular local sports talk show, and he coaches basketball for high school girls. But recently he has been involved with Shorewood High School, causing many difficult conversations to be had.

Dori Monson applied to coach girls’ varsity basketball at Shorewood this season but was rejected, not for his lack of coaching ability but for reasons that go beyond basketball. In order to understand why he wasn’t accepted, we have to look into the past.

In October of last year, the Seahawks removed him from their radio shows for a few weeks. He had put some transphobic tweets out on the internet, and Monson had to go through sensitivity training and write an apology letter before returning. As he states in his letter, “My tweet didn’t hit the mark. Instead, it was painful for some of our listeners and many in the Twitter-sphere. For that, like I said on the air the day after the tweet, I apologize.” Monson continued his show after his apology, still receiving backlash from the internet. This was taken into account when the Shoreline

district was considering his application.

However, Monson proved to be even more scandalous than before. In October, it was revealed that Shorewood’s mascot- a blue Native American thunderbird- was going to be changed due to a new law. This Washington state law states that any mascot that has Native American references should be removed. Monson once again shares his opinions without an open mindset. As seen from The Seattle Times, Monson referred to the change of mascots as “silly and meaningless” and “nonsense”. He calls to people to stand up against it because it “takes away from society” and is a “waste of \$’ [sic]” and “all out of control.” While some Shorewood fans believe that the mascot shouldn’t be changed, Monson’s comment was inappropriate, offending listeners throughout the state.

Shorewood responded to Monson’s application strongly, stating, “District administration learned of additional information that is inconsistent with the District’s policies and support of all staff, students, and coaches, regardless of race, creed, sex, or gender.” They said they had not authorized him for the coaching role, but Monson has

a different side of the story. He says that the job was offered to him but was then taken away. On October 1st, the athletic director sent him a message saying, “Hi coach, Welcome.” This obvious sign of acceptance was the opposite of the outcome and the comment sent by Shorewood. It left Monson muddled and confused; he had even assembled a coaching staff to prepare for the season.

As a result of all this, Monson now has a lawyer, Brad Keller. Keller warned the school district to reconsider, in order to avoid a very public and expensive lawsuit. Monson has made his case, saying he’ll fight for what he believes in. But is what he believes in the best interest of Shorewood?

Many questions have been raised over this argument. Should we value a leader for their ability to coach or for their role modeling? Should coaches be more discreet with their opinions when speaking to a larger audience? Personally, I believe that all of it matters. Having someone who leads by example and isn’t afraid to speak up can empower teammates to do the same, leading to more confident players. But a fine line does exist between



Photo Courtesy of Shoreline Area News

speaking out and overstepping, one that isn’t always made clear. In this case, was Monson simply stating his opinion? Only one thing truly seems to matter: what do you think?

AN INTERVIEW WITH MRS. GIACOLINO

FELICITY W.

“I wanted to start a revolution, using art to build the sort of society I myself envisioned.”

Yayoi Kusama

I interviewed Ms. Giacolino about how art plays an instrumental role in her life, what inspires her, and her advice to students.

How do you think art impacts society?

You can create the world you want through art. It's like a quote by Anishka Kapoor, “Artists don't make objects. Artists make mythologies.” You are not just making a piece of art, you are making the story behind the art. Art is action. Whatever you want to say about society, whatever you want to change about society, you can do that through art, through the act of creating. You can show people a different way through what you bring into this world creatively. Get used to that kind of mindset, and that mindset helps you envision a society that is different from the one we inhabit now.

Why do you think art is important?

I think art is important in the same way that creativity is important. The act of creating something that wasn't there before is a very human response. We all have an innate and natural human response to create something original. Anything you are creating that wasn't there before is a

very powerful expression. Art allows us to tap into the part of our humanity that awakens when you are being creative.

How does art shape you and your life?

I try to integrate art into everything around me. There is so much that is beautiful in the world around us, you just might have to look more closely in order to find it. For example, I think things are more interesting when they are visually interesting, so when I am doing something I'm not super excited about, like cooking dinner, I work hard to make it look good on the plate. I ensure that my work space is orderly and nice. I can find ways to make my life more interesting through art. Doing the dishes might seem like a boring chore. Finding ways to make dishes stacked neatly or in an interesting way is a method to create art out of the every day.

How has the pandemic influenced your art?

