

IB VISIONS



ATHENS COLLEGE

Hellenic-American Educational Foundation

Kindergarten • Elementary • Junior High • High • I.B.

ATHENS COLLEGE • PSYCHICO COLLEGE • KINDERGARTEN J. M. CARRAS

1925

PSYCHICO COLLEGE
INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE

2018 - 2019



BOOKS

Windows to the world

'The Persians'
by HAEF

Yiannis Moralis
100 years

IB
Activities

Students'
Articles

Literary
Endeavours

IN THIS ISSUE



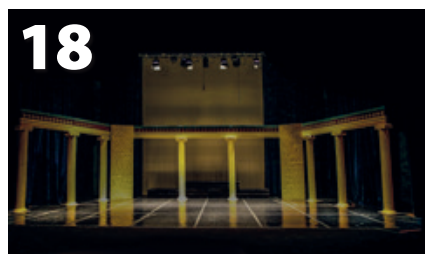
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Anastasia Papakostopoulou, Sophia Arditoglou, Arianna Karakosta, Victoria Karvouni, Eleni Preveza, Roberto Scilipoti, Stella Tsali, and Giota Maragou for their support and contribution.

Tatiana Skaidra Geroulanou

HLIAIA Publishing - Michael Kyrkos

From the Editor

Our contemporary challenges

The world is a sphere - both literally, and metaphorically. As it spins around, its biggest challenges cut across one another, and the answers humanity is called to find stem from different disciplines. This year proved it more than usual, with the all-encompassing pandemic, the exponential deterioration of the environment, and the far-reaching movement of Black Lives Matter. All these contemporary challenges remind us that the importance of education doesn't merely lie in fixating on our fields of interest, but in understanding the intersections between them. The IB program puts such intersectional questions at the frontline of its academic model: things like the art of social justice, the mathematical modelling that can help us prevent the next pandemic, the politics of creating a sustainable and thriving future. These issues form the heart of this year's IB Visions magazine, which attempts to move away from sterile compartmentalization and truly reflect the complex relationships that form the world around it. IB visions celebrates the transition from school to university, where students are called to narrow down their academic focus, but it is more important than ever to keep our minds broad and open, to search for the most unique academic permutations, and to appreciate each separate "tree" on its own. For after all, that is how they form the most majestic forest.

Adamantia Alevra



*IB visions
celebrates
the transition
from school
to university*

Enjoy!



OPINION

Are books still better for actual understanding?

In today's world more and more people use the Internet. Some of them think that books are obsolete and every information you need is on the Internet.

by Ariana-Christina Linara

If you are above approximately 30 years old you will probably continue reading this (and that's good) but if you are under 30 then you will probably read the first maybe even the last lines and take a look at the pictures because God forbid: this is a very long text. This habit of avoiding reading lengthy works is reflected in our generation's

derogation of books which is also connected to some of our generation's major characteristics.

So, why is not reading books a bad thing in the context of our discussion?

1. One needs to devote time to read a book and this creates patience which is a very valuable virtue in one's life.

2. Reading a book requires both imagination and an unprecedented level of personal engagement which train one's mind.



"This book is defective,
I tap the page and nothing happens!"

3. A book has a beginning, a middle, and an end, so, especially in categories such as geopolitics or economics, it helps one shape a holistic image of whatever it is that one reads.

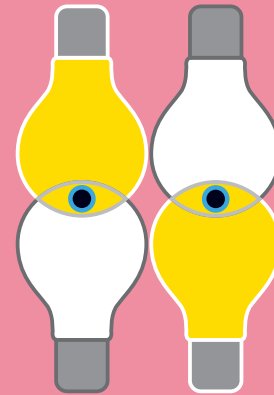
What are our generation's characteristics connected to our "book-aversion"?

1. Need for instant gratification
2. Inability for autonomous thinking

"Most of us chase success in all its forms, either material, spiritual or physical. So, if I were in a position to give any advice it would be this: grab a book and, most importantly, read it!"

The question-answer structure of this writing was not random; even though people tend to not like rules and order they are much more likely to read lists rather than condensed texts. This is partly why nowadays people primarily use the internet to inform themselves; they prefer its brevity, straightforwardness, and ease. Articles about certain politicians or environment-related issues are not only one click away but they are presented with large fonts, appropriate spacing, bullet points, and visuals. Reading a book would require twice the effort so why bother? This mentality of instant gratification (I want to learn → I google it → I am gratified) and use of the internet at all times makes people unable to think for themselves since they don't sacrifice the time necessary to cultivate a personal, unique opinion. The beauty of reading a book is that you evolve while reading it and by the end of it you feel

more complete as an individual. Our generation misses that... Instead of going through the strenuous task of informing ourselves through reading volumes after volumes we immediately google questions such as "What is Nietzsche's critique against Christianity?" or "What were Hitler's main points in *Mein Kampf*?" However, to fully comprehend Nietzsche's work one has to read his book "*Thus Spoke Zarathustra*" to indulge into what the idea of the "superman" really embodies, and then one has to read "*Beyond Good and Evil*" to view how Nietzsche discards the tradition of Western thought with its conceptions of truth and God and so on and so



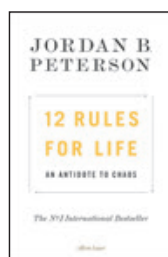
forth. I am not arguing that the internet is an evil and completely useless platform. My view is that the internet should be used as a complement and not as our primary source of information.

I recently read Jordan Peterson's book "*12 Rules for Life: an antidote to chaos*" and I really liked his comment on what defines successful individuals or, better yet, what distinguishes

them from unsuccessful ones. He presented it as "capacity for sacrifice". Those who are able to postpone current desires for future gains are those who will thrive in their dream jobs, gain more money, and reach their goals. Does our "book-aversion",

our inability to sacrifice time to read a book, mean that we are a generation of unsuccessful individuals? Of course not. It means, however, that we are not trained to sacrifice and we are not trained to wait patiently for our wishes to materialize. This will make life, every day chores and long-term aspirations, more challenging.

Whoever made it until the end of this text (well done!) can agree that most of us chase success in all its forms, either material, spiritual or physical. So, if I were in a position to give any advice it would be this: grab a book and, most importantly, read it! V




Opening Reception

IB1

Visual Arts Exhibition

Opening Reception
Wednesday 19th June 2019
In Caps

The opening reception of the IB 1 Visual Arts students' exhibition took place in Capps at 6.30pm on Wednesday 19th June 2019. The exhibitions were a culmination of the students' work in year 1 and included 2- and 3-D artworks as well as works created using digital media. Students also presented their visual arts journals to show the very interesting research and process leading to their final pieces. During the evening, students explained their ideas and concepts to the many enthusiastic exhibition visitors, including parents, faculty members and fellow students. 









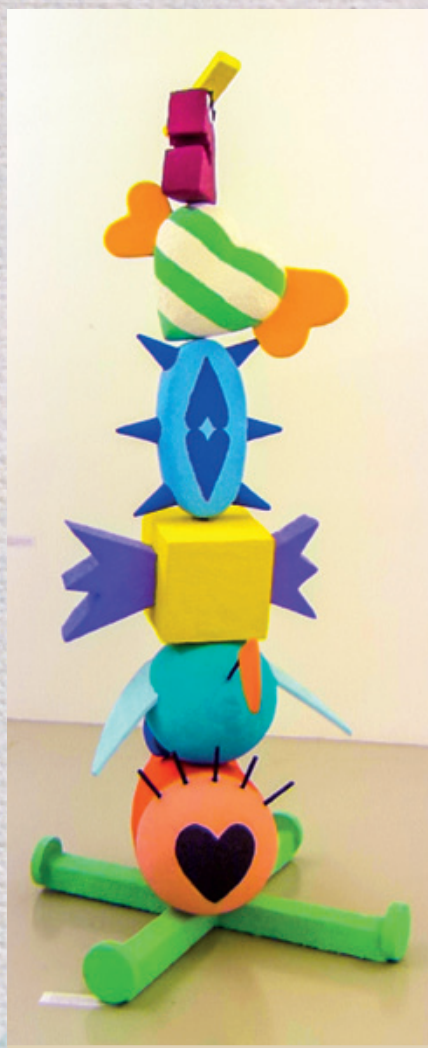
IB2

Opening of 2019 "The Arts" Exhibition

Opening Reception
Wednesday 27th March 2019
At DESTE art Foundation

The opening reception of the exhibition of IB 2 Visual Arts and Theatre students took place at DESTE Art Foundation on Wednesday 27th March at 6.30.

In keeping with the school's time-honored tradition of excellence in the arts, students presented their creative works in the Visual Arts and Theatre. 16 Visual Arts students and 1 Theatre student presented their individual exhibitions and research, explaining their unique ideas and concepts to the numerous exhibition visitors. The exhibitions were a culmination of the students' work during the 2 year the IB course and included 2- and 3-D artworks as well as works created using digital media. The event was received with great enthusiasm by parents, faculty members and fellow students. The evening began with the School Symphony Orchestra, which played a delightful selection of music, which truly enhanced the experience of the exhibition visitors.



Katerina Polychronopoulou

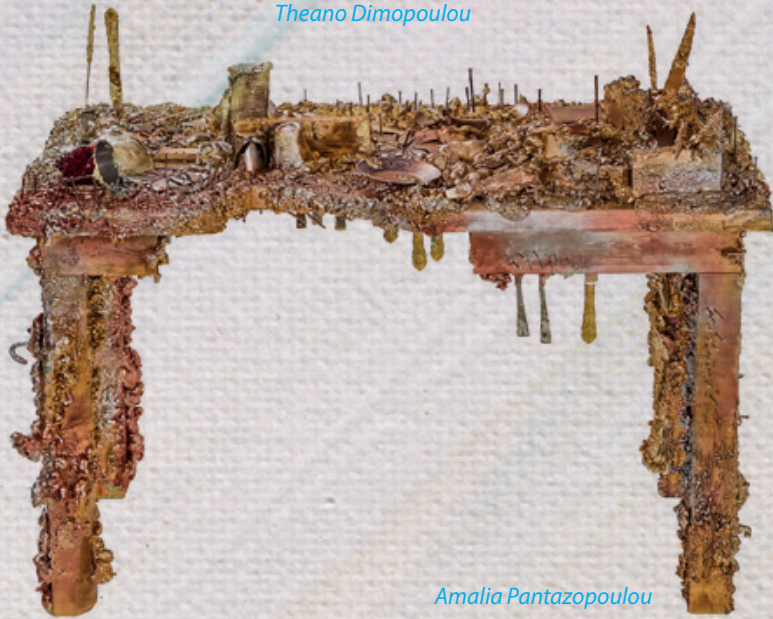


Christos Vakirtzis



Maria Vanou

Theano Dimopoulou



Amalia Pantazopoulou



Vivian Chatira



Despoina Panagopoulou



Evangelos Mayson

VISIT

100

years from the birth

By Maria Sarantiti

The IB1 and IB2 classes of Visual Arts visited the retrospective Yiannis Moralis exhibition in the Benaki Museum in Pireus street on Saturday 8th of December 2018. The exhibition showcased work that spanned over 100 years of the artist's prolific output. The students, accompanied by their teachers, enjoyed an in-depth tour of the exhibition by the Greek artist and old friend of Yiannis Moralis, Mr. Tassos Matzavinou.

The exhibition of Yannis Moralis was a classic retrospective presentation. It chronicled the artist's work, from its first steps, in 1931, until 2009. Rich archival material, as well as works by his friends and companions in art enriched the exhibition. Individual themes or other sections break the linear narrative by isolating and highlighting particular aspects of his life and work. The exhibition ended with the section "The Everyday Life of Yannis Moralis", which presented anecdotal material, some from the artist's archive.

As a fitting end to the artistic journey documented in this exhibition, were the monumental sculptural compositions of the artist, shown at the imposing atrium of the Benaki Museum.

of Yiannis Moralis

The development of his artistic style



Yiannis Moralis was one of the most popular artists of 20th-century Greece: pioneering painter, talented print-maker, gifted set designer and inspiring academic teacher. Through his paintings, sculptures, architectural commissions, record covers, and book illustrations, the exhibition aims to shed light on the artist's progress from one decade to the other, bringing unknown facets of his life and work to the fore. The human, and especially female, form was the main theme of his work. The academic style of his early works was replaced by abstract formalities in the 1950s.

From the first, Moralis, has always worked unobtrusively, in a spirit of humility, never pushing himself in the center of the stage, but he rather preferred to remain in the shadows. The paintings of the first phase, from 1934 to 1945 are mostly portraits. His early paintings are considered masterpieces both in artistic style as well as psychological insights, as he manages to capture the thoughts of people by depicting their expressions vividly. His technique is based on the orthodox principle of local colors and Renaissance chiaroscuro and also on

the principle of application of cold and warm hues.

From about 1950, Moralis sleeked a greater degree of gravity, plasticity and fullness, hence he is no longer satisfied with fluency, but he is looking into deeper values. The artists sense of color becomes refined to the height of delicacy. Movement becomes his new focus. Solid masses have a greater equilibrium. His works now speak directly to the viewers consciousness and convey the artists message entirely. Towards the end of this period Moralis starts reducing his compositions to the essentials.

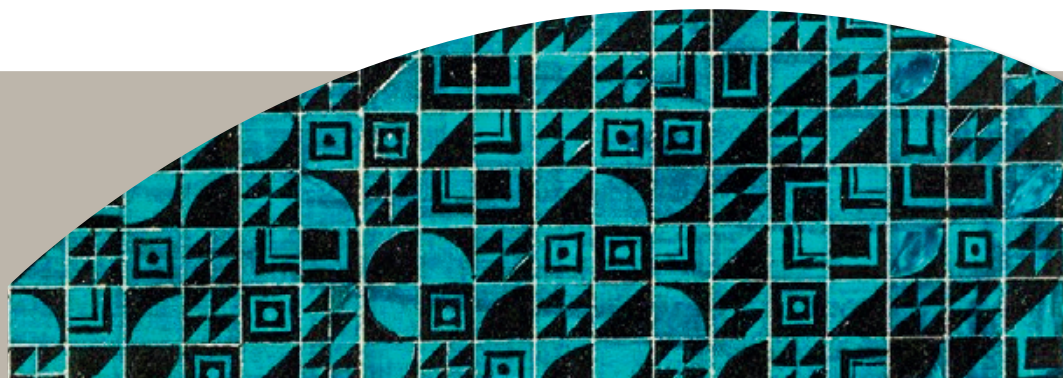
In 1950-1970 Moralis transitioned into the geometric abstraction period. Moralis chose geometry as the ideal means of rendering space and forms. The rhythm, the class, the avoidance of details and descriptions, and the cruel colors gradually imposed through an organic evolution underline an archaic sense of majesty and completeness. Once again, his abstract geometric works are based on the female figure, thus indicates his familiarity with the female body. Sometimes, they area also influenced my ancient Greek Cycladic structures, such as in Erotic 1990. The abstraction and geometricity become more vivid.

The exhibition successfully exhibited artworks from all of his artistic periods, hence there was a full perspective on his artistic style and his development as an artist. The students were intrigued by the change depicted in Moralis' artistic style through the span of 100 years.



The exhibition of Yannis Moralis was a classic retrospective presentation. It chronicled the artist's work, from its first steps, in 1931, until 2009

'My first sniff of oil paint was at my aunt's house, my mother's sister, who was a painter. It was then that I first started to draw. I went to the school with my father, picked up a few pieces of chalk, dipped them in blue and red ink, and drew on the class board in three colours - blue, red and white. I used to make geometric drawings using paper lines as a starting point on left-over exam paper. In the gymnasium building I would gaze at displays of funerary offerings, weaths and other objects that excited my imagination. Sometimes I wonder whether some of the things that turn up in my paintings can't be traced back to those childhood memories'.



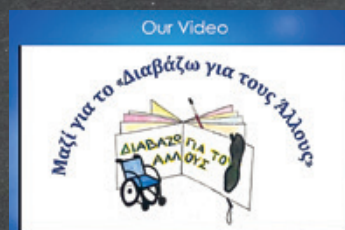
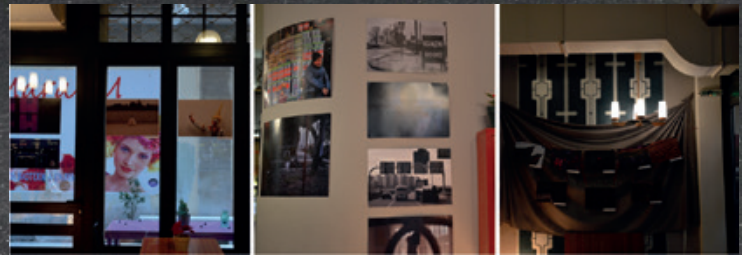
THE CAS PROGRAMME 2018-2019

During the 2018-2019 school year, we were thrilled to introduce four exciting new/renewed collaborations, among many longstanding ones of course, which have given us hope for the building of relationships of substance, mutual support, and contribution to the welfare of society.

The first one was initiated early on in the 2018-2019 school year, when a group of Yr1 students worked with “Mission Anthropos” and its “Keeping Grandma and Grandpa Company” program, under the auspices of the Athens University Medical School, and the guidance of Associate Professor Ypatia Doussi-Anagnostopoulou and her team of medical volunteers. Apart from providing medical care to the elderly in 4 nursing homes around the city of Athens, the program allowed our students to keep the elderly company. Their rejuvenating presence was an invaluable gift of activities, games, books, conversation, even an acquaintance with the latest in mobile technology such as Google Maps and YouTube! This six-month project was then presented in the following article in Kathimerini, and we are about to introduce it to our current Yr1 students: <http://www.kathimerini.gr/1021326/article/epikairothta/ellada/parea-efhvw-n-to-antido-to-sth-mona3ia>

Our second collaboration involved our enhanced relationship with “Special Olympics Hellas”. Apart from our established escorting of the SOH athletes during the opening race of the Athens

Authentic Marathon, our students participated in the “Flame of Hope Ceremony” at Zappeion, on February 27, 2019, both as volunteers and as runners. Less than a month later, SOH extended an invitation to the Psychico College Lykeion IBDP, in the context of the Special Olympics Hellas “Unified Schools” program. Our students and a group of Special Olympics Hellas athletes embarked on an open dialogue on the issue of diversity and inclusion in schools. The outcome of this fruitful and necessary conversation was recorded and presented at the “2019 Youth Global Leadership Summit” (March 14-18, 2019), where Greece was represented by the Psychico College Lykeion IBDP. During the Summit, which took place in the framework of the Summer 2019 Special Olympic Games in Abu Dhabi, delegates discussed ways for young people to create an inclusive world for all people. This collaboration is set to continue with one more round table early in the 2019-2020 school year, to take place in our sports facilities after a morning of track and





CAS PROJECT PRESENTATION

"Helping Aelia Tavitha Nursing Home in Bloopoli"

Beneficiary Organization: St. Savitha Centre for Elderly people in Bloopoli, Athens

Students names: Konstantina Galioti, Vivian Chaitou, Alina Kouloumetzi, Maria Marcouda,

Antonia Thomopoulou, Maria Topopoulou

Project Supervisor: Mia Potter

Remix: 4

Strands of CAS: Creativity, Activity, Service

Brief Description of CAS Project: We spent time with the elderly people staying in Aelia Tavitha Nursing Home, attempted to raise our neighbors' awareness of this organization and raised money through the selling of bracelets to donate food and medicine supplies



field games with the SOH athletes and our middle school students.

