



The Startling History of Scary Superstitions

By Lily

But first, what is superstition? The word comes from the Latin term “superstitio”, which means “an excessive fear or wonder.” In English, it can be simply defined as an unfounded belief that doesn't stem from logic or reasoning.

Friday the Thirteenth

The history of this misfortunate day originates from Christianity nearly two thousand years ago. The Bible writes that in approximately 33 CE, Jesus and his twelve apostles—thirteen people in total, gathered for a final meal together known as the Last Supper on Holy Thursday, the night before his death. At the table, the thirteenth person, Judas Iscariot, would later go on to betray Jesus, leading to his crucifixion the next day on Good Friday.

Over the years, the notoriety surrounding the number thirteen, and its relationship with Friday, the day of Jesus’ crucifixion, led to the widespread fear of the misfortunate Friday the Thirteenth. Even today, nearly two thousand years later, it’s still considered bad luck to host thirteen at a table. You might also have trouble finding a thirteenth row on airplanes, or a thirteenth floor on multi-level buildings.

A Black Cat Crossing Your Path

The superstition that a black cat crossing your path promises bad luck can be traced back to the Late Middle Ages, when these felines were associated with the widespread witchcraft craze ravaging Europe. From the 14th through 17th centuries, religious instability, widespread panic, and the deadly Bubonic Plague boiled over in a massive witch hysteria known as the “Great Hunt”. Looking for a scapegoat for the unfortunate circumstances at the time, thousands of Europeans falsely accused others, mainly women, of practicing evil sorcery and carrying out the devil’s work. These “alleged witches” were tried without evidence and most of the time, sent to death.

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Happy Friday the Thirteenth! For decades, this ill-fated day has been the subject of misfortune, horror, Freddy Krueger, and more. But fear of the number thirteen, known as triskaidekaphobia, is one of many superstitions with roots in ancient times that are still prevalent today. If you’re interested in learning about the origins of some of society’s most puzzling superstitions, then you’ve come to the right place!



Jolly Ranchers

By Flora



Jolly Ranchers have a long and interesting history that I bet you didn't know about before reading this. We should start at the very beginning. Jolly Ranchers were first invented by Bill and Dorothy Harmsen (pictured above) in Golden, Colorado, when they moved there in 1942 from Minnesota. At first Bill was a pilot for the Continental Airlines, but he had always wanted to open his own store.

Later his dream came true! The Harmsens bought a farm set up with their very own woodworking shop, and Dorothy went into the flower and fruit business.

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Fictional Story

By Polina

Suddenly my father leaped off his horse. He slayed four goblins, but the other three were too quick for him. “No” I screamed, but it was too late. My father lay dead. I was stunned. I seemed to be in a slow-moving dream. I was still in that dream when a hand reached down and grabbed me by the scruff of the neck, then swung me around and onto the back of a horse. The hand that grabbed me belonged to my father’s archnemesis. In the haze, one question raced through my mind: *Where was he taking me?*

To be continued in the next issue



Based on a real life cold case...



Murder Mystery

By Alice and Ally

The Real Story: It was in Kansas City, Missouri, 1935. A well-dressed 20-30 year old man going by the name of Ronald T. Owen checked into a hotel. He’d come without any luggage, and was checked into room 1046. At 4pm, a maid came to clean the room. She found the door to Owen’s room had been left unlocked. When she entered the room, she saw Owen lying on his bed in the dark.

The following day, there had been a “do not disturb” sign put up on the door. The maid came to the room, bringing towels, but heard a rough voice say, “We don’t need any.” These encounters with this man seemed strange, but no one expected what they would find in room 1046. A bellman in the hotel was sent to figure out why the phone was always off the hook, and he found Owen alive and conscious but horribly stabbed. He was bound and in a bathtub covered in blood. Shocked by this gruesome sight, the bellman immediately called his manager. When asked who’d done this to him, Owen’s replied that it wasn’t self-harm, only saying “no one.” Later, Owens died and was officially identified later by his mother as Artemus Ogletree. Two years later, a letter that was allegedly from Ogletree was sent to his mother in Cairo. The case was never solved, as the FBI couldn’t find any new leads.