At the beginning, I was like “I am going to make so much art and be so creative cause I have so much time!” When we got deeper into the pandemic, it wasn't as easy; we weren't able to be the people we envisioned ourselves to be. I did not have realistic expectations for myself! I had higher hopes that I was able to meet. However, since the pandemic, I am consuming a lot more art from the media. It's good and bad. Having lots of inspiration is wonderful. At the same time,

too much makes you distracted and more judgmental of your own work.

Which artists resonate with you?

I get a lot of inspiration from Ruth Asawa. She makes these fiber sculptures that are like nothing I've ever seen before. They are 3D sculptures that hang from the ceiling. I have also learned a lot from Sheila Hicks about the use of color.

What do you hope we students will learn after your class?

I hope you gain faith in your own creative ability. You are creative and you can make anything you want. People think that if they don't have innate artistic talent, they will never be good at art. I don't think that is true. Visual art is learning how to see in the right way. Train your eyes. Train your hands to do what you want. There is art and inspiration all around you. You just have to do it. You just have to start. You have to keep working and improving. You are all artists.

What advice would you give to beginners?

Just put it on the page. Try to do it and then judge it later. Get it out, let the process happen and then you can go back and fix and change if you need to. I think we are so scared to make the first mark on the page, and this prevents a lot of people from making art. So my advice is to work through

the fear, get it on the page and then judge or change it later but just get it out there first. I know teachers always talk about having a growth mindset, but it's so important in art!

What advice would you give to those who want to major in art?

Look at as much art as you can and look for art in basic stuff. Find out what kind of art you like and why. Find out what kind of art you don't like and why. Look for things that are exceptionally beautiful. Like when you walk to the car, notice one beautiful thing. Is there a beautiful color combination, like the glow of the blue sky and the clouds? So many times we are distracted and not noticing what is happening around us. There is beauty in everything and it is important to train your eye to observe. Get practice noticing what you find beautiful and just how artistic the world is we are in.



Photo Courtesy of Lakeside School



Photo Courtesy of Lakeside School

ARTISINAL HOT CHOCOLATE

MARIAH M.

Have you ever wanted a nice hot drink on a shivering cold day? Well, hot chocolate would be a pleasant and easy choice. All you need to do is walk to the middle school cafeteria and fill a cup up with hot chocolate! (Then pay). But if you want to make some of your own, follow these simple steps.

The ingredients that are necessary to make a delicious cup of hot chocolate are as follows:

- Hot chocolate powder or cocoa powder (one tablespoon)
- Milk (One cup; the amount does not matter)
- Hot water (The amount does not matter)
- Sugar
- A cup (8-10oz, can hold hot contents)
- A tablespoon
- Optional:
- Whipped cream

Instructions:

- Dump one tablespoon of hot cocoa powder into your cup.
- Make sure that there are no big lumps of powder stuck together. If there is, use a spoon to mash it into powder.
- Add hot water. Fill half of your cup with water and stir.
- After stirring, add some milk so that ¾ of the cup is full. Stir again.

Now, taste test your drink. If it is not sweet enough, add some sugar. After you add some sugar, taste it again. If you are still not satisfied, then add some more. When you are happy with the sweetness of the drink, your drink is ready!

Optional:

- For some extra tasty and creamy texture, add some whipped cream.
- If you want to make it look extra fancy, wash your hands, and get a tiny pinch of cocoa powder and sprinkle it on the whipped cream. (Not too much! Or else it will taste rather bitter.)

- If you do not have cocoa powder or hot chocolate powder, you can grab a leftover Halloween chocolate bar and use it to make an equally delicious drink. You will need the following:
 - One bar of normal-sized Hershey’s Milk Chocolate or a type of chocolate that is similar to that.
 - Some milk

Steps:

- First, cut/break the chocolate bar into pieces.
- Melt the chocolate using a saucepan or microwave. The melted chocolate should be rich and creamy.
- Pour the melted chocolate into your cup so it fills only half of your cup.
- Then, add some milk or water to the cup so that the cup is mostly filled up.
- Taste your drink. If it is too sweet,



drink some of it and add some more water/milk. If it is not sweet enough, add some sugar. (Not brown sugar!) If you still have some leftover melted chocolate, dump it into a bowl and refrigerate/freeze it. Maybe it will turn

into a hard bowl-shaped chocolate again!

I hope you have fun making these recipes!

