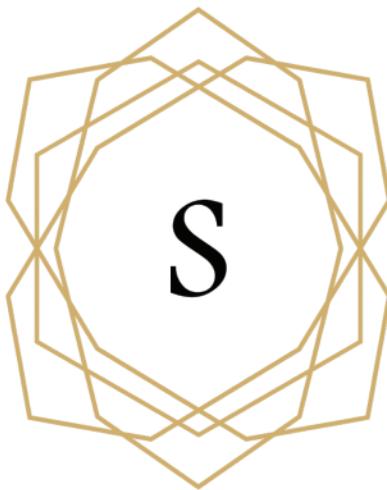


A wide-angle photograph of a snowy ski slope at sunset. In the foreground, a dark wooden chairlift tower stands on the right, with several chairs suspended by cables against a backdrop of a bright orange and yellow sky. To the left, a large, curved snow feature or jump is visible, with the words "AXIS FREESTYLE ACADEMY" printed on its side in white and blue. The slope itself is covered in tracks from skiers and snowboarders, leading up towards a forested hillside in the background.

# *the* spyglass.



winter issue  
twenty twenty



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# the greatest act

"In the midst of winter, I found there was, within me, an invincible summer."

And that makes me happy. For it says that no matter how hard the world pushes against me, within me, there's something stronger – something better, pushing right back."

— Albert Camus

“

Here we are, a cluster of atoms in an inescapably empty universe that couldn't care less about how some of us spend every living breath relentlessly seeking the destruction of another.

But we can. We can care about the consequences of our actions, even as others refuse to reflect upon the damage of theirs. And that's something you need to choose to do.

Because that's what kindness ultimately is: a choice.

Authoritative figures like to lecture us about how the only way to survive is through cruelty, that the only path to success demands for the expulsion of softness. An eye for an eye, violence in response to hurt, because kindness is always synonymous with weakness.

I read somewhere that there are two kinds of people: those who think, "I don't want anyone to suffer like I did," and those who think, "I suffered; why shouldn't they?" Society doesn't often acknowledge the rarity of the former, because no one but those who were immensely wronged by this beautifully wretched world understand how difficult it is to reach out again with the love they were never given. It requires immeasurable bravery, incredible strength, to take everything awful that has ever been done to you and channel it into various acts of kindness. To viciously push back and say, No. I'm not going to take this. To say, This stops with me. No more.

// JENNY HUANG  
PHOTOGRAPHY // RACHAEL PENG  
DESIGN // ELINA NIE

## LET'S FACE IT: HUMANS ARE TERRIBLE.

We're probably the lousiest beings to ever walk this earth, born with the capacity of mind to be so brilliant, so great...and yet given the free will to throw all of that out the window anyway. There isn't one day when we turn on the news and not see reports of fatal crimes, of stupid decisions that led to avoidable carnage, of scathing prejudice in "progressive" nations, of violent actions from the most unlikely people towards the most unfortunate ones.

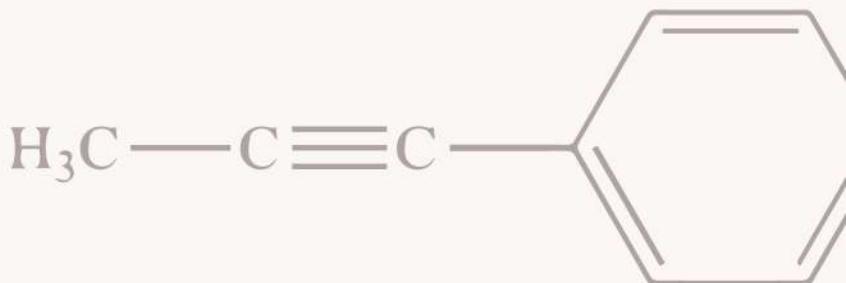
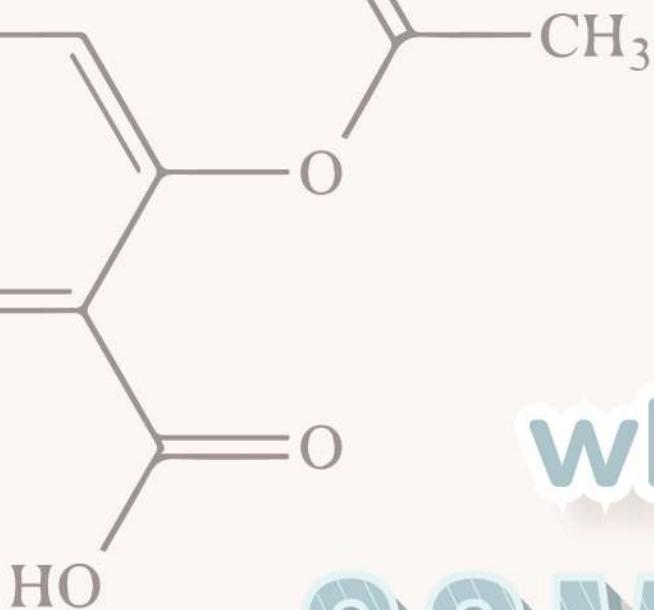
Kindness does not require you to forgive anyone, nor does it require you to suppress your anger and be quiet. You can be kind and fuel it with love, you can be kind and fuel it with joy; but you can also be kind and fuel it with rage, with spite, with righteous wrath. Kindness can be gentle words or relentless protests against adversity; it can be a warm embrace or the mercy of a quick death. Kindness doesn't always have to be nice. Sometimes it might even mean you should do nothing at all.

Whatever the source, radical kindness is an expression of emotion, an action. Kindness is choosing to gather your uncontrollable feelings and wrestling command into your reaction. To step outside with conviction and stand in defiance against the dark—lend a hand, compliment someone with sincerity, plant some trees, donate to charity. Kindness is vengefully choosing good, even if only temporarily, even if it doesn't heal anything within you because that will never be easy.

Darkness is nothing but the absence of light: endless and nihilistic and overwhelmingly suffocating. A single candle stands helpless against it.

But if enough of us ignite those seemingly insignificant tiny flames as we venture through this vast, uncaring universe—if enough of us dares to impose upon a bleak, horrific environment something beautiful—we possess the power to brighten infinite skies.

Be kind.

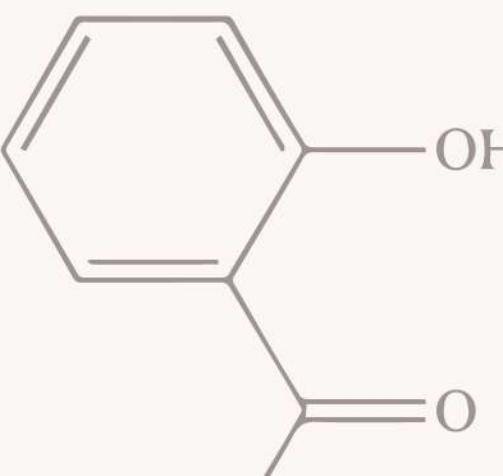
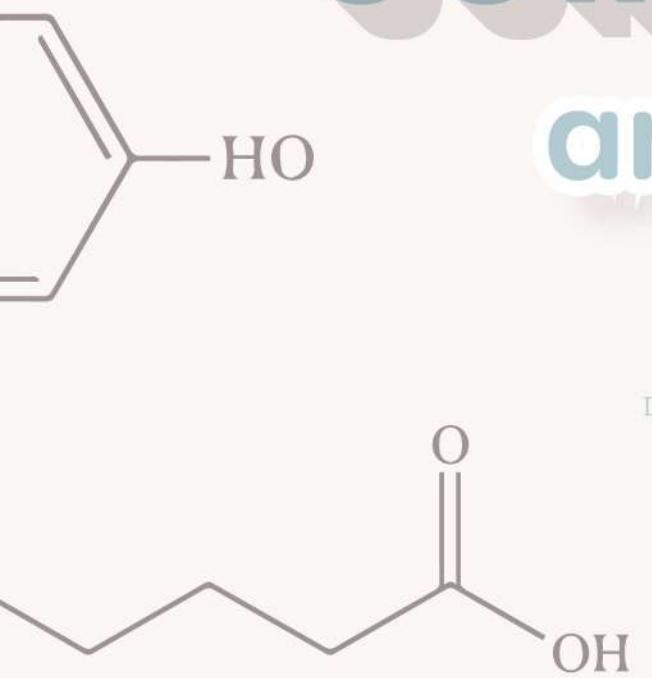


which

# COMMON CHEMICAL COMPOUND

are you?

