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MISINFORMATION, MEDIA, AND MODERNITY

This article is a message from the Editors-in-Chief to the Eric Hamber Community. The opinions expressed in this article are their own.

There is another plague that is currently on the rise, and it is not COVID-19. It is misinformation. In recent years, misinformation and disinformation have become more readily available than ever. With the rise of social media networks and platforms, information can be shared instantly by simply tapping your screen.

The Coronavirus Pandemic has shown claims of all sorts of misinformation, from onions as a cure, to the virus being spread by 5G technologies. There are even claims that wearing masks does more harm than good, based on the theory you are breathing in toxic carbon dioxide, and not air.

Due to the rise of social media, youth between the ages of 12-20 have been subject to many forms of misinformation and disinformation. From false Instagram posts to insensitive fake stories, teenagers have had to deal with their fair share of fake news. The problem arises when people do not know how to differentiate one from the other.

Now let us go through two of the various conspiracy theories in brief that have made their way into the factual category of students' knowledge. They are both examples in which the Editors-in-Chief have personally witnessed the presence of, and it is of relevance to inform readers of.

The first example is one known as Pizzagate. Pizzagate is an entirely debunked conspiracy theory that first spread during the 2016 U.S. Presidential Election. In brief, it revolved around the idea that members of the Democratic Party had been operating a human trafficking ring. Again, this is completely unsubstantiated, with zero evidence to support any of this. The Pizzagate conspiracy theory has been debunked by a multitude of news and law enforcement agencies. The theory fell out of the public eye for a while, until it started to regain traction in June 2020 from teenagers viewing such conspiracies on social media platforms, such as Instagram and Tiktok. This is a prime example of why nobody should ever use social media as their sole news source, without doing further research with peer-reviewed media outlets. The viewership of such "Pizzagate" content became so prevalent that the New York Times, CBC, and BBC all published recent articles debunking such beliefs.

The second example is the unfounded conspiracy involving furniture company, Wayfair. The theory was centred around the notion that Wayfair used the cover of expensive cabinetry

marketed with human names, to engage in child trafficking. The origin of this conspiracy: Twitter and Reddit. It later reached Instagram and TikTok where it was spread onward amongst teenagers. It is blatantly false.

The reason neither Pizzagate nor the Wayfair conspiracy were never originally recieved a spot in the news cycle, is because they are simply untrue. Nothing was hidden from the public view, only after people started to believe it did it require such coverage to dispel.

It should be pointed that both the Wayfair conspiracy and Pizzagate are aspects of QAnon, a set of digitally-manifested theories that are ultimately rooted in centuries-old antisemitic tropes. QAnon is primarily politically oriented in its content associated with far-right ideals and support of President Trump. QAnon has been discredited by the BCC, CBC, WAPO, NYT, WST, Reuters, AP, ABC, NBC, the Guardian, Al Jazeera, Bloomberg, Vox, NPR, the National Post, and a host of other news organizations (any further research on QAnon should be conducted via these named sources).

A note to those who find distrust in the "mainstream media." Go on their websites. Read their editorial standards, in full. Consult fact-checking and media bias organizations. Look at a host of sources. Are they similar? Are they consistent? Are they logical? Even the Griffin's Nest has a set of journalistic standards, ready for release at any time. This is because the truth matters, from a school newspaper to the largest of media corporations, the truth and the facts are the ultimate goal.

This is not to say that there are not large news organizations that publish misinformation and disinformation, but the key component to filtration is controlled skepticism. Employ a fulfilled and constant balance of seeking evidence and facts, and recognizing when solid evidence is presented. These processes are how you weed out fact from fiction, true from false, and right from wrong.

Misinformation and disinformation are prevalent online, and extremely easy to access. A global pandemic in conjunction with the current state of affairs leaves no room for a misinformed public. The knowledge we obtain forms the basis of how we make all decisions, including politically. Every time someone shares misinformation, whether they know it's wrong, think it's right, or believe it is "in the right direction", it chisels away at the foundations of our democracy.



NIGERIA: END SARS MOVEMENT

PARKER HAGA (11)

The youth of Nigeria have been protesting police brutality across the streets of the most populous city in the country – Lagos. The youth-led movement #EndSARS has seized the world's attention through social media and sparked a social change movement reaching some of the world's most recognized people to pledge their support, such as Beyoncé and President-elect Joe Biden. Starting in Lagos, the protests have extended into numerous cities across Nigeria creating the most extensive uprising Nigeria has not witnessed in a long time.

Established in the early 1990s, the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) was created as a way to tackle the growing crime epidemic across Nigeria. Regardless of their duty to protect, SARS grew a reputation of going rogue and abusing their power. In 2017 Amnesty International presented a report, which stated that between January 2017 and May 2020 there were at least 82 cases of ill-treatment, torture, and extrajudicial executions by SARS officers. While the youth of Nigeria have been peacefully protesting #EndSARS since 2017 the trigger of the recent protests was the release of a graphic video, which went viral on social media, on October 3.

The video displayed content of a young unarmed man being shot by a SARS officer in the southern Delta State. Following the release, Nigerian authorities denied the contents of the video and arrested the person who filmed it, evoking more anger amongst protesters.

In efforts to subdue the protests, on October 11th President Muhammadu Buhari disbanded SARS. The unit itself was dissolved, however, the SARS officers were relocated elsewhere within the system. The protesters were not appeased by this and demanded SARS officers to either be fired or prosecuted. In addition, protesters demanded more changes and reforms in relation to how their country is governed and stated they will continue to demonstrate until new reforms have been implemented. Meanwhile, in Lagos, protests were banned. In other regions, powerful state governors called for censorship of social media, which

played a vital role in the organization of the protests. Furthermore, many activists known for being with the movement were thrown in jail by the police, which pressured other activists to flee the country or go into hiding.

With a government curfew installed, the height of protests peaked on October 20 at the Lekki toll gate in Lagos. As the sun set, Nigerian flags were passed around while protesters sat on the floor and sang their national anthem in hopes they would not face danger. Philip Agu, a local sound engineer told protesters, "No Soldier can shoot any citizen holding their national flag." Despite Philip Agu's words, many protesters were shot by the government authorities present. Amnesty International reported that at least 12 people were killed and 30 injured. After the protest, a group of witnesses reported that they saw soldiers shoot at least two people at the protest. Another set of witnesses reported that the street lights and CCTV cameras had turned off moments before the shooting, allegedly as a way to protect the shooters. One final eyewitness reported that he saw bodies being removed by soldiers.

In a Twitter post released by the Nigerian Army, they stated no soldiers were at the protest and involved in any of the incidents, later changing their statement and saying they were present but only fired blank bullets into the air. However, two ballistic experts along with CNN investigated the incident and reported that the shape of the bullet casings used were those of live bullets. This disputes the claims presented by the Nigerian Army. Moreover, there is verified video footage that contains the sounds of gunfire and footage of soldiers shooting in the direction of the fleeing protesters. At this time, the police have not commented on CNN's report and instead taken to Twitter where they have denied every shooting towards protesters.

Since the start of the movement, more youth have been willing to speak out about their experiences with police brutality across Nigeria. The #EndSARS protests have created awareness of what is happening in Nigeria and become a prime example of how youth voices matter.

PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY

PLEASE REFER TO BACK PAGE FOR DETAILED PUBLIC HEALTH ORDERS AND ADVICE FROM THE PHO AND BCCDC. PLEASE HELP PREVENT THE FURTHER SPREAD OF COVID-19

LARGEST SEISMIC UPGRADE PROJECT IN VANCOUVER: ERIC HAMBER SCHOOL REPLACEMENT

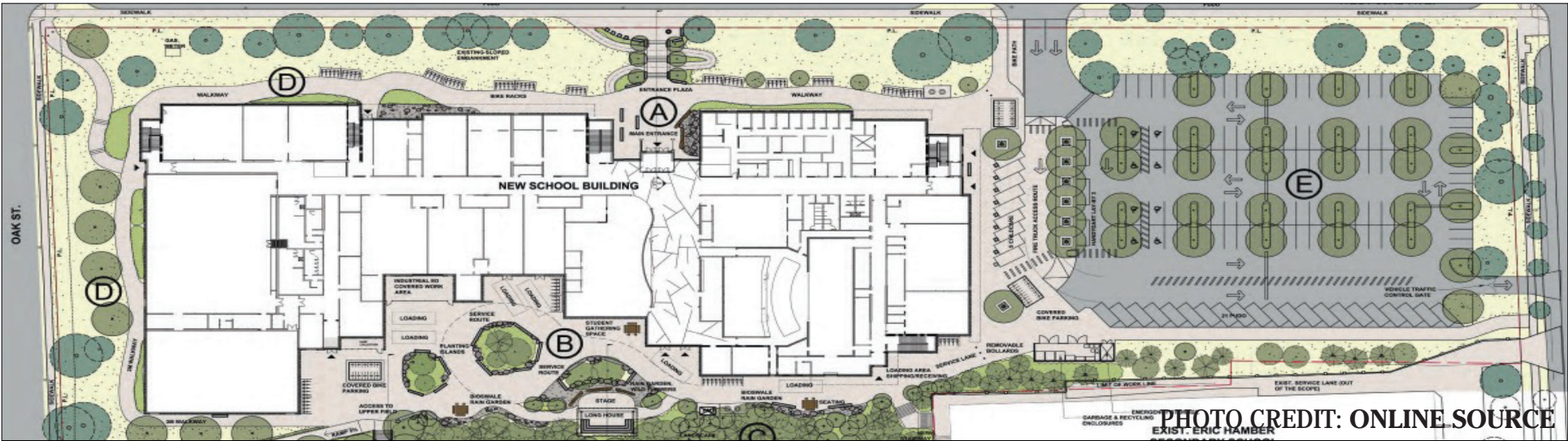
JOSHUA KLIMEK (11)

