Bandersnatch is a student run newspaper at John Abbott College. It is published biweekly and is partially funded by the Student Activities Committee and by advertising solicited customers. Submissions are welcome and become property of Bandersnatch. Submissions must be sent via MIO through John Abbott College's Omnivox to the respective editors, and must be in Microsoft Word Document format (.doc). All submissions must include the full name of the contributor, as well as the e-mail address if applicable. Bandersnatch reserves the right to reject submissions or to edit any submissions for length, legality, or clarity. Submissions should be a minimum of 250 words and a maximum of 500 words. Articles lower or above these parameters may be printed at the discretion of the executives. If you should have any questions or concerns, please contact us at our e-mail indicated above or visit us at the Bandersnatch office, located in the basement of Herzberg, room H-016 (Located in the locale H-010, by the printing room).

Editors can be reached by MIO.

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JOIN A YOGA RETREAT CLASS

Logan Macdonald
Editor-in-Chief

Picking a class to put into your schedule each semester can be a tricky task, there are so many that it can be stressful to decide on what you want to spend your time on. That’s why the Yoga Retreat class is a perfect class to help you relax throughout the semester.

The Yoga Retreat class is the perfect intensive class to help you remain mindful and aware of your mental and physical health throughout the semester. The first 6 weeks of class are normal yoga classes meant to introduce you to yoga and take things at your own pace, with a bit of homework on the side to keep track of your personal workouts.

However, the most interesting thing about this class is that second word: ‘Retreat’. The actual yoga retreat is really fun, and lets you do a lot of activities relating to yoga, and even potentially have you make friends with other students or even teachers.

The Yoga Retreat class is a perfect class for those students looking for a bit of an escape from their stressful semesters. Maybe take it into consideration next semester.

SUBMIT TO LOCUS

Emma Wallace
Entertainment Editor

Are you interested in sharing your creative work but don’t know where to start? Consider submitting to Locus: John Abbott’s magazine for arts and literature, created for students by students.

Anyone can submit, and Locus accepts almost everything: drawings, paintings, graphic art, photography, prose, poetry, songs, and more! The genre and theme is open, which allows great freedom of expression and an enormous range of subjects. You can submit works you’ve created for fun or even works you’ve already submitted as school assignments.

At the end of the semester, the chosen works will appear in the magazine and there will be a launch party where you can meet fellow artists and discuss your work. If you’ve already submitted as school assignments.

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If you want a platform to share your work, Locus is the place. Don’t be shy: submit!

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SUJAC UPDATE

Hi JAC!

Welcome back from March Break and we hope you had a nice change! It’s hard to believe we are into the month of March already and maybe sightings of Robins hopping around listening for worms is a sign of Spring soon in the air!

The days prior to March Break were packed with some major events around JAC that we saw you participating in—Carnival Week, SUJAC’s Valentine’s Bagel Special, Mental Health Blue Shirt Day and Bully-Free Pink Shirt Day! It looked like everyone was having a good time!

SUJAC has another food discount coming up for you, this time in the Stewart Cafeteria. SUJAC’s Saint Paddy’s Pizza Special will run from Monday to Friday, March 14 to 18 with a $1.75 discount per piece! Enjoy!

JAC’s famous Multicultural Week is also coming up from Monday to Thursday, March 21 to 24, with booths from different parts of the globe. Drop into The Agora during this time to enjoy the many traditional outfits of these wonderful cultures and sample a taste of some of their different foods.

SUJAC Executive Election season is also coming up—starting with the 10-Day Nomination Period from Monday to Friday, March 21 to April 1 (4 pm submission deadline). You can pick up the Executive Nomination Form on Monday, March 21, in the SUJAC Office, Penfield-101, and find out more about the process and the SUJAC Executive roles in the running.

Please stay tuned to the JAC Portal and SUJAC’s Instagram, instasujac, for news of more upcoming attractions and info. If you have any questions, doubts or ideas, come visit us at P-101.