// MICHELLE LIU  
DESIGN // STELLA WANG



**if you answered  
mostly...**



You walk into a bubble tea shop. What do you order?

- A. Plain milk tea with tapioca.
- B. Something that's not too sugary.
- C. Whatever I haven't tried yet.
- D. Wait, I'm not ready, I'm still deciding—!

**A** Known as the “universal solvent”, water is the most important compound for human beings and all life to survive. Though you might be a little bit basic, you have a caring heart and are ready to shoulder the burdens of those you love. However, you should think about yourself as well—never offer to bear more than you can handle.

**2**

Oh no! There's a test coming up next Thursday. What's your study plan?

- A. I'll study with my friends so we can help each other!
- B. I'm going to make a schedule of things I need to do and follow it.
- C. I'll study a little and do my best. It's not realistic to cram.
- D. I'll just study what I think I'll need to master to save time.

**3**

You're at a flower garden. Which blooms do you look at first?

- A. Roses
- B. Lavender
- C. Snapdragons
- D. Sunflowers

**Mg(OH)<sub>2</sub>** Magnesium hydroxide is a base (not an acid) that is used as an antacid to relieve pain from various minor health issues.

You are quick to take the lead in a seemingly hopeless situation, providing damage control and a strong foundation to build off of. With a cool head and careful planning, you manage to save even the most difficult of situations and keep everyone around you calm and collected.

**4**

There's a chicken in your classroom.

- A. A chicken! Can I pet it?!
- B. Don't panic, if we just corner it we can release it safely.
- C. There are many ways to cook this chicken.
- D.... Is that a duck?

**C** Though many people know carbon monoxide as “the silent killer”, it has many uses beneficial to the development of technology and medicine. You hold great potential and might consider yourself a creator or innovator. You are versatile and adapt quickly to new situations and are talented in a variety of different fields. You may struggle to choose your path sometimes and there is no clear guide between choices that will destroy you or benefit you, but in times of crisis, your heart and your mind are your compass and your map.

**5**

You and your adventuring party encounter a troll! It will let you cross its bridge after you answer its riddles three.

- A. Who hurt this troll so much that it won't even let people cross a bridge?
- B. If we all think about the riddles, they can't be that hard. It's a troll.
- C. I challenge the troll to a staring contest instead. I don't have time for “riddles three”, damn it!
- D. I pull an Uno reverse card



**D** Bromothymol blue is a well-known pH indicator. As the youth might put it, “you know a snake when you see one”. Aside from that, you have a colourful and vibrant personality and you aren't afraid to be who you are, whether that's a steady, constant state of the self or an ever-changing enigma in the form of a human being. Whether you've already reached the height of self-love or are still finding your way, the most important thing to you is to be true to yourself.

# Meet YOUR TEACHERS

Part 2 of 4

One of the constants of any high school student's experience is math class. While navigating the sometimes-fun and always-confusing Mathland, students are not without their ever-present guides. Through the even and the odd, our math teachers provide the footing for our learning—the domain of permissible values, if you will.

All teachers, but especially the ones who teach by numbers, will answer our questions without fail or hesitation, no matter how simple or trivial they might seem. When you think about it, the people on Earth who have answered the most questions are probably math teachers, so I thought a couple more for a loved teacher who is many students' first introduction into Mathland — Mrs. Marsella — couldn't hurt.



WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE PART ABOUT TEACHING MATH?

"My favourite part about teaching math is that it's like a puzzle. I love seeing kids when they fit the pieces together, that's so satisfying! [laughs]

"But getting to see a student where all of a sudden that lightbulb comes on and it seems like — you know with math, sometimes it seems so intimidating to them, so to see a kid all of a sudden feel confident and know that they've got something, it's awesome."

DID YOU ALWAYS WANT TO BE A TEACHER? WHAT WAS YOUR MOTIVATION FOR WANTING TO TEACH?

"So I didn't think I would be a teacher. My dad was convinced I would be an engineer, because I was good at math, to the point of leaving engineering

pamphlets under my pillow [laughs] so there was a little bit of pressure that way, and I never realized — I think I always was a teacher, I always helped kids in class.

"When I was in grade one, I actually had a friend ask me to help her in math, and I made quizzes and marked them for her, but it never occurred to me that I should be a teacher."

"The only time it actually occurred to me was in a grade 13 class where my teacher actually turned to me one day in class and said, 'you ever thought about being a teacher?' and I said 'well...no, not really,' and he said 'you'd be really good at it,' and this was two weeks before we had to put in our applications for university, and I decided to change everything and went for teaching. Haven't regretted it since."

### IF YOU COULD GIVE ONE PIECE OF ADVICE TO A HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

"You never know where life is going to take you. Life is not linear, to use a math analogy [laughs] so be open to whatever comes, and as much as we all like to think we have a plan for the rest of our life, one thing does necessarily lead to another, and to kind of just...not be so hard on yourself. Not every test is the end of your life."

"And even when plans don't go the way you think, it's usually for some reason, and afterwards you may be able to see it, but just be okay with what happens in life and...try not to be so hard on yourselves, because some wonderful things may come out of it."

### WHO WAS YOUR MOST MEMORABLE STUDENT?

"Oh my goodness. I honestly don't think I could just give one name. I think if I could give a type, that makes more sense for me, 'cause I've had so many wonderful students over the years. I think it's the student that is...not just...[pause]

"It's not about being good at math, but it's about being a person that's willing to help others, someone who strives for their best and is willing to put the effort in. I mean obviously, there are students I think about who were brilliant kids, but I don't know that I taught them anything, you know what I mean?"

"But the ones that stand out for me are the ones that work hard and don't give up, and are always there, with a smile on their face, willing to try, you know? That's the kind of student that gets my heart going."

[end transcription]

So for everyone who looks at a quadratic and sees an insurmountable vertex, you're not alone. As long as you're willing to try and "fit the pieces together," like Mrs. Marsella says, your teachers will be with you every step of the way.

// ETHAN KWAN  
PHOTOGRAPHY // JESSE LIU  
DESIGN // STELLA WANG



# REALITY CHECK

A FRIENDLY  
NEIGHBOURHOOD  
REVIEW



// MICHELLE SKIDELSKY  
PHOTOGRAPHY // RACHAEL PENG  
LAYOUT // KAYLA CHO

In my four years at RHHS, I've grown accustomed to various traditions we have at our school: the Kahoot song in playing the morning, food days, and a fantastic magazine coming out once each season. My favourite tradition, however, is the One Act Plays put on each semester by the graduating drama class. As these were the last One Acts I'd ever see from the audience, I figured I'd use my many years of expertise to provide a comprehensive review of each play.

## THE INTERNET DISTRACTS.... OH LOOK, A KITTEN!

As someone who used to procrastinate so badly that my parents would have to turn off my Wi-Fi just so I'd get some work done, I can definitely relate to protagonist Micah's (Rachel Wolfson) endless plague: from boxing cats, to that one friend that just won't stop distracting you (I'm looking at you, Taylor (Teresa Qu)), the Internet is unavoidable.

These painful distractions are hilariously brought to life on stage, complete with the stalker-ish nature of Facebook (Sameem Mir) and impossibly tempting deals on Amazon (Vino Shao). Kevin Liu delivers a particularly memorable performance as Google, the search engine ready and willing to sell all my data— along with my soul.

With each new character more bewildering than the last, our very cafeteria became the swirling, all-consuming world of the Internet. An unexpected twist-ending left me wondering how much longer it'll be before Google manages to capture my spirit, too. I'll ponder it some more once I read this article on the Top 10 Celebrities Who Look Like Thumbs.