The new 92 million dollar school will continue it's building process and will provide a big change for students. The original amount of \$79.3 million was increased after growing construction costs. Design and construction was scheduled to begin in January 2020 at the northeast side at West 33rd and Oak street, where the current track field is located. However, due to the Pandemic, construction was moved a year so it is intended to start January 2021 and open in Fall 2023. In the meantime, the current school will remain open until the new school is completed and the first students walk in. The new school is planned to be slightly

smaller than the current school. The proposed total area will be approximately 15000 square feet. However, it will incorporate 4 floors and is designed to promote space efficiency. The school's capacity will be increased to 1700. The earthquake-safe school will incorporate 21st-century learning environments. This includes more personalized and student-directed learning. Spaces are designed for easier collaboration and combination between classes. It will include many seating areas used for students to socialize or study. Classroom sizes remain similar to current standards. Modern principles will be incorporated,

and tradition will be preserved. There is an increased emphasis on flexibility and adaptability which many find important, especially in the current time of crisis. The school captures natural light and immersion with nature and the environment. Indigenous art will be included around the school, including Musqueam art at the entrance. The school's history and art will be incorporated elsewhere as well. A prominent concern of many parents and students was whether or not the new school would have an auditorium. Funding has been provided for an auditorium with a max capacity of 350 seats.

The \$92 million price tag includes a separate childcare space. The independent facility will reside on the 4th floor and have a play area for the children on the roof. The total space of the daycare will be 1500 square metres and accommodate 69 children. A parking lot will be built on the northeast side which holds 123 cars for staff and access to the childcare center. The final stage of the school's upgrade is scheduled for 2030. During this stage, a new track field will be built where the old Hamber once stood. Nevertheless, the Hamber community is excited to see what the new school has to offer.



THE GRIFF: REIMAGINED

KATJA RADOVIC-JONSSON (9)

The term “The Griff” no longer reflects the name of the entity. The physical store will remain “The Griff”, but the over arching group in which the outlined initiatives fall under is “Trilogy Hamber Business Group.”

Recently, I interviewed **Ishaan Gaur** (12), the CEO of Hamber's well-renowned Griff store, about COVID-19, store operations, and what it's like to be a CEO during these strange times. It went a little something like this:

- Q:** Why did you choose to apply to be the CEO?
A: I chose to be a CEO because I've always been a leader and a role model for a lot of people, so I felt like I could use those skills to be the CEO of The Griff, and along with my friends and fellow executives, I've always felt that they need a strong leader to represent them. I felt like I had those skills and I had those abilities that they needed at The Griff.
- Q:** What's your favourite part about running The Griff?
A: At least right now, my favourite part of running The Griff is that we're currently changing the whole face of The Griff and we're changing everything about it, so I'm really liking how we're spitting out random ideas and we're trying to figure everything out as we go. I like on-the-go thinking and keeping it really fast-paced. We're really starting everything from scratch and we're preserving the legacy left by former students and teachers involved."
- Q:** Is being CEO easier or harder than you expected?
A: Honestly, I think it's been a lot harder with COVID-19 going on. I definitely feel like there's been some ups and downs that wouldn't be there in previous years. It's definitely harder but it's been really fun to work with my fellow executives to create a new face of The Griff.
- Q:** How has COVID-19 affected your plans for this year?
A: We never really opened the store, and that's given us the opportunity to turn the face of The Griff around. We don't want to just keep The Griff as just a store anymore; we want to provide opportunities for young business-minded individuals as well. We're planning on creating a bit of a program for the younger grades at Hamber. Especially with COVID-19 going on, a lot of people, even me, have trouble knowing what we want to do with post-secondary. We want to provide opportunity and we want to provide knowledge on different opportunities in the community that might be suitable for you and that you might want to pursue in post-secondary.
- Q:** When do you plan on potentially opening The Griff this year?
A: As of right now, we don't plan to open The Griff this year, according to the stringent guidelines provided by the BC Health Ministry, and Ms. Jensen hasn't given us the go-ahead to open The Griff this year. We're not going to be super focused on the store this year. We're going to be more focused on our ability to provide more opportunities for young individuals who may or may not know what they want to do in the future. That'll keep us on our toes as well and it'll also give us something to do and it'll give a lot of benefit to the community.
- Q:** What's your favourite product traditionally offered at The Griff?
A: I would probably have to say the Mini Oreos, and for drinks, I'd probably go with Aloe Vera. Aloe Vera has always been a favourite of mine.

In summary, while The Griff doesn't plan to open this year, they're still working on lots of opportunities for younger Hamber students to explore the vast field of entrepreneurship. Stay tuned for more information regarding The Griff's operations this year, as well as upcoming Junior Management opportunities!

STREET ART BROUGHT BY COVID-19

BIANCA TAKENAKA (9)

Though COVID-19 has abruptly shut down art galleries and museums, artists around the world have reacted creatively to the challenges of the pandemic. They have been using street art and graffiti to spread awareness about COVID-19. Pandemic-inspired street art has been a coping strategy to push through times like these. Prominent works of COVID street art show gratitude for the frontline workers who risk their lives every day.

One of the most recognized works is “Super Nurse!” by the artist known as FAKE. Located in Amsterdam, it is dedicated to healthcare workers around the world. It depicts a nurse wearing a medical mask printed with the Superman logo. It is included in one of the world’s largest permanent digital public art installations in London, and was projected on the NYU Langone Hospital in Manhattan.

Another notable piece is called

“Game Changer” by the street artist Banksy, nicknamed the “King of Graffiti”. It is located on the Southampton General Hospital in England and displays a child playing with a nurse action figure, while Batman and Spiderman toys lay in the garbage can beside him. Banksy even wrote a personal note underneath his work: “Thanks for all you’re doing. I hope this brightens the place up a bit, even if only in black and white.”

Local works of pandemic street art are present in Vancouver. The Downtown Eastside mural by artist Smokey D conveys a reminder to “wash your hands 10 times a day an’ please stop touching yo face!!” In his artwork, he writes, “It may seem surreal, but it’s not— love to all, Smokey.”

These art pieces inspire and lift spirits all over the world, especially given all that has occurred. They will go down in 2020’s history by displaying the power of art, in trying times.

PHOTO CREDIT (ALL):
ONLINE SOURCES



COUNCIL COPEs WITH COVID JESSICA KIM (11)

This school year is different than all previous, with the implementation of the quarter system, reduction in class sizes, shortening of class times, and much more, all due to COVID-19. As individuals, we have adapted, but how has our representative body, Student Council, shifted their operations?

After undergoing a modified election process this year, a team of five senior students were elected to their respective roles on the 2020/21 Eric Hamber Student Council. With **Rohan Khanna** (12) leading as President, he is confident that “[they] are going to make this year the best year.” When asked about the Hamber community as a whole, Khanna speaks to one of Hamber’s unique traits, it’s “independent unity” amongst students. “Everyone at Hamber is incredibly independent, but they all find their cliques, whether it be the basketball team, volleyball team, Yearbook, Student Council, [or] Griffin’s Nest Newspaper, everyone has their own interests,” he explains. For even the most highly regarded of Student Councils, engaging Hamber’s diverse student body and making changes to the heavily populated school is an ambitious goal. This year’s council is working through

extenuating circumstances, as COVID challenges the original structure and operations.

In the upcoming year, students can expect a few virtual events, such as a virtual Clubs Day and a virtual talent show organized by Student Council, all of which sound engaging and exciting! Pledging in his campaign video to “make Eric Hamber the most environmentally sustainable school in all of Vancouver”, Khanna plans to make good on this promise by incentivizing students to reduce their plastic usage and collaborating with Eric Hamber’s own environmental club. In addition to these commitments, Khanna’s mentions of volunteer student council positions for the year hold promise, as they will present opportunities to students across the grade levels to engage with Student Council.

Rohan Khanna is confident in the Council’s abilities, describing them as “creative, hardworking, and intuitive.” With that in mind, Hamber students can look to Student Council to fulfill their promises and present as responsible and reliable, considering the tumultuous nature of the current school year.

PHOTO CREDIT: GABE TUNG (11)



EXERCISE AND SANITIZE!

HANNAH AZAD MANJIRI (11)

Despite the firm restrictions implemented in classrooms as they reopened this fall, Eric Hamber strived to make this school year as engaging as possible for all returning Griffins. A first step in achieving this was the launch of the Eric Hamber Performance Centre. This COVID-friendly athletics program allows students to practice their sport at the school on a weekly basis. Those involved aren’t required to try out or compete in games, steering away from the usual competitive focus of previous Eric Hamber teams.

Although the centre was officially introduced as a response to COVID-19 earlier this year, it had been in the works long before the virus struck. “There are kids every year who don’t get through tryouts and wonder how they can keep playing.” **Mr. I. Sehmbi** (Athletics) explained, “We’ve been thinking that it would be great to have these kids train throughout the year so they’re in a better place to make the team in the future.” The inclusive program hopes to encourage more students to get involved in athletics regardless of whether they’ve made teams previously. “We’ve also noticed a really alarming trend around girls in sports.” Mr. Sehmbi continued, “In grade 8 we have great participation, but in grades 9, 10, 11 and 12, we find a real drop in the

number of girls getting involved. By removing the selection piece, we’re hoping to retain more kids throughout the years.”