The third new collaboration, which is set to continue for this school year as well, is with the CSI Institute (<https://www.csii.gr/>) and the variety of opportunities they began offering us in 2018, which will continue in the 2019-2020 academic year. The main focus is on teaching the elderly how to use the internet safely, in association with "Oloi Mazi Mporoume". We are confident that this is going to be yet another opportunity to construct a long-term relationship of excellence.

Lastly, the 2019-2020 school year will mark a renewed collaboration with SEGAS. We are looking forward to assisting the magnificent 2019 Athens Authentic Marathon, with a force of 80+ volunteers, in making this annual landmark event one to remember for all participants.

The contribution of our students to the entire range of school-organized and school-related events, as well as all events to benefit the Fund Drive, was once again massive and continuous. So was their engagement with community work of their choice out of the school environment, in a wide variety of organizations concerned with the welfare of people, animals, and the environment. This engagement involved the CAS Project IBO requirement as well. Our students did not fail to make us proud of the sheer breadth and quality of projects devised, prepared, organized, carried

out, and reflected upon by them while in supportive, creative, and active groups.

The following examples are a mere sampling of the wonderful wealth of 2018-2019 CAS Projects:

- Purchasing books and organizing activities for children at the Karpenisi Municipal Library
- Photography exhibition to benefit the STEPS Organization
- Fund drives (including crowd-funding, selling T-shirts and bracelets, and a large number of s activities) to benefit organizations such as "I Read for the Others", "1ΨΥΠΕ", "Friends of Animals Chalandri", "The Lyreion Foundation", "Aghia Tavitha Nursing Home", "SOS Children's Villages", and so on
- Cultural visits for refugees with "Doctors of the World"
- Helping the homeless through the "Ithaca Mobile Laundry"
- Creating and contributing necessity packs to the "Home Project" through "Solidarity Among Peers"
- Purchasing equipment and engaging in creative activities at the "Centaurea" nursing home
- Providing houseware for "Filothei i Athinaia Home for Girls"
- Providing playground equipment for a kindergarten with pupils from financially constrained families
- "Trunk or Treat": Food donations to "The Athens Home for the Elderly" and the "PYRNA" organization

Hoping to continue building an even broader, richer, and more effective program for and with our students, we forge ahead with the new school year, and its challenges and rewards!



SOLIDARITY AMONG PEERS THE HOME PROJECT

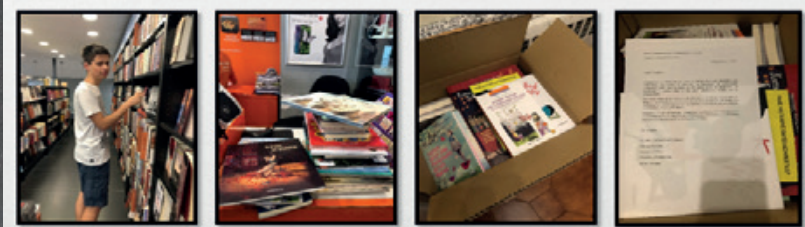
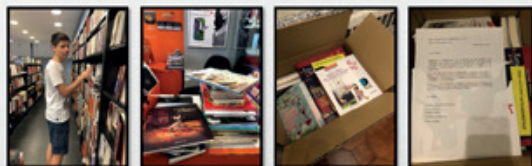
THEANO DIMOPOULOU
AMALIA CHRONOPOULOU
ERAGGELIA SKIAVENITI

SOLIDARITY AMONG PEERS

WE'VE COLLECTED 100 PACKAGES FOR THE HOME PROJECT. EACH PACKAGE IS 20€.

IF YOU WANT TO HELP OR HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, SEND ONE OF THE PEOPLE RESPONSIBLE OR SEND US A MESSAGE.

Theano Dimopoulou
Amalia Chronopoulou
Eraggelia Skiaveni



MATI PROJECT

By Alikì Coulouvatou and Maria Sarantiti

IT WAS A SUMMER AFTERNOON in 2018 when we took a ferry to return from the island of Andros to the port of Rafina. On the way home in the car we came across what we thought of being a “beautiful sunset”, however after tuning into the news we realized that “the beautiful sunset” was actually a wildfire happening in Mati, which is near the port of Rafina. Very soon we were surrounded by smoke and could see the flames rapidly spreading in the horizon. The wildfires turned out to be one of the deadliest and most devastating events that have that have happened these past few decades in Greece. Hundreds of people died, others were severely injured and locals lost their homes.

Even though, a year has gone* by, many people still live in shelters and haven’t been rehoused. What concerned us most was the fact that the local children

had returned to school to continue their education under extremely difficult circumstances. Being highly sensitive towards the living and learning conditions, we decided to add a splash of color into their lives. Therefore, as part of our CAS project, we wanted to do something for them. We contacted and visited the local public elementary school of Agia Marina in Mati to discuss with the principal and the parents’ board our idea. We introduced ourselves and were received with warmth and interest and the principal informed us that many of the children attending the school had lost their homes and some relatives during the wildfires. Being interested in

the Arts and Sports as students ourselves and listening to what the principal had to say about the school, we decided to combine our skills, knowledge, and love for making the school a beautiful place by suggesting an interactive drawing project as an activity to be led by us with the participation of the young students. We raised sufficient funds through donations from family friends to buy the necessary equipment such as paints and brushes.

We agreed to create a mural on the wall behind the basketball bleachers, creating a sublime scenery of Greek nature. The image was composed of olive trees, which is a characteristic



* This article was written in 2019

tree of Greek culture and a symbol of peace, as well as other elements of nature such as flowers, birds and small animals. It was a natural continuation of the surrounding scenery which survived after the fires. Since the mural was within a basketball court, we also wanted to have an aspect of team spirit and drew in the middle the symbol of the Olympic games. What was amazing was the overall process of creating something together with the young local children. We would go there in the mornings and spend hours drawing under the sun and at the same time having fun and talking with the students, making this a very pleasant activity for all. We wanted to have it all ready before their end of school year festivities that took place in the court.

This experience was very heartwarming since many students from different classes participated with excitement. During the school breaks the school breaks they would come running to us asking for gloves and brushes and colors sug-




gesting their ideas for their school mural. One young boy painted an owl, another girl and her friends wanted to add flowers and birds and

another boy would come at every break wanting to add hollows to the olive trees. They were very creative and had lots of fun. What was particularly touching were the things they told us such as: "I painted my wall last summer", "I know how to paint because

I painted the door of my house last summer", and "I want to make my school beautiful". They added a small touch to the mural and

BEING HIGHLY
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AGIA MARINA
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all the school community was pleased with the result. The teachers and parents were very kind to us and they all embraced the project.

We were invited by the principal and the parents to the school's end of year celebrations where the principal and the president of the parents' board thanked us on behalf of the families and the school and they offered us flowers. Their gesture was very touching and although what we did was small we felt that we gave something to the local community. The children's smiles after the mural was completed made us feel emotionally fulfilled. 





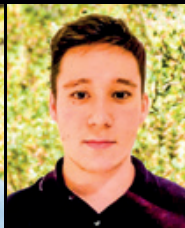
The Persians



MELINA CHALKIA
Queen Atossa



DIMITRIS PAPADIMITRIOU
The Messenger



LEON MELAS
Ghost of Darius



GEORGE STOURAITIS
Xerxes



EVA SKLAVENITI
*Queen's attendant
& Chorus*



ARIANA LINARA
Chorus Leade



AMALIA PANTAZOPOULOU
Chorus & Set Design

THE PRODUCTION of "The Persians" with my classmates was a new experience. It was my first time participating in an amateur production of a play, which has made it a very special and educational experience as I learned a lot about Ancient Greek theatre and tragedy. I have learned a lot about the messages, themes and mostly grieving and poignant emotions that can be conveyed to the audience through ancient tragedy. If you had asked me what I know about acting or Ancient Greek theatre exactly one year ago I would have nothing to say, now I can answer with confidence.

Evangelia Gianna



THE CREW: SCENIC DESIGN: Mrs. Judy Atwood, Amalia Pantazopoulou, Katerina Polychronopoulou COSTUME DESIGN: Despina Panagopoulou, Celia Kritharioti / 5226 LIGHTING DESIGN: Dimitris Marakis, Vasiliki Bardani SOUND DESIGN & MUSIC COMPOSITION: Lefteris Xanthis EDITING AND TRANSLATION: Melina Sardi & Eri Foka CASTING: Eri Foka & Melina Sardi MAKEUP DESIGN: Eva Sklaveniti & Eri Foka STAGE MANAGERS: Katerina Pambouki, Sofia Terzaki, Thalia Filipopoulou, Andriana Thomopoulou, Melina Kertsikof PHOTOGRAPHY: Stefanos Frilingos PROGRAMME & POSTER: Danae Areteou PRODUCED & DIRECTED BY Eri Foka



CONSTANTINA ANGOURA
Chorus


VIVIAN CHATIRA
Chorus

REGINA GIANNA
Chorus

GIANNI PASCHOS
Chorus

VASILIKI EFRAIMOGLU
Chorus

IT WAS DURING the end of the summer between IB1 and IB2 when my English teacher, Ms Foka, reached out to me, requesting my participation in the ancient Greek tragedy 'The Persians' by Aeschylus. The role I was requested to act was The Messenger. At first I was hesitant: it was my first time acting and so, naturally, I was afraid I would make a fool out of myself in front of the whole school. Furthermore, the rehearsals would span the larger part of IB2 meaning they would

require precious time that could be allocated for college essays, studying, applications, etc. Nevertheless, I accepted the challenge. As the Messenger, my duty was to enter the stage that was filled with proud Persians (members of the chorus) who boasted about their invincible army that had just invaded the small and 'weak' country of Greece and spread chaos. I entered screaming 'Persians', 'Persians' and announcing the disastrous news of the defeat of the Persian army in Salamis. During the rehearsals, I worked with the director of the play on improving my stage movement and extracting the necessary emotion. As busy as my Saturday was, I would always find the time to attend the rehearsal; these rehearsals provided a safe haven that protected me from the stress evoked by my pending college applications or the test I had on Monday. I was allowed to let my self free and dive into the wonderful world of ancient tragedy. This experience has inspired me to take drama courses at university alongside my physics major. 

Dimitris Papadimitriou



DRAMATIS PERSONAE: QUEEN ATOSSA Queen of Persia, mother of Xerxes, wife of Darius **Melina Chalkia** MESSENGER A soldier with Xerxes' army **Dimitris Papadimitriou** GHOST OF DARIUS Xerxes' father. He was once king of Persia **Leon Melas** XERXES King of Persia, son of Darius and Atossa **George Stouretis** CHORUS Elders & states people of Persia. CHORUS LEADER **Ariana Linara** MEMBERS OF THE CHORUS **Amalia Pantazopoulou, Constantina Angoura, Vivian Chatira, Regina Gianna, Gianni Paschos, Vassiliki Efreomoglou.**

REFORESTATION

IN MOUNT OCHI



By Thaleia Fourli, Maria-Liona Kourkoumeli and Sofia Sarsenti

MILLIONS OF FORESTS are damaged every year due to human intervention. The forests on our planet are getting more and more limited every day. That is why there have been many contributions to try and replant what has been damaged. Such contribution was performed once again on a trip with the IB environmental science team. On October 5th 2018 we started our trip to Evvoia, and more specifically to mountain Ochi for reforestation.

On the mountain lies an ancient chestnut forest with trees as old as 500 years. However, the mountain that was once filled with chestnut trees, full of life, the past years has been facing a serious problem. The forest has begun to disappear because there are no young chestnut trees due to the heat and the drought during the summer, and because of the goats that freely graze. Under

these conditions, it is impossible for the chestnut trees to survive. As a result, the once beautiful large chestnut forest is now in danger of disappearing completely.

Early in the morning of October 6th we started on our way up to mountain Ochi, prepared to work hard and plant as many trees as we could. We were fully equipped with everything that we needed to protect the young trees to be planted. Our equipment involved

gloves in order to be able to open up the chestnuts without being stung, bags in which we placed the chestnuts we collected and later planted, fences that we put around the areas where we planted the trees and pieces of iron which helped us stabilize the fences.

As soon as we arrived on the mountain, we faced some challenges. The wind was very strong, and the temperature was low. Yet, we had a mission, which we could not





abandon. Therefore, as soon as we stepped off the bus, that took us to the mountain, each of us carried the equipment needed. We walked a little bit, until we arrived at the beautiful chestnut forest of Ochi.

There, after we left the equipment, we began our mission, the collection of chestnuts. We walked around the forest and each one of us collected as many chestnuts as possible. Most of the chestnuts that we found on the ground had spiky shells around them, and therefore, gloves were needed for their removal. After almost an hour, we returned to our starting point and we gathered everything we had collected together. It was then that we separated into teams of four people each. Some were responsible for cutting and making the “fences” using wire, which were later used in order to protect the young trees from the goats. And some were responsible for planting small trees. When planting chestnuts trees, the loca-

THE WORK WAS CHALLENGING AND HARD. YET, NOTHING COULD STOP US. SAVING THE FOREST WAS OUR TASK AND HENCE!



unable to harm the young trees. This process was repeated several times as we wanted to plant as many trees as we could.

It was around 2, that we took a break from the hard work and sat down in the forest to eat our snacks. The work was challenging and hard. The temperature was low, and we were walking around the forest for around 5 hours. Yet, nothing could stop us. Saving the forest was our task and hence, after resting for a while, we started again the plantation of the trees. We continued until 6 o'clock, and by then we had successfully managed to plant about 40 trees.

Even though our contribution to the forest may not seem as significant, it was actually of great symbolic meaning. Every day, thousands of forests around the world are destroyed due to human intervention. The forests around the world need our help. It is impossible for a group of 22 people to revive an entire forest to its full potential. Yet, even the slightest contribution towards saving one of them matters. Each contribution is a step forward creating a better environment and saving our planet. And this was an effort towards bringing back, what has been lost. It was an experience we will never forget and this is because the feeling of having contributed to a task of such significance is so strong that it made us forget any feelings of exhaustion we had at that time. ▼

THE FEELING OF HAVING CONTRIBUTED TO A TASK OF SUCH SIGNIFICANCE IS SO STRONG THAT IT MADE US FORGET ANY FEELINGS OF EXHAUSTION WE HAD AT THAT TIME.



tion of the plantation is very important. Thus, we had to choose spots where there was moisture and shade for protection from the sun during the summer. Having chosen a location we then had to open a hole and place the chestnuts in it. The hole was then covered with soil and the chestnuts were watered. After that, fences were brought by other teams and with the help of iron steels we managed to make the fences so stable that goats would be



IB1 UK UNIVERSITIES TRIP




25 FEB - 1 MAR 2019

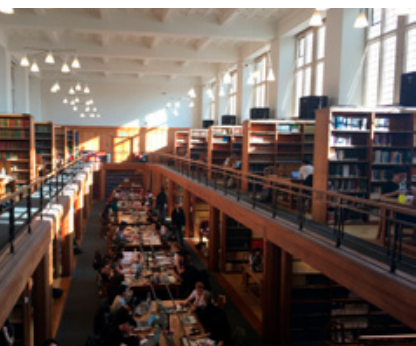


FROM MONDAY, 25TH FEBRUARY TO FRIDAY, 1ST MARCH 2019 first year students of the HAEF Psychico College International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme visited several British Universities. The main goal of the visit was to inform our students about the application procedures needed, the courses offered, and the student lifestyle followed

at a variety of British Universities. During the visit HAEF students received detailed information and were shown around the campuses of the following institutions: University of Surrey, University of Bath, University of



Warwick, University of Bristol, University College London (UCL), London School of Economics (LSE), Chelsea College of Art, King's College London, University of Oxford, Queen Mary University of London, Imperial College London and University of Cambridge. The students also had the opportunity to meet up with alumni and get insight into the universities, the campuses, as well as non-campus universities. In addition, students attended the musical performance "School of Rock" at the New London Theatre, and visited St. Claire's School Oxford, where they attended lessons with local IB students. 



THE YEAR 2 PSYCHOLOGY STUDENTS



Visit to the Institute of Mental Health for Children and Adults

EVERY YEAR, HL Psychology students accompanied by their teachers, Mrs A. Karakosta and Mrs E.Preveza, visit the *Institute of Mental Health for Children and Adults* in an effort to explore one of the main applications of Psychology, namely the field of Abnormal Behavior.


The Institute is the oldest non-profit organization in Greece that offers psychodynamic psychotherapy consultancy in the community. It was founded in 1996 as a Day center for children, adolescents and adults who face mental disorders. The Institute is based in the municipality of Kallithea, where it offers its services to the community for more than twenty years based on the methodology of social and community psychiatry.

The visit was organized by Alexandros Lountzis, *Social Anthropologist, Barrister in the Central Administration of the Institute of Mental Health for Children and Adults*, who presented us a very lively account of the history of mental illness in Greece, with particular emphasis on the conditions of psychiatric institutes such as the one in Leros, as well as the stereotypes, prejudices and myths that surround mental illness in our country. As an antidote to this, the important contribution of the Institute and its founder, Panagiotis Sakellaropoulos, prof. of psychiatry, in helping mentally ill patients re-enter the community, after many years of being institutionalized to Greek psychiatric hospitals was delineated. Students were also presented with a case study of a young boy suffering from autism and the process of diagnosis by a Develop-

mental Psychotherapist.

After the theoretical presentations, the students were divided into smaller groups and had the opportunity to experience the different units of the Institute such as the art and play-therapy groups, as well as visit two different residential adult homes. In the end of the visit, students exchanged experiences and voiced concerns and challenges that they experienced. Overall, they felt satisfied that they

were able to have first-hand conversations with patients who were no longer inmates in mental hospitals but were living with other patients in residential homes and were involved in creative activities. They understood however, the long process involved in therapy as well as the economic difficulties that Mental Health Institutes face as a result of the Economic Crisis in Greece.

Overall, this educational visit lead to heated discussions in our class for many weeks, in relation to the assumptions underlying different therapeutic approaches to mental illness. Many students found outdated the psychoanalytic theories regarding the role of the mother in the development of the personality of the child and others were shocked to discover the conditions of psychiatric hospitals and the stereotypes that still exist regarding mental illness. 

THIS
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IN OUR CLASS
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Is Feminism

By Christina Alevra and Dimitrios Glous

WELL, THE GENERAL DEFINITION OF FEMINISM is the advocacy of women's rights on the grounds of equality of the sexes. But, is this what feminism is about today? One could only assume that women as well as men of a certain educational level would identify with the specific ideology. Right? Well, it seems not.

