UIC SCRIBE

IDENTITY.

Winter Edition I Volume XI ED 2 2016

THE STUDENT ORGANIZED OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF
UNDERWOOD INTERNATIONAL COLLEGE

Dean's Message:
What Men Live By

It is getting pretty chilly lately. I remember the scorching heat past summer, but now the winter is around the corner so I suppose no one can defy the provision of nature.

I would like to give you some advice based on my personal experience that may help your college life.

In South Korea, the majority of high school graduates enter university. Especially for an admission to top universities such as Yonsei, most high school graduates make extensive efforts to compete with their classmates. But if you ponder this for a moment, the ultimate purpose of an acceptance to a prestigious university is linked with one's desire to receive a satisfactory job offer after his or her graduation.

Then, what would be a great job offer to you?

In an answer to this, you will probably consider your monthly income, social prestige, working environment, and the contemporary trends. In my case, I graduated from Yonsei, applied to major corporations and accepted a job offer from Samsung. I accepted the offer because Samsung was a major firm and was considered to be a secure job compared to other smaller firms.

I started my first job in Seoul and a few months later, I realized that the office life did not fit with my personality after all. Personally, I like meditation, metaphysics, and abstract thinking so the corporate life was way too realistic for me and I struggled with practical problems at work. (This is simply my personal view which can never be generalized!)

In the end, I quit my job in less than a year and returned to school after making my decision to enter graduate school. The reason I am sharing my personal experience with you is not to say which is good or which is bad. More importantly, in my case, I finally realized what I like to do and what I can do well.

Most people think that they know themselves very well, but in a sense, we are often ignorant about ourselves. As a result, we often blindly follow the latest trend when choosing a major or a career instead of considering our abilities first. According to Chinese philosopher, Confucius, we should engage in 'what we like to do' and this should be the most important factor in determining our occupation in life. In other words, although it is important for you to fulfill your assigned tasks well and work hard for your career, what is most significant is choosing a career that allows you to do the things you like to do.

Among Western proverbs is a saying, 'you are what you eat.' What I would like to say is 'you are what you like.' In short, I hope you will explore and find out what you really like to do throughout your four years in college. The time you have now is the best opportunity to focus on doing something that you are passionate about in life. Although we cannot easily define what is a successful life or measure career success, I suppose a person who focuses on doing something he or she likes to do will be able to live a happy life.

The purpose of college life is to learn. I suggest you find your own way to realize your abilities, what you like to do, and what you can do well throughout your four years. I hope you do not suffer through trial and error like I did in the past and I wish your college life will be your time to get to know yourself.

Thank you and God bless you all.

JIN BAE CHUNG
Dean
Underwood International College

The brighter side of things: Perks of being in UIC.

An address from UIC's 11th Student Council President Young-bin Kim.

A United Night and Dine

By **SEUNG BEOM HAN**

On October 21st, faculty, students, and alumni gathered at the Alumni Plaza in glamorous dresses and classy suits for UIC's very first banquet. The event was organized by UIC's 11th student council, "United," and the night kicked off with President Young-Bin Kim's opening remarks. "It's called first because we're hoping there will be a second," he said when introducing the banquet in a hopeful and encouraging speech. The dinner came afterwards as people moved around lines of tables to fill their plates with mouthwatering hotel-grade food.

After the dinner, the alumni association shared with the guests some news and announcements of upcoming activities that would enrich students' experiences at UIC and connect them to a growing network of alumni. Subsequently, Nodaji, UIC's official student band, and Harie, a renowned Yonsei dance club, filled the hall with ovation with their spectacular performances. Following the shows, Professor Jin-bae Chung, UIC's dean, gave the students and faculty more inspirational words of wisdom on the podium. A quick raffle to keep the audience enlivened and a closing remark by Young Bin concluded the momentous night.

The banquet commemorated not only the last event by the 11th student council, but also what it had achieved throughout the year. Whether it was to unite the various majors and departments, to connect students with faculty and alumni, or to bring together the diverse array of cultures and nationalities, United contributed in creating a closer, more intimate community in UIC. "The banquet symbolized that UIC is an established institution, and despite its diverse array of majors and divisions, we can still come together under the name of UIC. It was the first time there were alumni from Techno-Art Division (TAD) and Asian Studies Division (ASD), and we hope to see more of these events, especially as we will soon have graduates of the Integrated Social Sciences Division (ISSD) and Integrated Science and Engineering Division (ISED)," remarked Young Bin during a short interview.

Thanks to the values of United, a theme of unity has been at the center of activities throughout UIC's 2016 school year. In a time where there is distress and marginalization all around the world, it seems fitting to keep in mind the importance of keeping each other close and walking together towards progress, hand in hand. UIC does not have the long and rich history of many other colleges at Yonsei. However, UIC is unique because of one characteristic that other departments do not have: diversity. The idea that no matter where you come from, we are one, united in the goal of making this world a better place.

Even a breathtaking skyscraper has humble beginnings; not much is anticipated in its rudimentary stages. But throughout years of construction, the structure begins to garner more and more respect and awe from spectators as the foundational vision becomes a reality. UIC is without a doubt on its way to the top. On behalf of the UIC community, I strongly believe that much like the process of building a skyscraper, UIC is becoming a structure that will help people reach the skies. This first UIC Banquet is one of many testaments to such a vision and legacy. It is just the beginning of an epic story, hopefully one that will ultimately inspire other schools here in Korea and abroad.

Gyro:
## The IID Senior Exhibition 2016

By **YONKYOO JOO**

The Fall 2016 Information and Interaction Design (IID) major exhibition celebrated the last semester of the class of 2013. With only a few weeks left of college, the senior students planned and organized the annual event to present their final projects in the Techno-Art Division (TAD). The exhibition, titled "GYRO," showcased a diverse range of works, reflecting the individuality of each student.

The concept "GYRO" comes from the word "gyroscope," which is used to represent the IID major. In an interview with IID student, Pierre Zipagan, he explains, "We were trying to think of an abstract concept that would imply that the major we're in is our foundation but within the foundation of IID, there are many variations. When you look at the displayed works, none of them are really related per se. Everyone is different in how they express. A gyroscope is a device which has one focal point and gyro means rotate. Our concept refers to a single foundational piece and the freedom to revolve around it." Indeed, no section of the room was the same. Each corner was filled with interesting, fascinating pieces from videos and applications to images and models.

The event was an opportunity to hear the inspiration behind the projects. Each student presented their work in front of family, friends, faculty, and fellow students. The individual presentations revealed the level of time and effort that went into creating, designing, and installing the works. In answer to the question,

"What did the exhibition mean to you?" Christine McGahhey answered, "For me, the exhibition was such a big deal and I had been thinking about it since I was in my second or third year. With the advice of the professors, we spent about eight months working on the exhibition and getting the space ready. The last few weeks of preparation were really stressful but after seeing all of the guests enjoying the hard work that we put in and being able to see my fellow classmates' ideas made real, I just feel overjoyed and proud of our class."

Furthermore, the exhibition displayed the scope of skills and abilities that are able to learned in TAD. IID students experiment with many different platforms of design including motion graphics, posters, typography, product and service design, applications, and more. Christine describes the essence of her major as "understanding people, putting their needs first, and trying to meet those needs in the best way possible." Upon this fundamental core, students build their ideas in original and distinctive ways. In Pierre's words, "something like design can't be taught but it can be anchored onto something. For example, you never tell a painter his style but you can teach him how to mix paint. I think IID did that for me. But you can't teach taste." The exhibition was a successful event through which the "taste" of each student was expressed in their works. We look forward to seeing what all these talented graduates will be doing in the near future.

UIC Career Fair
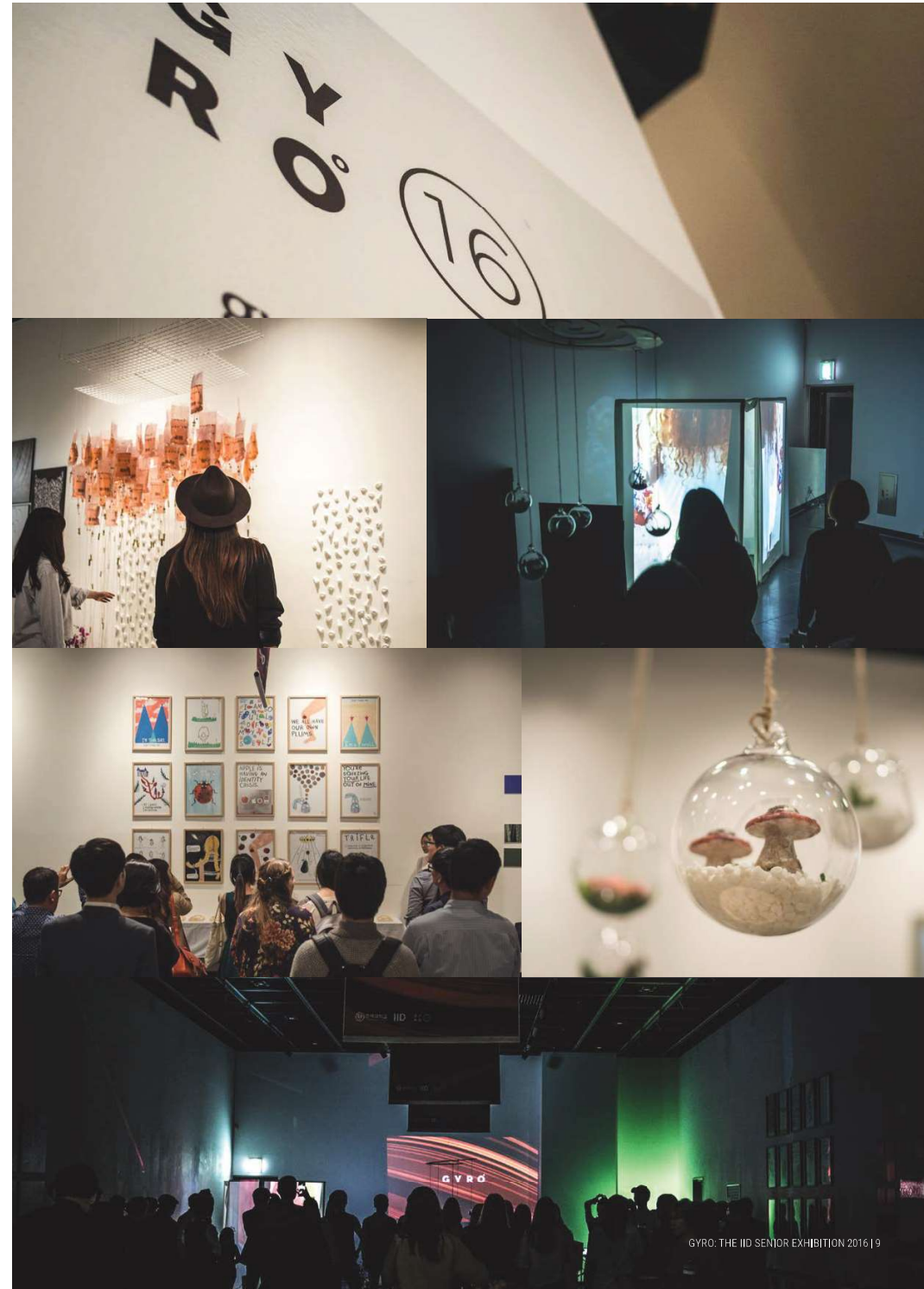
BY **JUNGHYUN NOH**

*"Have your resume ready at **any time**. You don't know when there will be a job opening."*

- Ji-eun Clio Han,
Class of 2010, Google Employee

At 2p.m. on November 19th, UIC students filled the New Millenium Hall (NMH) auditorium for the 5th UIC Career Fair. From freshmen to seniors, students of various majors gathered with excitement and curiosity.

The Career Fair was successfully organized by the UIC student council, the UIC Career Development Center, and Global Career society. The four-hour program attracted more than 100 undergraduates and 30 alumni. Under the catchphrase "We Have More," the Career Fair introduced the undergraduates to the world of diverse career choices and provided them with an exclusive opportunity to seek advice from their alumni.

In the opening speech, Prof. Jin-bae Chung, the Dean of UIC, emphasized the importance of exploring career options as early as possible while in college. Reflecting on his own experience, he said, "It is always better thing to find what you want to do in your life and the Career Fair is an excellent opportunity to do so." His remark set the tone for the event.

After the opening remark, the event officially began. The first half of the program presented a diverse range of industries categorized into seven groups: law school, medical school, marketing, domestic corporations, multinational firms, investment and consulting, and the public sector. One alum represented each group, introducing the industry broadly as well as sharing individual experiences in their respective positions.

Many of the alumni emphasized the importance of having a diverse internship experience. They also advised UIC students to become "aggressive" candidates who are ready. Ji-eun Clio Han, class of 2010, currently working at Google said, "Have your resume ready at any time. You don't know when there will be a job opening." She added, "List interview questions and prepare short answers. Remember, seeking a job is a process of elimination."

The undergraduates eagerly asked questions, demonstrating their desire to find a career that aligns with their interests. Jacob Lehar, a senior Political Science and International Relations (PSIR) student, said that he came to the Career Fair to learn more about the industry that he wanted to work in. He said, "I think it is all about getting an insight. This is truly a rare and privileged opportunity for UIC students. When will you ever get to meet your sunbaes who actually work in the industries? And there are so many of them!"

In the second half, the seven groups of alumni had their own breakout sessions. The undergraduates chose their groups to ask questions and to seek advice. Based on what the alumni had said during the presentation, they asked more specific questions. For example, in the consulting and investment group, a student asked, "When and what kind of internships should I look for and how will it help me in choosing my career?" to which Ju-hee Hong, class of 2012, answered, "As many as possible and as soon as possible. Internship experience can tell you whether or not you truly want the job. You need to test the waters." She continued with examples from her personal experience in various internship positions and how that allowed her to find the job that was right for her. The students found the personal interaction with the alumni very helpful.

The 5th Career Fair saw a great increase in the participation of students. Based on the increased support, Professor Denton mentioned at the dinner banquet after the event that he has even higher expectations for the future semesters. "Next semester I'm hoping to work with Underwood Global Community (UGC), Global Career Society (GCS), and possibly our new Social Innovation Center to come up with an 'International Alumni' or 'Alumni Abroad' Career Fair that highlights the experience of our international alumni working in Seoul as well as all of our alumni working abroad in cities like Shanghai, Beijing, Tokyo, Singapore, London, New York, and San Francisco." With the increasing participation of the undergraduates, alumni, and faculty, UICians are building a network of intimate connections. The expansion certainly merits the successful career development of more UIC students.

Meeting the Alumni

BY **YONKYOO JOO**

During the Career Fair, I had the opportunity of meeting three UIC graduates from different majors, who have successfully started their careers in various fields. Sawinee Galaputh came to UIC from Thailand in 2010 and majored in economics. She is currently working at Samsung Life Insurance in the international business team and she is in charge of taking care of joint ventures, marketing, and training. Jeehye Lee is a service designer at Works Mobile, a child company of Naver. She graduated recently as part of Techno-Art-Division (TAD) class of 2012 majoring in Creative Technology Management (CTM). Yeong Whee Kim is a (PSIR major, class of 2007. He has been working at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) since 2012. Currently he is in the Navy to fulfil his military service as naval officer.

What was your most memorable moment at UIC?

Sawinee: I loved the people. I loved being able to meet people from different countries. I came here six years ago and I've never regretted it. I've always been part of clubs. I was in Student Council, Student Ambassadors and I was the vice-president of Underwood Global Community.

Jeehye: My most memorable moment was first year Daedong Festival. The most fun part was the flash mob and it was the first one that TAD organized. It became our tradition. We really enjoyed it. I was in TAD Student Council back then so we organized the booth and the event and I really enjoyed the process. It was one of my favorite college moments.

