

# TWO ZERO ONE

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# ALONE

# TOGETHER



EDITED BY MAXIMILIAN OPENGEYM & VIVIANNE ZHANG WEI

COVER ART BY LIZA VASILYEVA

# EDITORS' NOTES

**M**agazines carry a stigma of flippancy. You might pick one up in your dentist's waiting room or consider a subscription if also offered a free tote bag, but they are mostly just seen as a way to pass time.

Normally, being unproductive is no big deal. But in a pandemic? Engineers design hospitals, construction workers build them, doctors work twelve-hour shifts in them; even supermarket workers and delivery men are out there saving lives. What could possibly be the role of writers, poets, artists, cartoonists, and – bless them – crossword designers, in a pandemic? Indeed, *is* there a role for us in a pandemic?

When it comes to saving lives, magazines admittedly aren't much help. But actually, those of us lucky enough to only be feeling the ripples of the pandemic don't need our lives saved – just some help getting through them. Affected as we all are by the virus, our symptoms aren't temperatures, dry coughs, or a loss of taste – but loneliness. And maybe that's where magazines come in.

Most of the time, we don't even need to be less alone to feel less lonely; we just need someone to tell us that we are not alone, *alone* but alone, *together*. Writers and artists have always been good at that. Seventy-three years ago, in his novel *The Plague*, Albert Camus wrote something that is of burning relevance today:

**"...there's no question of heroism in all this. It's a matter of common decency. That's an idea which may make some people smile, but the only means of fighting a plague is common decency."**

Unfortunately, we can't offer free tote bags, but see the next 60 pages as *Two Zero One's* little contribution of common decency. Maybe all it provides you with is something to help pass time, but we don't all need to be heroes; let's just do what we can to look after each other. ■

**Vivianne Zhang Wei**  
Editor-in-Chief

**B**eing apart in these delicate times has changed the way that we value our time together.

We are all waiting for tomorrow. 86,400 more seconds, and we're in another day. Time slipping through our fingers. The only way to happiness is to love what we have now.

The distance and time that has torn us away from our day-to-day quickly changed the way we express ourselves, as we engrave our contemplations into the world's history through the simple strokes of our pens.

Through a simple *Zoom* call, there was a motivation for the pens of *Two Zero One* contributors from around the globe to echo their individual experiences of living through a global pandemic.

As we try to navigate our way through this, you may want to refer to some of the articles in the following pages, to lighten your journey. ■

**Laetitia de Belgique**

Assistant Editor

**U**sually I, as the technical publisher, write something about metrics, statistics and quality. This time, however, I find it particularly important to stress the value of coming together in difficult times. I wholeheartedly agree with Vivi, that our magazine can, and should, help others feel part of a giant community – especially when most needed.

This is why this particular issue is our biggest, and in many ways most impressive one, to date. More than a dozen creators have dedicated their time to writing articles and drawing illustrations, a level of involvement that is unprecedented. I would like to thank everyone who has put their hard work into this issue and, of course, You, our dear reader. ■

**Maximilian Opengelym**  
Publishing Editor

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*Art by Jule S*

LOCAL AFFAIRS

# THE ARCHIVIST’S PAGE: BROMSGROVIANS THROUGH CRISES

Decades after the Spanish Influenza struck the Bromsgrove community, the School endured the “Third Pandemic”: the third major bubonic plague outbreak to affect European society. Like some of us did ourselves before the lockdown, Bromsgrovians of the past also went forth on a “nature ramble” for some much needed fresh air. Bromsgrovians of the 1950s swiftly returned to their routines, despite the survivors’ disgust, some convalescing by writing letters, playing chess – even “wrangling”.

### THE PLAGUE AND US

Within a day or two of the beginning of term, Boys began to sicken with the ‘flu : at first they retired to bed in ones and twos, but by the end of the first week the disease really began to take its toll, with victims going down seemingly like flies. Numerous day boys were transported home, and dormitory after dormitory was turned over to service as sickrooms for the boarders. In another two days so many boys were ill (not to mention the Headmaster) that School was cancelled, the Staff were put to such duties as seemed fitting for them, and the survivors, such as they were, went forth on a Nature Ramble ! The temperature book was crammed with hieroglyphics, orange juice and gargle became the staple diet of many a sufferer and meal service was improvised from the Bathroom.

*The Junior Bromsgrovian, 1957*

In 2020, those hours of playing chess seem to have turned into bingeing the newest shows on Netflix. Some amongst us may find ourselves glued to our devices, constantly refreshing our pages for the newest updates or breakthroughs. Others, however, may decide to try to reduce screen time by investing in a new hobby – maybe even chess. Who knows?

Within history lurks answers. In times when some of us may be experiencing anxiety, we may find hope in the spring edition of the Bromsgrovian from World War Two times, which, too, encapsulates a time of challenge.

Spring has brought dying before ; and confusion, and boredom and panic. And peace. It will bring them all again. And while it does so it will impose on us, as the cost of its coming, apprehension to make sound clear and colour clean. In it we conform to the patterns of the wind and grow quiet. Seeing becomes as natural as singing. Subject is object, active is passive, ourselves the experience.

*Spring editorial, March 1941*

“Spring has brought us dying before; and confusion, and boredom and panic.”

“And peace.”

Our experiences have been oddly similar to those in the past, with the same chaos of emotions and uncertainty. Let the Bromsgrovians of the past reassure us that peace will come upon us. It did so after the Spanish Flu, it did so after the Plague, and it will do so after the coronavirus. ■

*Chantal W*

Bromsgrove School  
Junior House Magazine




Vol. 3. No. 3. Christmas, 1957.

Within another day or so the crisis was over ; to the survivors' disgust, teaching was resumed on an emergency timetable, and even games of a sort were laid on. Convalescence became the order of the day aloft, during which the patients amused themselves by reading, writing letters, wrangling (and, even in one instance, an attempt at fighting), playing chess and draughts, attempting to listen to two simultaneous wireless programmes at once and plaguing the unfortunate Matrons and Maids. Each day a quota of the fitter specimens were ordered to get up, and those who took this ordeal without wilting were gradually eased back into School. A tardy sprinkling of day boys made its appearance also, and each morning the Staff rubbed their hands with fiendish glee and murmured, " Ah ! another seven back this morning, including Snooks ; I've been waiting for him ! " By the end of the week the plague was fairly beaten, and Monday saw us all back to the old routine. It had been a change, but I don't really know that many of us liked it.

*Junior Bromsgroviaan, 1957*

*I N F L U E N Z A.*

NFLUENZA, Spanish Influenza, Malarial Fever, Trench Fever, Septic Pneumonia, call it what you will, we have had it : practically everyone has had it. At our lowest ebb there were but forty survivors, while six of the staff, 5 nurses, and the School doctor simultaneously succumbed. All the " Bromsgroviaan " staff were laid up, except the censor, and even he took precautions, and on misty evenings might be seen flitting across to Kiteless

" Clothed in white mackintosh, mystic, wonderful."

The one remaining monitor had to read the lesson in Chapel every morning, and is now suffering from a sore throat. The Upper School and Remove acted as one form, and one day the first and second Mathematical sets of the Upper School and the Army Class were represented by four persons.

In School House seventy were down, and the Headmaster and Mr. Smith discovered a long-dormant talent for bedmaking—verily, 'tis an ill wind that blows nobody any good. Several of the household staff were laid up, and Mrs. Kendal's familiar figure, " Like rosy-fingered dawn, daughter of the mist," appearing down the passage, expelled monotony from many a weary spirit.

Owing to this shortage of service, convalescents were pressed into the service as orderlies, and woe to him who wished a moment's peace when a thermometer was to be found. The Old Wing passage was thronged with orderlies, and many were the collisions between porridge-bearers. But in dismal contrast to this, were the passages below, where the survivors slunk along, fearful of disturbing those who " were not in a fit condition to stand the slightest noise." -

Now, happily, all is over, and the victims have gradually returned to active life, all save three or four of the worst cases, whose convalescence has required a longer holiday, and who will no doubt return next term completely recovered.

*The Bromsgroviaan December, 1918*

LOCAL

# FINDING AUTHENTICITY IN THE VIRTUAL CLASSROOM

*Ironically, teachers seem to appear more real on screen.*



*Art by Jule S*

Ever experienced the inexplicable discomfort of running into a teacher in the supermarket? Some do such a good job at maintaining their professional facades that it becomes impossible to imagine *them* having a *life* OUTSIDE SCHOOL (!). That's why, I think, when teachers were told about our transition to online-teaching, those who were not sweating over "the-tech-side-of-things", were worrying about how to preserve this facade while teaching from their living rooms.

The contrast isn't even too palpable in a boarding school like Bromsgrove – imagine what it's like for the university professor who has only ever addressed his students from an elevated podium, dressed in a suit and tie. It seems unavoidable that people will struggle more to keep private and professional matters

apart the longer they work from home. The question is: what will this mean for student-teacher relationships?

The short answer is that I don't know either. But what I do know is this: when my first *Zoom* lesson was interrupted by the barking of my teacher's dog, I didn't feel annoyed, uncomfortable, or even disheartened with the virtual classroom experience. I felt hopeful.

In the recent two summers, Mulan and I have been teaching English to younger, but not a lot younger, students in China. The "not a lot younger" aspect of it posed us a dilemma. We had thought that keeping them quiet would be our biggest challenge: who knew that getting them talking would be a greater one? Here's the thing: teachers are

granted some authority by default. Standing at “that end” of the classroom and having the teacher title was enough to keep these students sat still in their chairs, quietly listening to us. It was enough to make them turn up punctually and enough to make them complete their homework with reasonable effort. But was *that* enough? Ten minutes into our first lesson, we realised that it wasn’t; we wanted our students to open up, feel confident, challenge themselves – trust us – but then, how could we expect them to do so while hiding behind facades ourselves? Our dilemma became this: teachers, or friends?

Let’s cut the suspense; our dilemma was resolved the next morning. The second lesson in our course is called “A day in my life”, which we would start by showing a short clip from, well, a day in our lives, at Bromsgrove. Quite busy feeling smug about what a clever way we had come up with to teach temporal adverbs, we didn’t think too much about what we were doing. But unknowingly, we had revealed a part of our harmless, high-school student selves. The hastily edited iPhone-recording featuring me brushing my teeth, making my bed, doing homework at midnight – against the backdrop of a messy-ish dorm and overused iMovie stock music – showed them who we really were: that we were no different from them – that we, too, were just students. Occasionally disorganised, confused, imperfect: human.

I think the little, accidental glimpses that our teachers are giving us into their lives, into them, over *Zoom* are having a similar effect. I’ll occasionally catch myself looking at the books on Mr Ruben’s bookshelf, wondering what he might be reading at the moment, or Dr Whitbread’s teacup, wondering which brew fills it this morning. I’ll look at the mess that I’ve shoved out of my webcam’s reach and am able to, for once, imagine my teachers having imperfections too. Of course, we need them to set good examples and be professionals, and I respect the preference to keep private and professional lives apart, but sometimes, just sometimes, we really crave the refreshing

reminder that our teachers are just everyday people, and these humanising clues to who they *really* are. Especially now.

Don’t get me wrong: I would do anything to be back in a physical classroom again. But in the meantime, perhaps we shouldn’t be too quick to label *Zoom* some yeah-okay-good-enough “Plan B”, “last resort” or sad replication of the “real thing”, but see it as a new and exciting experience that, despite its flaws, may help us re-evaluate our traditional classroom practices. When I look at my classroom in gallery view, there are no elevated podiums, teachers’ desks, front rows, back rows: we all show up right next to each other, in randomly ordered two-by-three-centimetres participant boxes, equally likely to, at any point, be interrupted by slow Wi-Fi, construction work, a family member, or doorbell.

The feeling it communicates, that, in lack of a proper word, “we – *even* teachers – are in this together” is so comforting that whatever the long-term impact of online teaching may be, it seems irrelevant for now. Perhaps what we end up finding in our “fake”-classrooms is something that we least expected: authenticity. ■

Vivianne Z W



Art by Polina V

LOCAL

# CULTURES CONNECT 2020

## *Meet the performers*

*Photography by Anastasiia B & Vivianne Z W*

**I**nterconnectedness. Globalisation. Free movement. The buzzwords we revered for decades seem to have backfired completely; in COVID-19 context, these have become swear words. Images of people holding hands, embracing and crowds cheering now make us cringe rather than applaud. We are faced with a decision to make: are we going to give in to the forces pulling us apart, or do we, instead, choose to emerge from this crisis with renewed appreciation for all that we had?

The School's annual Cultures Connect Concert took place on March 14: only six days before the UK government ordered school closures, and two days before a stop was put on mass gatherings. A few performers had already emailed us the same morning, apologising for having to cancel with such short notice, but explained that they had to board a flight home while they still could. To them, the crisis was already very much real. Others – most – still saw none of this coming.

I think this liminality is what made the evening so powerful. One second you would find yourself spellbound in the moment by an intense crescendo, and in another you'd remember your worries and

anxieties again. It left us with a special type of beautiful: not the type of beautiful that you get *because*, but the beautiful you get *despite*. The fact that we were celebrating our countries and heritages – despite the cloud of xenophobia looming over the media. The fact that we were sat there, in Routh Hall on a Saturday evening in mid-March, just like we had done every year – despite the global pandemic lurking from distance.

Being a part of the organising committee and getting to immortalise the evening through the camera lens with my friend Anastasiia, in a year where the concert feels more symbolic than ever, is something that I will cherish for the rest of my life.

Let's have look through our camera roll, meet some performers, and remind ourselves about why, now again, cultural diversity matters.

*Vivianne Z W*



## THE K-POP DANCE GROUP

*Alan Cheng, Sanniva Chang, Ashley Woo, Sunny Tang, Angela Hong, Jenna Kam*



*Q: Alan, I heard one of your performers had to fly home early and was unable to perform tonight. How did you manage to figure that out?*

*A: "Yes, Junfei had to leave the UK just one week before the concert, so we had to ask around for someone to fill in her spot. We thought it would be impossible to find someone willing to learn the choreography within just one week, but then Jenna came up to us and said she would try, despite having two dance performances to practise for! It was very impressive and we are so grateful that she helped make our formations complete again."*

## A RUSSIAN ROCK TRIO

*Arsenii Steshenko, Vitaliy Zakalskii, Stefan Tarasov*

*Q: Hands down the best outfits of the evening! Stefan – do they have a cultural significance?*

*A: "We tried to imitate the looks of Russian rock bands who would wear leather jackets, sunglasses and bandanas along with their long hair to look cool. This era was in the 1990s but is still really popular, and Russians love to make fun of it, just like we were doing tonight. We were also inspired by the fact their performances actually tended to be quite awful, and most of it underground, but with artists sending out so much positive energy, the performances nevertheless became appreciated for how fun they were."*



## UKRAINIAN VOCALS

*Vlada Bogatyreva, Dasha Hromyk, Jaren Yeung, Max Campbell*

**Q:** *Dasha! A woman of many talents aren't you? Not only did you sing beautifully, you also were also Head of the Committee. What did you enjoy the most: on-stage or backstage? And are you happy with how the evening turned out?*

**A:** *"Aw, thank you Vivi! The evening was marvellous and I do believe that it helped many in the audience relieve some stress. I also cannot fail to acknowledge our outstanding committee, without whom the concert would never have ran so smoothly. It's so difficult to say what I enjoyed the most... Backstage, I felt so lucky to be in a team with such responsible and easy-going people, and when rehearsing I kept admiring how quickly Vlada managed to learn a song in a different language completely without accent, and how outstandingly Max and Jaren played after only two rehearsals. But then when on-stage, there's this priceless splash of hormones that I feel throughout the whole performance! Although, actually, it doesn't feel too different from what you also feel throughout the *whole concert* as an organiser, especially when it is all over and the feeling of accomplishment – that *WE DID IT* – comes over you. I'll have to say that I sincerely enjoyed both equally."*

## INTERNATIONAL METAL

*Max Campbell, James Bradley, Jaren Yeung, Arsenii Steshenko, Hamish Cross, Marian Skurtu*

**Q:** *Wow Jaren – this was your second appearance tonight and you guys finished with no less than...four songs! What can we do if we still haven't heard enough of your music?*

**A:** *"First of all, I'd like to thank everyone for coming to the show – we had a lot of fun. It's always a pleasure to perform for you guys. To answer your question, I am making a few tunes of my own. If you want to check them out and show some love, they are on my Soundcloud ([soundcloud.com/jearvan](https://soundcloud.com/jearvan)). Bless."*



# THE SPECIAL GUEST

## Dr Thompson

**Q:** Absolutely stole the show tonight, Dr Thompson! I don't think many teachers would feel comfortable performing in front of so many students, even though they teach everyday. Do you feel like a different person on stage to who you are in the classroom?

**A:** "Thank you, that means a lot. I feel the same person, but I'm certainly a lot more nervous on stage. When I teach physics, I'm very comfortable with what I'm doing, but I'm a hobbyist-musician and well out of my comfort zone when performing. Maybe in the next life I will be a professional musician who plays occasionally at physics."