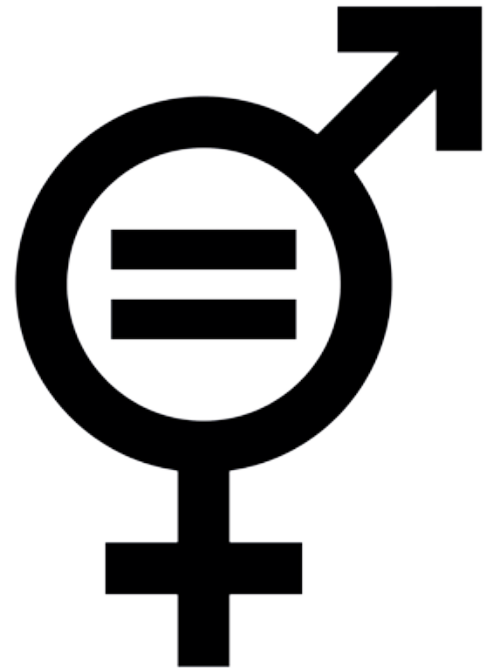
In fact, according to a recent study conducted by the BBC, fewer than 1 in 5 young women identify as feminists. What would you attribute this stance to? Three possible scenarios! A) Are 4 in 5 women "women-hating misogynistic pigs"? That would be absurd! This brings us to scenario B. Are 4 in 5 women inadequately informed on what feminism is about? Given that mainstream media like CNN and BBC as well as other pop culture media like BuzzFeed and Vice support feminism to an unprecedented extent, it seems that feminism is actually more than well represented. So, what about scenario C? What if feminism no longer voices women's concerns? What if present day feminism has been turned into something that scares women away?

No matter how hard modern day feminists like to justify the flaws of the movement using its initial definition, this simply isn't accurate. A movement is judged by how it's practically implicated rather than how it's theoretically defined.

After a century of active service and contribution to society, the movement seems to be facing critical dilemmas regarding its identity and orientation. Throughout the 20th century, groundbreaking changes have been achieved in terms of gender equality and social justice in western societies.

However, continuing to be a militant movement for the sake of maintaining its dynamism, feminism is turning into a rebel without cause and irreversibly tarnishing its reputation. What can feminism as well as other gender equality movements do to stay relevant?

Well, they can take the role of safeguarding those very principles they are supposed to stand for or even try to bring gender equality to developing nations, instead of trying to pursue equality of outcome in the west.



An example of trying to pursue equality of outcome is the wage gap fallacy. Sure women's-to-men's earnings ratio has remained in the 80 to 83 percent range, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. How can this be interpreted? This steady ratio could demonstrate two possible scenarios.

A) It could be assumed that stereotypes still dominate working conditions and that leads to the wage gap remaining at the same level for more than a decade. However, that would indicate the failure of the feminist movement to reduce gender related stereotypes for a remarkably long period of time.

B) Conversely, if those stereotypes have indeed been reduced, but have not affected women's to men's earnings, it

still relevant in Western



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would mean that there are other factors that contribute to the wage gap other than systemic sexism and enforced stereotypes.

Whichever the case might be, one conclusion can be drawn: Feminism has been ineffective either in combating inequality or by supporting misleading and outdated narratives. Focusing on the central question of the discussion, it is only right to examine some reasons for which we believe feminism could be considered “irrelevant” in Western societies.

Feminists assert that their movement advocates the rights of both sexes, which could be accurate according to its definition. However, when taking a step back and facing the facts, one can easily ascertain that feminists never bother to protest the violated rights of men.

How many times do we see feminists protesting about the fact that men lose custody in 84% of divorces, that men are 97% of combat fatalities, make up 94% of work suicides or that they tend to receive longer sentences for the same crime?


It just seems rather intelligible that feminism barely looks at both sides of the coin.

Instead of taking a stance against significant issues, which do not belong to the western world such as child brides, feminists prefer to repeatedly advocate issues such as the stereotypes against women, which are not even endorsed by the general public.

The complacency of the feminist movement is rather worrying considering their unknowledgeable standpoint concerning the atrocities happening against women outside the Western world.

We live in a world where women have attained substantial goals. It is a shame that movements such as feminism constantly victimise them and represent them as weak in comparison to “world dominating” men.

Women are led to believe that they cannot acquire the same wages as men and that they cannot succeed in areas such as business, politics or law just because of systematic sexism and stereotypes. There is a certain defeatism behind the feminist movement that makes it hard for most women to identify with.

Perhaps feminists should wonder to what extent the movement has kept up to date with the social developments in the western world. There are pressing issues in developing countries that unfortunately feminism rarely challenges but in fact, they should be on their daily agenda. 

societies?

Is Feminism Still Needed in Western Societies?

By Dimitra Stratopoulou

Feminism in general

Goal: to define, establish, and achieve the political, economic, personal, and social equality of the genders.
At the start of the feminist movement: Bring women into the picture (1950s).

After: 1. Define why inequality between the two genders exists, aiming to find the way it can be overcome.

2. Recognise the idea that there may be more than two genders

Now: Intersectionality: gender, race, ethnicity, culture, and age interact with each other.

- Feminism fights for a woman's right to vote, to work, to earn fair wages with equal pay, to own property, to receive education, to enter contracts, to have equal rights within marriage, and to have maternity leave so that there is no fear of non-reemployment.

Feminism is not about women, it is not about men, it is about both

- It is about equality, and since women are treated unequally, the view that it is about women has been created.
- It tries to fight gender stereotypes and establish equal educational and professional opportunities for both sexes.
- Ethnically specific or multicultural forms of feminism, including black feminism and intersectional feminism exist, pointing out that feminism is universal.
- Many movements include points about men's liberation, since men are also harmed by traditional gender roles.
Why do men benefit?
 - The alteration and reduction of societal expectations.
 - The improvement of parental rights.

- Male suicide rates will decrease. Note that male suicide rates increased 24% in the last 15 years during the economic crisis.

WHY: most studies mention the construction of masculinity, the expectations on men to behave in a certain way, as well as the pressure to appear strong and not sensitive.

A TRUTH: Many feminists are men and many men and women support feminism without realizing it.

Some people have associated feminism with misandry... This is a false presentation in our view.

Equality does not even exist 100% in theory... Only six countries currently give women and men equal rights (World Bank): Belgium, Denmark, France, Latvia, Luxembourg, and Sweden. Things are improving but based on CNN's calculations full equality will not be achieved until 2073.



No inequality?

In the European Parliament (2014-2019), women's representation lies at 36.2%.

In the European Commission, 12 of the 27 commissioners are women, i.e. 44.4%.

Only 34% of global managers are women (Global Gender Gap Report)

Most Southern European countries have gender pay gaps below the EU average (16.1%).

In Italy, women earn just 5.3% less than men.

But smaller pay gaps are generally the result of lower rates of female participation in the workforce, so there may be no progress.

Portugal, with 17.5% wage gap is the only Southern European country with a gender pay gap larger than the EU average.

What does the wage gap mean in real terms? Women effectively work for two months unpaid each year, compared to their male colleagues.

- Labour markets are highly segregated:
 - Women tend to work in sectors that pay less than jobs associated with men (for example, airline pilots).
 - Administrative staff is mainly comprised of women but only 6.3% of CEOs in the EU are women.
 - Many women work part-time, because they often are the primary caregivers in their families.
 - Women take parental leave much more often in comparison to men.
 - So, they interrupt their careers and reduce their earning power.
- Why are women associated with childcaring since both Maternity Leave (1992) and Paternity Leave (2010) exist?

Women vs Men in 4 fields

In 2017, university enrolment showed that 55% of women pursue a university education vs 43% of men.

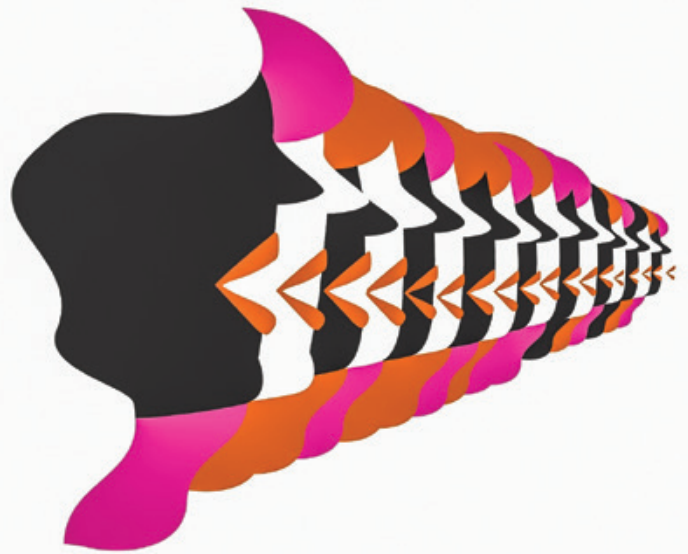
Life expectancy gender gap in 2017 was 5.2 years (83.5 years for women vs 78.3 years for men)

Gender employment gap was 11.5 percentage points in 2017 (67% of women vs 78% of men)

Gender pay gap was 16.1 percentage points in 2017



Feminism is a necessity



By Athina Avrantini

IN THEORY, the battle against gender inequality has been won: all women have the right to vote and almost half of the labor force is made up of women. However, in reality there are core societal issues that women still face today because of their gender and we believe that feminism is necessary to address them. To outline my points briefly, I will first talk about how gender stereotypes in general are harmful and I will then move to the issue of sexual violence against women.

**Stereotypes and gender norms:
how they affect us and why they are harmful**

– Denying the existence of gender stereotypes is absurd, since we see them everywhere: boys are better than girls in science, women can't drive, men are more competitive, women are more emotional, the list goes on and on.

– Now, some would argue that there are intrinsic biological differences between the two genders that make us think in fundamentally different ways. However, this view is extremely flawed and here's why:

– Yes, studies have indeed shown that the “average”

man has more traits associated with masculinity than the “average” woman and vice versa. This is a fact. But let's try to interpret that fact. According to the same studies, the difference between the “average” man and the “average” woman is significantly smaller than the differences between two randomly chosen individuals of the same gender. What this means is that, even if gender differences do exist, they are such a small aspect of our personality that they become insignificant and essentially meaningless. Moreover, this result does not imply in any way that these average differences are biological and inescapable: we argue that living in a patriarchal society is what creates

these differences in the first place.

– So let me outline how this mechanism works: starting in elementary school, we are implicitly told, over and over, that girls are more responsible, agreeable and polite, whereas boys are quick-thinkers, aggressive and strong. “Crying is for girls”, “You fight like a girl!” “Boys will be boys”. These sentiments become a self-fulfilling prophecy that affects women and men alike while growing up. Women are taught to view their role in society as defined by being nice, caring and submissive.



**SOCIAL ISSUES RELATED TO GENDER
INEQUALITY STILL PERSIST IN
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INEQUALITY IS STILL AN ISSUE AND
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I RAISE UP MY VOICE NOT SO I CAN SHOUT, BUT SO THAT THOSE WITHOUT A VOICE CAN BE HEARD... WE CANNOT SUCCEED WHEN HALF OF US ARE HELD BACK

– MALALA YOUSAFZAI, NOBEL PRIZE LAUREATE 2014

This extends to the workplace, where women tend not to receive as many promotions because they are more agreeable in comparison to men, which contributes to the wage gap.

Women become less confident in their abilities from a very young age, because society perpetuates the notion that men are more capable. At the same time, men learn that expressing their emotions is a sign of femininity which is perceived as weakness; this can have dreadful consequences, as men are less likely to seek out help when suffering from mental health issues, leading to increased suicide rates in comparison to women.

We thus desperately need to start raising girls and boys in the same way. We need to abandon gender roles: they are unnecessary, they restrict men and women, and they can even become dangerous.

2) Rape culture

– This leads me to my second point: one of the most dangerous aspects of gender roles is that women right now are over-sexualized and their sexual agency is minimal compared to men's.

Feminism is needed to combat the sexualization and objectification of women and to combat what we call rape culture.

– By rape culture we mean a society or environment whose prevailing social attitudes have the effect of normalizing or trivializing sexual assault and abuse.

– In the US, 1 in 5 women will be raped at some point in her life, and 1 in 3 will experience some form of sexual violence.

– On top of this, rape is the most under-reported crime; 63% of sexual assaults are not reported to police. Why do women not report these crimes? In most cases it is because they know that they will not be taken seriously. When a woman is raped we ask questions like “what was she wearing?”, “had she been drinking?”, “what was she doing all alone at night?”. We are essentially blaming and shaming the victim instead of the perpetrator.

In a 2018 trial in Ireland, the lawyer of a man accused of rape cited the lacy underwear worn by a 17-year-old rape survivor as a sign that she had consented to sexual intercourse. The assumption that the way a woman dresses has any impact on her willingness to have sex with a man is inherently misogynistic and does not respect women's right to bodily autonomy.

– Consider the case of Brock Turner. Brock Turner was a student at Stanford in 2015, when he sexually assaulted an intoxicated and unconscious woman. He was sentenced to only 6 months in jail because a more severe punishment would “negatively impact his future” as the judge said. He was released after 3 months. Is this what justice looks like? Do we as a society value the future of a rapist more than the rights of the woman he raped and the safety of his potential future victims?

– We need to change our attitude towards sexual abuse and victim blaming, otherwise rapists will continue getting away with these horrendous acts.

– Before I wrap this up, I feel the need to point out that yes, men are victims of rape too: the focus of my analysis was on women simply because they represent 91% of sexual assault victims. But let's talk about sexual violence against men: Male sexual assault has historically been shrouded in secrecy and stigma. Our culture values invulnerability and denial of pain as essential qualities of “manliness.”

Guys are not allowed to admit that they have been sexually assaulted and abused, out of fear that they will be perceived as weak, effeminate and not “macho” enough. Our society's strict gender norms make women extremely vulnerable to sexual assault, while they deter both male and female rape survivors from speaking up.

– To conclude my points, social issues related to gender inequality such as harmful gender roles and rape culture still persist in western societies. Thus, gender inequality is still an issue and feminism is necessary.



The role of International Non-Governmental Organizations on the world stage

By Adamantia Alevra

IN THE PAST 40 YEARS the number of International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs) has increased significantly from around 2000 to 8000. The diversity of INGOs has allowed them to have an extensive function on the world stage often to the extent of facilitating relations between states or even preventing large transnational corporations from carrying out profitable yet harmful practices. Before considering the different viewpoints on the impact of INGOs on the world stage, we should ask the question: What exactly are INGOs? International non-governmental organizations are regarded as organizations that are not-for-profit, not dependent on government funds, have a fixed organizational structure, have members in at least three countries

and work transnationally. They are known as civil society as they operate in the third sector of the economy. Their role on the international stage is indisputably significant, yet while some tend to pinpoint the positive impact INGOs have on the society, others tend to question their legitimacy and ability to determine eligibility for certain rights.

Those arguing in favor of the positive role of INGOs on the world stage underline their potential in challenging conventional power politics and shifting the power from the hands of the states and transnational companies to those of the people, not only in need, but also the people fighting for a more equal and sustainable society. For this reason, INGOs are seen as a legitimizing force in the global arena, as they do not pursue national interests but are instead seen as advocates for affected groups worldwide. With regards to transnational corporations, INGOs ensure their moral



ARE THEY PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST?

and positive action via heavy campaigning or by participating in the formation of documents that restrict and regulate the role of TNCs. Greenpeace, for example, an environmental INGO, forced Shell, the transnational oil corporation, to abandon



its plans to dump the Brent Spar platform at sea and, instead, dismantle the facility on shore to diminish the release of pollution in the seas. In the same way, INGOs regulate the actions of TNCs in diplomacy. In diplomacy, INGOs are often

active behind the scenes participating in the drafting of international rules and norms and specifically they establish standards for transnational corporations. In the case of the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) INGO representatives contributed to formulating international standards concerning sustainable forest management and to developing a certification system for a sustainable forest and product chain. In addition to transnational corporations, INGO contribution has an impact on states too. Their work makes it easier for states to create relations, regulate these relations, eliminate tensions, as well as carry out diplomatic activity as NGOs serve as experts, diplomats and activists for specific issues or groups, protesters and activists. For instance, INGOs participated in drafting the Rome Statute, the international treaty that established the International Criminal Court. The negotiations were conducted by government representatives, but they unofficially relied on advice and information from INGOs. In their role as experts and diplomats, they cooperate closely with states or even represent governments such as during the West African Ebola Epidemic in 2014 when it became clear that the INGO *Médecins Sans Frontières* had the necessary expertise and human resources needed to set up and run



treatment centers which states lacked. The “cosmopolitan camp” in this way supports that NGOs are legions of not-for-profit groupings that fan out across the world, intent on capacity building, reducing poverty and ensuring that the voices



of the most marginalized are heard. In this viewpoint, reaction against NGOs seems ungrounded and irrational.

Yet, some question the legitimacy of INGOs and the nature of their work. Their so-called “help” is seen by sceptics as an attempt towards self-profit. Indeed, critics consider the NGO relationship with states detrimental in NGOs remaining unbiased and not driven by the agenda of these states. And why is it so? While NGOs are supposed to be independent from government funding, in reality, contributions from governmental and intergovernmental aid agencies and from corporate donors often form the largest parts of their income. Although NGOs still deny



WE HAVE BECOME A PART OF THE PROBLEM RATHER THAN THE SOLUTION.



Even the minimal help that they generate in many plagued areas of the world and the heavy campaigning they carry out to bring about change is significant enough to claim their importance on the world stage and support their role.

this, their dependence on these funds evidently influences their outlook, making them increasingly accommodated to the wishes of their donors. Indeed, in a recent article Dhananjayan Sriskandarajah, a representative of Civicus, a global network of civil society organizations and activists, wrote: 'We have become a part of the problem rather than the solution. Our corporatization has steered us towards activism-lite, a version of our work rendered palatable to big business and capitalist states. Not only does this approach threaten no-one in power, but it stifles grassroots activism with its weighty monoculturalism.' Admitting to the distraught nature of these organizations claiming to alleviate poverty and cruelty in the world, while striving for a better world may be the rhetoric, but, critics argue little that is lasting has been achieved by NGO activism in practice.

At the same time, the legitimacy of NGOs is not only questioned because of their financial sources but also due to their political nature. Like governments NGOs operate in democratic settings. Unlike governments, INGOs are not elected, so they lack a democratic mandate for taking decisions that are mandatory for others. For example, sometimes INGOs take binding decisions – not for the entire society but for certain groups. Such cases are organizations that implement aid programmes and determine who receives support and who does not for example. As INGOs are not democratic organizations, many question if they have the legitimacy to act in such a way and make these decisions. Finally, while INGOs are questioned in principle, some actions that have been carried out by them have also come under critique. For example, after the geno-

cide in Rwanda in 1994 INGOs working in refugee camps in Goma realized that these camps not only worked as shelters to victims, but they also served as meeting places for perpetrators of violence. Nonetheless, many INGOs chose to proceed with their operations and remained quiet. Only a few withdrew

missing out on an important opportunity to stay in the business of helping refugees. In this way INGOs made it evident that what mattered to them was not to generate a positive impact on society but instead to stay relevant, ignoring and covering up evident problems and the negative impact of their work, due to the knowledge that other INGOs would quickly take their place and pocket donor money. Overall, the appearance of a virtuous nature in NGOs has been continuously challenged by critics who point out these inconsistencies in their principles and their practical work.

