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Are Schools Teaching Us to Fail?

by Adam Czerwiec

As time progresses, jobs are becoming more and more difficult to come by. Once upon a time you could survive with a high school diploma or equivalent. Nowadays, most jobs require at least a Bachelor's degree, if not a Masters. But, not everyone is cut out for the schooling environment. As early as middle school, kids begin to shut down, saying, "I hate school." In the 4 years of my working at a middle school, I can't tell you how many times I have heard kids say that they can't wait to drop out of school at 16. They've begun to learn that they aren't learning anything useful.

Then a shift in their attitude happens as they enter high school. While they still have to take core classes, they now have more freedom to choose what classes they want to take. Yet it isn't until college that students are really able to take their learning into their own hands. While they still have certain courses they are required to take for their programs, students can now choose which elective suits their interests, what lab science they prefer, and what concentration classes intrigue them.

Aside from these new learning opportunities presented, schools

don't teach students basic, necessary life skills. By the time you graduate college, you'll have learned a cornucopia of information relevant to your area of study. But will you know how to cook a basic meal, defend yourself, effectively communicate, or manage your time *before* you go off to college? While most people consider these skills to be second nature, a vast majority of students will not know them by the time they enter college. Instead, they are taught to memorize information, most of it which will not be relevant to their specific career path later on in life.

Similarly, schools teach us it is grades that matter most. In school, if you get all "A's," you're considered successful. In life, you're more likely to be handed a plethora of "F's" (rejections, pink slips, etc) before you get your first "A."

Educators keep insisting teaching kids how to take high stakes tests, most of which the kids struggle with these days. Instead, schools should be taking time to teach children how to succeed in life. The more basic skills students possess, the more beneficial and rewarding the school system becomes. ¶¶

New Shuttle Policy Is A Bad Fix

by Alex Marquez

One day I was riding the student shuttle back to my car and I noticed the driver did not let a student on the bus when she was walking toward the bus about 15ft away from the stop; the driver drove right by her like she wasn't trying to catch a ride. I knew that this was VERY uncommon for the drivers to do, so I asked him why he passed by her. He then explained to me that there is a new policy in place.

It seems that an Administrator in Building 16 had filed a complaint

about shuttle drivers stopping for students not located right at the bus stop. The reason for the complaint is that making additional stops causes traffic to slow at the drop off area and exit on campus.

But in all honesty I find this complaint is putting the blame on the wrong party (the Drivers) and doesn't solve the problem at all. In fact, the real source of the problem is not the student shuttles stopping for students, but students who get dropped off by other vehicles. The fact that both drop offs are in the

same spot is what creates all this congestion on campus. Not only is it a problem for traffic flow, it's a safety hazard as well.

For example, I am a student who like most, listens to music with headphones in, and when dropped off the bus, I walk in front of it and then attempt to cross the street. But 9 out of 10 times I have to yield to a vehicle gassing it around the shuttle I just got off of. Then these drivers have to jump on the brake because they don't realize students are getting off the bus. This should not be a daily

occurrence for students because one day someone will get HIT.

It is irritating to me that the anonymous Administrator in Building 16 couldn't identify the real source of the problem, instead of implementing a policy that makes it harder on students and their commute. Solution: develop a new drop off system that separates the student shuttle drop off and the commuter student drop off—to two different locations. ¶¶

C's Get Degrees

by Alex Marquez

In my opinion it seems as if the problem with higher levels of education is that a diploma is not tailored to an individual's actual intellect. For example, the student who studies as much as possible and aims to be more knowledgeable, but fails to attend class on time on a regular basis will get the same diploma and the same amount of validation as a student who, has perfect class attendance but puts little effort into school work and isn't focused on being knowledgeable. It's clear that the level of intel-



lect will be different between the two but their diploma will suggest they are equal. If your degree were to reflect the actual knowledge you possess instead of simply how well you memorized information for a test, then the ole saying, "C's get degrees" wouldn't be true.



I presume that this is the reason most employers look for candidates with experience, versus those fresh out of school. If your major isn't hands on then it's most likely going to be tough to find employment right out of college. So, some extreme advice if you would like

to push yourself harder as scholar and student, is to simply compete with other students in class by trying to be the first one there, asking the most questions, and cranking up study hours. That type of thing is what real successful people are made of, even if the degree doesn't reward proper representation of your intelligence. You can make sure you reward yourself with knowledge itself. Because everyone can agree that they are much smarter than their degree in the long run. ¶¶

« Nostalgia »

by Adam Czerwiec

I find it humorous that of all places for inspiration to strike, it happened to be in a McDonald's drive-thru. While waiting in the lunch rush line to feed my Big Mac addiction (don't judge me—they're absolutely delicious), I just happened to look to my left. There, in all of its structural glory, was a vintage play-place. Not just any play-place; this was the same one that I frequented as a child, and then, one I later cleaned as an adult while working at that restaurant. Seeing it there, in all its plastic beauty, brought on a wave of nostalgia.

The simplicity of childhood can be summed up by these play-piece, architectural beauties. Adults see them as breeding grounds for bacteria, drug dens, a safe place for your first drink, and the location for adolescent sexual excursions. But, children had other visions. Instead, they saw elaborate pirate ships, exotic jungles, or any other invention of the mind.

I remember begging my parents to take me in the warm summer months to get my Happy Meal - Cheeseburger (NO PICKLE!!) with a Coke. Sometimes it was Orange HI-C, or a milkshake when you just wanted to treat yourself. Once I was well nourished, it was time to play. Jumping around in the ball pit, sliding wildly down the slide with the rug burns to show off your wild side, were childhood goals.