## ALL BY MYSELF

Complete darkness. Our protagonist, played by Souren Amini-Kisomi, can be heard hacking away at some firewood on stage. The everlasting genius of Celine Dion's "All By Myself" blares through the speakers.

It's the perfect opening scene for an equally perfect play. Equipped with a strong cast and a fantastic director (Zack Randhawa), All By Myself tells us the story of Larry, a man who spent 7 years in complete solitude on a deserted island,

only to find out that he had dozens of neighbors all along. Just the premise itself is hilarious, but the casts' delivery of all the eccentricity that brews in a strange land of sun-councils and shipwrecks truly seals the deal on a fantastic show.

From Pemberton's (Mehrene Sachedina) sing-songy giggles, to Miller's (Dahlia Solnik) infatuation with Ken Jiang's Nicholson, to Ashworth's (Jessica Wu) impassioned recount of her ships demise, the 48 hours Larry spends with his newfound "friends" are enough to convince any extrovert that people suck and life is better spent alone. BRB, just locking my doors and avoiding my neighbors forever.

## SPEED DATE

As soon as director Paige Bowen ran out onto the stage to make her introduction, adorned with a handlebar moustache and bushy eyebrows, I knew that this play would be one I wouldn't forget.

There have been many One Act Plays like Speed Date, in which two central characters converse with a myriad of...well, weirdos, to put it lightly. Speed Date, however, with weird its characters weirder than ever, might just be the funniest of these plays yet.

Grounded by the strong performances of Arianna Balouchi as Laura and Andrew Kim as John, the two meet an increasingly bizarre list of characters, including, but not limited to: a loving mother dressed up as a clown (Maathangi Rudranantha), an ink-blot obsessed therapist (Vania Yoo), and an action-movie-fanatic who just loves Tilapia movies (Sameem Mir).

In true rom-com fashion, John and Laura's dealings with all those outlandish individuals prove to be for naught: they realize that they were destined for each other the whole time, leaving the audience with one of the cutest One Acts endings of all time.

If you didn't see these plays, you definitely missed out. Be sure to catch the One Act Plays next semester — and every other semester of your high school experience. You definitely won't regret it.

# SURROUNDED, YET ALONE



YOU FEEL A TWINGE OF SOMETHING IN YOUR CHEST, BUT  
IGNORE IT AND KEEP SCROLLING.

The sun is still down when you wake up, drenching your bedroom in darkness as you struggle to keep your eyes open. Your alarm is still ringing so you pick up your phone to turn it off, and are instantly shown the things you missed while you were asleep. 22 messages, 15 Instagram notifications, 12 'In case you missed it' tweets... You roll back into a comfortable position, holding your phone above your face. Despite the little voice at the back of your head telling you not to, you open Instagram, your eyes skimming past the gloriously over-saturated lives of everybody you know, or don't know. Just a few minutes, you think to yourself, mindlessly scrolling through your feed, your thumb double-tapping videos of dogs playing in the snow or pictures of Instagram models sipping wine on a beach. You stop on a picture of your friends, posing at a party they were at without you. So much for being invited. You feel a twinge of something in your chest, but ignore it and keep scrolling.

You're all caught up!, the screen tells you. With a sigh you close the app, the bright blue colours of Twitter enticing you, begging you to tap on it, to get lost in it. You take a quick peek towards the time at the top of your screen, wincing when you notice you've already been in bed for fifteen minutes longer than you intended. But it's okay, you think, just a few more minutes. You open Twitter and laugh at the funny tweet at the top of your feed. You scroll a little more, liking and retweeting, laughing with nobody and losing track of time.

Soon enough, it's twenty minutes later and you have no idea how all that time passed by so quickly. Well, I might as well stay in bed a little longer, you think to yourself. But you hesitate, and your finger hovers over the Snapchat icon. You know you should just get up. You could get up and read, or make your bed, or start on assignments, or do anything productive, really. Ignoring the sensible voice at the back of your head, you open Snapchat. Instantly, you're greeted by an onslaught of pointless images meant to keep up your streaks and stories containing pictures of expensive-looking lunches and videos of more parties you weren't privy to. Before you know

it, you know how every single one of your friends and mere acquaintances spent their weekend, and there's no more content to consume. You've opened all the messages, seen all there was to see.

A glance at the clock tells you that you've been in bed for a whole hour since you woke up. The sun has now risen, and you feel stupid for having wasted so much time doing absolutely nothing. Because really, what did you gain? You've been reminded of all the exciting things your life is missing, and you feel drained before the day's even begun, that twinge in your chest having never left your side. So this is what it's like to be social, yet isolated. Surrounded, yet alone.