In conclusion, the presence of INGOs on the world stage continues and is even widely significant and decisive for countries, transnational corporations and individuals. While some experts praise INGOs' cosmopolitan role, others express skepticism. Indeed, in recent years the perspective that most INGOs do more harm than help seems to rule. Yet, this does not have an impact on the increasing number of global NGOs and one could argue that even the minimal help that they generate in many plagued areas of the world and the heavy campaigning they carry out to bring about change is significant enough to claim their importance on the world stage and support their role. **V**

UNLIKE GOVERNMENTS, INGOS ARE NOT ELECTED, SO THEY LACK A DEMOCRATIC MANDATE FOR TAKING DECISIONS THAT ARE MANDATORY FOR OTHERS.



Wes Anderson

By Maria-Anastasia Filaretou


THE ANSWER TO THE QUESTION of what constitutes a great film holds great ambiguity and uncertainty. In most cases, a film's grandeur is a solely subjective matter despite the few films in cinematic history that have managed to make people reach a consensus addressing their greatness. Accordingly, Wes Anderson's technical precision, aesthetics and recurring motifs help compose a series of original and nostalgic films that, in my opinion, comprise some of the best films of the 21st Century.

Wes Anderson was born in Houston, Texas and had to cope with his parents' separation at just the age of eight. His misbehaviour, an inevitable result of his parents' divorce, transformed into creative endeavors as he began directing movies starring himself and his younger brothers. Being an avid reader he often wrote and set up his own complex play productions at school, marking him as a creative individual from his early years.

The director's recognizable individual style, however, was gradually developed from his first film "Bottle Rocket" to his latest stop-motion animated film "Isle of Dogs". His style consists of characteristic techniques used in a number of different aspects that help comprise a typical Wes Anderson film. One of these aspects is dialogue. It's a challenge to attempt and describe the deadpan delivery of absurd lines, comical delivery of serious lines and idiosyncratic language. The major element overlooking all others in the delivery of lines and the lines themselves is the over-formalization of dialogue in cases that it wouldn't be formalized. In simpler words, politeness is used in speech when it wouldn't usually be required. This in turn has a comical effect due to the absurdity of the situation.

Another repeating motif in his films are the rich microworlds he creates and surrounds his characters with, that have the tendency to acquire people interested in the arts and greater philosophical matters. In this imaginative world, objects, locations and articles of clothing or entire outfits are repeatedly presented, that define personalities, relationships and conflicts. Thus, a type of "material synecdoche" (materials representing feelings, personalities etc.) is created that subsequently helps establish the main traits of the people and aspects in these microworlds.



The most significant characteristic trait of Anderson's films is the accurate symmetry, intricately constructed scenes and specific colour patterns that indicate the influence of his father's job, seeing as he worked in an advertising company. He is known for creating specific aesthetic styles, tones and moods that support and emphasize recurring nostalgic themes in his films. Emotions of longing, insecurity, passion etc. are greatly communicated in his works through the use of specific colour patterns for objects, clothing, and locations rather than the stereotypical emotional dialogue. This, together with the "material synecdoche", closely relates but ends up contradicting the nature of aesthetic experience in which an experience of an object can be deemed aesthetic only if there is an ascribed value to the object that is solely aesthetic. In this case, the aesthetic color patterns in his films acquire a deeper meaning and value rather than the superficiality that seems to surround them at first glance. Although in film school directors are taught to avoid symmetry, claiming that asymmetrical shots help develop a natural visual dynamism to them, Anderson follows a continuous pattern of placing the most significant aspect of a scene in the middle of the frame. The perfect symmetry that feels staged complements the fashionable pseudo-reality and comical effects of deadpan delivery of emotional lines, cultivating a style undeniably linked to the director's name. 

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How Compatible are Democracy & Capitalism?



By Konstantinos Gkiokas

ARGUABLY, DEMOCRACY AND CAPITALISM HAVE PROVEN themselves to be the most successful systems of political and economic order. Over the past century, these systems have co-existed successfully in the majority of the developed countries excluding the Soviet-Union and the Chinese economy of the twenty first century. Even though there is a degree of strong interdependence between them, historical evidence confirms that capitalist can exist independently whereas no developed democracy has ever flourished under different economic systems. Capitalist dictatorships in North America, Singapore, the People's Republic of China and National Socialist Germany all are examples of capitalism thriving outside of a democratic context. Taking that into consideration the following approach will examine the extent to which capitalism is a challenge for democracy and more specifically to a government's ability to function properly.

In examining the relationship of capitalism and democracy it is important to consider the different principles that lie at the core of the two systems and then make a comparison between them. In doing so, differences seem to outnumber similarities between the two systems. On one side, democracy is a system that embraces debate and majority participation in decision-making whereas the wheel of capitalism is profit and revenue generation. Meanwhile democracy supports equal rights and equal opportunities, capitalist decisions and their implementation seem to bring rise to social and economic inequality (look the polarization in the US social classes where the middle class starts to vanish giving its place to poverty. Lastly, on one side, particular emphasis is given to equal opportunities and equal

duties, the other side seems to set aside equal participation and minority protection, something particularly prevalent in L.E.D.C's (Less Economically Developed Countries) where cheap labor is being exploited by large corporations.

However, given their long period of coexistence, the two systems share a number of congruences. Competition and electoral decisions play a key role in both systems. In particular, traditional economic theory embraces healthy competition as one of the most favorable aspects of capitalism since it promotes a greater quality and more advanced methods in the production of a product. Similarly, competition between opposing political parties is equally important in politics. Different approaches and advanced methods when dealing with certain political, economic or social issues incentivize each political party to promote its political agenda. Moreover, capitalism and democracy have as a common enemy uncontrollable agglomeration.

As most economists argue the concentration of wealth in single firms leads to inefficiency in democracy the concentration of power in one particular individual or institution is undesirable as it is against the democratic values. Lastly, the most important aspect of the two systems that has kept their relationship stable for so long is their need for each other. When an economy faces recession or capitalistic procedures seem to go off track, the government often feels the need to intervene, thereby keeping the economy stable. An excellent case in point is the economic crisis of 2008 when the American government had to step up and help in the economic recovery. Democracy on the other hand is also heavily reliant on capitalism. Economic growth will ultimately lead to sustainable growth, to a prosperous society. It is now clear that the two systems may face a number of in-

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compatibilities and contrasts in their core values, but their sharing points balance the scale.

In addressing the thesis statement and explaining why capitalism proves to be hurtful to democracy it is necessary to define what kind of capitalism is the one being examined. The aspects that are briefly described above are very general and applicable to all forms of capitalism. The form of interest is *financial capitalism*. The most common form widely known. It is the one not done with the production and exchange of goods but rather with money, conducted by brokers, banks, investor and capital markets. These agents have experienced a massive expansion over the last decade with the assets of banks and the profits of bankers rising exponentially. Globalization has greatly boosted this form of capitalism since global capital flows have increased massively.

Considering the historical framework, his specific “type” of capitalism proved to be challenging to democracy in the 1980s and early 90s when it experienced significant deregulation by governments internationally. Beginning with Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan who both promoted heavy deregulations in the economy, privatization, as well as cuts in welfare benefits (e.g. health insurance). These policies valued the market forces, free trade and promoted productive inequality as well as individualism, turning away from equality and strict government interven-



Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan were widely regarded as political and economic soul-mates. Both should be credited with revolutionizing and reforming their respective economies.

tion. These policies were a result of the previous Keynesian welfare system exhibited by both the UK and the

US, which had brought heavy unemployment in the 1970s. More importantly it was a result of the rapidly growing “IT movement” which led to a significant advance in the production and consumption. By 1970 the GDP of the US rose by more than 10%, following a tremendous explosion of the industrial sector meanwhile the assets of banks and the profits of bankers rose exponentially. Over the next years this rapid growth of capitalism was boosted by new technology which was faster and more efficient accompanied with the emergence of competition in the market led to a market which was unable to operate sustainably. Firms like Google, Amazon, Apple flourished

during that time. The importance of the economy and the economic agents (banks, investors, tech firms etc.) of *financial capitalism* gained strong political influence, starting to affect the state and democratic procedures. The global financial crisis was an indication that in the current situation, a crisis in capitalism translated into a crisis for democracy.

Having identified the strong interconnection that has been established it is time to investigate the reasons for which capitalism poses a threat to democracy. The first argument in favor of this view is that the increasing socioeconomic inequality and poverty rising from capitalistic procedures leads to asymmetric political participation. This issue manifests itself in the most common of all forms of political participations, in the elections. It has become apparent that the lower classes in the US and in Europe are not participating as they did ten years ago. In numbers, although 80% of people with annual income exceeding 100,00\$ state that they vote, only 33% of the ones with income below this amount actually participate in the national elections. Consequently, lower income classes do not participate in other democratic processes leading to a form of “elitist democracy”.

This attitude towards political participation is a result of two factors. One is the increasing social selectivity by political figures who turn toward the wealthier classes as a source of political and financial support. It is very difficult for a politician to propose or support legislation against the wealthy that will damage their donors’ interests. Unfortunately, money plays an important role in politics. Politicians not only seek donors to promote their campaigns but are afraid of the large corporations and the influence they have on the political procedures and thus fear the political cost that their decisions carry. As most politicians, especially in the US, tend to support legislation in favor of the upper and middle-class turning away from the interests of the lower classes. Secondly, there has been a significant absence of “catch-all” parties, labor unions or other collective organizations that provided the lower classes with important political influence. Thus, the lower classes are not represented in most parliaments and either avoid participating in the political life or tend towards populist politicians. Closing, it is evident that economic equality translates into social and political inequality proving the effect on democracy and the state.



Another reason for which capitalism is often harmful to democracy is that during times of *financialization* the state becomes more vulnerable. Financialization can be defined as the introduction of new “financial services”. This means that profit will occur through financial means such as investment rather than with traditional commodity production. It promotes the power of banks, large investors and hedge funds and increases the vulnerability of the state to them. The financial sector occupied a dominant position in the position in most econ-

omies, a far more important one than the industrial sector. For example, in 2018, the automobile brand Porsche earned more profits through the speculation* of financial products than its core sector, the production of cars. Financialization however, not only increased the dependence of industrial production on the financial industry but it also increased the dependence of the society and the state to it. Governments are dependent on economic growth and more importantly being voted out of power is now in the hands of big investors and foreign creditors. After the financial crisis of 2008 many governments felt obliged to support the big banks (especially in Europe) despite being held responsible for most of the damage claiming that they were “too big to fail” illustrating the strong dependence the states had on them and their well-being. In the current framework the governments act as a “policy takers” rather than “rule makers” and have totally submitted to the financial sector. As Angela Merkel highlighted, we experience a “democracy conformist capitalism” when what we should aim for is a “market conformist democracy”, meaning that

democracy is subordinate to the market and it should adjust to it. Finally, democracy submitting to the market seriously affects the power of the state and even though this phenomenon is not necessarily a negative aspect of the relation between the two systems it highlights the vulnerability of the states towards the financial sector.

Lastly, democratic bodies’ procedures are unable to keep up with the time constraints of financial capitalism. One of the most astonishing aspects of capitalism is speed; large-scale transactions are made in a friction of a second, as the American

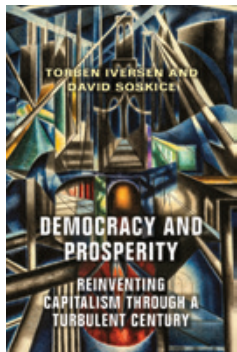
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Angela Merkel

* *Speculation* is the purchase of an asset (a commodity, goods, or real estate) with the hope that it will become more valuable in the near future

economist often calls it “an empire of speed”. By contrast parliamentary procedures are time consuming, and clearly unable to keep up with the rapid pace of economic activities. The need for faster political decision-making is especially important in times of crisis when the intervention of the government is imperative. The most recent example is in the economic crisis of 2008 that called for immediate and concerted action by all member states of the European Union. The demand for faster political decisions results in thin decisions which may result in serious consequences. It is thus clear, that the slow and time-consuming democratic procedures are not in a position to meet the needs of rapid capitalism, adding to the argument of incompatibility.

If democracy and capitalism are so incompatible, what explains their long co-existence around the world? An answer



to this question was given by the economists. Iversen and Soskice who claim that “capitalism and democracy are potentially mutually supporting with two stabilizing pillars”: a strong government and a sizeable middle class. According to the two analysts the main reason for the long history of the two systems is a strong government that can protect the society from the inefficiencies of capitalism and at the same time constrain it. This

includes making sure that the market remains contestable through regulated barriers of entry, when a monopoly is concerned. Also, the government constrains or protects the labor unions and assures the protection of the workers rights. Thus, government intervention is vital for the “peaceful” coexistence of the two systems.

The second, reason according to Iversen and Soskice is the sizeable middle classes. Governments can create an environment that offers equal education to all citizens and most importantly encourage the “development of frontier industries” that demand skilled workers. When this occurs, the middle class understand the benefits of capitalism while it relies on the government for this economic growth. In this way, through the middle class, democracy and capitalism find a middle ground where the government can utilize the opportunities provided by capitalism for its own political growth and to generate economic growth. This requires heavy taxing on the citizens so that the government can support the education and the infrastructure needed. Undoubtedly, the middle class is a key factor to the co-existence of the two systems since not only does it have political influence and participation but is also the oil that fuels the engines of capitalism. It is important to note that as the middle class in most economies starts to dissipate the relationship between capital and democracy will start to worsen. This is becoming evident in the US.

In conclusion, this article examines the extent to which democracy and capitalism are compatible. It is apparent that the two systems share more differences in their core principles than common points. Despite this they



CAPITALISM HAS PROSPERED UNDER BOTH DEMOCRATIC AND AUTHORITARIAN REGIMES BUT SO FAR, DEMOCRACY HAS EXISTED ONLY WITH CAPITALISM.

have existed together for the past two centuries and have prospered. It is important to clarify that the article is condemning neither of the two systems and it is not a call for change but merely a spark for further skepticism. Closing the examination, the last point that anyone has to bear in mind when thinking about the relation of the two systems is that capitalism has prospered under both democratic and authoritarian regimes but so far, democracy has existed only with capitalism. V

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What is the Human Life Protection Act of Alabama?

The Content of the Legislation, What it proposes and the Controversy surrounding it

By: Melpomeni Kourti

With November 2019, we should all keep in mind that from its first day, the Human Life Protection Act, also known as House Bill 314, will be in place in Alabama. If you have been following international news since the Spring of 2019, you probably have heard of the Human Life Protection Act, which the State of Alabama decided to pass during May 2019. At the time, it was a huge controversy, covered by news agencies worldwide. Since the Bill is about to take place, in an effort to understand this legislation better and raise awareness on the issue I decided to write this article, explaining what the House Bill 314 stands for, what it showcases as well as whether or not it is justified.

The term of abortion is defined as “the deliberate ending of a pregnancy at an early stage”. In other words, it is the action of terminating the life of an unborn child.

THE DEBATE ON “PRO-LIFE” VS. “PRO-CHOICE” IS STILL GOING ON, NEVERTHELESS, THE CONTROVERSIAL ACT PROTECTING HUMAN LIVES IN ALABAMA WAS PASSED AND SIGNED.

Abortions have been the subject of a much heated debate since many believe that they are considered as murders of unborn children. Others suggest that if an abortion takes place at an early stage, it cannot be deemed as a malicious act, due to the fact that the fetus is not yet a baby, nor a person. In this debate entered the House Bill 314, which passed in May 15th, 2019, by the Republican governor of Alabama Kay Ivey as well as the chambers of Alabama Legislature. The Bill has now been signed into law and therefore the state of Alabama is now sided with the supporters of “Pro-Life”. The Bill suggests that abortion in the State of Alabama will be classified as a felony offence and would even go as far as charging the doctors performing the operation with imprisonment. Abortions are permitted only in the case where the life of the mother or the child is in danger and otherwise when the fetus is not able to survive. Abortions can also take place when an unborn child is diagnosed has a lethal abnormality and thus resulting into death. Therefore, abortions are not allowed by the law they are now classified as illegal activities. The cases of rape and incest were not excluded in the House Bill. Efforts were made to allow abortions in both cases but were rejected at all times.

The Human Life Protection Act was met with quite the criticism. On the one hand, it was praised by the supporters of Anti-Abortion. It is believed that the new legislation is trying to save as many lives as possible through the strict law passed. The majority of the Chambers, agreeing on the Bill, justified their decision by saying that this law showcases the beliefs of most Alabama citizens, that every human life is precious and gift of God, and thus should



People gather at the Alabama State Capitol during the March for Reproductive Freedom against the state's new abortion law, the Alabama Human Life Protection Act, in Montgomery, Alabama, U.S. May 19, 2019

not be terminated, even in the cases of rape and incest. Moreover, they suggest that as soon as the heartbeat of the fetus is heard, the fetus is known a person, with Human Rights and thus making the termination of the pregnancy a murder. On the other hand, the Bill was met with protest by many favoring abortion, also referred to as “Pro-Choice”, the majority of which were Democrat. They argued the case that no women should have to keep the baby of her rapist as well as many women do not wish would do get pregnant. Moreover, in case of incest, no child should be born with this high of a risk of genetic abnormality. In addition, many physicians have come out and suggested that it is hard to determine the specific time when a fetus is experiencing heartbeat. Democrat and former presidential nominee Hillary Clinton suggested that this Anti-Abortion Bill is a direct attack against women, another way of limiting their freedoms.

The debate on “Pro-Life” vs. “Pro-Choice” is still going on, nevertheless, the controversial Act protecting human lives in Alabama was passed and signed, and therefore, depriving women in an entire state of their right to choose whether they want to become mothers or not. Many states have since followed a similar path to the most

restraining anti-abortion bill, ever signed in the US. States including Missouri, Georgia, Mississippi and Louisiana have adopted similar bills, banning abortions as soon as doctors can detect the heartbeat of the fetus.

