



WOMAN'S HISTORY MONTH

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UNITY FOR EQUALITY

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Celebrating Women's History Month

By Jason Lee



Image from www.lenfestinstitute.org

It started with a parade in Santa Rosa, By 1980, President Jimmy Carter would California. The year was 1978 when Sonoma recognize National Women's History Week County first organized a Women's History as the week of March 8. A year later, Con-Week celebration, overlapping it with the gress would do the same; six years later in celebration of International Women's Day 1987, National Women's History Week would on March 8. Schools all over the county also become National Women's History Month. made sure to teach and celebrate women's Each year since then, the President official-impact on the world through pr sentations ly announces March as National Women's and an essay contest.History Month.

It may be important to establish first that This year, the theme of National Women's International Women's Day actually started History Month is "Celebrating Women Who earlier in the century with its first celebra-Tell Our Stories," and as such, a lot of tion in 1911. It was celebrated every year by emphasis is placed on the contributions of countries all over the world, and by 1975, women in media, entertainment, news, etc. the United Nations officially sponsored the Though the name suggests we celebrate holiday and continues to do so each year. historical achievements, we also celebrate Still, the concept of a national Amer can the women around us today who continue celebration of women would not come to to change the world.

fruition until Santa Rosa's in 1978. The week-

long celebration was a success, and soon For those wondering how to celebrate this other cities all over the country would adopt month, there are plenty of ways to broad-their own celebrations.en your understanding and appreciation

of women's impact on society. Learn about

feminist movements in history and in the present day by watching various documentaries. After centuries of obscuring and minimizing the achievements of women in history, we are now championing an era of just and deserved acknowledgement. Furthermore, learn more about women's history through museum tours (some of which are available online).month to look back and truly appreciate the impact of women all over.

Be sure to support women in actionable ways as well. Donate to local communities and causes that serve to help women. Some examples include programs that seek to aid girls in STEM, provide shelter and food, provide reproductive care, offer legal counsel, etc. Support can also mean frequenting women-owned businesses, advocating for women, and attending marches or conferences focused on women's rights. These actions do not have to be limited to the month of March either. Lift women up every day of the year, and celebrate the significance of women's contributions.

Finally, one of the best ways to celebrate Women's History Month is to celebrate the immediate women in your life. From mothers and daughters to close friends and coworkers, be sure to respectfully support those around you. Listen, learn, and acknowledge how much of an impact they have had on your life.





Video Games: The Good and The Bad

Almost every child nowadays has played because of increased food intake and lack of a video game growing up, and many don't exercise while playing games for extended periods of time. Lastly, gamers are also understandably show growing concern for being prone to vision-related issues as the increased time spent in front of a screen puts online playing games than doing other more strain on the eyes.

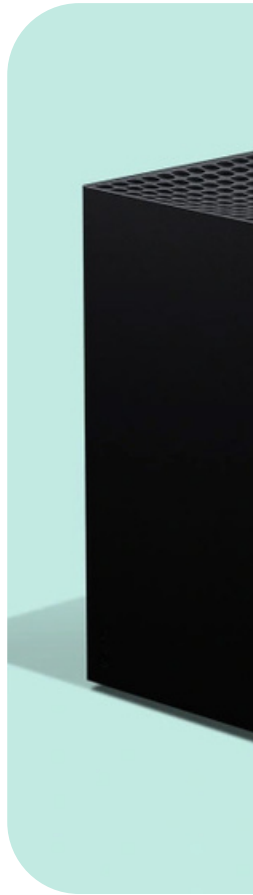
activities. Because of their addictive nature,

video games are often seen as harmful, but video games are not solely physically harmful either; they can have a plethora of mental health detriments too. Gamers

It's easy to call video games harmful. Flashing colors and other stimuli can keep playing games may have an addiction. Some people sit in one place for hours on end. People may experience withdrawal, apathy. One article from Harvard Health mentions towards other activities, weakened rela-

how gamers are more prone to developing relationships in real life, and increased negative carpal tunnel syndrome as well as other mood states. Other problems that may occur are insomnia, anxiety, and depression. Gaming is also correlated with higher rates of

obesity, which is thought to be a concern just yet.





photograph by Deanna Pai from nbcnews

While these are possible, more studies need to be done to strengthen the causal link between games and mental health. Thus, if you are a gamer or are concerned about one's gaming habits, you should know that moderation is the most important takeaway.