Your SUJAC Executive Team 2021-2022:
President Ivana Riveros Arteaga
VP Internal Allison Kastner
VP Academic Gracie Diabo
VP Finance Richie Tan
VP External Sabrina Goriani
VP Communications Dante Meldrum
A n Inuk named George Kauki, from a northern village named Kuujuaq, went on a four day trip to pay tribute to his ancestors. He wanted a friend to join him on the four day journey but they were unavailable, so he just decided to go alone. During the night on February 11, he states that he had to turn on his portable Coleman stove just to receive heat. Throughout the night, he shivers in the camping tent, on a thin foam mattress padded on the frozen snow covered ground. During this time, he says that he quickly lost the sensation in his toes and pulled off his jacket to put on his legs.

He says that even though the sleeping bag he had was made for -40 °C temperatures, it did little to keep him warm. Within the four day dogsleds excursion, he munched in total 240-km around the river that is located next to Kuujuaq, the Koksos River. His dogs slept outside throughout this time. All of the dogs curl up into fluffy orbs to preserve their body heat, said Kauki. The dogs’ wolf-like tails cover their faces to protect them from the harsh winds, snow and ice. The morning when Kauki started this trip, just 30 minutes into it, all of his gear had a thin layer of frost and ice. Forgetting how the next 3 days would be like, he continued on with his eight dogs mushing along the river pulling roughly 360 kg.

While crossing the frozen solid river, the dogs were on high alert because they heard the ice cracking below them. Kauki kept that in mind and was cautious when crossing. He noted “that dogs continue to be useful tools for northern trips”. Kauki remembers plenty of stories about how men left for months at a time with their dog teams to go hunt for their communities, most of the time with a limited time and short with equipment and absolutely no guarantees of catching anything. Kauki encountered some mundane days and some days with windstorms, after resting every seventh hour he would set up camp, with less than stellar sleeping conditions, headwind, frostbite from the frigid temperatures.

Many people thought he wouldn’t be able to do it, and were generally discouraging him to do it. Kauki admits he partly did it “for the fun of it”. He really wanted to take the time and effort to reflect on his culture and Inuk ancestors. He mentions that “it was such a rewarding feeling, there were a lot of times where [he] got to think how much more [he] should appreciate life and how much [his] ancestors had to go through in order to survive this harsh environment. [he] was thankful [he] completed the trip”. Packing all of the necessities, he said that it really gave him the perspective of this “adventure of a lifetime” that his ancestors had to do daily. With all of the work they had to endure, while opposed to only doing it for a four day trip. His ancestors had to do this daily for their whole lives. “It is challenging enough as it is”, Kauki stated. He goes on to say that they did not have store bought rope. They were unable to buy wood; everything they had, all was made with what was around them. The rope Kauki’s ancestors had to use was made from sealskin; they cut their own trees and other various materials. He gets some of his experience from being a part of a local dogsled mushing competition; Kauki regularly competes in the annual competition, even with his knowledge being part of a dogsled team, it was still considered uncommon.

During the second day, he encountered someone on a snowmobile who passed him “shocked” to see a dog team so far up the Koksko river. Generally, nobody goes that far with their dogsled team; the only time somebody went that far as George can remember was when dogs were the only means of transportation. “It gives elders peace too when I’m going out for rides and others just love to see it, it brings them back to the past”, Kauki said. “It couches them. Sometimes they get emotional.”


A BRIEF LOOK AT RUSSIA AND UKRAINE

Emma Wallace
Entertainment Editor

O n February 24, Russian troops invaded Ukraine. Though Russian President Vladimir Putin previously called the invasion a “special military operation”, this conflict has escalated into a full-fledged war. As the fighting intensifies, the fate of Ukraine and the rest of Europe remains uncertain.

The war did not begin with Russia’s invasion—to understand the conflict, it is necessary to look back on the long-term relationship between these two countries. Their histories are intertwined, as Ukraine was a part of the Soviet Union until they finally declared independence in 1991.