MOVIE RECOMMENDATIONS

STELLA J. & GABRIELLA N.

Do you have a couple spare hours and feel bored? Is it a Friday or weekend night? Do you just feel like watching a movie? If the answers to these questions are “yes,” then these recommendations are for you. These are all age-appropriate and extremely funny movies that came out in 2021.

1. *Flora and Ulysses*: This movie is an amusing comedic adventure based on the Newbery Award-winning book by Kate DiCamillo. It’s about a self-

avowed cynic named Flora and her friend Ulysses on a journey that will change her outlook forever. --Except there’s a twist. Ulysses is a supernatural squirrel with flying powers. This humorous, heartwarming tale about a girl and her squirrel is a delightful movie to watch with your family.

2. *Cinderella*: This remake of the classic movie Cinderella comes with a spin. Cinderella is an aspiring fashion designer and the prince falls in love with her. But Ella has no desire to spend the rest of her life waving to a crowd in a royal box. Will she find a

way to live with her love and follow her dreams? Watch this movie to find out. This movie is funny, witty, and features James Corden as a mouse.

3. *The Addams Family 2*: Have you watched the original Addams family? Or the 2019 animated Addams Family? If so, you should definitely watch this movie. It’s a sequel to the 2019 movie and features Wednesday Addams. After a close call with a lawyer about Wednesday’s real parents, her parents decide to take the family on a road trip. Cousin Itt comes along for the ride. Meanwhile, Uncle Festus is

turning into an octopus due to a science experiment. Will Wednesday find out who her real parents are? If you want to find out, watch this movie!

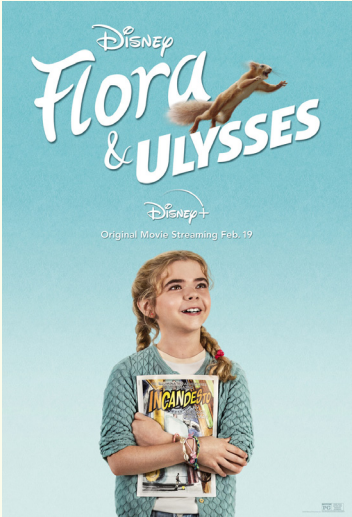


Photo Courtesy of IMDb



Photo Courtesy of IMDB



Photo Courtesy of Entertainment Weekly

NO SHOES: A SHORT STORY



Photo Courtesy of How Stuff Works

TESSA N.

Bomo Mobo thought that shoes were very inconvenient. Bomo had to lace them up and unlace them every day. Plus, whenever he got too big for them, he had to spend more money on buying bigger ones. Besides, Bomo enjoyed walking barefoot in the grass. The softness of it was just like his wool carpet, and his wool carpet was very soft.

When Bomo grew up, he decided not to wear shoes. He smiled with pleasure the first time he went without shoes. He felt the cool grass beneath his feet and the blades of grass tickling his toes. Just then he remembered: he needed milk for his Lemon & Lime cereal. He wouldn’t eat cereal without milk! Bomo walked out onto the street. His eyes flew open wide as the cement sidewalk pressed into his feet.

“Ow!” he shouted with surprise, his feet full of splinters from the twigs littered on the ground. All the way to the grocery store, he trespassed on other people’s lawns, so as to not hurt his feet. As he walked, he heard whispers following him.

“Not even any socks...”

Bomo tried his best to ignore them. When he entered the grocery store, he hurried to the milk section and bought his favorite brand of milk, Fresh Milk. Bomo hurried out of the store and back onto the street, ignoring the whispers again.

This went on for two weeks. By that

time, Bomo had become grumpy because he was constantly teased about his shoelessness wherever he went. He also became notorious for chasing children who had dared each other to climb over his fence. Bomo would look out the window to see uninvited children running wild all over his lawn, trampling his precious grass. On the occasion that he did go out, people who saw him veered away to avoid him.

One day, Bomo looked at himself in the mirror and thought I have become as sour as my favorite cereal, Lemon & Lime. To think this all started with shoes! At that thought, he resolved to do better.

Bomo decided that he should get shoes. Then people wouldn’t judge him, and in turn, he would not get

angry and feel bad.

He walked to the shoe store he had gone to as a kid, Shoes Are Shoes Are Shoes.

“Welcome. Bomo, is that you? Come in!”