Yeongwhee: Nodaji was probably one of the most memorable experiences for me. I was the vocalist and I participated in the very first concert of Nodaji in May 2007 (and two more afterwards). I recall the concert was very successful because the college itself started in 2006 so we didn't have much to enjoy. It was the very first rock band and there were only a few clubs so I joined the band and I think that was a very precious memory for me to start off my college life.

What skills did you develop here at UIC that you find useful in your job?

Sawinee: I was an average student but I was very involved in activities, clubs and meeting people. It really helped me with working in a big company. You learn people skills.

Jeehye: The skills that really help me now were presentations and group studies. During the process we got to develop our solutions, organize our concepts to present them clearly and I think that kind of project management, presentation, and communication skills helped me a lot. I chose CTM over IID because IID was more focused on design and visuals. I was hoping that I would be involved in meeting with people and doing conceptual projects. Since CTM deals with business, consulting and technology, I think the field was more appropriate for me. Technology is everywhere and you can't do anything without IT so I thought studying this field would help me in the future, whichever industry I choose. I also did an internship at a start-up company called No-ri (an edu-tech company) before I got into Yonsei University and I really enjoyed the culture of IT company and I think I saw I could do something here.

Yeongwhee: I felt like the PSIR major helped me develop skills that are useful for my job. There are, of course, those who have backgrounds in different fields in MOFA. I even know a Physics major who is a colleague of mine. But surely, studying political science helped me a lot because throughout my college years I was always immersed in that world of power games, international relations, and the political economy of day-to-day diplomacy. Basically, such a background provided me with a smooth transition from school to work and certainly Yonsei University has a very great pool of professors who are leading scholars in the country, so it helped a lot. Also, the constant training of "thinking critically" in UIC propels its graduates to excel in whichever field they enter in their careers, which, in my case, was helpful for diplomacy.

How did you enter your field?

Sawinee: If you look at my resume, all my internships were in different fields. I didn't know what I liked. My passion was to just meet people, that's what I love. My first internship was at a medical appliances company. I was in the human resources department. My second internship was for an application start-up. Just having opportunities to intern in various fields helped me intern at Samsung Life Insurance. You don't have to know what you like, you just try different things. It's trial-and-error. I found these internships online and through professors. They keep in touch with alumni who are looking for student interns. For Samsung, I came across a poster that was looking for Thai students so you just need to keep your eye on things.

Jeehye: During my college years, I thought I wanted to become a service designer but there wasn't a lot of information about jobs and not a lot of job position openings because usually they require people with experience. So I was on Google and LinkedIn, exploring the past work history of other people in the field. I favorited key IT companies and their recruiting boards so that I could get notifications for new postings. I didn't intend to get a job right after graduation. I was looking for an internship. I applied to some start-ups and IT companies. I had a few interviews and I also applied to regular positions. I think it was more about being resourceful and looking it up.

Yeongwhee: I had the basic idea of working in the government in the field of international relations from early on in my life. My father influenced my decision for my career path too because he was a career military officer so he dedicated his whole life to working for the government. I think that generally influenced my idea of where I would fit in. And of course I also had my experience abroad during my high school years in the U.S. I guess I developed a desire or vision for working in the field of international relations then. I came to UIC and without hesitation, I chose to study PSIR.

Why did you choose this particular company/specialty?

Sawinee: Samsung is Samsung. I realized I want to be part of a big company, a big system. I want to be successful in a company, learn what a system is and learn what it's like to be evaluated every step. I personally believe you need to learn what it's like to be inside the system and then step out into a start-up. A company teaches you the basics and as a graduate, I didn't know what I was doing. I needed to be taught first in order to step out.

Jeehye: I think I was very inspired or motivated by the idea of a start-up or project. I like developing something and making it work. I really wanted to build a product involved with service design. Although we have IT departments in every company, they are not the core of the company. Even among IT companies, the core competency or capacity is not about the technology or UX, but it's more about the contracts and business. In order to become more competitive as a service designer, I wanted be in a company that builds software services in Korea so that was my main criteria in choosing a company. I didn't really know about Works Mobile but I was interested in productivity applications like Calendar, Planner or Note and I personally enjoy downloading those kind of services. So I think I wanted to be in a position to really improve those kind of services.

Yeongwhee: I chose MOFA because I really wanted to contribute to the foreign policy of this country. I would say foreign policy is one of the most important elements that shapes our nation's future. And so I asked myself, "what could I do, as an official, to further the foreign policy and national interest?" That drove me into this field.

In terms of "specialty" area, once we enter the ministry, we move from division to division every year or two, dealing with different issues, different countries. For the first 10-15 years, normally we junior diplomats wouldn't really have much chance to develop specialty areas. Rather, we move around different divisions within the headquarters, and around different countries abroad where our diplomatic missions are established as required, to get the basics of diplomacy in general. Once we move up to director level, we are able to develop our own special areas.

What does your typical day at work look like?

Sawinee: I have two main roles. Most of the month, I do marketing. Marketing in insurance is different. When a sales person approaches a customer, they need to make the customer feel the need to have insurance. I take care of the Thailand region. I look at the Korean version and see what the marketing team is doing. I study it and then compare it to the Thai market. I see if a Thai person would feel the need to get

insurance. My job is thinking up things that sales people can present to a customer that the customer would find helpful. I'm also in charge of training sales insurance people. Insurance is not easy. We make videos for sales insurance people so they can study. I spend time watching and studying. I have to learn the market here and in Thailand. If I don't know the trend, then I can't make the marketing tools. In a month, the first half I think up marketing tools and make videos. I take care of SNS too. Then for the other half, we go to our training center and have training sessions. I give suggestions and constantly communicate with sales people.

Jeehye: Our morning work time is short. I check my emails and plan my day. We have a lot of meetings. There isn't a lot of time for me to do my work during the day so we often stay late. If I'm lucky, I leave the office by 7:30 and if not, after 10. Our role is in between product manager and UX designer. We are assigned new features that are updated each month so if I'm responsible for a feature, I investigate the users' needs, requirements and organize the specifications for the features. I develop a plan and communicate with the designers and developers to see if it is technically feasible or to see if changes need to be made. We deliver the mock-ups from the designers to the developers. We are basically in the process of software production.

Yeongwhee: My typical work day would differ from division to division because the nature of the work varies. But, regardless of the division, we would generally start out our day by reading cables—the reports or telegrams we gather from our embassies abroad. We receive information from abroad, and take them into account in drafting directions and guidelines for our embassies in return.
In terms of what I went through, my first division—which was the policy planning bureau—dealt with the grand diplomatic strategy and the specific foreign policies of the administration. I was there in 2013 when the administration just came into office. We started out by brainstorming on our nation's foreign policy: what to do, what should be the idea behind foreign policy for the next five years, etc. The whole day was just studying, talking with scholars and professors from different fields, and developing guidelines for the

next five years. For example, the foreign policy towards building trust with North Korea, or the Northeast Asia peace and cooperation initiative were the products of such brainstorming.
Then, I moved to a division focused more on direct exchange between countries— the Northeast Asia cooperation team. I dealt with the Korea-China-Japan trilateral cooperation mechanism. I had to talk to our counterparts in Japan and China on a daily basis. We also constantly met with the diplomats from China and Japan in Seoul and delivered our message from the headquarters. The trilateral relationship went through a very difficult time for the past few years, so I recall we had a very hard time dealing with issues related to the three countries.

Where do you see yourselves in five years?

Sawinee: I like my company. But it's hard to say if I'll still be here. It's a very traditional industry. Personally, my dream is to become successful in a company but sometimes it's so slow and I'm afraid of falling back into the system. A system is good but it's not good for life. I still feel the need to go back to school. It's good to have work experience but I want to learn more. I'm interested in international economy and I feel like going back to graduate school will be a good break. When you're in a company, you get comfortable and you feel secure. So I actually feel a little scared to leave that but going back to school and learning more will bring me back to a space where I can step back and see the skills I have acquired.

Jeehye: If I build a successful career, maybe I could be in charge of a bigger project or product. Maybe in the same company or another smaller star-up with a larger role. I'm not sure yet but I think I will be at this company for at least a few years so that I know this field thoroughly and I can say I have a background in project planning.

Yeongwhee: It's quite simple for me because I'm expecting I will be assigned to one of our diplomatic missions abroad. I have no idea to which country I will be assigned to yet. It could be anywhere from Latin America to the Middle East, wherever my service is required at that moment as a junior diplomat.

### Do you have any advice for our current students?

Sawinee: When I was at UIC, the integration between Koreans and International students wasn't that great. But I worked to fix that. I was in UGC but also had many Korean friends. I want to say to the international students that just because you are in Korea, doesn't mean Koreans have to take a step towards you. You have to take a step. Being able to take the step is important for working too. I wouldn't have been able to survive if I stuck with foreigners. Smile and practice Korean. If you want to work in Korea, it might be hard but if you try and you're willing to step out of your comfort zone, then Korea is not a bad place to work.

Jeehye: I think there are smarter people wherever you go and there are so many competitive peers you can learn from. If you know what you want to do, you can pursue and move up. Just build your career step-by-step.

Yeongwhee: I think UIC students already have a head start because we have experienced things that normal Korean high school students wouldn't have had the chance to experience—and that really makes the difference. At first those with higher GPAs or more work experience may join the so-called better companies with bigger salaries, but over time, those who have experienced more, read more and met with more people, they pull off much better. Throughout college life, I would recommend students to experience even more. These years never come back. If I had the chance to go back, I would study less and do things I wasn't even thinking about. Somehow, in your career, random experiences help a lot. They affect your work productivity because work is, in essence, nothing more than transforming your experiences into output. You can only develop that through experiencing more, whether it be through books, meeting with professors or studying abroad.

YEONGWHEE KIM:
At the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
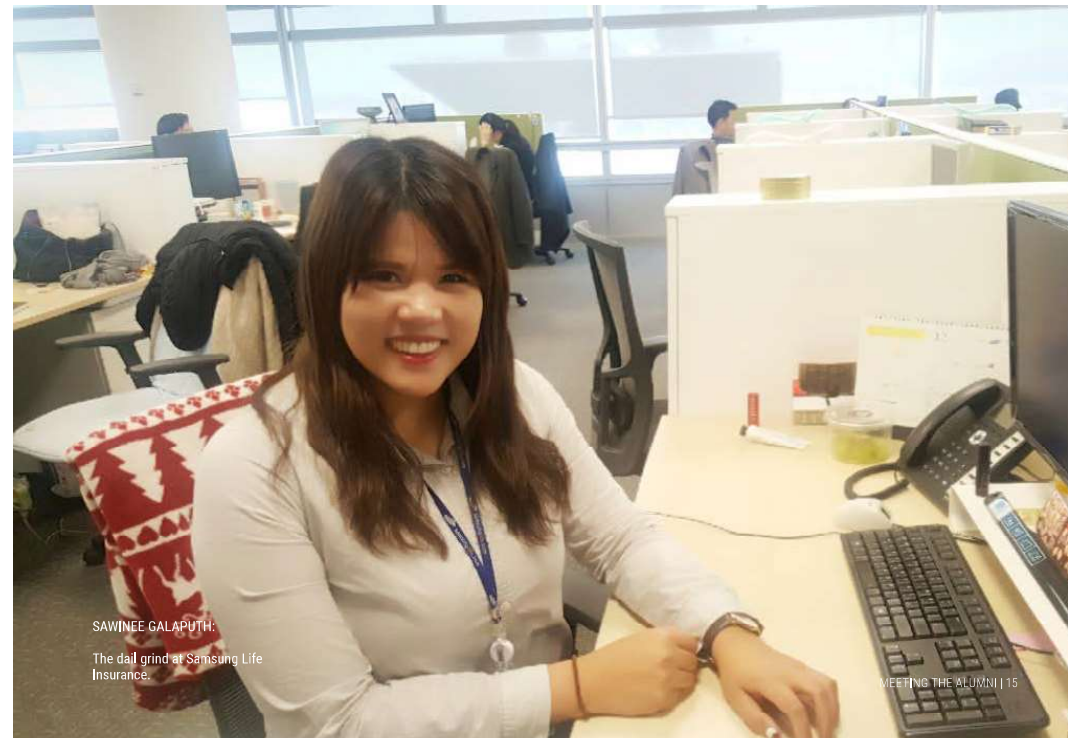
SAWINEE GALAPUTH:
The dail grind at Samsung Life Insurance.

Declaring Your Major

BY **JI HYUN BANG**

Freshmen should take advantage of every opportunity available to ensure that the sky is truly the only limit in pursuing their dreams. However, in the course of university life, they are faced with many uncertainties, one of which is declaring a major. As a sophomore who has recently chosen one, I will describe my experiences to hopefully help uncertain freshmen.

Being a freshman at UIC involves growing intellectually through academic challenges. In fact, before declaring one's major, a freshman can benefit significantly from the UIC's distinctive common curriculum. Instead of "segregating professors into separate departments, divided across disciplinary lines, [UIC] encourages vibrant intellectual exchange by bringing scholars and students from different fields together into one program," as stated on our website.

As someone who has recently finished most of the courses in the common curriculum, I can attest that this system was a perfect segue into university life. Most UIC students have studied a wide variety of topics in the past. Therefore, the common courses such as Eastern and Western Civilization, Critical Reasoning and Research Design provide a solid foundation, equipping students with skills that are useful for all majors. Furthermore, the burden of choosing a specialized field is lessened by the year of preparation. This way, students are able to receive advice from seniors and professors before declaring in their sophomore year.

As a sophomore who had fretted so much about the burden of choosing my major in my freshman year, I daresay that declaring a major is significant in some ways and insignificant in others. I will restrain myself from trying to provide quasi-advice to the readers from the perspective of a so-called sunbae. What I will do instead is to briefly discuss my own story in hopes of providing some solace for the puzzled freshman.

Declariang a major is undoubtedly significant. It doesn't determine what you will do for the rest of your life, but it is the first major decision that you encounter in your college life. Though some students make up their minds long before entering university, it wasn't the case for me and many of my friends. Before coming to Yonsei, I lived abroad for five years and received International Baccalaureate (IB) education during my high school at a British school in Korea. I enjoyed a liberal educational atmosphere in which there was enough room for me to study whatever was appealing to me at the time. However, in college, I felt the I needed to calculate my strengths and weaknesses as well as consider where I would like to work—another puzzling decision in itself.

Major declaration can also be considered a minor decision as it is not rare for students to change their majors later in their studies. The decision is still adjustable. Here, I know that having to undo a decision may appear as a waste of time. However, I believe that a greater emphasis lies in staying true to yourself and bearing the consequences when you make the wrong choices. At our age, making mistakes is almost a necessary stepping stone rather than a great cost or harm. Decisions will only increase in scale and frequency as we grow older. At the end of the day, you learn from your mistakes and you mature in the process.

Here is one message that I once heard years ago which has inspired me until now. It is that every single choice made, irrespective of the degree of contemplation and deliberation, will inevitably leave an individual with a certain amount of unavoidable regret. All we can do therefore is to attempt to minimize the potential amount of lingering doubts and dissatisfaction from our decisions. And once decided, let bygones be bygones for we still have countless valuable choices awaiting.

Many often casually quote "life is like a box of chocolates. You never know what you're gonna get." I personally do not think this is entirely true. There is no box of chocolates bestowed upon us from somewhere. We are the makers of our boxes of chocolates. And what determines the degree of satisfaction and pride in each of our personal boxes of cholates depends on how much we can persevere in every major and minor decision we face. Major declaration is one of them. So think hard and think well. Knowing that all decisions are followed by some remnants of regret, simply minimize these potential feelings. Consider the whole journey of life and you will realize major declaration is only a tiny footprint in your path.

Strategic Patience is Kim Jong-un's Willing Accomplice

BY **SEUNG HYUN (SCHONI) SONG**

"In South Korea, there is no better litmus test than one's position on the North Korea question in classifying one's political ideology and party affiliation."