// GABRIELLE COLE  
PHOTOGRAPHY // HANNAH NGUYEN  
LAYOUT // KAYLA CHO

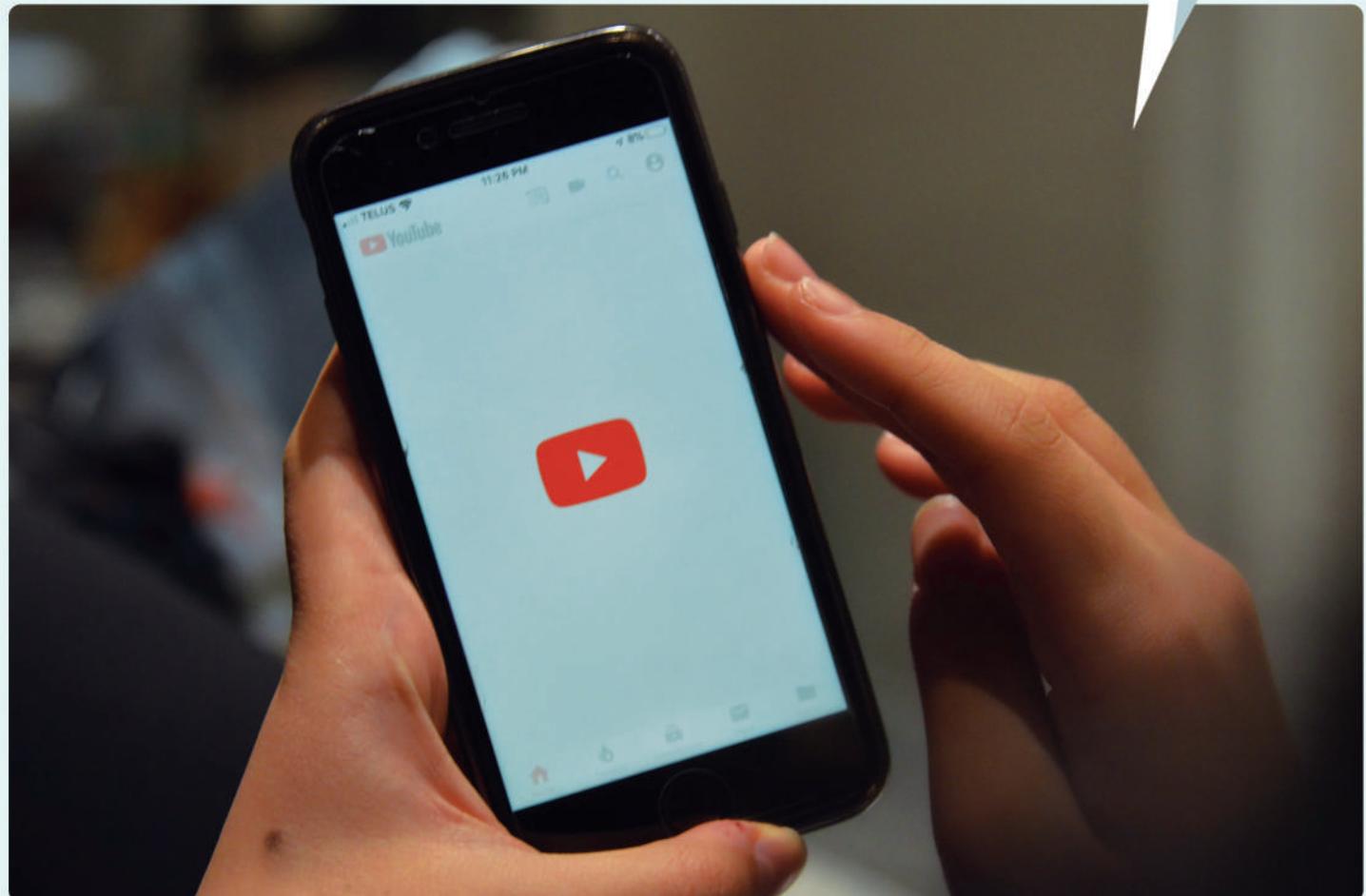


# **ANALYSIS OF THE INTERNET INFLUENCERS & THEIR INCOME**

// TIA HARISH

PHOTOGRAPHY // IVY LUO DESIGN // ELINA NIE

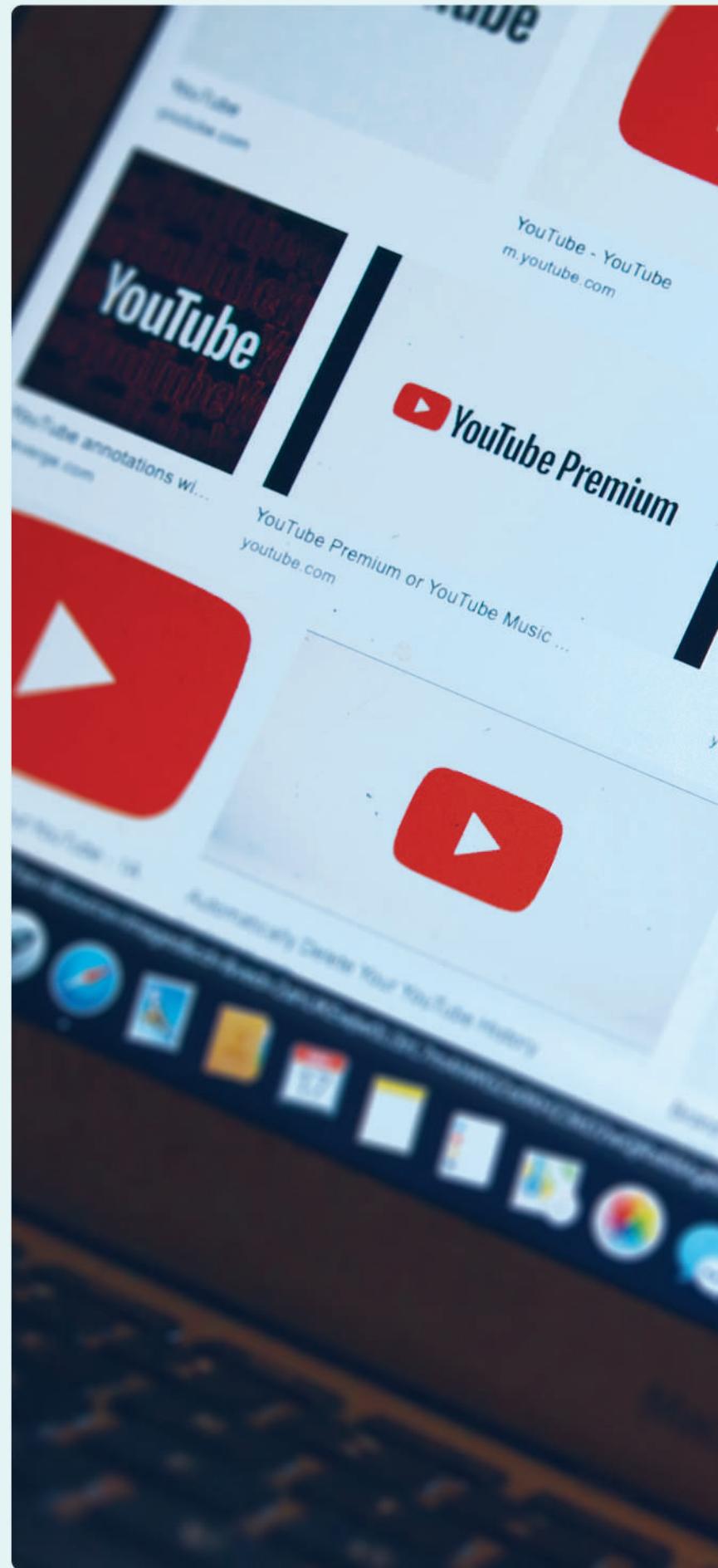
Who would've thought that a video-sharing website created in 2005 by 3 ex-Paypal employees would skyrocket and eventually become a platform on which creators could build entire careers out of their personalities? YouTube has become the most popular social media website and averages about 30 million visitors per day. But if you've lived on the Internet long enough, you'll know that this corner of the online world also has some dark, nasty secrets. YouTube culture is a culmination of solidarity and scapegoating, in which influencers battle wielding passive-aggressive comments and call-out videos as weapons. So if you're online solely for the content, you might be wondering why YouTube culture has such a large influence on our daily lives. That's the big question: why and how do we, the viewers, empower these influencers?



Being a successful YouTuber is often considered an easy job by older generations, but in reality, it is a very creatively exhausting career choice. Content creators must come up with new video ideas at regular intervals, then find ways to execute them in a way that their audience will find most enjoyable. Creating interesting, high-quality videos can create a significant dent in the average person's bank account, so how do YouTubers keep publishing them and still have enough money left over to live such lavish lives? The answer lies in those little yellow lines on the time bar: ads. AdSense is money given to a creator by a company for including their ads in videos. For YouTubers with more than a million views per video, AdSense is one of their main sources of income.

But there are more ways to make money. Sponsorships have creators actively advertise products to their viewers, many of whom will buy the product in question. They typically have a coupon code for online purchases, allowing users to get a 10%+ discount while receiving a certain amount of money every time their code is used. This can become quite problematic; several YouTubers have been caught promoting products that are either harmful or don't work. Vitamin supplements are one of the most common "problematic sponsorships". They tend to be fairly popular amongst beauty and lifestyle gurus, who cater to teens & young adults that likely do not actually need them. Some of them do absolutely nothing. Another popular money-making method among Youtubers is selling merch. It's one of the fastest ways to start your own mini-brand online. If you have enough fans, then hoodies, bags, pins, and even socks can become sold out items on your website.

Essentially, YouTubers have become glorified spokespeople for brands. A single Instagram post could yield several thousand dollars, and that's just the tip of the iceberg. These influencers are the reason why we use certain products, try certain diets, or even invest in certain companies. Many of them had started out as creative minds only trying to lift the spirits of their audience, but as their careers grew, money became an important factor in who they cater their content towards. Some have turned into entrepreneurs, creating a miniature empire with themselves at the top of the food chain. Others are using their popularity to boost their careers in the entertainment industry. They are crafty media magnates and should be considered as such. Does this mean that all YouTubers are sellouts? Definitely not. This does, however, mean that when your favourite online creator suddenly starts sponsoring a brand you've never heard of, there's undoubtedly a good reason why.



# HUMANS



RIN OZAKI  
GRADE 9

You've seen me, I mess around a lot. I joke around, and I make fun of myself and whatever; I'm like this ball of energy. My friends call me a chihuahua, cause I'm small, cause I have energy and it doesn't go anywhere else. And that's fine since I feel like that is truly myself, but I guess when people don't take you seriously they just don't tend to think you have your problems, someone who doesn't mess around as much. My mom used to have a lot of health issues and she's dealing with one right now. The last thing I want from everyone is pity, but it sucks. It was a big shift, especially because my mom is such a big part of my life. A lot of people have something to regret when it comes to things like this, like "oh, I wish I spent more time with them." The thing is, I do spend so much time with her. I guess that's the thing that sucks the most - there's just nothing more I can really do. There's a saying that goes something like, you never know that you needed it or loved it until you let it go. I don't want everyone to learn that lesson the hard way, but I guess everyone can appreciate what they have, whether it's health or privileges or whatever. People could mess around and not care, but when something serious happens they understand the bigger things. And, yeah, we definitely need to have a kid side to us, but life is life.