*Some responses have been edited for clarity and brevity.*

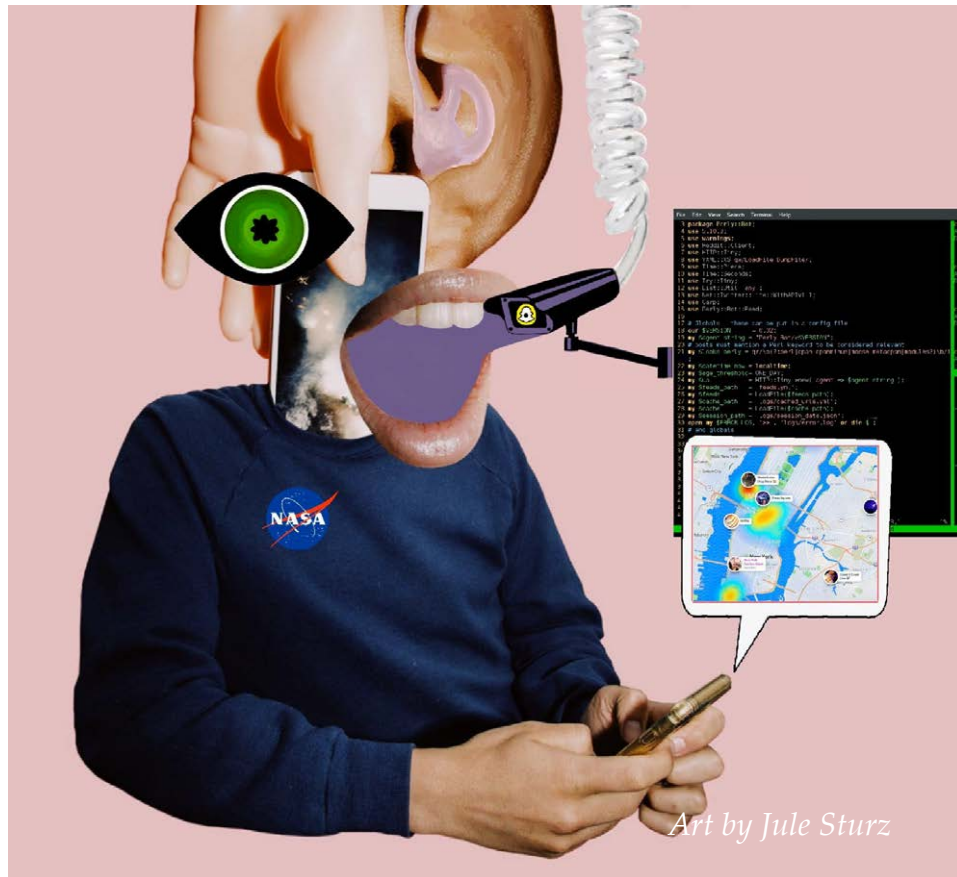


*Vivianne Z W*

GLOBAL AFFAIRS

# NOT ALONE, TOGETHER

*The coronavirus pandemic has provided opportunistic autocrats with an excuse to tighten their control over citizens. An anonymous student writer asks: how alone are we, really?*



As if the pandemic wouldn't be depressing enough with its bustling hospitals, closed schools, and mostly barren streets, the crisis has also provided an occasion for opportunistic autocrats to seize control. Under the pretence of maintaining health and safety within their respective countries, they can now get away with increased use of surveillance and emergency powers.

To illustrate the current state of affairs around the world, The Centre for Civil and Political Rights in Geneva reports that 84 countries have declared a state of emergency. For new and fledgling democratic institutions, who are yet to install the "checks and balances" that are part and parcel of more advanced governments, it may prove dangerous for the survival of their existing

political bodies. One of the more prominent examples is located in the heart of Europe and the European Union.

On March 30, the Hungarian Parliament enacted a new "coronavirus law", which granted Prime Minister Viktor Orban the ability to create new legislation without two restrictions normally accompanying emergency powers:

- 1. Expiration of legislation after 15 days of enactment, which would require parliamentary extension.**
- 2. Limits on matters that Orban can legislate about.**

Critics fear that Orban's newfound powers could be used to suppress political opposition, with a section of the legislation

warning citizens that spreading “falsehoods” or “distorted truths” carries a penalty of up to 5 years in prison.

Poland’s incumbent Law and Justice party has attempted to push forward with its presidential election amidst the pandemic by postal ballot, which has triggered strong opposition. Nine former Polish Prime Ministers have declared they will abstain from the ‘pseudo-elections’ taking place on the 10<sup>th</sup> of May, warning that the elections could potentially be unconstitutional, and put voter confidentiality at risk. Opinion polls indicate similar dissatisfaction amongst the electorate, with only 30% Poles reporting an intention to cast a vote in the upcoming elections, according to Reuters.

Unfortunately, the European Union’s response to Hungary’s situation has been lacklustre, with the European Commission’s written statement warning of “the risk of violations of the principles of rule of law, democracy and fundamental rights arising from the adoption of certain emergency measures” omitting a certain key name: Hungary. In a situation that would otherwise seem humorous, Orban himself signed the treaty which had the very purpose of implicating him. In another exhibit of irony, the €5.6 billion received as part of the European Stability Initiative, in comparison to the mere €2.3 billion Italy – an especially hard-hit country – received, were allocated on the day that Hungary’s Parliament passed this legislation. It seems to suggest the EU has failed in its duty to uphold the values which it so prides itself in.

But the surrendering of citizens’ rights and liberties does not pertain only to the actions of government institutions. Technology-based companies are becoming increasingly responsible for implementing infrastructure that may threaten the privacy of its users, with the most notorious example being the Cambridge Analytica data leak from Facebook. The COVID-19 crisis has seen a major shift towards the use of modern technology for solutions. Particularly, Google and Apple are in the preliminary rounds of a new exposure notification, API, previously named the contact tracing API.

Contact tracing is one of the numerous tools used by governments to combat the spread of the coronavirus. Once a patient has

tested positive, medical workers must immediately backtrack and identify people who have been in close contact with the patient and may therefore have contracted the virus too. As the number of human-to-human cases rise locally, it has become increasingly vital, but also increasingly impossible, to manually detect potential infections.

Several countries, such as Singapore and China, have already rolled out similar versions of mobile contact tracing, and the UK is in the process of creating a contact tracing app. The new software used by Apple and Google relies on Bluetooth to detect other phones within range of each other; when one person is tested positive for the disease, one will be able to notify those exposed.

**1. The current scarcity of health care officials and testing kits in the USA (where the new app is being tested) will end up limiting the app’s effectiveness; officials must follow up on suspected cases.**

**2. The system cannot monitor contacts of people who do not agree to use the app.**

**3. The app loses its importance in highly infected areas such as New York, where potentially everyone has been in contact and therefore already has instituted mass lockdown.**

Both Google and Apple have promised measures to ensure users’ privacy, including encryption of metadata, which is shared through Bluetooth. In addition, they have announced that the programme will be shut down after the pandemic, varying between different affected regions. However, the exact parameters in regards to how this will be achieved are difficult to determine. What would, for instance, count as the pandemic “ending”? Issues such as GPS location data, which app developers could potentially ask of its users to share, remain a standing issue. While the actions of both companies seem well-intentioned, such use of technology nevertheless comes with potential risks and ethical questions, which must not be overlooked.

On the subject of privacy, China has ramped up surveillance operations in order to enforce quarantine and lockdown

measures. This has come from an already staggering 200 million CCTV cameras as estimated in 2018, with projections reporting a camera for every 2 people in the country in 2020. The potential invasion of privacy has reached new heights, as citizens report of cameras being placed in front of doorsteps and even inside homes. The country's infamous social credit system, which was in its preliminary phase in 2014, has become another tool in the vast apparatus that the government wields: citizens who fail to disclose their disease history when travelling risk being penalised, with lower scorers unable to utilise public transport such as trains. Communications data in the form of messages or pictures, thought to be private, have been transferred from company hands and utilised by the government. The Chinese Human Rights Defenders, a Hong Kong-based organisation based, reports 452 people arrested for "spreading rumours" about the virus through social media apps such as WeChat.

China's strong-arm response to the virus seems to be an attempt to compensate for its earlier failures in detecting and preventing the spread of the virus. In an embarrassing display of bureaucratic carelessness, Wuhan officials were reported to have suppressed the spread of information in the early stages of the virus' development, thereby allowing the disease to expand into an epidemic, and later a pandemic. The most notable case was Dr Li Wenliang, who attempted to warn other doctors about the outbreak of a new disease in December but was silenced a few days later by local police; regrettably, he has now succumbed to the disease. Needless to say, this decision has led to dire consequences: a study from the University of Southampton reports the possibility of a 95% lower infection rate in February, had China intervened only 3 weeks earlier.

In a move that can scarcely appear more blatant, China has arrested more than a dozen of Hong Kong's most prominent pro-democracy activists, while the city's justice minister states that Article 22, a clause in Hong Kong's constitution which guarantees non-interference from mainland departments in local affairs, does not apply to the Beijing Hong Kong liaison office. These measures come as a response to the anti-extradition protests that swept the region a year prior.

The rapid encroachment on the city's freedoms and rule of law as promised by the "one country, two systems" principle in 1997 has only served to aggravate dissent towards the local and federal government.

Despite the diseases' horrible impact worldwide, and the overall pessimistic tone sustained throughout this article, perhaps a silver lining can be found. While the pandemic has exposed major, deep-seated flaws within institutions around the world, it has also partially served to politicise and alert the public with the briefings and news reports that circulate the web daily. It comes at a time where politics is heavily polarised after issues such as Brexit that still fracture national or international opinion and constructive conversation.

This crisis must serve to educate citizens about the disastrous consequences that might result from our divided global community, as ill-motivated politicians or governments seek to threaten our political freedoms and way of living. Perhaps it is apt to end this article with a quote from President Ronald Reagan:

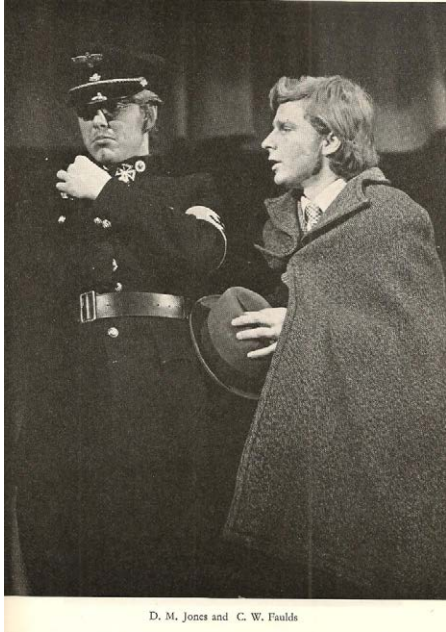
"Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction. We didn't pass it to our children in the bloodstream. It must be fought for, protected, and handed on for them to do the same ..." ■

*Anonymous*

# MEET O.B. LORD DIGBY JONES

*Interviewed by Liza V, Oli O & Maximilian O. Written by: Liza V & Oli O.*

*In an exclusive interview with Two Zero One, Old Bromsgrovian and Member of Parliament Lord Digby Jones discusses the Chinese government's early response to the coronavirus, different political systems, Sajid Javid's resignation, and the Labour Party's leadership election.*



On February 13, we were lucky enough to have Lord Digby Jones visit Bromsgrove School for an exclusive interview with Two Zero One. For those who don't already know, Lord Jones is an Old Bromsgrovian (O.B.) who still maintains strong ties with the School, holding annual talks in Routh Hall, which are as informative as they are entertaining. Here is a quick background of his long and successful career to get you up to speed:

Upon graduating from Bromsgrove, having served as Head Boy, Lord Digby Jones went to read Law at UCL, followed by twenty years at a legal firm, three of which he was a Senior Partner. Jones then turned his attention to business, with his appointment as Director-General of the *Confederation of British Industry* (CBI), acting as the UK's "Voice of Business". It was while serving this role, in 2005, that Jones was knighted. Jones proceeded to focus on the private sector, advising *Barclays*, *Ford*, *Deloitte* and *JCB*. Next came politics, as Jones

became Minister of State for Trade and Investment in Gordon Brown's government, travelling to 31 countries on trade missions in his fifteen months in ministerial office. At the same time, he was made a life peer, becoming a member of the House of Lords. Yet Jones decided against forming any party allegiance, later explaining that "business in my constituency". He remains a cross-bench peer in the House of Lords.

Jones has also busied himself with charity work, working as Corporate Ambassador for *Cancer Research UK* and president of *Diversity Works*, as well as running the London Marathon and cycling from Lands End to John O'Groats, raising a total of £409,000 in the process. He has published 2 books, won *Celebrity Mastermind* by a 9-point margin and supports *Aston Villa* and *Leicester Tigers*.

All in all, his has been an incredibly industrious career, which is why we felt so privileged to have him join us for an interview.

**Editor's note:** This interview has been edited and condensed; we strongly recommend that you email Liza (see staff directory) for the full version with more questions and more elaborate answers. Bear in mind, too, that the following interview was conducted on February 13, 2020. Neither the interviewers nor the interviewee will have had access to information that is available today.



*Photo: Miss Z Leech, Bromsgrove School.*

**Q:** *How do you feel about the way that the coronavirus has been handled so far by China?*

A: "For a country that has developed so quickly and whose population is so big: an enormous achievement. How come, though, China is sophisticated enough to develop companies of the ability of Huawei, who undeniably are technologically the best in the world at what they do, yet cannot sort out elementary public health? If in Wuhan, they have it the traditional way of going to a market and buying a live bat and eating it, one therefore cannot be surprised when a virus transmutes into a human being.

Face is everything to the Chinese: you mustn't be humiliated, you don't want to be in the wrong. They have a problem with publicly admitting that 'we have a problem', but from the moment that they went 'oh no', I think that they've been brilliant. Building hospitals in weeks, clamping down – and they can do that because they're a totalitarian regime. They can say 'I don't care who you are, you're not going there'. They've handled things excellently in the last three weeks, but the first four were very poor. Interestingly though, had the food regulations been better,

we wouldn't have had all this in the first place. The rest is all a consequence of the integration of a globalised society. A bloke in Leicestershire might be laid off from work as the factory closes down, because we don't get any wheels to put on a motorbike, all caused by some public health issue in the middle of China."

**Q:** *But since they put their hands up, you think they've handled the crisis very well?*

A: "Exactly. When I saw the Chinese ambassador to Britain last Sunday, he told me: 'We've done everything we can, we've linked with the international community, we've done well'. I think he's telling the truth, but they have, like the rest of Asia, a problem with face. They just find it very difficult to say: 'I am to blame'."

**Q:** *If England had to make the same decisions that China has made about, say transport bans, do you think we, as a democracy, would have been more or less effective?*

A: "Far less effective – especially because we're a democracy. The average Briton wears democracy so easily on their shoulders that they almost take it for granted, until you interfere with it. Take the referendum for example: loads of people who voted remain actually, when the possibility of a second referendum was brought up, said that they would vote Brexit simply because they didn't believe that the democratic of the people should be overturned.

But when I just said democracy, I didn't mean that, did I? Actually, voting has got nothing to do with it. The hallmarks of a democratic state are freedom of assembly: your right to demonstrate, freedom of speech. You can stand outside Buckingham palace and say horrible things about the Queen or you can stand at Number 10 street and call Boris Johnson anything you want and no one's going to imprison you. Freedom of worship: you can worship whoever you like, however you like, or not at all if you like. And voting, in secret of course. The rule of law. We might not like some of the decisions taken by our judges, but I'll tell you one thing: they're honest, straight and not corrupt.

That is what people mean when they talk of democracy: they're talking about all those freedoms. I think I do too, and those



freedoms are what we feel are inviolable. If people would be told not to move in or out of Newcastle and someone dug a tunnel and got out of Newcastle, they'd be on the front of the Daily Mail praised as a hero. 'Cocked a snoot at the officials' – we're sort of like that, whereas the Chinese have a history of doing what they are told to do by those in power. The best way to get the British people to do something is to tell them not to do it."

**Q: How long do you think, realistically, China could remain totalitarian?**

A: "What year were you born? (2002). Oh God. In 1992 – that's the reason I asked you – Clinton became the President of the United States. There's a 'one country one vote' system in the WTO (World Trade Organisation) and when I used to negotiate on the WTO as Trade Minister in Britain – the fifth biggest economy in the world and probably, per capita, the greatest trading nation – had the same vote as Botswana. America still only has one vote, but enormous influence, and Clinton admitted China to the WTO. And for the first five or six 6 years, he gave them a so-called 'favoured nation status', which means they lowered tariffs on Chinese imports. At the time, the opposition to that would ask: 'why should this totalitarian police state be admitted to, and then given all the benefits of, democratic free trade?'

The argument on the other side was: 'but if you ever want it to change, you must expose it another way of doing things, and over the years you show them that there's not only another way, but that it actually makes people richer, and lead more fulfilled lives'. That was the reason for giving them the 2008 Beijing Olympics. I went to the opening ceremony of that as a guest of the Chinese government and you were well aware that China was on show, but it was having to talk, move and have social interactions, which was a good thing.

Do I think that, therefore, there will be a day when it adopts our norms? I think, for two reasons, no. One: they have 1.2 billion people. India, with roughly the same population, is a democracy, but has been one since the British Empire left. And for better or worse, they are used to it. Because of their ability to object, they don't get things done as quickly as China can; India could never build a hospital

in ten days because democracies have to take into account things that non-democracies don't have to. For the last three years, we have had a paralysed parliament in Britain and parts of the country in peaceful rebellion. If we weren't a mature democracy, you would have had civil unrest, or worse. Therefore, China's got this issue: how do you keep increasing freedom, yet stay in control because you don't want trouble in Western China fifteen hundred miles away? I don't envy Beijing; that choice, that is a difficult thing.