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, many countries that were formerly under Soviet rule reformed their governments and joined NATO, an alliance of 30 European and North American countries that was formed in the Cold War to fight against the Soviet Union. Ukraine has been attempting to become a member, and as Ukraine borders Russia, this makes them a prime target. The conflict between Russia and Ukraine has been gaining fuel since 2014, when Ukraine’s president was forced out of office in consequence of his support of Russia. Seeing that Russia had lost influence in Ukraine, Putin invaded and annexed Ukraine’s Crimean peninsula, a move that destabilized Ukraine significantly. As a result, the two countries have since been in a brutal conflict that has killed over 14,000 people. On the 21st of February 2022, following an ongoing negotiation in which NATO refused to draw back their border, Putin announced his “long overdue decision” to invade. Ukraine declared a state of emergency, and president Volodymyr Zelensky released a statement in which he spoke directly to the Russian people, saying “Who will suffer the most? The people, Who doesn’t want it the most? The people. Who can stop it? The people.”

On the 24th of February, Russia launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine. In the days since, over half a million Ukrainians have been forced to flee their homes and the fighting has included attacks on civilian regions.

Anti-war protests have broken out throughout Europe and politicians have released statements opposing Russia, though it is unclear how long sanctions will go on or how effective they will be.

There has been significant speculation surrounding the looming threat of a Third World War; any outcome, however, will have a catastrophic impact on the lives of millions. As the situation constantly evolves, no one can say how this war will unfold.
ALL THE COLOURS OF THE RAINBOW

Sophia Jeroncic
Staff Writer

In the early morn,
I awake
And stare afar into empty space.
Amber rays of sunlight stream
All across your face
In a sleepy state of serenity,
You have never looked so beautiful.

***

In the faltering glow of dimmed streetlights,
We danced;
Under the purple galaxy painted in the night sky,
Hidden behind wisps of grey clouds
As if they were peering from behind a curtain,
Shining only for us.
Your eyes twinkled like golden stardust.

On a summer evening,
We ran
In the rusty mountains.
Disappearing from all civilization;
Living in our own world
Comprising only the both of us.
I looked at you
Lying in the lush, green grass,
Isolated from

The thoughts,
The words,
The feelings;
We only had each other,
And that was true happiness.

I still remember that morning
Scarlet stains were smeared All over your person.
Your eyes brimming with blackened puddles.
I lay with you
And wiped away the opal tears.

I felt your gaze upon me
The dawn I was set to leave.
Your melancholic eyes
Held mine,
Bursting to latch onto me
And never let me go.

The blue paint on your jeans
Wasn’t enough to distract me
From feeling helpless and hollow.

***

Last night, I told you I loved you.
I watched your face light up with a silver glow.
I have always lived in black and white
Until you showed me all the colours of the rainbow.

GREY CLAM

Xena Jones
Staff Writer

FRUITS AND FOLIAGE

Logan Macdonald
Editor-in-Chief
DECOMPOSITION

You always told me how much you loved flowers. How they bloomed, how they smelt. How they were so full of life, how they were so strong. I hated your beautiful flowers. I hated the care you put into them. I hated the attention they could garner. I wanted to aim my scissors at their stems. When I spoke to a friend, they called this a jealous seed. They recommended I speak to you about it. But how could I tell you I envied an overgrown weed? Too late, a fire was lit. A flame in a greenhouse was a danger to this haven. But you never saw it coming. Until you came home to a ravaged garden. I had stopped smouldering, but you were fuming. Your words burned and smoke rose in the air. The hazy cloud became a wall between us. I couldn’t see you, my eyes lost focus. I lost hope in myself quickly. Realizing I was just filthy. I decided it was time, To decompose what I’d done. I became one with the Earth you loved so dearly. Hoping you’d love me once again. I’d like to be reborn as one of your flowers.

HAWK

Xena Jones
Staff Writer

FLUTTER

Clara Nennemann
Contributor

SUNRISE

Tara Aghdam
Arts Editor

HAWK

Xena Jones
Staff Writer

ARTS
THE GENIUS OF LEXI HOWARD

Laïla Beauzile
Staff Writer

I

t is not every day that you encounter a scene in a TV show that stays in your mind for days on end, but Episode 7 of Euphoria accomplished that feat. In Lexi Howard’s (Maude Apatow) story, the return of Demon Slayer has left many fans thrilled, and excited for its next arc to be adapted. Ufotable certainly delivers with this new arc of the Demon Slayer series.