“  
really  
perfect”

There are some people that you look at and you just think they're perfect, and I've had a lot of people who come up to me and were like "You do all these things and you intimidate me a lot." I feel like it's 'cause there's this image of perfection being set up, when they see me in the halls or when they see me on social media, and that's something I can really relate to because when I was in ninth grade, I was at a private school. Everyone there tried to paint themselves picture perfect. There were these girls, who dressed really well, wore lots of make-up, got these good grades, did all these extracurriculars. It was really competitive. But when I tried to become more I like that, I realized, you know what? That's not truthful at all. And looking back at these people I was hanging out with, these people that I deemed perfect, that was really only one side of them. You can never really say that about someone. No one's ever really perfect, no matter what they want you to think.



LUCY ZHAO  
GRADE 12

# O F R H H S

I was born in Japan. My dad was Canadian, my mom was Japanese. I was raised there for like five years. When you're that young, you don't really make memories that much, but it still really shapes your character.

Even though I've lived here for more than ten years now, I feel like that Japanese side of me is still a huge part of my identity, you know? I still think very Japanese, if that makes sense. It's very "other people first". That's the main, sort of, foundation of all of Japanese society. Don't make trouble for other people, put other people before you. While that does sound like a great thing to follow, and I agree that it is, in Japan it's to a point where people don't compliment themselves enough. People will put others ahead of themselves so far that end up putting themselves down. I sort of see that here as well, but not as extreme. Sometimes I feel like that gets to me, where I see other people and I admire them, and then I downplay a lot of my own achievements, even though I really shouldn't. But, no matter what, I'm still happy to be Japanese, and I try to keep in touch with that part of me. I just wish people would stop asking me to "say something" [in Japanese]. That gives me too many options. Like, come on, give me something to say at least.



KENTARO  
NAKAMURA-  
RAMAGE

GRADE 11

For 15 years I lived in China and I didn't think the Chinese education system was very suitable for me, so my parents suggested we move to Canada. When I first came here I was very very shy. I got verbally bullied in grade 6 and I, like, kept thinking that I was not good enough - constantly worrying about how I looked. In China, I didn't have a lot of friends and was always thought of as the weird one. Over the years, I became very shy and quiet. After my first day of high school in Canada, I was very surprised that people actually talked to me and I felt accepted here. My first class was drama. My teacher was very nice to me but the first few assignments were very difficult; I couldn't even understand what they were saying. But I kept challenging myself and pushing to try my best. I was very stressed first semester but I think I was able to learn a lot from it, because now my confidence is a lot better due to the caring and accepting people around me. My marks also got higher due to internal motivation. I learned that moving to a new place is very challenging but in order to be successful, you need to be persistent and believe in yourself.

MAGGIE ZHAO

GRADE 10



# when my grandmother came to canada

// CAITLIN CHU

PHOTOGRAPHY // RACHAEL PENG

DESIGN // ELINA NIE

When my grandmother came to Canada  
She carried the weight of six lives on her shoulders  
Taking first steps into a land that was colder  
Than her home  
But not home

Because home meant safety  
Where she grew up  
Fell in love  
Had a life she could see  
Living free  
Of fearing for her children's futures

So when  
The sounds of bombing stopped  
And screaming subdued  
She knew home was no longer home  
But a place painted with what was lost

As she was handed a cloth and told  
To wipe away any trace of past pains  
They removed her right to speak  
Told her only to preach  
Words of good faith  
And maybe they wouldn't take  
Everything

They tried  
But centuries of family history  
Couldn't be erased so easily  
Rice farmers turned city learners  
Hard working, hereditary

And choosing to leave a country  
With so much history  
Took ten gold bars and a piece of her heart  
An arrest and three attempts later  
She boarded a boat  
And adopted the label  
"Boat people"  
Better than  
Dead people

Because some people  
Didn't listen the first time  
When wanting to leave was a crime  
Detention centres  
Failed deterring them  
Now nobody's heard from them

I wish the water held more comfort  
But a boat full of refugees at sea  
Seemed so similar  
To the stories survivors told for safety  
Of ocean explorers  
And unspeakable horrors

Worried her daughters  
Would be slaughtered  
Or worse  
She cut their hair  
So they would pass as boys

And when the engines died  
Heard were only cries  
From the children on board  
Who were tired and sick  
Of cloudy water  
And forsaken fathers  
Who were taken

But she was not shaken  
Wearing brave faces for four children  
Not over the age of seven  
Serenity was her strength  
And courage her weapon  
In the worst of times

She weaved a blanket of ambition  
Told stories and rhymes  
That they were on an expedition  
Drifting with no plan  
But lucky they found land on a camp that cost her  
One wedding ring  
For ration cards and a hut  
To stay in  
And for the children  
To play in

And one year later  
Patience paid her back  
And they packed for a life  
Of opportunity  
Finally free

When grandmother came to Canada  
She carried the weight of six lives on her shoulders  
Taking first steps into a land that was colder  
Than what she'd known  
But now this was home

And the snow felt warm

# the sword in the stone

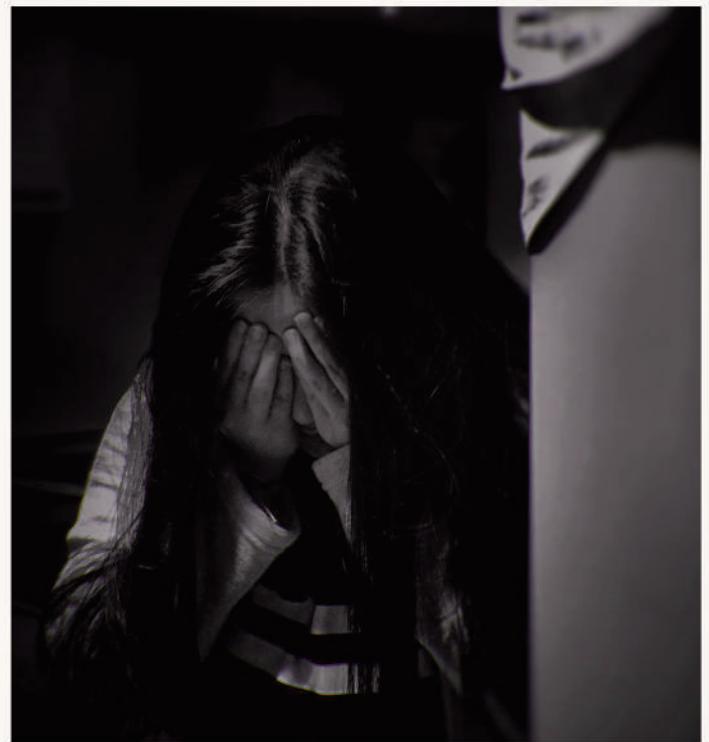
// SARAH GRISHPUL

PHOTOGRAPHY // KERRY YAN

DESIGN // ELINA NIE

Have you heard the tale of The Sword in the Stone? In the story, everyone failed to free a sword from a stone, except a young boy named Arthur. He was the only one in the kingdom who was worthy, and was thus crowned the new King of England. This is merely a legend, but the message still resonates with us to this day: only those that are worthy receive what they desire. But what about those who don't believe themselves to be worthy of what they aspire?

Self-doubt can poison our minds like the plague, spilling into the cracks and crevices of our fragile teenage minds, whispering words of insecurity and skepticism into our ears. Self-doubt is a result of overthinking and a lack of self-confidence, in convincing yourself that what you have done was wrong. As human beings, we are bound to make mistakes, but we tend to take those slip-ups to heart and treat them as acts of failure. That feeling of being unworthy then leads to a drop in self-esteem, which quickly transitions to low self-confidence, and eventually becomes a constant need to doubt yourself in every action you do. While we dread someone telling us that we're not good enough, it turns out they don't need to, because we're perfectly content with telling that to ourselves. This mindset is not healthy in itself, but the true danger is how we choose to cope with it.