Starting with volleyball and field hockey, Hamber’s eager athletes buzzed with excitement at the announcement of the new performance centres. They were ready to comply with all COVID-19 guidelines if it meant they could return to the fields and courts. “This year we had to change a lot of our drills to ensure all of the players were able to stay socially distant, but still have an enjoyable experience and learn new skills.” **Gabriel Tung** (11), a coach of the volleyball performance centre shared. Despite the restrictions, the Griffins were happy to reunite with their respective sports and experience yet another successful athletics season at Hamber. “It was nice to see so many new faces playing field hockey this year!” **Simone Hamilton** (10) expressed enthusiastically. Mr. Sehmbi reflected proudly on the success of the new program, “It’s crazy to think, but we actually have more kids involved in athletics this fall than we did last fall, despite having two fewer teams.” The Eric Hamber Performance Centre is not only a solution to 2020’s COVID-19 challenges, but is a program that will continue to develop and flourish in future years.

HAMBER STUDENTS' THOUGHTS ON THE NEW QUARTER SYSTEM

REYA KHANNA (9)



“I’m finding that my students are working really hard” -**Ms. Panesar** (English)

The pandemic has affected our lives and the way we learn at school. Due to the virus, the school system has been split up into quarters that last ten weeks with A and B Cohorts, and Hamber students are now obligated to adapt to the new system.

Everybody has their thoughts and opinions about the change in systems. Some students enjoyed the liberty of being at school for only an hour and forty-five minutes Others found it easier to focus on two subjects rather than the eight there would usually be in the school year. **Sophia Keng** (9) stated that “I think the quarter system is better because there is more one-on-one learning.” Supporters of the new system agreed, adding that they felt there was more focus on the important parts of the curriculum and not as time is not wasted.

However, the majority of students found the new system to be a difficult change because of its fast pace and the worry of forgetting the material needed for the next year. These students also mentioned how they found it stressful and overwhelming to learn the compressed course in ten weeks. “It feels like you don’t have a chance to absorb much,” remarked **Rohan Khanna** (12).

The cohort system has been a huge change in students’ social realm as most are no longer able to mingle with their classmates and friends after class. There is no guarantee that their friends will be in the same cohort, making it difficult for students to communicate with each other around school times. Though the cohorts allowed students to respect the necessary social distancing protocols, they were generally considered an unpleasant necessity. As **Gina Hallensleben** (9) said, “It is a good way of keeping COVID under control, but some of my friends are in a different cohort and that is sad.”

Most students favoured the A Cohort rather than the B, although there were advantages and disadvantages to both. Cohort A was more highly preferred because it allowed students to finish school and have the rest of their day free. “I like Cohort A better because I like finishing school and then having the rest of the day to catch up on homework or do whatever I want,” **Shaan Sandhu** (9) said. The main drawback to this cohort was waking up early. Cohort B supporters

were avid fans of catching a few more hours of rest. “Cohort B is better so I can sleep in and study before class,” **Jessica Cho** (9) commented. Yet students also mentioned the negatives of the B Cohort, which included feeling unproductive after reminding themselves of their afternoon class and feeling as if the day has been wasted.

Under this new system, all teachers have had to work much harder to adapt to teaching in such a short amount of time. **Mr. Arkiletian** (Computer Science) revealed that “In terms of the amount of work, it is more work getting adjusted to this style of teaching.” Other teachers felt a large increase in their workload as they transition into this new system. Due to social distancing, most teachers were unable to interact with their students through group activities and class discussions. “I don’t get to interact as much because there is less time for discussion,” stated **Ms. Derrah** (Science). But even for teachers, the cohort system was not without its perks. “There are fewer people in the class. So you get to talk to them a little more,” Ms. Derrah added, with many teachers sharing the sentiment. Still, some teachers saw the small class size as a barrier to open discussion and communication.

For teachers, the turn to technology was another learning curve. “I have learned that I need to work twice as hard, but I’m finding that my students are working really hard and they are getting high marks. The students who in the past may have struggled are doing really well.” **Ms. Panesar** (English) stated.

Despite the difficulties adjusting to the quarter system, the school community recognized that it was created to protect the students, staff and families’ lives. **Ronan Pon** (9) remarked, “I feel safe in the quarter system because everyone is wearing a mask and there is good social distancing taking place.”

Varying from concern to praise, both teachers and students alike have many thoughts to share. Even though cohorts are by no means a perfect system, they proven to be safer than returning to the regular system and are crucial in protecting staff and students.

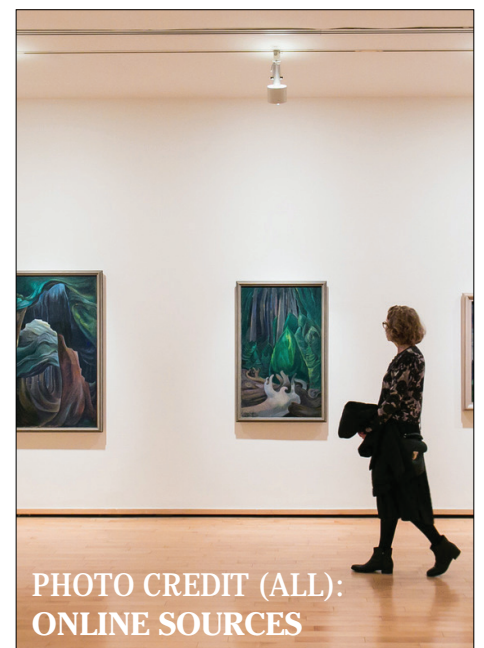


PHOTO CREDIT (ALL):
ONLINE SOURCES

COVID CAN'T STOP THE FUN!

AMELIA HUGHES (11)

Suggestions subject to the most recent Public Health Orders.

Although taking a daily socially distanced walk and other outdoor activities can be entertaining, most of us get tired of kicking a ball and strolling around. But never fear! Even though it is starting to feel like the only place you can go is home, there are a lot of activities you can do this winter that are COVID friendly.

COVID may have destroyed some of our holiday plans, but many Vancouver holiday traditions remain alive despite this challenging year. Visiting some of the city’s famous light displays is a great way to break up the

monotony of quarantine. Some events that are still taking place are Bright Lights at Stanley Park, Glow Gardens at Greater Vancouver Zoo, Canyon lights, and the PNE Winter Lights, all of which happen outside. If you feel like a light festival isn’t the best way to brighten your day, there are other pastimes that might tickle your fancy. COVID restrictions allowing, there many socially distanced activities you can do all over the Lower Mainland. For one, Vancouver Mysteries Adventure Games provides an outdoor escape room service that will lead you

on a wild goose chase trying to solve mysteries throughout Vancouver. You can choose between solving a cold case or murder mystery using the three packages the company provides. It is a wonderful way stay in touch with friends while getting that daily dose of fresh air.

Another good event is paintball, as there are both indoor and outdoor facilities that allow people to stay a safe distance from one another. After all, what better way is there to relax after a long day than by covering your friends in paint?

If heart-racing adventures aren’t really your pace, you can always go visit a market and support local vendors. The Hastings Park Winter Farmers Market, Vancouver Flea Market, and East Side Flea Market are all spectacular options. If after all that you are still looking for something else to do, be sure to check out your local art galleries to see what they have going on. It’s a wonderful way to support local artists and their amazing shows might surprise you. Remember, whatever you end up doing this season, stay safe, continuing to abide by recent Public Health Orders.

LOCAL NEWS

RACISM IN NOVA SCOTIA'S FISHERIES

HOMELESSNESS IN VANCOUVER

11 DECEMBER
2020

5

“It feels like they (non-Indigenous lobster fishers) have declared a lobster war against us,” said Michael Sack, chief of the Sipekne’katik First Nation, when asked to comment on the recent violent attacks against Indigenous lobster fisheries in Nova Scotia. His tribe is part of the Mi’kmaq people, who live mainly on Canada’s Atlantic coast. First occurring in September 2017, the attacks against Indigenous lobster fishers and fisheries have increased both in number and in severity. Most recently, on October 17, 2020, an Indigenous lobster fishery was burned to the ground in an incident that the police are calling “suspicious”. Other attacks include the dumping of Indigenous-caught live lobsters from holding facilities as well as acts of continued vandalism and sabotage throughout the years.

Indigenous leaders have raised their concerns that law enforcement has sided with the predominantly White non-Indigenous lobster fishers in the disputes, and that currently not enough is being done to protect the Indigenous fisheries.

The lobster fishery disputes in Nova Scotia all stem back to a ruling by the Supreme Court of Canada in 1999, which reflected the treaty rights



PHOTO CREDIT: ONLINE SOURCE

RACISM IN NOVA SCOTIA'S FISHERIES

LILIANA CHOW (11)

of the Mi’kmaq, Maliseet and Passamaquoddy bands in Eastern Canada to hunt, fish and gather to earn a “moderate livelihood.” The ruling was based on the interpretation of the Peace and Friendship Treaties approved by the British Crown in 1760 and 1761. However, a “moderate livelihood” was not clearly defined and a later ruling by the Supreme Court said that Indigenous fishers can fish only for “necessities”, not for the “open-ended accumulation of wealth.” This amendment did not clearly state what the difference between “necessities” and the “open-ended accumulation of wealth” was, thus prolonging the racist actions against Indigenous lobster fishers.