This arc takes place after the Mugen Train arc and follows Tanjiro Kamado, Inosuke Hashibira, and Zenitsu Agatsuma. Having recovered from their previous mission on the Mugen Train and becoming stronger, they accompany Sound Hashira Tengen Uzui on a mission to hunt down a demon hidden within the Entertainment District. It begins with a forty-minute episode and it doesn’t take long for viewers to get to the District. The first few episodes start slow, but I found that this helps build up to the action and gets viewers hooked. By halfway, everything starts to pick up quickly and things get exciting. I won’t spoil anything, but the last six to five episodes are excellent and very fun to watch; the animation is beautiful in this arc it feels like Ufotable decided to go crazy with it.

This arc of Demon Slayer was a lot of fun to watch from start to finish. I believe from here on, Demon Slayer will just continue to improve, and I’m looking forward to seeing what Ufotable has next for the hit anime.

NOT YOUR AVERAGE SUPERHERO SHOW

Lara Fakhoury
Social Media Manager

Y

ou are probably thinking to yourself “great, another superhero show”. I get it: the CW has come out with countless shows about superheroes and after a while it becomes boring. When Superman & Lois came out last year, I kept the bar low just to see how the show would play out. After the first episode, however, I knew that I would keep watching the show until the end.

Superman & Lois follows the Kent family when they move to Smallville from Metropolis and the challenges that Clark and Lois’ twin boys, Jonathan and Jordan, face when they find out that their father is Superman.

One of the main aspects of the show that I love—other than the action and dialogue—is the relationship and partnership between Clark and Lois. I have seen many married couples on screen, but none have struck me as much as them. Their communication and mature understanding of each other’s goals and morals as they face the hardships of parenthood shines in every episode, and their conversations don’t feel hollow.

Tyler Hoechlin’s portrayal of the man of steel is not as dark as Henry Cavill, but rather the perfect balance of a light-hearted Clark Kent and the capable heroism of Superman while also showing us how he handles being a good father and husband to Lois.

If you are looking for a show with great storylines and a twist on the classic tales of Superman, Superman & Lois is the show for you.

DEMON SLAYER’S NEW ARC

Samuel Spaulding
Staff Writer

T

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This arc of Demon Slayer was a lot of fun to watch from start to finish. I believe from here on, Demon Slayer will just continue to improve, and I’m looking forward to seeing what Ufotable has next for the hit anime.
I'M ON OBSERVATION DUTY

Are you tired of narrow hallway, non-frightening, indie horror games with bare-bones gameplay? Well, a not-so-new game has been making rounds on social media and it's a surprisingly fun, and unique concept for a game. The game is called I'm On Observation Duty and it deserves more love, which is why I'm highlighting this game.

The story is less of a story, and more of a concept. You are part of a team of paranormal investigators tasked with taking care of anomalies that take place in buildings that have seen too many paranormal occurrences. Your job is to observe the six or seven security cameras in every room of the building and report anomalies that need to be dealt with.

Sounds easy enough, right? Wrong.

The challenge in this game is that not every anomaly is obvious and most of them happen when you're not looking at the room it happens in. You need to memorize what every room looks like when you first start the level and pay close attention to the little details. Something as simple as a coffee cup or a pair of headphones could be obvious anomalies, like ghosts, intruders, painting anomalies, and others of the sort, have a greater scare factor because they really catch you off guard. Yes, 95% of the scares are jump scares but it doesn't feel forced or cheap because the game is built around it, you have to deal with the anomalies yourself. What's also spooky is when you haven't noticed any minor differences for a while, and you start to wonder if you're getting too close to failure. At that point you start wishing for more obvious anomalies to happen. Then they happen and you regret asking for more obvious anomalies.

One thing that makes this game even more fun is that it's so much better when you have a few friends to play with you. When you have more than one person it becomes somewhat easier to find anomalies when they happen. This game technically has a co-op mode without having a co-op mode programmed into it and it's probably some of the most fun you'll have playing with your friends. I'm On Observation Duty is a game that is absolutely worth your time if you want a fresh new concept for a horror game. And the best part is that there isn't just one game, this is a series of four games so far, three of which are worth your time (don't play the third game). So, what are you waiting for? Go get the game on Steam! It's cheap and worth your money!
WHAT YOU PROBABLY DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT THE PARALYMPICS
Kimberley Huard-Jones
Archivist