As I got older, I watched those majestic structures get more and more derelict. My parents would take us to park playgrounds in lieu of the play-places. The one that my parents took us to the most was to a giant wooden structure resembling a castle. My times spent there were some of the happiest of my life. My sister and I would relish the hours we spent there, running around, playing hide and seek, and avoiding the killer bees that would try to attack us. When we outgrew the playground structure in our teen years, it was the spinning carousels of death that we gravitated towards instead. Just mentioning them, my eternal nemesis, makes me nauseous. We teens would go from those, to the monkey bars, to the obstacle courses, finally to the giant slides; every moment was pure and utter magic.

My most vivid memories were the swings. Every child becomes significantly braver on the swings. Higher and higher we would go, ignoring the poles slowly inching out of the ground from our velocity. There were shouts of “yo, watch me

flip over the bars”, to our friends watching with baited breath. Your insides squirmed as you crept higher and higher. When that sensation hit, I did what every child would do - I jumped. Soaring through the air, I felt like a superhero, flying to a graceful tumble just feet below. Little did I know how far the jump would actually take me. It was as if I jumped right into adulthood, without ever knowing it...

Every time I pass a playground or play-place, a small piece of my soul dies. It's like a horcrux inside of me has been destroyed, knowing that I can no longer relive my youth. What I would give to have some of that innocence back. While I know that they are technically public areas, I'm pretty sure there would be some serious legal ramifications if I was to sit around nostalgically loitering in these areas where young children frequent. Probably safer to observe from a comfortable distance. Not even amusement parks can cure the itch that I have to just let my responsibilities back-- and just play. The thrill from my heydays is gone.

Instead, I have become an old spinster who just can't seem to move forward with the times. I'm the guy who thinks 2000 was 5 years ago. The one who keeps the dream of the 90's alive on his iPod. When did it become taboo for adults to let loose and have fun? Why are kids the only ones allowed to run around having the time of their lives? Aren't we entitled to needed naps and required recess? They get to run around and dream peacefully, unaware of what life has in store for them in the next 15-20 years.

It is in my humble opinion that siesta time should be required for all adults, complete with complimentary margaritas (extra salt, on the rocks, of course) or a sangria. With all the hard work we do, we have earned it. What have the kids done to deserve these rewards? Shared the Legos with Billy during activity time in preschool? I share 20% of my income with Uncle Sam every paycheck. All I get in return is a bill from the IRS telling me how much I owe in taxes.

So, let's cut loose, have fun. Let us adults enjoy ourselves—*nostalgia-vu!* ☐☐☐

Baked Goods, Seasoned with Time

by Lauren Delude

The idea of baked goods lead me astray to reminisce about being a kid again and how I would always bake with my mom and how we'd spend an entire afternoon making batch after batch. Then again I still am a kid I guess, being only 18 years old, even though I'd like to think otherwise. It's complicated how differently you view yourself to how others see you.

As I was applying to colleges one of my essay choices was “describe the moment you became an adult according to yourself, or your culture.” I didn't opt for this topic because is it really a single moment? Am I gonna wake up one day and have my ‘ah ha’ moment of yes today I am an adult. I personally don't think so because to me you are neither adult nor child, but instead this ever growing person, and what's wrong with that?

I could be as mature and as proper as I want, and I can speak philosophically about affairs of the heart and mind, tossing around a

slur of big words that a 50 year old has yet to comprehend, but that is not what makes someone an adult to me. To speak above someone does not make you mature but rather being able to speak to them on their level displays your maturity. On the other end the fact that someone likes to joke constantly and be carefree does not make them childish.

I think life is about a balance. If you have the heart of a child, but see the need for the reason of an adult, I think that's when you can say you've crossed over from child to adult. People hold their lives in such an imbalance that they tend to sway from childlike ways to believing they are mature. I wish things were as simple as choosing between a chocolate chip cookie or a sugar cookie, as I think back to the whole topic of cookies.

Choices were easier then and maybe that's when I became an adult when the world wasn't so black and white anymore but I am

surrounded by this immense gray with every idea, question, or concern tossed around. There is not a basic right or wrong anymore. I look around me and yes, there is an age difference between my older peers and I, but without knowing this number, I fell as though we are the same, though I'm sure they see it differently.

They believe they've “experienced more” or “know the true value of things,” but to me they are no more adult than I am when it comes to certain aspects.

Whether we take the same courses at school or started working at the same job at the same time, I feel judged by those individuals more than ever. They still treat me with an authority they do not have over me simply due to their greater age. To just be a kid again where no one cared would make their scrutiny of me a little easier to bear. ☐☐☐
Source: <http://www.clipartkid.com/images/334/free-clip-art-baked-goods-cliparts-co-Snlcew-clipart.jpg>

