

# HEARTBEAT

PRVA GIMNAZIJA MARIBOR

FEBRUARY 2020

170 let



PRVA GIMNAZIJA  
MARIBOR

*Per aspera ad astra*



## EDITORIAL

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Throughout life we experience many anniversaries. Joyful ones, as are birthdays, and even sad ones. No matter if they are good or bad, anniversaries are always something special. They mark the passing of another year and present us with the chance of consideration and dwelling on what has happened since a specific event transpired. The year 2020 for example, marks Prva Gimnazija's 170<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and I invite you to remember the time you have spent here as a student. Reflect on everything this school has seen through all these years, and be proud to be a part of its history.



Nuša Simonič

*HEARTBEAT published by the students of Prva Gimnazija  
Maribor.*

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ISSN: C506-4473

# Per Aspera Ad Astra

This year our school is celebrating the 170th anniversary of its emergence, resulting in a myriad of activities the school is organizing. Prva gimnazija Maribor, as we know it today, has been through a number of changes from its beginnings to the present day.

It all started with the school reform executed in Austria in 1849 where they created the so-called "realke" (Austrian secondary schools), which led to "lower realka" being created here in Maribor in 1850. Later, in 1870, they decided to create "higher realka" where the program lasted seven years. However, as there was no available space large enough for all of the students, it was decided that a new building would be built. The building we walk through today was built in 1873, but the construction process actually began in 1871. The architect who designed our school was a certain Wilhelm Bücher (1824-1888), who was partial towards the classicistic style. At first, it was a German school, but during the years of the Monarchy SHS and, later on, the Monarchy of Yugoslavia, it became mainly Slovenian.

It is also interesting that between 1941 and 1945 our Grammar School was, in fact, abolished due to the German occupation of our land. The Germans created their own school, which was mostly attended by German students and few Slovenian students. Prva gimnazija, as we know it today, has had many different names over the years. In 1945, following the liberation of our school, the name changed to I. gimnazija, but shortly after, during the 1959 - 1960 school year, the name changed again to Prva gimnazija. From 1981 and 1990, the school was known as "Srednja družboslovna šola", however, in 1990, our school was given the name it proudly bears today – Prva gimnazija Maribor.

The building we enter daily and spend a good portion of our time learning and growing as people was carefully designed. Especially interesting are the four statues (see pages 6, 10, 22, 30) above the balustrade, which is a decorative column. These four statues represent four women who each has their own representation, the first represents arithmetic, the second, geometry, the third, music, and the fourth, astronomy.

A lot has changed since our school's beginnings, not only in terms of teaching methods and creating a comfortable environment for students, but also in the building itself. In 1928, an extension was built onto the existing structure giving us more space for extra-curricular activities. Today, this extension is the home of Prvi odel and our gymnasium where performances of both our Improvliga (improvisational theatre) and school theatre group are carried out.

All of this history has led us to the present. Today, Prva gimnazija Maribor is one of the best schools in Maribor. Through our achievements, we are becoming recognized not only in Maribor, but also nation-wide. This is one of the reasons why new students continually decide to attend this school. With the education we receive, we set strong foundations for study at any university. Additionally, we are one of the few schools in Slovenia to offer the classical "gimnazija" program, which includes courses in Latin and Ancient Greek. The classical "gimnazija" program was established in 1996 and the students are very fond of it, particularly those who are more interested in the social sciences.

Currently, we have about 800 students in attendance at our school and each one of us counts. Together, through our achievements, we define our school and even though, at times, we feel stressed and tired, especially during the "busy months" of classes, our friends help us and relate to us. It is important to acknowledge that school is not only meant to give people an education, but also to provide us with the opportunity to develop social skills, meet new people and make new friends.

I think it is crucial that you and your classmates get along because you spend almost every day of your life with them for four years and you all have to work hard to contribute to this symbiotic relationship. It is with hard work, patience and strong will that we will achieve our goals and Prva gimnazija Maribor is a step that will bring us closer to it.

Zala Tepeh



Music

*Quomodo fabula, sic vita:*  
non refert, quam diu, sed quam bene acta sit

*“As is a tale, so is life: not how long it is, but how good it is, is what matters.”*

– Seneca the Younger (Lucius Annaeus Seneca, c. 4 BC – AD 65)

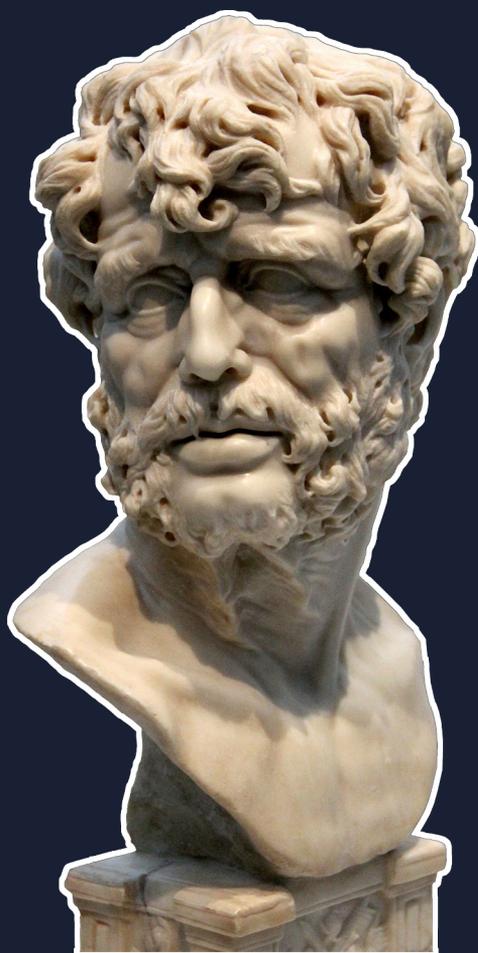
As is the grandeur of passage, so is the virtue of one’s own journey – to traverse the path of many, and yet claim it as your own, engraves not only the boundaries of the mind but unlocks a spiral of undiscovered possibilities. To wander is to search for a purpose, and to seek purpose is to structure a finesse for the spirit. One’s heart is bound to its will; it begets the construct of human nature and unlocks all puzzles of the unknown.

All we bring about eventually echoes in the aching memory of passage – sooner or later, all that reigns withers to memory and makes way to change... to something new and unrefined in the process of excellence soon-to-be, for a future yet to pass.

In all eagerness of such a prosperous sight, I turn to you, the wandering spirits who so profoundly shine light on your very first steps in a tale that will shape not only who you are and could be, but will set in motion much of what you will bring to the tale yourselves. Remember wisely – not all things are as complex as they appear, as enigmatic as you are told, and as obscure as that which the wise are unable to uphold; to make your decision and take the first step is never an easy task, but neither is it as impossible as the mind tends to perceive.

A mere thought will carry out a question, and the question will begin its quest – striving for that special finesse that binds the heart and will together, and foretells the greatest tale of all... as long and good as one shapes it to be.

Miha Červek



# Do what is right, not what is easy

As humans, there's no doubt that we are complex. We feel, we spend a lot of time with our thoughts, and we're alarmingly skilled at disagreeing with each other on matters such as which lights should go on the Christmas tree.