The second reason is that the unspoken deal seems to be working; the social contract that no one seems to ever talk about. It's the concept of 'I'm not going to give you the right to vote or the right to freedom of speech, or freedom of assembly, but I'll make you richer, and in return, shut up.' And that's working, by and large. Now if you're a Muslim in the west of China and you've just been put in a re-education camp, I don't think it looks the same from there. But there'll be a lot of people, in a lot of parts of China, who are vastly wealthier in relative terms than their mums and dads; probably in better jobs and moving from an agrarian society into an industrialised society. China can do all this more easily and effectively by not having the problem of voting.

Just because democracy has worked – withstood the strains of world war and constitutional upheaval – in America, France or Britain, it doesn't mean it suits everyone. It works in Australia and New Zealand, Canada but doesn't mean it's going to work in Iraq, nor Russia, nor China; I'm not arrogant nor pompous enough to tell them what to do, and just because I live in a working democracy doesn't give me that right. I do think we have a right to say that they should have free trials, free protests and drug-free sporting events because I think that it's a basic responsibility to ensure others are entitled to the basic values we have, but we should back off from saying 'you should be a democracy', and look more at how their people are looked after in an environment where they're not a democracy. Take the Sultanate of Oman, for example; they're not a democracy, but a complete autocracy, and yet their people are free because there is very little oppression. Small, wealthy countries can afford to do it, a cynic would say."

**Q:** *What would you call Russia, if not a democracy?*

**A:** “I suppose Mr Putin would call it a democracy, yes, because they vote every 4 years. I think you and I might have a different view on what voting means. Iran’s previous leader, Ahmadinejad, had ‘elections’. He would win 99.9% of the vote, but he had an election.

Would I call it a democracy? No. But it’s not for me to say whether that system is right or wrong. I should look at the consequences of it. For instance, there are many non-democracies who treat their women disgracefully, whereby I think I have every right to say that I don’t want to trade with you until you treat women equally to men. That’s a basic human value to me, but you don’t need to be a democracy to be able to do that.”

**Q:** *So, do you think that there is a single term to describe such systems, or are they mixes between a democracy and something else?*

**A:** “There will be hybrids of different ways of doing things, including delivering government. Did you see the news this morning saying that the 2021 census may be the last one they do in Britain? They send a form to a household, rather than to an individual, and that household can be a sole tenant of a flat, or it could be one of the adults living in a family home. That person has a legal obligation to fill in, at midnight, who was living in their house: age, race, religion.

I can remember once when I was travelling on the day, and my wife asked ‘What do I do? Do I tell the truth, which is that you’re actually sitting in America tonight and that therefore, I am the only one living in this house tonight? Or do I say that last night, he was here?’ We rang up the census people, and they said ‘ Well, if he’s coming back tomorrow, put that he’s here because what we’re trying to do is get a photograph of what the country looks like’. It’s public knowledge; they pull lots of information out of it and base many government policies on it.

I think that they are realising now that there has to be a better way of doing this than delivering a form. (Q: *By post? Seems a bit backward?*) Oh, entirely! But the second you

do it on there (*points at mobile phone*), anyone could do it, which is a problem. That form came to our home and either my wife or I were going to sign it. If it was online, somebody in Romania could be filling it in and you’d never know.”

**Q:** *Just onto something different now. Have you heard about Sajid Javid’s resignation? (Former Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sajid Javid, resigned 10 minutes before the interview.)*

**A:** “I was actually on the phone with him yesterday because we know each other, and I don’t think he saw it coming when he walked into Number 10 this morning, and I don’t think Boris Johnson saw it coming either. This was not planned.

Johnson was parading Dominic Raab at the Foreign Office, Priti Patel at the Home Office, and Sajid as the three great officers of state who were staying. I mean, they were walked up Downing Street in public: they were staying. But inside, it was: ‘I’m taking over Number 11. Your special advisers are morphing into mine and you’re not going to raise taxes in the budget, you’re going to borrow more. Take it or leave it’. Sajid obviously said ‘Alright then, I’ll leave it’. Very principled decision. Actually, a hugely respectable one. Politics is a dirty business: a mixture of Ladbrokes and the London Palladium. Ladbrokes is a large betting environment and the London Palladium is an entertainment palace of varieties in London; politics is a mixture of taking gambles and making public shows.

A very rare animal in politics is a principled human being and Sajid is one of those, for sure. Jeremy Corbyn was also an incredibly principled individual, but you’d only make him your PM if you wanted to turn Britain into Venezuela in twenty minutes. Corbyn was an old-fashion rebel from a different age: unpatriotic, anti-business, Marxist. Now, in my country, you can believe that all you like, you can express it, you can get elected saying it, and I like living in a place where Corbyn can exist, I just don’t want him to run my country. There is a difference.”

**Q:** *In the leadership election for Labour, if they hope to win the next election, should they go for someone more pragmatic like Keir*

*Stارmer who would put power over principles, or someone like Corbyn, say Rebecca Long-Bailey?*

A: "The trouble is, you should never interrupt your enemy when they're making a mistake, and it was Einstein who said that the definition of stupidity is doing the same thing again and again and expecting a different result. If they make Long-Bailey their leader, they'd be saying that they give Corbyn a ten out of ten for what he did at the last election when he led his party to the greatest defeat since 1935.

It was Blair who said: 'in British politics, if a traditional right-centre party fights a traditional hard-left party, you'll get the traditional result.' And that's what has happened. Whereas if you move the fight to the centre ground, you'll have 10% of the electorate voting hard left like they always have and will, you'll get another ten for hard right, and 80% of the British electorate are basically moderate people and they are the one electing governments. If the Labour Party doesn't move into that ground, they will never see power again.

Keir Starmer, compared to Rebecca Long-Bailey, is more moderate. Compared to the Millibands and Blair, he's left-wing. Everything is relative in life. Lisa Nandy is probably more Blairite than anybody and would have the best chance of winning an election, but she probably won't win the leadership election, because it doesn't matter what you and I think is best for Britain, it's what the Labour Party leadership think is best for its party.

I put my money on this: Starmer will win it. Is he electable? Definitely more so. If I gave him the benefit of the doubt, he might be pandering to the hard-left wing and then once he's gotten into power, he'll move it further to the middle. "

**Editor's note: Keir Starmer was elected leader of the Labour Party on April 4, 2020. Well predicted!**

What I find amazing is that the Labour Party membership, the largest European party by membership, had this vote two weeks ago: 'Who do you think has been the most successful Labour Party leader since WW2?'

You've got Attlee, who gave Britain the NHS and a landslide majority after the second world war, Wilson who kept Britain out of Vietnam, and was elected PM thrice, Blair who was the most successful leader the party ever had in history, never losing an election and winning three, with basically 100 seat majorities. Yet the membership of the Labour Party said Corbyn was the most successful leader they had ever had. The country has just said that he's the worst since 1935, yet the membership said that he was the best ever? And it's the membership who will be electing the leader...

I think Starmer will get it. Anyone but Long-Bailey, because she is Corbyn in a dress. The only shame of it being Keir Starmer is that he's a bloke and it would just be really good for the Labour party to have a woman. Not tokenism, but rather as a role-model. It would be really good for a girl at school, aged 14-15, to feel that I can, regardless of my political persuasion. I've got women who've led all the parties of Britain – women can do it. The only party that hasn't been led by a woman is, actually, the Labour Party." ■

**Editor's note: The discussion continues into the construction of the High Speed 2 (HS2): specifically, why the British tendency of "NIMBY" and the short term environment of politics will have contributed to its delay, and its potential impact on the West Midlands' economy. Remember to email Liza V for the full interview, or stay tuned for the next issue of *Two Zero One*.**

*Liza V & Oli O*



*Art by Liza V*

GLOBAL AFFAIRS

# MALEVOLENT INCOMPETENCE

*American citizens are isolating, and so is their government.*



*Art by Julie S*

Across the pond, the federal response to the coronavirus pandemic has been a catastrophe in the making. As of April 27, 2020, *Worldometer* reports nearly 1 million cases in the US alone, which accounts for roughly a third of the world's total COVID-19 infections. Of that number, 57,000 have lost their lives. Amidst this fiasco, the crisis has tested the relations between the US federal government, embodied by President Donald Trump, and state governments alongside their respective governors.

The core issues, faced by both parties, concern the allocation of vital medical resources, as well as the decisions pertaining to the lifting of social-distancing measures in order to re-invigorate the suffering economy. On April 22, the *Washington Post* reported 22 million workers currently in unemployment, a month after Trump declared a national emergency. The country has not seen such numbers since the Great Depression, and they are expected to rise even further if the lockdown continues, as businesses are

unable to pay staff due to reduced revenues. Earlier this month, President Trump declared that “[the President’s] authority is total”, in a statement disregarding the limits of his office under the constitution. This comes as several state governors across America refuse to loosen lockdown measures in an attempt to ‘flatten the curve’ or avoid risking another wave of the pandemic, which would overwhelm hospitals and medical staff. Law Professor John Yoo disagrees: “Only the states can impose quarantines, close institutions and businesses, and limit intrastate travel...”, which suggests that Trump’s comments had little basis. In a humiliating twist, Trump later explains that he was in fact “authorising” governors to implement decisions themselves.

The federal government’s incompetency during this pandemic has bordered on needless malice at some points. The Trump Administration always had the ability to invoke the Defense Production Act, which would have given the President unilateral authority to force private industries to produce goods for the public’s interest. And

yet, Trump only did so on March 27, when, according to *CNN*, more than 100,000 cases were already reported in the USA. Even then, out of the 40,000 ventilators ordered from *General Motors*, only 6,000 have been produced, according to *Forbes*.

The administration's late response to the pandemic has led to overall shortages in important medical equipment among states. The dire situation has forced states into "bidding wars" to procure PPE and oxygen ventilators. The New York Governor Andrew Cuomo comments that "This is not the way to do it, this is ad hoc, I'm competing with other states, I'm bidding up other states on the prices." Rural states such as Oregon may end up even more heavily hit by the coronavirus as they find themselves outbid by larger and more financially developed states. Needless to say, this operation has unnecessarily ramped up pricing for life-saving equipment.

To add insult to injury, the federal government has allegedly been bidding alongside states to block supply chains for "redistribution"; Kentucky Governor Andy Beshear reports his state lost to the Federal Emergency Management Agency to procure medical supplies. The federal government has also seized three million masks from the state of Massachusetts, requiring an outlandish operation by the state executive involving the loading of medical equipment onto food trucks in order to avoid federal interference, as reported by *The New England Journal of Medicine*. The governor of Illinois, J. B. Pritzker, has ordered secret chartered flights to ship much-needed supplies – a move that exemplifies the 'Wild West' situation now experienced by states when trying to purchase medical equipment without federal help.

As if the federal government weren't already scraping the bottom of the proverbial barrel, a report from the local government of Berlin claimed on April 4 that a shipment of 200,000 US-made masks, originally directed to Germany, were "confiscated" in Bangkok, in a move described by Berlin's interior minister Andreas Geisel as "an act of modern piracy". The mask manufacturer 3M has

also been instructed to halt the distribution of n95 respirators to Canada and South America through the Defense Production Act, a move which it warns will have "significant humanitarian implications".

Overall, the federal government's attitude towards the pandemic has left much to be desired. If the government wants to retain its global image during this crisis, which has led to much unneeded suffering, a greater level of co-operation between states and the international community must take place. The administration need not take the same isolationist attitude as its citizens stuck at home. ■

*Matthew C*

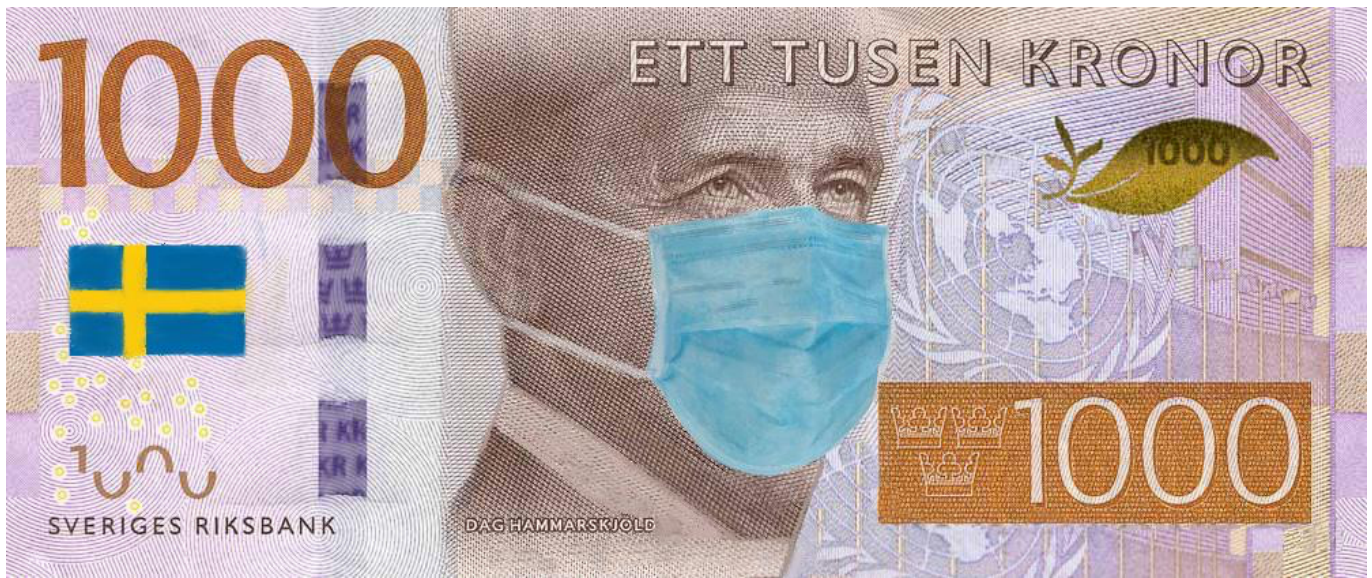
*Sources available upon request. Please email Matthew (see staff directory).*

GLOBAL AFFAIRS

# A GLOBAL MORALITY EXPERIMENT

## *Sweden vs. New Zealand*

*Governments are facing tough choices, and they are choosing very differently. How do we decide what is right and wrong in a pandemic?*



*Art by Jule S*

Coronavirus. COVID-19. The virus. Whatever you call it, this global pandemic has become the most extensively debated and talked about topic of 2020 (for obvious reasons). It has halted the drive and progress of most political protest movements that had previously been at the forefront of politics, including the ones in Hong Kong. Brexit is no longer making the headlines in every British newspaper. Whilst the pandemic is global, every nation has taken a different approach to dealing with it. In some countries such as Hungary, it has acted as a political power booster for their leaders. In others, it has brought about a lot of criticism and controversy, in turn affecting the popularity of political parties. Whatever the nature of the impact, COVID-19 has caused a great amount of chaos for nations across the globe.

It is particularly fascinating to observe the strikingly juxtaposed approaches to tackling the crisis taken by various liberal democracies. As Sweden and New Zealand

are both wealthy countries with progressive outlooks on political issues, it is interesting to compare the success of Sweden's arguably more "laid-back" approach and New Zealand's "elimination" approach to the virus. The brutal dilemma of "money vs. lives" is the Hobbesian choice that both these countries have been forced to make. So, which is more successful?

Supposedly, an answer to this is based on what the individual values more. Do they choose life and the great value that it brings to society? Or do they choose money and the power that it has? Nevertheless, it is very difficult to argue for money or for life, as the two are deeply interlinked. Without life, there is no one to make money, let alone anyone to need its value. Yet without money, it is incredibly difficult for human society to function and hence, the sacrifice of one of them almost automatically means sacrificing the other. In order to judge which is the "better" approach, one can look at the wider moral question in the context of the case study "Sweden vs. New Zealand".

The strategy of New Zealand has been to completely eradicate the virus at almost any

cost in order to prevent an incredibly high death toll. This policy is implemented through putting a complete stop to immigration and importations, as well as imposing severe containment “lockdown” rules. As New Zealand is an island, it is quite easy for it to put strict restrictions on borders. In stark contrast, the Swedish government has kept businesses, elementary schools and even restaurants and gyms open, urging citizens to take some “self-responsibility” through social distancing. This is highly controversial, and the government has faced some backlash for its actions, particularly from its elderly population after the death toll surpassed 1,000 by mid-April.

To continue with more solid figures and statistics, as of April 25, Sweden has 2,192 coronavirus related deaths reported and New Zealand has just 18. It is worth considering that the population of Sweden is around twice that of New Zealand, but even then, New Zealand is clearly more successful in terms of reducing deaths. It is too early to review the economic cost of this, but a couple of years down the line it will become pretty clear which strategy worked better.

Utilitarian thinkers would argue that the prosperous economy in Sweden ultimately maximises the overall amount of happiness and that therefore, it should be “business as usual” in order to keep people fed, active and paying bills, which also sustains morale. However, this argument would only be valid until the number of deaths became so high that the pain and loss outweighed the utility of those thriving and living virus-free. Critiques of utilitarianism question whether it is morally justified for individuals to be sacrificed for others to be very happy, instead of just content, for example. Is it a violation of an individual’s rights if they are exposed to the virus as a result of Swedish “light-touch” tactics? These tactics are even viewed as discriminatory by some people, as certain categories of people are more vulnerable than others, whereby it appears that the elderly and sick are already being abandoned by the government.