Behind the Tech Times

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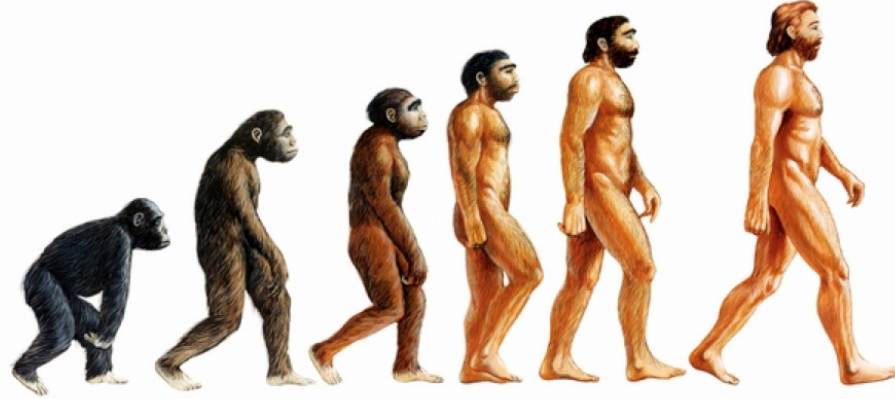
The Evolution of Social Media and the Downfall of Society

by Adam Czerwiec

As the digital age continues to progress, we are finding it easier and easier to stay in-touch with friends, family, and acquaintances via social media. Or should it be called “antisocial media?” Apps such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram suck their users in instantaneously. Next thing you know, everyone is posting every minute detail of their mundane lives. You know who is going where, who they’re with, what they’re doing... the list goes on and on. True, as a fellow user I am guilty of this as well, but let’s be clear—social media is ruining the world.

According to a 2017 survey from Statista, 81% of the United States population has some form of social media account. This is a 3% increase from 2016. Compare that to 2008, where 24% of the population said they had some form of social media. That puts us at a 238% increase in usage in 8 years. Globally, that number is a staggering 2.34 billion, and is expected to grow to almost 3 billion users by the end of the decade. Amongst teens, 91% of 13–17 year olds have access to internet at home, either from a phone or computer.

It all began with AOL. With the introduction of the world-wide web and chat rooms, it was the first way to get people involved with one another from across the globe. AOL later morphed into AIM (AOL Instant Messenger), where you were given



Source: <http://blogs.brighton.ac.uk/taramatthews/files/2015/11/social-media-evolution-1eyig7i.png>

the painstaking task of choosing the most perfect away message. It was a struggle known to those of us born in the 1980’s and the early part of the 90’s. It was essentially the equivalent to creating the perfect tweet, or a great Facebook status update.

Post AIM, around 2004, came MySpace—a place for friends. It is, in my humble opinion, the best social media platform that ever existed. The introduction of the Top 8 friends list was the most savage move played on the internet. Friendships and relationships were ruined because you weren’t in someone’s Top 8.

Around the same time that MySpace was introduced, Facebook came along. Originally intended for business and college students, they eventually opened their doors to the general populous and then everyone jumped aboard. Now, everyone from ages 13–113 has a Facebook account.

With the stock rising in Facebook’s favor, as well as the introduction of the “smart phone,” a plethora of other social media applications or apps, hit the market. These include Instagram, Vine, Twitter, Snapchat, and a variety of dating applications. With these, individuals can connect on a variety of levels, and share moments with one another. You’ve probably seen, or have been, the person taking a picture of their food. Next thing you know, it has found its way onto the Internet. Since the introduction of the hashtag (#), finding these images has been a breeze.

The hashtag was introduced when Twitter was launched in 2006. The hashtag was there as a way to collectively group a single thought from a variety of users, and therefore make it easier for you to locate said thought globally. For example, say you took a picture of your pizza.

You post it to your social media with the caption “#pizza.” Anyone can now click your hashtag, and boom: anything #pizza related now fills your media screen.

While these connections may seem like a blessing in disguise, social media is actually hindering our society. In a recent online article, the website “Houston Chronicle,” or “Chron” for short, makes a case for the downfall of social media and us both as individuals and society as a whole. One purpose of social media is for us to be able to feel more connected with people we have meaningful relationships with. But with the rise in popularity of social media we are also seeing an influx in losing real social interactions. By adding people we have had limited interactions with, or increasing the amount of people who follow us on Twitter due to similar interests, we lose touch with those real relationships we have forged.

In addition to losing our real relationships, we also are seeing an increase in cyber bullying. It’s an epidemic that is crippling our school-aged kids. With more and more teenagers on social media, it’s easier for them to target individuals without parents being able to monitor their actions. According to the Megan Meier Foundation website, 43% of students admitted to being cyberbullies in their

>>>continued on page 6

Slide Into the Past

by Lauren Delude

When it comes to reminiscing about play places my mind immediately drifts to the old wooden playground in my town, the kind being put to rest everywhere. The beaten up playscape sits right by all of the schools in the town and was the place to go on long summer days. Children could spend hours there never getting bored.

Every time you passed by the playground, the slides, monkey bars, and swings could be seen flooded with children eager to take their turn. The determining factor if you had a good time at play there was when you came back with a few splinters in your hands and a great story, that is if you were brave enough to go down the metal slide that had been sitting in the sun all day long. It’s sad to know so many kids will never get to enjoy playing here or crawling through all the small cubby spaces, where if you were lucky, you were never to be found during a game of hide and seek.

The playground still stands but not a child has stepped foot on it in years. It has been shut down being deemed unsafe for children due to the pressure-treated materials that were used in the construction. Right next to the wooden fossils a new playscape has been built to take on its role. Where instead of wood chips and gravel under your feet there is a foam mat, instead of the tower you are no more than a few feet off the ground, instead of the rickety toys made of chains and tires there are plastic workout stations.

Kids aren’t kids anymore, and every time I pass the old wooden playground I am reminded of this. Don’t get me wrong; it’s wonderful to have an all inclusive, handicap friendly playground, but it does not work as a one size fits all playscape. There’s nowhere to hide or to stretch the imaginations of children who wish to pretend they are running their own castle way up in the tower. Parents are more fearful

than ever and have their children in constant line of sight at all times. The wide expanse of the wooden playground provided an escape to create adventure while the new metal one can be crossed with only a few strides.