Bomo walked in nervously. “Where have you been? I’ve been hearing so many rumors that you quit wearing shoes, and then I saw you bare foot!” wheezed the old storekeeper.

“Well...I kind of gave up wearing them,” confessed Bomo, and he explained how he had always loved the feeling of grass under his feet and how hard shoes were to lace up.

“Well, I have just the thing for you,”

the storekeeper replied. He led Bomo to the back of the store. “I call them flip-flops,” the storekeeper stated proudly.

Bomo tried these flip-flops on. “See? No laces, easy to put on, and easy to slip off to feel grass!” exclaimed the kind storekeeper.

Bomo was delighted with this curious invention. After Bomo paid for his flip-flops, he strolled out of the store, feeling overjoyed that his feet didn’t get splinters all over them.



Photo Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art



Photo Courtesy of Fine Art America

LETTERS AND SECRETS

PART II

SKYLAR B. & NOELLE Y.

Soon, the king and the detective were on their way shortly after their meeting. Andrew trusted his apprentice to handle the court’s letters.

The journey to London took a few days. The two traveled in silence, with only the occasional farmhouse to keep them company. The detective watched the king’s stony face. He couldn’t imagine having, let alone starting, a conversation with the king.

The plains faded to suburbs then gave way to the outer streets of London. Upon reaching the Tower of London, the king immediately retired to his chambers. The detective was given a small room in an inn outside the tower and permission to enter all the rooms in the fortress. There was no time to waste, and the detective began interviewing upon arrival.

All of the respondents eyed Andrew with suspicion. The detective did his best to act as professional as possible, but the staff and noblemen he was interviewing ignored his questions.

“Is this necessary?” they asked upon seeing Detective Andrew.

After hours of thorough questioning and very few results, the respondents stopped arriving at the door. A servant notified the detective that the day’s interviews were complete. The detective thanked the servant and retired to his inn.

The detective strode down the hallway to his room. The pressure of his well-polished shoes made the

velvet-covered floorboards creak. He approached his door and withdrew the key the inn’s manager had given him. The door inched open, and the detective stepped into the room. Something crunched under his foot. The candlelight illuminated a small envelope sealed with a muddled stamp as if someone had swirled it around in the wax, and he bent down to snatch it up.

He walked into the small room and dropped his bag in a corner. Had his apprentice decided to write him? The detective sat at the room’s rickety desk and slid his finger along the seam of the envelope. The seal broke easily.

A loosely folded small square of paper dropped onto the desk. The detective unfolded it and read.

Dear Detective Andrew of England, I know a lot about you. I have known you for a while, even if you don’t know me. At times, I wish you knew me. But that doesn’t matter. You will soon find out.

I’ve been watching your entire life, but now I must write to you. I must aid you. Because I believe this will be the most important mystery you will ever solve.

As you unfold this enigma, I intend to write to you plenty of times. I am aware of who committed this murder of the royal boys. Unfortunately, I am not inclined to divulge the criminal.. It is you who needs to do it.

However, I did say that I would aid you. I will present you with your first clue: you know the murderer in question. Whether you’ve met them recently or not, I cannot reveal.

Think, for the outcome of this mystery depends on you. This is all I can inform you of in this letter. I do hope you appreciate the lead.

There was no signature. Very informal.

The detective rested his head in the crook of his elbow. He reread the letter. It was so unprecedented, and it complicated the mystery greatly. In fact, the writer of the letter was a clue themselves.

Then there was the clue the writer had given. If this figure did know the identity of the criminal, they were bold to suggest the detective knew this murderer. Who had he been in contact with recently? The king? His expression darkened, and he brushed away the thought.

Now he was investigating the former princes’ death not only to please the king, but also to see where it led. The thought kept him awake for a good hour before he slept.

Early the next morning, the detective woke to the sound of someone knocking on the door. Outside, rain fell, dripping on the roof. He rolled over, thoughts of the letter coming back to his mind. This was an early time to get up, even for him. However, he didn’t want to be rude, so he slipped on a proper-looking coat and answered the door.

A maid stood outside. “Sir,” she said timidly, “A servant of the king brings this to you.” She held a small vial to the light.

“Does it contain mud?” The detective examined the bottle.

“I think so, sir. Around midnight,

soldiers guarding the White Tower found this near the steps. They believe it was tracked from the shoes of the criminal, but wanted you to examine it.”