What's particularly interesting though, is how willing we are to be a bystander when presented with inequity. It's almost as if that decorated tree in our living room, that will have to be taken down in a month anyway, affects us much more deeply than someone being treated unfairly in our everyday life. One of the reasons why is probably because it simply takes less effort. It's always easier to watch than to do anything about it. It's easier to be ignorant than to act.

I don't mean that every single person on this planet should be educated on every single issue because there's only so much time and motivation in one day. I'm talking about the ones most heard about in today's world. Racism. Homophobia. Sexism. Unfortunately, that's only to mention a few. The worst part of it is the fact that no amount of advancement in technology, medicine or science has been able to eliminate them completely.

It's easy to forget how important communication is, especially because so many topics are still taboo today. Yet no one realizes how harmful it is to choose not to discuss certain subjects. Yes, we've gotten drastically better at it over time, but as a society, we are still nowhere near where we should (want to) be, especially when it comes to matters that affect us all. In case it isn't obvious already, pretending like the issue isn't there doesn't help anyone. Instead, it just builds frustration around it. One of my all-time favorite quotes

by Martin Luther King perfectly illustrates this: “Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter.”

If there’s anything you take away from reading this at all; if it isn’t hurting you or anyone else, stand up for what you believe in. It’ll be demanding but worth it. To finish off, I would like to add a quote by Roy T. Bennett: “Do what is right, not what is easy.” And in the event of injustice, I hope you choose to do so.

Irena Sovič



Astronomy

# The Problem With Overthinking

I believe overthinking is quite common nowadays, among all generations. We often find ourselves rethinking something we did either one day ago or even years ago or a conversation that may or may not occur in the future. Overthinking has become such a common thing that the younger generations often seem to joke about it, but no one actually tries to fix the problem or get to the bottom of it. So, what causes overthinking and how can we avoid it?

One of the main causes of overthinking among younger generations is school and the stress that comes with it. Although stress in school is almost inevitable, it makes us cancel all of the activities we love, for example, our hobbies and hanging out with friends, so we can focus on school and studying, because not studying or sitting behind our desks all day makes us feel guilty. But truthfully, even though we feel productive while studying, it doesn't give us that feeling of satisfaction and enjoyment, at least not all the time. That's when start procrastinating and end up on our phones thinking about how we might get a bad grade. Overthinking about a bad grade might turn into overanalysing our personal life and even our day to day habits. It might get to such an extreme that eventually we might develop a mental illness. That's why our generations tend to make a joke of it, which is a common coping mechanism.

One of the causes of overthinking is the longing for control. Today, everybody wants to be in control and knowing what we're going to do in the future or being conscious of our mistakes and the stupid things we may have said and done in the past gives us exactly that. But you see, you shouldn't have the control over everything in your life. Why not? Because it's simply impossible and failing to



have control can make you feel even more pathetic than you were at the beginning. That's when we begin to lose control, which makes us overthink about the future.

In my experience, things always turn out very differently than I imagined. Meaning, I could imagine how something will turn out, but in the end, something I didn't expect at all happened instead. That's why overthinking is in vain because there's only a small chance that a scenario in your head will actually happen as you've imagined or a big chance that a conversation will not proceed as planned.

So, how to prevent overthinking? I don't think there's an immediate solution to it, as it's not possible to prevent it entirely. Keeping ourselves busy helps, however, not with work or school, but keeping ourselves busy with the things we love. If you're on vacation somewhere, it shouldn't be only about resting. Make your vacation active as that will keep your mind busy, but not in a stressful way. Find hobbies that make you happy, surround yourself with people that bring joy into your life. Just do things that make you feel good at the moment and they will make you feel good for a lifetime.



Neža Malek

# How Should You Choose the Right Career Path for **You?**

As this is the newspaper of a grammar school, I reckon my target audience are highschoolers that plan on continuing their education in university. While some people have been set on what they'll study in university since primary school, not all of us seem to be as lucky in figuring it all out. Allow me to help those of you who fall into the latter category.

First, I want to assure you that there is nothing wrong with you for not being sure or even not having even the slightest clue as to what your future holds. In my opinion, there isn't nearly enough attention brought to this subject in our educational system, resulting in a big portion of students simply not knowing what to do after school. That shouldn't be considered normal, although it is. After all, what you'll be doing for the rest of your life is one of the most important decisions you'll ever make. So let's give it some thought, shall we?

You'll have to begin with some research. Start by exploring various fields of study that interest you. Once you have chosen some options there are three main elements you should consider:

1. How big of a demand is there for this particular profession on the market? The higher the demand, the easier it will be for you to get a job and start earning money. I know nowadays everyone would like to be a celebrity or an online influencer but let's be honest - what are the chances of that happening? To give you a bit of perspective, here are just some jobs that are currently in demand in Slovenia: *electricians, pharmacists, physiotherapists, ...* On the other hand, some jobs that are currently not in demand are: *architects, economists, philosophers, photographers, ...* Now don't panic if what you had in mind is not in demand on the market.



If you're truly passionate about it, I fully support you taking a bit of a risk, however, if you aren't entirely sure, maybe look for other options.

2. How high is the approximate salary? Of course, money shouldn't be why you choose a job but I believe it's important to consider if the salary you'll earn will be enough to sustain the life you envision for yourself.

3. Will it make you happy and bring you a feeling of fulfilment? Does it interest you? Or does the mere thought of repeating this job day after day bore you to death? This should be the most important element of choosing your future profession. Despite a lot of people believing that your job isn't meant to make you happy, it should at the very least seem bearable. If you're going to be repeating a task every day, make it something you enjoy.

Once a profession fits all these criteria, research where and how you can get the degree required for it. In Slovenia, we're incredibly lucky to have free education so money isn't a big factor, however, if you plan on studying abroad, you'll have to start saving up money. Search for the most fitting programme and what the requirements to be enrolled in it are.

Lastly, I'll add that there's no need to rush, take your time figuring this out because you should be satisfied and confident in your choice. Only you can decide this for yourself. I'm positive you'll choose well and hope this article helps you.

Maša Štraus

# Being Left-Handed in a Right-Handed World

Lefties. They make up roughly 10% of the world's population. "Oh, you're left-handed?" is something they hear almost every time someone watches them write something. There are also everyday occurrences, which seem normal to right-handed people that can be incredibly annoying to the left-handed population. Yet no one really considers lefties because the world still is, unfortunately, built for righties by default.

Although a child's dominant hand isn't necessarily determined by their parents, I think I might have acquired my left-handedness from my dad. Being left-handed might not seem like a huge deal in today's world, however, it wasn't always like that. Lefties were discriminated against for many decades and it was even deemed completely unacceptable for a child to prefer writing with their left hand instead of their right. As a result, thousands of children were scolded or even punished for doing so and forced to write with their right hand instead.

While I'm lucky enough to live in a time when I'm allowed to write with whichever hand I please, I do still wish I could write in a spiral notebook painlessly from time to time. Or to be able to use one of those lecture chairs with arm tables on the right side. Or to write quickly without smudging the ink across the page. Or to be able to buy and use normal scissors. Or to use a can opener without struggling. I could go on.

It does, however, build a special kind of connection with fellow lefties. Which hand someone writes, draws, paints, or plays sports with, is usually a small detail that only we tend to pay attention to. It's a kind of mutual understanding of "you experience the same kind of everyday annoyances as I do", because roughly 90% of the population will, quite literally, never understand, think about and, certainly, won't

have to deal with them. In some odd way, it's something incredibly small that connects us all, no matter how different we may seem to be.