Many days pass without anyone stepping foot on this new playground. On the wooden playground you could play and anyone around was the one who looked after you. If you fell they helped you up, or another kid would run and get your parent who would pull you up, brush you off, tell you you’re okay, and send you on your way. Now you don’t have to worry about falling because from the safety of any angle your mom is telling you to stop whatever it is that might be slightly unsafe on this overly padded playscape. No more bruises, lessons, or overcoming your fear of the dangerously high monkey bars that all the older kids play on.

Quiet and abandoned, the wooden playground is being retaken by nature, overtaken by vines as it deteriorates. It stands holding the memories of childhood past. The only thing left behind are the dozens of names, dates, and bad words (that you’d laugh at knowing you’d be in trouble if you uttered them aloud) scribbled over the walls, corners, and cubbies of the secret places. The years of memories made there are like fading tattoos on the wood.

To take down all of the wooden parks would be taking apart the memories of so many families. With the proper sealants these wooden playgrounds can be salvaged and kids can be kids again. People are more than willing to donate towards the construction of a new playground so what is preventing them from putting that money towards saving what is so fondly loved and already there to be loved that much more for years to come? ☪☪

Working: Anecdotes of a Life Well Spent

by Adam Czerwiec

Since the ripe age of 12 and a half, I've been a working man. My first job was the treasured paper route. Six days a week, I would arrive at my pickup on the corner of Holyoke and Plaza. Then, for the next 45 minutes to an hour, I would walk alone on the streets with my Walkman in tow, delivering the day's news to the 30 or so houses on my route.

During my time, I met some of the nicest people. My favorite was a man I dubbed "Uncle Henry." On good weather days, he would sit at the head of his driveway in a lawn chair, waiting for me in the shade. If I was running late, you bet he would be sitting in the window of his living room, watching for me. If it was hot outside, he and his wife would give me a glass of water before sending me on my way. He was the kindest, sweetest man I ever met. I found him to be very easy to talk to, because when I had extra time, we would socialize. When I found out that he passed

away years later, I attended his funeral, much to the surprise of his wife and daughter, who both said he would have been happy to know I was there.

Then there were the Bassets. They never let me go without a hello and a treat. Every Christmas, there was a giant plate of cookies waiting for me. In the summer there were ice cream bars and water. It was interactions like this I treasured. They cared about me and my well-being, and instilled the virtue of caring onto me at such a young age.

By the time I was old enough to get a "real job," I was hired on the spot after my first interview ever. It was a job I had been promised years prior, at the McDonald's in town. It was here that I spent the best 5 years of my life in by far the best first job ever. Here, you are taught a positive work ethic. You are forced to learn how to perform under pressure. You learn great social skills. If you are good at what

you do, you can even climb the ranks to become a McManager.

I eventually left the Golden Arches for a job at Chili's. This would become my first serving job leading to almost a decade later, my still waiting tables. It was here I was able to take EVERYTHING I learned at McDonald's, apply it, and PERFECT it. In this profession, you have to be on point, and be able to maintain conversation with your customers. You have to be courteous, kind, helpful, friendly, and cheerful; all skills I learned previously as a Boy Scout.

I have memories of a couple that would come in quite regularly during lunch. If they saw me, they requested me. He always got merlot, she water. As they ate their meals, we talked about everything from astronomy to economics to oceanography to books. They just loved to have a conversation, and that I was able to hold one. They would leave me a very generous tip and be on their way, all because

I took time out of my schedule to have a conversation with them.

I eventually learned about working in the professional setting at 25, when I became a teacher's assistant. This is the job that made me realize this is what I want to do with my life. It took me a whole decade of working to learn this. As cliché as it sounds, I'm glad I took my time, because I am more happy than ever in my job choice. While I still wait table to make some extra cash, my days are spent with middle school aged children, who every day instill in me that I am on the right path. For the past four years, I have watched a group of 5th graders who were scared of me become the 8th graders who don't want to leave middle school because of the bond we have. Previous students come to me for advice, which I am happy to give. It's memories like these of work that really make you appreciate the value what you're doing in life. ¶¶

<http://www.workinglawsolicitors.co.uk/images/workers-col.png>

You Change the Climate and It Changes You

by Mark Balicki

Air pollution is described as being any mixture of solids or gases that are introduced into the atmosphere. These may include both particulate matter and biological molecules. These pollutants can lead to development of diseases, allergies, or in some cases death. Not only does this apply to humans, but it also applies to other living organisms, including animals and plant life, some of which we use as food.

Classically, air pollution is broken into two groups: outdoor and indoor air pollution. Outdoor air pollution consists of emissions that occur outside of the built environment. Examples of this include the products of burning fossil fuels, noxious gases, reactive forms of oxygen known as ground-level ozone, and tobacco smoke. Indoor air pollution involves the many pollutants that are carried by indoor air and dust. These include household byproducts, building materials, mold and pollen, and indoor allergens brought from the outside environment, such as animal waste. Outdoor pollutants may find their way indoors by means of open windows or doors, or in some cases ventilation.

Air pollution and its effects have been a large topic of debate

throughout the past few decades; with the debate over global warming, different pollutants have been brought into question. Climate change, despite its being a global process, has local influences that can affect specific areas. An increase in temperature can be clearly connected to air pollution, which, along with the air pollution itself, increases the risk for heart or cardiovascular disease. The increase in temperature enhances plant growth, which in turn affects the production of pollen, releasing more spores into the air. This also applies to the production of molds because of the increased severity of storms.