- Schoni Song

Hidden in the pitch-black night on the opposite side of this peninsula exists an imploding state where the only things that properly work are the police and the armed forces. It was rhetorically conceivable, in previous epochs of ideological confrontation, for politicians to speak about the "slavery" of Nazi Germany and that of communist Soviet Union. And indeed this was also true of many nations that were themselves "captive." The element of hyperbole was pardonable, in that both systems exploited forced labor and also the threat of forced labor to coerce and terrify others. But not even during the lowest moments of the Third Reich, or the gulag or even Mao's "Great Leap Forward," was there a time when the entire nation was actually enslaved.

The situation in North Korea, however, is little better than indentured servitude for the whole nation. The slave masters at least promised to keep their slaves fed. In North Korea, this compact has been broken too. It is a famine state as well as a slave state. But to make matters worse, the "Dear Leader" and his fellow slave masters are trying to dictate the pace of events by setting a timetable of nuclearization, by sacrificing enormous human capital on the altar of their songun (military-first) policy.

In the face of all adversity, South Koreans today are being asked to consider whether or not they are more "secure" than they were years ago. What this question means in practice is: Have the recent American and South Korean foreign policies exposed us to more danger or to less? The answer most definitely depends on how we define, and understand, the threat. We could either believe that North Korea's most recent nuclear weapons tests are a series opening shots—or the most shockingly palpable shots—in a long war waged by the hermit kingdom against "the Capitalist dogs of the West." Or we could believe that it is part of an obdurate recalcitrance to an unjust global order largely led and organized by the West, with the Republic of Korea as its servile junior partner.

If we take the first view, the main priority is to take the war to the enemy, to impose ever stronger sanctions, and to deny even things like basic access to the global financial network. Any risk involved in sanctions is preferable to continued passivity or inaction under the lame banner of "strategic patience." But if we take the second view, then every such action undertaken will only incite and justify the hermit kingdom's further acts of destruction and terror, thus making us all less safe by definition.

But in various forms, this second view is what repeatedly gets more attention. The vastly overrated book by Mohamed Mustafa ElBaradei, The Age of Deception, attributes almost all rogue-state nuclear delinquency to the arrogance of the West and primarily to that of the United States. The Libyan stockpile, as is argued in the manuscript—the entire existence of which ElBaradei managed to overlook during his extensive tenure at the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)— was "allegedly" acquired in response to the April 1986 American bombing of Tripoli. In that very same book, ElBaradei reveals his blissful ignorance about North Korea, claiming that the regime is beleaguered, impoverished and feeling powerfully threatened by the United States but "nonetheless defiant." Defiant enough, certainly, to test one of its missiles by firing it without warning across the backyard of a non-nuclear Japan, only to "splash down" in the Pacific.

In South Korea, there is no better litmus test than one's position on the North Korea question in classifying one's political ideology and party affiliation. There are those who say that these actual or potential provocations committed by the North are to be expected as a reaction to a foreign policy that is "perceived" as a direct threat to Pyongyang. And, of course, there are those who say that the resort to violence is produced by the depraved totalitarian dictatorship of the Kim dynasty. The fact of the matter is that both of these perspectives are simplistic. There clearly is a connection between our foreign policy and the activities of North Korea's delusional leadership who think it their sacred duty to free the rest of the world from American imperialism.

If we take the view that resistance to North Korea's provocations only makes the regime more militant and, given the fact that all wars intensify feelings on both ends, there must be some grain of truth to this. But the corollary is a bit disturbing because the most prudent course of action seems to be, then, compromise or surrender. This is a rather contemptible position to be held. And it also overlooks the unpleasant fact that Kim Jong-un and his inner circle of corrupt military generals don't seem to be all that much enthusiastic about compromise in the first place.

Likewise, is it seriously argued that this whole loosely connected nexus would behave itself more rationally if the United States and South Korea adopted a more "lenient" strategy? Do we actually believe that things would get better if we displayed a more "nuanced" awareness of the needs and dreads that prompted dictators to go nuclear? We know one thing for sure. No state has ever surrendered its nuclear program without having to face the gritty question of regime change. The only question then is how. It can do this either voluntarily, or it can do so under the most draconian of compulsion.

The two great first instances were South Africa and Brazil, two very influential states in their regional theaters today, that had gone a long way on the nuclear road in the final years of the Cold War before realizing that nukes were an obstacle not only to their neighbors but to their own integration back into the closer and warmer global family. We all reminded how a "swords into ploughshares" sculpture was fashioned from parts of a dismantled nuclear warhead and was henceforth presented to the IAEA's Vienna office back in 1994.

Nobody ever threatened South Africa or Brazil with the stick of external force. Rather, for both of these former dictatorships, denuclearization was part of the agreed democratic. In studying these cases, it's impossible not to notice the continuing links between the nuclear weapons and the character of the rogue states that develop them. North Korea's nukes are the perfect symbol of its own stunted and starved and stupefied character, let alone its continued stubbornness to risk an apocalyptic outcome on the entire Korean peninsula.

The more important problem is that North Korea is already in possession of enough conventional artillery batteries to completely saturate much of South Korea with fire— and this is without even resorting to its stockpile of nuclear arsenal. The course of future confrontation and potential blackmail, therefore, has already been determined, but by the dictatorship itself. It is wrong for the South Korean liberals and the political left to imply that the threats come from the other direction, or that nuclear arsenals can or will underwrite the security of such dictatorships indefinitely. Such logic, after all, would license a pre-emptive strike on Pyongyang's nuclear facilities.

The possession of North Korea's illegally acquired nuclear weapons remains a huge threat and burden not only to South Korea but to other neighboring states like Japan and even to its few remaining allies like China. It is needless to say that the nuclear strategy of North Korea is putting an enormous strain on the very institution of international law and cooperation itself. History shows that going down the nuclear road is also nearly insupportable for the offending state precisely because unwarranted nuclear programs have a long-run tendency to shorten the lifespan of its despots. It's a good thing that, so far, disarmament and democratization have shown themselves to be natural allies.

Only if things were that simple. The problem is that so volatile and hysterical has the North Korean regime become that it was believed at one point that even the finding of nuclear program might trigger a fresh escalation—an escalation that might pass the threshold before anyone could draw breath. Nixon used to ask Henry Kissinger to imply to the Chinese that he might be such a touchy president that he was capable of anything—this loopy strategy became known in policy circles as "the Madman Theory." In the case of Kim Jong-un, nobody has any difficulty believing that he is delusional and worse, so the blackmail keeps on working.

The dirty secret here is that no neighboring power truly wants the population of North Korea to be released from its awful serfdom. Here are millions of stunted and starved people, deformed and traumatized by decades of meaningless labor on the plantations of a mad despot. The truth is that the South Koreans do not truly want these hopeless cases on the soil of their flourishing consumer society. The Chinese, who have a Korean-speaking province that borders North Korea, are likewise unwilling to suffer the influx of desperate people that is in our future. And neither is the United States willing to accept them in its present mood. Kim Jong-un's junta knows this, as it knows that we are not prepared to fight him. So the deliberate mass starvation and the nuclear blackmail are two sides of the same depraved coin that is North Korea. Incidentally, if that system doesn't deserve to be called "evil," I don't know what does.

Who are the White Helmets?

BY **HAJIN DANIEL YOO**

"*Will you listen? Put your ear here and try to hear. I think I hear a baby's voice.*"

A storm of phosphorus fire and cluster bombs continues to shatter Syria day and night. Despite the breadth of international coverage on the devastation wreaked by inconsiderate and ruthless bombings in the past year and the support from international relief groups, much of the Syrian population feel neglected and abandoned, especially those still remaining in the volatile land. Peaceful nights are rare boons for the civilians of Syria, as aerial bombings may indiscriminately land on apartments and hospitals. One night, 10-day old Mahmoud would've died were it not for Khaled Omar who pulled him out of a collapsed apartment. Pulled out amidst a hazy smoke of dust from the rubbles and precarious steel structures, Mahmoud was indeed a miracle. However, Mahmoud is just one of many babies saved daily by Khaled, until he gave up his life forever on August 10th, 2016.

A painter and decorator, Khaled decided to join the Syrian Civil Defense, a group of around 3,000 ordinary citizens who volunteer to risk their lives every day to save civilians trapped in cities hit by airstrikes, such as Aleppo, Ibliz and Holms. "To save a life is to save humanity" (Surah Al-Ma'idah 5:32) is the organization's founding belief. More commonly known as the "White Helmets," the rescue group pledges to save all Syrian civilians regardless of their political or religious association. Wearing their eponymous safety helmets, they have saved more than 60,000 lives from the moment of inception. Thus far, the international community has recognized the White Helmets'

humanitarian contribution through the Right to Livelihood Award and a nomination for the 2016 Nobel Peace Prize. Recently they were featured on Netflix in a candidly jarring and scintillating documentary produced by Joanna Natasegara and Orlando von Einsiedel. What many don't initially expect is that many of the members are ordinary citizens, who previously lived normal lives.

The relentless bombings keep the White Helmets awake at night. They listen intently for signs of incoming aircrafts. Raed Saleh, the head of the Syrian Civil Defense, can distinguish the fighter plane that carry deadly cluster bombs, munitions that explode into hundreds of smaller bomblets that multiply the damage wreaked by a single bomb. That the rescue missions have zero psychological toll on the members of the White Helmets would be a flagrant lie. The rescuers cannot easily escape the weight of guilt that crushes their soul upon pulling out the corpses of victims they could not ultimately save. Facing the carnage of innocent children and citizens every single day is a harrowing experience that have long-lasting consequences.

As remarked by Beebers Mishal, one of the founders of the Syrian Civil Defense, no one in Syria will be able to continue in these conditions. Cities are constantly bombarded by cluster bombs and bunker busters; munitions and food supply are depleted by the second, prompting some families to live on one meal of rice or a single packet of instant noodles a day. Routinely, Mishal rushes to bomb

sites and carries civilians out. His life is a constant flow in this rhythmic manner; there is no "starting point" or a beginning. Inevitably, his service has distanced himself from his wife, who is currently taking shelter in the comparably safer Aleppo countryside. In fact his premonition may be true, which aligns with that of a UN envoy to Syria, Staffan de Mistura, who recently warned that Eastern Aleppo may be completely destroyed by Christmas.

Despite the publicity the White Helmets has managed to garner, response from the political tables hasn't been up to par with what many Syrians have hoped. Raed Saleh was recently denied entrance to the United States in April 2016. An intended recipient of an award from InterAction for his organization's humanitarian endeavors, Saleh was sent back to Istanbul on the next plane, under the claim that he had failed the screening process during immigration control. The State Department has failed to provide a thorough explanation, after which Saleh expressed how difficult it is to communicate past the barrier of stereotyping towards the Muslim culture group, "In any airport, the treatment we get as Syrians is different. The way they look at us, we are suspected." This did not fail to raise voices of concerns regarding the treatment of the White Helmets' leader. At dinner, which Saleh was supposed to attend, the InterAction staff members posted a photo on Twitter, wearing white helmets to the occasion as a message of solidarity.

Saleh did not hide his larger concern

regarding procedures to resolve the Syrian problem inside the international organizations, such as the UN. "We hear a lot of talk about peace and war and terrorism and refugees and UN convoys. But we don't see decisive actions. We don't see the political will to address the roots of the problem. And we don't understand why that is," he says.

The recent suspension of cooperation on both sides of the U.S. and Russia shows no immediate progress to stop the bombing any time soon, reflecting the growing concerns of many in Syria. In desperation, Steffan de Mistura even offered to sacrifice his own life in an impassioned speech in Geneva in October, saying he would "personally escort up to 1,000 Islamic fighters Aleppo," if that could stop the Russians from bombing the city under the alibi that rebel fighters resided in the city.

With the Assad regime still fervently against the notion of ceasing oppression in Syria, any opposition factor is severely cut down by pro-government factions. Unfortunately, the White Helmets haven't escaped the scathing remarks of the Assad regime, which frames the rescue organization as a mere propagandistic model of the West to further destabilize the political milieu of the region. That the grass root organization devoted solely to save people continues to be viewed by the present government as tied to a terrorist threat only goes so far as to show where the true extremism lies.

In Netflix's moving documentary, "The White Helmets," members confess how they

have converted from armed rebels who resisted the Assad-regime to rescuers who now devote their lives to saving the lives of fellow civilians. Many have given up their arms in their belief that to save a life is better than to take one. To these individuals their job is sacred, many believing in the eternal reward that will follow from their sacrifice.

Certainly, the fragmentary parts of Syria are healing. The nation experienced, in the past decade, a new trend of cooperation and support from within. The White Helmets themselves are a reflection of this—a union of smaller relief groups that began to coordinate around the year of 2014. Former tailors, builders and blacksmiths have forsaken their livelihoods to join. Beebers Mishal worked as a language teacher and public servant. Uncannily, the White Helmets demonstrate the potential impact a group of proactive ordinary people can make in others' lives. As the airstrikes and oppression continue, more and more people have risen to use their own hands to help. When more than half of the population has fled for cover, why do these brave individuals run towards the very bombs that have destroyed their country?

Perhaps what kept the Syrian Civil Defense is the belief that there is still hope in situation so dire as that of Syria. Perhaps it is the concoction of happiness and sadness that flows down in tears that have sustained the Syrians in rebel-held cities. There is an immeasurable joy for every baby that is pulled out from the graves of rubbles and an

indescribable sadness whenever you look at your own daughter, for all her peers that never got to see the light. Perhaps a once weakened patriotism now burns ever so strongly, uniting citizens who can't bear to watch their nation suffer any longer. Mishal tells us that these bombings are not "just a death toll." He warns our possibly desensitized minds that "every missile that is dropped and every explosion that occurs is a story of its own."

So when the voices call them, invariably and irresistibly, they will run into falling buildings in order to pull their loved ones out from the gaping mouth of death. Behind the backs of our cold and ruthless hearts, the Syrians save themselves every day. In their civic duty, religious piety or love for humanity, the volunteers will plunge themselves back into the fire. However, the real question is, when will these horrific happenings open up our eyes? How many more cities must burn and citizens ruthlessly buried until our hearts are moved? When will we ever lend our ears to the cries of million souls awaiting their salvation? Will you listen? Put your ear here and try to hear. I think I hear a baby's voice.

Sexism in Korea:

How Gender Inequality and Under-representation is Slowly Ruining the Future of Korea

BY **CHRISTINA LEE**

"Do you know you have to be willing to give 'everything' to be an anchorwoman? You want to become an announcer despite this?" Thus began the remark that initiated this decade's most recent outrage and discussion on sexism in the Korean media industry. In July 2010, Kang Yong-seok, a 41 year-old lawyer, TV broadcaster, and member of South Korea's parliament at the time, directed these suggestive statements at female university students who participated in a speech contest hosted by the National Assembly. Following that remark, Kang also made promiscuous comments to a woman he remembered seeing at the Blue House in 2010. According to the *Joongang Daily*, he said, "The President was staring at you all the time. Men are the same. We all like pretty girls... If the first lady wasn't sitting right next to him, the President would have asked for your [phone] number." In response to the scandal, Kang simply replied, "I never said anything to embarrass anyone."

Regardless of the validity of his purported statements, the Korea's conservative Grand National (Saenuri) Party (GNP), Korea's Association of Announcers, and Internet users immediately demonstrated their outrage. The GNP revoked Kang's membership to the party, a group of female TV announcers filed a lawsuit condemning Kang's remarks as "sexual harassment of its announcers" and even visited the GNP headquarters to protest his comments, while netizens tried to shame Kang into quitting his job by posting malicious comments on his website. The Seoul Western District Court sentenced Kang to a six-month

suspended jail sentence with the claim that his role as a lawyer "would have greater weight with the public."

One group that should have, but did not, dissociate Kang from their name was the Korean National Assembly. The motion to expel Rep. Kang from the National Assembly was voted down by 111-134, and this final decision revealed that the vast majority of the parliament had a partial view of Kang's state of affairs, and that they were perhaps even sympathetic that Kang was caught for saying something they all believed. According to the *Wall Street Journal*:

The vote itself had been repeatedly postponed in an unusual display of bipartisanship. But perhaps the most interesting part of proceedings was a grim speech from Kim Hyong-o, in which the former National Assembly Speaker called on lawmakers to reflect on their own behavior before voting to expel Rep. Kang.