From the Maid’s Point of View: I look at my watch and sigh. It is only 4 pm, and I still have a couple hours left in my shift. I check my schedule, and see the next room I have to clean is room 1044. I use my key to open the door, walk inside, and start mindlessly cleaning, letting my mind wander. Today I hope to get home at 10:30. This job pays pretty well, as it is a nice hotel. But the shifts are long and my 12-year old daughter often has to spend lonely hours alone. I sighed. *“I work long hours so she can have a better life. She’s bright, pretty, and talented. My daughter deserves better than our small cramped apartment. She deserves more than cheap hand-me-downs. I wish she could dress as the other kids, in new fashionable clothes, but she settles for less. And although I can see that she doesn’t like them, she never complains.”* Sometimes I think about stealing from the guests. I sigh again, then finish cleaning the room. The next room I have to clean is room 1045, but there is a “do not disturb” sign so I skip it. Instead I head to room 1046. I open the door and what I find is not what you see in the average room. The man staying in this room is lying on the bed, fully dressed in an expensive looking suit.

To be continued in the next issue

Snowflakes



By Lily

Just like flowers, snowflakes are one of nature’s many gifts which remind us that beauty surrounds us even in the darkest and coldest times of the year. But unlike flowers, no two snowflakes are alike.

These phenomena start their journey high up in the clouds. Extremely cold water droplets or water vapor freeze onto pollen or dust particles in the sky, creating an ice crystal. The water molecules of these crystals arrange themselves into predetermined spaces, known as crystallization, forming a six sided snowflake. These crystals are symmetrical, but it’s really the temperature and atmospheric conditions in the area the snowflake forms that shape its unique, one-of-a-kind appearance.

At 25 to 32 degrees Fahrenheit, the snowflake starts off as solid hexagonal discs that resemble tiny plates. When the temperature drops between 21 and 25 degrees, the shape becomes long and thin as a needle. Lower, in the 14 to 21 degree temperature range, the needles thicken into hollow columns.

The prettiest snowflakes, however, are produced under 14 degrees. Between 10 and 14 degrees, the flake broadens into stellar plates, and six-armed stars begin to form. As the crystal falls towards the ground, water vapor freezes onto the main crystal, building on to the six arms of the snowflake. Between 3 and 10 degrees, the most breathtaking snowflakes, known as dendrites, form. These are the most well-known snowflakes, named for their tree-like branches.

Although they might all look the same at first glance, no two snowflakes are exactly alike. This is because individual snowflakes all undergo different paths falling down from the sky to the ground. They experience different atmospheric conditions, humidity, and temperatures, each factor molding the snowflake into a completely unique and original pattern.

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Jolly Ranchers



continued

Afterwards, they opened an ice cream shop, the beginning of their work in the sweets industry. They started the store on May 28th, 1949, but when winter came around and ice cream was no longer desired as much as in the warmer months, they made the hard candies that we still love today: Jolly Ranchers!

They chose the name using the word rancher to suggest a western vibe, and included jolly to make it friendly! The popularity of Jolly Ranchers quickly grew and people loved them as much if not more than the ice cream. But how did Jolly Ranchers grow to reach their widespread fame we know today? Well, the Jolly Ranchers were so popular that Bill and Dorothy started expanding with franchise stores across the Rocky Mountains region. In 1966, the brand was growing fast and was sold to Beatrice Foods, which the Hershey Company bought, of course giving it even more popularity. Today, Hersheys and other companies across the globe produce thousands of Jolly Ranchers each day. And of course, the best thing about these candies? Their taste!

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Fun Facts

Submitted by Dahlia

- The word for the fear of palindromes (words that are the same backwards and forwards) is a palindrome: aibohphobia
- You can’t say the word stutter without stuttering
- The word for the phobia of long words is one of the longest words in the English language:
Hippopotomonstrosesquippedaliophobia
How ironic!

Submit a fact that you would like to have featured in the next issue [here](#)

The Startling History of Scary Superstitions



continued

A Black Cat Crossing Your Path

At the time, many believed animals like black cats, toads, dogs, and certain insects to be the familiars of the witches: low-ranking demons from the devil that served as the companions to the supposed sorcerers. As a result, these felines, along with their “witch masters”, came to be seen as symbols of evil and harbingers of misfortune. Not all cultures, however, share this fearful view of black cats. In Japan, these creatures are seen as good omens, while in ancient Egypt, black cats were quite the opposite from in Europe. These animals were associated with Bastet (or Bast), the goddess of cats, home, protection, and revered as sacred guardians that protected against evil spirits and brought good fortune.



Breaking a Mirror

The superstition that breaking a mirror brings seven years of bad luck is believed to be between 2,000 and 2,700 years old. The Ancient Greeks and Romans both believed that one’s reflection revealed their soul, so mirrors were thought to have mystical powers, even allowing the gods to observe people through these windows.