When we struggle with academic achievement or social situations, it is easy to become trapped in a fog of self-doubt. This unhealthy behaviour quickly becomes dangerous as we begin to lose our self-discipline and the ability to follow through with our ambitions. This mindset can bring about symptoms of depression and lead us to building unhealthy relationships with ourselves.

When you've struggled with something for so long, it can be hard to break free of that negative and doubtful mindset, even as you begin to work on improving it. Throughout my life, I was never the strongest in math. I used to get tutored in the subject twice a week and every word problem seemed to be written in a foreign language. Now that I'm older and stronger in the subject, my grades have improved, but I still struggle with believing that I am capable enough to succeed.

The ability to feel confident about ourselves is a trait that most of us long to possess. Being able to feel comfortable in our skin and the decisions we make is a future that we desire to own one day. The thing about self-doubt is that it's all in our minds, and therefore it is up to us to decide whether or not we want it to control our lives. I find that spending time with loved ones and the people who care about you are great ways to ward the worries from your head. Plus, acting more compassionate towards yourself can help you build a healthy self-relationship, quieting the harsh criticism and learning how to love yourself for who you are.

In the end, there will always be events in life that will lead you to question yourself. What matters is if you're able to push past the screaming voices in your head and pull the sword from the stone. If you can believe in yourself, then you are already one step closer to achieving your ambitions.



# THE SCIENCE BEHIND MUSICAL TIME TRAVEL



Craaaaack. That's the sound the egg made when it was catapulted towards me by an 8-year-old, exploding across my back. Last summer, I worked as a camp counsellor in a cooking class, and, in a moment of weakness, turned my back on a particularly enthusiastic child. The rest is history.

Whenever I hear the song "Senorita" by Shawn Mendes and Camilla Cabello, which was playing during this tragedy, I'm immediately transported back to that moment -- and to the disgusting wet feeling of that egg sliding down my back.



This isn't the only song that instantly takes me back in time, reminding me of the specific moments in my life I had seemingly forgotten about. "Viva La Vida" sends me to my piano teacher's basement, which always smelled faintly of wet clothing. David Bowie's "Heroes" makes me think of that summer I decided to take up jogging (a terrible mistake).

I could go on forever, and I'm sure I'm not the only one: there are hundreds of songs out there that take me on time-travelling journeys. Upon being forced to recall that traumatic egg catastrophe for the millionth time, I decided to do some research on why this phenomenon exists.

Evidently, this all has to do with the types of memories our brains house. Many of the memories our brains store lie within the unconscious mind, as implicit memories. These are not consciously recalled; things like habits, skills, and automatic behaviours like riding a bike. It's the reason why as soon as you hear someone sing "hey, I just met you," you remember all the words to "Call Me Maybe". Because they're able to affect us from outside of our consciousness, these memories are often extremely powerful. Explicit memories, however, require concentration to recall; last Tuesday's dinner, for example. These memories are often far less powerful – last Tuesday's dinner is a blur, but "and this is crazy," comes to mind instantly.

Interestingly, the human mind often has a soft spot for memories formed between the ages of 10 and 30. One study found that most people's favourite songs are ones they first heard between the ages of 11-16, even if they're much older now. Another theory posits that the song that was #1 on your fourteenth birthday will be the song that defines your life.

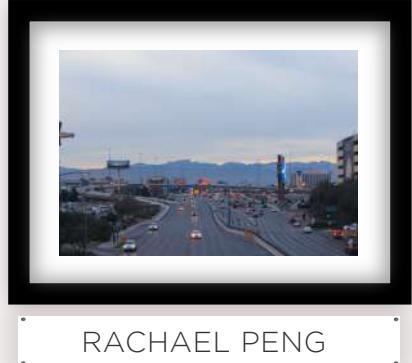
So why is it that "One Dance" -- the #1 track when I turned fourteen-- really does take me back to that feeling of summer, angst, and wanting to dye my hair purple? The answer lies in that mushy grey thing sitting in my head.

In short, listening to music involves large-scale neural networks in our heads, and activates the system involved in emotional processing and controlling memory. Different parts of the brain work together to interpret music in a circuit-like manner that analyzes tonal progressions, elicits emotional responses, and forms memories. The more you listen to a song, the more likely your brain is to encode it as a long-term implicit memory. Once you hear that song played again, your brain will automatically enter into that same circuit-like response that allows you to truly feel exactly how you felt when that memory was first encoded.

This fascinating occurrence has many practical uses, namely in helping those with traumatic brain injuries or diseases like Alzheimer's to remember memories they may have long forgotten. Music therapy is an extremely powerful tool in combating many different types of dementia, and helping those with memory loss reconnect with their loved ones and themselves.

So, the next time you hear a song that takes you back, savour the moment – enjoy the quick peek into the mind of your younger self. Most importantly, don't stop making memories, or listening to music. After all, there's a good chance that in a few years, you'll experience this very same wizardry again, and your future self will take a chance to appreciate the person you were in 2020 — no matter how terrible your taste in music was.

// MICHELLE SKIDELSKY  
PHOTOGRAPHY // KERRY YAN  
DESIGN // DAVID WANG AND ELINA NIE



RACHAEL PENG



RACHAEL PENG



RACHAEL PENG



JESSE LIU



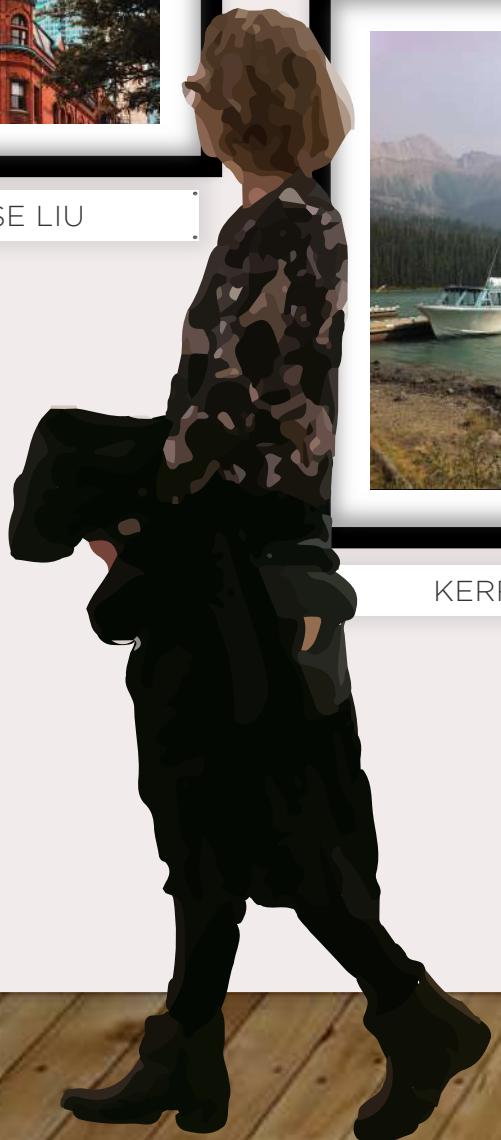
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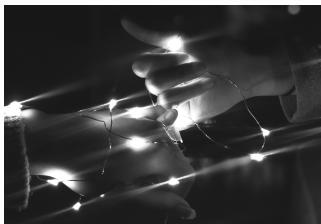


JESSE LIU

## PHOTO SHOWCASE



KERRY YAN



HANNAH NGUYEN



RACHAEL PENG



I read Inferno for my ISU in tenth grade. While a lot of people find Inferno for their own studying, it's quite manageable and scary as it looks. One thing to note is that while Inferno is simple and ambiguous in nature (as poems generally are), you need to conduct research in order to make sense of it will be extensive. However, if you're willing to put in the time and effort, you can whip up a killer essay. Nothing I write will ever be as satisfying as my tenth grade essay.