Some people are at a greater risk of developing severe health problems from air pollution, including, but not limited to, individuals with heart problems or any of the various lung diseases. Immediate health problems caused by air pollution are also noticeable in the heart and lungs. Examples of these issues are damaged respiratory cells, aggravated cardiovascular and respiratory illness, and harder work for the heart and lungs, which increases the stress on these organs. Long-term exposure, however, can cause more permanent issues. In

>>>continued on page 7

Love Not What You Do, But Why You Do It

by Lauren Delude

Work in itself holds such a negative connotation in today's world. Not work as in a final career but more so a beginning job that many of us have had starting off at our very beginning teen years. This is the kind of job you didn't really want, but maybe your parents made you get, or the one where you were the youngest one there and didn't have a clue to what you were doing because the only thing you could think of is how much you really didn't want to be doing it at all.

When people think of work their minds tend to first jump to money; how much they will be paid for doing the work they are doing, rather than what good will come from the work they've done. Another thought that always jumps out is exactly how hard the work will be.

But what if the focus is shifted? People focus on all of the wrong things when it comes to work, namely the negatives. Yes, it can sometimes simply be a means to an end, but why not have it mean something while you are forced to be there? What if it can all be done just by altering your perspective?

Whether you work in retail, a restaurant, babysitting, or mowing your neighbor's lawn, with the

right mindset, good can come from each and every job. Yes, money can be the good, but dig a little deeper.

In retail maybe you gave a customer a compliment on an outfit they try on; that may be the first compliment they've heard in weeks. In a restaurant, maybe a family has come together to celebrate after a long time apart and you have made the experience enjoyable and fun rather than filling them with frustration.

Babysitting, maybe you're helping out a single mom who can't afford the luxury of daycare but you still take the time to sing the ABC's with them. Mowing your neighbor's lawn maybe took the stress off of them after a long busy week, or a widowed woman offers you some lemonade because her husband used to do the lawn and you are the first company she has seen in months of his passing.

You never truly know the impact of your work and simply just your time. If you could peek into the lives of everyone you have come into contact with, it would be eye opening how many lives you have touched. Then, it doesn't feel so much like work after-all, but more so of an honor or privilege. ¶¶

Source: <http://www.onlymessages.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/work-in-denmark.jpg>

Imagination and Conformity

by Mark Balicki

The school system has been developed from being a means of spreading ideas and knowledge to being a way to mold the youth into ideal individuals. This ideal, however, is taking away from the growth of an imaginative mindset; they are teaching kids to fit into society, to conform. Conformity takes out of the box thinking, and pushes it to the wayside, shaping it into something more concrete, something that can be defined and observed in reality.

Imagination is something too abstract to teach in schools because it is different for everyone. Abstract thinking is part of one of the earlier stages of development and should be allowed to develop to its full potential, rather than be flushed out. It is important to learn of the past and the present, however, so that

we can interpret the current situation and make changes that will be suitable for our preconceived ideas of the world, our wants and our needs, everything that comprises our ideation of a perfect life.

One of the many famous quotes on the subject comes from Albert Einstein and reads as follows, "Imagination is more important than knowledge. For knowledge is limited to all we know and understand, while imagination embraces the entire world, and all there ever will be to know and understand." It seems a bit clichéd to use a quote from Einstein, but his mind was great and it was all thanks to the way he looked at life; he imagined things and brought them into reality.

Imagination with a purpose is the driving force behind breaking

ground; there can be no change until someone imagines the world in a different way, a new way, a way that is hard to understand. The more abstract an idea, the harder it is for people to understand, which in turn causes people to disregard it as a radical ideation. One person's idea for the perfect life may not fit with that of another's. This, in my opinion, is what is holding us back from advancing as a whole, as a society. Some people are too worried about making their own lives perfect, they don't think about making things perfect for a larger community.

Imagination also brings with it a sense of resourcefulness, or a general sense of ingenuity; it is the creative spark that ties our current situation with one that we feel can be attained. When thrust into

a tough situation, what needs to be processed is on a deeper level, perhaps a maze or some sort of hostile situation. In order to work our way out, we need to get creative; we need to envision all of the outcomes possible and act on the one that serves us the most.

Although ideals are for the most part abstract, they can be brought into our reality. In order to manifest our own creative power, the creative power must first be developed into something that can see a vision of the future and attain it by means of action. Live, learn, imagine a brighter future; your own version of the future. Once you've done that, do whatever it takes to reach out, make the dream reality, by bringing your imagination to life. ¶¶¶

<http://www.cscvanier.com/assets/images/ateliers/suggestions.gif>

Tits for Tips

by Juhi A. Dasrath

Like many women in the service industry, server Tiffany Kirk has had customers grope her, slap her butt and even tip her with hotel room keys. She stated that most wait staff experience sexual harassment at the hands of managers and coworkers but the most uncomfortable behavior comes from patrons who feel entitled because they tip.

Kirk has been a bartender in Huston, Texas, for 10 years and says that sexual harassment "is almost expected." She continued, "It's kind of a running joke in the industry: if you're not being harassed then you're not doing the right thing."

According to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the restaurant industry is notorious for sexual harassment. Recent surveys done by a restaurant worker group, ROC United, found that 60 percent of women have experienced sexual harassment, at least weekly.

When presented with that information, Kirk said that she was not the least bit surprised. "I'm not even exaggerating when I say it's an everyday thing," she said. The study also included statistics showing men also experience sexual harassment, but at lower rates.