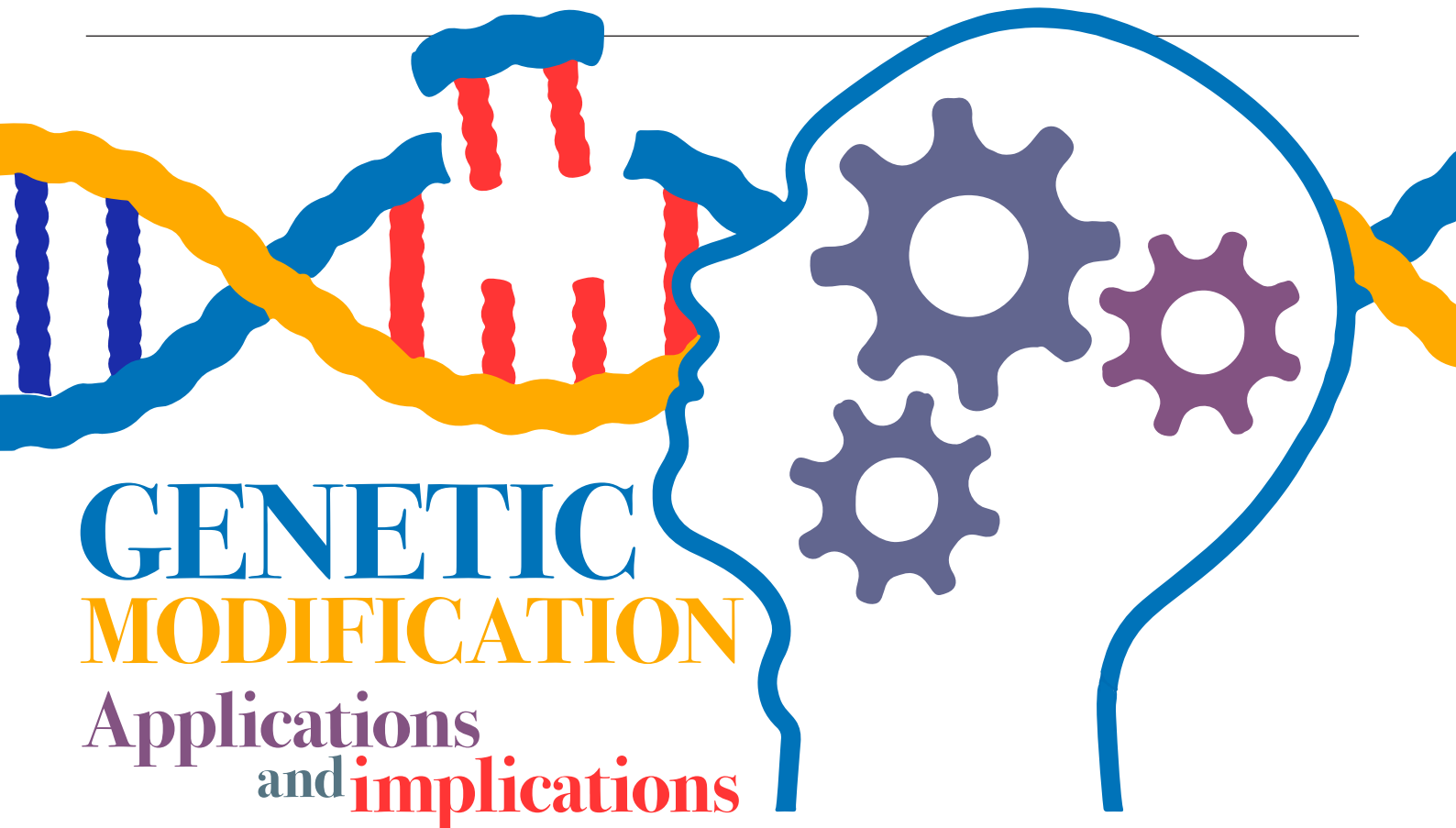
To sum up, in about 3 weeks, what is known as “The most restrictive anti-abortion bill of the nation” will be up and running. The backlash that came after the bill only managed to open the conversation but failed at taking action against this new legislation. This puts an end to abortions in the state of Alabama and thus an end in freedom of a woman to choose whether she wants to keep her baby or not. We shall now wait and see what will come out of this debatable law.

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GENETIC MODIFICATION

Applications and implications

By Stylianos-Michail Lazanakis

HONG KONG, November 2018,
Second International Summit
on Human Genome Editing



He Jiankui
at the
Human
Genome
Editing
Conference
in Hong Kong

Among the speakers is He Jiankui, a Chinese, biophysics researcher and associate professor at the Southern University of Science and Technology (SUSTech) in Shenzhen, China. *On the 26th he announces that he had successfully altered the genomes of two embryos which were born, healthy, the month prior. He claims that, before implanting them in the mother's womb, he had removed, using a revolutionary gene-editing technique called CRISPR/Cas-9, the CCR5 gene that enables HIV to enter and infect the immune system cells. He stated that the removal of said gene would protect against possible HIV infections in the future.* However, though he did present some of his results at the summit, not all of his them were published nor did he do so in a scientific journal or any other sort of publication.

THE RESPONSE he received was far from positive. The meagre evidence he presented, for one, raised suspicions concerning the validity of his results with many believing his research to be flawed and perhaps dangerous for the babies' future health. His actions were also condemned by several scientists and ethicists and many expressed their concerns with regards to both the

biological and ethical repercussions of his research. Mercy Darnovsky, Executive Director of the Centre for Genetics and Society (an organization concerned with incorporating human rights perspectives in the advancements of biotechnologies) stated "If true, this amounts to unethical and reckless experimentation on human beings and a grave abuse of human rights". Though it may not be illegal to deliberately modify an embryo's genes in China, a group of

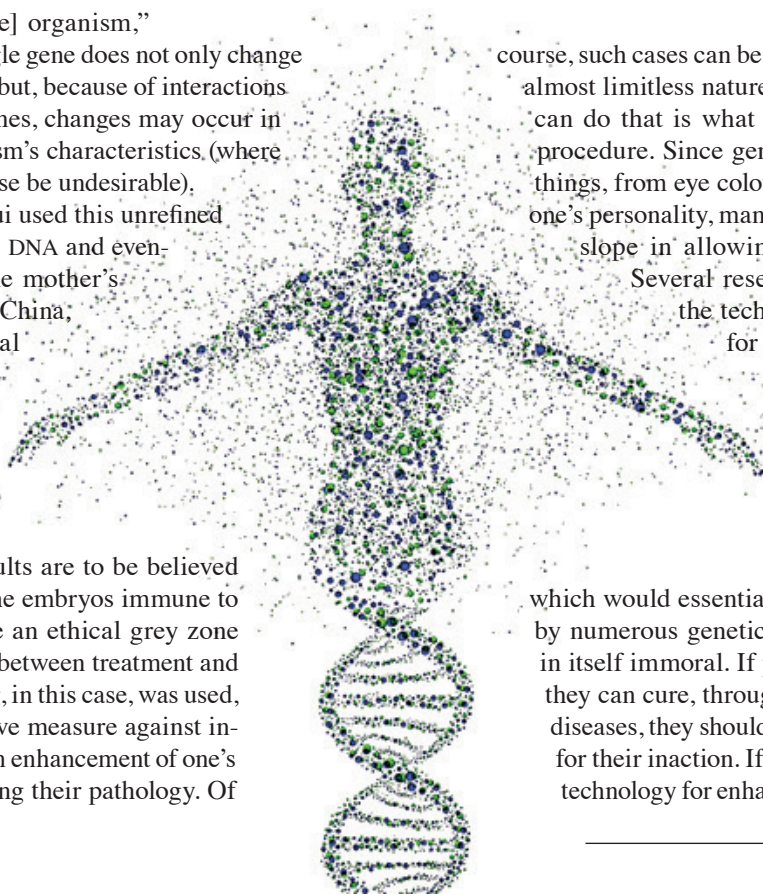
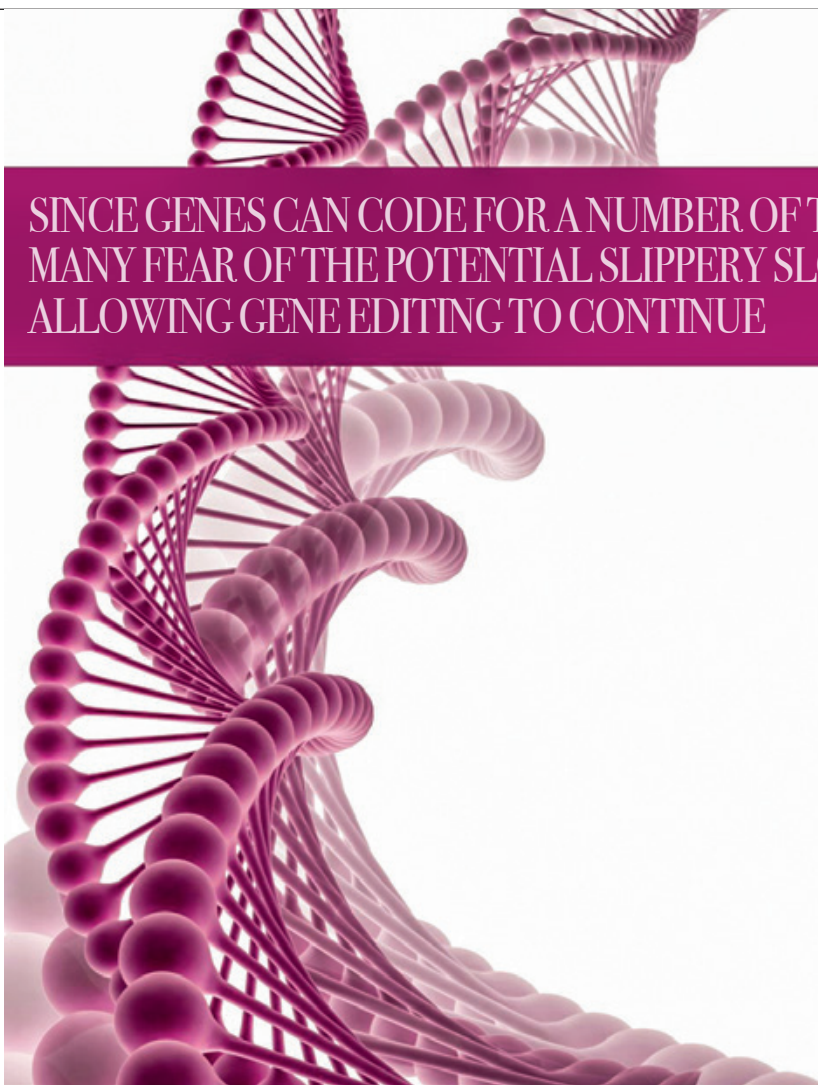
122 Chinese scientists issued a statement calling He's actions "a huge blow to the global reputation and development of Chinese science".

So why so much backlash? For one, there is the biological aspect of the research. The method used to edit the gene, CRISPR/Cas-9, is still in its infancy and it seems that more problems arise when altering the genetic makeup of an individual than are solved. In a study published in *Nature Biotechnology*, researchers concluded that CRISPR-Cas9 might cause more damage to DNA than previously thought. Feng Zhang, who was in the group of scientists that laid down the groundwork for the gene editing technique, noted that, though removing the CCR5 gene may indeed prevent HIV infection in the embryos, it is also very likely that it increases their susceptibility to the West Nile virus infection (an illness that originally seriously affected only 1 in 150 people who had it) and possibly even influenza. Mazhar Adli, a geneticist at the University of Virginia School of Medicine, stipulated that "Deleting a single gene may not only alter how other genes are going to function but also may alter the overall behaviour of the cell and the phenotype of [the] organism," meaning that editing a single gene does not only change one specific characteristic but, because of interactions between the rest of the genes, changes may occur in the entire set of an organism's characteristics (where some changes may of course be undesirable).

The fact that He Jiankui used this unrefined technique to edit embryos' DNA and eventually implant them in the mother's womb is not only illegal in China, under a 2003 ministerial guidance to IVF clinics, but also gives rise to several ethical conundrums when considering possible medical applications

of his research. If his results are to be believed and he did indeed make the embryos immune to the HIV virus, they create an ethical grey zone concerning the difference between treatment and enhancement. Gene editing, in this case, was used, essentially, as a preventative measure against infection which constitutes an enhancement of one's immunity rather than curing their pathology. Of

SINCE GENES CAN CODE FOR A NUMBER OF THINGS MANY FEAR OF THE POTENTIAL SLIPPERY SLOPE IN ALLOWING GENE EDITING TO CONTINUE



course, such cases can be made for vaccines, but it is the almost limitless nature of what genetic modification can do that is what concerns most critics of the procedure. Since genes can code for a number of things, from eye colour to even, to a certain extent, one's personality, many fear of the potential slippery slope in allowing gene editing to continue.

Several researchers believe that, though the technology may initially be used for medical purposes in treating genetic diseases, it may also lead to being used for enhancement and even cosmetic reasons. In contrast to this, however, many contend that possessing a powerful technology which would essentially alleviate suffering caused by numerous genetic diseases and not using it, is in itself immoral. If people stand by knowing that they can cure, through preventative methods, such diseases, they should be held morally reprehensible for their inaction. If the concern is about using the technology for enhancement or cosmetic purposes,



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then appropriate regulations can be put in place to prevent such actions. Another aspect, however, that has to be considered in this debate is the economical one. Several scientists and ethicists believe that such technologies will only be accessible to wealthier individuals. This, they say, will lead to an even greater disparity in accessing healthcare between higher and lower classes something which is, of course, very controversial.

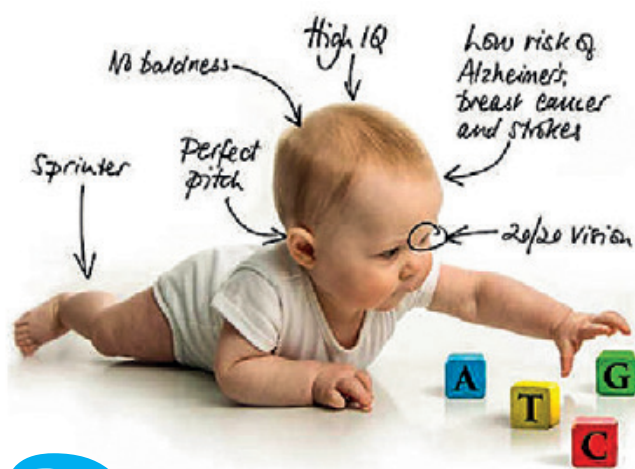
The scepticism about human genome editing is not something recent. In 1975 the Asilomar Conference on Recombinant DNA took place to discuss the issues that arose with new biotechnological advancements of the time and specifically involved putting in place regulations that would guarantee safe use of recombinant DNA (i.e. DNA formed by the combination of DNA sequences from different sources). Strict guidelines were put in place in limiting experimental procedures that involve recombinant DNA and could lead to harmful effects on human health and the environment. This also led to a ban on human germline editing, the efficacy of which was challenged by the recent case of He Jiankui, something that should be considered given that it is a tool to maintaining the public's trust in research on DNA modification.



One of the biggest conundrums, however, that arises in this debate is the distinction between enhancement and therapy, which is not as clear-cut as it may seem to be. This is because finding a suitable definition for “disease” to act as a stepping stone in developing appropriate policies and regulations for genetic technologies, is far from simple. On the one hand it can be proposed that diseases are mental or physiological states that society deems to be negative. Although this definition may work in cases such as heart disease or cancer, this certainly cannot be applied in cases such as homosexuality (which is not classified as a disease) as societies’ opinions of them differ significantly throughout the world. Another possible definition could go along the lines that a disease involves a state which is caused by some part of the body failing to perform its usual biological function. Again, this is supported in diseases like cirrhosis where the liver fails to function properly due to excess alcohol consumption. The same definition, however, cannot be applied in cases where said “disease” does not impede on the progress of human lives in any way and is absolutely irrelevant to human progress. If scientific findings were published connecting, for example, homosexuality to the malfunction of a specific area of the brain, should these findings outweigh the fact that many homosexual people live perfectly normal lives as it is?

Though, presently, implanting a genetically modified embryo in a woman’s womb is illegal in most of Europe and in the United States, some shifts in values concerning this issue are already noticeable. The Nuffield Council on Bioethics, a UK-based organization which investigates bioethical issues that arise from advancements in biology and medicine, published a report stating that modifying an embryo’s genome could be “morally permissible” if it was beneficial for the child and did not contribute to societal disparities and divisions. The line in their statement about it being to the child’s interests is, however, significantly vague which is why the report centred around stimulating thought and discussion on the appropriate methods by which research in this field should be conducted, the repercussions of it, and what it might mean for society. It did not in any way call for adjustments in UK law for allowing genetically modified babies but it should be noted that the problem has taken up a new light in which discussion on the possibility of using CRISPR/Cas9 on human genes is not discarded and is even considered a viable choice for treating disease. In the words of Marcy Darnovsky (mentioned earlier) “In practical terms, they have thrown down a red carpet for unrestricted use of inheritable genetic engineering, and a gilded age in which some are treated as genetic ‘haves’ and the rest of us as ‘have-nots.’”

So is there any hope for the CRISPR technology? Yes. The safest options are in the form of editing somatic cells which will not cause genetic changes to be passed down generations unlike in the case of He Jiankui’s research. Professor Charpentier, director at the Max Planck Institute for Infection Biology in Berlin and co-founder of Crispr Therapeutics, along with Vertex Pharmaceuticals, is com-



CRISPR/CAS9

To what extent it will be used in the way it was by He Jiankui and what measures governments will take in regulating gene editing?

mencing trials in gene therapy seeking to target sickle cell disease and beta-thalassaemia, serious inherited blood disorders. The technology could also be used in treating inherited eye diseases with many companies such as Editas Medicine, cofounded by Feng Zhang, opting to combat LCA10, an inherited disease that causes significant vision loss or even blindness.

Gene editing technology continues to be a considerably promising field which could make several contributions to science and medicine. However, it still remains to be seen to what extent it will be used in the way it was by He Jiankui and what measures governments will take in regulating gene editing. China’s Ministry of Science and Technology has ordered research institutes to suspend all of He’s scientific projects. This may be a temporary solution to the problem but gene modification will persist in making its way into medicine and society and it is up to the people and the governments who represent them to decide which course should be taken regarding the issue. **V**

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Looking Back to Plan Ahead

By Filippa Samella

SINCE THE LATE 1970s the ozone layer is steadily thinning in the stratosphere. The big scare we remember as kids, when everyone was warning of the ozone hole and prophesizing the end of the world as we know it may have passed, but the problem hasn't been solved yet. The banning of CFCs, the most aggressive culprits of ozone depletion, has decreased the rate by which the layer was thinning, yet it continues to suffer from our inconsiderate lifestyle.

What the ozone layer does is block the harmful Ultraviolet (UV) rays of the sun from penetrating the atmosphere and reaching the ground. At ground level sunlight is 44% visible light, 3% ultraviolet (with the Sun at its zenith), and the remaining in the infrared region (IR) of the spectrum. The sun emits three bands of UV: UV-A, UV-B and UV-C, going from soft to hard in alphabetical order. UV-A is so weak that it does not get absorbed at all, makes up 95% of the radiation that reaches the earth, and has little to no effects on living tissues. UV-B is mostly absorbed, the amount depending on the cloud cover and atmospheric conditions, and makes up the small remainder of radiation that manages to reach the earth. Although more dangerous than UV-A, it is essential to the development of life, as it affects most of the plants' hormones.