The detective sighed at the maid’s inexperience. He clearly needed to inspect the scene. “May I examine the area where the soldiers found the mud?”

“I’m afraid not.” The maid glanced at the dripping window panes. “The rain began shortly after the soldiers found the mud. It washed the tracks away. This is the only sample.”

“Thank you. I will study it.” Andrew dismissed the maid and brought the vial to his desk. He had to arrange his evidence and piece a report together for the king by noon. The king, who was now a suspect. He could have easily murdered the boys for power. After all, they were his only threats to the throne.

The detective sighed sharply. No, he mustn’t think that way. Not until he was quite sure.

TODAY’S GONNA BE SUCH A PRODUCTIVE DAY

CHLOE L.

Today’s gonna be such a productive day. It’s raining outside, the lights are nice and bright, the house is warm and cozy. It’s like one of those “study vlogs” that pop up in my YouTube recommended list at least twice a week.

So I sit down in my chair, take out my backpack, and suddenly I decide that my desk is just too messy for me to work at. But that’s okay! I’ll just organize it, throw some trash away, and everything will be perfect. It’ll take ten minutes, tops. Until I discover this random notebook that I wrote in when I was seven. The thing about random notebooks that you wrote in when you were seven is that they make both complete sense and zero sense at the same time, so I usually spend around half an hour laughing at how dumb I was when I was seven. Fast forward thirty minutes, and I’m laughing about how I spelled “laugh” like “laff” in third grade, which is also when I start thinking about spelling, which is when I remember that my English homework is due tomorrow, which is also when the “oh wait, what was I doing again?” moment kicks in.

I’m back on track! I’ve shown the

notebook to both of my parents, screenshotted it and sent it onto Discord for my friends to laugh at, and hastily swiped the rest of the stuff on my desk into a random bin that I found under my bed. Now the desk is nice and clean, it’s still raining outside, and the house is still nice and cozy and the perfect place to work in. Some hot chocolate would be really nice right now. So I get up and go get some hot chocolate, except the cocoa powder won’t melt, so I have to go find actual chocolate to melt into my milk. Actually, I lied. The cocoa powder did melt, and I just wanted to see if I could melt chocolate in my milk. How many seconds would it take for the chocolate to melt in the microwave?

A steaming cup of hot cocoa, a clean desk, rain ambiance, cozy lighting: everything you need to study! I’m ready for a productive rest of the day. I have my pajamas on, my hair is tied, my laptop is charged, mouse is ready, fingers warmed up... I open LME and start my math homework. A message from Discord pops up. It’s someone laughing at the screenshot of my notebook. Then ten minutes have disappeared while I was aggressively arguing about the accurate pronun-

ciation of “adult,” which causes me to remember that I’m supposed to be doing math homework. Dangit, you procrastinate too much. Which is probably what urged me to delete the LME tab, go to Google search, and type in “how to stop procrastinating,” which leads to a WikiHow binge, which leads to me screenshooting a picture of a person hitting a flamingo on the legs with a stick and a caption “AIM FOR THE LEGS.”

Yeah, I’m procrastinating again. No, I don’t know how it happened. I totally don’t know how it happened, I’m serious, I don’t know what you’re talking about. Y’know what would be a really good idea? To choose a less rabbit-hole-like website to research about procrastinating. YouTube we go! *I’ll just watch ONE video*, I tell myself, one video about how to stop procrastinating and then I get back to whatever homework I was doing. Then after video number one, I still don’t understand. Maybe another one. Then after video number two, what would be really helpful would be watching a video about pig drop-kicking orphans. Then after video number six-thousand, and twenty-seven point three, it would be really beneficial to stop my procrastination by watching a video of a

porcupine sneezing and farting at the same time.