The first mirrors were made from polished metal surfaces by Roman artisans, but as time went on, the empire started crafting them out of glass, which made breakage easier. The Romans, however, also believed that the body renewed itself every seven years, meaning that breaking a mirror ruined the person’s luck until they could get their good fortune back seven years later. And it’s not just the Greeks and Romans—in Chinese Feng Shui, mirrors are believed to bring positive energy into a room, while in astrology, breaking one of these devices spells trouble in your relationships.

Don’t worry, though! If you act swiftly, you won’t have to wait the full seven years... According to folklore, grinding the broken pieces into dust and burying these remains in a running stream or sacred ground is thought to restore your good luck, but only if you act quickly!

Opening an Umbrella Inside

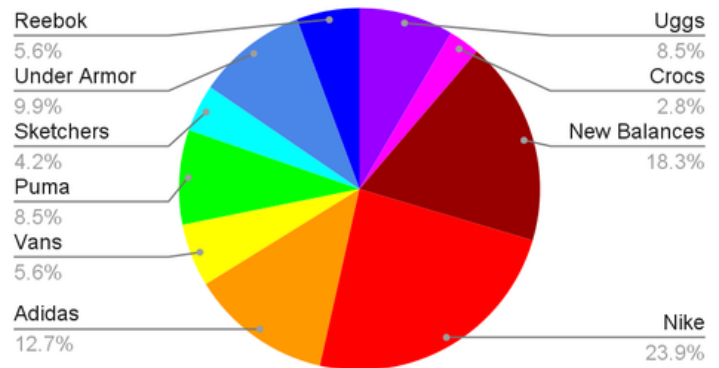
Unlike the previous superstitions, the history behind the misfortune of opening an umbrella indoors is murky. In Ancient Egypt, the birthplace of these devices, some believe that to open an umbrella indoors and away from sunlight angered the Egyptian sun god Ra. Meanwhile, others feared that peacock-feathered parasols were mimicking the sky goddess Nut, and anyone but nobility using her shade was sacrilegious.

But it was truly in the Victorian Era of London that the dangers of umbrellas indoors grew serious. Around the mid 1800s, these sunshades first started being used by common folk, but they were nothing like the modern, fold-up contraptions we have today. Designed with spring triggers, steel canopies, and hard metal spokes, these umbrellas were large, unwieldy, and violent to open suddenly. Doing so in a room could cause serious harm to people and damage furniture and other surroundings, and as such, umbrellas became notorious for indoor usage.

If all of this talk of superstition is making you anxious, though, just listen to the advice of Stevie Wonder. As the famous singer says, “superstition ain’t the way.”



Shoe Types



Survey By Polina

Have you ever wondered about how many kids at school wear Uggs? What about how many people Crocs over sneakers? All these questions will be answered in the pie chart above. 50 people were surveyed.

A Short History of the Super Bowl

By Lily

The Super Bowl is the annual championship for American football that determines the winning team in the NFL (National Football League) for that year. This sporting event was created in 1967 as a result of a 1966 deal that merged the nation's two separate football leagues: the NFL and AFL (American Football League).



It all started in 1960, when a group of businessmen wanted to own football franchises in the NFL. Their request was denied, and they instead created their own new league—the AFL. In 1966, an agreement was formed to merge the AFL into its rival league the NFL. The following year, on January 15th, 1967, the first Super Bowl took place, a spectacle that was broadcasted to over 51.8 million Americans.

After both leagues united, the NFL divided into two different conferences: the AFC (American Football Conference) and NFC (National Football Conference,) with the winners of both divisions facing off in the final Super Bowl match. Another highlight of the game is the HalfTime Show, a music and entertainment act that takes place in between the second and third quarters. This year, Super Bowl LX, saw a victory for the Seattle Seahawks against the New England Patriots, as well as a HalfTime show performance by Grammy award-winning singer Bad Bunny.