The shorter and most energetic bands that make up UV-C are completely absorbed by the ozone layer as well as molecular oxygen (O₂), as they are particularly harmful to living tissues: they damage their DNA and mess up the cell cycle.

Why do we care? Well, sunbathing and playing volleyball on the beach without a

healthy ozone layer to protect us from above, increase exponentially the probability of skin cancer and impaired vision. UV-B and UV-C rays either break down our cells' reproductive pattern by tampering with their genetic code, or simply "fry" them. The former will lead to the skin cancer also known as "melanoma" a name that brings terror to a mother's eyes, while the latter will burden our vision since nerve cells are unable to regenerate and, being particularly sensitive and exposed in the eye, once "fried" can't really heal.

Between 2000 and 2010, the diagnoses in skin cancer increased drastically - proof of a problem developed through years of careless exposure. These last years 9 out of 10 cases of melanoma in the UK could have been prevented by avoiding sunbeds and enjoying the sun more carefully, while today more people are diagnosed with skin cancer each year in the U.S. than all other cancers combined.

These numbers are really scary, and if we do not change our attitude and lifestyle, scientists warn that life on earth will only become more and more unsustainable.

**BETWEEN 2000 AND 2010, THE DIAGNOSES
IN SKIN CANCER INCREASED DRASTICALLY -
PROOF OF A PROBLEM DEVELOPED
THROUGH YEARS OF CARELESS EXPOSURE.**

This threat to sustainability derives from the effect on the environment much more than that on humans, even though it does not directly come to mind. Starting from producers at the bottom of the food chain, the malfunctioning of their genetic code can create a domino effect that will make the ecosystem collapse. The Montreal protocol in 1987 and more recently the Paris Agreement are a collaborative effort to revert the atmosphere to its natural state.

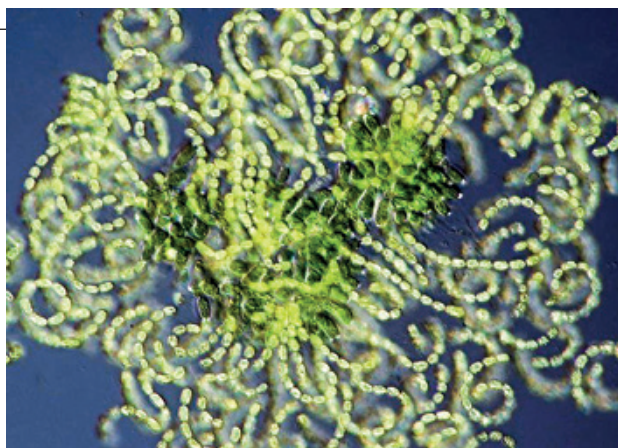
However, we are talking about such large, uninformed - or worse, misinformed - populations that it is practically impossible to bring about any change with a bunch of signatures. We are by our nature insensitive to long-term consequences when it comes to satisfying our short term needs with minimal effort. For that reason, we must look to science and technology - rather than legislation - for an effective solution.

One approach is to observe and derive ideas from mechanisms developed by other organisms. Certain primitive organisms - namely cyanobacteria, phytoplankton and macroalgae, have been found to be remarkably resistant to UV radiation.

Why do they have this advantage? We have to look back in time for the answer. They've been around for millions of years - long before dinosaurs and the first mammals. Back then, the radiation that made it to the ground was much more destructive than today. Oxygen was a very recent addition to the atmosphere's composition and, being scarce, didn't really block much of the radiation coming in.

Therefore, these microscopic organisms had to survive larger bands of high energy UV-B and UV-C. To avoid extinction and propagate life, they developed various mechanisms as adaptations to these unfavourable conditions that can be divided into three broad categories: Locomotion, pigmentation, and metabolism. First, they can move very quickly away from the source of radiation as they possess sensitive receptors and potent movement projections. But if surrounded by UV from every front, that is not enough. This is where pigments and metabolic adjustments come in. Pigments are specialised proteins that are sensitive to particular wavelengths of light. In this case, the pigments (i.e. xanthophylls, scytonemin) can absorb the harmful wavelengths, thus protecting the organisms that possess them. However, no pigment can screen 100% of the radiation. This is where enzymes come in - biological catalysts that speed up reactions necessary for life. These primitive organisms have molecules able to repair UV-induced damage of DNA, but also accumulate carotenoids and detoxifying enzymes or radical quenchers and antioxidants, to preserve their genetic material.

But just how much can these little guys take? To



Anabaena Cyanobacteria under the microscope

determine this, NASA tested cyanobacteria and algae in outer space where UV is maximum as there is no atmospheric shielding, and conditions are not exactly favourable for life. All samples survived 450 days and all but one lived upon returning to earth. If you think about it, this is quite remarkable. Not only did they sustain themselves out there, but also resisted the Sun's head on radiation when any other tissue - at least that

we know of - would have been destroyed.

NASA is now trying to integrate these organisms in hardware and suits to protect both astronauts and spacecrafts in their missions, ensuring their safety and procuring more accurate data. With as low as 30% permeability to radiation, these microorganisms can act as shielding agents that block the harmful radiation and - somehow, someday - may be put to everyday, downmarket use. **V**

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On the Nature of Music



By Achilleus Heylap Savvidis

*P*lay some real music! We've all said this when someone is charged with the epoch-making endeavor of choosing what music to play in the car. Of course we refer to "good music" when we say "real music," but what *is* music anyway? Imagine if someone started playing a recording of factory noise. Certainly no one thinks *that's* music!

Or is it?

When defining things, it's always reasonable to consult a dictionary or encyclopedia. So here's Wikipedia's definition of music: *an art form based on sounds organized in time*. There are also many common elements of music, such as pitch, rhythm, dynamics, and timbre. But if we look only at the elements, there are many exceptions to this "definition." Many types of music actually totally omit one or more of the elements mentioned.

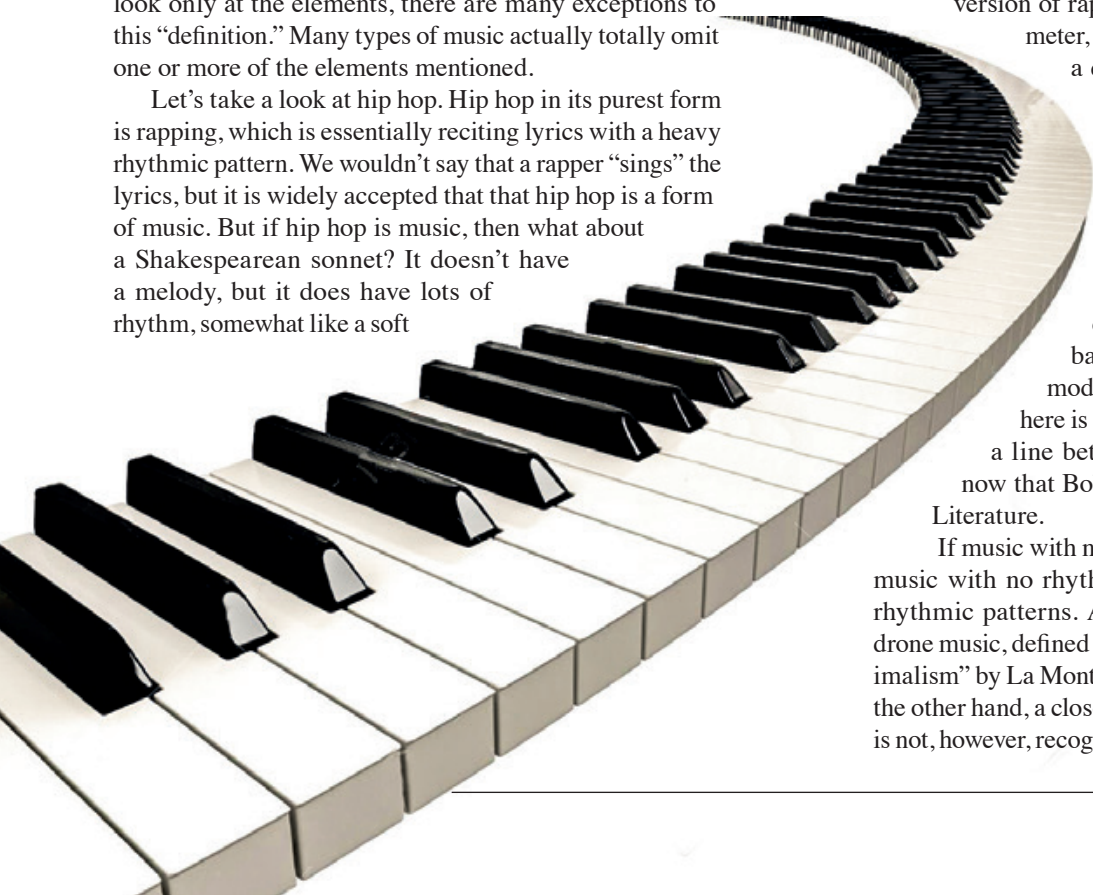
Let's take a look at hip hop. Hip hop in its purest form is rapping, which is essentially reciting lyrics with a heavy rhythmic pattern. We wouldn't say that a rapper "sings" the lyrics, but it is widely accepted that that hip hop is a form of music. But if hip hop is music, then what about a Shakespearean sonnet? It doesn't have a melody, but it does have lots of rhythm, somewhat like a soft

ANYTHING CAN BE "MUSIC TO ONE'S EARS," AND MAYBE, WE HUMANS ARE THE ONES WHO DICTATE WHAT WE CALL MUSIC.

version of rap. Also, many poems use the iambic meter, which roughly translates to a half plus a quarter note in conventional music.

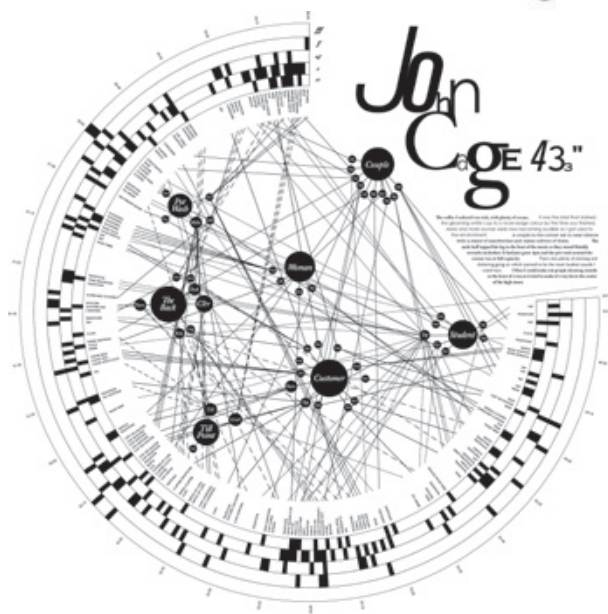
So, most probably, if we somehow convinced Sir Ian McKellen, the famous Shakespearean actor, to recite a sonnet, just slightly faster, we'd get an epic rap song! And in this sense, William Shakespeare himself was a hip hop artist! I'd certainly love to witness an epic rap battle between Shakespeare and his modern counterpart Tupac. What we see here is that it is sometimes very hard to draw a line between music and poetry, especially now that Bob Dylan has won the Nobel Prize in Literature.

If music with no pitch is still music, then what about music with no rhythm? Hymns often have no obvious rhythmic patterns. A more extreme example would be drone music, defined as "the sustained tone branch of minimalism" by La Monte Young, the pioneer of the genre. On the other hand, a close relative of this exotic music—which is not, however, recognized as music—would be your pet or



your baby sister composing masterpieces on the piano. Their unconscious striking of keys results in sounds of perfect pitch, however dissonant and non-rhythmic the notes may be overall.

Furthermore, apart from these unintentional exceptions, some people have in fact tried very hard to challenge the definition of music itself, creating dissonance, noise, and whatever else they can



think of to reshape music as we know it. Modernist composer John Cage went a step further: he decided that music didn't need sound to be music, so he composed four minutes and thirty-three seconds of everything but deliberate sound.

So what's the conclusion? That the recognition of sounds as music is totally random? Noise could be music, music could be noise. Who decides?

Let's go back to our dictionary. The Oxford English Dictionary says that music is "sound combined in such a way as to produce beauty of form and expression of emotions." But what is beauty? It is totally subjective. Everyone has the freedom to decide for themselves what they perceive as beautiful. Some people might enjoy random noise and call it "noise music." Another guy might not like Bach, then maybe, for him, it's not "music."

As far as emotion is concerned, an interesting example would be sirens and emergency

alarms. They incorporate pitch changes, and they have periodic rhythm. Some may argue that they don't have emotion, but sirens and alarms invoke fear and, as the name implies, cause alarm. So if people feel emotions listening to them, why shouldn't we call them music?

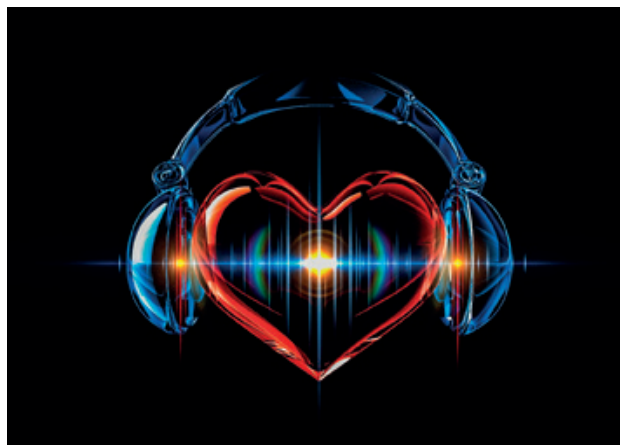
In the end, maybe anything can be "music to one's ears," and maybe, since music is, after all, a human creation, we humans are the ones who dictate what we call music. We, society and individuals, have the ultimate power to define music.

Let us now think further than just music. Let us now think about other human creations we struggle to define.

Society is a contract between people. It is a human creation, and we decide how it should function: we define society. And just as artists and philosophers challenge the definition of music, our citizens constantly challenge the definitions of society. Civil rights activists have challenged the definition of equality; the LGBT community has challenged the definitions of marriage and identity; feminists have challenged the definitions of sexual differences and gender roles.

We have seen that social progress is achieved only when we see things differently, when we define things differently. So if we are here to think about the future, then let us think of the definitions waiting to be challenged; let us think of the status quo waiting to be changed. We have changed music; we will change the world. The ways we see the world will be the vectors of change, and the definitions will be the messengers. Small changes will ripple over the stagnant waters and inspire a tsunami. **V**

**WE HAVE
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WORLD!**



THE ADOLESCENT BRAIN

By Angeliki Taniskidi

*A*DOLESCENCE describes the years between ages 13 and 19 and can be considered the transitional stage from childhood to adulthood. However, the physical and psychological changes that occur in adolescence can start earlier, during the preteen or “tween” years (ages 9 through 12). Adolescence can be a time of both disorientation and discovery. This transitional period can bring up issues of independence and self-identity; but at the same time, many adolescents and their peers face tough choices regarding school, sexuality, drugs, alcohol, and social life. Peer groups, romantic interests, and appearance tend naturally to increase in perceived importance for some time during a teen’s journey towards adulthood.

ADOLESCENCE is also a period of life that is rife with stereotypes¹, such as: “teenagers are addicted to social media”, “they have no idea about what ‘real’ music is about”, “they are lazy and too young to understand anything about life”, “they only care about themselves and they can’t last a day without a phone”, and finally “teenagers dress inappropriately these days”.²

What are the most frequent worries of mothers of adolescents?

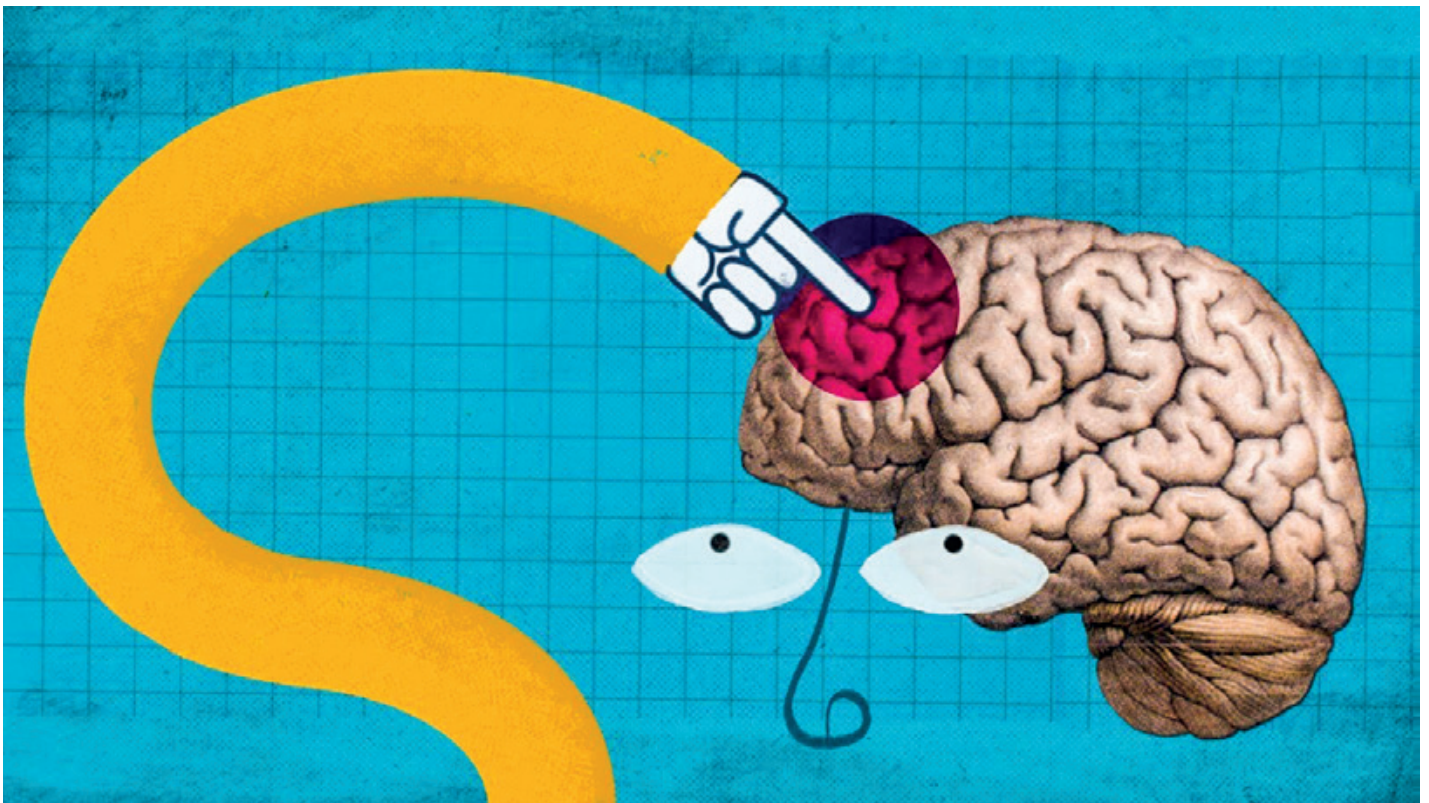


1. Why doesn't my teenager care about being tidy?

ANSWER: Tidiness needs an advanced level of cognitive control, and the way the teenage brain is connected means that their planning is not excellent. The last bits of the brain to connect are the frontal and prefrontal cortices (where planning is controlled). Organization is not a high priority for most teens.