Nearly 80 percent of women in the service industry have experienced sexual harassment from customers, with a third dealing with it on a weekly basis, according to ROC United. Two-thirds said customers made suggestive remarks or jokes and over half have



experienced suggestive looks or gestures, over 40 percent have been pressured about going on dates and over a third were deliberately pinched or touched—per the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

Westfield senior Alex Hiller said that, as a male, he would accept being cat-called or touched if it meant he got a better tip. He stated, "Typically, guys would consider it flirting and would not be offended."

A UMass Amherst journalism student, Tanya Anderson, agreed saying, "I also believe that males do not get offended by it as much because female patrons are less likely to be aggressive and confronting." As a woman, Anderson said that she would not accept this kind of behavior making herself "uncomfortable in order to make more money."

She recalled an encounter with a customer when she was a waitress in Toronto, Canada. "When working in Toronto I had a customer tip me \$20 then try to grab

me from behind. When I stopped him, he tipped me another 20 and tried again. I told him no and gave his money back. I told him that it is not okay to try and pay me to touch me."

Tipping seems to heighten an already bad situation. Kirk said, "We almost have to sell ourselves," she said, "a lot of us tolerate inappropriate behavior. It's sometimes nerve-racking and makes us uncomfortable but it pays the bills."

ROC United found that "the very highest rates of sexual harassment comes from female workers who are tipped the federal minimum wage of \$2.13." But some patrons feel that this behavior is acceptable depending on the environment of the restaurant.

Joe Leone, a customer at Texas Roadhouse in Springfield, MA, "if the girls don't wanna be touched then they shouldn't dress the way that they do! Put some clothes on. They're damn near beggin' for attention."

Server Shalie Rios, from Texas Roadhouse, overheard the comment chiming in, "I believe it more based on the establishment. Like if someone worked at Hooters with more revealing clothes than say Olive Garden, where the servers are much more covered up, then the clientele is different."

Bartender and server Kirk explained that waitresses are hesitant to complain to management to have a customer leave because this takes money directly away from servers. "Especially if you work in

a restaurant where tips are pooled, then you're taking money out of everyone's pocket," she says. "I believe strongly that this acceptance of harassment is a direct result of a lack of living wage," Anderson supported.

Rios agreed, "servers are treated with a little less respect when it comes to customers who are tipping because they believe we are there to serve them and put up with their attitudes and whims."

The ROC feels, this problem could be fixed by increasing the wage. Kirk confirmed this by saying, "If servers were paid a higher wage and did not rely on tipping this problem would be minimal." In countries that do not practice tipping culture this problem is drastically lower, according to Worldstats.com.

In Australia, there is no tipping culture and Anderson explained that she has never experienced such a thing. "I definitely believe that this kind of behavior is more accepted in the hospitality industry. Especially in North America where there is a tipping culture. In over a decade of hospitality work, I have only ever experienced this behavior in North America," she stated.

In a recent interview with The Guardian, Saru Jayaraman, ROC, co-founder and co-director stated, "When you live off the tips you have to tolerate whatever the customer might do to you, however they might touch you or treat you

>>>continued on page 7

Seen & Unseen: Exploring Déjà Vu

by Adam Czerwiec

Ever have the sensation that you've already experienced an event, down to the most minute details? Has it rattled you to your core, or do you brush it off, saying you must have seen this on TV? Did this moment really happen, or is it a trick of our mind? What is this strange sensation, and why does it affect people?

Coined by the French psychic researcher Émile Boirac, the term déjà vu literally means "already seen." It is not limited to physically seeing a familiar scene, however. This odd sensation can be triggered by any of your five senses. A single smell can send you reeling down memory lane, only to realize, this scent is unfamiliar to you prior to this moment. The sensation is so powerful, it literally chills you to the bone. As someone who experiences semi frequent déjà vu, still to this day the feeling makes me cringe.

Scientific American states that the sensation of familiarity through déjà vu happens to between 30-100% of people, and that young people between 6-25 have the most encounters with this phenomenon. This is most likely the case because by the age of 15, you have been able to determine how familiar a scenario feels. If it feels stronger than it should, congratulations; you've experienced déjà vu. But

they say that after 25, those sensations should begin to diminish. This brings up a great point for discussion: is déjà vu a memory problem?

The answer? No, it actually may be a sign of a healthy mind, one able to tell that these feelings of familiarity are all wrong. Scientists have noted that most people who have epilepsy also suffer from temporal lobe epilepsy. The temporal lobe is the part of our brain that is responsible for memories. Epilepsy is caused when the brain sends electrical signals that are out of control, and effecting brain function. These signals can send the person into a seizure, where your thoughts and movements are no longer in your control. Most people with temporal lobe epilepsy have stated they have déjà vu right before one of these seizures.

Some people also think that there are spiritual reasonings behind déjà vu. One theory is that it is your higher self communicating to you that you are on the right path. Being a Pisces, it is noted that we are highly intuitive individuals. Getting these sensations of déjà vu, I would agree that I am indeed on the path I am supposed to be taking. For years, I would have constant déjà

vu experiences. Then suddenly, they stopped. No explanation. I had detoured in my life, gone down a different juncture. As soon as I rectified my decisions and made a more positive change in my life, the sensations came back.

My most vivid one happened about a year and a half ago. I had a dream (95% of my experiences happen from dreams that I have.) I was sitting in a classroom, getting lectured on energy flow in ecosystems. I thought nothing of it. Then the professor said one thing, and a sudden shiver went down my spine. Everything was familiar - down to the professor's wardrobe and where my water bottle was placed. How can that be, I thought. I had only met this professor a week ago.