Citing the Bible, he said: "Jesus once said (of a woman accused of adultery), let he who is without sin cast the first stone at this woman."

"Have any of you lived a life, honorable and confident enough to throw a stone at Rep. Kang Yong-seok? Can you throw a stone at him? To be honest, I can't even lift a stone," he said.

Some of the lawmakers reportedly leapt to their feet and cheered for Mr. Kim. Perhaps that reaction was due to relief that Mr. Kim was brave enough to say what others felt.

In August 2015, Kang was once again criticized for misconduct when he was linked to an adultery scandal with a famous blogger,

Kim Mi Na—also known as her blog name dodomom— whose husband filed for a damage suit for 100 million won ($86,000) for tearing the family apart. Internet users posted around 30,000 vindictive comments. Kang's retaliation to all this? Exploiting his legal advantage by suing 200 select malicious commenters for defamation and contempt.

While Kang's incident may be an extreme case of sexism, the National Assembly's decision to overlook Kang's actions validates that there still indubitably exists a deeply rooted sexist tendency in the Korean political, media and entertainment fields. From working conditions to societal expectations, women encounter gender discrimination every day in the workplace in not only wages, but also in representation. In a series of studies published by the Korean Institute for Gender Equality and Promotion and Education (KIGEPE) in September 2015, it was shown that sexism is indeed still prevalent in both TV and print journalism in South Korea. KIGEPE is an educational institute whose goal is to bring about change in the work culture of government offices through educational programs consisting of participatory discussion-oriented classes, hands-on learning, and Information and Communication Technology, to cite a few examples.

In the 2015 study, KIGEPE monitored nine TV channels including KBS, YTN, MBC, and daily newspapers including the *Joongang Daily, Chosun Ilbo,* and the *Kyunghyang Sinmun* on their daily news shows and issues for a week, and some of the key results were as follows:

- Male hosts were four times more likely than their female counterparts to open the shows by delivering the first news segment of the programs.
- Male anchors in general were significantly older than female anchors, on average by 10 to 20 years.
- Among the 18 male anchors working for the news shows, none were in their twenties, four were in their thirties, eight in their forties, and six in their fifties. However, eight female hosts were in their twenties, nine in their thirties, only one in her forties, and none in their fifties.
- Male TV reporters in general appeared more on shows than their female counterparts: 64 percent of the 966 TV news reports were reported by male reporters.
- While most male reporters were in charge of covering politics, economy and social affairs, many female reporters were placed to cover life or cultural events.
- These discrepancies were even found in the TV program interviewees. Not only were 30 percent of 1,141 individual interviewees women, only 10 percent of them were considered as experts (lawyers, professors, doctors, scientists).

While the image of a senior male anchor paired with a young female anchor is pervasive in Korean news programs, the reverse is rarely the case. KIGEPE concluded that this age difference gave male anchors significantly more authority, as they were perceived to have more experience and expertise, and this arrangement further suggests that the female hosts maintain the "supportive, complementary roles while their male counterparts...[deliver] the 'important' news."

As for the study on the daily newspapers, the results were no surprise. Newspapers had significantly less coverage on women's issues, and very few women worked as contributing writers. Among the 1,209 newspaper stories,

only 7.8 percent covered women's issues, and only 15.2 percent of the 66 contributing writers were women. Kim Ha-ing, president of KIGEPE iterated in a public statement that this is accounted by the "general social perception that does not value women's experiences and their expertise." She continued that the role of the media is crucial in order to "bring changes to this general perception," and essential that there is "equal coverage on the experiences of both genders."

When American journalist and CNN International Hong Kong correspondent Kristie Lu Stout visited Korea to air a special weeklong segment on the IT industry and K-pop, she also pointed out the gender disparities in Korean journalism and broadcasting. In an interview with the *Korea Herald*, Stout criticized the meager role that Korean female anchors have in media, and remarked that their role should extend beyond simply reading the news, to actively engaging in the interviewing, reporting, researching, writing, and compilation process.

With this domestic and international disapproval comes another layer that is perhaps less addressed, but potentially more damaging to Korea as an economy and society. Korea's most recent average gender wage gap stands at 36.6%, the widest gap among all 34 OECD countries. According to *The Economist*, "Only 60% of female South Korean graduates aged between 25 and 64 are in work—making educated South Korean women the most underemployed in OECD countries." This number may change over time given the steep decline in marriage and fertility rates, and it is unfortunate that only at the expense of giving up the future generation can women be successful career women.

Foreign firms are alleviating women's work problems, or lack thereof. The currently existing gender inequality actually creates opportunities for rival foreign companies to recruit undervalued but highly qualified South

Korean women. For foreign firms, this surplus of highly educated but unemployed women is an easy way to hire qualified workers and gain competitive advantage. For example, the American investment bank Goldman Sachs has more women than men employees in their Seoul branch. By hiring these women, the company not only gained workers who are no less proficient than their male counterparts, but also helped increase the proportion of female managers by 10 percent. Women rarely make it to the managerial position, as most are discouraged, both by the inadequate option of maternity leave and by Confucian values, from returning to their jobs after having children.

If South Korea doesn't begin addressing and start improving working conditions, fair representation and wage gaps for women, it seems that birth and marriage rates in Korea will only decline, while highly qualified and educated women will seek elsewhere to find firms or countries that would gladly accommodate to them.

"The President was staring at you all the time. Men are the same. We all like pretty girls...If the first lady wasn't sitting right next to him, the President would have asked for your [phone] number."

- Kang Yong-seok,
former member of South Korea's parliament

In Critique of Academic Cliques and Lessons of History

BY **SEUNG HYUN (SCHONI) SONG**

The telos of higher education institutions in our society is not only to educate the next generation of national talents and global leaders but also to produce quality research and academic work that is perfectly tuned. But when these individual voices are put together, they inevitably and deliberately create a cacophonous mess, a beautifully jarring dissonance of the institution's collective creativity. In the history of South Korea's most prestigious academic institutions; however, there has been at least on one level a startling and inconvenient harmonization of opinion. From seemingly every corner of the country, in seemingly every edition of the major newspapers, can be heard the same kind of lament: we are part of a cliquey and factious society where like attracts like and people rarely leave their insular factions to truly discover what is happening in the outside world.

I recently completed my exchange program at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. Something I noticed immediately about the people there was the effort to integrate. Hong Kong was already one of the most powerful gravity centers in Asia but the Hong Kongers had bigger ambitions. The students and faculty I met in Hong Kong were all worried about the rapid rise of their Asian neighbors, not just in the traditional economic sense of the word "rise" but also in educational competitiveness. They spoke of the old days when Hong Kong and Singapore enjoyed the reputation of model international hubs and added, "But it seems like all Asian countries including South Korea are making a play for the international hub position." And indeed, we have. Over the years, Yonsei University among others has done a brilliant job with internationalization, too. But there is one criterion where our diversity recipe completely falls apart. And it's not just us. This is a thread that runs through all the top universities in South Korea—let alone SKY (Seoul National, Korea, and Yonsei University). It is the failure to promote faculty diversity.

I was sitting at a nice café near the Changdeokgung Palace the other day. Right next to my table was a group of young trendies from Hongik University (HU) college of Fine Arts, chatting about a recently hired pure arts professor in their department. "Pure arts" in Korea refers to Western Painting, Oriental Painting, Sculpture and Printmaking as a whole. Their conversation was surprising for two reasons. This pure arts professor was apparently the "first" Seoul National University (SNU) graduate to be hired by HU. So why the surprise? In fact, SNU and HU are arguably the two most prominent universities known for pure arts in South Korea. These two factions of some of the greatest artists in the country were confined in their own ivory towers, passing each other for so long, and ostracized by their own preconceptions. With the small exception of those who studied abroad, the entire faculties of arts at both SNU and HU were teaching at their alma mater. Don't get me wrong. Loyalty is a virtue. But too much water will drown the miller. I believe that is precisely what has happened to Korean universities today. The second surprise was that HU's decision to hire a SNU graduate was not a voluntary choice. It turns out that the decision was made by the university administration, unable to bear the sight of this perennial academic inbreeding.

No matter how you slice higher education in Korea, academic inbreeding or "pure-blood hiring" is one of its most inveterate diseases. It's clear, nonetheless, that Korea's top universities are serious about producing graduates of the highest caliber. However, on a campus where everyone argues over everything, an impassioned debate over the academic factionalism is conspicuously absent. Throughout my exchange program in Hong Kong, I noticed that when many students opened fire on the Department of Political Science for being too Sinocentric, professors would humbly take the criticism and talk about ways to make changes so that education would better cater to the needs of the students. If there is a legitimate complaint about the way things are taught in a college, if the rationale for a core curriculum itself comes under question, then the university deserves a good dose of skepticism and argument. After all, there is much to be skeptical about and so much to argue over. Why should the issue of faculty diversity be any different? Throughout the expensive and often Sisyphean task of earning a college degree, how often do we consider why we are being taught what we are and by whom? Students may grumble about certain things in moments of frustration at 3 o'clock in the morning. But how often do we genuinely second-guess our decisions—and the administration's decisions for that matter?

The existence of such a question would bring to the forefront a looming decision: which academics would the top universities choose to hire? For many, including Yonsei University, this is not an easy choice. Given SKY's convention of elitism and our history of inbreeding, there is a troubling tension between what is practical and what is interesting, what is timeless and what is trendy, what is easy and what is daring. Even before the choice can be made, there is the problem of limited knowledge. Our political leadership has tried to solve the problem top-down. In 2005, the Ministry of Education issued a guidance to all tertiary institutions recommending that no more than two-thirds of the newly appointed faculty come from the same undergraduate school. But the guidance had no binding force and, consequently, failed to produce the intended results. If the National Assembly were to pass a bill on faculty and student diversity, exacting severe penalties for those who did not adhere to the Ministry's guidance, this would never be a problem. But according to the Ministry of Education, South Korean universities still have a long way ahead of them. According to the Ministry's 2014 data, 84.1% of all faculty members at SNU were SNU graduates. Yonsei University had 73.9% and Korea University was slightly better off at 58.6%. Still the vast majority of all faculty members at SKY universities were hired among their own alumni pool.

Of course, academic inbreeding is not all gloom and doom. There are certainly positive sides to it as well. Professor Park Sung Choon, the head of SNU Unification Education Research Center and a SNU graduate himself answered my question over lunch one day. He said, "If you pick among your alumni, the chances of drawing a complete quack diminishes." There are other merits too. Faculty members working for their own alma mater might display a stronger sense of loyalty. Likewise, they would have already worked with their own colleagues in the past, making academic collaboration and accumulation easier. But as a research intern at Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, a German political think-tank, I have seen how university administration is and can be done differently in other areas of the world. For example, Germany has laws forbidding tertiary institutions to hire their own graduates as professors. Yet German universities are among the most productive when it comes to quality research and academic work. An argument can be made that in the earlier years of an institution's development, a certain amount of inbreeding is necessary to cultivate an environment that is conducive to accumulating knowledge, expertise and know-how. But South Korea is no longer a developing country. The Korean economy and its universities are sitting on the threshold of becoming globally first-tier not because we lack loyalty or inbreeding but because we lack industrial competitiveness. This is precisely why it is important for SKY universities to lead the way by developing a creative academic climate anew. The Park Geun-hye Administration's talk of "creative economy" is fine. I do not mind that South Korea spends millions of dollars every year inviting distinguished visiting scholars from abroad. But the pressing need of the hour should be to do away with our long standing convention of pure-blood hiring and academic endogamy, not some half-baked blood transfusion.

This might have something to do with our national history. In June 2010, South Korea launched the second Naro-1 rocket. I was sitting in front of the television watching this with my parents. At the time, there was an overriding sense of national shame over the Russian assistance that it took us to develop and build the Naro-1. But Koreans must face the reality that this is nothing to be ashamed of. In 1957, the Soviet Union launched the world's first artificial satellite, Sputnik. This shocked the whole world, especially the United States. In response to this, the U.S government quickly prepared their own space program and launched the Vanguard rocket into space. It failed spectacularly, deepening the U.S dismay over its position in the space race. After the failure, however, the U.S immediately launched an investigation into its failed Vanguard Project, culminating in a massive report which at the very end stated that mathematics education in the U.S had to be changed from bottom-up. I probably need not mention that behind the veil of the Soviet Union's Sputnik success was a group of German scientists who aided them with their genius.

Had the Soviet space program been trapped inside a culture of endogamy and factionalism, their achievements would not have been possible. After the failure of the Vanguard Project, NASA developed a new space program known to us as the Project Apollo and went on to successfully launch Mercury, Gemini, and many other programs that we still speak of to this very day. But the fact of the matter is that this was not America's doing alone. Without the genius of Wernher von Braun, another German aerospace engineer, we do not know how much longer it would have taken the United States to catch up with her Russian counterpart. The point I am trying to make is that as SKY students, we should not be intellectually pusillanimous. After all, it is the revolutionary, the polemical and the iconoclastic that we are taught in our classes—those who have had the intellectual audacity to denounce the status quo. It is the source of conflict and disagreement that acts, more often than not, as the subject of academic investigation. It is those who have contributed to our country and culture by having the courage to disagree that we respect and revere. If there is room for improvement in our campus' model of diversity, we must, for the sake of progress, continually highlight these shortcomings. And highlight we must, even if they are our professors held in high esteem by our own colleagues.

RECYCLING PATRIATION?

The Use of Unmanned Robots

BY **WOO JIN HAN**

On July 8, 2016, a disgruntled US veteran, 25-year-old Micah Johnson, shattered a peaceful Dallas protest against police violence by opening fire on the Dallas Police Department (DPD). For hours, the metropolitan area by El Centro Community College was violently morphed into a warzone, in which the gunman exchanged hundreds of bullets with DPD officers and SWAT team members. Throughout the chaos, Johnson killed five DPD officers and injured nine others in one of the most deadly ambushes against police in modern American history. The most unusual aspect of this tragedy, however, is the way it ended. After a 20-minute deliberation by the DPD, officers agreed to dispatch the gunman through a ground robot. In this unprecedented incident, an officer controlling a handheld device guided the robot toward Johnson and triggered the C-4 explosive it was carrying. The robot, as with other forms of modern technology, promptly and effectively carried out its purposes; in a flash, the standstill was over and the dangerous criminal was killed.

To many, this use of weaponized robots in the domestic sector raises various questions and concerns. Of course, the device itself is neither novel nor revolutionary in today's world of advanced technologies. In fact, the first use of an unmanned robot to target an individual dates back to 2002, when the American CIA deployed a drone to kill a man in Afghanistan. Thus, questions arise not simply from the existence of the technology, but also from its spontaneous use by the DPD. That is, while the incident exposes the fearsome capabilities of weapons technology to the public, winning the praise of some, the sheer willingness of authorities to implement them (especially domestically) alarms others. Prior to this incident, the subject of weaponized robots had not been a prevalent domestic issue for the US; uncooperative suspects were detained or killed through mostly human efforts, while weaponized robots were reserved for military personnel engaged in the chaotic battlegrounds of war. A robotic suicide bomber in an American city is out of the ordinary. It is an alien in full view – one whose intentions ought to be questioned by the public.

The use of these robots is startling because of the unchecked power it grants the users.

Unmanned weaponized robots (UWRs) grant authorities the capability to end others' lives without putting their own in danger. Because they are not at risk, these UWRs may be more prone to carelessness and making improper decisions. Indeed, most UWRs themselves are imperfect, and cannot precisely relay situations to their controllers. Cameras have blind spots, thermal ones make it more difficult to identify individuals, movement can be flawed especially in uneven terrains, and UWRs themselves can be hacked by others. Additionally, most UWRs do not relay senses of touch, smell, or hearing, which can potentially be useful when making decisions – especially life-threatening ones. For instance, a detection of leaked gas should discourage one from triggering explosions, as it can cause unintended collateral damage.