With the winter Olympics crossing the finish line on Sunday, February 20, fans have left the stadium that was their screen and tuned back into their regular, everyday routine. However, many seem to forget about the Paralympics. Set to take place in Beijing from Friday, March 4 to Sunday, March 13 with over 600 contestants representing 51 countries and a total of 78 medal events spanning six sports: alpine skiing, biathlon, cross-country skiing, sled hockey, snowboarding, and wheelchair curling. Though Canadian Paralympians receive a pay cheque, as all professional athletes around the globe do regardless of whether they are playing for the Olympics or not, there are no funds dedicated to winners. Ideally, the Paralympic Foundation of Canada (PFC)—a division separate from the Canadian Paralympic Committee (CPC)—would be responsible for handing out such grants. The reason this is not happening: insufficient funds.

Working alongside the PFC for nearly three years, Québécois Paralympian swimmer Benoit Huot disagrees with the verdict. Having disability rights at heart, he considers this situation an injustice to the community as well as a step further from progress—and he isn’t the only one to think so. Ex-wheelchair racer from Québec, Chantal Petitclerc, speaks on the devaluation of Paralympic athletes in comparison to their Olympian counterparts. As a disabled woman, she has had to work even harder just to make a name of herself. Where a bronze would get a competitor recognition in the Olympics, Petitclerc had to win five gold medals before she could be taken seriously, undermining her value not only as an athlete but as a person.

Since its appearance in the late forties, the Paralympic Games (formerly named the Stoke Mandeville Games up until the sixties) have created a platform for those with disabilities to pursue sports professionally. Yet, visibility remains a weak point and with that comes few sponsors and, ultimately, little to no funding. Fortunately, there are some solutions to this problem. For one, the PFC can go beyond private donors and start accepting external funds—government aid is an example. Better yet, the CPC can collaborate with the COC by pooling their finances and resources to support the foundation. For what concerns budgets and investments, it’s all a question of prioritizing and planning accordingly.

As for us, the general public, we can raise awareness (and visibility!) by showing interest and having discussions on the matter to dismantle the ablest ideologies that are creating inequalities in the domain of athleticism. It’s important to keep in mind that for most Paralympians, this is not only a dream and a career, but also a movement.

Enjoy the games!

HOW HARD IS IT TO ACTUALLY BECOME A LIFEGUARD?
Cierra Monaco
Staff Writer

Being a lifeguard is an ideal young adult job. Almost everyone wants to do it. They sit in the sun all day and are super social. Lifeguards are considered to be extremely popular. They are also often judged primarily on their looks and work in bathing suits. However, how hard is it to actually be a lifeguard? As a lifeguard myself, I can tell you that it is not as easy as most people think.

There is a huge physical aspect to being a lifeguard. You have to be able to swim 400 meters in 10 minutes. That’s 16 laps of the pool in 10 minutes! You have to be able to swim 5 meters holding a person above water, as well as swim 1 lap pulling someone. It takes a lot of cardio! You also must be able to swim 2 laps of the pool with your head above water in 50 seconds or less! Another physical aspect that a lot of lifeguards have trouble with is the brick. The brick is when a 20 pound brick is put in the bottom of the deep end. The lifeguard has to go get it, then swim with it back to the wall while keeping their head above water. They must be able to lift people out of the pool safely. These requirements are just to be a pool lifeguard!

There are four different types of lifeguards. Pool, lake, beach and water park. Each type of lifeguard requires different physical training. For example, lake lifeguards have to be able to swim with fins and beach lifeguards have to swim 32 laps in 14 minutes! Lifeguards also have to redo their certifications every two years. If you fail the test, you cannot be a lifeguard. Even if you were one before.

Being a lifeguard requires so much more physical fitness than people realize. Lifeguards are constantly training to make sure they stay in shape and are able to react properly in case of an emergency. Being a lifeguard means that you might have to carry people heavier or bigger than you. Especially if someone is unconscious, they are unable to help move themselves at all. It is crucial that they are always in good shape. Many lifeguards often prioritize the gym and swimming laps to make sure that they are able to save people.