**"I Want A Morally Grey Protagonist And I Really, Really Like Reading"**

Again, this is a novel I read just recently for my ISU, so I can speak from personal experience on this one. To put it in the simplest terms, The Count of Monte Cristo is an adventure book about revenge. Alexandre Dumas makes great use of imagery and heaps of description, so for the avid reader who likes to question the motives of a story's protagonist, this one's for you. However, keep in mind that Dumas was probably paid by the line while writing it, which kind of explains why the copy I read had around a thousand pages.

# Monte Cristo

## Alexandre Dumas

group study by the hands of the man with the plastic bag close to the wiper of the window. It was house is coming in, the movement of which will allow you where to make the window frame. Use the page on all suspended areas. You'll be surprised to discover how many spots need caulking or weatherstripping.

#### A Fabulous Secret Story

he arranged so Ossian would no longer be the major stockholder if he refused this offer, and no choice but to accept.

Most people thought that Ossian's plan was completely untrue. Although his investment, the company's revenue over four years would have been the same figure. Besides to say, Ossian was not even made his fortune by investing the money he had in his business. The only good of this risk, which he had no intention of taking, was that he kept his building, which will always be the Mann Maritime.

I would like to continue this chapter, but it is in a way against all of Ossian's previous good business. In April 1960, he was invited to arrive in Gibraltor in the afternoon. Most of the individuals scheduled to meet him on the Chico-Craft and transport him were those who had been in touch with him. The usual crowd had gathered outside the hotel, and Ossian was going to arrive. As he was walking towards the door, my sister was being brought from the car to meet him, not stopping to speak to anyone. The car was already running and the Chico-Craft was about to start when a young boy broke through the palm trees and plumped fully clothed into the water, crying: "Mr. Ossian, I absolutely have to talk to you!"

77

"What's going on?"

# 3 Mockingbird

Harper Lee

You can't really get more basic than *To Kill A Mockingbird*. Almost everyone's heard of it and so it should be relatively easy to get people's opinions on it and look at the story from multiple points of view. It's got a lot of meaning condensed in less than 300 pages, and even adds a dash of humour and warmth despite dealing with dark topics and racial inequality.

what their conflict is it would be. I know that Uncle Axel had proposed the only practical solution, and I know, too, no one possibility meant recognizing that nothing could be done.

Anne now transmuted anything whatever, caught on trace of her, but wouldn't do it again. She was too much of a creature to be loved. From Rachel, however, we learned that she would listen only to words, and was doing her best to prevent her from being seen in every way, but that could give us enough confidence for us to exchange our thoughts.

In the following weeks Anne kept it on, as that she almost seemed to be succeeded in convincing her

and becoming a mere. Her wedding-day arrived with nothing more, and she and Alan returned to the house.

The last few days of her life, Anne had written to her mother,

as far as memory lets, but otherwise there was little comment.

During the next few months we heard scarcely anything of Anne's life, and we could learn from her letters that were written to us that she had died.

One of the correspondents, however, was a man with troubles. Quite why it was that he was quite the law of the land, we did not know. But we had to take his thoughts even before we addressed them, for when two people have the same thoughts, they are either the knowledge of the other, or the need of one another's love.

But when they know they

T-22-9

will be capped. I went through and through the wash-high

and

# ARTISTIC ANXIETIES

// ASSAL TOUDEHFALLAH  
DESIGN // ELINA NIE



## CLAUDE MONET'S WATER LILIES

Claude Monet's Water Lilies are perhaps his most famous series of paintings. However, with great fame comes great criticism. Monet's perfectionism, alongside his harsh critics, led him to burn 15 of his Water Lilies paintings in 1908 before they were exhibited. Even without social media, it is hard for the human mind to deal with negative comments.

## FRANZ KAFKA, ARSONIST EXTRAORDINAIRE

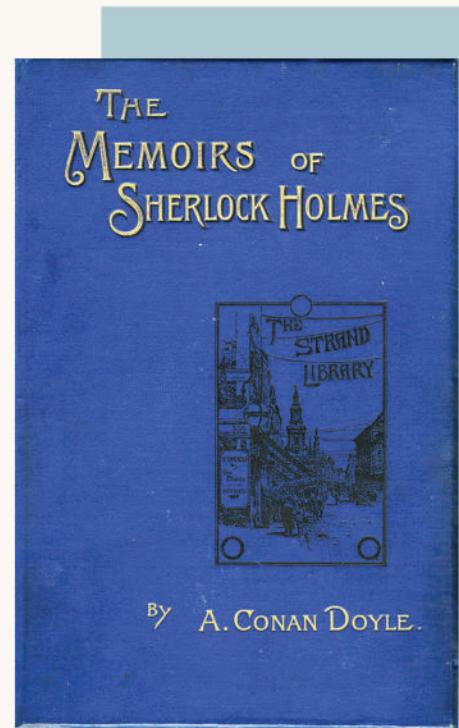
It is impossible to talk about great storytelling without mentioning Franz Kafka and *The Metamorphosis*. Despite critics adoring his works, he despised them. He was his own worst disparager, and burned roughly 90 percent of his work before he died. Later a letter of his was found addressed to his friend Max Brod: "Dearest Max, My last request: Everything I leave behind me... in the way of diaries, manuscripts, letters (my own and others'), sketches and so on, to be burned unread". Max Brod, thankfully, did not follow this request and published Kafka's works after his death.

## SHERLOCK HOLMES, SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE

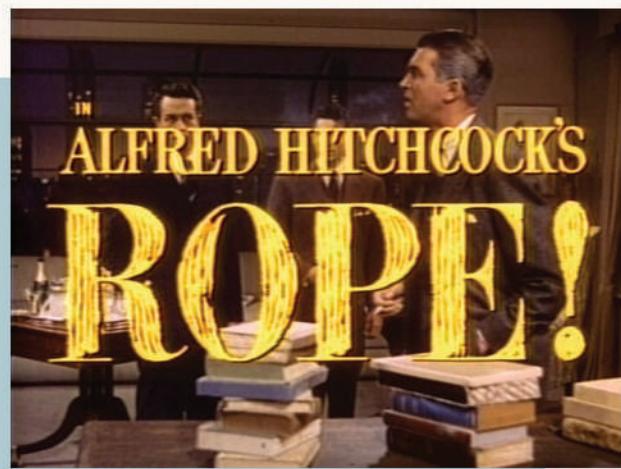
Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's greatest creations are perhaps his many stories of Sherlock Holmes and Doctor Watson. However, he resented Sherlock. To him, it was simply a way to pay off his college loans, as he desired to be a historical novelist.

## "CREEP", RADIOHEAD

Most people, of almost any walk of life, enjoy or resonate with the song "Creep" by Radiohead. The band, especially Thom Yorke, loathe this track of theirs. They find it too soft, and are too tired of playing it. They went 7 years without playing "Creep" until 2016 when they began touring again.



BY A. CONAN DOYLE.



## "PARTY IN THE USA", MILEY CYRUS

Miley Cyrus's famous song "Party in the USA" has remained very popular since it came out in 2009. She originally recorded it because she needed more tracks in her album, and she did not genuinely like it. Nonetheless, it rose to number two on the Billboard Hot 100 and was the seventh best-selling digital single of that year. She recently said that she finds the track immature. This change of heart, however, only shows that she has matured since 2009.

## ROPE, ALFRED HITCHCOCK

Famous for his movie Psycho, Alfred Hitchcock made a few attempts at films before Psycho with which he was not pleased. One of these attempts was his movie *Rope*, based on the 1929 play of the same name. It is one of his most ambitious films, as he attempted to present the film as if it were one continuous shot in real-time. The critics adored his movie and, even today, it has a rating of 94 percent on Rotten Tomatoes. Hitchcock, however, bought all the rights to the film so that no one could watch it until after his death in 1980.

IMAGE 1 // METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART VIA WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

IMAGE 2 // TORONTO PUBLIC LIBRARY VIA FLICKR

IMAGE 3 // ROPE TRAILER VIA WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

# BROKEN WINGS

A single star shone through a blanket of darkness. It called out to me, but I shrouded my eyes with a heavy fog and walked away.

No more.

No more pain.

If I stay closer to the ground, I won't have to fall anymore... right?