Thus, whether or not the robot has a life of its own, there is a potential transfer of responsibility from the creator to the creation. Under these circumstances, it is easier to fault technical limitations for unintended results. With an increased degree of authority and anonymity, accountability becomes increasingly loose, and program errors and limitations can become scapegoats for carelessness and irrationality. Furthermore, the capabilities of UWRs increase the need for precision and deliberation to the extent that a slight lapse in judgment or minor human error can lead to the death of an innocent person. Therefore, it is problematic that while accountability is integral and actions must be taken meticulously, the use of UWRs can promote unfavorable and counterproductive tendencies. As robots enter the fray, the stakes and the unknown factors are automatically increased.

Additionally, the systematic use of UWRs in the domestic sector would open up a Pandora's Box of dangers by hackers. As the most sophisticated and effective robots require programming and implementing systems such as GPS, surveillance, and communications, they are vulnerable to cyberattacks. If a hacker takes over just one such system, the entire effectiveness of an UWR can be compromised. For instance, because drones depend so much on coordinates, hacking its GPS system may be all it takes to render it useless. While there have only been a few instances in which

today's UWRs have been hacked, this is mainly due to its highly guarded and restricted use for military purposes. However, the proliferation of UWRs domestically would open up a multitude of opportunities for hackers to develop and utilize their skills. One can then only imagine the catastrophic consequences that result when anonymous groups and individuals hijack robots armed with bombs and automatic assault rifles. Wider use and technological expansion of UWRs come with potentially dire risks from dangerous hackers.

In addition to UWRs, there exists another form of robotics that raises ethical questions: autonomous robots. While self-functioning "killer robots" remain in the realm of science-fiction, the robotic technology is undoubtedly becoming more complex and autonomous. For instance, take self-driving vehicles and their implementation in war zones. In the same month of the Dallas Shooting, the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) became the first group to deploy self-driving military vehicles, and it plans to equip them with weapons in the future. Barring any effective international laws that prevent the use of autonomous military robots, such technologies may eventually become a norm for wars, as robots become cheaper and more capable. In fact, the major powers – U.S., Russia, and China – have also been investing money and conducting research into such programs, as they can offer significant military advantages. Even with today's robotic systems, it is technologically feasible to install weapons into their programs. With the absence of corresponding international laws (for example, the Non-Proliferation Treaty, which has significantly prevented the spread of nuclear weapons), many military programs and technology firms are legally free to develop automaton robots that can fundamentally transform the landscape of war, security, and society. As Gordon Johnson, a member of the Pentagon's Joint Forces Command, straightforwardly puts it, "[Robots] don't get hungry. They're not afraid. They don't forget their orders. They don't care if the guy next to them has just been shot. Will they do a better job than humans? Yes."

The issues of UWRs are highly controversial. Consider, then, the alternative: unmanned robots that are not weaponized. There exists

a wide range of such robotic systems, with various purposes, including law enforcement, bomb disposal, search and rescue, and standoff and hostage negotiation. Throughout several decades, hundreds of unmanned robots have been destroyed while attempting to defuse bombs, saving hundreds of lives. Small, powerful robots have been used to navigate through rubble to locate trapped individuals. Others have been used to detect improvised explosive devices (IEDs), and to deliver and retrieve items for hostage situations. One can immediately notice how these devices are far less controversial and precarious than their weaponized counterparts. In most situations, robots do not need to be armed in order to serve their purposes of saving lives and performing actions that humans cannot. Their utilitarian value is clear and the risks are low, and few argue against their use. The focal issue with UWRs, then, is that they have destructive capabilities.

While Micah Johnson was killed by a police officer behind a controller, from his perspective, there was only an unhesitating, suicidal robot with a single objective: to end his life. Although it stopped the violence, no one can offer a definite answer to whether the method was the best. The purpose of a non-weaponized, unmanned robot is clear: to be used as a means of support. However, the most effective robot would identify, disarm, and immobilize its target without threatening any lives. This ideal robot, still capable of being abused, would ultimately be considered a non-weaponized one. Realistically, however, it is easier to attach a bomb to a moving robot than to create a robot that somehow also preserves the life of a killer. We are faced with a philosophical tradeoff: endangering lives for the sake of other potential lives. However, this is not all. The capabilities of the ever imperfect UWRs require heightened human precision and responsibility, as well as impenetrable cybersecurity from perpetual hacking. Perhaps the best option may be to keep weapons off of autonomous robots, and leave the burden of achieving peace to those who are willing to risk their lives for it.

Gender Equality and the Korean Gaming Industry

BY **JOSEPH KIM**

Ever since the PC bang (internet gaming cafes) boom during South Korea's so-called "IMF crisis," gaming has become quite the favorite pastime for an increasing proportion of the Korean population. Supposedly, Korea is a country that now takes gaming seriously: the stereotype that South Koreans are 'godly' with their gaming skills is already widely accepted in the global professional gaming scene. South Korea's gaming industry has grown with the explosive growth in the gaming population. The Global Games Market Report currently ranks the Korean games market as the world's fifth-largest market in the world, and according to the Korea Creative Content Agency, the market is expected to increase by 4.3% in 2017. The growth is surprising considering the various government regulations on the Korean gaming industry, namely the so-called "Shutdown Law" or the "Cinderella Law," which prevents those under 19 to play games past 10:00 P.M., but I digress. Government regulations aimed to appease concerned parents are not the only issue hindering the Korean gaming industry; a market too heavily dependent on mobile games, the Chinese gaming industry clawing at Korea's heels, and stale and plagiarized content are among the many problems it must overcome. Two of the bigger issues that have surfaced recently, however, are gender discrimination and sexual harassment within the Korean gaming industry.

Gender discrimination and sexual harassment are major problems within the gaming industry overall, and a long running one at that. Gaming has been a male-dominated scene for quite some time. Now, however, things have changed. *The Guardian* reported that in 2014, 52% of the gaming population is made up of women. While the article pointed to the rise of the mobile games as the cause for the influx, it is still very much apparent that a lot more women play games than before. However, the article states that even with this percentage of women in the gaming population, only 12% of game designers and 3% of programmers are women. The problem then lies with the fact that the U.S. and European gaming markets have not sufficiently adjusted to this change in their customer base and thus still heavily favor their male constituents. As such, one of the largest issues surrounding gender discrimination is the portrayal and representation of both genders in games, where men are predominant, while women are portrayed as more submissive in roles such as "damsels in distress." Distorted portrayals of the female gender also runs rampant within the industry as it relies on the age-old tactic of "sex sells"; in order to reach a predominantly male market, many developers used physically and often sexually attractive images of women.

We can see just how widespread this practice is in the triple-A gaming industry. Anita Sarkeesian is an outspoken feminist media critic for games. As controversial as her work can be, she reveals the slow-changing pace of the market in an article for Feminist Frequency. Drawing up a list of games shown on E3, a popular annual gaming expo where companies announce their upcoming games, she identifies the gender of the main characters for all of the games revealed. Surprisingly, figures show that out of 76 titles unveiled, only 9% of the games exclusively feature playable female protagonists, while 32% feature male protagonists. On the bright side, the U.S. and European gaming industries are definitely making efforts and changes to appeal to their female audiences. We can take, for example, Blizzard's new game that was released earlier this year: Overwatch. During its initial reveal, *Feminist Frequency* mentioned in a separate video the lack of diversity in body types and ages in the female cast of Overwatch. The article questioned Blizzard's design choice of diversifying its male cast of characters in terms of age and body types, while limiting the body types and age range of its female characters to what it essentially described as Barbies. After the article, Blizzard went on to reveal the body-builder Zarya and the aged sniper Ana as an effort to diversify its female cast of characters.

As game-changing and progressive these decisions may seem, similar efforts to change the market are almost nonexistent in South Korea. Take for example the controversy surrounding Sudden Attack 2, an online first-person shooter developed and recently published by Nexon. While the game itself has many other problems, its portrayal of female soldiers caused a stir within the gaming community. Two of its mascot characters, Maya and Kim Ji-yun, as well as several other female characters in the game, were dressed in outfits that reveal their thighs or cleavage. The game engine simulating physics actually caused enormous problems in gameplay as well, due to its focus on the physics of certain body parts. The game instantly received backlash from Nexon's gaming community, with the issue generating so much controversy that news sites such as Yonhap News and SBS published articles reporting the

incident. Nexon responded by deleting the two characters, seemingly ignoring the fact that other female characters of the game were still dressed in similar fashion. The measures taken were not received well by the community, and Sudden Attack 2 closed its servers on September 30th, 23 days after its launch. Sudden Attack 2 is not the only Korean game that relies on the "sex sells" marketing strategy. The Youth Assembly of the Republic of Korea reports that out of the seven most popularly searched games, five of them had promotional images featuring female characters exposing their thighs or cleavage. According to the article, several other games—even those rated for teenagers—featured such risqué promotional images. This was more apparent with Nexon recently revealing its future line of games at its convention Nexon G-Star 2016. A total of 19 games were announced: six for the PC platform and 13 for the mobile market. Excluding racing games and puzzle games, a majority of the games included playable female characters. However, ten of them portrayed their female cast with a hypersexualized emphasis on exposed thighs and cleavage. Only two presented diversity in their female cast's age and body type, and even then, one of these two included sexualized female characters.

Although Korean game developers and companies risk losing their female audience by using sex appeal based on objectifying women, that is not the only problem when they willingly decide to continue such tactics. Namely, the sexualization and objectification of women in video games may affect how players deal with gender roles. In the study The Effects of the Sexualization of Female Video Game Characters on Gender Stereotyping and Female Self-Concept, Elizabeth Behm-Morawitz asked participants to fill out a survey after playing sexualized and non-sexualized versions of a female game character. Results of the survey show that those who played the sexualized character were more likely to have lower expectations on what women can accomplish. This included women who played the game with the sexualized version of the character, whose self-efficacy scored lower in the survey than of those who played the game with the non-sexualized version of the character. On a similar note, Dr. Karen E. Dill's research Do Anti-Social Video Games Foster Sexism and Violence Against Women? connects the portrayal of gender roles in video games to several factors such as "rape beliefs"(or RMA, rape myth

acceptance), "negative attitudes toward women" and "aggressive personality." She cites examples of how other forms of media—such as tv series and movies—and their messages affect viewers' thoughts on these topics, no matter how much the viewer thinks he or she is immune from their influence. Based on the premise that the same goes for video games, she conducts a survey on the correlation between exposure to violence in video games to the three factors above. Discussing her results, she states that those exposed to anti-social video games—the likes of the GTA series—are less likely to react emotionally against rape, are more likely to show negative emotions toward women (i.e. upholding the notion that women belong "in the kitchen") and, if male, are more likely to harass women themselves.

Unfortunately, such "negative attitudes toward women" and sexual harassment are already big issues in the Korean gaming industry and community. The Game Developers Guild of Korea states that 36.3% of women in game development have faced sexual harassment in some form, a significantly higher percentage than the 2% of men who have faced sexual harassment

in the same field. It is especially shocking and discouraging that Korea's Game Rating and Administration Committee has been accused of numerous counts of sexual harassment within its departments. With these issues being problematic in the gaming industry, it is no surprise that the gaming community suffers from them as well. In the gaming community, it is fairly easy to come across "toxicity" (a term used online to indicate actions negatively impacting a game) against women. Sexual harassment and bias against female gamers seem to be a common occurrence. One prominent incident was the widely and internationally reported accusations against an Overwatch female professional gamer, Geguri, who was deemed to be using hacks. Two professional gamers made the hasty accusations, one of whom threatened to show up at her house with a knife in hand if she indeed was using such programs. Confident that they were in the right, these gamers promised to step out of the eSports scene if Geguri proved herself innocent. Official word from Blizzard stated that she was not, in fact, using hacks, but was genuinely skilled at the game. However, prior to Blizzard's announcement, Geguri was subjected to massive

amounts of cyber-bullying as well as sexually abusive comments. In the aftermath that saw two accusers apologize and quit eSports, many of those involved saw it as proof to how women were poorly regarded in the gaming scene by many of the men within it.

Games are a form of media. Although they do provide cheap entertainment value, we must consider the fact that there's much more they can offer. With the rise of third-wave feminism in Korea, tensions are already high concerning gender roles in Korean society. If there is indeed a connection between its male-centric portrayal of both sexes and how members of society view gender roles, then the Korean gaming industry is very much responsible to refrain from sexualizing female characters. There is no excuse for the gaming industry to continue to project biased gender roles in its products. It cannot stay out of this issue and act as if nothing has happened, as it is too late to do so with various conflicts already entrenching it deeply into the middle of the mudpit. Whether for the money or the message, this is something the industry will have to put a lot of thought into.

What's with Ageism in Korea?
Neo-Confucianism in South Korea

BY **IN YEONG (SOPHIA) CHOI**

"I haven't seen you in ages! What's keeping you so busy?"

He replied, "Lots of stuff, mainly club activities. It's those after-parties. I drink with my club members. They offer me too much alcohol all the time."

He went on about how he had difficulty getting around, trying to avoid the drinks offered by upperclassmen. "I don't hate it. I don't mind the frequency and I love the atmosphere—really loud and exhilarating. The thing is, it's when they start pouring you drinks, especially when you are at your limit, it becomes problematic. You realize you can't say no. They tell you that the amount of soju they pour you corresponds to their love for you so I just can't reject their offer."

When he talked about hierarchy between the upperclassman and underclassman, I realized I had heard this all before from my other classmates. There was no denying the difficulty of declining, for age is one of the most sensitive issues to get around in a Neo-Confucian society like Korea.

Confucianism has been around for a long time in Korean history, and it still continues to shape present-day Korean moral and legal systems. Filial piety, rites, competitive education, meritocracy, succession, and loyalty have been some of the dominating ideas of Confucianism, shaping social relations, corporate structures and inheritances in Korea for years. However, in contemporary society, Confucianism has often been criticized for holding back modernization.

For example, academics of the Republic of China under Mao Zedong, criticized that though Confucianism at one point in time served to resist Western influence, it had become a binding force, preventing China from modernizing. It was the idea of strict obedience to superiors and cementation of social status that were problematic to progress.

Similarly, Korea, too, had raised this issue of Confucianism during the 1997 IMF Crisis, when globalization strategies were disputed among Korea's crème de la crème intellectuals. In the search for the problems and solutions of the crisis, an unprecedented mock trial of Confucianism began with the book titled Confucius Must Die For the Nation to Live by Kim Kyong-il, a professor at Sangmyung University. In the book that was submitted as the plaint for the trial, Professor Kim claims that filial piety and enforced loyalty to the nation allow those in power to have greater control, and thus, prevent further progress. His stance, simply put, was, "the time of Confucianism has gone."

This debate, having taken place in 1999, could have had some influence towards changing the rigid Confucianism of Korean society, considering the fact that Korea did survive the IMF Crisis and has grown as a powerful economy just like the Republic of China. However, whereas China has gotten rid of or modified most of the Confucian practices, Korea continues to uphold most of its traditions.

The traditions remain dominant in the lives of Koreans, just like the social relations between youth and elders—sunbaes (seniors) and hubaes (juniors). Thus, when my friend was "encouraged" to drink, the Confucian relationship between the young and the old served as a shackle that prevented him from saying "no" to the alcohol that came with the idea that the "amount of soju equals love for underclassmen." Declining the sunbae's offer would mean rejecting Confucian values that require obedience. As the saying goes, "when in Rome, do as the Romans do."

Despite having grown up most of his life abroad, he had to comply with the Korean system. Though UIC, the most international college in Korea, is less strict about age differences, age hierarchy is still a big deal. It does not matter whether you are on the same grade level or position. People think that the older they are, the more respect they deserve from those younger than them. In a traditional Confucian Korean society, hierarchy is what keeps the community together—hierarchies between parent and child, teacher and pupil, and sunbae and hubae. The senior is pressured to lead, while the junior must respect and comply. These are roles predetermined by birth.