Following the Supreme Court ruling in 1999, Indigenous lobster fishers began to exercise their rights and set lobster traps outside of the typical lobster-fishing season dates. The non-Indigenous lobster fishers protested the usage of Indigenous rights to fish during the non-typical fishing season, through acts of sabotage such as burning boats, acts of violence, and peaceful demonstrations outside of lobster fisheries. Around this time the Department of Fisheries and Oceans had maintained a hardline approach to enforcement, escalating to an incident that involved the ramming Mi’kmaq boats out on the ocean in 2000. The DFO also seized lobster traps, arrested and charged fishers, and prevented Indigenous lobster fishers from fishing and making a living.

As of now, the Sipekne’katik First Nation opened its own fishery enterprise and began operations outside of the federal season as allowed

by the Supreme Court ruling. The commercial non-Indigenous lobster fishers are reportedly worried about the Indigenous lobster fishers taking away their source of income, endangering the lobster populations, and disrupting their lives. Indigenous lobster fishers have the right to fish, no exceptions, given the result of the court ruling in 1999. Commercial lobster fishers are not allowed to fish between May 31 and November 30 annually, because lobsters tend to mate in the summer months and moult (shed their undersized shells) in the fall. On the other hand, Indigenous lobster fishers argued that systemic racism and discrimination occurring as they are being attacked for only using their government-given rights to hunt and fish, supported by the Supreme Court ruling in 1999.

On November 12, the Mi’kmaq people entered into a billion dollar partnership with Clearwater Seafood.

When Deputy PM, Chrystia Freeland was asked about the recent clashes, she stated, “Systemic racism, specifically toward Indigenous Peoples in Canada, runs very deep in our country and very deep in our history.” To ignore systemic racism in Canada, is to ignore racism as a whole.

HOMELESSNESS AND POVERTY IN VANCOUVER

TARINI TALREJA (11)

Vancouver ranks as one of the most expensive cities to live in worldwide. However, this title comes with the polarizing issue of Vancouver’s rising rate of homelessness. The shortage of affordable housing, migration, income disparity, and minimal access to high-paying jobs is prevalent among both youth and adults.

In 2020, studies showed there were over 2100 individuals that identified as homeless. Among those, 547 were living on the streets, and the rest shuttling between shelters, safe houses, hospitals, and detox centers. Although the percentage of homeless persons is small when compared to the overall population of Vancouver, homelessness remains a highly prevalent issue that affects many. Further research shows that homelessness disproportionately affects minority groups and people of colour. 33% of homeless people are of Indigenous origin and over 7% are Indigenous youth, while Indigenous persons make up only 2% of Vancouver’s population.

Part of the rising rate of homelessness may be attributed to the city’s climate. Vancouver is blessed with the mildest of Canadian winter, attracting people without long term living spaces from other provinces. Out-of-province travellers have increased since Alberta’s 2016 oil crash, adding to the existing homeless population.

Nevertheless, it is important to recall that few homeless people were born into homelessness. Lack of accessible and affordable housing, mental health issues, and past mistakes are the key factors behind homelessness. The act of becoming homeless leads to a cycle of challenges that keep many homeless for the rest of their lives. Living on the streets exposes individuals to violence, drug abuse, poor hygiene and health, and sexual abuse. Additionally, many individuals have stated that the support services and mental health facilities for homeless people are far from effective.

The BC government has acknowledged the growing issue of homelessness and has taken steps to mitigate it. The provincial government has created several programs to reduce the annual tax burden on BC taxpayers to managing homeless shelters, programs, and detox centers. Temporary Modular Homes is one such initiative and is aimed at giving homeless people a chance to resolve any existing substance abuse issues and re-enter the workforce. In light of COVID-19, the government has allocated over



PHOTO CREDIT: ONLINE SOURCE

\$10 million to reduce the pandemic’s impact on homeless people, which has gone towards helping people quarantine, stay sanitized, and access personal protective gear, including face masks.

While there have been multiple steps have been taken to address the issue in the short term, a better system of services, policies and initiatives is needed to solve homelessness in the long term.



PHOTO CREDIT: ONLINE SOURCE

QUEBEC'S BILL 21 REOPENS DEBATE ON SECULARISM

SPENCER IZEN (11) AND DEAN ROHMAN (11)

A controversial 2019 Quebec law is once again making headlines across the province and the rest of the country in its return to public debate.

The law titled “An Act respecting the laicity of the State” (French: *Loi sur la laïcité de l'État*), commonly known as “Bill 21”, seeks to prohibit certain public servants from wearing religious symbols at work. Bill 21 would apply to police officers, prosecutors, school teachers, the fire department, and numerous other government occupations.

The government of Quebec has said that the purpose of the bill is to promote and protect neutrality within the public service framework. The bill seeks to address the larger interprovincial debate regarding secularism as part of the larger provincial and national debate over “Quebec nationhood and sovereignty.” Secularism refers to the separation of government and religious institutions.

In 2019, Quebec Premier Francois Legault said “In Quebec, it’s been a long time since we’ve decided to separate religion and state, and it’s over 10 years that we’ve been debating religious symbols,” when discussing the merits of these conversations. Premier Legault went on to say “Secularism is not contrary to freedom of religion,” continuing “each can practice the religion of their choice. But we have to set rules, and that’s what we’re doing.” Supporters of the bill say it strikes a balance between personal freedoms and pro-secular interests within the province.

Those who oppose the bill say that it constitutes legalized discrimination. Idil Issa, vice president of Fondation parole de femme, said “Bill 21 is part of systemic discrimination.” Issa went on to explain how the bill directly targets minority communities. Those affected minority communities include Muslim, Jewish, or Sikh Canadians.

Religious symbols that are banned under the new bill include the hijab, burqa, niqab, kippah/yarmulke, turbans and crucifixes. These symbols are integral to certain people’s identities, as they tie them to their faith.

Public servants who wear any of these symbols

would no longer be permitted to do so. Because of this, many Quebecers have displayed their opposition to the bill by taking part in peaceful protests and demonstrations across the province. Tensions are rising as more people worry about their livelihoods and futures. At least 10 Muslim teachers have lost their job because of the ban. Many are saying that their future career dreams have been ruined due to the harsh enforcement of the bill, while others fear the kind of message the bill sends to future generations. Some Quebecers are worried that future generations will not grow up to see the diversity within their communities.

One of the most pressing questions in discussions around Bill 21 is “How is this legal?” Purely from an objective standpoint, the bill would reasonably seem to most Canadians that it violates religious liberty protections outlined in the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, a part of Canada’s constitution. However, the government of Quebec used the rarely invoked constitutional “nuclear option” called the Notwithstanding Clause (Section 33 of *the Charter*), which allows for the override of certain protections also contained in *the Charter*, and therefore allowing the bill to come into law.

In November 2020, the Canadian Civil Liberties Association announced they would pursue legal action against Bill 21 in Quebec courts, along with many other organizations. There are several legal arguments pertaining to the potential democratic, mobility, religious, and expression constraints that Bill 21 places on the citizens of Quebec. Numerous legal experts have cast predictions that Bill 21 could find its way to the Supreme Court.

Two clear sides can be seen when it comes to Bill 21. One side claims that the bill helps to promote secularism and unity within the province. The other side states that the bill promotes otherism, intolerance, and xenophobia.

Wherever you stand, one thing is clear. The people that are directly affected by this bill are not willing to stand down anytime soon.

HISTORY REPEATS ITSELF: ANTI-ASIAN RACISM IN CANADA

ERIKA CHUNG (11)

“Racism is not a series of isolated incidents. Racism is systemic, compounding and interconnected.” **-Project 1907**

The First National Anti-Asian Racism Report was released on September 9, 2020. It details the disturbing trend of reported anti-Asian incidents, confirming the foreboding sentiment looming over COVID-19 life. The government-funded report was compiled by the Chinese Canadian National Council Toronto Chapter, the Vancouver Asian Film Festival, the Chinese Canadian National Council for Social Justice and Project 1907.

Since the onset of COVID-19, there have been more reported anti-Asian racist incidents per capita in Canada than in the US. British Columbia has the most anti-Asian reports of any other sub-national region in North America. In BC especially, women are disproportionately affected, with 70% of all incidents occurring against them.

Compared to last year, anti-Asian hate crimes rose by 878% according to a Vancouver police report. Of the 600 plus reported anti-East Asians hate incidents, 26% have occurred since the pandemic’s declaration.

Incidents are reported through climin8hate.org and covidracism.ca. Vancouver-based Elimin8hate (a joint project between Project 1907 and the Vancouver Asian Film Festival), specifically plots out Metro Vancouver incidents. These reporting resources exist as safe places where anti-Asian racism can be reported, shared, and tracked. In many cases, racist incidents do not meet the threshold to be investigated as crimes. Therefore, these community databases serve to collect data, to inform calls to action and to design policies.

Anti-Asian sentiments are not

new, with COVID-19 bringing forward fresh reminders of present violence, hate crimes and microaggressions.

Canada has a history of systemically oppressing those of Asian descent. When the Canadian Pacific Railway was constructed, Chinese-Canadians were paid \$1.00 and had to pay for food out of pocket, while white workers were typically paid \$1.50-\$2.50 with provisions provided. With the head tax’s function being to restrict Chinese immigration (began at \$50, later raised to \$500 “per head”), systemic racism has long been a part of Canadian legislation.

Current levels of anti-Asian hostility are reminiscent of 1907 (hence Project 1907), where a 3-day riot through Vancouver’s Chinatown and Japantown sparked violence and vandalism led by white supremacists. Thousands of people participated, but only one person was convicted of any offence, according to records.