Some of history's most significant figures were left-handed. Leonardo da Vinci. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. Marie and Pierre Curie. Aristotle. Michelangelo Buonarroti. Mother Theresa. Among others. There is a slight sense of comfort in knowing you're in the same boat as them, and it might even feel like an honor to share just one of their characteristics.

Despite there being much bigger and more serious problems in the world than lefties not always being taken into consideration in today's world, it's something small to consider more often. And sometimes it really is about the small things.

Irena Sovič



## Solving of a *Murder*

The author of the amazing *Murder on the Orient Express*, Agatha Christie, is an wonderful writer. During her career, she wrote 66 novels and 14 short story collections, which adds up to an impressive 80 books. The novels revolve mostly around either a famous and not so humble Belgian (not French!) detective Poirot or a cunning old lady who just won't stay away from solving murders no matter what her doctor, nephew, neighbour or maid say to her, Jane Marple. Both characters have unique personalities that stay consistent throughout the books. However, not all of Christie's books feature Miss Marple or Hercule Poirot. Some of the books revolve around world wide criminal operations instead.

Two of her most famous works are *Murder on the Orient Express* and *And Then There Were None*. Surprisingly both are quite systematic as, in the first one, Poirot goes through each passenger and their testimonies and, in the second one, they follow an old song and each victim dies accordingly.

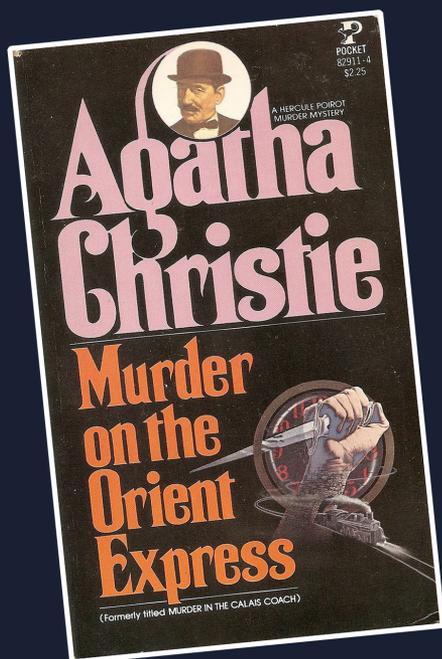
The story of *Murder on the Orient Express* features the Belgian gentleman Hercule Poirot, whose destination is changed at the last minute and he boards the *Orient Express*. Sure enough, as in all murder mystery novels, a body is found. As always, Agatha leaves readers astonished, marveling over the genius thought process of Hercule Poirot. Unsurprisingly, Poirot figures out the puzzle long before anybody else and the readers are left with a shocking conclusion. No spoilers about the identity of the murderer.

Agatha definitely follows the mystery novel recipe: a detective, a dead body or bodies and, at the end, the criminal is revealed.

The story definitely isn't for someone who prefers fast paced stories, supernatural forces and absurd conspiracy theories. It's quite laid back and, at times, slow. The story is set for individuals who like to think and analyze, for readers who enjoy details that all connect at the very end to create an aha moment. In other words, if we presume that we can divide all people's intellect into two groups, the action thinkers (those who run around thinking in the moment) and those that sit in a big armchair and let their brain cells do the work. This book would be better for the second group.

Although the book was great and is her most famous one, I don't think it's her best work. The shocking end is, well, shocking, but she wrote endings that were ten times more exciting and unexpected. Endings that leave you speechless. In any case, *Murder on the Orient Express* is a great way to start.

Maša Harl



# Why is K-pop so Popular?

K-pop is not just a musical genre, it's a global phenomenon. The reason it is so popular is that K-pop people who are called "idols" are vigorously trained in singing and dancing. The marketing strategies of the entertainment companies are commendable. Their music videos offer top quality production, composition, vocals, make-up, outfits and amazingly synchronised choreographies with different themes. A K-pop band is the perfect package. Some idols in a band are vocalists, some are proppers and some are amazing dancers so they balance each other out.

The most famous K-pop group is BTS. They are a group made up of 7 members- Jin, Suga, J-Hope, RM, Jimin, V and Jungkook and they come from all over South Korea. The band debuted in 2013 and since then they rocketed to global stardom. They have broken many records, some of which are:

- First K-pop group to speak at the United Nations,
- First K-pop group to top the US album charts (Love yourself: Tear)
- First Korean act to perform at an US stadium show
- The most viewed music video on YouTube (Boy with love; over 74 million views)

K-pop is getting bigger and bigger and gaining thousands of fans every day.

Edonita Balaj

## Friends: an Iconic Sitcom

Friends is an American NBC sitcom television series. It was first aired on September 22nd 1994 with the episode titled "The One Where Monica Gets A Roommate (Pilot)". It was produced by Bright/Crane/Kauffman Productions in association with Warner Bros Television. The original producers were Kevin S. Bright, David Crane and Marta Kauffman. The series consists of ten seasons and concluded on May 6th 2004 with the episode titled "The Last One."

Some of you may not have watched the sitcom, but you probably have heard of it. It became successful because of its easy-going, relateable and chill content, which was delivered in around 20 minutes, so people didn't have to invest a lot of their time into watching it. People found it genuinely funny, with the right mix of romance and friendship between the friends.

The show has received a number of nominations and awards, including Golden Globe Awards, Primetime Emmys, Screen Actors Guild Awards and many more. All ten seasons reached the top ten final television season ratings with season eight rating number one. The series finale was watched by around 52.5 million American viewers, becoming the fifth most-watched series finale in history, and the most-watched episode of the 2000s.

The cast features Jennifer Aniston, David Schwimmer, Courtney Cox, Matt Leblanc, Matthew Perry and Lisa Kudrow. The sitcoms explores their lives in the 90s, living in New York City in their day to day lives, as they learn, laugh and love together.

They potrtay the characters of Rachel Green, an unsure nearly-wedded

woman coming from a rich background, who flees her wedding and moves in with Monica Geller, a loving, yet loveless chef, who takes Rachel in. Across from them lives Joey Tribbiani, the failed actor and a womanizer with a list of rejections and women's hearts. He lives with the self deprecating and sarcastic IT manager Chandler Bing. Their friend Phoebe is a masseuse with an accepting and warm character, while Monica's older brother Ross Geller is a paleontologist with a sweet like nature, who lives in a constant state of insecurity. Oh, and he also owns a pet monkey!

The pilot starts with Monica (Cox), Phoebe (Kudrow), Joey (Leblanc) and Chandler (Perry) sitting in a café, when Ross (Schwimmer) joins them first, feeling emotional about his wife moving out. Soon after, Rachel (Aniston) joins them as well, looking equally distressed in a wedding dress, after leaving her almost-husband at the altar. After facing uncertain feelings for him, she has decided to go to her ex-best friend Monica, as she was the only person she knew that lived in the city. And so she stays with Monica and informs her father that she is not coming back home and is staying in Manhattan. After a short bonding period with Monica and Ross' friends, Monica leaves to go on a date with 'Paul the wine guy'. Joey and Chandler help Ross build his new furniture and also help him in dealing with the divorce of his wife, who left him for a woman, while Rachel is grieving on her own watching tv shows. Monica and Paul don't work out, as she learns the truth about him the very next morning from her co-worker in the restaurant she works at. As Rachel has officially moved in, she starts looking for a job, yet her money-spending nature doesn't exactly allow her to, so she instead bought a pair of shoes on sale with her father's credit card. Her new friends encourage her to gain independence for the first time in her life, cut the credit card and start making her own money. Late at night that same day, after a heart to heart talk, Ross admits his high school crush on Rachel and asks her out, to which she agrees. Ross leaves the apartment overjoyed as the episode ends.