Korea's society is significantly shaped around this age culture. Thus, when people meet for the first time, they all begin with honorifics. However, sooner or later, either side will eventually ask, "What year were you born?" This question is quite central in Korean conversation, because it determines the form of language—polite or casual. However, to foreigners, the practice of asking about age to determine language form can be quite unusual. I have heard people complain, "Why does Korea have two forms? It feels like I am learning two languages." It is not only the case for Korean but also for most other East Asian languages as well. This is because Confucianism has primarily influenced East Asian countries like China, Korea, Japan, and Vietnam. On the contrary, the West has traditionally valued individualism and self-reliance over conformation to age hierarchy. One's ability is of greater importance in determining social status. As a result, foreigners who come to Korea for the first time find the language structure odd.

However, there has been a gradual change in Korea's social practices. Even a generation ago, age imposed great restrictions. It was impossible to decline offers or instructions from elders because it could be seen as impertinent, even when done in the most gentle manner. Saying no was a form of denial and denial would undermine the power of the superior. But at present, the rigidity of Confucian culture has died down significantly. Respect has become something to be earned through one's actions rather than something given by age. Moreover, the social hierarchy has become more malleable in that the younger people can climb up the social ladder traditionally dominated by elders. Consequently, Korea is moving towards a more competitive society where ability is becoming more significant than age.

The Confucian aspect of Korea's culture has contributed to building a powerful nation thus far. The rigidity in respecting elders makes Korean culture unique and attractive. However, we must accept the weaknesses and limitations of Confucianism by allowing Western practices to melt into our social practices. Too much fixation on traditional practices, as Kim Kyong-il argues, can hinder Korea's role in the globalizing world.
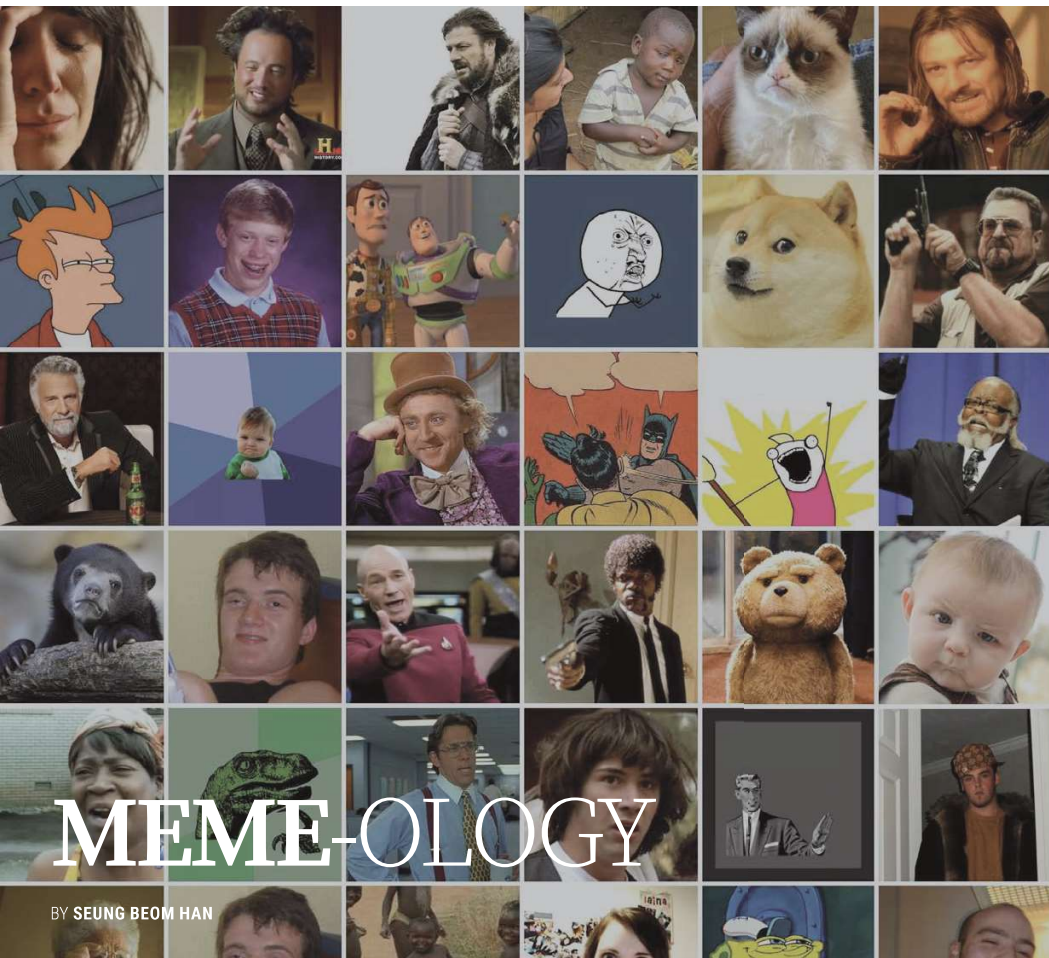
MEME-OLOGY

BY **SEUNG BEOM HAN**

It is the year 2096; the world is in terror as distant echoes of sirens and cries from outside pervade a large and abandoned warehouse. Inside, a group of steadfast "archeolocoders" from the department of Integrated Computer Science and History (ICSH) at Yonsei University are assiduously salvaging the last remaining links to the past. The Stuxnet computer virus has struck the world once before in 2009 and has made its comeback almost a century after. The engineering skills and software required to deal with such primitive viruses have long been buried deep beneath dilapidated ancient computer servers and it is up to this group of stellar heroes to rediscover the remedy to the imminent apocalypse.

However, they must first burrow through what looks like a mesh of primitive file formats of poorly rendered photos with large and accentuated captions, videos of people dancing to the same electronic tune, some differently titled videos portraying a man singing that he is "never gonna give you up," another video with a man that apparently has an apple and a pen, and other peculiar forms of primordial media. The newest member of the "archeolocoding" team, perplexed by such oddities, asks an older veteran what these are and he replies, "These, my young cadet, are what we in the business call memes. They are remnants of the past that we use back in the department to study our ancestor's cultures and values. Do not be fooled, they are more than what meets the eye." The veteran pauses and proceeds to scrutinize the millions of lines of code presented in front of him, becoming more and more anxious until he finally closes his laptop, takes a deep breath and continues to speak. "Considering that the world will probably end soon, let me just tell you what my professor back in the day taught me in Meme 101. Are you ready?"

If you think of memes, you immediately think of one of the more popular photos shared on Facebook and Reddit; maybe it's the viral photo of a Shiba Inu known as "doge" or the iconic drawing of a desperate and angry man above the text "Y U NO." I used to think that what consists of memes was just that: superficial viral photos and drawings with a witty text using the font Impact imprinted on top. However, as I was digging deeper into the world of memes, I learned they are so much more. If you are an avid fan of "dank memes," spend a little too much time on the internet, or consider yourself a 21st century polymath, what I will be telling you might be old information. If not, get ready for some "memeducation."

Before we go further, I would like to clarify one thing. You may be confused as to what the correct pronunciation of 'meme' is. Despite the clever portmanteau I made above, the word 'meme' is pronounced like 'meem.' Although it sounds like something the internet community has made up in the last couple years, the word has quite a long history. In the early 1920s, Richard Semon, a German zoologist and evolutionary biologist, coined the term mnemes, which he used to describe biologically inheritable memory. After several decades, Richard Dawkins, another fellow evolutionary biologist, shortened the word mimema (which means "something imitated" in Greek) into its present day form 'meme.'

In his 1974 book entitled The Selfish Gene, Dawkins uses the word to describe a "self-replicating unit of information," a cultural analogue to its biological counterpart, genes. This is in fact a very accurate description of the 21st century notion of memes. Paul Gil, an internet basics expert, defines meme as a "virally-transmitted cultural symbol or social idea"—a social artifact. The majority of memes we encounter in the internet are witty captioned photos that often contain jokes or mockery of human behavior. However, there are many other forms of memes, such as videos, and even verbal and/or physical expressions people display.

It is difficult to argue against the fact that the world of memes is a worldwide social phenomenon and much like the common flu, is viral and quickly shared across people all around the globe—all thanks to the internet and social media platforms. The majority of memes nowadays are transmitted by members belonging to Generation Y or Z (born during the 1980s or after). This is by no means a surprise, as they are the ones spending the most time on the internet and are the most adept at using it to its full potential.

The very nature and structure of the internet is why it is the ultimate playground for memes to exist. There are four elements of internet data storage that make it so. Firstly, digital objects are infinitely reproducible across a range of platforms. Secondly, digital objects, whether complete or incomplete, can be easily found or "searched." Thirdly, digital objects may be produced for a specific audience, but are done so with the knowledge that they can be spread to an unfathomably large audience wherever internet access is available. Finally, online artifacts can stay online forever as they are infinitely transferable and storable in different locations.

Much like quantum mechanics, memes mean nothing if they aren't in some ways observed, or most importantly, shared. Before the rise of social media sites, memes were shared through email conversations or by simply showing a friend a link to a certain photo or video. The introduction of social media sites such as Reddit, 4chan, Facebook, Pinterest, 9gag, and Imgur resulted in a drastic increase in the production and circulation of memes. People now have platforms to share memes not only with their friends, but also with hundreds and thousands of strangers in the internet.

Memes are dynamic and are subject to change as society and culture of our world change. Sean Rintel, a researcher at Microsoft Research Labs in Cambridge, associated memes with three concepts. First is the notion of intertextuality. Rintel states that memes make reference to other memes, concepts, time periods, and cultures. Second is the notion of indexicality. Memes are exploitable in that an element in one meme can be used to describe or remark on different situations. The third notion Rintel writes about is templatability, and how memes have recognizable elements in them that can be replaced or reused in different contexts. Templatability of memes resulted in the production of various websites and applications people can use to create new memes. This adaptability allows memes to in some way reflect our ever changing societal values, as a meme that went viral means that a large number of people found it relatable in some way and then shared it to their peers.

Most memes as of now are for pure cheap comedic values that employ techniques such as observational comedy ("funny because it's true"). However, as the users along with the culture of memes continue to evolve, memes may become progressively philosophical and intellectual. There are several reasons as to why people create memes. Some produce them for internet fame. Memes, like animals and plants, go through a process of the survival of the fittest. Only the ones that the highest number of people find in some ways amusing or relatable are likely to become viral. So, making a meme that pervades the internet might bring the original producer a great sense of pride.

Furthermore, viral memes, if utilized and exploited correctly, can bring fortune to its creators. For example, many YouTube content creators purposely create ridiculous or "so dumb it's funny" videos hoping it would go viral and hence become a meme people will share with friends and coworkers, or start a trend such as a viral dance move or a reproducible mannerism amongst people. Because of the way YouTube allows content creators to earn money from third-party advertising, such videos that go viral can make them instant millionaires. An example of a meme that brought significant wealth to its creator is the Grumpy Cat meme. The owner's cat, which became an internet sensation because of its iconic grumpy look, through paid appearances, merchandising, book deals, et cetera, generated millions of dollars for its owner.

There are also memes that have political, social, religious, or ideological undertones that may have been created to share an opinion one has about a subject. Such memes are usually, but not always, created in the form of satire in that they poke fun at certain issues, much like political cartoons in a newspaper. However, unlike abstruse political cartoons, memes often require no complex thought processes to understand and hence can be virally shared by many people who find the meme amusing in some way. Lastly, some memes are even used in the world of marketing to advertise products and services.

Brushing off memes as dumb and mindless photos and videos may be the reaction of many newcomers to the world of memes. However, whether you find them to be a waste of human intelligence or see them as the exemplary result of the fusion of technology and expressive art, the pinnacle of our communicative capabilities, memes are slowly taking over our world. A person can effectively communicate his or her ideas to another just by using memes and nothing else. Some may even have an arsenal of memes on their phones that they can shuffle through when trying to impart a certain message. Memes, as Sean Rintel defines it, are "virtually shared nuggets of cultural currency." Memes can illustrate what people value; what they find humorous; how they respond to political economic, and natural crises; how they attempt to make social change; and ultimately, how they interact with one another.

The internet has brought about the culture of active "user-generated" content, which is a sharp contrast to the past's passive "read-only" atmosphere. Memes are in this sense, a modern example of how far we, as humans, came to realize the power of having the freedom of speech. It is now possible to broadcast a message to the entire world in a way many can make sense of that also penetrates societal barriers and permeates through populations. You may have heard the expression, "With great power comes great responsibility." So let us embrace the new means of communication and entertainment memes have introduced to the world and use it wisely: either to make a roommate chuckle, or even change the course of history.

Perhaps in the distant future, an "archeolocoder," if such professions ever exist, will be able to salvage your name in a dilapidated warehouse just like the one mentioned above, alongside your memes, and the momentous legacy you bequeathed upon our world.t

Age of Unreason, Art of Reason

BY **HYE JU (JENNA) KIM**

Take a look around. Fear of logic; systematic denunciation of science; trust in manufactured semantics over truth; blind advocacy of bigotry and sexism; propaganda of the media and the corresponding spoon-fed consumers.

In short—widespread cognitive deficit.

Humans are great. Make no mistake about that. We built the Internet. We built democracy from the society of autocracy. We learned to fly, ventured into the great unknown and stepped on moon dust. We are idealists, the greater fools who dare to dream and reach further until dreams become reality.

There are many people who argue that our society is on the road to "progression." Are we not better off than we were five centuries ago? Do we not, as a general public, have more liberties than we had before? Are we not living in an advanced post-industrial society in which we have access to so many technological luxuries? And are we not smarter?

Are we smarter? That's a tricky question. Obviously, intellect can be measured in more than one way, but for the sake of this article, I'm going to equate intellect with rationality, as defined in the Age of Enlightenment in the 18th century.

Back then in the 17-18th century, previously silenced individuals craved reason. Descartes, Hobbes, Locke, Pascal, followed by Hume, Smith, Voltaire—these are the kinds of people who set the groundwork for the concept of humans as autonomous, "rational" beings. This is the underlying concept of human in the modern age. Democracy, the basis of our society, presupposes that humans have the capability to govern themselves; that they are capable of being rational free-thinking beings. We believed in this so strongly that we've built systems and governments with rational humanism at their very hearts.

That being said—take a look around. In this modern age, is the world governed by reason? Does logic prevail in the election of politicians in some of the most "progressive" countries? In economics, are consumers always viewed as rational? Are there lobbyists who still claim (with no solid evidence whatsoever) that global warming is a hoax? More importantly, how many people believe in such sugar-coated lies? Wake up, world. We are not rational. This plea for acknowledgement is not restricted to the neighbour next door who plays Nirvana at full volume all through the night. It's not only about him. Maybe you are not rational.

We would certainly like to believe that we are. We like to think that we deserve all the prerogatives of a rational human being: freedom, because we are smart enough not to hang ourselves with the proverbial rope. Here, my argument is not that humans are irrational, and therefore undeserving of freedom. My argument is that humans are twisted, brilliant, irrational beings, who are occasionally misguided and misunderstood. I am saying that we are smart enough to recognise this.

However, drowning in the screaming white noise of the modern society, this simple fact—that our minds are not perfect, that sometimes dichotomy is overrated—seem to slip our minds. This imperfection has always been a part of human nature, but it has become more difficult to detect under the illusion of rationality in the modern age. With all this in mind, one can state that we are living in the Age of Un-reason—precisely because this facet of truth is hidden to so many.

This is a problem.

I am not saying that the world should be governed by the virtue of reason solely; that would be horrifying. I am saying that the refusal to recognise our irrationality, the pretense with which we subconsciously blanket ourselves for the sake of convenience, is a huge problem threatening the fabric of our society.

There are very few beings in the world that is more dangerous than an irrational zealot. Some examples might be: loyal supporters of certain political candidates who are overcome with anger when their candidates are attacked with facts and logic; non-experts who maintain skepticism despite all the scientific evidence pointing the other way, who claim they are outraged at the scientists spinning "blatant lies"; critics who make up their minds to negatively view a certain object of criticism, who use every detail in a sophistic way to spite the piece. In face of such irrationality, healthy debate becomes as likely as a clownfish flying in the night. Social debate is reduced to argument for the sake of argument.