Deontological thinkers would argue that the approach of the government in New Zealand abides by the fixed, universal moral rules that we have. The idea that death is undesirable and should be avoided is pretty much agreed upon across the globe, making the elimination tactic of New Zealand

morally correct. Many also argue that choosing not to do something has just as much of an impact as choosing to do something. This would make “it would have happened anyway”, “inaction doesn’t make a difference”, and similar excuses, invalid.

The moral debate of COVID-19 could apply to many political situations, but it has never been tested on such a global scale. This may cause people to change their views, particularly if they have had a significant personal experience with the virus.

The examples of Sweden and New Zealand also beg a fundamental question of political philosophy: is it acceptable for the government to make these moral decisions for us, or should we somehow be given the political autonomy to decide for ourselves? ■

*Liv D*



*Art by Jule S*

# ON THE BRIGHT SIDE

*20 Positive things that have happened during the coronavirus Pandemic.*

With our phones constantly being bombarded with the latest news and updates on the coronavirus, it is no wonder that we feel anxiety wash over us. Even when we are away from our devices, the current situation feels overwhelming, and the future uncertain. But remember: the best of human nature can triumph over adversity, and even the simplest acts of kindness can bring about change.

1. Smog-free skies have allowed Germany to break records in solar power generation.

2. NASA satellite photos have shown air pollution drop over northeastern US.

3. Miss England has hung up her crown to return to work as a doctor.

4. Rare baby turtles are thriving in a tourist free Thailand.

5. Australian supermarkets are now operating with elderly-only hours.

6. Endangered white tailed eagles have now been spotted in England for the first time in 240 years.

7. Cuban doctors have been sent to help an overburdened Italian healthcare system.

8. The singer Lizzo sent lunch to healthcare workers in the Dayton area.

9. Brazil's top football clubs are handing over their stadiums to allow health authorities to turn them into field hospitals and clinics..



*Art by Jule S*

10. Some landlords have cancelled rent for 3 months, telling tenants to go spend the money at local businesses instead.

11. NASA managed to develop a COVID-19 prototype ventilator in 37 days.

12. Thailand is giving free mobile data for those in isolation to support people who work from home.



13. Boots UK is donating over 200,000 toiletries to vulnerable people and NHS workers to use between busy shifts. The donations will include hand cream, shower gel and toothpaste.

14. The BBC is set to launch a 14-week lockdown learning scheme for children missing school.

15. Jacinda Ardern, the Prime Minister of New Zealand, has deemed the Easter Bunny and Tooth Fairy “essential workers”, hoping to spark some excitement in the country’s children.

16. Roadkill is down in Belgium. While 2,032 fatal collisions with hedgehogs, badgers and polecats are usually reported between mid-March and mid-April, this year only 772 were called in.

17. College students in Canada have created a toll-free hotline with messages of positivity for elderly people in isolation.

18. Two children in Hanoi, Vietnam used their “lucky money” – money they’ve been saving up – to send 20,000 medical masks to the UK.

19. HRH Princess Sofia of Sweden took a three-day medical course at Sophiahemmet University College in Stockholm to work in the hospital as a healthcare assistant.

20. Our School has produced over a thousand PPE items for frontline NHS staff with help from the DT department! ■



*Chantal W*



*Photo: Evie S-J*

GLOBAL AFFAIRS

# THE POWER OF MEDIA

*Media isn't all anxiety and "fake news". In this pandemic, it is a source of hope.*

Every morning, we wake up to scroll through millions of tweets, theories and articles about, yours truly, COVID-19. The “pings” and “tweets” resonate loudly around my room as I await yet another instruction, another explanation, another sign of hope.

It's easy to underestimate the information imbalance in our society. After all, “information” has never felt more easily available. A few keyboard strokes, one click, and a thousand portals open up, connecting us to unlimited digital content. And yet, the apparent ubiquity of news and information is misleading. As the many conspiracy theories surrounding the spread of the novel virus engulf the news, one may question the validity of the media during these uncertain times. As a dear friend of ours, Mr. Trump, often calls it: “fake news”, can spread like a wildfire.

Amidst the constant buzzing and the overwhelming “how to get through isolation for dummies” guides, I struggled to select the information that connected us all. What advice should I follow? “Drinking bleach instead of orange juice for breakfast” or “Workout at least sixteen times a day”. What should we believe?

As time has slowed down, and we find ourselves able to take a minute to breathe and readjust to what we are living through, I decided to be a bit “old-school” and return to the antecedent of our tiny, confining screens. I quickly resorted to the grey newspapers in our mailbox to acquire some form of affiliation to the outside world.

As I opened the great, big paper with the great, big letters, I began to question what the meaning of all these words and phrases were during this pandemic. Clutching onto my curing cup of tea, I read the news of the day, examining every picture, scrutinising every experience. These words and images, albeit simplistic, helped me find a profound sense of



*Art by Jule S*

proximity to the outside world. Being used to the boundaries of walls binding me to my room, I suddenly felt a sense of liberation and hope. I knew that somehow, despite all the chaos and confusion, these words connected us all together.

I came to comprehend the influence that the media has upon each and every individual during these complicated times. The simple comfort of some words of hope can completely change one's outlook on our experiences in lockdown. The words we read every day are testimonies of many individuals navigating through this storm, towards the light.

We often forget that we are currently living through our great-grand-children's history lessons, and that as much as this pandemic has been an erratic journey, we are all part of a substantial story.

Our story, our experiences of COVID-19, every second that has ticked by ever since our lives changed so suddenly, has been encapsulated by the media for future generations to look back upon.

Through the simple task of picking up a pen, running our fingers along our keyboards, we have become the media. We are the narrators of what it truly means to be alone, together. ■

*Laetitia D B*

# COULD 2020 STILL BE OUR YEAR?

*Every new year we make promises we don't keep, and it seems especially true for 2020 – but who knows what the year still has to bring?*



*Art by Julie S*

*“2020 is going to be the BEST year of our lives!”*

Whilst I can't prove it, I can, with some level of confidence and accuracy, predict that approximately 3 billion people said that to someone at the beginning of this year, 1.5 billion of whom even believed in their words. Honestly, they couldn't have been more wrong.

So far, 2020 has brought us the tragedies of the Australian Wildfires, then the seemingly imminent threat of a third world war, the awful death of Kobe Bryant and nine others, 109 “mass shootings” in the USA (so far), and, of course, the COVID-19 pandemic. Naturally, there will have been so many more tragic events; these have just been the statistics and stories with the most traction.

I doubt that when anyone thought about 2020 – even if their thoughts weren't overly optimistic, barely realistic, perhaps even undeniably pessimistic – were able to imagine the current state of affairs being within the realms of possibility. The stock markets are crashing, world economies are slowing, unemployment rates are skyrocketing, and meanwhile, hundreds of thousands of people are dying – alone, without their loved ones.

2020 is certainly not going to be the best year of our lives.

In fact, without question, it's going to be one of the toughest years to survive as a human race. We should, and shall, strive to create as many positives as possible from this huge, negative black cloud that is blanketing our lives at the moment. We aren't in a world war, we aren't being invaded by aliens and we haven't succumbed to the worst predictions of climate change effects.

Some people are probably spending more time with their immediate family than they ever have before. Some people have watched more movies than they ever have before, read more books, eaten more food, gotten more exercise. Whatever it is that you are doing more of, whether it would be classified as productive or unproductive, stupid or smart, boring or fun: enjoy the time that you have. The probability of you ever having time in this way again is unlikely, at least until you reach retirement.

Instead of spending your days longing for an escape from this unique and unlikely hell, spend it living the life that you always complained about not having time for – if you want. Spend this time finishing every season of *Gossip Girl*, if you want. We all dream of the day when we will finally be able to see all of our friends, when our families aren't the only people we can communicate with in person, and when we can finally eat at a restaurant again. We all dream of the day when life returns to normal. But will life return to normal?

Life could return to normal. I just think that there's an enormous chance that we might have to change our definition of “normal” in an unprecedented way. Zoom could become the new FaceTime.

We don't know. The scariest part about this situation is that “we don't know”; in fact nobody knows. We are all in the same boat, and whilst some cabins might have holes in while others have a walk-in-wardrobe, we have to stand together and get through this together.

Whilst 2020 might not be the best year of our lives, taken individually, perhaps it will be the best year of our lives as a global community. ■

*Emily C*

SCIENCE & TECH

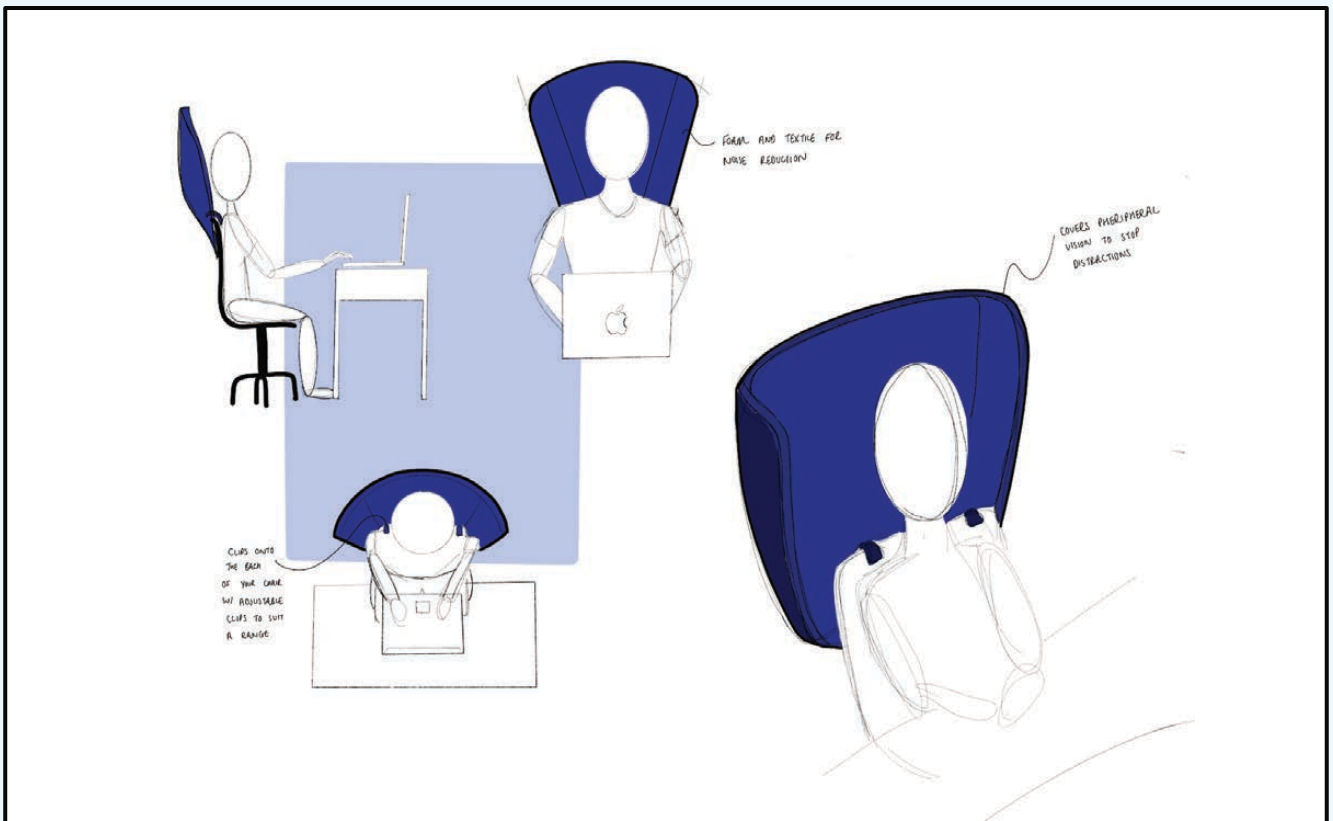
# INNOVATION IN ISOLATION

Designers need Designers.

For criticism, for validation, for feedback, and for proposals. No matter how much experience you hold under your belt, a peer review is the most crucial step in all design processes. The introduction of lockdown has not only put a strain on the design industry, but it has also prevented designers from communicating and inspiring creation. A time of crisis requires immediate innovation in order to combat the issue, hence Dezeen's response of launching the first virtual design festival, as an attempt to showcase awareness and inject inspiration into the creative world.

Similarly, *The Bridge Programme*, designed to prepare the Upper Sixth for their next stages of life, caters for the creative brains of Bromsgrove. Our ADT department's design programme briefs these creators with design challenges; the most recent challenge was to design a product to ease the strain of lockdown. From skill-sharing apps to a hygienic solution to reading braille, these designers have not failed to impress.

Will E



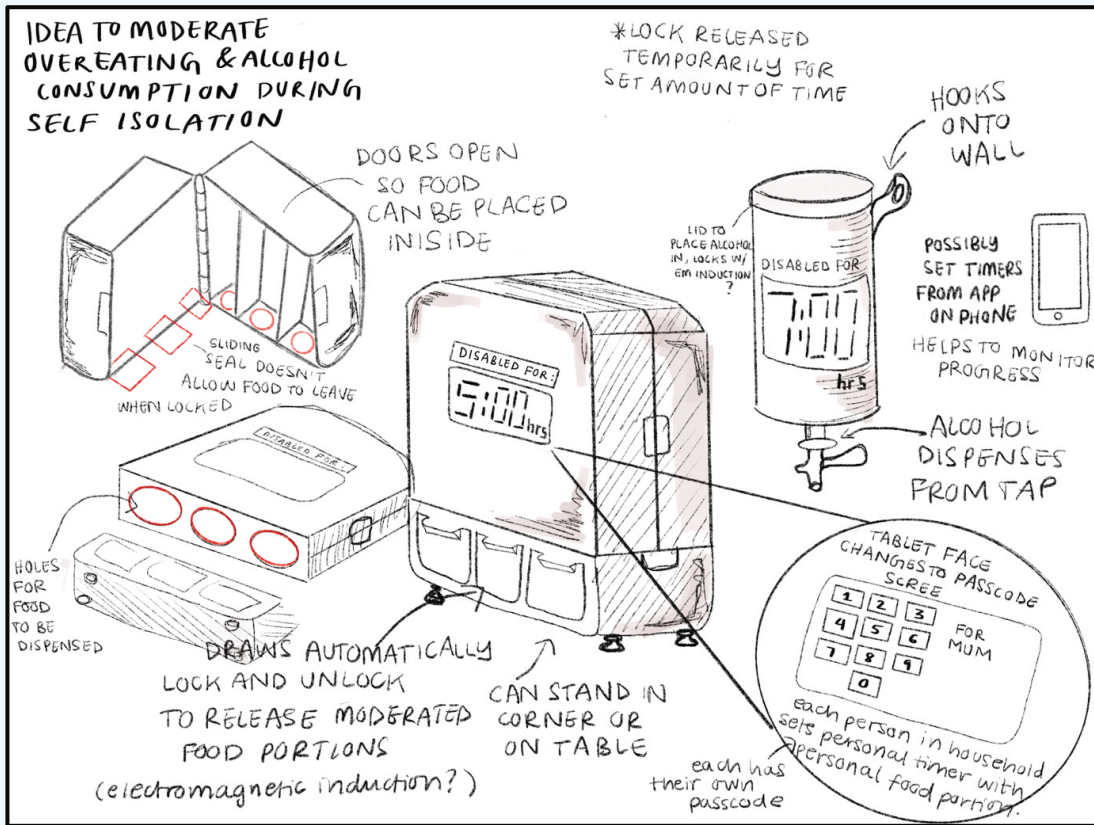
At-home privacy screen. By Alex E. (Old Bromsgrovian)

# + covaid

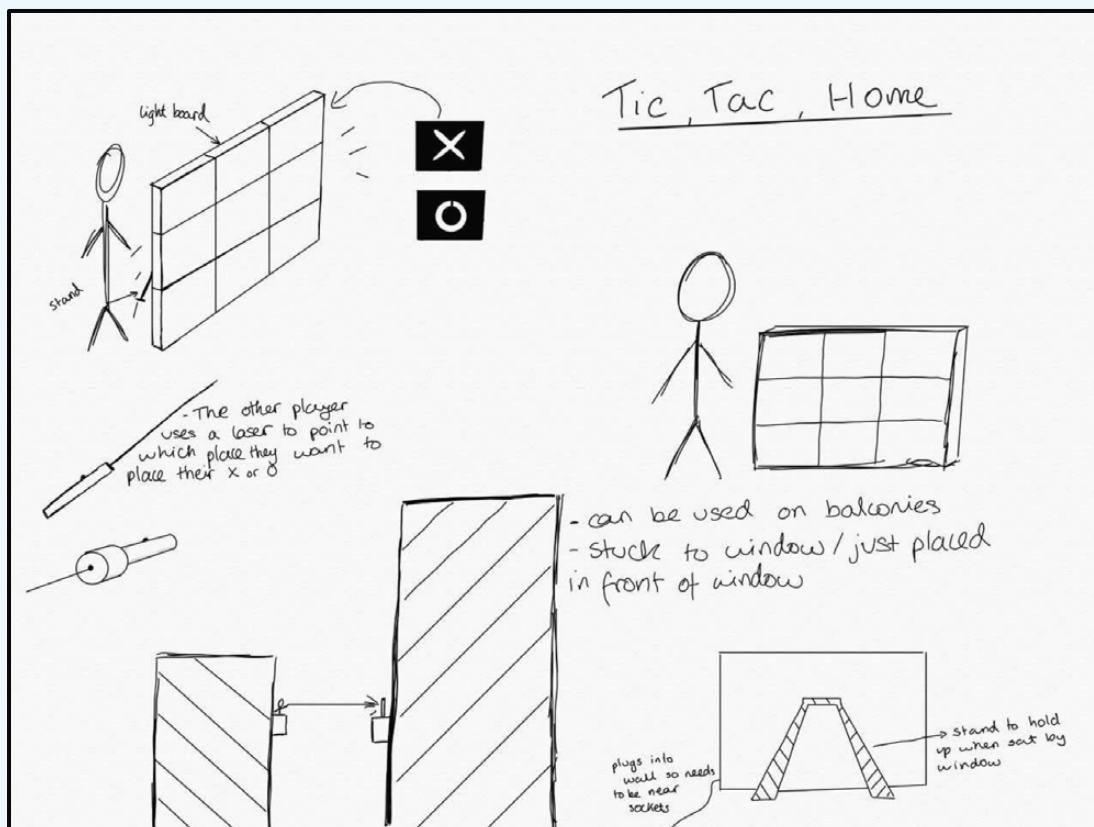


+Covaid aid matcher. By Will E.