But that's just the first episode, only 235 more to go!

And lastly, although the show reached its end more than 15 years ago, there are rumored talks about a reunion. And if it does happen, one thing is for sure, it would most likely break the internet.

Maja Mok



Geometry

# 19th Century English Literature **Pioneers**

Also known as »The Brontë Sisters« named Charlotte, Emily and Anne. They were among the most influential people and powerful women in their time. The Victorian era of literature was heavily impacted by their amazing and in that time extremely controversial work. They fought hard against the prejudice and male dominance in everyday life to publish their work, which is the reason why the Brontë sisters were three of the finest writers of the Victorian era.

**Charlotte Brontë** was born on April 21st in 1816; she was the oldest out of The Brontë Sisters. Some would say she was a good and hardworking person. She enlisted in school at the age of 14, but she left a year after, to home school her two sisters. Later in life she and her sisters opened a school, but sadly they failed to attract pupils. Because the opening of the new school was unsuccessful, they turned to writing. Charlotte's first novel »The Professor« was rejected by the publishers, but her first published novel »Jane Eyre« came out in 1847. She wrote under the 2 pseudonyms Lord Charles Albert Florian Wellesley and more known Currer Bell. She became pregnant shortly after her marriage in 1854 but died in 1855, almost certainly from hyperemesis gravidarum, a complication of pregnancy which causes nausea and vomiting. Bronte was the last to die of all her siblings. Her novels are still one of the classics of English literature.

*»I am no bird; and no net ensnares me: I am a free human being with an independent will.«*

*Charlotte Brontë, Jane Eyre*

**Emily Brontë** was born on 30th July 1818. She was the fifth child of the family and the middle sister. She was shy and very close to



her siblings and was known as a great animal lover. She started to attend school at the age of 17, but she left due to extreme homesickness just a few months later. At the age of 20, she became a teacher, but sadly she quickly returned home after some serious health problems. She is most known for her novel »Wuthering Heights«, which was first published in 1847. It appeared as the first two parts of three were set. She wrote and published her works under the pseudonym Ellis Bell. The novel caused a lot of controversy, because of the portrayal of amoral passion and barbarism. Emily never knew the fame she achieved with her only novel, as she died a year after its publication, at the young age of 30 from tuberculosis. There are some indications that she started working on the second novel, but there hasn't been any physical proof of that.

*»Treachery and violence are spears pointed at both ends; they wound those who resort to them worse than their enemies.«*

*Emily Brontë, Wuthering Heights*



**Anne Brontë** was born on 17th January 1820 and was the youngest of the sisters in the family. Anne followed her sisters' footsteps, decided to become a teacher and quit shortly after that to fulfil her dreams of becoming a poet and a novelist. She published a volume of poetry with her sisters. She wrote 2 novels. Her second and also the last novel »The Tenant of Windfell Hall« is considered to be one of the first feminist novels. It was published in 1848. Her novels were published under the name Acton Bell. »The Tenant of Wildfell Hall« is amongst the most shocking contemporary Victorian novels. It brought extreme controversy, because of the themes portrayed in the novel, for example feministic ideas. After Anne's death her sister Charlotte prevented its re-publication in England until 1854, claiming that the choice of the subject in that work was a mistake. Shockingly, the novel had instant and phenomenal success. Anne died in 1849 at the age of 29 of what is now suspected to be pulmonary tuberculosis.

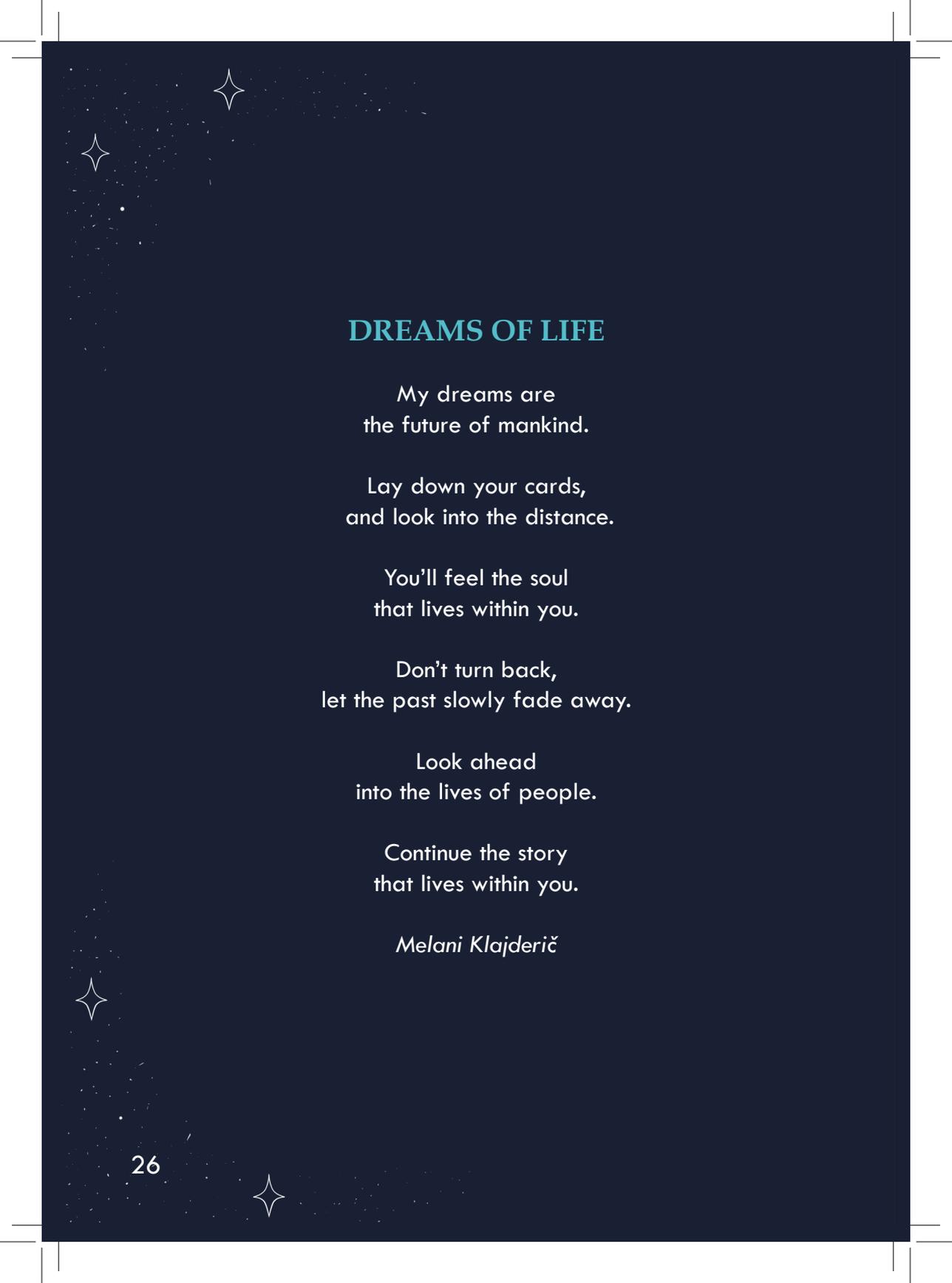
*»But he who dares not grasp the thorn  
Should never crave the rose.«*

*Anne Brontë*

All of the sisters have had somewhat of a tragic life, because of the frequent death in the family. In their time there was a dominant system of patriarchy, so they all wrote under pseudonyms. At the end, their real identities were revealed and they were praised for their work.