“Concrete policies that put equitable recovery at the forefront must be implemented recognizing how Black people, Asians and other people of colour, and especially those who are economically marginalized – remain disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 and its fallout. All levels of government must engage more with grassroots groups to ensure policies are aligned with an equitable recovery for all,” says Justin Kong, Executive Director of the Chinese Canadian National Council Toronto Chapter.

The aforementioned 4 organizations are calling on the federal government to include an anti-racism strategy in its post-pandemic recovery plan.

CITY HALL: CLIMATE CHANGE EMERGENCY

KRISTJAN VASARA (11)

On November 17, the Vancouver City Council implemented a new climate plan. The Climate Emergency Action plan is in accordance with the UN objective to limit global warming to 1.5° Celsius by the end of the 21st century.

The Vancouver government plans to cut its carbon emissions in half by 2030 and to hit carbon neutrality by 2050. Currently, 54% of Vancouver’s carbon emissions come from natural gas usage in buildings, and 39% from vehicles. To hit these targets, the city will undertake 6 targeted initiatives: neighbourhood development, active transportation and transit, zero-emission vehicles, zero-emission space and water heating, low carbon construction, and carbon sequestration.

City Hall plans to deal with the majority of this pollution by capturing the carbon from the air and “repacking” it into forests and the soil, through the promotion of alternative vehicle solutions, and through an emphasis on building infrastructure around other eco-friendly habits. These initiatives include remote work, the removal or adjustment of parking space requirements based on new building contracts, and an additional parking surcharge in relation to the carbon cost of a vehicle.

This plan is not legally binding, so the changes are not guaranteed. Certain bylaws may be difficult to implement due to economic pressures from the construction industry or automobile industry.



A CALL FOR POLITICAL REFORM: 2020 THAI PROTESTS

NISHA TIANGRATANAKUL (11)

Amidst the economic downturn brought by the pandemic, a pro-democratic uprising has begun in Thailand. The country has a long history of civil unrest, having seen nearly 20 coups since 1932. This new wave of protests started in early February in response to the dissolution of the Future Forward party, a prominent pro-democratic opposition party in the 2019 election. Many predicted that the election of the Future Forward party would return Thailand to democracy, following a 2014 military coup, but the election was marred by claims of corruption and collusion, which critics say were skewed in favour of the army-backed candidate.

The first wave of protests was cut off after the pandemic locked down the country in late February, but the second wave returned with vigour in late August, following the disappearance of Wanchalearm Satsaksit, a prominent political activist who had been in exile since the 2014 protests. This is rumoured to be the Thai government's doing.

Protestors are calling for a new constitution with authority over the monarchy and the resignation of Prime Minister Prayuth

Chan-ocha, the retired general who led the most recent military coup in 2014. However, the Prime Minister publicly refused their demands, reassuring his citizens on October 28 saying, "I will not run away from problems. I will not leave my duty by resigning at a time when the country has problems."

Protests started out peaceful, but with police involvement, many turned violent. Protestors have been shot at by water cannons, tear gas, and rubber bullets. Protest leaders, Panupong Jadnok, Panusaya Sithijirawattanakul, and Parit Chiwarak were arrested on October 15 for charges of breaking the lockdown restrictions the government added to stop the protests.

The protests have been gaining international attention, putting the Thai government in an extremely difficult position. With the continued deterioration of Thailand's economy, citizens who are in support of the current Prime Minister and King have now called their authority into question. Protestors are seeing this newfound support as a sign of hope. Perhaps, 2020 will mark the start of the end of Thailand's long history of violence, corruption, and authoritarianism.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS IN POLAND UNDER SIEGE

EMILY SHI (11)

As abortion becomes more of an accepted human right around the world, the government of Poland has taken a step in the opposite direction.

On October 23, 2020, the Polish Constitutional Tribunal ruled that abortions in instances of fetal defects were unconstitutional. This eliminates the right to abortion in all cases except in the event of incest or danger to the mother's health. This new bill makes all women who miscarry susceptible to legal suspicion and criminal prosecution.

Prior to this ban, Poland already

held some of the strictest abortion laws in Europe. In a law first established in 1993, abortions were only permitted on the grounds of fetal defects. Abortions of fetuses with developmental defects made up for 98 percent of all abortions performed in Poland.

In 2016, women in Poland protested the bill as it was debated. They took to the streets in a pro-choice march, wearing black to represent the death of their reproductive rights. This event came to be known as Black Monday. Protests took place in 90 Polish cities, with over 24000

citizens striking to take part in the capital city Warsaw alone.

On October 23, protests began in 60 cities as the ruling for the bill took place. By October 30th, over 100,000 people had flooded the streets of Warsaw in a stand for women's reproductive rights.

The acceptance of this ban into Polish law has struck a massive blow to the efforts of many Polish activists. Antonina Lewandowska, an activist, deemed this ban to be a violation of the UN's laws outlawing torture stating "It is inhumane [and] despicable to make anyone carry a pregnancy to term, especially if the

fetus is malformed."

The government's decision was further met with national and global condemnation. Activists around the world saw it as a massive infringement of human rights, and the decision was dubbed a "sad day for women's rights" by the Council of Europe's Human Rights commissioner. International groups such as the Center for Reproductive and Human Rights Watch have committed to continuously monitor the situation in Poland and provide transparent information. The centre stated that the government's efforts to "attack...and roll back reproductive rights" went against the "judiciary and rule of law in Poland."



PHOTO CREDIT: ONLINE SOURCE

CHARPENTIER & DOUDNA: FEMALE SCIENTISTS MAKE HISTORY

GLORIA RAHGOZAR (11)

With the circumstances of this year, updates on scientific discovery have become a highly anticipated topic to the general public. Amidst the race to find a vaccine for the Coronavirus, two scientists made monumental achievements in genetic science. In October, French microbiologist Emmanuelle Charpentier and American biochemist Jennifer Doudna became the sixth and seventh women in history to win the Nobel Prize in Chemistry. Their collaboration led to the discovery of Clustered Regularly Interspaced Short Palindromic Repeats (CRISPR)/Cas9 genetic scissors, which allows scientists to meticulously alter the DNA of living things.

CRISPR contains very powerful gene-editing technology. In it, prokaryotes work as a bacterial

immune system, preventing infections that stem from viruses known as phages. CRISPR allows prokaryotes the capability to recognize and eradicate viruses with the use of specialized enzymes.

Charpentier and Doudna's findings have left a revolutionary influence on life and health sciences. Researchers hope that it can be used to modify human genes to terminate and cure inherited diseases, wipe out pathogens, and perform other previously impossible medical feats. In her Nobel Prize acceptance speech, Charpentier hoped that her win was a "positive message to the young girls who would like to follow in the path of science," and showed "that women in science can also have an impact through the research that they are performing."

A few minutes after midnight on November 3, the town of Dixville Notch initiated the traditional “first in the nation” electoral event and cast some of the first votes in the 2020 US Presidential Election. The community of a few dozen unanimously cast a grand total of 5 votes for Former Vice President Joe Biden.

What began as a clear and traditional start to the quadrennial democratic exercise proved to indicate exactly what *not* was to come. In a campaign marked by precedent-setting abnormality in all venues, the Presidential Election certainly lived up to the theme of 2020 and its associated idiosyncrasies. Upon recollection, the phrase ‘clinically strange’, comes to mind when diagnosing the overall state of affairs.

Some background knowledge is needed to fully appreciate the oddity and significance of this year’s Presidential Election. First, where is the race competitive amongst the 50 states? Election 2020 featured a geographically diverse set of 13 battleground states (competitive states that could go either way). The regulars such as Ohio, Michigan, and Maine were present, along with the politically infamous state of Florida. A set of 3 battlegrounds known as the “Blue Wall”, consisting of Pennsylvania, Michigan, and Wisconsin was of particular interest this election as they were vital in securing



AMERICA’S CHOICE 2020

SPENCER IZEN (11)

President Trump’s 2016 victory over former Sec. of State Hillary Clinton. Beyond the aforementioned states, Georgia and Texas were presented as competitive, an electoral rarity as neither state has gone blue since ‘92 and ‘76 respectively. Essentially, what the former Vice President needed to do was recreate the 2016 electoral map, and flip certain battleground states to obtain the 270 Electoral College votes needed. The last important factor is that Election 2020 featured an unprecedented number of early votes, with at least 100 million voting before Election Day.

With that base knowledge, the stage has been set, as the (major) candidates themselves do not require much of an introduction. A majority of the states closed between 8 and 10 PM, and the battlegrounds drew most of the attention. President Trump, in addition to the numerous solid red states, won three of the largest battleground states, Texas, Florida, and Ohio, worth a combined 85 electoral votes. Former Vice President Biden took the western states of California, Oregon, and Washington totalling 74 electoral votes in addition to other reliably blue states. After a relative stalemate, the eyes of the world were now fixated on certain counties within the uncalled battleground states of Pennsylvania, Michigan, Wisconsin, Georgia, and Arizona.

All of these states were classified as too close to call or an equivalent. This is due to insufficient data to predict or call an election based on the lack of total reporting. Votes had been cast, but not yet counted, and therefore reporting rates remained too low. This system is what allowed for Pennsylvania to remain a key race on election night despite President Trump leading by 700 000 votes. Similar situations with smaller margins existed in all of these battlegrounds, turning Election Day into Election Week.

As the votes continued to be counted in the following days, President Trump’s lead in the five key battlegrounds began to shrink. The lead’s reduction can be attributed to the number of mail-in ballots. Most counties counted a majority of mail-in ballots after Election Day, and mail-ins skewed heavily Democratic. President Trump had engaged in a public campaign against mail-in voting, claiming without evidence, that it leads to voter fraud. That campaigning lead Republican voters to turn out more in person on Election Day, and Democrats preferring the usage of mail-ins or early voting.