FLYES virtual-reality travel app. By Alan C.



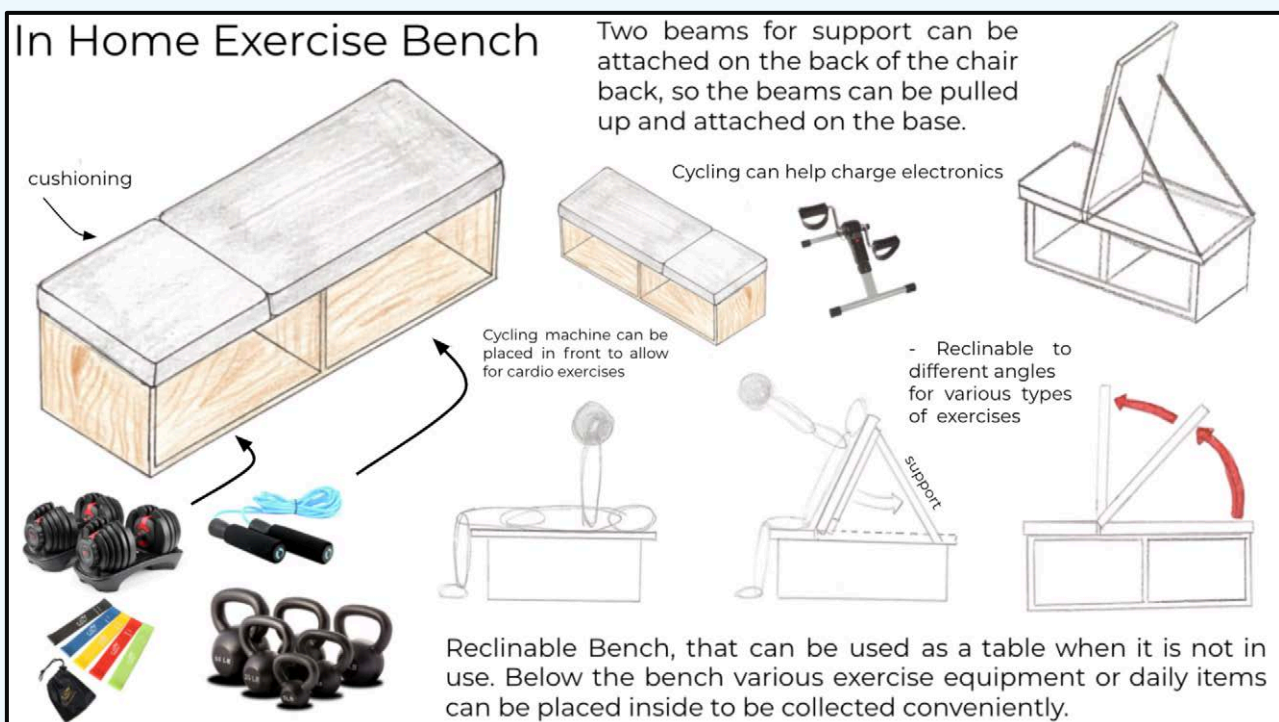
Food & Alcohol-intake moderator. By Serene S.



Tic, Tac, Home – neighbours game. By Edward R.



GROW+ entertainment app. Kristi L.

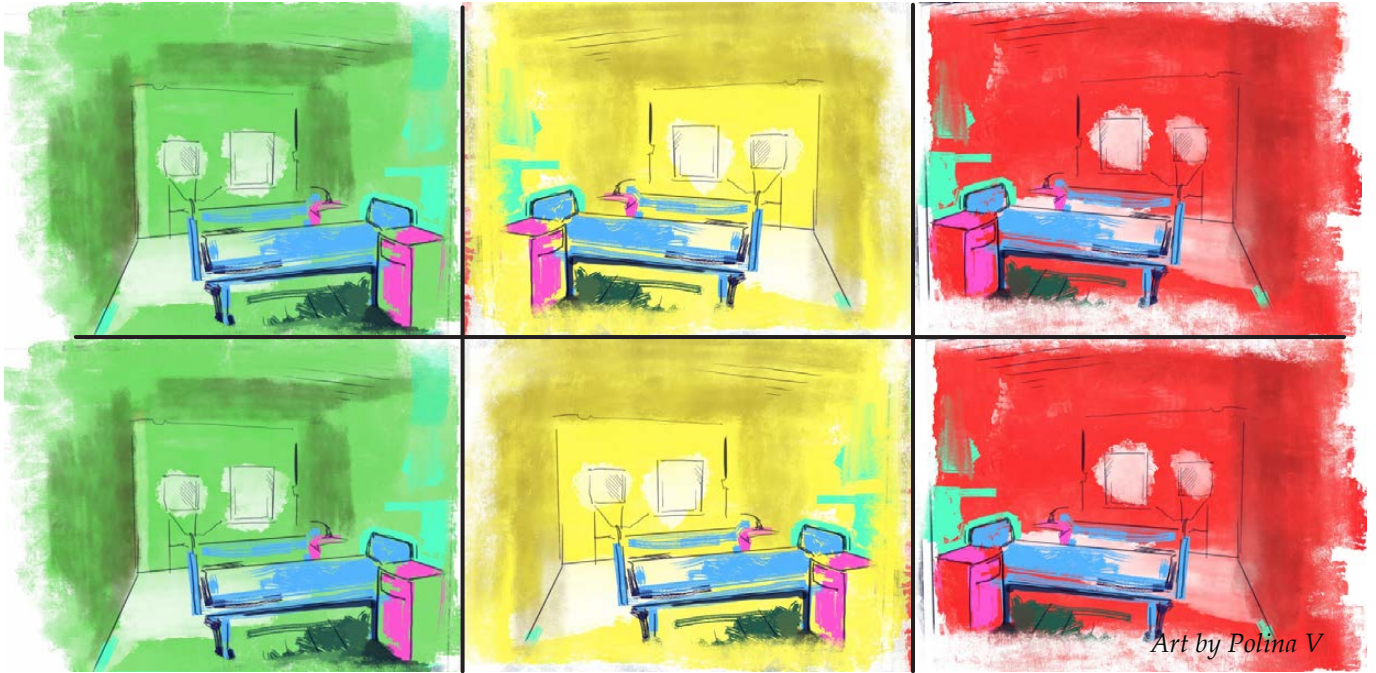


Multifunctional in-home exercise bench. By Tsz Yau W.

SCIENCE & TECH

# RECONSTRUCTING LIVES

*The vital art of hospital engineering.*



For some time, the coronavirus has been causing disruptions to our daily routines; disruptions which, for most people, include being isolated or having to put masks on if they do have to leave the safety of their home. But what about the people who are sick? Surely there aren't enough hospitals that meet the necessary requirements for treating COVID-19 patients? Let's have a look at how countries are trying to solve this problem.

One of the most obvious and impressive examples of such efforts is the recently built hospital in Wuhan, China, which was constructed in a record time of only two weeks and ready to admit its first patients already after one week. The Huoshenshan Hospital is a remarkable engineering achievement: it managed to provide additional space for 1000 COVID-19-infected patients. At first, such an accomplishment may seem completely surreal: surely you would have to finish building a hospital before admitting its first patients? A structure has to be built step by step, when little

parallel work is possible between different building teams, right?

Well, not exactly. First of all, an enormous number of people worked on the project. With the hospital being as large as 25,000 square-metres, it was only made possible with the mobilisation of over 7000 workers and the collaboration of hundreds of engineers. China, despite calling itself a democracy, is actually a fairly authoritarian regime. This proved incredibly useful in such a situation; as no time was spent conducting a referendum or holding countless elections on the matter, the Chinese government was able to mobilise workers and doctors very quickly and efficiently. They also have a flourishing economy and can afford such a venture. However, whilst this strategy has doubtlessly saved lives, it would simply be impossible to implement anywhere else.

Secondly, the hospital is actually not a building in the traditional sense: it's more of a collection of blocks stacked on top of each other



and connected by various corridors, an approach that has already been used in the past. In 2003, China, along with the rest of Asia, was suffering from a severe SARS outbreak and had to quickly construct a hospital that met the isolation requirements to treat the affected. Back then, China managed to engineer and build a hospital on a similar scale in Beijing. Instead of a solid concrete foundation and floors being put in place, the hospital stands on a metal frame. Such infrastructure allows the blocks to be built elsewhere and then simply put in place later. This allows great flexibility for workers, who can be working on the frame for the blocks at different places simultaneously to finish it much quicker. This also means that the hospital can be reconstructed in a mere matter of days, or even hours, depending on the needs of the situation.

Initially, I couldn't find any information in the press about the blocks making up the hospital, which made me suspect that they were somehow classified. However, after more research, I found that they are actually sold on *Alibaba* (can be seen as a Chinese equivalent of *eBay*) for \$2000. They are incredibly simple in construction and the illustrations show their inner workings: two beds, oxygen ports, plugs for electrical equipment and thin metal walls, actually resembling a shipping container. They are arranged in groups of many and connected with other block groups using corridors with barriers to prevent the disease from spreading into the control centre and other uninfected areas. The corridors have two doors: one on the "clean side" (away from the patients) and one on the "dirty side" (on the side of the patients). Between these doors is a disinfection station. This helps create a barrier, which the virus cannot travel through, as it can only go as far as one metre due to its relative heaviness. It is necessary to reduce the movement of patients as much as possible to, again, avoid the spread of the virus. For the same purpose, the hospital is divided into zones according to pollution levels, as well as different movement channels for patients and staff to avoid cross contamination. Another measure is the implementation of negative air pressure, so the ventilated air can flow into, but not out of, the isolated wards. This makes sure that the virus is kept inside the system. A closed water supply also makes this possible.

Not all countries can, nor find it effective to, build temporary hospitals. This is because building a hospital so quickly requires unimaginable effort, finances, and mobilisation of many experts from across the country. Some countries do not have the authoritarian power to do so, or cannot afford it. Let's have a look at Russia as an example.

All across Russia, many different hospitals – including maternity ones – have been converted to deal with the virus with massive blocks of hospitals allocated for the purpose. Insulated blow up barriers with disinfection centres have been installed, which are simple but effective measures taken to reduce the risk of contamination. However, most hospitals have not had much change at all. This is unfortunate, but there was very little time to get the hospitals ready and the funds were extremely limited. A problem, which unites every country, is the lack of Artificial Lung Ventilation machines. There are too many people with severe cases of pneumonia to be treated at the same time effectively. This has been mostly solved in developed countries, but the rest are suffering worse than ever.

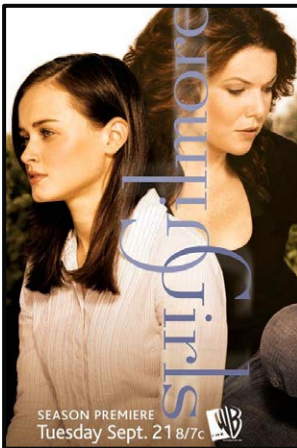
We may be talking about the global scientific challenges that countries are facing, but we cannot ignore the real heroes saving lives. Doctors have been working seemingly endless shifts and avoiding home to keep their families safe. They are working severely over hours to help the ones in need and we owe them a lot. In terms of healthcare, this is the biggest and most serious crisis the world has seen since the last Influenza outbreak. Although engineering is one of the most powerful tools of humanity since fire was discovered, it cannot solve all problems. In this case, we rely on the infinitely optimistic and often selfless people, who motivate us to keep going. That is until we find a solution of course, because a problem cannot rest unsolved forever, great minds will eventually find a way out. Engineers can learn a lot from doctors in this regard, as their tasks – in the grand scheme of things – are often not too dissimilar. ■

*Maximilian O*

## LITERATURE, FILM &amp; CULTURE

## 7 SHOWS TO WATCH ON NETFLIX

Going to bed at 5 am, not waking up in time for breakfast... Yes, we've all been there. We've all experienced these symptoms at some point in our lives and we've all suffered from the sleep deprivation caused by a highly contagious condition called "The Netflix Addiction". As of now, there may be more people suffering from this condition than from the COVID-19 pandemic itself. Are you one of them? Do you feel like you have watched everything that there is to watch, and been abandoned in pointless existence? Fear not – **I have the cure for you!**



## 1. GILMORE GIRLS

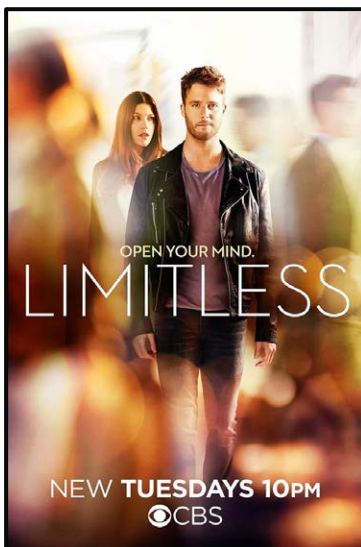
This rom-com TV show, directed by Amy Sherman-Palladino, lies very closely to my heart, and I am sure you'll develop a close connection to it too. It is rated 13+, but will accommodate audiences of all ages. The two female protagonists are mother and daughter, Lorelei and Rory Gilmore. You will embark on a soul-searching adventure with the two girls as they struggle with very relatable crises. The witty comedy and turn of events will have you engaged and dying from laughter. It is a lengthy show, 7 seasons to be precise, which is just perfect for a time like this. By the time you finish, you are guaranteed to be left craving for more. But don't worry: a one season sequel, *Gilmore Girls: A Year in the Life*, was released in 2016.

## 2. THE SHANNARA CHRONICLES

Without exaggeration, I devoured its 2 seasons in less than a weekend. *The Shannara Chronicles* is a fantasy TV show set thousands of years after the collapse of humankind. It's rated 16+ due to violence, as the protagonist, the half-elf Wil, goes on a journey and fights battles to prevent a demonic army from obliterating their world. The show includes magical creatures and people, such as Celtic Druids, and is filled with suspense throughout. Also, the actors are pleasing to the eyes, which, of course, is an added bonus to any TV show *\*wink wink\**. Also, this series is based on a trilogy of books, so if you prefer reading over Netflix, then check out Terry Brooks' *The Sword of Shannara* trilogy.



## 3. LIMITLESS



A sci-fi crime TV show, rated 13+, which will doubtlessly have you asking yourself greater questions. In *Limitless*, we are presented with the concept of a pill called NZT-48, which, when consumed, enables access to every single one of your brain cells. Personally, I envy this concept; just imagine everything you could do! There would be no need to revise for exams because, with the pill, you would be able to remember everything effortlessly. However, as we all are aware, drug abuse comes with consequences... The so-called "miracle pill" seemed perfect, but turns out to have life-threatening side effects. Watch the show to see how Brian Finch, the protagonist, helps his FBI friend Rebecca Harris solve cases and look for a cure. This show is actually based on the movie 'Limitless', released in 2011 and starring Jake McDorman as Brian Finch. So, if you find yourself enjoying the show and wanting more, you can also give the movie a go.

## 4. LOCKE AND KEY

This new addition to Netflix, as of February 2020, is based on the comic book series written by Joe Hill and Gabriel Rodríguez that share the same name. It is a 13+ rated supernatural horror drama, but frankly, it is quite scary for my taste. However, I'm sure that some of you adrenaline junkies out there are specifically looking for shows like this one! It follows a family who, after their father's murder, have moved in to a house with a mysterious history. The three Locke siblings – Kinsey, Tyler and Bode – explore the house and find interesting sets of keys that behold more than they can understand. Join them as they try to solve the mystery of their father's murder, and discover the secrets of Keyhouse....