It could be claimed that the Brontë sisters were among the best authors in the history of English literature. I especially like Anne Brontë, because she was fearless and bold in the sense of the obvious controversy her novel would bring and with that she brought hope to women to fight for equality in the unfair system of the 19th century. I think she was and still is one of the most inspiring people in the English literature. The sister that stood out to me the most in the negative way was Charlotte, who purposely prevented re-publication of Anne's novel for 6 years, because of the controversy and fear it brought. Despite Charlotte's bad decision in this subject, she is still one of the best novelists and poets of the English literature. But we cannot forget Emily, who stood out from her sisters, because of the themes in her novels. She was the only one that wrote about love and is known as the mystery, which is really intriguing about her. This is the main reason why she was the most remarkable in comparison to her sisters.

Kaja Selinšek



## DREAMS OF LIFE

My dreams are  
the future of mankind.

Lay down your cards,  
and look into the distance.

You'll feel the soul  
that lives within you.

Don't turn back,  
let the past slowly fade away.

Look ahead  
into the lives of people.

Continue the story  
that lives within you.

*Melani Klajderič*

## We

We are different as can be,  
but I was in love with you immediately.

I am day,  
you are night.

I am bright,  
and you are dark.

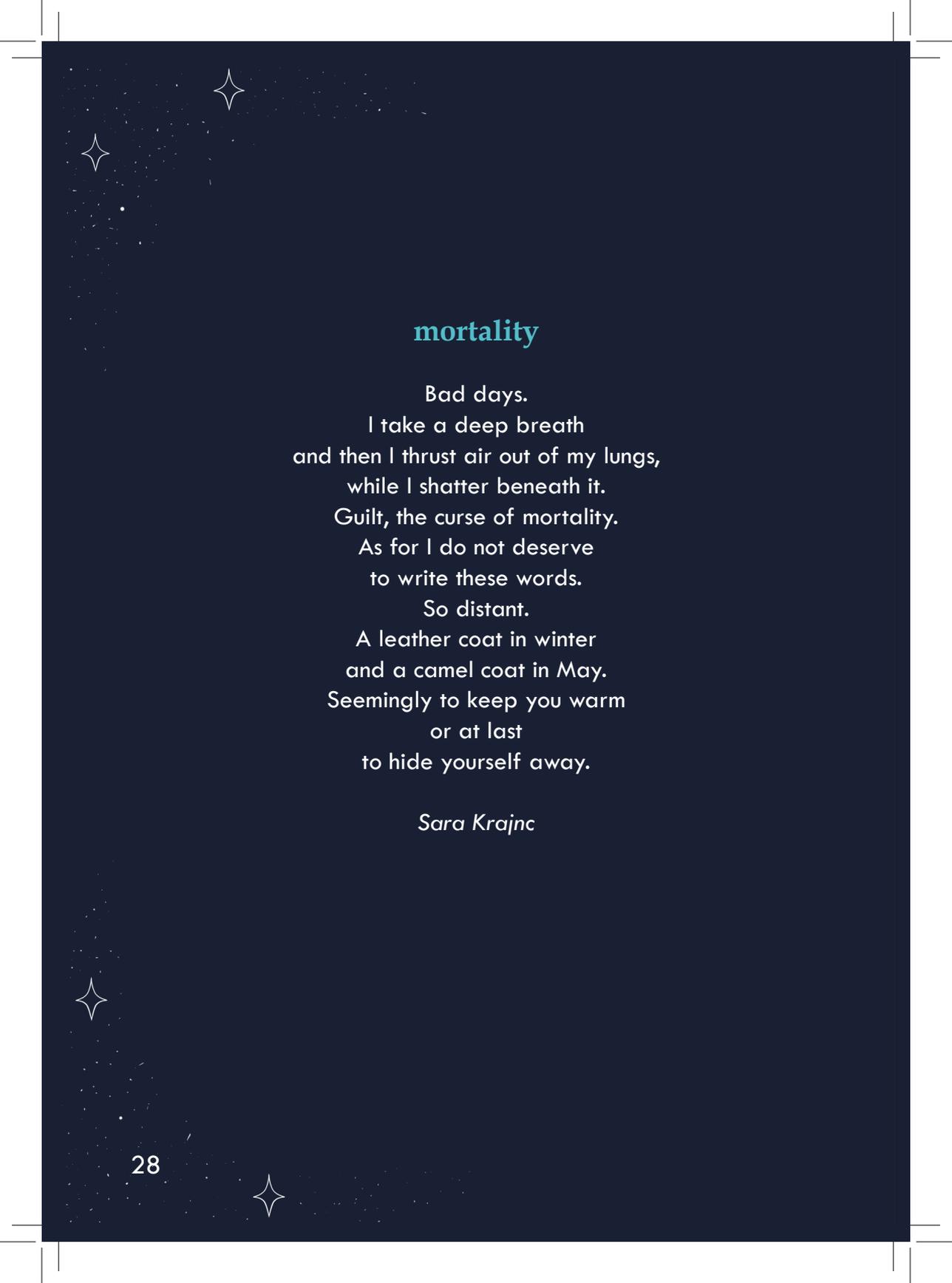
We smile,  
then hide.

We hug,  
then cry.

We dance in the moonlight,  
we dream in the sunlight.

We don't show,  
but we both know,  
that we are in love.

*Lara Mavrič*



## mortality

Bad days.  
I take a deep breath  
and then I thrust air out of my lungs,  
while I shatter beneath it.  
Guilt, the curse of mortality.  
As for I do not deserve  
to write these words.  
So distant.  
A leather coat in winter  
and a camel coat in May.  
Seemingly to keep you warm  
or at last  
to hide yourself away.

*Sara Krajnc*

# People Want to Save Our Planet... *But Not Really*

I think at this point all of us know global warming, plastic pollution and deforestation are serious problems threatening our planet. They all also have an abundance of verifiable research spanning throughout decades to back up their importance. It's fair to state almost everyone cares about our planet and wants to see change. But I've realised something – **no one wants to be the change that our current climate desperately needs.**

Despite the general public caring about our planet, not enough people are adjusting their personal lives. People still buy unnecessary plastic items because even a small change like bringing your own nonplastic items with you takes effort. Not to mention several people believe this effort doesn't influence anything in the bigger picture. Yet our planet is in dire need of big changes and those only come as a result of many little changes. We as the consumers in our consumer-driven society need to realise the impact and power we have by merely putting our money in the right place. **All of us have an option** and we can either choose to support something that helps our planet or something that doesn't.