On November 4, President Trump was overtaken in the final vote counts in Wisconsin and Michigan, states that he won back in

2016. Days later on November 7, Pennsylvania pushed the former Vice President passed the 270 electoral votes threshold and became President-Elect of the United States. The Biden-Harris ticket earned more than 80 million votes, crushing the previous record, Obama’s 69.5 million in ‘08.

Senator-turned Vice President-elect Kamala Harris also made history, becoming the first woman and first Person of Colour to be elected to her office. She served as a Senator from California since 2017, and before that served as the Attorney General of California. Harris was also one of the many candidates who ran for the Democratic nomination.

Election 2020 has officially been called for Joe Biden by all members of the National Election Pool. The Trump campaign has stated their belief that voter fraud impacted the election and have pursued legal action, none of which have been successfully litigated.

In the days and weeks following there has been little communication from the White House regarding the results of the election, with the first step coming on November 23 via a government agency starting the transition with the Biden team.

President Trump has not formally conceded, and while not a legal requirement by any means, it is a tradition that helps ensure a cohesive transfer of power from one administration to the next.

Whatever the next few weeks will bring, the Biden-Harris administration will be an undeniable change in direction, no matter where you may stand on the political spectrum.



BLACK LIVES MATTER: THE HISTORIC ISSUE OF POLICE BRUTALITY

EMILY SHI (11)

The events of 2020 have opened ears to an alarm that has been going off for hundreds of years - the issue of police brutality and discrimination against the Black community.

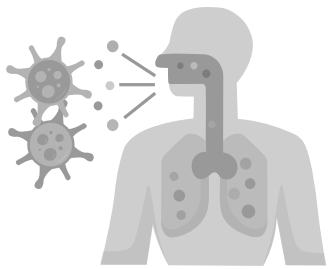
In June of this year, George Floyd, a Black man, was murdered by police for allegedly passing a counterfeit bill. Police handcuffed Floyd and tried to place him in the police car, which Floyd refused, stating that he was claustrophobic. White officer Derek Chauvin then arrived at the scene and attempted to force Floyd into the vehicle with other officers. When he could not succeed in forcing Floyd to enter the vehicle, Chauvin pulled him away from the passenger side of the car, where he knelt on Floyd’s neck for over eight minutes, despite him making no effort to resist arrest. Floyd repeatedly called out that he could not breathe, to no avail, and died of mechanical asphyxiation. His death sparked national protests over the long history of police brutality in America. Although Black people make up less than 13 percent of the population, American statistics showed that they were twice as likely to be lethally shot by the police. Protests within America continued for months, inspiring similar protests around the world, such as in Canada. Almost all of these protests were peaceful. Nevertheless, there were many occasions where police intervention worsened the tensions between themselves and protestors.

Even though Black activists have worked tirelessly to bring attention to the issue of race in policing, for many, George Floyd’s death was a reminder that racism remained a part of the police institution. The George Floyd protests soon grew into a resurgence of the Black Lives Matter movement. Other Black victims of police brutality became figureheads of the movement, leading to the cry “say their names”, in remembrance of all the Black people killed by police. Breonna Taylor, a first responder murdered in her home on false suspicion of drug activity, became an example of how innocent black civilians are too-often victims of institutionalized racism. Many activists have stated that the actions of the police have



shown that they are incapable of de-escalation. Calls to defund, demilitarize, disarm, and dismantle the police have all been discussed as possible solutions.

Events in the US reminded people around the world that police brutality was not an issue exclusive to Americans. Heightened awareness of the Black Lives Matter movement shed light on the racism and violence that continues to exist in Canada. Numerous articles published this year have provided statistics on how Indigenous and Black people are disproportionately subjected to police violence in Canada. While Black and Indigenous people make up less than 10 percent of the Canadian population, they comprise more than 20 percent of police victims. “There is systemic racism in Canada,” acknowledged Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, and it is about time that we confront it.



COVID-19: PROTECTING YOURSELF AND OTHERS

CAMERON LEONG (11)

Overview

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that are known to cause illness including the common cold, Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), and Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS). COVID-19 is a strain of coronavirus first identified in humans in late 2019 in Wuhan, China. In March 2020, the COVID-19 outbreak was declared a pandemic by the WHO.

Symptoms

COVID-19 is a respiratory disease that can range in severity from very mild to severe. Symptoms are often not noticed immediately and can take between 2 to 14 days to appear. This is called the incubation period. The most common symptoms include cough, fever, and tiredness. Other symptoms include muscle aches, chills, sore throat, shortness of breath, chest pain, and headaches. Note that this list of symptoms isn't 100% inclusive and that there are less common symptoms. Some people who get COVID-19 may show no symptoms at all, whereas others may experience more severe symptoms, like pneumonia or worsening shortness of breath. Those who are older or who have pre-existing medical conditions are more at risk of serious illness from COVID-19. These medical conditions include serious heart diseases, cancer, smoking, diabetes, a weakened immune system, and sickle cell disease. Other less serious conditions may increase the risk of many serious illness, such as asthma, liver disease, obesity, nervous system conditions, and high blood pressure.

Causes/Spread

Studies show that COVID-19 spreads easily among people in close contact (within 6ft or 2m) via respiratory droplets, especially in indoor settings. These droplets are transmitted when an infected person coughs, sneezes breathes, or talks, and are usually inhaled or land in the nose, face, or mouth of another person. The virus can also be spread if a person touches a contaminated surface, then touches their mouth, nose, or face. However, this isn't considered to be the main method of transmission. In some situations, COVID-19 can also be spread through droplets or aerosols that stay in the air for several minutes or hours. This is called airborne transmission, and it is not known how common it is for the virus to spread this way. Cases of reinfection have been reported but are very uncommon. The spread of the virus usually happens in the 2-14 day incubation period, when someone has contracted the virus but hasn't exhibited symptoms yet.

Vaccine Development

Ever since COVID-19 started spreading rapidly around the world, biotech and pharmaceutical companies have raced to create an effective vaccine through clinical trials. The Canadian government has pre-ordered over \$1 billion in vaccines. Most noteworthy, Pfizer and Moderna are already testing their vaccines on humans and have released their Phase 3 clinical trial results for their COVID-19 vaccines. Pfizer's studies show that their vaccine is over 95% effective in preventing COVID-19, whereas Moderna's preliminary studies show that their vaccine is 94.5% effective. The main side effects include fatigue, muscle aches, and injection site pain, all of which are common with vaccines in general. The only downside is that the length of protection from the virus is unknown. Although the protection rate numbers are subject to change, it is very encouraging to see progress on vaccine development.

Prevention

Despite the fact that there have been advancements in COVID-19 vaccine development, it is imperative that everyone takes the following precautions to avoid exposure and prevent the spread of the virus. Avoiding close contact by keeping 6 feet (or 2 metres) distance from others is one of the most important things you can do to protect yourself and others. When it's difficult to maintain distance from others, wear a mask. Surgical and cloth masks prevent droplet spread, and other forms of face coverings like N95 respirators provide at least 95% Bacterial Filtration Efficiency at 0.3 microns and filter out harmful viruses. All masks should provide a proper seal and be worn properly over your nose and mouth. Other precautions you should take include washing your hands for at least 20 seconds, using at least 60% alcohol hand sanitizer, and avoid touching your face or sharing household items. When planning activities, think responsibly and evaluate if you are putting yourself or others at high risk of contracting COVID-19.

Conclusion

Vaccine development will take time and may not be immediately effective, but there is light at the end of the tunnel. It can be easy to get complacent and get back to normal activities, but it is vital to continue our prevention efforts. So many people have made sacrifices to their lifestyles to try and flatten the curve, but others continue to be irresponsible and make risky choices. It is not fair to those who are struggling with distance learning, for example, or to families that can't visit relatives in long-term care homes. Now is not the time to be partaking in social activities like going on dates or shopping with friends. I encourage everyone to stay cautiously optimistic and continue to take precautions like staying distanced and wearing a mask.

COVID CONSEQUENCES - BC TOURISM INDUSTRY SUFFERS

JESSICA KIM (11)

With COVID-19 sweeping the globe, to say that there have been detrimental effects is an understatement. First and foremost, the pandemic has resulted in a devastating loss of human life worldwide. In addition to the millions of individuals globally who have been infected with the virus, many more were impacted on a different axis. The pandemic has resulted in economies worldwide suffering greatly, with many experiencing extreme losses in revenue and employment.

Tourism is one of the primary industries suffering due to COVID-19. As BC's biggest economic contributor, the BC tourism industry accounted for \$8.3B of the province's GDP in 2018. Following the travel and mobility restrictions enacted by the province on March 17, the tourism industry in BC saw \$14.8B in losses, and over 115,000 individuals losing their jobs. The tourism and hospitality industry's success is entirely dependent on the collective population's desire and capability to leave their households and due to the ongoing pandemic, the normal visitations we were previously accustomed to are no longer an option. Restrictions and guidelines are ever-changing on local, national, and international levels, presenting as a predominant factor in the instability and loss in the industry.