→ Carefree

1. “Adolescence.” *Psychology Today*, Sussex Publishers, www.psychologytoday.com/us/basics/adolescence. Access 5 May 2019.
2. Nagi, Ariel. “11 Ridiculous Stereotypes About Teens That Need To Go Away.” *Seventeen*, Seventeen, 13 July 2017, www.seventeen.com/life/friends-family/a29191/annoying-teen-stereotypes/. Access 5 May 2019.



2. Why does my daughter always seem so angry, especially with me?

ANSWER: Teens can get frustrated with situations and themselves as a lot of things still aren't fitting together in their brain. The prefrontal cortex that gives us the ability to resist temptation, show self-control and learn from our mistakes has not fully developed. As a result, they exhibit risk-taking behavior and impulsivity and they have constantly mood swings and anger. → **Impulsive**

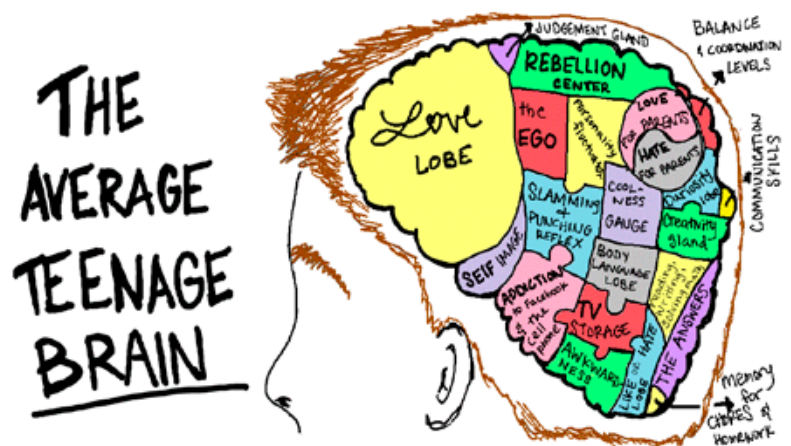
3. Why doesn't my son talk to me properly?

ANSWER: Teens are an age of self-discovery and novelty-seeking behavior, and it is natural that they will start to cut ties. They need to become independent, but we live in a very complex world and there is exposure to many potential stresses. → **Rebellious**

4. Should I worry about my daughter drinking or dabbling with drugs?

ANSWER: The same quantity of drugs or alcohol has a much stronger effect than it does in adults. Binge drinking, and hard drugs can do more damage to young brains for the same dose. Teens are prone to learn quickly, and addiction is a form of learning because as it will be discussed further down, their brain is plastic. So, they get addicted faster than they would if they were exposed to the same substances later. → **Reckless**

Taking the questions above into account, the average teenager is portrayed as carefree, impulsive, rebellious and reckless:



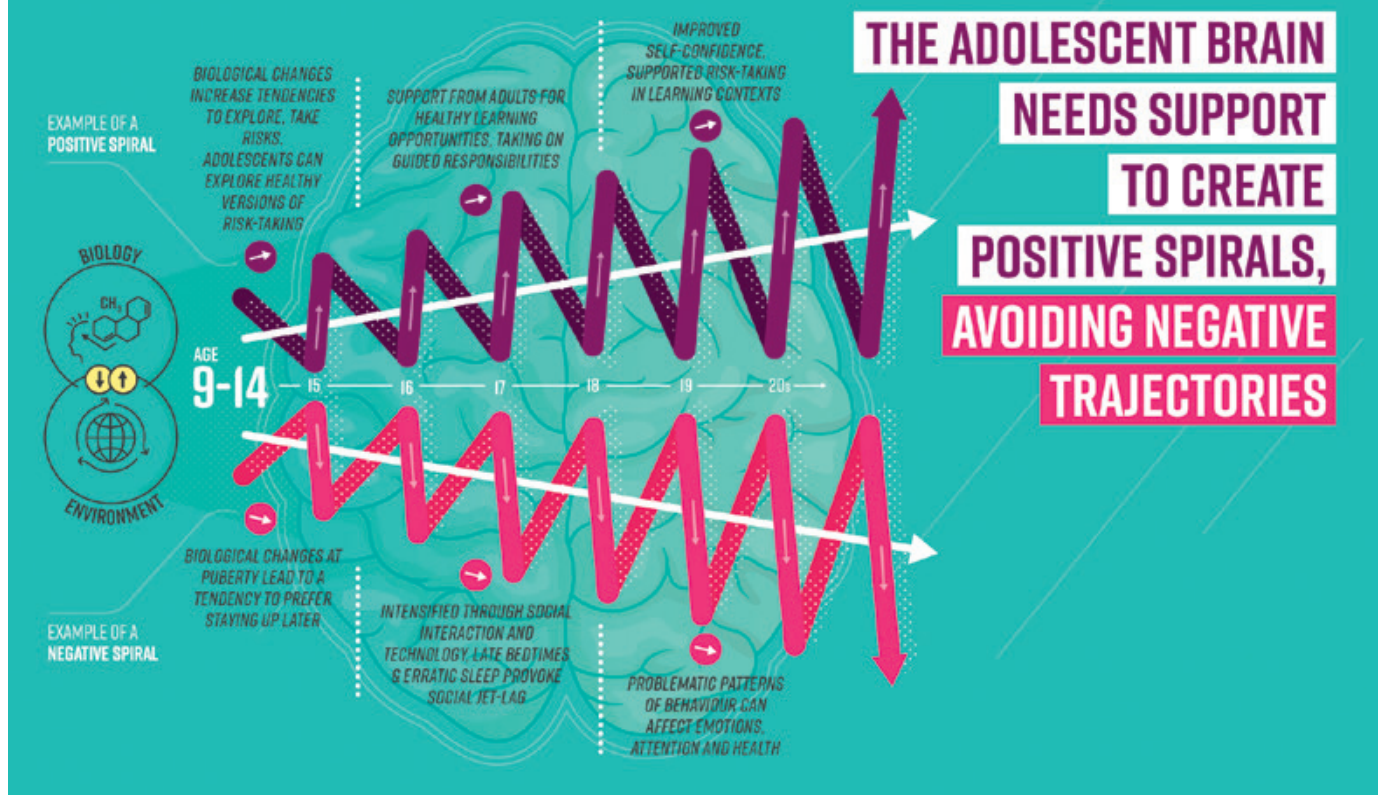
Picture 1: The average teenage brain depicts different behaviors in relation to the different brain areas. ("Driving and Teen Brain Development." DrivingMBA, 20 Apr. 2017, drivingmba.com/driving-teen-brain-development/. Access 5 May 2019).

Why are teenage behaviors so hard to understand?

For generations, the overarching thinking was that the brain had reached its full growth by the time a child reached puberty. However, according to research by Jensen in the 1990s, Chair of the Department of Neurology at the University of Pennsylvania, it was found that the teenage brain is much more complex than the adult one. Advances

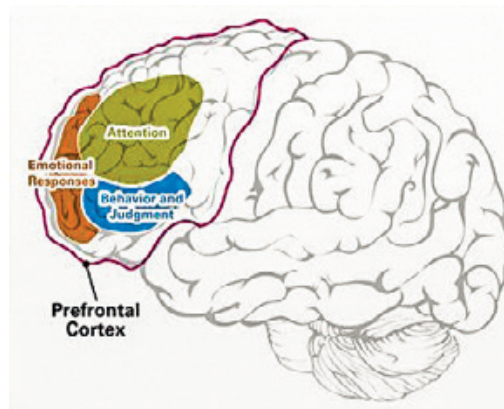
POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE SPIRALS

DURING ADOLESCENT BRAIN DEVELOPMENT



in brain imaging revealed that development of the brain continues into a person's 20s. By growth, it is meant increased connectivity between brain regions. This growth in connectivity presents itself as white matter in the brain, which comes from a substance called myelin. As the brain develops, myelin wraps itself around the axons of nerve cells which extend from the soma of the cell and transmits information. This process is continuing in the teenage brain and is known as myelination. Shortly, myelination strengthens and accelerates the communication between areas of the brain indicating that learning takes place.¹

A brief description about the different parts of the brain and their function allows us to explore the brain's highways and byways. The brain is composed of the cerebrum, cere-



Picture 2a: The location of the prefrontal cortex in the brain. (Cooper, Belle Beth. "6 Scientifically Proven Ways To Boost Your Self-Control." *Fast Company*, Fast Company, 12 Jan. 2017, www.fastcompany.com/3032513/6-scientifically-proven-ways-to-boost-your-self-control. Access 5 May 2019.)

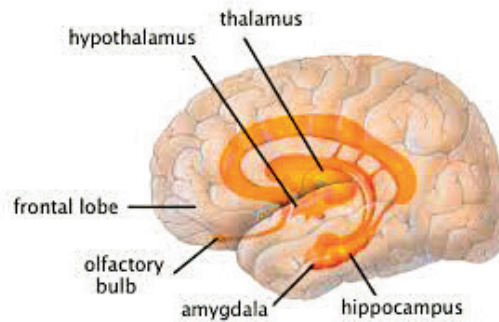
bellum and the brainstem (picture 2a.). However, the largest part of the brain is the cerebrum which is composed of the right and left hemispheres and divided into four lobes: the frontal, the parietal, the occipital and the temporal lobe. The frontal lobe is one of the most noteworthy parts of the brain as it is responsible for emotions, judgment, planning, problem solving, intelligence, concentration, and language.² Between the cerebrum and parts of the hindbrain is the limbic system, which is only evolved in mammals. It is particularly involved in behaviors which satisfy motivational and emotional needs. In particular, the structures of the amygdala and the hippocampus are involved in emotion and emotional memory.³

1 Sifferlin, Alexandra. "Why Teenage Brains Are So Hard to Understand." *Time*, Time, 8 Sept. 2017, time.com/4929170/inside-teen-teenage-brain/. Access 5 May 2019.

2 "Brain Anatomy, Anatomy of the Human Brain." *Brain Anatomy*, *Anatomy of the Human Brain*, www.mayfieldclinic.com/PE-AnatBrain.htm. Access 5 May 2019.

3 Boeree, George. *The Limbic System*, webpace.ship.edu/cgboer/limbicssystem.html. Access 5 May 2019.

The process of myelination starts from the back of the brain and works its way to the front. In adulthood, the connections between the frontal cortex and the limbic system are strong with maturation and an experience. In adolescence, however, this is not the case. What are the implications for the function of different brain areas during adolescence? It means that the frontal cortex, the executive part of the brain and the one that controls emotions and planning, is the last to mature. This explains why teenagers have a hard time controlling their emotions and impulses to drink or take drugs or even control their fits of anger as the frontal lobe does not yet control the limbic system (emotional center found at the back side of the brain). Even more, the process of myelination can explain the difficulty that adolescents have in planning and organization, what teachers call: “time management”. For instance, “that’s why my teenage boys would come home without their textbook and realize at 8 p.m. that they have a test the next day”, says Jensen.



Picture 2b: The anatomy of the limbic system. Boeree, George. The Limbic System, webpage.ship.edu/cgboer/limbicsystem.html. Access 5 May 2019.

those skills. Understanding those weak spots allows parents to help their children develop them. It can also keep parents from making incorrect judgments about their kid. It is also a good idea for parents to provide scientific evidence to their children regarding the stresses that they experience, and the dangers that this generation faces, such as addictive behavior as well as strategies that will help them avoid them.

Moreover, it is necessary for parents to set rules and boundaries. Teens will benefit from a framework which can help put parameters around their behavior. However, considering the rebellious aspect of teenagers’ behavior,

Social support to adolescents

Without doubt, useful psychological support can be provided to teenagers. The foundations of the relationship between parents and adolescents has been established in early childhood. More specifically, the attachment that an adolescent has formed with his/her parents from earlier stages of development will determine the ability of parents to support their teenagers through this transitional period.

Notwithstanding this, parents need to be present, maintain an effective daily communication and be particularly vigilant during the period of adolescence in order to prevent risk-taking and impulsive behavior. In particular, in relation to extreme behavior such as drug addiction, parents should consult an expert like a psychologist to seek advice. People rely on executive functioning skills to make good decisions and then act on them. However, teens have weaknesses in



Picture 3: The brain of a teenager undergoes a manufacturing process to solve problems.

rules may tempt children to break them. To prevent this behavior, parents ought to warn them that if they break the rules, they will face the consequences.

Nonetheless, to my mind, the best solution to stop children’s dangerous behavior is that parents should have close emotional contact with their children. To put it in other words, parents must open themselves to the children and explain their concerns to be understood by their children. A strong relationship of understanding and trust must be built between a parent and a child. But, how can this be achieved? By daily discussion and sharing of the problems. In this way, the one will trust the other and vice versa and they will solve any problems together and parents will help their children handle peer influence. But, at any case, parents must be careful to respect kids’ privacy. For example, some parents may feel that anything their kids do is their business. But, to help their kid to become a young adult, parents must grant some privacy. To sum up, following this advice, parents should develop a strong bond with their children. Hopefully, a relationship of trust and openness will support the teenager through the period of turmoil, the ‘adolescence’.⁴ ▼

A RELATIONSHIP OF TRUST AND OPENNESS WOULD SUPPORT THE TEENAGER THROUGH THE PERIOD OF TURMOIL, THE ‘ADOLESCENCE’.

4 “Gameplan for Positive Parenting Your Teen.” *Aha! Parenting*, www.ahaparenting.com/ages-stages/teenagers/parenting-teens. Access 5 May 2019.

Mate selection

By Maria-Filomeni Zepou

AS PART OF OUR PSYCHOLOGY SYLLABUS we studied the evolutionary theory and whether it has an impact on behavior and specifically mate selection. This article was inspired from the discussions we had in our psychology Higher level class about the evolutionary theory and how it may have an effect on mate selection. One important theory of the biological approach to psychology is the modern theory of evolution (a combination of Charles Darwin's theory with the discoveries of genetics). According to the biological approach, behaviors just like physical traits are affected by genes and consequently by other evolutionary pressures. Evolutionary psychology addresses topics such as fear, aggression, homosexuality, altruism, jealousy, disgust but also phobias and depression among others. As a result, in order to investigate further as well as to test the validity of how Darwin's theory of evolution could affect mate selection, we decided to conduct our own investigation on the matter. Each of the 13 students in our class was asked to conduct a semi-structured interview to two of their peers (one male and one female) on the topic of attraction and their criteria of choosing their partners.

According to Darwin, evolution is the process by which organisms change from generation to generation as a result of a change in their heritable characteristics. One of the most basic assumptions of the evolutionary theory is that the biological purpose of all organisms

is to survive and reproduce. If applied to the concept of mate selection it is understandable that mate selection means that people try to select partners who will maximize their chances of producing offspring. Furthermore, according to mate selection women are generally more discriminating than men in their choice of sex partners, because the consequences of

mating with an unsuitable partner are potentially greater for women than for men. As described by Bush, a main evolutionary psychologist who specialized in the evolutionary explanation of mate selection, "A man in human evolutionary history could walk away from a casual coupling having lost only a few hours or even a few minutes. A woman in evolutionary history risked getting pregnant as a result, and therefore could have incurred the cost of that decision for years".

Buss et al (1989), conducted a cross-cultural survey in which 37 samples from 33 countries (over 10,000 people) participated. They were given a questionnaire in which they were firstly asked their biographical data and information on their desirable age to marry. They were then asked to rate each of 18 characteristics (e.g., dependable character, sociability, chastity, intelligence) on how important or desirable they would be on choosing a mate. In the second part of the questionnaire items such as, religious, kind and understanding, exciting personality, along with several items to test the specific hypotheses about sex differences in mate preferences, were included. Buss came to the conclusion that females prefer mates who are older, have "good financial prospects" and are ambitious, which are good predictors of increased status, and protection for a female and her offspring. On the other hand, males prefer mates who are younger, and beautiful which is consistent with the hypothesis that males value mates with higher reproductive capacity. As a result, they came to the conclusion that mate selection can be explained by evolutionary psychology.

However, some critics of the study have pointed out that there was a smaller gender difference in more developed than in less developed cultures on most responses on the questionnaire, suggesting that other factors such as education and cultural norms play a role

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”



According to Darwin, evolution is the process by which organisms change from generation to generation as a result of a change in their heritable characteristics

in mate selection. Another limitation of the study was that the samples were not representative, since rural and less-educated individuals were underrepresented. Also, the use of a questionnaire that included only closed-ended questions led to biased answers and to findings supporting the hypothesis of the researchers since the participants were not allowed to express their opinion freely. It is worth keeping in mind that one common limitation of all questionnaires is that there is a discrepancy between what people say and what they actually do.

Evolutionary theory has been heavily criticized from other approaches in psychology as being reductionistic when trying to understand such a complex choice as mate selection. In particular, psychologists from the sociocultural approach, have offered a different interpretation of Buss's results, namely that women prefer richer men because traditionally they have been cut off from economic opportunities and likewise men seek out an attractive partner because this will enhance their social status.

In order to test the theory ourselves and given the important limitations presented in the study of Buss, the students in our Psychology HL class conducted their own interviews – a qualitative methodology that could complement the quantitative study of Buss. The first part of the semi-structured interview questions involved their past relationships and the criteria with which they chose their partners. The second part of the interview involved asking the participants about their preferences in partners, in physical characteristics, personality traits and how their answers would potentially be different to ones of the opposite gender. Using the interview as a method to obtain information allowed us a better understanding towards the matter since all the participants had their chance to elaborate and express their opinions freely. The interview followed all the ethical considerations when it comes to conducting psychological research since, for example, all the participants were asked for informed consent and they were debriefed regarding the aim and results of the study at the end.

The most important findings of our interviews were that both male and female participants were preoccupied a lot by their romantic relationships, and they discussed the topic with their friends but not their families implying that romantic relationships are a taboo subject of discussion amongst family members. The majority of the participants had had a relationship before, however more female participants had been in long term relationships which lasted on average 6-12 months, whereas male participants appeared to be involved in short term ones.

Other gender differences in mate selection were



shown in the characteristics with which boys had chosen their previous partners, but also the characteristics they said they were interested in appeared to be in general more focused on body image and physical attributes. Some girls on the other hand shared the views, but others claimed to be more interested in their personalities and values. As one girl characteristically said: “The thing that attracted me more was that from

the beginning I could be comfortable with him and that it wasn't awkward at all”, or another one admitted: “His body will not change my opinion about him. Generally external characteristics won't”. Some characteristics which were not essential for neither gender were religion, being artistic and academic accomplishments.