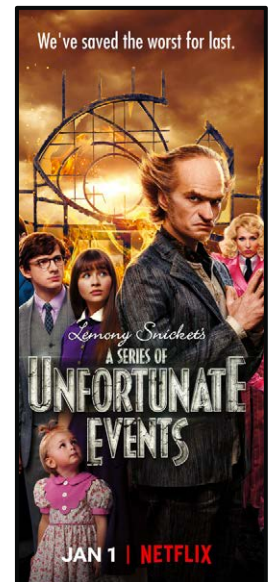


## 5. THE UMBRELLA ACADEMY

In 1989, there was an inexplicable event that caused the peculiar birth of 43 children. The peculiar part wasn't the fact that 43 children were born, but that none of their mothers were pregnant when the day first began. Six of the children were then bought and adopted by the billionaire industrialist Sir Reginald Hargreeves. Later, it was found that these six children were gifted with supernatural abilities. Together they formed the *Umbrella Academy*. The somewhat violent, 16+ rated, superhero sci-fi show tells the story of these six children, who are now adults living separate lives. After their adoptive father's death, child number five (who has been lost for years) returns to the family from the future, informing them that the apocalypse is near. Now, if that doesn't sound interesting, I don't know what does! Join the siblings as they seek the cause of the apocalypse and try to stop it.

## 6. A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS

This show makes me reminisce my own childhood memories. I would build a fort, cuddle up and disappear into one of Daniel Handler's *A Series of Unfortunate Events* novels for hours. It was a childhood dream come true when I found out that the thirteen novels had been compressed into a 3 seasons Netflix-series! The show is about three orphaned children: Violet, Klaus, and Sunny Baudelaire. When their parents recently perished in a, seemingly, non-accidental fire, the children inherit a large sum of money that would be available to the children once the eldest, Violet Baudelaire, comes of age. But until then, they remain in the care of their guardian, Count Olaf, who does not have the purest of intentions for the children and is clearly only after their money. This show is perfect to watch with your family; despite the 7+ rating, it showcases a very intriguing, complicated, and unpredictable plot. Go ahead and find out what happens to the Baudelaire children as they run away from Count Olaf and try to solve the mystery of their parents' murder.



## 7. STRANGER THINGS

If you have not watched this show already: what are you doing?! *Stranger Things* is definitely a must-watch! This 16+ rated thriller sci-fi show is about a group of kids who want to know more about the cause of the strange events that take place in their town. Their passion for solving government mysteries first started with the disappearance of one of their friends, Will. When going to look for him, Mike, Dustin and Lucas run into an interesting, to say the least, little girl, who becomes known to us as Eleven. I promise you that once you start watching it, you will not be able to stop. ■

Images: IMDb

Ioana V

LITERATURE, FILM & CULTURE

# WHAT WE OWE EACH OTHER

*What binge-watching "The Good Place" can teach us about our duty to others during this global pandemic.*



Art by Jule S

I know, I know – this article is hardly what you would expect to read in a school magazine. Surely you would expect me to write something more academic like “How to be more productive at home”, “Online workouts you can follow” or “Ten classic books the English department recommended for lockdown reading”. Yet, here I am, encouraging you to sit in bed for exactly the 1 day and 2 hours it takes to watch all four seasons of *The Good Place*. You’re welcome.

But imagine this: there I was, curled up on my sofa, trying to escape the chaos of the world falling apart around us by watching someone else’s world fall apart on TV, when the episode entitled “What We Owe To Each Other” flashed up on-screen.

On the face of it, it seemed just like any other witty, if slightly over-dramatic, episode.

If you aren’t familiar with the show, it tells the story of the main character, Eleanor, who has wrongfully been allowed into “The Good Place” after her death, despite having been a selfish person on Earth. The show follows her as she tries to better herself in order to deserve her place in this seemingly perfect afterlife. True to form, in this episode, Eleanor faces a moral dilemma: deciding whether to honour a promise to help her friend Michael, even though honouring that promise could bring awful repercussions upon herself. On one hand, her most natural instinct is of self-preservation. However, on the other hand, her friend Chidi explains that there are certain ethical principles that, as a society, we must all agree to follow in order for it to function, and honouring promises is part of that.

But, you ask, what has any of this got to do with the global situation we currently face? Well, as the episode ended and the

judgemental “Are you still watching?” screen stared back at me, I couldn’t get that phrase out of my head.

“What we owe each other”.

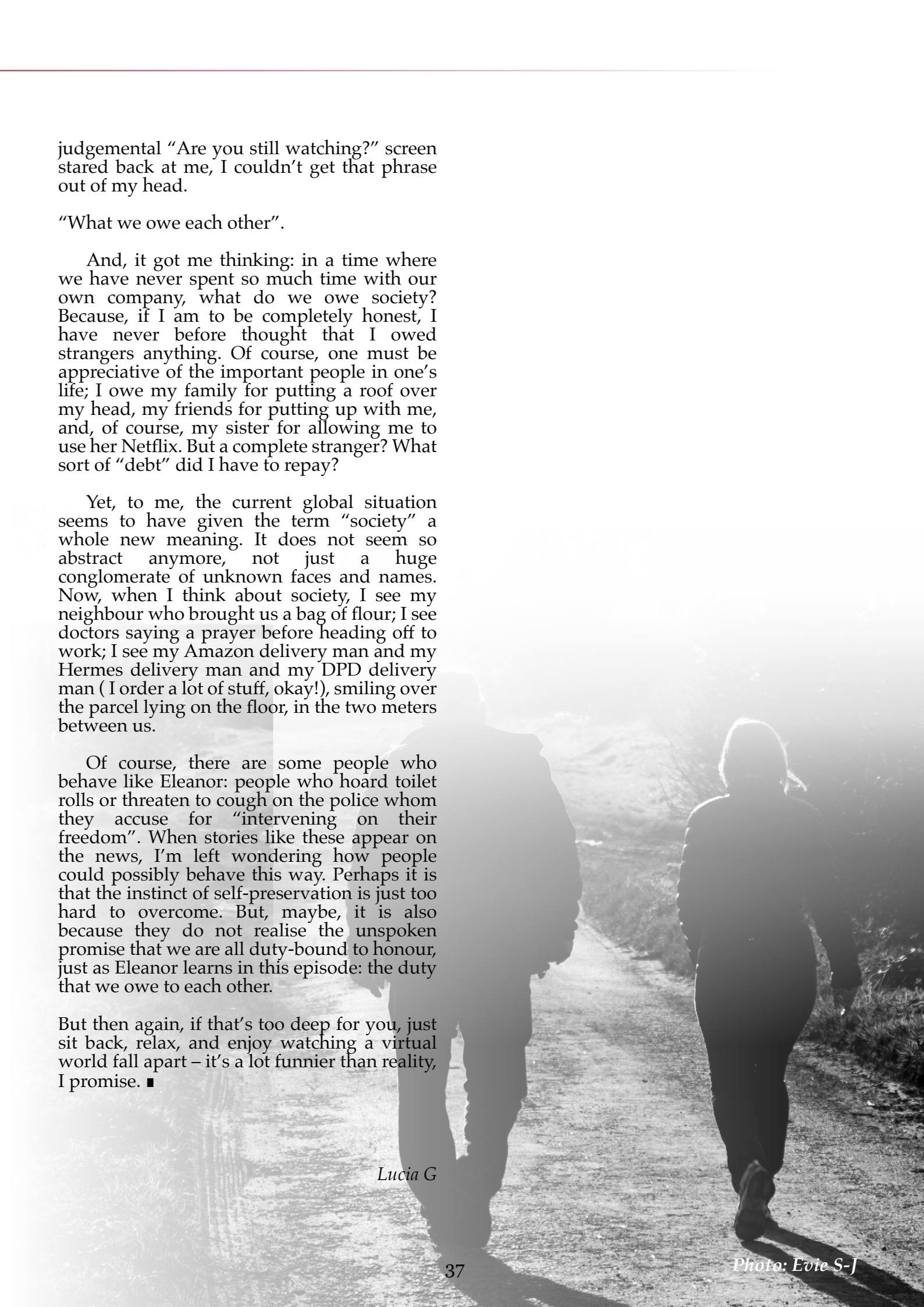
And, it got me thinking: in a time where we have never spent so much time with our own company, what do we owe society? Because, if I am to be completely honest, I have never before thought that I owed strangers anything. Of course, one must be appreciative of the important people in one’s life; I owe my family for putting a roof over my head, my friends for putting up with me, and, of course, my sister for allowing me to use her Netflix. But a complete stranger? What sort of “debt” did I have to repay?

Yet, to me, the current global situation seems to have given the term “society” a whole new meaning. It does not seem so abstract anymore, not just a huge conglomerate of unknown faces and names. Now, when I think about society, I see my neighbour who brought us a bag of flour; I see doctors saying a prayer before heading off to work; I see my Amazon delivery man and my Hermes delivery man and my DPD delivery man ( I order a lot of stuff, okay!), smiling over the parcel lying on the floor, in the two meters between us.

Of course, there are some people who behave like Eleanor: people who hoard toilet rolls or threaten to cough on the police whom they accuse for “intervening on their freedom”. When stories like these appear on the news, I’m left wondering how people could possibly behave this way. Perhaps it is that the instinct of self-preservation is just too hard to overcome. But, maybe, it is also because they do not realise the unspoken promise that we are all duty-bound to honour, just as Eleanor learns in this episode: the duty that we owe to each other.

But then again, if that’s too deep for you, just sit back, relax, and enjoy watching a virtual world fall apart – it’s a lot funnier than reality, I promise. ■

*Lucia G*



LIFESTYLE

# 8 WELL-BEING LESSONS FROM ISOLATION

*A.k.a how to stay healthy & productive in ambiguous times.*

How are you?

I just wanted to start off this article by checking up on you. These unpredictable times can be extremely scary and, trust me, I completely understand what you are going through. Having been indoors for about 2 months now, I've found myself struggling to wrap my head around each day being fundamentally the same as the one before. The crazy events unfolding on the news keep generating anxiety and questions like "How can I cope and manage the monumental changes I am dealing with right now?", "How can I find peace and happiness, and preserve my self-identity when the way I define myself and my everyday life has been shifted so drastically and quickly?", "Can I control the uncertainty and anxiety that I am feeling through my daily actions?" are all popping up every now and again. It is difficult to find the motivation to boost my energy levels, especially when also battling with emotional eating and boredom snacking.

However, after multiple trials and errors, I believe that I am somewhat close to finding a way to manage these pressures and use this time productively. Whilst the recipe is not yet perfect, I wanted to share the 8 things I have learned so far about how to stay healthy – both mentally and physically – and productive during these ambiguous times:



## 1. MORNING ROUTINES ARE KEY.

The first thing you do when you wake up is so unbelievably significant to how you feel throughout the rest of your day – and scrolling through your phone right away isn't the best way to start it. Decrease your screen time, because there are so many other things to do that will kick start your day on a good note! Why not play some funky music, get up and dance? Maybe make your bed while dancing, then take a warm shower to freshen up. Follow this with a nutritious breakfast while writing a to-do list for the day, listening to a podcast or even watching the latest youtube videos. You'd be surprised by the number of activities you can do even when you're stuck at home.

## 2. GET SOME EXERCISE IN.

When at home 24/7, exercising is fantastic self-care. Over the past few weeks, I have learned that getting a good, sweaty workout in always feels so rewarding right after. If you're feeling uneasy, anxious or simply bored to tears, just get up and move! Exercising does not only benefit our bodies physically, but our mental health as well. And if you are feeling overwhelmed or just lazy (don't worry, I get it), you do not have to do intense HIIT workouts and run 5Ks – even exercises as simple as stretching can help release stress and release endorphins. Do whatever feels the best for you! Here are some of my favourite fitness *YouTube* channels with a variety of workouts that will suit your preferences:

## 3. DON'T TAKE SUNSHINE FOR GRANTED.

Because we aren't out and about, we don't notice how much sunlight we are missing out on. According to the World Health Organisation, savouring the sun in the morning (7am-10am) and before the Sunsets (4pm-7pm) has numerous beneficial effects on our health, especially in these anxiety-inducing times. Exposure to the sun can help increase blood circulation, allowing us to detox, while also giving us our daily doses of Vitamin D, which helps improve sleep quality, reduce stress, strengthen our auto-immune system and build stronger bones. It is, therefore, crucial that we get a minimum of half an hour of sun every day. Go on morning walks with your family, try moving your exercise or working space outdoors: enjoy what Mother Nature offers! Of course, if getting ample amounts of sunlight outdoors is inconvenient for you, at least try taking some Vitamin D supplements.



Art by Felicitas Z

**MadFit**  
**Natacha Océane**  
**Sami Clarke**  
**Boho Beautiful**  
**Yoga With Adriene**

Too *girly* for you? Don't worry, big man, I've got you covered too:

**FitnessBlender**  
**The Body Coach TV**  
**V Shred**



## 4. HEALTH IS WEALTH.

This saying is something to live-by. Sleep, sleep, sleep! I don't think I have appreciated how beneficial sleep is until now. Too often we find ourselves so busy and stressed with work that we don't prioritise sleep. Our time in self-isolation is the ideal opportunity to get our sleep schedules back as our top priority. There are so many benefits of sleep: from helping us feel energised to take on the day, to helping our bodies repair and recuperate. In addition, having a balanced and varied diet is amazing at boosting our immune system. Eating a well-balanced diet with plenty of fruits and vegetables, whole grains, plant and animal proteins and healthy fats will allow us to get all the quintessential nutrients we need for a healthy immune system. Lastly, turn off that TV! Don't consume yourself with the news. With everything that's going on in the world, the news channel can be very overwhelming and may even spike our stress levels even further. Instead of always watching the news: catch up on your favourite shows and movies on Netflix instead!

### 5. KEEP SETTING GOALS & LEARNING NEW THINGS.

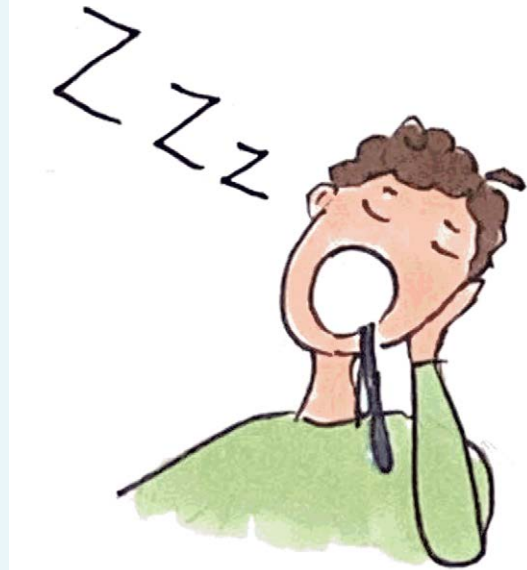
What have you always wanted to do but just not had the time to? Now is the perfect time to do all the activities you were dying to try out, whether that be learning the latest *TikTok* dances, a new language, an instrument or even reading/watching the whole Harry Potter series (again)... During your time at home, you can change yourself for the better or do the things you already love. Be ready to emerge from isolation, reflecting on your time in lockdown and feeling happy that it hadn't gone to waste!

### 6. SPEND MORE TIME WITH YOUR LOVED ONES.

I think it's safe to say that the shock of this pandemic has prompted us to recognise the fact that life is just too short and unpredictable. This is why I encourage you to spend this time with your loved ones if you can. Call your family and friends and tell them how much you appreciate and love them! We are so incredibly fortunate to be living in an age where communication is so easy through technology. Set some time aside every day to spend with your loved ones, and plan fun activities that your whole family can do together.

### 7. REST.

Self-care means REST. With so much free time we think we are obliged to be super productive, but here's a reminder: you don't need to feel guilty if you're not! Simply getting out of bed and having a shower is already an achievement, and, in the end, whatever way you're coping with this global pandemic is absolutely okay. There is no need to try to become a whole new version of yourself. Therefore, I'm taking each day as it comes, and seeing what I feel up for doing. My BIGGEST tip is to not overwork yourself. Listen to your body! If you need a break, take it; you can jump right back in whenever you feel ready to be productive again. Doing this will lead us to the right decisions for our mind and body. This goes for everything: if something in you says "I want chocolate", then please listen. Everything should be in moderation, though, of course.



### 8. YOU ARE NOT ALONE!

The longer that this pandemic goes on, the more isolated and lonely we feel. This is perfectly normal. Here is a reminder that you are not alone. Sometimes it's hard to reach out if you're feeling down, but if you are feeling lonely: spontaneously call a friend or a family member! You'd be surprised about the fact that you really are not the only one feeling this way.

*Jolene K*



# HOW TO LOCK-DOWN YOUR COOKING SKILLS

*Tired of eating the same three dishes on repeat, or cereal for every meal? Don't worry! Here are two exotic recipes to try out.*



*Photos: Liv D*

## CHORIZO SHAKSHUKA with flatbreads (4 servings)

An easily recreated North African dish suitable for any meal of the day. I chose it because it is very adaptable, which allows you to tailor the recipe to your taste. So, if you don't like the following ingredients, or didn't get a chance to stock up on them, then get creative and make your own recipe!

### Ingredients

2 peppers  
2 red onions  
2 cloves of garlic  
A handful of coriander  
Feta cheese (to sprinkle on top)  
120g chorizo  
1 tbsp ground cumin  
1.5 tbsp harissa paste  
2 cartons of chopped tomatoes  
8 eggs  
6 Greek flatbreads

*Tip! Use two pans if cooking for 4 to give room for the eggs.*

### Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 200 °C (fan oven: 180 °C)
2. Slice peppers into thin strips, season with salt and pepper and drizzle with oil. Soften in the oven for 12-15 minutes.
3. Peel and slice the onion into thin strips and then grate the peeled garlic.
4. Crumble the feta and roughly chop the coriander and put to both the side.
5. Add chorizo to a large heated frying pan (with no oil) and fry for a couple of minutes until golden.