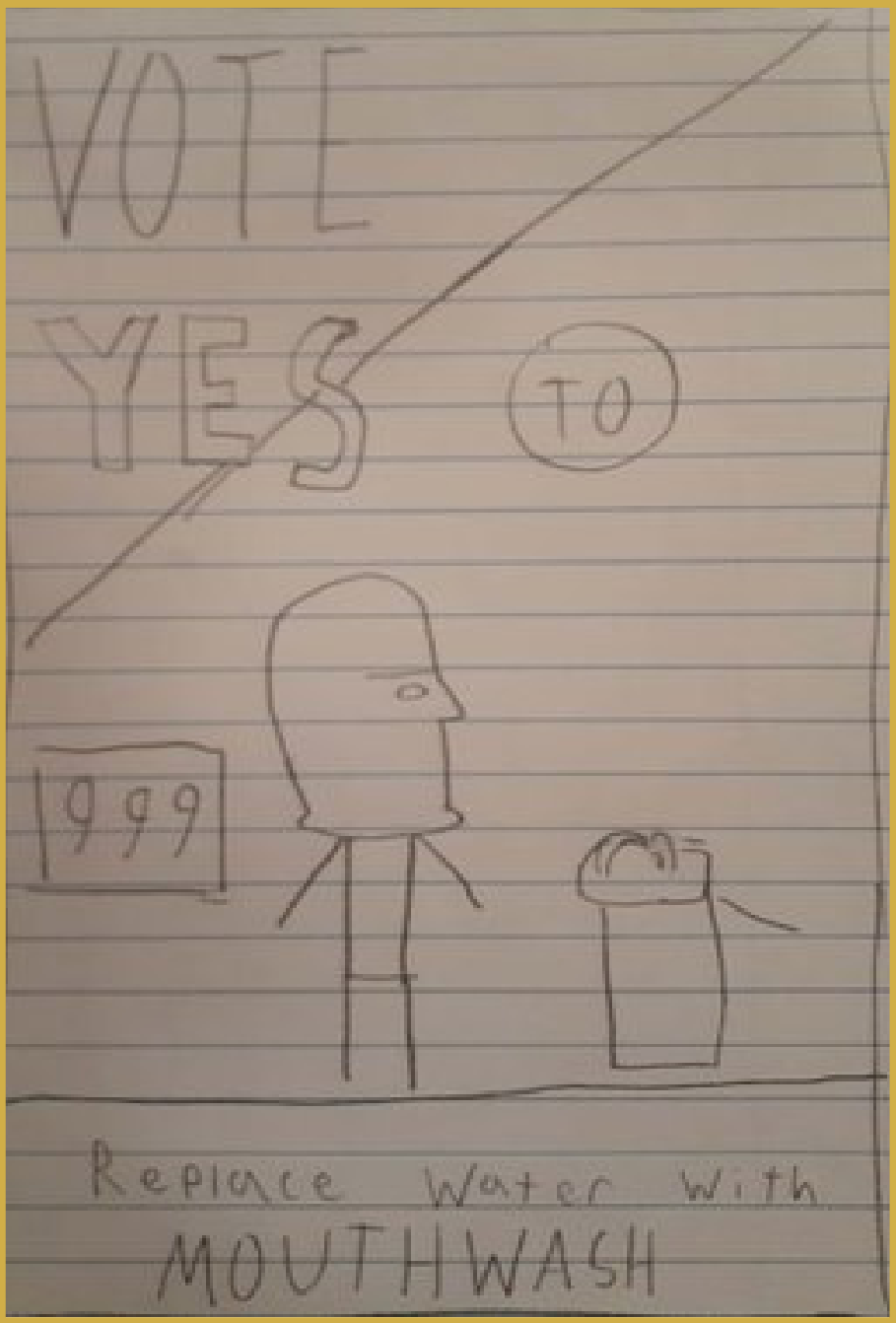
So it’s two in the morning, and I’m lying in bed thinking *I’ll just take today as an off-day. Tomorrow’s gonna be such a productive day.*



Photo Courtesy of Pexels

AD SATIRES

ALDER G-H.



FRUSTRATION CLICKS

SOPHIA C.



PUN-ISHMENT

PAUL M.



Photo Courtesy of What Else is Happening



Photo Courtesy of News in Levels

HE DIDN'T
WANT TO
BRISKET,

HE WOULD
BECOME
**GROUND
BEEF,**

THE **STEAKS**
WERE TOO
HIGH,

**Why didn't
the cow jump
off the cliff?**

HE DIDN'T
WANT TO
MOOVE,

THIS JOKE
IS **UTTERLY**
AMAZING

AND, AROUND
HEIGHTS, HE
WAS A **COWARD.**

THIS IS THE
GREATEST
JOKE YOU'VE
EVER **HERD**

I REALLY
MILKED THAT
JOKE

P.S.
DON'T STAY
UP **PASTURE**
BEDTIME

HOPEFULLY
THIS WASN'T
TOO **CHEESEY**