As a result, it becomes apparent that the findings of our interviews are consistent with the one's of Buss' survey to some extent and further research is needed

with a larger sample, in order to evaluate the reliability of the evolutionary explanation of mate selection.

The evolutionary theory of mate selection has a wealth of evidence, both experimental (Wedekind, 1995) and non-experimental (Buss, 1989) and as a result it provides great heuristic value, meaning that it has provoked great debate and research amongst psychologists and other social sciences. It is a promising field in the understanding of human behavior as it seeks to explain all instances of human be-

havior. In the science of psychology, no other theoretical framework provides an overarching theory. Therefore, evolutionary psychology has the explanatory power to bring together different observations about human behavior. (Popov, 2017).

On the other hand, although the evolutionary theory can explain whatever male and female behaviors are observed, by claiming that they are adaptive in an evolutionary sense, it cannot be falsified but it also proves that the theory lacks predictive value.

To conclude, through running these interviews, we understood the importance of testing theories ourselves and reaching conclusions that can be generalized to our target population. It was overall a great learning experience since we got an idea of how much work and coordination needs to be put in, in order for an interview to work successfully but at the same time provide credible data. Finally, it was an important first introduction to running our own research, which will later in the future benefit us greatly, for our IAs and other university like assignments. 

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THE EVOLUTIONARY THEORY OF MATE SELECTION HAS A WEALTH OF EVIDENCE, AND PROVIDES GREAT HEURISTIC VALUE.

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RESILIENCE

By Eleni Dimou

DEFINED BY THE CAMBRIDGE DICTIONARY, resilience is *“the ability to be happy, successful, etc. again after something difficult or bad has happened”*. Resilience is a trait that has been closely examined by psychologists for decades, since by acquiring this trait you manage to live your life in a better way, without the fear of anything putting you down. Resilience is a form of anti-depressant. After reading the homonymous book by Boris Cyrulnik, I was inspired to put more thought around that trait. The book specifically talks about stories of people, especially of young age, that were traumatized in a serious way, such as a war, a crime, a killing, an assault, domestic violence, etc, and how some of those managed to thrive, despite this experience.

“A survivor is a hero who is guilty for having killed death”

Factors that make a child resilient can be found in its environment. A child’s inner world is a product of three elements; its genetic makeup, its emotional environment, and the psychosocial environment in which it is raised.

Unfortunately, a trauma can be followed by two paths, those being deterioration or development. “A survivor is a hero who is guilty for having killed death”; this quote from the book is an indication of the first thing that can lead someone to deterioration. Matthew, the boy whose parents were both killed at war right in front of his eyes, can follow either of these two roads after that defining moment. Guilt is the wrong one. *“They didn’t deserve to die. It should have been me”*, this is the exact mentality that leads to a dead end, since feeling guilty for an irreversible situation can do nothing more than enhance unpleasant and even catastrophic emotions. Instead of survivors they turn into disappointed individuals and vast amounts of negative energy starts piling up within them. This energy has to be channeled somewhere. This is a second chance. Finding the right place to channel all those negative

emotions can be a turning point for the individual, that will lead them back on track. Not finding such a way, however, will most probably lead to a self-catastrophic habit. Moreover, the ‘disappointed’, who act wrongfully, tend to say that they were compelled to act as they did by obscure forces of pressure. Another thing driving them to act wrongfully is that *“all*

victors are suspects, and all victims are lovable”. We love victims so long as they remain wretched, because it makes us feel good when we help them. But when the martyrs turn into heroes (resilience) and become powerful, they become suspect because it supposedly is unnatural for prey animals to turn into predators. The book said *“that we should show the survivors no mercy. That they are killers, not victims. To make them pay the price for the crime of surviving we have to ask them to create*

something”. I both agree and disagree with this claim. I don’t believe that we should have no mercy, and I don’t think blaming is the right choice. But I do believe that encouraging ‘survivors’ towards creation can indeed be a solution; creation can become the outlet where they let out all of their energy and turn it into something beautiful, something useful, something necessary, even. It isn’t incidental that many of the most famous writers (Baudelaire, Byron, Dante, Dostoyevsky, Dumas, Poe, Sand, Tolstoy, Voltaire, ...), where actually traumatized at a young age. But when it comes to creation, there are several factors that determine whether one will eventually result to creating.

STRUCTURE is one factor. Modern psychologists are able to explain why the absence of structure is so often associated with both creativity and delinquency. An overbearing structure, of a close family for example, of

“

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”

a society that is too well organized, makes a child feel safe. But exactly because it forces children to develop along lines laid down by their parents/ society, their creativity is blocked. The only thing they learn to do is what they are told to and taking initiative and freeing their imagination, remain untouched fields. Children, on the other hand, that have been set free from these constraints by some tragedy (i.e. orphans), encounter a host structure. They find themselves in a position that encourages them to talk about their ordeal and to discover new ways of seeing the world. They are in a position to become creative and to join the ranks of many scientific innovators and artists who are, by definition marginal because they are introducing to our culture something that was not there before they emerged. In other words, survivors can easily become creators, if they are given room to express themselves, and thus become resilient, but they can just as easily become delinquents if their energy finds no outlet. Resilience defines the spirit of those who, having suffered a blow, have been able to get over it. The world “oxymoron” describes the inner world of these wounded victors.

You go towards resilience once you understand that “the moment of survival is the moment of power”. This feeling is deeply ambivalent. A child who has survived an extreme situation is shaped like an oxymoron; “his guilt is innocent, his pride is shameful, and his heroism is cowardly”. The ordeal becomes the standard by which all things are judged. For someone who has lived the exhilarating moment of having killed death, the miseries of daily life look quite laughable. But being resilient doesn’t mean that you can’t be sad. The concept of resilience refers to the mechanism that allows us to bounce back when fate knocks us down, and not a talent for happiness.

There are different points of view from which a single situation or event can be viewed. And that is another factor that determines whether someone will be able to become resilient. One person might perceive something as tragic and another might perceive the exact same thing as something completely indifferent.

“Our history does not determine our destiny. What is written does not remain written for long. What is true today will no longer be true tomorrow because human determinisms work in the short term. Our sufferings force us to undergo a metamorphosis and we always hope that we will be able to change the way we live our lives”

I have a theory about resilience, which is deeply connected with the above quote. But first I must present how I perceive the world. I am a person of science. Particles, forces, reactions, energy, chemical imbalance-



es. That is all I believe in. All my fate is put in those notions.

“Life is hard”, “life is unfair”; people tend to complain. I view these misfortunes as surprises, with surprise being something not planned, no

matter if that is something positive or negative at a first glance. So, imagine going through the worst thing that could happen. “The worse thing” is something completely subjective for each of us. But imagine it


happened. Imagine there is nothing you can do about it. In order to become resilient, you have to detach yourself from the situation. You have to become the observer of your own story and ask yourself a few questions. “How”, “why”, “what”, “when”. Examine the situation

closely, and identify all external factors that could have played a role in it being caused, and then identify your role as well. How did your actions lead you to where you are now? If you had no control then that is fine but if you did, you should ask yourself “did I meet my expectations?”, “was there an underlying factor in my behavior?”, “is there anything I can gain from this terrible experience in regard to valuable knowledge that might help me in the future?”. This is just a small introduction to the way I view the matter.

“**‘QUE SERA SERA’,
WHATEVER
WILL BE WILL BE**”



My final word would be, that **the moment you learn resilience; the moment you learn how to turn every situation (as bad as it can be) into beneficial knowledge and a life lessons that will provide you with valuable strength for future encounters, that will be the moment you will actually get to live your life to**

the fullest. But all this requires a lot of self-teaching and discipline. It requires starting an unknown journey in your own mind and meeting yourself, something that many disregard because they take it for granted. Once you learn who you are exactly; your strengths and weaknesses, too, only then you can actually be objective enough to stand up against anything that might happen and keep going no matter what. After all, ‘que sera sera’, whatever will be will be. 

AMERICAN BEAUTY

the beauty behind the picture



Kevin Spacey
receives his
Academy
Award
for *American
Beauty* in 2000

By Konstantina Galani

Suburban life. A typical two-floor house. Garden filled with roses. The setting subtly filled with the colors of the American flag: red door, red roses, blue windows, blue roof. The perfect house. The perfect neighborhood. The director Sam Mendes however, intends to take the audience behind this veil of perfection.

The movie begins with the protagonist, Lester Burnham (Kevin Spacey), presenting a typical day to us. The first shot is a panorama, with Lester narrating in a calm, almost reassuring voice. He states that in a year from now he will be dead. A peculiar opening one could argue. It catches the audience's attention, despite the "spoiler". Lester then, takes us step by step to yet another dull day, while preparing for work. The plot thickens. His beautiful wife Carolyn gardens, while discussing with their neighbors about their perfect roses. His daughter Jane, "a typical, angry and confused teenager", looks at herself in the mirror. The typical, middle class, happy American family. At least on the outside. Sam Mendes in these introductory scenes has already presented to us what the film is all about: the failed American Dream of success and prosperity. With approximately 5 different shots, he has warned us how this idealized picture of perfection will slowly be broken down once the doors of this beautiful house open up. And all this in about 2 hours. This article will analyze the fall of the "great" American Dream, focusing only on Burnham family.

In short, the story is about a 42 year old man who is going through a midlife crisis, while becoming infatuated with his daughter's friend, Angela. He quits his white-collar job, raises his stand towards his authoritarian wife and starts working out his physique.

▼
A "rite of passage film" about imprisonment and escape. Escape from a materialistic world and a mechanical, dull life.

Sam Mendes,
Director

Mendes called *American Beauty* a "rite of passage film" about imprisonment and escape. Escape from a materialistic world and a mechanical, dull life. In *Lester* one can identify a part of ourselves which wakes up in the morning and has nothing to look forward to, except the passing of this day, this week, this month. Mendes points out how people are unintentionally driven down this reality and everyday life, as well as how difficult it is to escape it. *Lester* manages to do so, because of *Angela* and what this young and beautiful girl really represents for him: life. How beautiful life truly is and how awful it is that he has practically forgotten how it is to be alive, to be happy. This fascination over *Angela* is masterfully portrayed through another unusual scene with *Angela* in a bathtub filled with roses and *Lester* walking inside the bathroom. Mendes' careful choice of music, combined with the roses, instinctively brings out an element of lust and passion. Instinct and emotion. *Angela* should be considered more than just a crush. She represents a deeper desire. A long lust for freedom. Freedom from responsibilities. Freedom from the typicality of life. She is a wakeup call mainly through sexual rebirth.


On the other hand, we have *Carolyn*. A neurotic real estate agent, mother and wife. Trapped in a joyless marriage, she starts cheating on her husband. She feels like something is missing but in contrast to *Lester* she isn't willing to accept that she is in fact living an unhappy life. She is uptight, nervous and restraint. A cat on a hot tin roof. Mendes' scene of *Carolyn* shutting the drapes, crying, yelling "shut up" and slapping herself portrays the desperation, the heavy burden of having to keep up appearances. Through this close-up frame, we are in shock witnessing a woman exhausted due to her constant effort to stand up to this "perfect" image. However we must consider that she has brought this on herself. Focusing on creating her personal Eden, "a house beauty" domestic bliss, she doesn't realize that this "stuff (as *Lester* mentions) have become more important to her than living". The surprising part of the story is that despite *Lester's* unorthodox thoughts, *Carolyn* is the one who gives in to adultery first. She as well, is in search of an escape.

The entire theme of entrapment is subtly portrayed through the frames. Most of *Lester's* frames present the protagonist restraint like living in a jail cell. Examples of this are the scene in the shower as well as *Lester's* bored reflection on his computer while working. Same applies to *Carolyn*. The close ups show every detail, emphasizing on emotions such as anger, sorrow and disappointment. One of the few "joyous" close ups is

Applause | By Anastasia Korre

at the very end, following Lester's catharsis where he realizes how lucky he already is with the things he has. That's one of the main messages of the film as well. Beauty and joy are hidden in the small, everyday things. Things we normally take for granted, things we tend to ignore. The theme can also be presented through the motif (recurring element of symbolic significance, introducing a theme or a mood) of the rose. The rose, used heavily when Angela is around, is a symbol of beauty and passion and stands as a motif in the film to point out the beauty of simple, ordinary things in life. This brings us to another important element of the movie: the title.


The title has a double purpose. First, it stands as an irony because the events occurring in the movie are anything but beautiful, except the end where the characters come to a realization of what they want out of life and who they really are. The issue of identity serves as a synonym to meaningful life, as the movie presents a journey of exploration. All characters are posing the same questions to themselves: "who am I", "am I truly happy", "how did I end up here" and "what can I do to change this situation". Therefore, the title serves as a warning in regards to the reality of the American Dream. The reality behind the perfect image and the effort to keep up appearances. The second purpose is to point out one of the themes of the story having to do with the real beauty in the world, which is often unnoticed.

Personally, *American Beauty* has stood as an awakening for me, in regards to what is truly important in life. While watching the film, I started questioning our reality. Why do we feel the need to keep up appearances? The need to present a perfect framework of happiness, which may in reality be fake, despite all efforts to make it real? Can we accomplish true happiness once we constantly start behaving in a certain way and eventually get carried away within the act? The movie offered certain answers as to how happiness can be achieved. For one, shutting down this obsession with the image being chased. Maybe just relaxing. Indulging to nostalgia can be good. Owning control and stop having a passive standing towards life. This way you could avoid crises of identity and allow yourself to explore the small joys of life, which in the long run are the ones that count. One must always wonder however: Is there beauty behind things if they are considered to be meaningless? Or are they simply a way of giving purpose to our lives, in terms of how others see us as well? 

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I AM NOW WALKING SLOWLY, my feet dragging under my body, my back creeping behind my chest. The light is steady; it burns my eyes. I stop walking and fall on my knees. I made no sound; inside my head, however, a crashing noise is trapped. I've been doing this for a long time, but still, it hurts. I lower my body and elegantly dislodge my arms from my sides. With the tips of my fingers, I touch the ground. I try to feel its texture as I close my eyes... and wait. Fear. That's the only thing I can think about. I'm anxious. I'm going to fail. Waiting is torture. Only a few seconds have passed, it feels like a century. One, two, three, four. I am balancing myself, I can't let anyone see that falling is what I do best.

Silence is violent. It exposes weaknesses. When will it start, I want it to start, I need it to start. Five, six, seven, eight. Finally, it begins. I can hear the beat, the ground is shaking; I can relate to this feeling, the shaking. I lift my hands and fall on my back. One, two. I turn around facing down. I eventually get up, "Oh at last" I think. I spin, I'm feeling dizzy, I stand only on my right foot. "You should use only that foot" I remember her saying. Three, four, five. I jump and land on my knees, turn my feet to the other side and fall back with my back. Again. Is that right? I think so... I have to keep on moving or I'll forget. Six? Five, seven? My waist and back hurt. I'm fearful, my heart beats like crazy, I am sweating. I feel the pumping all over. I shouldn't have cut myself, it burns. But it felt so nice... nice after so long. The sound is so loud; my ears are almost bleeding. I get up and run in circles. I don't know what I'm doing, they must think I'm mad. I open my mouth but nothing escapes. Holding my hands in front of me, I stare at them as they move aimlessly. It might seem odd but actually it is enchanting. The only way to concentrate on what I'm doing. What am I actually doing? Why am I doing this? It's so painful. Now my hands are on my face. I try to feel my lips. Rough. Why would anyone like this? Bright red, as red as my blood. Isn't this disgusting? I know how it looks, I've seen it before. Then my nose. Big, crooked. It's embarrassing. My eyes. My eyes are shut. I would prefer to wear a mask, I don't want them to see me, I am not ready. I throw my hands in front of me again, bend on my knees and stand up again. I start thinking now, could it be any worse? well it could. My left hand falls on my uncontrolled body. In my mind, it pierces through my chest, through my lungs, through my heart. It finds my soul, buried in the emptiness of the dark. It grabs it, pulls it out of my flesh. I can finally see it, blurrily, with my watery eyes. I finally agreed with myself. "You should always see the bright side" they have always told me. That's what I am going to do. I keep kneeling and jumping up again a couple of times. One, two, three, four. It is almost tolerable. I start to feel the beat. It synchronises with my heart beat. I start to feel warm, it definitely is a weird feeling. Haven't felt it before. My eyes are wide open filled with tears, tears of joy. I've missed this feeling. A little smile shows up on my face. Five, six, seven, eight. Now my moves are more intense, filled with power. I like this. I wish I had felt like this from the beginning. I don't care about the pain anymore. I run, stand on my right foot, as always, and jump. I fall. I lower my hands on the ground. I feel it with my fingers. It is now meaningful to me. It is the place I discovered myself. I can hear nothing now. Only the beat of my fluttering heart. I wait. Time goes by so quickly. I stand up and slowly walk away. Applause. My dance has come to an end. 

IBSEN'S GHOSTS

Yesterday I broke my soul
Into a million pieces
Thinking I would release my ghosts
The ones Ibsen told me about
That night I went to the theatre

But now
They came crawling back to me
How rare
I am standing in front of them
Bare

Ibsen didn't warn me
About the craziness of the human soul
So I kiss my ghosts
Because loving is the only way to let go

Ο Ίψεν ξέρει
Ότι οι άνθρωποι πάνε εκεί που βλέπουνε φως
Αλλά όσοι τύχει να βρεθούν στο σκοτάδι
Ζουν με τους β ρ ι κ ό λ α κ ε ς
Που ή τους καταπίνουν
Ή τους μετατρέπουν
Σε φως

Ioanna-Fereniki Skoufalou



Chrysanthi Makrygeorgou, African World

MY MADNESS

What does a quiet mind sound like
What does it do
When it meets a wild one
Does it explode?

Το μυαλό σου το χάνεις μετά από τρεις ώρες πρόβα
Που λες την ίδια ατάκα
Ξανά και ξανά
Μέχρι η σκέψη σου να ματώσει
Απο το καρφί που σου καρφώνει την ιδέα
Λέξεων άχρηστων
Κενών

What does the art of a man who has loved feel like
What colors is the palette stained with
Is it wet from the paint
Or dry and sore?

Τον εαυτό σου τον βρίσκεις μετά από τρεις φορές που
θα πονέσεις
Που στο εγώ σου θα φωνάζεις
«ού φονεύσεις»
Μέχρι να πέσει στο κενό
Και από τα απόνερα του σκότους να λουστείς
Εώς ότου μόνος σου να πνιγείς

Giovanna Skoufalou

TRANSLATION OF THE GREEK STANZAS:

You lose your mind after three hours of rehearsal
After saying the same line
Again and again
Until your thoughts bleed
From the hammer hammering you with the idea
Of useless words
You find yourself after three times that you'll get hurt
When you'll tell yourself to not kill
Until you fall
As then the dark will shower you
Until you drown

Giovanna Skoufalou



Danae Aretaiou