A good example of the impact our habits and their funding has is animal agriculture. As soon as you even mention that meat has an enormous impact on our planet everyone seems to stop listening, despite the fact that animal agriculture is responsible for **18% of greenhouse gas emissions**, which is more than the entire transportation sector. When you consider livestock and their byproducts it all accounts for **51% of global greenhouse emissions**. People tend to forget that each animal needs to be fed, watered and requires land to live on. In fact, most of the deforestation currently



# *Global Warming* Threatening Our Planet

Nowadays information about global warming is hard to avoid. There is not a person in the world who doesn't know about Greta Thunberg and her passionate speeches. Or the wildfires in the Amazon Rainforest and Australia. But despite all of the information the media are giving us, do people really know what global warming is? And what will happen to our planet in the future if we don't change the situation we are in? A lot of scientists are saying that we are getting closer to the sixth mass extinction and that a lot of small island nations won't even exist a few decades from now. We are destroying this planet ourselves and this will lead us to irreversible consequences.

Global warming is the long-term rise of the average temperature of the Earth's climate system. It causes natural disasters such as earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, floods, tsunamis, blizzards, cold or heat waves, wildfires, tornados and so on. Due to human interference with nature, these natural disasters are becoming more common than they were 20 years ago. Additionally, many animal and plant species are losing their primary habitats and becoming endangered. The number of endangered species all over the world is rising. In 2012, the Red List (list of endangered species) featured 3079 animal and 2655 plant species as endangered worldwide. Some of them are endangered because of the loss of their natural habitats, overhunting, overharvesting, invasive species, low birth rates, small populations, lack of appropriate food sources, diseases and so on. The level of biodiversity is decreasing with every extinct animal or plant species and with every year the situation is becoming worse. Imagine that future generations may be living in a world without black rhinos or snow leopards.



Natural disasters are threatening nature and the species living in it. Take wildfires, for example. There were a lot of wildfires in 2019 all over the world. The biggest were in the Amazon Rainforest and in Australia. The Amazon Rainforest is the biggest forested area in the world and contains 10% of all living species. The Amazon Rainforest is also called the lungs of the Earth because it plays an important role in soothing the effects of global warming. It absorbs huge amounts of carbon dioxide. Nevertheless, the Brazilian president, Jair Bolsonaro, still can't see the damage. He believes that the fires were intentional and that country must pursue the development of economy and industry. The Australia wildfires are causing extensive damage to both wildlife and the environment. So far, almost a third of koalas have been killed and a third of their habitat has been destroyed.

The melting of glaciers has caused the sea level to rise very quickly and there are many small island nations that will be exposed to immersion over the next few decades. One of the countries that are the most endangered is Tuvalu, small country in Polynesia, located in the Pacific Ocean. It consists of three reef islands and six atolls. Its location and altitude will make it the first country to experience a total disappearance due to global warming. It will also cause a loss of the primary habitat for many species that live in this area. The truth is that the rising sea level has a huge impact on a lot of small countries that most of the people don't even know about.



Many organisations and activists are trying to raise the awareness among people to convince them to help. There are protests held by students every Friday all over the world. Those protests started because of the young Swedish environmental activist, Greta Thunberg. She encouraged young people to stand up and protest in order to point out the critical condition in which our planet is due to the climate crisis. Despite all of the protests and actions, many people still can't see what is happening to our planet and the possible consequences that will erupt within the next few decades. I think people are focusing on developing economy, industry, infrastructure

and building different objects and buildings rather than on the issue at hand. However, we are forgetting what the effect of this is on the environment, the animals, plants and the nature. Due to human interference with the environment, nature has suffered enough, and we need to change our lifestyles in order to reduce the consequences of global warming.

It is a shame that we were born on such a beautiful planet with such beautiful natural wonders and now we are going to destroy it ourselves instead of treasuring and exploring it. Homo sapiens are, by far, the most evolved creature that has ever walked on our planet. So there is no doubt that our species is taking over the whole planet and acts like it owns everything that exists. We are on the edge of the sixth mass extinction and I think people aren't aware that there is a good chance that our species will go extinct too. We often think that these problems don't concern us, but in only a few decades the consequences of global warming will affect us too. Then it will be too late to take any serious measures, so we have to understand that all of the problems happening in nature are our concern and, even if they don't affect us directly, we need to take them seriously.

Katja Malek



# Addressing the Stigma on *Psychedelics*

*Disclaimer: this article does not promote the use of illicit drugs.*

## **Introduction**

If you were raised in Western culture, you were probably taught that all hard drugs are extremely dangerous, addictive, have no medical potential and should be avoided at all cost. That is a product of a decades' long propaganda, which has robbed Western culture of the proper understanding of a group of drugs that vastly differ from hard drugs - psychedelics. Psychedelics are a class of drugs the primary action of which is to trigger psychedelic experiences. Classic examples of psychedelic drugs are: Psilocybin (active compound in magic mushrooms), LSD, mescaline (active compound in the peyote cactus), DMT, ayahuasca and iboga. The term psychedelic is derived from the Greek words ψυχή (psyche, "soul, mind") and δηλεῖν (delein, "to manifest"), hence "soul-manifesting", the implication being that psychedelics can access the soul and develop the unused potential of the human mind (A. Weil, 1993). Today, we are in the midst of the so called "psychedelic renaissance" as the medical potential of these compounds is starting to become acknowledged and research is once again being approved.

## **History of Psychedelic Use**

The earliest type of society known to people is the hunting and gathering society. In the hunter-gatherer society, we used to rely heavily on the plants that grew around us and were consequently exploring a variety of diets. One of the things that humans stumbled upon when searching for food were plants and fungi containing psychoactive compounds. Some people noticed that these effects give you insight into the human consciousness that was often

interpreted as a divine and mystical experience, such as converging with a deity. These people became shamans or spiritual leaders of their tribes and served the purpose that religions serve today. There's a number of examples of psychedelic use in human history, such as: psilocybin mushroom use in North Africa in 9000 BC (Tassili n'Ajjer cave paintings), the use of ayahuasca by native tribes in Peru, the use of iboga by the Bwiti tribe in Gabon, the use of Peyote cacti by the Native Americans, the use of DMT in the acacia tree known as the "Tree of Life" by ancient Egyptians, etc. Witches in medieval times possibly also used psychoactive ointments to achieve hallucinations. One of the reasons psychedelics were so common in ancient cultures is that organisms containing psychoactive compounds emerge on every continent, excluding Antarctica. These practices are still prevalent today for the cases of ayahuasca and iboga, where there's a growing number of retreats emerging, enabling people to take part in therapeutic ceremonies involving the aforementioned compounds. These cultures not only accept psychedelics, but have a culture built around them and properly educate their young about them and their sensible use.