According to industry representatives, without the involvement and aid of the government, it will be nearly impossible for the tourism and hospitality industry to rebuild itself. They are continuing to call for government financial assistance to counter the severe economic impacts of the pandemic. In a direct response to this call to action from business owners and industry representatives, the provincial government has created the BC Tourism Task Force, in order to make large scale, province-wide change. Constructed of

eleven industry leaders, they plan to identify targeted initiatives the government can take to accelerate the growth and recovery of the industry. With representatives from various regions, as well as sectors, the eleven individuals will represent Thompson Okanagan, Vancouver Island, North, Kootenay Rockies, Cariboo Chilcotin Coast, Large Hotels, Indigenous Tourism, Aviation, Anchor Attractions, Transportation, Vancouver (Coast and Mountains), and Labour and Human Resources. The task force also plans to hear from experts from many more specific sectors, as well as concerned individuals who submit their proposals via email. The provincial government has allocated \$50M for the initiatives set forth by this task force. By December 31, 2020, the task forces' report to the Minister of Tourism, Arts, and Culture, Lisa Beare, with their defined goals and recommendations is set to be proposed. Individuals can reserve their specific criticisms until they have seen the completed plan, but for now, eagerly await the specifications.

The new initiatives set out by BC's Tourism Task Force and the provincial government may appear promising, but there is no guarantee the industry will ever recover to what it was formerly. Individuals across the globe will reconsider their travel plans with reservations about the spread of disease and concerns for overall cleanliness, as well as the environmental footprint of travel. CEO of the Tourism Industry Association of BC, Walt Judas speaks to the consensus and mutual feelings of stress from operators in the industry, saying "[w]hether it's 2021, 2022, or 2023, the industry will be on a gradual increase if all things go well. But there's no guarantee of that either." At this point, professionals in the tourism and hospitality industry are hoping for business of any kind.

COVID-19 RESPONSE IN TAIWAN AND NEW ZEALAND

RYAN CHENG (10)

In the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, many countries have decided not to impose stricter restrictions due to several wide-ranging factors. As a result, they have been faced with severe recurring waves affecting upwards of tens of millions of patients all over the globe. One such example, the USA. There have been approximately 40 000 cases per million that are continuing to skyrocket. Some other countries, in contrast, have found success in their different approaches towards the handling of COVID-19:

Taiwan, a small country with an enormous population density of 673 people per square kilometre, has been able to keep its COVID-19 case count to around 27 cases per million people. Compared to the USA's population density of 36 people per square kilometre, their population density is significantly greater, yet their cases per million are much smaller. During the dawn of the pandemic, Taiwan was one of the first countries to close off its borders and restrict travel. Their previous encounter with the SARS virus in 2003 has also caused increased awareness and compliance among the general public. One of their key actions has been implementing a vigorous contact tracing system as well as a technology-based method of ensuring quarantines are being upheld.

New Zealand, like Taiwan, is another country that has faced success in its battle with COVID-19. Though their population density is much lower at 15 people per square kilometre, strict, swift lockdown rules assisted by general compliance from the public has resulted in nearly 0 cases a day for a few weeks.

Though we cannot control restrictions, perform contact tracing for each case, or ensure everybody follows quarantine protocols, what has been consistent in countries facing success in their battle with COVID-19 is the compliance of the general public. Though it may not seem significant, wearing your mask, keeping your distance, and washing your hands is significant in our battle with COVID-19!

CLASS AND COVID-19

MATTHEW FU (10)

In light of the recent steady climb in BC’s COVID-19 cases, BC Health Officials have begun to emphasize and implement more precautionary safety protocols. Vancouver schools, even with a multitude of robust safety procedures in place, have started to experience singular and clusters of cases. Including Eric Hamber, along with a few secondary schools in the area such as Prince of Wales, David Thompson and Tupper, saw a rise in individual and cluster cases in the past few weeks. Seeing that the first outbreak in a BC school was only announced on October 21st in Kelowna, BC Health Officials feel that the established safety procedures within schools, both secondary and elementary, have been quite effective in limiting the potential spread of COVID-19 in schools. As Dr. Bonnie Henry, BC’s Provincial Health Officer, says, “What we are seeing is that the plans that are in place in our communities and in our schools are working to prevent transmission.” These plans and procedures for schools include managing traffic flow in the halls, enforcing students to wear a mask inside the school building and establishing sanitization stations within each classroom and at the school entrances.

Though the apparent influx in cases throughout Vancouver schools has caused unease within the school community, Dr. Bonnie Henry states, “What we have not seen is a lot of transmission events in schools. Schools are not amplifying this virus. They are merely reflecting what’s going on in the community.” Naturally, with the increase of cases in Vancouver and throughout all of BC, students are more likely to contract the virus and unknowingly bring it into the school environment.

However, in these inevitable circumstances, the safety procedures implemented and enforced in schools help slow, if not entirely prevent, the spread of COVID-19.

In these uncertain times, the priority of BC government officials involving schools has also been called into question; whether it is to keep schools open or to ensure transmission rates remain low. In ideal settings, both of these priorities would be maintained. Considering current situations where very few outbreaks have occurred within BC schools, keeping schools open appears to be a higher priority. However, this does not imply that Vancouver schools are disregarding staff and students’ safety, rather, BC Health Officials explain that having students spend their time in a controlled, safely managed and productive learning environment would potentially be even safer than sending them home, which may result in more frequent unmonitored social gatherings. Dr. Bonnie Henry comments, “We can see that transmission rates are less in schools than they are in other parts of our communities, and we know they are also incredibly important for families and for children to have in-person, in-class schools. But we’re looking at all of our options — there are a whole bunch of things that are happening hopefully within the next months.” Discussions over a possible winter break extension have also circulated.

Regardless of the alterations in future schedules, it is important to emphasize that it is only through collaboratively following and enforcing appropriate safety measures, that transmissions of COVID-19 can be kept low and a safe and healthy school community can be established.

HEED THE TASK, WEAR A MASK

SPENCER IZEN (11) AND
DEAN ROHMAN (11)



2020 has brought a newfound personal accessory to the forefront of everybody’s mind: masks.

Masks are critical in protecting not only others but oneself in the global battle against COVID-19. The science behind them is relatively simple. COVID-19 is spread via droplets that are expelled when a person breathes. Masks are a filtration system designed to prevent the entrance and exit of those droplets through the nose and mouth. These facts are backed by science. The usage of masks is recommended by nearly every health authority, from the WHO to your regional-community health office. In some jurisdictions, the usage of masks is not only recommended, but required and enforceable by law.

As the Lower Mainland invokes its own mask mandate, it is still not uncommon to witness improper mask usage, from the lack of nose covering to eager removal. As per the latest Public Health Order, “[m]asks are now required to be worn by all British Columbians, 12 years and older, in many indoor public settings.” The full list of required settings can be found on provincial government websites and physical postings.

Some reservations on the orders to use masks are founded in concerns regarding personal freedom, when mask mandates are implemented. Most of those concerns have been raised regarding the factor of personal choice, but many legal scholars and experts have cast doubt on the necessity for concern. The decision to implement such orders is generally required to be quite specific. In relation to concerns associated with *the Charter*, Section 1 (of *the Charter*) permits “reasonable” limitations of certain provisions as long as those limits are or can be “justified in a free and democratic society”. The Supreme Court has also found that reasonable limits can arise out of “exceptional conditions such as war, natural disasters or epidemics.” In short, mask mandates are not illegal.

In a scenario where a significant majority of people actively followed Public Health precautions and orders, it is extremely likely that the Lower Mainland would not be in the situation it is currently in, especially in regards to masks. Proper usage of masks results in fewer virus pathogens spreading on surfaces. Less pathogens on surfaces means that the chances of coming in contact with virus pathogens are significantly decreased. Ultimately, the proper usage of masks results in lower infection rates, which in turn means it is less likely for the virus cycle to continue.

As winter approaches and more people are headed indoors, the Public Health Agency of Canada now recommends masks of at least 3 layers to improve effectiveness. Chief Public Health Officer Dr. Theresa Tam said “[t]he fit is the most important thing”, when asked about recommendations. She emphasized the importance of a tight seal around the nose and mouth when Canadians are choosing what mask(s) to purchase.

Heed the task, wear a mask.



SMALL BUSINESSES FACE COVID CHALLENGES

CLAIRE HAN (11)

The global spread of the infectious viral disease COVID-19 has not only taken a toll on public health and healthcare systems but created significant economic change. The negative effects are gradually piling upon themselves and causing many financial issues. Some of the unfortunate victims of this unexpected economic crash include small local businesses with less than 100 employees.

During the lockdown starting in March 2020, it was reported that small businesses were more likely to experience a decrease in revenue (up to 20%) compared to last year. Current lockdown restrictions regarding customers also contribute to a loss of income within these local businesses. Monetary deficits and lack of customers have led to many layoffs or even permanent closures of locally-owned stores and businesses.

The expenses outweigh the revenue by too much for these shops to manage.

Many small business owners expressed

their complaints about the laws regarding lockdowns in places such as Ontario, declaring that they felt they were being unfairly targeted. The policies seemed to be highly in favour of large companies that sold goods in addition to essential items, benefiting from the restrictions as customers also visited for non-necessities that were available in store.

On Global National, Dan Kelly of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business stated that “to shut down small businesses that serve a handful of customers in an entire day while allowing those same products to be sold at Costco and Walmart makes no sense at all.”