If this trend of unflinching willful ignorance continues, the world will continue to decay from the inside. The fantasy of irreproachable rationality is equivalent to the bread and circus factor in the Pax Romana. Even now, we are suffering countless political, economic and social injustice from this refusal to acknowledge irrationality. If this goes unaddressed, this problem will spin out of our hands, and one day, break through the blissful illusion. And upon opening your eyes, it would baffle you. The world then would be subject to entirely different rules, governed by entirely different laws of physics.

So here is my solution to the problem: return of empathy and reason.

First of all—empathy. The question of what if. Empathy is an invisible inhibitor in you. It makes you stop, and think. It makes you think about the things that you take for granted. Popular politicians who, in their "locker-room talk," brag about their exploits with sexual assaults, and their supporters who find them funny. A moment to stop and think: what if the victim of the assault were me? What if it were my daughter? And after this, if it is still funny to you, then you are lacking something human. Others, waging war on poor people instead of poverty. Again, stop to think: what if it were me? What if it were my family? What if it were my children who can't even chew because they cannot afford to pay for the dentist's? After properly empathizing with these people, could you deride, or ignore their problems simply because they are someone else's problem?

Empathy is hard. When you get right down to it, the truth is that you can never know what others are thinking. In Hunter S. Thompson's words, "We are all alone, born alone, die alone, and... we shall someday look back on our lives and see that, in spite of our company, we were alone the whole way." Yes, we are alone. We are the prisoners of our own minds. But good news is that there is a way to punch through the confines of this wall. Or to put it another way, make a small hole in the wall so that we can perhaps glimpse at someone else's different truth. This is where art comes in. You can attain empathy through film, documentary, artwork, literature, music, performance, TV show, comic or any other kinds of art that interest you.

Being emerged in art is like temporarily leaving the room that you call your conscious mind. You don't know how clean or messy your room is; you don't know how it smells or if the furniture arrangement is unique or conventional in relation to others' rooms. Because you have been here your whole life. Then, you grab a good book or sit down in front of a cinema screen, a television, a stage. And maybe, just for a little while, you get to leave the room. You get a taste of different air, glimpse at the fire outside the cave. If you are lucky, you get to truly listen to the other—whether they are writers or actors or characters. The brief magic ends, of course. But when you come back inside the room, you start to notice things that you have never noticed before. It may be too far-fetched to call them the Truth, but perhaps they could be called a "different truth." You get to see that there are so many truths in the world beyond your mind, and you begin to wonder. You remember the emotions that you have felt, and you feel alive. And then, you begin to think.

And how do we think? From the beginning of this article, I have stressed the usage of logic and rationality. Now, because art is generally thought to be based on generating emotions, some people might be shaking their heads right now. You may view empathetic art and cold reason as polar-opposites. These concepts can be, but are usually not the negation of each other. Have you ever heard of Mark Twain's quote, "Truth is stranger than fiction," or Oscar Wilde's "Life imitates Art far more than Art imitates Life"? Reality is often stranger than fiction, because as Twain says, fiction is about possibilities while truth has no rules. Fiction has to adhere to certain truths in order to get people to believe in them. Truth, on the other hand, is preposterous. Life is an insanity asylum, chaos after chaos, containing shocking amounts of horror and compassion. If you think about it, sometimes fiction is more "reasonable" than real life. So don't hastily denounce art as unreasonable. They usually have more logic than your run-of-the-mill politics or Guinness Records (unless the fictional work is specifically designed to be irrational, of course).

Art is a mirror-reality. It is not born out of vacuum. It is born out of the social reality, and so it often reflects life. The background in which it is born may be happy, angry, sad, confused, afraid, or proud. Whatever it may be, art takes an aspect of our world and shows it in the mirror-universe—where everything is a little strange, but believable enough that people get intrigued. This spark of initial curiosity is gold. It expands into a full-blown idea when art is properly experienced. We begin to ask the question what if. And if we are very lucky, we might see the resurgence of empathy and reason. This is the Art of Reason.

So, here is the core of what I really want to say: read, watch, examine, create, appreciate, and believe in art. Consume stories like your life depends on it. With all that, leave your comfort zone and start thinking rationally. In this way, humans can actually be trusted to be humane.

And then maybe, idealism wins over cynicism. Empathy and reason win over mass blindness. Be drunk on art, on life, and let's transform the Age of Unreason into something else. Let's not succumb to those who would manipulate us with empty words and primordial aggression.

Let's start thinking, start creating an era in which we are proud to be living.

"If this trend of unflinching willful ignorance continues, the world will continue to decay from the inside. The fantasy of irreproachable rationality is equivalent to the bread and circus factor in the Pax Romana."

- Hye Ju Jenna Kim,
on being illogical.

The Industrial Age brought about the invention of various novel artificial materials that completely revolutionized the production process of East Asian household appliances. Traditional wooden bowls and bamboo chopsticks were replaced by metal or composite materials to increase durability and reduce costs. We are blessed to enjoy the fruit of human progress, but we also live in ignorance to the "obsolete art."

Would you choose a $30 handmade bowl over a $5 plastic one? The answer is most probably no. Even if your answer is yes, would you try to mend it on the occasion that it breaks into pieces? It is quite certain that you would buy a new one. We live in a world where the availability of replacement is so great that few would bother cherishing a certain handicraft item for life. In this world, lacquerware is a luxury. Instead of being thrown away, a broken bowl will be glued with lacquer mixed with gold powder. This repair technique illuminates the cracks to honor imperfection as an indispensable part of an object's history. The Japanese call this method "kintsugi."

"Lacquer" is an English term which originated from the word "Lākshā" in Sanskrit which signifies the number 100,000. It refers to the myriad number of the Lac insect that produces scarlet substance used to paint on wood in ancient India. Nonetheless, East Asian lacquer is not extracted from the Lac insect but from the toxic sap of the Rhus verniciflua lacquer tree. Since lacquer is

a natural resin that is resistant to water, acid and heat, applying processed lacquer on an object's surface will create a delicate and glossy texture with greater durability.

It is significant that lacquer is one of mankind's oldest inventions. Though, the vegetable-based nature of lacquerware would have made them decay when buried underground, archeologists still manage to retrieve ancient lacquer pieces that were fortunately preserved in mud. The first lacquerware artifact excavated in Zhejiang Province, China dates back to the Neolithic period 8,000 years ago. In Hachinohe, Japan, the lacquerware dates back as early as the Jōmon period of Prehistoric Japan, circa 3,000 B.C. Korea and Vietnam's lacquer techniques were developed around 2,500 years ago and slightly influenced by Chinese technique.

Ever since ancient times, lacquer has been a precious material for primitive people who did not have many techniques to smoothen or enhance the surface of an object. Lacquer is also believed to have symbolized wealth and authority. Archeological evidence discloses that only in tombs of wealthy people were lacquerwares found. For instance, lacquer-coated leather pieces were discovered inside the ancient tomb Viet Khe found in Northern Vietnam. The excessive number of burial artifacts suggests that the owner of the tomb must have been a community leader to have possessed such precious lacquerware.

The production process of lacquerware is similar among East Asian countries. First, viscous sap is collected from the lacquer tree by cutting deep into its branches. Then, raw lacquer is applied directly onto the wooden surface of an object to strengthen and waterproof it. After that, raw lacquer undergoes purification by using heat to vaporize extra moisture. The purified lacquer will be coated on the surface and left to dry in a warm place for three days. This process is repeated over and over again until the object is coated with thirty or more layers of lacquer.

Despite the similar techniques, each East Asian country has its own signature technique of decorating lacquerware. Though, China was the first to develop lacquer techniques, it was Japanese lacquerware that became the most famous.

When lacquerware was first introduced to Europe in the 17th century, the European public immediately fell in love with it and attempted to imitate Asian lacquer techniques. Just as the term "China" was used to address the Chinese porcelain, Asian lacquer technique was likewise framed as "Japanning." The native term for lacquer in Japanese is "urushi," which originates from the word "uruwashii," meaning beautiful. Japanese artisans developed the unique technique "maki-e" of sprinkling gold and silver powder on damp lacquer. The finished products became mesmerizing lacquer objects with sparkling decorative patterns as if they were actually made

of gold.

In contrast, carved lacquer technique, or "diaoqi," was the most famous invention in Chinese lacquer art. This particular technique maintains lacquer in its purist form by carving three dimensional patterns onto layers of thin lacquer. Since this technique does not require mixing other substances into lacquer, Chinese lacquerware is easily recognizable by its original color: bright red.

In Korea, lacquerware is usually decorated with mother of pearl, the iridescent inner shell layer of several mollusk species. This technique is called "najeon." The surface of the lacquerware is coated with black lacquer to highlight the inlayed mother of pearl. This technique is also costly since high quality mother of pearl is difficult to obtain and process. Nevertheless, the final products have breathtakingly beautiful patterns that resemble the image of a silver rainbow on a dark background.

Unlike East Asian lacquer of China, Japan, and Korea, Vietnamese lacquer is less toxic and thick since it is extracted from the local Rhus succedanea wax tree. The signature Vietnamese lacquer painting style was developed in the 20th century. When the French colonized Indochina and established the École Supérieure des Beaux-Arts de l'Indochine, also known as the Indochina Art College, many Vietnamese students adopted the European-style oil painting and later replaced oil paint with lacquer. The

process involved drawing on black woodblock and coating it with multiple lacquer layers. Subsequently, the artist would grind the painting with a stone repeatedly to reveal the beautiful details underneath. This style was revolutionary since lacquer, traditionally speaking, had only been used on objects. Using lacquer to paint is to undermine its first function as a protection layer, thus honoring the substance solely as an aesthetic material.

The meticulous process of production makes lacquerware extremely sturdy but also quite expensive, which threatens the traditional technique that must compete in the modern world, where various inexpensive materials are on the rise. Nonetheless, the value of lacquer in both the historical and the aesthetic senses are undeniable. On the one hand, lacquer shows a long history of miraculous preservation and development throughout thousands of years. On the other hand, the delicate appearance of lacquerware makes it desirable both for daily utilities and as exhibitory artifact.

Sad as it is, lacquer cannot escape being slowly eliminated from modern society. In countries like Japan and Korea, the demand for expensive lacquerware made by highly skilled craftsmen is dropping due to economic changes and shifting public interests. Since it requires a certain amount of money and patience to create such luxurious handicraft like lacquerware, Asian people nowadays are less likely to buy a

lacquerware object, let alone fix it with golden lacquer when it breaks.

The Vietnamese situation is even gloomier. As I walked down the bumpy road of Ha lacquerware village in Hanoi, I saw nothing but sad eyes of artisans who couldn't even sell a piece of their lacquerware in a day. Struggling to preserve their ancestor's techniques, these artisans must resort to chemical paint to reduce costs. The downside of this economical maneuver is that it also reduces the quality of their products. In a modern market economy where one can easily purchase plastic products at cheaper prices, the lacquerware industry that once thrived now faces oblivion.

There are many artisans battling poverty every day to preserve the traditional handicrafts of Asia. Meanwhile, we are too busy trashing the planet with plastic waste. We must reconsider the value of traditional art. It will take small changes in our ways of life to choose more expensive and traditional handicrafts over the convenience of mass produced goods. At the end of the day, we will be the one to decide whether or not to keep these arts as part of our ongoing history and cultural heritage.

There is a thin line between art and mere craft. A handicraft is unique since it carries a part of an artisan's soul. Please treat handicraft as if it were your own soul. Mend it when it breaks. Scars are golden threads that beautify your existence in life.

East Asian Lacquerware: A Perennial Beauty

BY **NGUYEN THI LAN PHUONG**

Japanese oldest lacquerware excavated in Korekawa site of Hachinohe, Japan.

"Spring garden" by Nguyen Gia Tri, Vietnam's most famous lacquer artist.
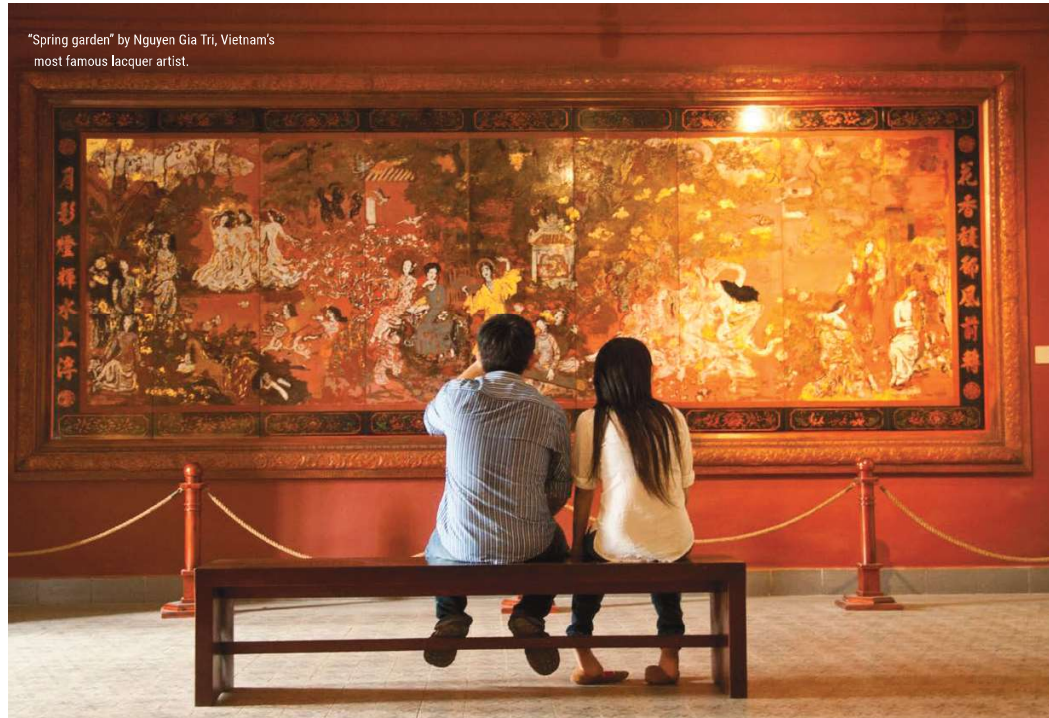
An example of Korean Lacquer

Christmas Traditions Around the World:
Europe

BY **NICOLE MARTINCOVA**

What comes to your mind when you hear the word "Christmas?" Some common associations may be snow, gifts under the tree, tons of food, or Mariah Carey. There are hundreds of unique traditions and ways of celebrating this holiday all around the world.

Although Christmas is mainly known as a sacred religious holiday that refers to the birth of Jesus Christ, it has become a worldwide cultural phenomenon that is celebrated by both believers and nonbelievers. Every year, Christmas takes over shopping malls, city streets and TV commercials to spread the holiday spirit. Christmas songs are played from early November, the Coca-Cola truck with Santa Claus hits the TV screens, and the list of Christmas-themed movies gets larger every year. While many people claim that the true meaning of Christmas is being forgotten, others can hardly wait to wear a reindeer sweater and throw a Christmas party.

Christian Traditions

First, let us look at the history of Christmas. From the fourth century onward, Christians have celebrated the birth of Jesus and his teachings. Prior to this, people celebrated Saturnalia, a week long period of lawlessness and gift-giving that began on December 17 to celebrate overcoming the dark with light.

General traditions include reading about the birth of Jesus, singing Christmas carols, decorating houses, and role-playing the story of Mary and Joseph. Christmas trees are decorated with lights and candles are lit to symbolize Jesus, who is believed to be the light of the world. Red represents the blood and death of Jesus while green represents life. Families often gather together to share food, exchange gifts, and go to church. In western churches, Advent is a name for a season before Christmas Day. It commences on the fourth Sunday before every Christmas. Advent practices include keeping an Advent calendar, lighting an Advent wreath, and preparing food. Children usually receive an Advent calendar with a chocolate bite for each day or one with small pockets filled daily with little gifts. An Advent wreath is decorated with four candles that are gradually lit every Sunday.