### Why Are Psychedelics Banned?

Although laws concerning psychedelics differ from country to country their production, transport and use is generally illegal. However, it wasn't always that way. Before the 60s, these compounds were legal all over the world. So, what happened? In short, the US started military intervention in Vietnam in 1955. This prompted a counterculture movement, which opposed the Vietnam War and was haranguing people to stop enlisting. In order to stop this movement, the US government started the War on Drugs. By demonizing drugs like Cannabis, LSD and magic mushrooms in commercials and schools, prohibiting their use and medical research, and associating them with the counterculture was how the US government created the stigma on drugs, and used it for its expansionistic interests. It did so knowing that they were misinforming people and outright lying about the dangers, effects and medical



potential of these substances. If you perhaps don't believe me, maybe you will believe John Ehrlichman, Richard Nixon's top adviser and a key figure in the Watergate scandal, as he said in an interview with Harper's magazine: "The Nixon campaign in 1968, and the Nixon White House after that, had two enemies: the antiwar left and black people, you understand what I'm saying? We knew we couldn't make it illegal to be either against the war or black, but by getting the public to associate the hippies with marijuana and blacks with heroin, and then criminalizing both heavily, we could disrupt those communities, we could arrest their leaders, raid their homes, break up their meetings, and vilify them night after night on the evening news. Did we know we were lying about the drugs? Of course we did." Other countries followed swiftly, prohibiting medical research and funding antidrug campaigns. Today, we are living in the result of 60 years of misinformation and propaganda towards psychedelics.

### How Psychedelics Differ from Hard Drugs



There is no set definition for hard drugs, however, the qualities of hard drugs are generally the following: the drug has a high potential for addiction, no current accepted medical treatment use and a lack of accepted safety for use under medical supervision. All three of these statements either don't or barely apply to psychedelics. Firstly, there is no evidence that psychedelics cause any long term psychological trauma. Secondly, unless you've done any research on your own, you probably believe, that LSD and magic mushrooms (which you've probably heard of) are as addictive as heroin, cocaine and methamphetamines. However, not only are they not addictive, they are counter-addictive. Not only is it impossible for a person to be physically addicted to a psychedelic, but psychedelics are, in fact, used to cure addictions. Iboga has a reported 70-80 percent success rate with effective aftercare to cure meth addiction and is also used to cure heroin addiction. No other methodology is yet to come close to such effectiveness. Bill Wilson, the founder of Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), used LSD to cure his addiction to alcohol. He initially included LSD as a part of his

program, but had to eventually exclude it, as the US banned the substance. Psilocybin is also showing immense results in curing nicotine addiction, and many others and new studies are emerging, finding positive results with addiction treatment. You might say that while psychedelics might not cause physical addiction, they can cause psychological addiction. That is also extremely unlikely, as the nature of the psychedelic experience is not addictive. While stimulants (meth or cocaine) cause energized feelings and opioids (heroin) produce a relaxed euphoric state, the psychedelic experience is said to be more similar to non-ordinary forms of consciousness such as meditation, yoga, dreaming and near-death experiences. The psychedelic experience is notorious for being extremely difficult to describe.

### Medical and Therapeutic Use

Although the potential for curing addictions is incredible enough, it is not all these substances can help with in a medical sense. There were a lot of studies taking place in the 60s and earlier that were made impossible because of the prohibition during the War on Drugs. Luckily, there's a number of scientists currently working on using psychedelics for medical purposes, such as Rick Doblin, the founder of Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies (MAPS), who is FDA's recent decisions to both move the research into final Phase 3 stages, and to label the treatment with the important "Breakthrough Therapy" designation. Other notable scientists include Robert Carhart-Harris from Imperial College in London, Roland Griffiths, Ralph Metzner, and others who have all spoken about Psychedelic Therapy as means to help patients cope with depression, anxiety, PTSD and terminal illnesses. Evidence was collected from a 1965 study, concerning problems associated with terminal illnesses. Research consisting of providing a psychedelic experience for the dying was conducted. Of 17 dying patients who received LSD after appropriate therapeutic preparation, one-third improved "dramatically", one-third improved "moderately", and one-third were unchanged by the criteria of reduced tension, depression, pain, and fear of death.

With that said, it is important to note, that any scientific research is being done under controlled conditions and by professionals. A lot of people report having negative experiences, known as “bad trips”, while under influence of a psychedelic, however, that is a consequence of the careless and irresponsible use of powerful substances. As people cannot be trusted to use psychedelics responsibly, I believe these compounds will only ever be legal in a controlled therapeutic environment and with a trained professional, in order to greatly decrease the chances of a negative experience.

Lucijan Pustoslemšek



# Not a very United Kingdom!

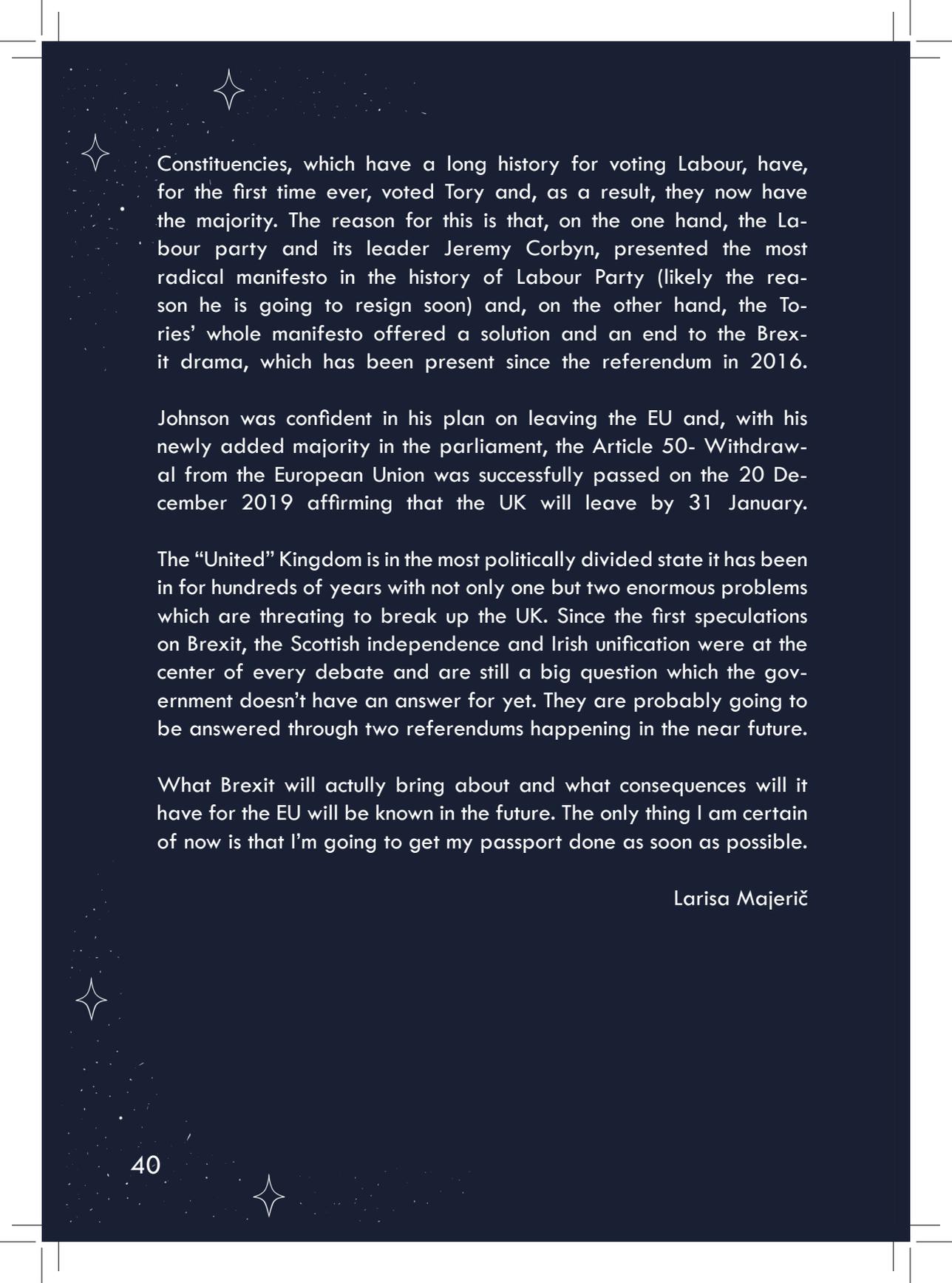
The political situation in the United Kingdom seems to be at its all-time low. On December 12, they held their fourth election in a span of five years, where the majority voted for the Conservative Party and its leader, the Prime Minister, Boris Johnson who considers this win the ultimate confirmation of the British nation on leaving the European Union.