I turned around one more time, catching sight of those who stubbornly refuse to stop jumping towards the distant lights in the sky. Watching others I admired was all I ever did, yearning and idolizing them silently. Yet, no matter how fast I chased or how high I tried to jump, I knew I'd never catch up.

A sudden sharp pain filled my head, and my knees sank into the barren ground. My nails dug into my scalp as I begged for this feeling to stop. I didn't want to remember.

I followed him through thick and thin, as he flew across the endless blue. A new admiration grew inside of me, like a seed blooming into a beautiful flower. He spread his broad wings behind him and leaped towards the blinding stars. But the one I had thought to be strong was quickly swept down by a ruthless black storm.

My heart sank, and the vibrant flower burned to ashes, violent flames spreading through my body.

It burned. It burns. It still burns even as the days turned into months and into an endless cycle of pain. Scars that will never go away, and memories that slowly eat away at my thoughts.

My tears fed the fire as if it were fuel, and it greedily devoured every last drop. I plummeted down into the ground – a pit that seemed to never end.

Why is it that staying on the ground caused me to fall further than before?

A sudden wind blew the flames away like a candle. They offered a single hand with a gentle smile. Soft, compassionate eyes caught the twinkling reflections of the scattered dust, overflowing me with a familiar warmth – different from the previous burning sensation. As I reached out to grab their hand, I began to float out of the dark and towards the glowing figure before me.

Not long after, they started to stare above with an almost tangible yearn. "The stars are where we belong," is what they told me, while their silver hair rode the rhythm of the wind.

They had already reached their stars and had ended up here, so why did they still wish for more? What was this invisible force that could push people this far? Was it the stars? Were the distant lights in the sky really worth all the pain?

"The feeling you get when you can finally soar through the sky – it's hard to describe, but when you experience it once, you'll find yourself wanting more – even if it's just one more time," they answered with a nostalgic smile as if they were reminiscing about something.

"I think it's finally time for you to let your wings out of those shackles, don't you think?" With that last line, they disappeared, but I still had so many questions.

A single star shone through a blanket of darkness.

Nothing is set in stone until it is. Nothing is fact until it has happened for real.

A rush of adrenaline raced through my body, as I took my first step into the air. A pair of silver wings extended from my back, and the once far away lights seemed to be within arm's length. The gentle wind against my face pushed my hair away from my eyes, giving me a clearer vision of my goal. I could feel it – the feeling of finally knowing where I was meant to be. The monster eating away inside of me died, and a newfound determination quickly replaced it.

The lone flower had grown into a garden. The single star had led to a million others.

Saving myself from the pain of falling also prevented me from thriving farther than I ever thought I would. Sometimes, things don't have to fail. Sometimes, things do work out.

In the end, it was all worth it.

// SAMANTHA LEE  
PHOTOGRAPHY // UNKNOWN  
LAYOUT // KAYLA CHO

# A Logical Fallacy

Ten years ago, the economy crashed.

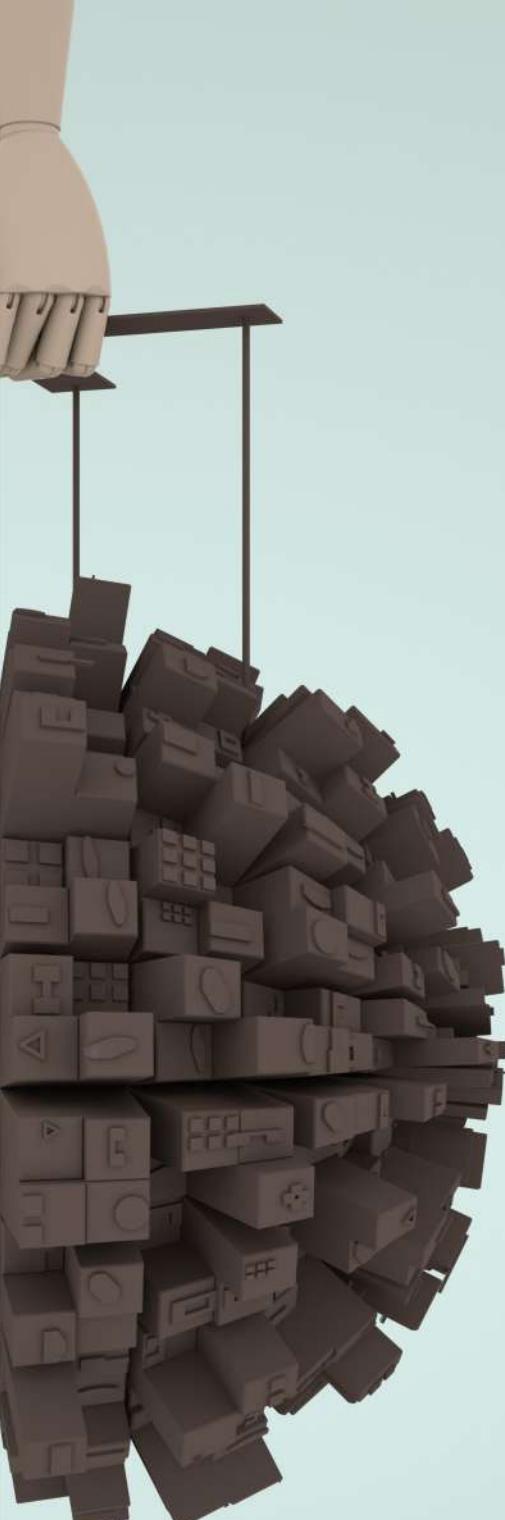
Nobody expected it. Leading economists pored over past trends and assured the public that a crisis was statistically impossible — the data said so — until it suddenly wasn't so impossible after all.

In a world of uncertainty, the flaw with any purely rational system is that the future will not always reflect the past. Unusual things happen all the time, spontaneous and unprecedented, and it is impossible to predict even tomorrow's events with certainty.

So is logic really the best model we have? "Of course," we're inclined to say, "if the alternative is just our feelings, how accurate can that be?"

It's easy to pick apart the concept of emotional thinking; without rationality, we are prone to bias, jumping to conclusions, and neglecting our broader goals on a whim. But being completely averse to emotional thinking falsely portrays the world as black and white, logic and emotion, and leads us to overcompensate with logical reasoning. We lend the utmost power to products of facts and statistics and neglect what feelings can tell us. But even the most advanced computers can't factor in unknown variables; like with the market example, people act unpredictably, and understanding the social forces that shape those decisions is often more useful than statistics from fifty years ago.

The problem, then, is that a world that prizes constant rationality pushes our real priorities to the back burner. Within our own lives, logical thinking values only quantifiable goals: figures, marks, and money, without taking into account the complex person behind those goals. It leads us to constantly overthink, caught up in assessing the likelihood of achievement while forgetting that unpredictability can bring more happiness than living in a "safe" rut.



Relying on logic makes it natural to look at the high acceptance averages for your dream post-secondary program and decide against applying in the first place. There's a chance you would've gotten in. Statistically, more hours of studying means better performance, and rationality encourages you to stay up the entire night working, even though getting sleep is better for you physically and mentally. For most decisions, intuition — the sum of all your past experiences — is a better arbiter than impersonal numbers.

And the numbers are far from definite. If all the facts and figures in the world couldn't predict an economic crash, they can't accurately predict your life either. Life isn't formulaic — your friend succeeding because they did x, y, and z does not mean you will have the same outcome if you do the same. So, relax a little. There's no need to micromanage your life and spend hours thinking about how every small assignment and extracurricular will affect your chances of becoming a doctor. Because one way or another, things will fall into place, and that isn't something you can really predict or control.

This is not a defense of impulsivity or making irresponsible choices. It's the recognition that most things can't be rationalized, and it's pointless to try. It's a defense of embracing human emotions instead of being a robot, of not fitting into the mold of a "perfect student" all the time, of taking risks instead of staying on the safe road, and of valuing relationships over calculated possibilities.

Don't worry about the trend line— being an outlier is okay, even if the analysts say otherwise.

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