Orthodox churches celebrate Christmas 13 days after December 25 in accordance with the Julian calendar. Nativity Fast is practiced by Orthodox believers who restrain from meat products, eggs, and dairy products from November 15 to December 24. Consumption of wine, oil, and fish are also limited to only a few days a week.

Ways of Celebrating in Europe

Nowadays, in Central Europe, Christmas is mainly celebrated on Christmas Eve, December 24. There is a myth which is told among many families who skip lunch in order to see a mythical figure. The myth goes as follows: if you feast before dinner, you will see a "golden pig." Thus, families usually only eat Christmas cookies and small snacks while waiting for an early dinner followed by the opening of presents under the Christmas tree. In Czech Republic, a fish soup made of carp is served for dinner, followed by a fried carp, schnitzel, and potato salad. Ježíšek, "Baby Jesus," brings the gifts after dinner and rings a bell to notify the family that they can come see what is underneath the Christmas tree. Czech Christmas carols are sung around the tree and families usually go for a midnight service in a nearby church.

Hungarians celebrate by eating traditional fish soup called "Halászlé" for dinner. People dress up nicely around the table, sing national carols and exchange presents after dinner on December 24. In Austria, one of the biggest traditions is the Christmas markets in almost every single city around the country. The biggest markets take place in Vienna, Innsbruck, and Salzburg. Christmas cookies and hot drinks are sold as well as Christmas decorations, ornaments, and candles. Hot wine is very popular among Europeans during Christmas season. The feast of Saint Nicholas marks the beginning of Christmas in Austria. Families get together to light the Christmas tree and sing carols on December 24. The kids write letters to Christ Child weeks prior to Christmas Eve and are given presents under the tree on the evening of December 24. The famous Sacher cake and different kinds of chocolate are served as dessert after dinner along with traditional homemade cookies. Greeks enjoy roasted lamb or pork with spinach and cheese pie for Christmas dinner on Christmas Eve. Traditional sweet pastries called Baklava, Kataifi, and Theeples are usually eaten for breakfast or as starters.

In Great Britain, having a family dinner and opening presents take place on December 25. In the morning, children wake up to stockings filled with small gifts such as vouchers and candies. In the evening, turkey, baked potatoes, sausages, and ham with cranberry sauce are served on the table. Presents are opened right after dinner and the tradition has it that everyone who receives a gift should write a thank-you letter to the giver. Families often go watch the Christmas pantomimes, which are performances that usually play out typical fairytales and interact with the audience. Another typical British tradition is spending a day doing something fun with the family on Boxing Day. Many families also go to sports events. For example, the soccer Premier League holds several games on December 26 so many people find their way to a soccer stadium.

In Sweden, most of the families sit around the Christmas tree on December 24. The Christmas table, called Christmas smorgasbord, is full of ham, meatballs, sausages, pickled herring, spareribs, small hot dogs, lutfisk, potato casserole with anchovy, and rice pudding. Candies associated with Christmas are marzipan, figs, toffee, dates, and oranges decorated with cloves.

The Orthodox countries of Eastern Europe do not share the same traditions as do the majority of other European countries because they celebrate Christmas thirteen days later. Most families do not gather together to share food or exchange gifts in Russia, Ukraine, or Armenia. However, they do have a major figure similar to Santa Claus, called Ded Moroz, or "Grandfather Frost." According to legend, he travels in a magical sleigh drawn by reindeer, visits homes, and gives gifts to good children. In Eastern European countries, Ded Moroz does not come in December but on New Year's Eve.

Some Other Christmas Traditions in Europe

European countries also celebrate traditions related to Christmas that are rarely known to the rest of the world. Saint Nicholas' Day is celebrated in many areas of Central Europe on December 6. Saint Nicholas, whose name varies from country to country, visits kids on Saint Nicholas Day and usually reads a list of good and bad manners of the children for the past year. If they have behaved well overall, Nicholas gives them candies and gifts. In the opposite case, Saint Nicholas is often accompanied by a devil who threatens to take the bad kids away or leaves a rod in the house. In some countries an angel comes along with Saint Nicholas and the devil to commend the good kids and to encourage the naughty ones to get better.

Saint Lucy's Day, also called the Feast of Saint Lucy, is a Christian feast day celebrated on December 13. The commemorating Saint Lucy, a third-century martyr under the Diocletian Persecution, is believed to have brought food to Christians hiding in the catacombs. She had to use a candle-lit wreath to light her way because her hands were full of food for the starving people. Saint Lucy's Day is celebrated most commonly in Scandinavia. The legend has it that celebrating Saint Lucy's Day will help one live the long winter days with enough light.

It Is the Time of the Year Again

In comparison to Christmas traditions in the United States or Asia, European countries stand out by organizing huge Christmas markets and decorating beautiful Christmas trees in every major square of every major city. Whether you go to Dresden, Vienna or Prague, you can smell cinnamon and ham in the air, hear the carols, and enjoy wonderfully decorated streets. Hot wine, as well as different types of Christmas punch, is drunk widely and Christmas cookies are baked by coffee shops, families, and supermarkets.

The Must List:

Best Christmas Gifts

Unsure what to get your loved ones this Christmas? We've got you covered. We've compiled an array of options, for all walks of life, to ensure a very Merry Christmas this 2016.

Board Games

WOO JIN HAN'S CHOICE

I am caved in on the night of Christmas Eve by silently roaring waves of snow: a fresh layer that would add to the canvas of night-defying, gleaming white outside. Inside, there is a different world. A solid brick wall and tiled roof separates the dazzling scene of the outside from the burnished, cozy setting of the interior. Unaware of the unforgiving cold that lies outside, my family members eat, talk, and relax. However, the blissful night passes by, the outside having been the sole center of attention. It is then that I realize that family time like this is a true rarity. So I look for something that can liven the inside as much as the outside. Soon, it becomes a necessity for family time. Through family board games, we learn how to compete, cooperate, and simply enjoy time with those we are closest to.

A Teddy Bear

NGUYEN THI LAN PHUONG'S CHOICE

The freezing temperature of Seoul's winter signals the 'hugging season'. Whether or not you have a special someone, a giant stuffed teddy bear is an ideal gift during this time of the year. Coming in all shapes and sizes, teddy bears win our hearts at first sight for their adorableness. Dongdaemun Market is a must-go place for someone looking for the perfect teddy bear. A teddy bear is not a mere stuffed toy in substitute for a pillow. It is reminiscent of your innocence—a loyal friend from childhood. No matter the difficulty you face in life, at the end of the day, you can always come home and hold your teddy bear in your arms.

DL 8128

Merry Christmas

DECCA RECO

Adeste Fidelis • I'll Be Home for Christmas • White Christmas • God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen • It's Beginning to Look
Silent Night• Jingle Bells (with the Andrews Sisters) • Christmas in Killarney • Santa Claus is Comin' to Town (with the A
Faith of Our Fathers   •   Silver Bells (with Carole Richards)   •   Mele Kalikimaka (Merry Christmas) (with the A

Bing Crosby's "White Christmas"

SEUNG BOM HAN'S CHOICE

As someone who grew up without ever experiencing a white Christmas but still grew up watching timeless Christmas classics such as Home Alone and Mickey's Christmas Carol, Christmas always felt incomplete. I lived my entire life in Indonesia, where we don't get snow or officially celebrate Christmas. So, the magcal and festive illustrations of Christmas I grew up reading and watching never became a reality. However, there was something I was always able to replicate from the perfect Christmas image that made my dull Christmas day all the more magical: the music. Bing Crosby is the voice of Christmas and a quick listen to his carols will make you understand why. His songs and his iconic voice illustrate festive visuals, moods, and memories that remind you of why Christmas is the most magical time of the year. The perfect Christmas gift for a friend would be an old gramophone, a nice armchair, an artificial fireplace, a snow machine, and most importantly, Bing Crosby's Merry Christmas album on vinyl. However, if you're tight on finances, which I'm sure most of us college students are, go and get your friend Bing Crosby's White Christmas album (re-released edition of Merry Christmas) on CD. It's magic encased in a disk.

Gift
of the Ages

HAJIN DANIEL YOO'S CHOICE

Do you find yourself scrolling through Instagram and comparing your holidays to somebody else's? Are your close friends wasting time by click-bait titles online? Why don't you and your friends plunge into the rich and mesmerizing world of books this winter? Virgil will guide you through a journey through the afterworld and Shakespeare will lead you in an ethereal journey of his dreams. Relive the timeless stories that outlasts those we see and hear in theaters and TV shows. Tales of romance and courage will console your concerns in life as you recline in your room discussing the Karmazov Brothers with your friends. You will soon discover that sharing such a gift will not only last you through a season, but throughout a lifetime. Listen to the voices of wisdom and consolation; they await your fingers to bring them to life again.

Temple Stay

NICOLE MARTINCOVA'S CHOICE

What could be a better treat for yourself and/or your classmate after an exhausting semester? Escape the reality for a day or two and experience a unique cultural program, Temple Stay. Clear your mind by meditating at 4am, enjoy Dado, a traditional tea ceremony, have a conversation with a monk and find out more about the Buddhist heritage that still has an impact on Korean culture today. Almost 30 temples all around Korea (some in the heart of Seoul) offer various programs ranging from 20,000 Won to 98,000 Won. Whether you stay for an afternoon or a whole night, the goal remains the same: search for your True Self, experience the life of Buddhist practitioners and enjoy a well-deserved rest after finals! Go to www.eng.templestay.com or visit the Temple stay Information Center located across the street from Jogyesa Temple for more information and reservations.

Ballantine's
Christmas Reserve

SEUNG HYUN (SCHONI) SONG'S CHOICE

This limited edition from the Chivas Brothers is all about creating the perfect Christmas blend. To understand what Ballantine's Christmas Reserve is all about, just close your eyes for a moment and try to imagine the aromas and flavors that you instinctively associate with at this time of the year. For me, I tend to imagine sweet and rich flavors like cinnamon, chocolate, nuts, toffee, fruity Christmas cakes, and maybe even cloves. Not surprisingly, you will find just that in this bottle. At first sip, it's going to taste pretty rich and fruity, then slowly give its way to a sweet toffee aroma. Sweet and zesty. Smooth indulgent caramel. Orange and a hint of festive spice. Christmas. This seasonally evocative wine has a design of profound amber complexion and is beautifully presented in a red snowflake-covered bottle.

An Instant Film Camera

IN YOUNG (SOPHIA)'S CHOICE

No memory lasts forever unless it's recorded. Our brains cannot retain everything, so they keep a record through writings or pictures. Instant cameras capture moments. Unlike the pictures in your phone or your digital camera, analogue films are one-of-a-kind. You cannot Photoshop them—they are permanent, physical, and lasting. These days, photos remain in the digital world which can only be accessed virtually. This also means that, in a matter of split seconds, they can be erased, along with the memory. Though instant film may be a bygone technology, it is regaining traction among those who want tangible images that can be produced by the click of a button. So, how about commemorating this Christmas with snaps and shots?
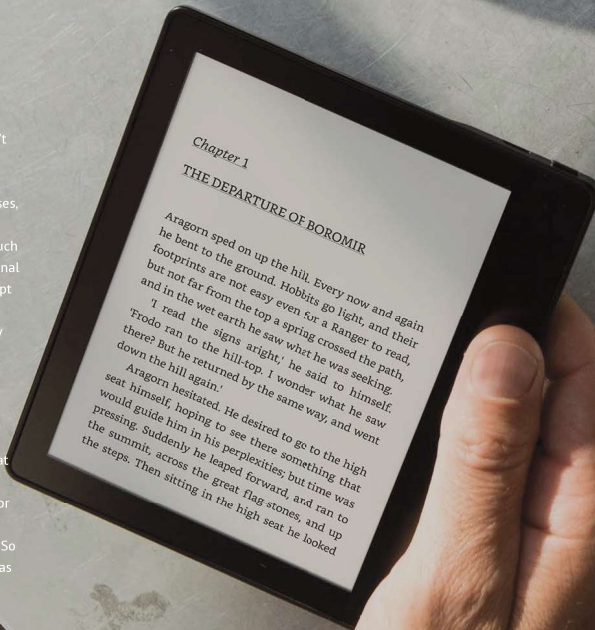
Muffler and Gloves

JI HYUN BANG'S CHOICE

The beauty of winter consists of more than carols singing cheerful melodies and snowflakes blanketing the landscape gently. Undoubtedly charming these may be, appreciating the true meaning of winter requires us to detach ourselves from such immediate observations. We must instead appreciate the value easily unnoticeable: warmth. This is precisely the reason why cozy mufflers and gloves would be the best Christmas presents for me. Besides allowing me to better cope with strong breezes, these gifts would always make me warm-hearted by reminding me of how grateful I am to be cared dearly by those around me. As Lewis Carroll wrote, "I wonder if the snow loves the trees and fields, that it kisses them so gently? And then it covers them up snug, you know, with a white quilt; and perhaps it says, "Go to sleep, darlings, till the summer comes again." Love indeed thaws even winter.

Kindle

YOONJEH (JAY)'S CHOICE

As a college students living in Korea, we don't always receive the best selection of English books. Libraries and bookstores will only contain the great classics and hot new releases, not some obscure volume about American health care policy. Using e-commerce sites such as Amazon is no solution either, as international shipping fees can quickly pile up and bankrupt our meager budgets. This is where Amazon's e-reader, the Kindle, comes in handy. For only $79.99, we can hold thousands of books in a lightweight, easy-to-read device that has access to a the million books in the Amazon marketplace. Unlike the backlit screens on our phones or computers, the Kindle doesn't interfere with our sleep cycle when reading at night (a MUST for college). In addition, most E-book formats are cheaper than paperback or hardcover editions, which means that even a light reader will save money in the long run. So order the Kindle now for the perfect Christmas gift to satisfy that inner bookworm.

Chapter 1
THE DEPARTURE OF BOROMIR

Aragorn sped on up the hill. Every now and again he bent to the ground. Hobbits go light, and their footprints are not easy even for a Ranger to read, but not far from the top a spring crossed the path, and in the wet earth he saw what he was seeking. 'I read the signs aright,' he said to himself. 'Frodo ran to the hill-top. I wonder what he saw there? But he returned by the same way, and went down the hill again.'

Aragorn hesitated. He desired to go to the high seat himself, hoping to see there something that would guide him in his perplexities; but time was pressing. Suddenly he leaped forward, and ran to the summit, across the great flag-stones, and up the steps. Then sitting in the high seat he looked

Lotte World Tickets

JOSEPH KIM'S CHOICE

Lotte World is one of the largest indoor theme parks in the world, which makes it a perfect choice in the cold and snowy winter weather. The theme park hosts a variety of rides such as roller coasters, drop towers, viking ships, and is separated into multiple floors, each complete with their own set of rides. While the theme park may be crowded during the holiday season, Lotte World provides a magic pass app that allows you to reserve the time on different rides. Ticket costs range from W17,000 for entrance after 7 p.m. to W48,000 for a full-day's experience (prices for adults). If that sounds a little costly, worry not! A plethora of discount options are available on the official site for students, families, couples, and more. Lotte World also operates a separate aquarium that opens from 10:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., with tickets priced at W29,000.

Special Thanks:

UIC SCRIBE

WINTER EDITION
Volume XI ED 2
2016

UIC SCRIBE

———————————

UNDERWOOD INTERNATIONAL COLLEGE (UIC) is an all-English college within Yonsei University, a private university based in Seoul, South Korea. UIC freshmen take classes at Songdo (a city nearby Seoul). UIC aims to bring together students from diverse and multinational backgrounds, providing them with a liberal arts program that rivals top universities worldwide. The first class was admitted in the spring semester of 2006.

———————————

THE UIC SCRIBE was also founded in 2006 as the official student newsletter organized by UIC students. It continues into its ninth year. (For inquiries and articles, e-mail us at scribe.uic@gmail.com.)