The theory behind this is that when we are born, we are predestined to take certain paths. Our ethereal spirit blueprints a "map" for us. When we are following this map, we get sudden reminders from our subconscious that we are following our destiny. Another is that it is the universe hinting to us, or warning us, of the paths we will take.

Whatever the case, science or faith, déjà vu is an odd sensation. It can rattle us to our core, and make us feel like we are reliving moments again. Or it can be a subtle nod from some higher entity, letting us know we are indeed making the right choices in life. No matter what you believe, these are signs to not ignore. Tap into your intuition, and follow the road you're on. ¶¶

<<< *Tips, cont'd from page 5*

or talk to you, because the customer is always right. The customer pays your bills, not the employer."

"Young people are willing to put up with disgusting and degrading behavior in order to make money. Sure, this culture is disgusting but I believe strongly that this acceptance of harassment is a direct result of a lack of living wage. How are young people supposed to value their self-worth when the employer doesn't even value them enough to pay them a substantial wage?" expressed an outraged Anderson.

In an industry where the tip means everything, when do servers draw the line without affecting their income? Is a higher wage the answer? "It would put some integrity back in the job. We shouldn't be treated like animals. This isn't a zoo," says Kirk.

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<<< *Climate, cont'd from page 4*

some cases, this includes a loss in lung capacity and function, development of diseases like asthma or cancer, and a faster aging of the lungs.

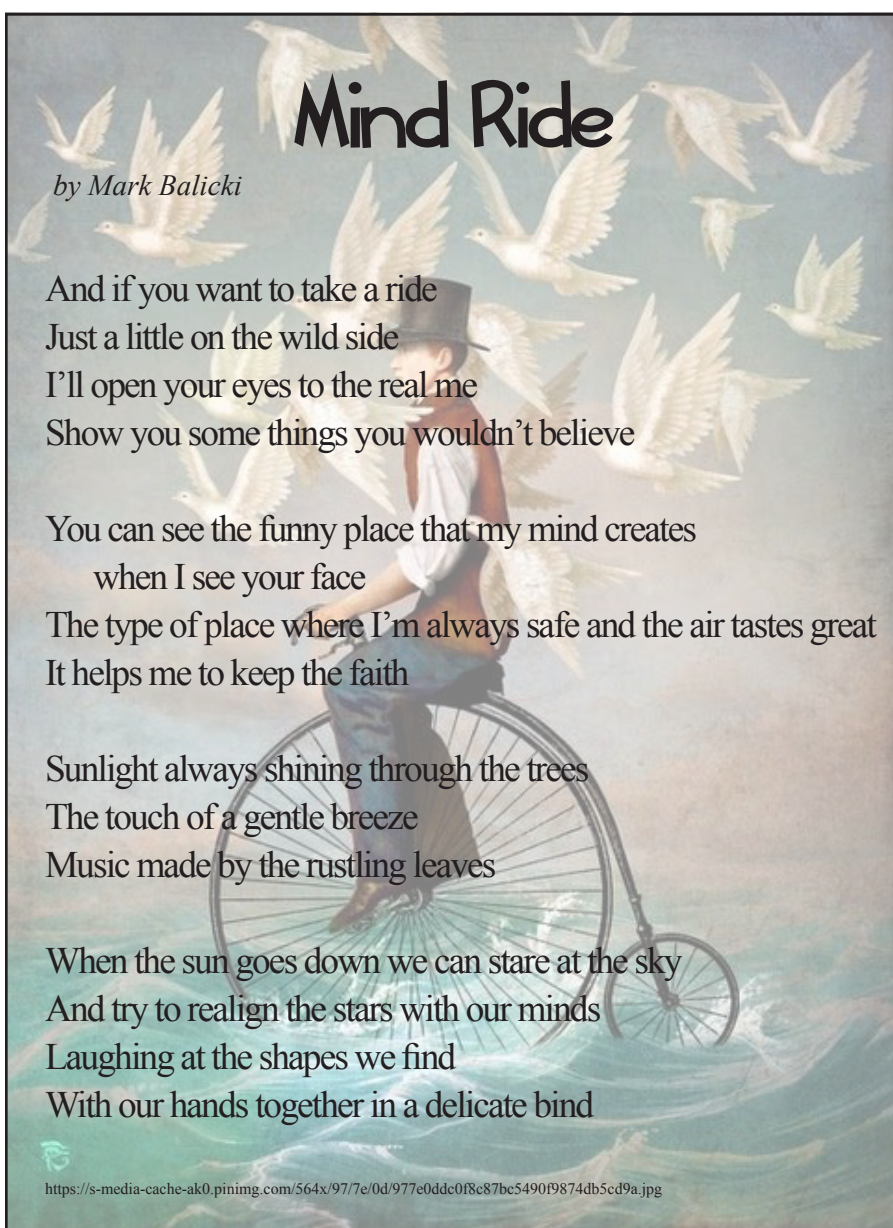
There are ways to reduce the risk of exposure to air pollution, but they are not guaranteed to completely remove the possibility. One of these includes preventing the buildup of dust and mold within a building by ensuring that the building is properly ventilated and that ventilation is regularly maintained. It is also important for the inhabitants to remove any known air pollutants from the building, which includes things such as aerosols and some cleaning supplies.