*Chorizo Shakshuka recipe continued*

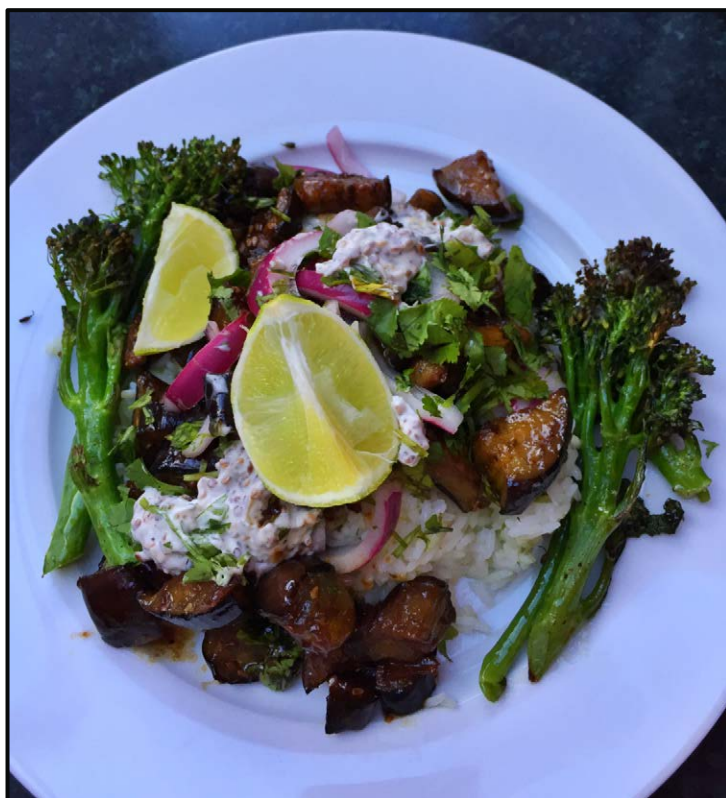
6. Add onion to chorizo and soften for 5 minutes and then stir in the cumin and garlic for a further minute.
7. Stir in the harissa paste, chopped tomatoes and peppers for 2-3 minutes.
8. Create 4 wells in each pan and crack an egg into each one. Cook for 3-6 minutes, depending on your preference.
9. Toast flatbreads and then cut into strips.
10. Sprinkle feta cheese and coriander on top of shakshuka and serve in bowls with flatbread on the side!

*& for the vegetarian...*

## MISO AUBERGINE AND RICE with sesame mayo (4 servings)



A fusion of complimenting flavours that will jazz up a repetitive meal plan. It is vegetarian, using aubergine as a main ingredient instead of meat, but of course meat could be substituted back in (I recommend chicken!).



### Ingredients

- 4 aubergines
- 2 packs of tender stem broccoli
- 2 red onions
- 1 tbsp rice vinegar
- 2 tsp of sugar
- 300g jasmine rice
- 1 lime
- A handful of coriander
- 2 tbsp miso paste
- 1 tbsp honey
- 1 tbsp soy sauce
- 1 large sachet of sesame seeds
- 1 tbsp mayonnaise

## Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 200c / 180c fan oven.
2. Chop aubergine into 2cm chunks, season with pepper and drizzle with oil. Roast in the oven for 20-25 minutes.
3. Thinly slice the red onion and place half in a bowl. Add the 1 tsp of sugar, the rice vinegar and salt seasoning and mix. Set aside.
4. Pour 600ml of water into a saucepan and bring to boil. Add a pinch of salt and then stir in the rice. Cook for 10 minutes on a low heat.
5. Zest the lime, cut it into wedges and then chop the coriander.
6. Mix together the honey, miso, soy sauce, 4 tbsp and the remaining 1 tsp of sugar.
7. Toast sesame seeds in a frying pan for 2-3 minutes.
8. After, add half of the seeds to the miso mixture.
9. Add the mayo to the other half of the seeds with 1 tsp of water per person and mix.
10. Drizzle the broccoli in oil and season with salt and pepper before roasting in the oven for 10-12 minutes.
11. Add some oil on the remaining onion and stir fry for 5 minutes until soft.
12. Add aubergine to this onion and pour the miso mix into the pan and cook for 3-5 minutes.
13. Add the lime zest to the rice and stir.
14. Serve the rice in bowls with the aubergine mixture on top. Add the red onion pickle and coriander, the sesame mayo and then the lime wedges and broccoli on the side.



*So...how did it go? Email your photos to Liv D (see staff directory)!*

*Liv D*

LIFESTYLE

# LIVING GREEN IN QUARANTINE

*Use this time as an opportunity to develop your eco-habits.*

According to the forecasts of climatologists, greenhouse emissions were supposed to increase 10% by 2020, despite 2019 being the so-called record year. That was until the coronavirus appeared and changed the course of events.

Demand for airplane travel – the most environmentally unfriendly way of moving – has reduced by 80%. In just two weeks, CO2 emissions from China fell by 25%. Overall reduced oil demand has further lowered global emissions.

However, not all environmental news are positive. Disposable medical masks, the need for which has grown significantly, began to accumulate on the beaches of Hong Kong. The growing demand for disposable items in general is strongly affecting the level of garbage pollution.

Coming back to a more positive note, though: due to quarantine measures, we have been granted a unique opportunity to do things that we have always wanted to do, or learn about things that we always wanted to explore, but not had time to.

Why not the field of ecology? For the past few years, this has been quite a viral topic across social media platforms. Don't just see it as a fashion trend, though, but as a problem that should be raised and solved. There are so many ways to help alleviate the current situation, even when isolated. I would consider exploring different topics to find out what specific field you are more interested in and feel is more relevant to you personally. Ecology, as a movement, concerns many areas, starting from FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) to the harm of household chemicals. It is difficult for the beginner to be aware of everything, but we have time for baby steps.

Here are five simple eco-habits to develop in quarantine, and to continue after:

## 1. Drink your drinks in your cup.

This topic has already been raised in our previous issue, but let's recap some key facts. Disposable cups are not "just paper cups": they are covered with plastic film inside, and such mixed materials are not accepted for processing and recycling. Also, they are made from freshly cut trees, which does not decompose. By buying a single-use cup with a drink, we feed the growth of landfills that poison nearby settlements with landfill gas, poisoning the soil and water. Now that you don't need to bring your drink outside your home, there are no excuses for not using a proper cup!



*Art by Liza V*

## 2. Reduce your meat consumption.

Take a minute and think: livestock companies are responsible for around 15% of the world's CO2 emissions and occupy 30% of the land. While 1kg of beef requires 15,400 litres of water and 1kg of chicken meat requires 4,300 litres of water, 844,000,000 people do not have access to drinking water. How wise is it to spend these resources eating steak, when even Harvard and Stanford guides advise us to either to reduce meat consumption to micro portions or to remove it completely from our diets?

### 3. Ditch the tea bag!

Did you know that pyramid-shaped tea bags are made of plastic? Although it is claimed that tea is put in silk pyramids, they are mostly made of food-grade nylon and polythene terephthalate or plastic. When we put a plastic tea bag in hot water, toxic substances contaminate the tea. One cup of this tea might not do much harm, but the habit of continually drinking from plastic bags can lead to health problems, especially if you brew the same pack several times. Teabags create waste that does not decompose, and the chemicals used in their production also harm the environment. It is more sustainable to switch to loose or leaf tea, which would be not only eco-friendly but more beneficial for your health.



### 4. Read electronic books.

There are several reasons why an e-book is more convenient than an ordinary one: thanks to the high capacity of modern memory cards, one electronic book reader of size equivalent to one volume of an ordinary book can carry thousands of different books. This allows you to save space in your house, and significantly reduce the amount of dust which "paper" books not only accumulate, but also produce, not to mention the fact that they can settle dust mites. It is perfect if you cannot leave the house to access the library, and if you are able to go on a trip: an entire library can fit in the bag!



### 5. Plan out your meals for the week.

Between 33% and 50% of all food produced globally is never eaten, and the value of this wasted food amounts to about \$1 trillion. Meanwhile, 800 million people go to bed hungry every night. According to the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research, the global food system is responsible for up to one third of all human-caused greenhouse gas emissions, making it one of the largest contributors to climate change. Food waste is not only caused by restaurants: households actually contribute to 50% of it. Major contributors to household food waste include food spoilage, over-preparing, overbuying, date label confusion and others. Planning your meals is a win-win: it would not only help the environment, but also help to balance your diet. ■

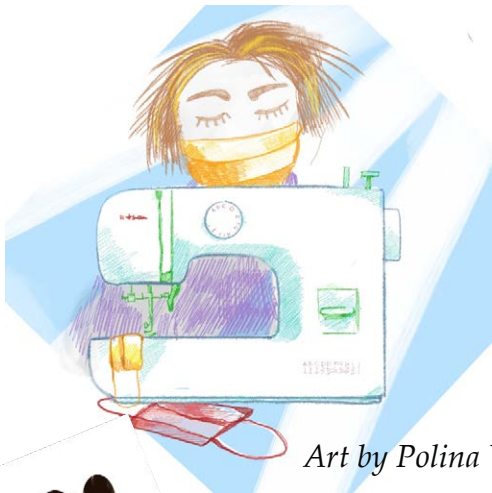


*Tatiana M*

LIFESTYLE

# HELPING HANDS

*An introduction to two social projects started by teenagers on Instagram during the COVID-19 pandemic. Let them inspire you to reach out a helping hand, too.*



Art by Polina V

During this time, when help is more needed than ever, the topic of volunteering has been brought to surface. Some have provided financial support for volunteering organisations started by influencers, others are starting social projects on their own. I have managed to get in touch with the representatives of two recently started projects that target important, but niche, problems.

What is so special about them? Well, their creators are not professionals, nor popular bloggers, but ordinary teenagers – ordinary teenagers who are concerned about the current situation and want to help.



## HelpPaw @help.paw

The aim of our project is to support an animal shelter through this hard time. We are helping with the collection of money for food, medicine and better conditions for animals, but on our Instagram account we emphasise that followers can support us in other ways than financially, for example by helping us share information.

**Q: What inspired you to start the project?**

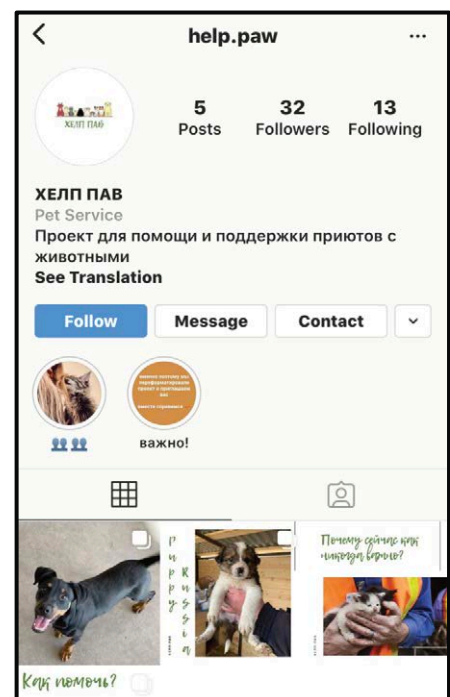
A: “Mostly just the situation of being in quarantine in itself, but also other voluntary projects. We decided to help Puppy Russia, our current partner, because we admire how they help those who cannot speak up for themselves, namely animals. No one asks them how they are and it seems like they have been forgotten at this time.”

**Q: Was it difficult to create the project?**

A: “As this idea came to our mind quite spontaneously, it was hard to develop it into something concrete. We were particularly worried about getting enough donations, but feel proud that it has turned out quite successful.”

**Q: What other ways of supporting funds in addition to financial support?**

A: “After partnering up with PuppyRussia, we started to raise the problem of over-keeping animals and permanent help required. Beside sending financial help once a week, we are planning to provide food and promote our project to the new people.”



**Q: What do you want to say to those who want to organise social projects?**

A: “Your aim should have social value, and you should be both creative and intuitive when developing ideas because there are so many projects around already. For example, many of them target quite popular spheres, for example older generations, so we decided to promote something that we have a personal connection to, which is pets. It all should all come from your heart; without our passion and love for animals, we would never have started this project.”

## FamilyTimeChallenge @family\_time\_challenge

Our project is about a very important topic, that is of concern to many at the moment: our relationships with our families. We have created a challenge to encourage people to spend more time with family and by more, we mean not only in terms of time, but quality; for example, dealing with old conflicts and disagreements, and being more supportive during this difficult time.



**Q: What is the situation like in your families?**

A: “For most of us, it is both difficult and simple with parents: we don’t argue and we talk calmly, but we lack some warmth and ability to communicate about our feelings.”

**Q: Is the challenge hard to complete?**

A: “Yes, we are taking part ourselves and must admit that it is quite hard. But we understand that this is important!”

**Q: How do you plan to develop the project?**

A: “Our main goal, for now, is to make it known to more people. We have already thought out some ways to promote our project by collaborating with other social projects. “

*Responses have been translated, then edited for clarity and brevity.*

*Tatiana M*



*Art by Jule S*

STORIES & POEMS

# ALONE TOGETHER & LAUGHING TOGETHER!

In these strange times, one may feel all alone.

We think of all the things we would have said, if only we had known.

But with every cloud, comes a silver line,

No it's not that exams, now have, another, deadline.

Yes, it is mad, that one would actually miss school,

even with Miss Leech, and her entourage of rules!

And Mr Matthews won't be happy, when he sees the boys' hair,

Buzzcuts, mullets, dreads – he'll be, forever, in despair!

Mr Clague will have to change, his hatred for all phones,

as everybody tunes into *Zoom*, even in different time zones!

But however crazy, scary or mad, the world does become,

we can always rely on Mr Mullan, to enforce rules, against bubble gum!

And we're all waiting for the day Mr Farnes gets onto *Zoom*,

telling us to march, around the living room.

Miss Scannell is going mad, driving herself, round the bend,

As she can't bring her floor length skirts, in, as a new trend!

But we laugh and cry together, even in, this big mess,

As our community continues, with nothing but success!



I am humbled by the bravery, of those still left at school.

The NHS thanks you, for sticking to the rules.

So I thank you, Bromsgrove, for everything you do.

I'm sure I speak for everyone, when I say: thank you.

We'll all be back together I'm sure, in little to no time at all.

Laughing once again, on the grounds of Bromsgrove School!

*Isabella W*



*Art by Polina V*

STORIES & POEMS

# WE'LL BE ALRIGHT

I stretch my arms out, looking at the clouds passing by  
tick, another minute is passing  
I breathe in, feeling the crisp air flowing through my nose into my lungs  
being in the moment, what does it mean?

the memories are spinning in my head  
pictures are moving around my brain like they're on a carousel  
a laughter, the evening adventure to Waitrose  
the feeling of victory after a hockey match  
I breathe as music turns my memories into a motion picture,  
one person to another, the blowing of your candles on your birthday, time  
constantly wrapping us up barely giving us the time to snapshot the moment

we long to have that freedom back  
the ins and outs of everyday,  
wishing we'd played a bigger part in who we were in that exact moment,  
now time is standing still, we're trying to reconnect, with ourselves and with  
the world, change is upon us

I listen to the voicemail I received, looking at the clouds again, my head  
heavy  
on the grass, "we'll be alright", it says

*Laetitia D B*

Art by Liza V

STORIES & POEMS

# OBSERVATIONS FROM THE STORM

*a collection of poems*

quarantine pastimes

half-jokingly posting a poll  
in a spur of self-destructive energy

nicotine addiction or a fringe

incredulous laughter  
at my equally  
self-destructive friends

quietly delighted in the responses  
and watching the dividing lines form  
on an unpopular question

a number beg me to do neither



a deceptively sunny day  
is laced with icy winds

that knock over  
a pole  
in a lonely distant field  
that cuts the power

we must wait  
for someone to call them  
and for that them to send a man  
to trudge through those fields  
searching in his solitude  
for the felled  
and for that man to send for a team  
and for that team to scrape and twist  
until the light springs on again

but until then

isolation reigns supreme  
as we sit in the rectangles  
of sunshine  
under vaulted ceilings  
and a shroud of  
silence,  
respite  
from the dronings  
and murmurings  
of technology



indecision

in the tepid humidity of my  
room

I imagine stripping down  
to the bone  
if I could

I pursue the next best option

but upon my discovery  
of my window flung open

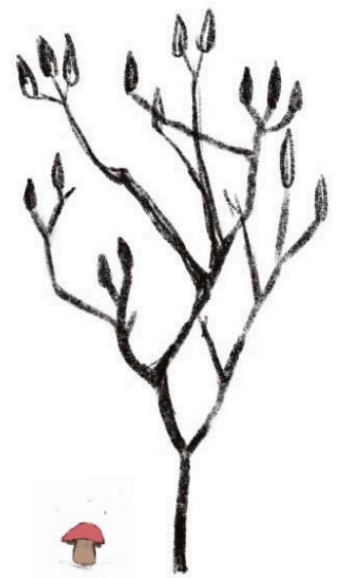
I concede that perhaps  
the room is not so warm  
nor uncomfortable  
nor stuffy  
cosy, perhaps

still I clamber into bed  
not before  
feeling the sudden urge  
to stand astride it  
and  
dissatisfied  
with the examination  
of my surroundings  
from my newly found vantage

I step down inelegantly  
and peel the covers back  
only to find the lacings  
of a cold  
that has slipped in  
and now lurks at my pillow

perhaps just a shirt then  
still warm when I lift it  
from the undignified pile  
on the floor.

in bed,  
the calendar catches my eye  
and the 1 of may  
stares stupidly back at me



arrival

when the plane takes off  
and when its pilot announces descent

when I stand in line  
and smile at passport control

when I wait by the carousel  
and drag my suitcase off

when I see the bus driver  
and sit down at the very back

I'll listen to my music,  
I've already thought of what to play  
mostly triumphant fanfare  
of a celebratory return

and when we turn into Bromsgrove,  
see the pubs we always pass

when we turn into the drive  
and haul our things from the bus

when I walk into my home

I will cry and cry and cry

for the friends I have lost,  
for the times I have missed,

but also for the joys the future will  
hold.