So, the next time you see a lifeguard, try to see how difficult it is to become one. It is a job that requires extremely difficult pre-requisites and a lot of physical fitness. We do not just sit in the sun all day and relax. There is so much more to becoming a lifeguard than people think. We stay in shape to make sure that everyone in the water is safe.
CIRCE REVIEW
Cierra Monaco
Staff Writer

Madeline Miller is one of the novelist's with the most hype right now. She has written two books: The Song of Achilles and Circe.

I decided to read Circe as an introduction to Miller's world. I was so excited to read it! However, I was extremely disappointed. I did not like Circe at all. I found the book very hard to get through. I also thought it was really boring. The main character just stays on an island by herself for the majority of the story. I just couldn't get into it. I also kept getting confused with the characters. Since time moves differently in the book, I kept losing track of who was doing what. The time frame was very weird and made the book hard to read.

The one part I did like about the book was Circe’s personality. I liked that she was confident, curious and independent. I enjoyed how much her personality influenced the story. I like how she interacted with other people. She was never scared and always stood her ground.

Overall, I was truly disappointed by this book. It was pretty expensive and was a total let down. I don’t even want to read The Song of Achilles anymore because of how much I disliked Circe.

I TOLD YOU SO
Connor Rooney
Opinions Editor

Being right can be bittersweet. Nevertheless, I never miss an opportunity to say I told you so. The price of gas is soaring as I am sure you have all noticed. There was a time not so long ago during the pandemic that gas was at roughly $0.90 per gallon. At present the price of gas is hovering around $1.97 per gallon. That is quite the jump. Analysts have been warning us of another advantage is that it would be far less affected by international conflict. Fortunately, we are already importing gas from other nations due to lack of pipelines. There is no pipeline connecting Quebec to Alberta therefore it must be transported by rail. This is more expensive and less can be transported at once as well as a threefold increase in likelihood of incident. Due to this more than half of Quebec’s oil is imported from foreign nations such as Russia, Saudi Arabia and the US. Quebec may be located in an oil rich nation, but make no mistake it depends on other countries to receive most of its oil.

This is why Canada needs more pipelines so that it may become self-sufficient and no longer need to depend on other nations for oil. If this were the case the conflict in Russia would not have affected the wallets of Quebeckers nearly as much. Another advantage is that it would be better for the environment. Canada would no longer import oil from nations with lower environmental standards. Whether you like it or not Canada still needs oil, so being able to make it as clean as possible here in Canada sure beats the war.

According to Eurostat, Estonia, Poland, Finland, and Slovakia all import more than 75% of their petroleum from Russia as of 2018. This poses a grave danger to European stability as at the flip of a switch Russia can cut off any country from its vital imports to destabilize and invade.

Europe must move away from Russian energy dependence and toward renewable energy as to not be at the helm of Russia.

It would also be substantially cheaper. Here in Quebec for example, it only costs around $3.50 to fully charge a Tesla, while it costs much more to fill a combustion engine, even when you match the range of each vehicle. Heating costs are also cheaper, all because our electricity in Quebec is completely renewable and domestically sourced. If Europe were to do the same, it would drive costs down in the long run.

EUROPEAN ENERGY INDEPENDENCE?
William Draycott
Staff Writer

After months of speculation, Russia invaded Ukraine on February 24th in what Putin called "a special military operation". Since then, the country has been hit with severe economic sanctions and international condemnation. This further strengthened NATO and EU alliances as it gave them a use case for the first time in a while - a united west against Russian expansionism.

The news has not been all doom and gloom though, especially for climate activists as the invasion sparked calls for energy independence and a renewed interest in sustainable energy solutions.

This is because Putin enjoys the luxury of controlling Europe's natural gas and petroleum lines which gives him the upper hand. Replacing Russian oil and gas with renewable energy would not only free Europe from Russia's grip, but also defund their government, putting an end to the war.

Since then, the country has been hit by this book. It was pretty expensive and I was not even interested in reading it or not. Canada still needs oil, so being able to make it as clean as possible here in Canada sure beats the war.