As a result of the lack of income for small businesses, several surveys were conducted to determine their financial positions. Unsurprisingly, around half of these stores reported having only 1-2 months of cash available to cover expenses when asked: “roughly how much cash (e.g. in savings, chequing) do you have access to without

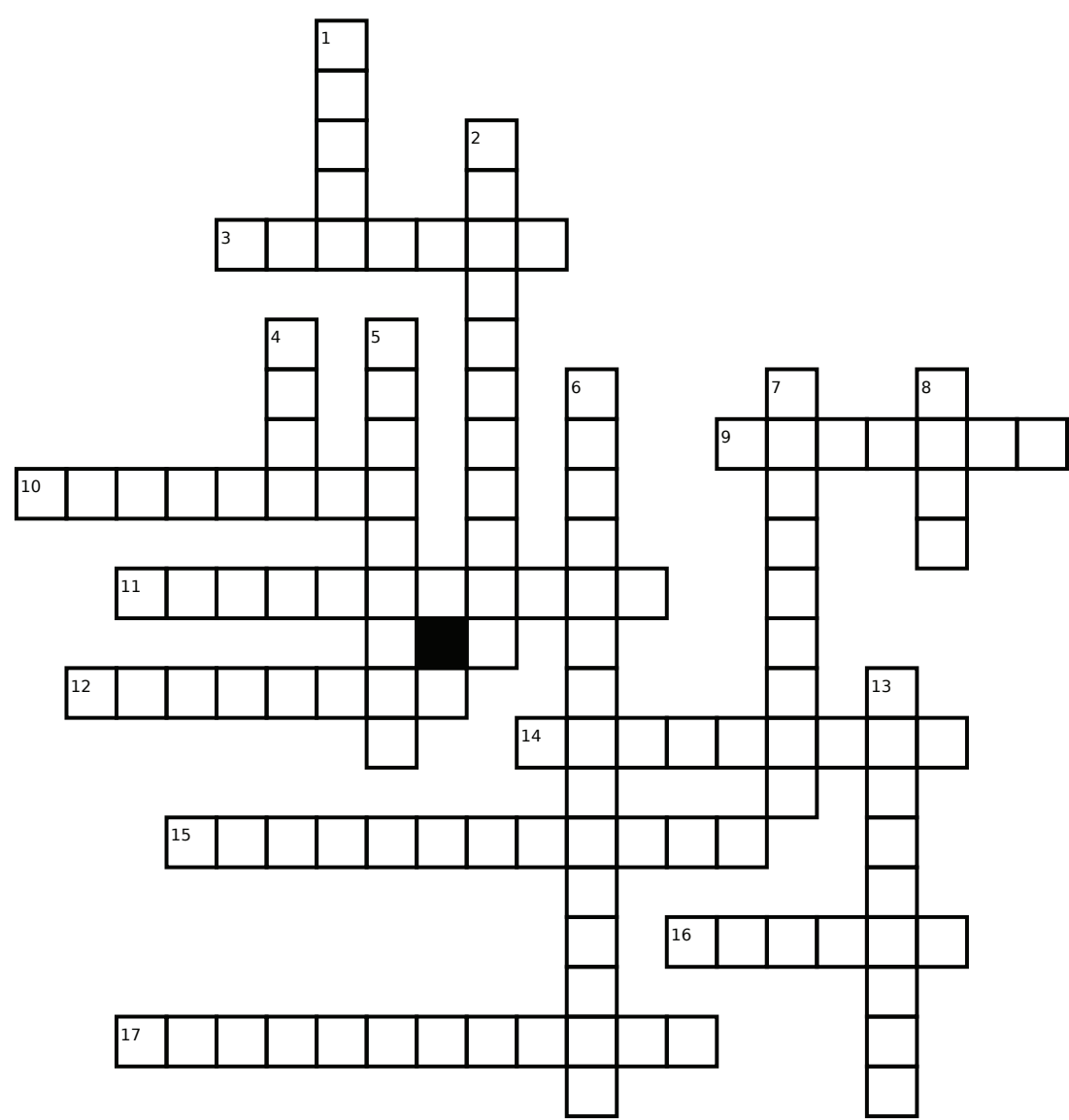
seeking further loans or money from family or friends to pay for your business?”

The Canadian government has recognized the troublesome situations of many local businesses and has offered some loan programs directed specifically at those issues. For example, the Canada Rent Emergency Subsidy provides a percentage of rent and mortgage relief for organizations that have endured loss in revenue. However, the issue with these programs is that the duration of the support is quite limited, and damages of the business while not in operation may not be completely restored when the pandemic has settled down.

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected many different aspects of life; the economic system being one of the most critical. This being said, it is possible for us to aid small businesses as individual consumers! Take initiative during these difficult times and show your support by buying from a small business in your local area today!

CROSSWORD CORNER

ÉLISE ROY (11)



ACROSS

3. A messaging platform popular with gamers, also a word for dissension or conflict.
9. Seven-letter word beginning with I for malady
10. Surname of New York actor starring in Call Me By Your Name
11. British Columbia’s provincial health officer, whose catchphrase is “be kind, be calm, be safe”
12. Megan Thee _____
14. A sweet, orange, tomato-shaped fruit originating in China
15. Vice President Elect of the United States
16. First name shared by Canadian pop singer and the Prime Minister of Canada
17. Legend has it that Hamber students can take a dip in the _____ on the fourth floor.

DOWN

1. Premiering on Netflix in October, television series Emily in _____ features actress Lily Collins and her character’s experiences in France.
2. A former member of One Direction, the first solo male be featured on the cover of Vogue Magazine
4. A four letter word beginning with Z for moving very quickly, also the name of a popular video call service.
5. A plant under which it is traditional for lovers to kiss
6. Artist of the 2019 album, Igor
7. Whistler’s neighboring mountain
8. Generation born between the years 1997-2012
13. Ariana Grande’s sixth studio album

ASK THE NEST

ALL YOUR MOST BURNING
QUESTIONS ANSWERED

Dear Nest,
I am a **grade 8 student** struggling to get involved at Hamber. It’s even more difficult to make friends because of the pandemic school system! How can I get connected with my school community and meet new people?
Sincerely,
Solitary Student

Dear Solitary Student,
It’s challenging to put yourself out there when you’re new to Hamber. Try joining a sports training program: it’s a surefire way to bond with other students. Hamber also has numerous clubs, which are a great way to make like-minded friends! From STEM Sorority, to Kitchen on a Mission, to Debate, or even Newspaper, there are clubs to cater to every student’s interests. If you don’t know where to start, ask teachers or peers if they are aware of any involvement opportunities. You can also do some social media digging: most clubs at Hamber have an Instagram account and/or Facebook presence.
Good luck! The Nest

Hey Nest,
Help! **The holidays are approaching** and I haven’t done any shopping for gifts! On top of that, I have no idea what to buy for my friends. What are some **affordable gift ideas** for high school students?
Best,
Procrastinating Present Shopper

Dear Procrastinating Present Shopper,
This holiday season, skip the big-box online retailers and try buying from local businesses in your community instead. Here are some affordable gift ideas for your friends:

- A disposable camera (Henry’s camera store, 555 W Broadway)
- A one-of a kind poster or print (Urban Source Alternative Art Materials, 3126 Main St)
- A funky hat or unique accessory: (O’Gemma Boutique in City Square Mall, 555 W 12th Ave)
- A bag of their favourite candy (The Candy Room, 1218 Robson St)
- Create a photo album
- Search on Etsy for the perfect gift. Sellers create a huge range of items, whether that be hand-poured candles, custom jewelry, or handmade clothing!

Happy gift-giving!
The Nest

Have questions you want answered in the next issues’ Ask The Nest advice column? Send them to **ehnewspaper@gmail.com** or dm us at on Instagram **@ehnewspaper**. All questions will be kept confidential!

JOURNALISTIC COMMITMENT

The Griffin’s Nest aims for the highest editorial and ethical standards. The Editorial Team and Journalists should be open-minded, fair and respectful of the truth. Questions, comments, and concerns may be emailed to the Editors-in-Chief at ehnewspaper@gmail.com.

The Griffin’s Nest has adopted the *Canadian Association of Journalists’ Principles for Ethical Journalism* and *Ethics Guidelines* as part of our Journalistic Standards policies.

PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY

The Province of British Columbia has been in a state of emergency since March 18.

As of this writing (Dec. 4), BC is in one of the most critical and dangerous points of the Coronavirus Pandemic. Cases are soaring to record highs and it is imperative that **ALL** British Columbians do their part in this crisis. The Public Health Officer has issued the following orders and recommendations;

1.

A ban on holding gatherings of any size at your home with anyone outside your household or your core bubble. This includes **no** holiday dinners unless the Provincial Health Order regarding gatherings has been lifted (unlikely).

Failure to comply with PHO regulations may result in a fine of \$2000 for the organizer.

2.

Masks required in many public settings as per the mask mandate order (Ministerial Order No. M425). The full list of settings and exemptions are available on the PHO website.

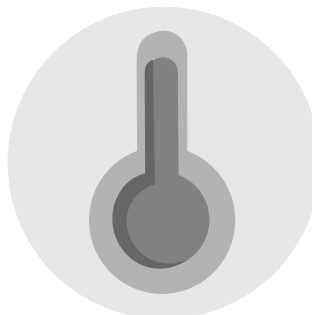
If you do not comply with the mask mandate you may be subject to a fine of \$230.

3.

Avoiding all non-essential travel. This does not include commutes to work or medical appointments.

In the event you are required to travel, please take the following precautions as per the Public Health Officer;

- Wash your hands often
- Practice safe distancing, 2 m
- Travel only with yourself, household or pandemic bubble
- Stick to the outdoors whenever possible
- Clean spaces often
- Wear a mask in indoor spaces



Remember that we, students and staff, are operating in a facility which has not been subject to the same regulations as virtually every other building in the province. **We MUST NOT take advantage of these circumstances.** Precautions such as wearing masks indoors need to be taken seriously by all students and staff. These precautions save lives, do not treat them lightly. A single person's actions can devastate a community.