Weird, Wacky Laws

By Lily



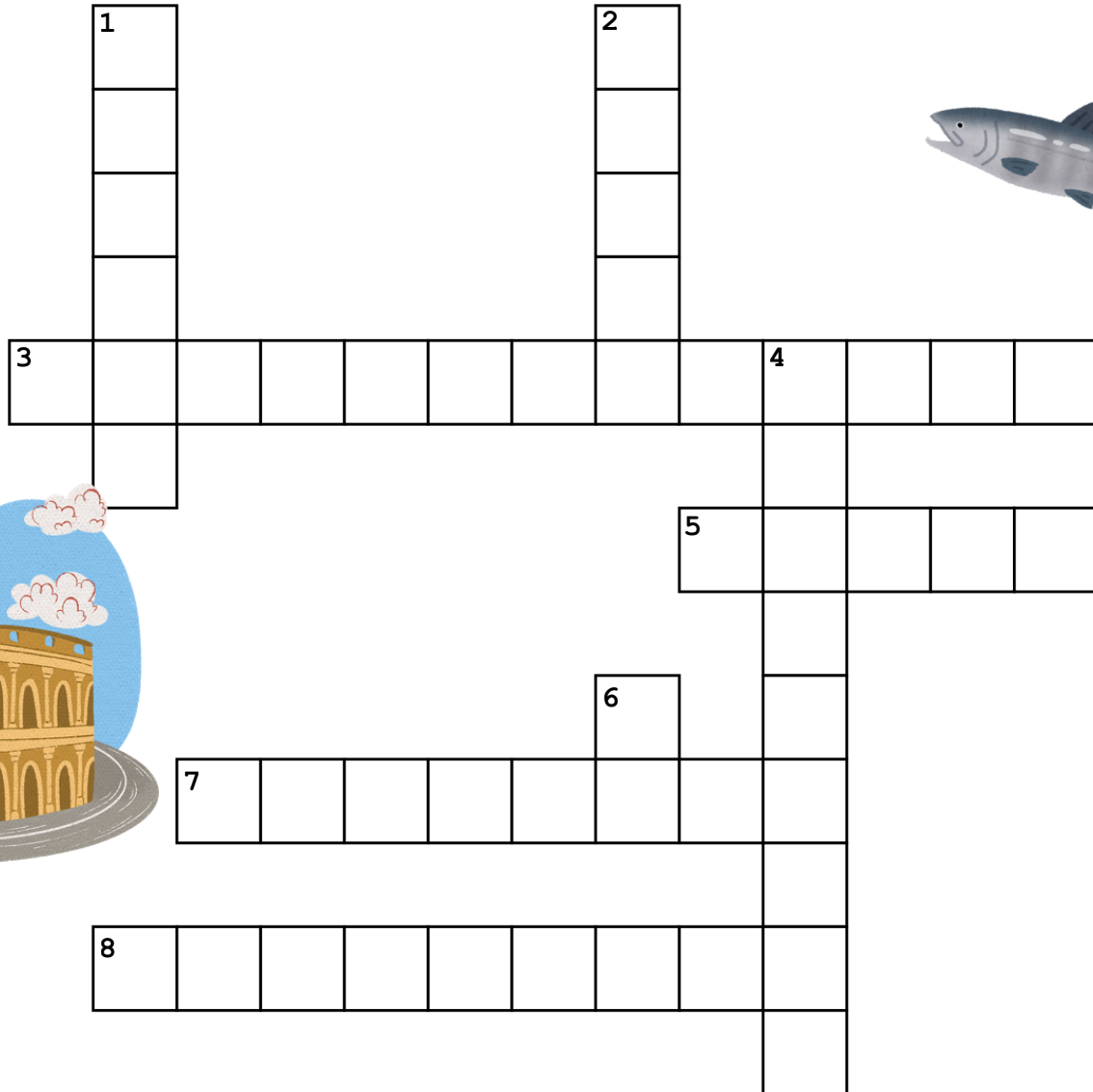
1. It is illegal to chew gum in Singapore, except for very rare medical circumstances. The purpose of this law is to maintain public cleanliness, and failure to comply can result in a fine and even time in jail!
2. In Italy, it is against the law to wear high heels at ancient sites like the Acropolis, in order to protect these ancient historical monuments.
3. It is illegal to turn your back on a statue of Buddha in Sri Lanka, as it represents spiritually disconnecting yourself from him.
4. In the UK, the Salmon Act of 1986 makes it illegal to handle salmon "suspiciously." The exact meaning of this is unclear, but heed caution when dealing with fish.
5. In Scotland, you are legally required to let someone knocking on your door asking for the bathroom inside your home. The actual law, which is enforceable, is a result of the old Scottish common law that obligates people to be hospitable to guests.