Johnson is the third PM for the Conservatives since they won the majority in the last general election in 2015 and the party changed drastically since the position was occupied by David Cameron. He resigned after the Brexit referendum occurred and was replaced by Theresa May.

The situation May was thrown into was without a doubt a political mess. The post-Brexit state of confusion and panic would have been a tough one for anybody in charge. With that in mind, she still showed disastrously bad judgement in calling the 2017 “snap election” when she already had the majority. Her negotiations with the EU were poorly carried out and the constant delays didn’t do her any favours. Popular belief is that she was the worst PM in the living memory of the UK.

If we follow the opinion of the masses, her successor Boris Johnson should never have been chosen as the leader of the Tory party. Not only did he take over May’s place, his position was also secured by winning the latest general election. This win was historical for the Conservatives with a majority of 80 seats, which is the largest since 1987. However, on the other side of the political spectrum is the Labour party who was greatly disappointed by their worst performance since 1935 and have lost 60 seats since 2017.

The political map changed in favour of the Conservatives.



Constituencies, which have a long history for voting Labour, have, for the first time ever, voted Tory and, as a result, they now have the majority. The reason for this is that, on the one hand, the Labour party and its leader Jeremy Corbyn, presented the most radical manifesto in the history of Labour Party (likely the reason he is going to resign soon) and, on the other hand, the Tories' whole manifesto offered a solution and an end to the Brexit drama, which has been present since the referendum in 2016.

Johnson was confident in his plan on leaving the EU and, with his newly added majority in the parliament, the Article 50- Withdrawal from the European Union was successfully passed on the 20 December 2019 affirming that the UK will leave by 31 January.

The "United" Kingdom is in the most politically divided state it has been in for hundreds of years with not only one but two enormous problems which are threatening to break up the UK. Since the first speculations on Brexit, the Scottish independence and Irish unification were at the center of every debate and are still a big question which the government doesn't have an answer for yet. They are probably going to be answered through two referendums happening in the near future.

What Brexit will actually bring about and what consequences will it have for the EU will be known in the future. The only thing I am certain of now is that I'm going to get my passport done as soon as possible.

Larisa Majerič

# The “Plague” of January 2020

2020. The start of a new year and a new decade. Quite a number of people had high expectations of the year of 2020. Why high? While some things went well the year before, the majority went south, from Australian bush fires to the predictions and possibly a start of WWIII to the theme of this article: The “plague” of January 2020 or Corona virus. (By the way, I want to point out that my horoscope did not predict any of that.)

What even is *corona virus*?

These are a large family of viruses found in both animals and humans. Some infect people and are known to cause illnesses ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS).

The new virus is a novel corona virus, which means that it is a new strain of that virus that has not been previously identified in humans.

The outbreak started in December 2019 and originated in the city of Wuhan in central China. However, cases have later also been detected in other countries. The signs of infection are respiratory symptoms, fever and cough. A number of deaths have been linked to 2019-nCoV.

There are strong indications that initially the virus has spread from animals (bats) to humans. There is a popular belief, of the virus being just the worst case of a cold or the flu. People with 2019-nCoV infection, the flu, or a cold, typically develop respiratory symptoms such as fever, cough and runny nose. Even though many symptoms are alike, they are caused



by different viruses. Because of their similarities, it can sometimes be difficult to identify the disease based on symptoms alone. That's why laboratory tests are required to confirm if someone has 2019-nCoV.

It spreads through contact with an infected person. Simple disinfectants such as alcohol-based hand rub or water and soap can kill the virus, making it no longer possible for it to infect people. Older people and people with pre-existing medical conditions seem to be more at risk of developing a severe disease.

While we know that antibiotics do not work on viruses and are only effective on bacterial infections, there is still an extremely important question in the back of peoples minds; is there any specific medicine to treat or prevent the 2019-nCoV? The answer is sadly no. To this date (1 February 2020) there is no newly discovered medicine to treat or at least relieve the symptoms. However, those infected with 2019-nCoV should receive appropriate care to relieve and treat symptoms, and those with severe illness should receive optimized supportive care. Some specific treatments are under investigation and evaluation and will be tested through clinical trials.

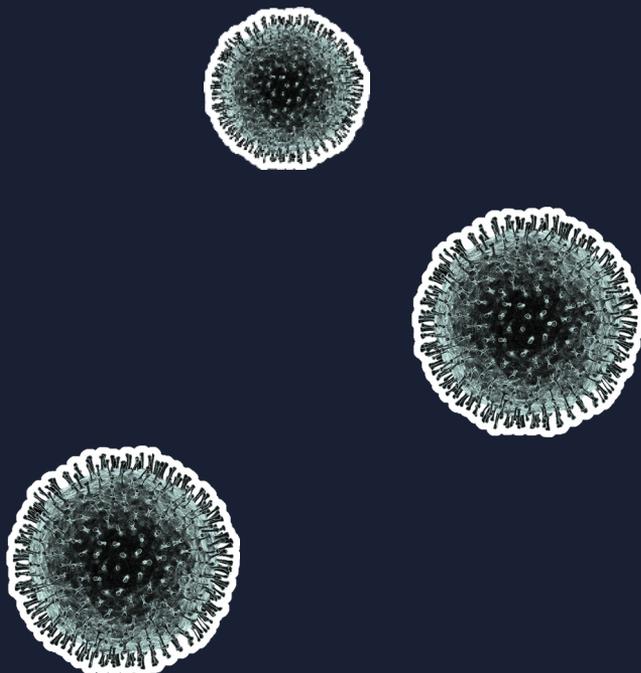
As always, it is recommended that people who have a cough, fever and difficulty breathing should seek medical care early. Patients should inform health care providers if they had travelled in the 14 days before they developed symptoms, or if they had been in close contact with someone who had been sick with respiratory symptoms.



It is highly advised that any travelling plans to China are delayed and if they cannot be, it is best to avoid markets where animals and poultry are found and avoid contact with people who have symptoms of respiratory infection. Anyone who develops respiratory symptoms within 14 days of a stay in Wuhan should seek medical attention and inform medical staff about their travel history.

This is a hot topic at the moment and everyone has their own opinion on the subject in question. Personally, I think, that the theme is very complex and interesting to write about, but it is hard to get concrete information as a consequence of panic and unreliability of the media and the news, which are heavily influenced by some of the most powerful politicians that cancelled their flights and limited travelling in and out of Wuhan or generally China. My honest opinion is that the extreme panic is probably completely unnecessary. This is neither the first nor is it the last virus the humanity had previously and will have to endure in the future.

Kaja Selinšek



*per aspera ad astra*