*Liza V*



# IRONY OF IGNORANCE



*Jule S*

CARTOONS & ENTERTAINMENT

# 8 TYPES OF PEOPLE IN QUARANTINE

You know that you are one of them! Quarantine has brought out different versions of most of us. Just to be clear: there isn't really a right or wrong way to act in quarantine. Whatever this pandemic has turned you into, embrace it!



## THE SPORTS FANATIC

He or she enjoys working out at least 4 times a day. Arthur, for instance, not only works out but also juggles toilet paper all around his house. Arthur is doing very well and keeping himself busy. He is likely to emerge from quarantine as the next Arnold Schwarzenegger!

## THE ONE WHO HAS GIVEN UP ON LIFE

He or she uses this opportunity to catch up on all the Netflix shows that are yet to be explored! Roberta, for example, has unfortunately ruined her sleep schedule and wakes up every day at around 2 pm. She enjoys only having to move the 20 meters from her bed to her fridge. Most importantly, Roberta is keeping a positive mindset and is now able to watch Gossip Girl for the 5th time in a row.



## THE ONE GETTING ALL THE WORK DONE



These are people whom I most truly admire! He or she uses this time as productively as possible: getting all the schoolwork done, doing some extra reading, as well as studying ahead. Sandra, for instance, just finished reading a 700 pages long book about cows in Austria! She is beyond excited to write some essays about the book and come up with a new to-do list (she loves making a new one every two hours). Sandra is buoyant; she's getting her work done and, most importantly, she's staying busy!

## THE ONE GETTING CREATIVE

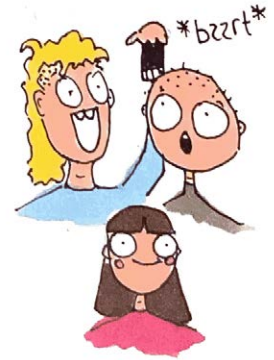
For many, this quarantine has been the perfect time to get out the old drawing equipment from the attic and project an inspiration – or what people like to call 'a vision' – on canvas. Steven here is a huge Bob Ross fan. He has watched all the Bob Ross Videos and was inspired to draw a beautiful landscape. Thankfully, he did not forget, as Bob would say, the 'many many happy trees to really compliment the painting'. Steven is as happy as can be and he will most certainly open up a gallery very soon!





## THE ONE WHO WENT FOR A NEW HAIRCUT

It is quarantine and that obviously means not leaving the house to go to the hairdressers. But there is absolutely no reason to panic! Just *snip* and *bzzrt* and you can give yourself a totally new look! Greg, Charlie, and Vanessa have decided to take matters into their own hands and give themselves a little makeover. Currently, the latest buzz is mullets and buzzcuts, as well as spontaneously cutting a fringe and then regretting it the second after the hair is chopped off. But do not let that influence you: Vanessa and her brothers are all very happy with the new looks! Albeit this being absolutely great, their parents were not all too happy...



## THE ONE WHO WON'T LET A PANDEMIC STOP HER FROM HAVING A GOOD TIME

Kimberly here has the right attitude towards quarantine and does not let it affect her happiness! She spends her days making *quarantinis* (yes, Kimberly is old enough to drink – don't you worry!) and celebrating the fact that she is healthy and well. She is appreciating the fact that being miserable will not change the current situation! Kimberly is definitely a person to talk to when you cannot see the bright moments of life, even the small ones.



## THE ONE EXPLORING NEW HOBBIES

He or she has been spending her time in quarantine looking for that specific something that they were always destined to flourish in! Little Louise, for instance, started baking massive wedding cakes, even though no one is getting married... However, she gets to enjoy them all by herself and she cannot wait to start her own wedding cake business once the pandemic is over! Until then, she is keen to explore different flavours and ameliorate her designs.



## THE ONE SPENDING QUALITY TIME WITH FAMILY

During this quarantine, the key thing to appreciate is family. You are not alone in this! Use the current situation to leave your room from time to time and maybe get to know those people next door. You might soon realise that they, actually, are not too bad and can be quite fun to hang around with! Finn and Rosie, for example, started spending a lot more time with their parents and have enjoyed each other's company, quite a lot, indeed! Yes, even little Rosie, who might not look as content, is very happy and grateful to be close to her family during this difficult time. From playing card games to convincing the whole family to make *TikToks* together, the possible ways of keeping busy are infinite!



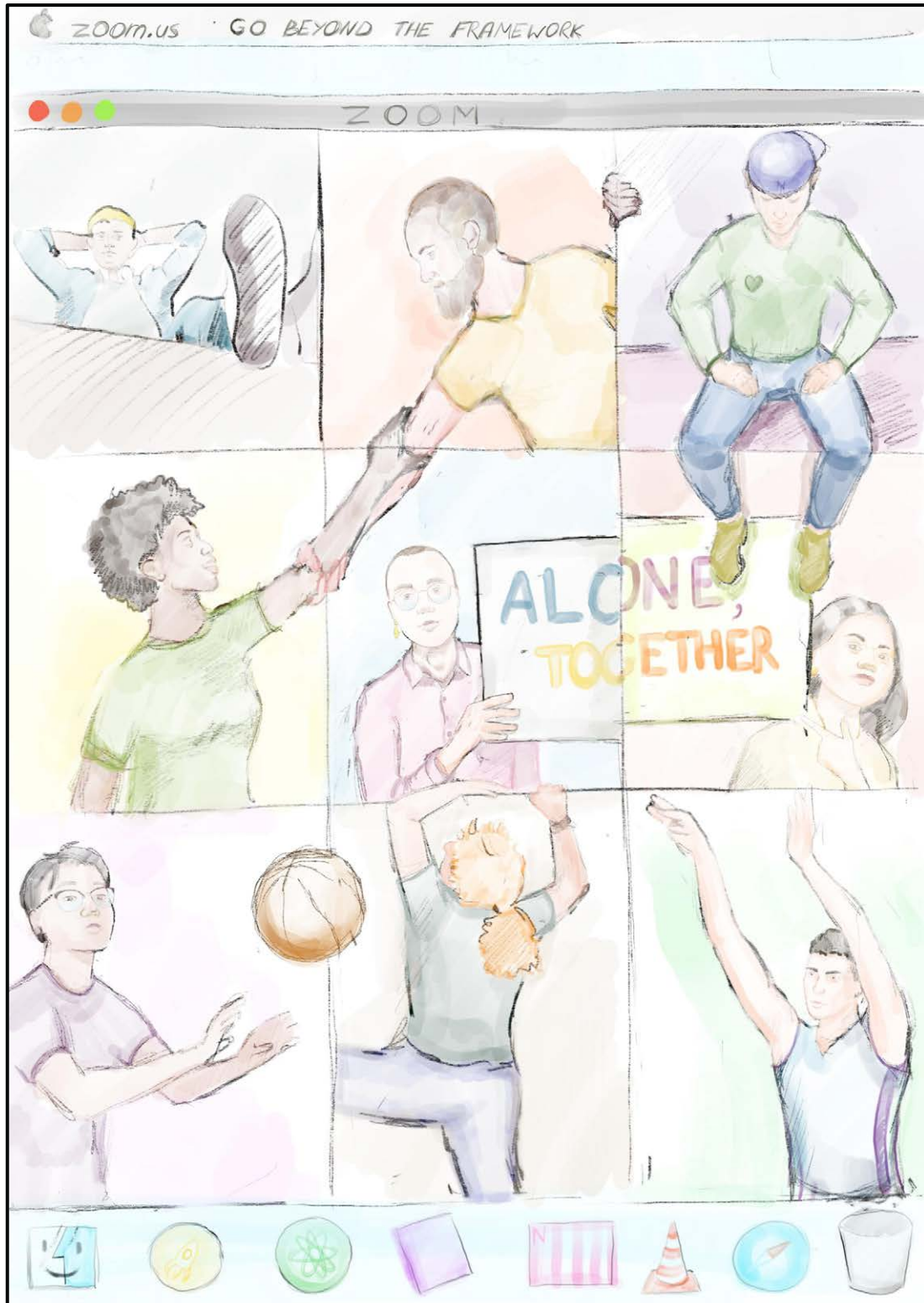
Quarantine sure is a confusing time and can be quite rough, especially if you are a social butterfly. But it definitely does not have to be boring! The list of possible things to do is endless. So, have you figured out which type of person you are during this quarantine? Be it Roberta or Sandra – never forget to stay positive and use this time to appreciate all the little things, including the loved ones in your life.

Stay safe!

Felicitas Z

CARTOONS & ENTERTAINMENT

# ZOOM.US/GO-BEYOND-THE-FRAMEWORK



Vitaliy Z

CARTOONS & ENTERTAINMENT

# THE ULTIMATE SELF-ISOLATION BINGO

Thought you were alone?



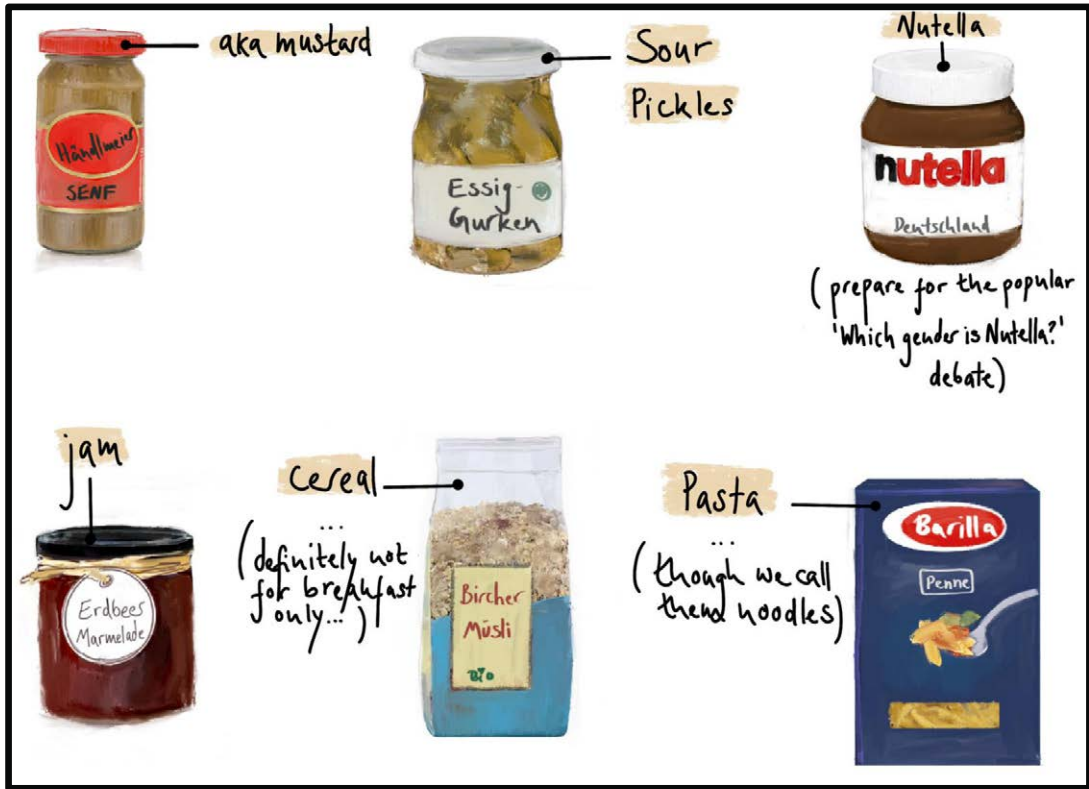
CARTOONS & ENTERTAINMENT

# 201 ARTISTS DRAW THEIR PANTRIES

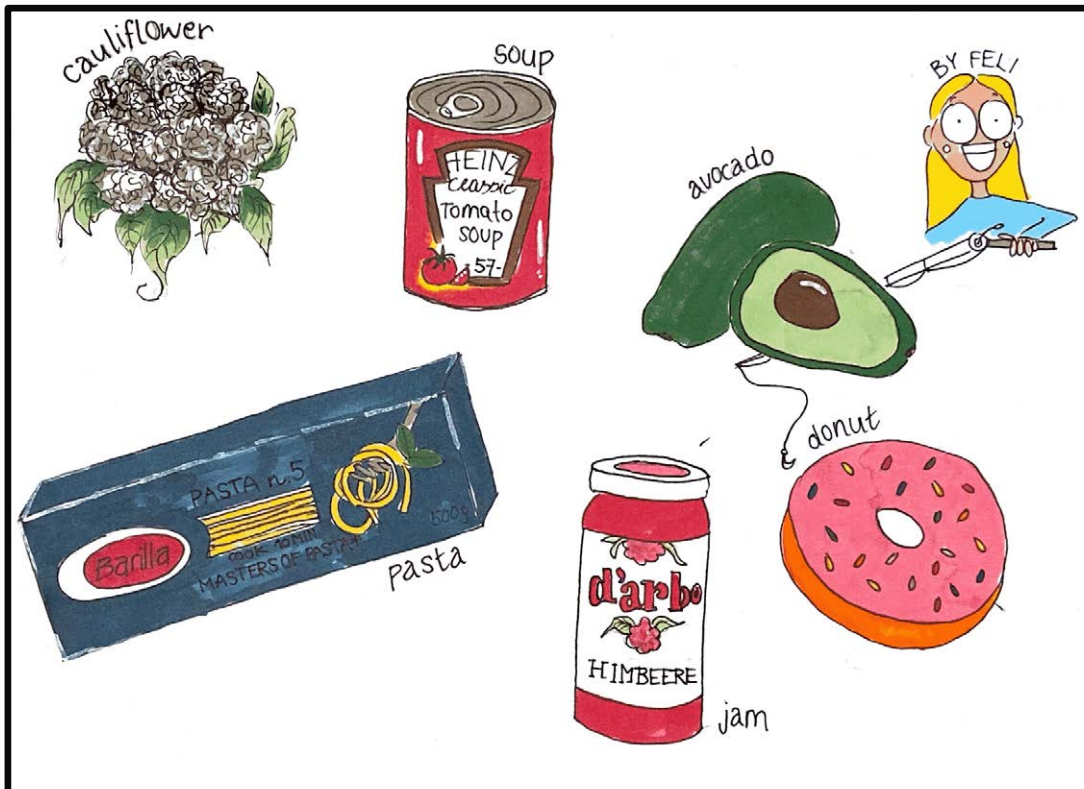
Inspired by Edward Steed's cartoon "Quarantine Cupboard: Day Twenty", published in the April 13, 2020 printed issue of the *The New Yorker Magazine*, *Two Zero One's* own staff artists have decided to share their pantries ...



LIZA VASILYEVA – MOSCOW, RUSSIA



JULE STURZ – AUGSBURG, GERMANY



FELICITAS ZAHLBRUCKNER – GRAZ, AUSTRIA

CARTOONS & ENTERTAINMENT

MINI PUZZLES

Since you have made it this far, we assume you've got plenty of free time... These mini puzzles have been created exclusively for *Two Zero One*. Why not have a go?

CROSSWORD

1	2	3	4	5
	6			
7				
8				
9				10

ACROSS

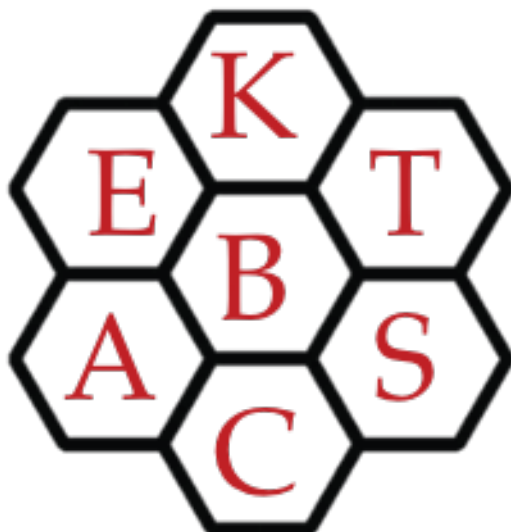
1. What you might find in the centre station in the dining hall
6. Who \_\_\_ it better?
7. Perhaps
8. If you say so...
9. Cymraeg

DOWN

7. Take care of the lawn
2. Arisen
3. True-blue
4. Fast food chain with a cowboy hat logo
5. The fourth letter

WORD JUMBLE

Can you find words of lengths 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 letters using the letters below? For an extra challenge, find every four-letter word... There are 38 of them!



2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_

Taymour Z (Given up? Email 15TZaazou for answers).

TWO ZERO ONE

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*Art by Liza V*



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