6. In Denmark, the government has provided a list of 7,000 pre-approved baby names that parents are required to choose from to name their newborn. If they wish to name their child something not already accepted and on the list, they must first get special approval from their local church, then have it reviewed by government officials.
7. In France, it is legal to marry a deceased person if there is proof that the dead had the intent to get married before their passing.
8. In Alabama, it is against the law to wear a fake mustache in church that causes laughter.
9. Winnie the Pooh t-shirts are banned from playgrounds in Poland because the character doesn't wear any pants. Officials were worried that the bear's inappropriate wardrobe would be a bad influence on children.
10. During Arkansas' first years as a state, its two US Senators were split on the spelling and pronunciation. One said they were from "Arkan-SAW," while the other pronounced it "Ark-KANSAS." In 1881, the General Assembly of the state passed resolution 1-4-105, establishing the official spelling as "Arkansas," though it's pronounced "Arkansaw." Today, the law states you can't pronounce the state "ArKansas" or other pronunciations, although you won't be arrested for not following the rule.

Tiger Prints Crossword Puzzle

By Lily



Across

3. Popular candies created by Bill and Dorothy Harmsen
5. The very first umbrellas were created here
7. The name for Snowflakes formed at below 10 degrees
8. Annual football sporting event

Down

1. In the UK, it's illegal to handle this fish "suspiciously"
2. The Romans believed the body renewed itself every ____ years
4. In Italy, it is illegal to wear these at historical sites
6. Abbreviation short for "artificial intelligence"

Editorial



It has long been feared that one day, perhaps soon, AI will take over the job market. We've heard stories about restaurants where customers are served by robot waiters, or how in the next few decades, children will supposedly grow up in a world where their teachers are automated machines.

Since the release of generative AI like ChatGPT in 2022, this future has become increasingly more likely and feared. As of October 2025, 21% of US workers reported using AI for completing their jobs, almost 16% higher than the statistic from 2024. This raises the interesting question about the role artificial intelligence plays in the workplace.

On a positive note, it can serve as a catalyst for employment, company growth, and a helpful boost for the quality and efficiency of work. According to the MIT Sloan School of Management, “positions near the top of the pay scale — saw their share of total employment grow by about 3% over five years. That’s because AI boosted firm productivity: Companies that used the technology grew faster, which helped sustain or even expand head count in high-exposure positions.” In other words, when AI completes the more tedious work tasks—like performing calculations or replying to emails—human workers are able to focus and devote more time, energy, and brainpower to other work or skills like critical thinking, problem solving, and brainstorming original ideas, all areas in which artificial intelligence is less specialized. This effectively increases the amount of work that gets finished and the quality of it, all while decreasing its completion time.

However, this tool should be taken with a grain of salt. AI draws information from a vast array of online sources, some of them accurate and some of them not. It is designed and trained to predict each next word or sequence based on patterns learned from its coding, leading to sometimes false information. Other times, especially if unsure about an answer, artificial intelligence might just completely fabricate an incorrect response, and users have no way to easily confirm its truthfulness. Furthermore, AI is attributed with significantly discouraging creativity, original ideas, and the human ability to think for yourself. When you have a machine that gives you information from thousands of sources, able to write that paragraph, answer that email, or finish that assignment in seconds, most would rather use it than do these tedious, boring tasks themselves. And AI doesn't always boost employment—sometimes it can do exactly the opposite. The MIT study found that when artificial intelligence can execute most of the tasks in a specific job, the number of people in that role within a company falls by approximately 14%. Think about this from an employer's perspective: when you have access to an automated machine that can bring you the answer to almost any question in seconds, which doesn't need food and water, rest, vacation time, or a salary, the more appealing option will probably be the AI over the human.

But before you get too alarmed, you should know that we're actually safer (so far) than society makes it out to be. In reality, starting from ChatGPT's release in 2022, AI has had a rather minuscule effect on the job market and its entirety. As stated in a 2025 study by the Budget Lab at Yale University, “Even if new AI technologies will go on to impact the labor market as much, or more, dramatically, it is reasonable to expect that widespread effects will take longer.” Although AI is experiencing massive technological advancements and exponential growth each week, it will simply be many years until it develops the capabilities to replace human labor in the work force.

At the end of the day, the decision is really up to you, reader. Artificial intelligence can be both a useful tool that increases productivity, efficiency, and the quality of work, but also a factually-incorrect, erroneous source of information that suppresses creativity and originality. You've seen with your own eyes the evidence, the facts, the direct effect of AI on everyday life, and the things it is capable of. So what do you think of artificial intelligence and its role in not just the job market, but society as a whole? Should it be a useful tool that improves the lives of workers and people, or at some point, does it reduce what makes us uniquely human—our individuality and the ability to think for ourselves?

Thank you for reading this issue of *Tiger Prints*, the official school newspaper of PVC. If you enjoyed it, make sure to check out some of our previous ones [here!](#)

Editor Lily
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