Outdoor air pollution is a bit more difficult to avoid, especially in highly populated urban areas. Although this is true, there are steps that can be taken to reduce risk of exposure. These include checking the area's Air Quality Index, avoiding heavy traffic and secondhand tobacco smoke. Although a healthy lifestyle is important for the maturation of human cells, this process is hindered by outdoor air pollutants. Individuals who do their exercise outdoors are at an increased risk of exposure, so some of these individuals may find it beneficial to their health to switch to an indoor setting.

Air pollution causes damage to the natural and man-made environment, which in turn harms the world's ecology. Although there are steps that can be taken, the long-lasting effects will not do any good if all of society does not join in on the reduction of emissions. It truly is a global effort to slow the processes of global warming by decreasing the pollutants we create. Individuals who do their exercise outdoors are at an increased risk of exposure, so some of these individuals may find it beneficial to their health to switch to an indoor setting.

Air pollution causes damage to natural and man-made environments, which in turn harms the world's ecology. Although there are steps that can be taken, the long-lasting effects will not do any good if all of society does not join in on the reduction of emissions. It truly is a global effort to slow the processes of global warming by decreasing the pollutants we create.

Sources: <https://www.niehs.nih.gov/health/topics/agents/air-pollution/>
<http://www.sparetheair.com/health.cfm?page=healthoverall;>
Photo: http://pamola.um.maine.edu/DailySummary/images/GFS-025deg/DailySummary/GFS-025deg_NH-SAT1_T2_fp.png



Mind Ride

by Mark Balicki

And if you want to take a ride
Just a little on the wild side
I'll open your eyes to the real me
Show you some things you wouldn't believe

You can see the funny place that my mind creates
when I see your face
The type of place where I'm always safe and the air tastes great
It helps me to keep the faith

Sunlight always shining through the trees
The touch of a gentle breeze
Music made by the rustling leaves

When the sun goes down we can stare at the sky
And try to realign the stars with our minds
Laughing at the shapes we find
With our hands together in a delicate bind

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Social & Emotional Development

by Lauren Delude

A child's social and emotional development is dependent on several environmental factors. Throughout development a child begins to experience emotions differently which then translates to how they express and manage their emotions as well. The extent of development whether it be negative or positive is highly determined by the environment a child grows up in and is exposed to on an everyday basis. The most influential years of development involve the first three years of a child's life. Many environmental changes begin to occur during this time, hence the social and emotional changes. The most prominent influences can be observed in the home and classroom setting.

A child spends the majority of the first few years of their life at home surrounded by mostly family. Their emotional basis is founded on reacting to the events of the home and the emotions displayed by parents and siblings. If a child has a "healthy" home life they will potentially have a more positive social and emotional development than a child growing up in a negative setting.

A healthy home life may include a mother and father who enforce rules while also teaching and providing nurturing love. A change a child may undergo in the home is when a mother goes back to work after having spent every day with her child. The child is then forced to become more socially and emotionally independent. If coddled as a child they may have a more

difficult time with the separation and become reclusive from others and not actively develop positive relationships with newfound peers and caregivers.

In a more toxic home, parents may be under a lot of stress or release their frustrations on one another in turn demonstrating a negative display of emotions to their child. At the young ages of 0-3 years children do not understand fully the difference between right and wrong and may imitate the negative behavior in their own interactions. The very neighborhood a child grows up in can impact how they view the world. If raised in an unsafe neighborhood a child may be more socially aware and less trusting, compared to a child who was raised in a safe neighborhood where they can walk the streets alone and say hello to everyone they know.

It is very common for parents to decide to have multiple children in a few years time. This is a large change that the older child learns to deal with both socially and emotionally in varying ways. In a more positive light an older sibling may become more independent and pick up on more acceptable social behavior as they interact with their younger sibling. They learn to share and take into consideration the feelings of others. In this way they are learning to establish positive relationships. The younger sibling benefits from this change in the home environment and may develop social and emotional skills at a faster rate because they attempt

to imitate their older siblings' accomplishments.

However a change in the home such as the one described above may have opposite results. An older sibling, though still age three or younger, may digress from their social and emotional skill level once they have a younger sibling. They may begin to act out or act in a similar manner to their younger sibling in hopes of regaining the same level of attention they previously received from their parents. This is a sensitive time of development and with a drastic change, a child may not handle it properly.

Often times, how a child was raised in the home directly translates to how they behave in the classroom and their potential for further social and emotional development is contingent on home life. The transition from home to school can be more challenging for some children more than others. A child coming from a very sheltered home may find it increasingly difficult to make friends and form emotional bonds not having done so before. They may act out under the authority of someone other than their parent because they have not been taught that it is socially correct to follow the instruction of another adult.

The goal of parents and teachers is to make the transition from home to school as smooth as possible in a way that promotes social and emotional growth at this crucial time. The way in which they built relationships at home helps to determine how successful their

relationships with their peers will be. This transition usually marks a time of accelerated social and emotional growth. Children must learn to adapt to their surroundings and establish relationships with their peers. Doing so they learn to take into consideration the emotions of others and react in the appropriate manner.

Children may not always adapt so efficiently to their new environments and lash out. An only child may not have the same level of pre-established social skills and have a more difficult time progressing socially with their peers. A child may not pick up on all social cues of another's emotions as in if they've hurt their feelings. Being away from their parents may also prove to be difficult emotionally because they have not yet had to cope with the unfamiliar.

Transitioning a child from one familiar setting to an unfamiliar one, or any drastic change, proves to have varying impacts on social and emotional development. Home life does, however, set the foundation for development and is a determining factor to how children react to new scenarios. In the beginning stages, children are merely a reflection of their environment and use this first to form, then shape who they are when around other social groups, whether this results positively or negatively in growth. ¶¶

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