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So I say ditch the ridiculous gas prices and invest in the construction of pipelines. The economy would heavily benefit as well as your wallets. Canada would not depend on countries like Russia to supply oil and therefore would be far less affected by international conflict.
AN OPEN LETTER TO ASPIRING SCIENTISTS

Mehnu Mahapatuna
Science & Tech Editor

When I was a preteen, probably around the age of twelve or thirteen, I decided to pursue a career in the sciences. Now I’m eighteen years old, barely passing Electricity and Magnetism and losing hair, all because I stuck to the path chosen by a child who didn’t even know how to boil rice. This crisis has forced me to ask myself the question: Why? Why was I so adamant on becoming a scientist? What was all the hype about, and was it worth it?

After long periods of deep retrospection and despair, I always come to the same conclusion: It was all about respect. I remember a time, before the entire world’s faith shifted so significantly (as a result of political polarization and what not), when science was regarded as nothing but fact, and the word of scientists was never even considered to be subjective. To be a person of such great stature, to command so much respect from entire populations, felt like a dream to my younger self.

But what was that mentality ever reasonable? Did it make sense for our society to regard scientists as completely empirical, perfectly unbiased, experimenters? Aren’t we all just human beings at the end of the day? Obviously not. But it took me nearly six years to learn that lesson, all because of a humanities class.

Last semester, I chose to take a class called Science and Pseudoscience, solely because the teacher who was supposed to teach the course had amazing reviews. When I went to my first class, I found out that said teacher had gone on leave for the semester, and there was a substitute in her place. It was one of those evening classes in which you practically smell the restlessness and mental exhaustion of forty kids crammed into a class with roly-poly desks (or maybe that was just sweat).

Despite my first impressions of the class, it turned out to be the most eye-opening course I’ve ever taken. I strongly recommend it to any student currently pursuing the sciences. In it, I learned that scientists don’t operate within a vacuum. They are human beings whose work is affected by societal conditioning and personal desires just as much as anyone else’s. Essentially, I learned the true nature of being a scientist.

Let me give you an example. You’ve probably heard of the Placebo Effect. This effect essentially causes people to feel the effects of a certain drug or treatment after they’ve taken a “fake” drug (believing it to be the real thing). In many drug studies, half of a control group ingests a placebo on a regular basis while the other half will take the actual drug. This method is used to verify whether it’s the drug causing health improvements within a patient or rather the patient’s own mental conviction.

Here’s what you didn’t know: placebos aren’t meant to be used in novel drug studies when there are pre-existing drugs (for the same illness) that have been tested against placebos. I’ll present an analogy that’ll make it simpler: If you’d like to find out if Usain Bolt is actually the fastest man on the planet, why would you have him race against your grandma (who who uses a walker) instead of the second fastest man in the world?

What’s important to note is that all scientists conduct better, then why do faulty studies like this still make their way into the light? Well, as I mentioned, the work of scientists is affected by societal conditioning and personal desires, just as anyone else’s would.

Take Tammy as an example. Tammy’s a scientist. She works for a major pharmaceutical company and is asked to test a new drug that they’ve manufactured. Her supervisor gives her a little wink and lets her know that the results of this study are extremely important to the financial success of her employer. On top of that, Tammy’s kids have been bugging her for a trip to Mexico for two years now. So, a promotion would be pretty nice. The only way that Tammy can secure her employer’s favors and satisfy her whiny kids is by ensuring that the results of this drug study turn out to be positive. The only way she can do that is by conducting a faulty study. Yes, she’ll have to compromise her scientific integrity. But no one would be able to tell the difference. So Tammy goes ahead and conducts her study improperly. End scene.

Now I hope you understand just how easy it is for a scientist’s work to be affected by external pressures. Along with that realization, I hope you’ve learned that scientists don’t need to and shouldn’t be revered as omniscient, fully unbiased individuals, rather as human beings who are trying their best to do honest work. It is for this reason that the scientific community and concepts such as peer review exist. Even though scientists as individuals aren’t perfect, the scientific community eliminates bias and misconduct to the best of its ability, valuing integrity and fact over anything else. This is why I no longer want to be a scientist, but simply a part of the scientific community. Sorry to disappoint twelve year old Mehnu.
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Lucass Garcia
Contributor

THE BOSS
Logan Macdonald & Xena Jones
Editor-in-Chief & Staff Writer

PROCRASTINATOR
Xena Jones
Staff Writer

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SEE YOU THERE!