Yet, just because video games have harmful effects does not mean it doesn't have its benefits either. Many games offer an online community that people from all over the world use to interact with others and strengthen relationships. Though it is not face-to-face, there are still benefits in feeling like you are part of a group with shared interests. Additionally, games can be used to help people communicate, and there are reported effects in it being useful for

children who are autistic or have ADHD. The concept of making hard tasks feel like a game, or gamification, is useful for people trying to be productive too. Popular apps like Habitica and Finch gamify everyday tasks and make habit tracking fun. Many people benefit from staying on track and fostering their wellbeing; this leads to an improved mood and mental clarity.

Again, casting judgment on the potential of video games is a difficult decision with no clear answer. While an excess of gaming can harm one's body and mind, it is still a valid activity that provides benefits when playing in moderation. Games can be an enjoyable activity, but remember to pursue other forms of enrichment in order to have a balanced lifestyle.

by Jason Lee



Confronting Climate Change Through Art



Photograph by Chris Jordan

The impacts of climate change are commonly understood through daily reportage and expert commentary, but often these do not motivate or sympathize with us as well as visual arts. Numerous artists/ environmental advocates continue to disclose climatic disasters, both natural and human-induced, by focusing more on open expression and less on staggering facts contributed to climate anxiety, which are feelings of fear or stress connected to climate change.

Chris Jordan, an artist/photographer who developed a notable online gallery, *Midway: Message from the Gyre* (2009-Current), exhibiting the staggering, yet recurring consequences of public waste on wildlife over the North Pacific Gyre, other known as the Great Pacific Garbage Patch, by embedding discarded plastic-containing materials in the stom-

achs of scores of “dead baby albatrosses.” His earlier work, *Intolerable Beauty*, dubbed Jordan as an environmental advocate for his intensifying photographs of polluted cellphones, chargers, circuit boards, and bullet casings, marked by American consumerism, found in industrial scrap yards and shipping ports, all jumbled in myriads.

Nils Udo is another environmental artist/ activist whose ongoing online exhibit, *Art in Nature*, appeals to nature as an aesthetic. Featured in North America, India, Europe, and Japan, Udo’s technique includes visual play of organic plants, botanicals, and inorganic materials obtainable in each space. His following project, *Art in the Urban Space*, places trees and bamboo stems at the center of an urban space to follow his idea of witnessing the existence of nature in modern-day life.

Aida Sulova is a multimedia art director who inspires social change and community involvement through projects such as, *Once Upon a Plastic Bag*. This 2012 project, located in Kyrgyzstan, Central Asia, considered the issue of littering. As her solution, Sulova had designed a series of sizeable photographs and plastered them on some of the city's trash cans, portraying a cartoon-like human mouth opened wide and consuming an overspill of trash. Other segments of this project include a photographed series of plastic dump sites, again in Kyrgyzstan, depicting mounds of plastic extending as far as the eye can see. One even displayed a pair of donkeys near the South Shore of Issyk Kul, Kyrgyzstan picking at a pile of empty plastic bottles and bags. Lastly in her spare time, Sulova engages in personal projects which touch on her fascination for package materials. Labeled, *Package Reimagined*, Sulova refashions "store boxes, dividers, paper, pieces of wood, weird street finds, etc.," into jewelry pieces.

Olafur Eliasson is a Danish/ Islandic artist. Like Udo's strategy for using an open space to present his craft, Eliasson does so to unveil his series of light installations, which manifest the effects of climate change. His most momentous 2003 exhibition, *The Weather Project*, once located in the Turbine Hall at Tate Modern, London, contained a ceiling of aluminum frames bordered by mirror foil, and an arrangement of 200 mono-frequency lights to reflect the appearance of an indoor sunset. The underlying point was to instill one's reconnection with the natural world. Hence, a questionnaire by Eliasson to Tate Modern's employees including one which asked: 'To what extent are you aware of the weather outside your workplace?' Later in 2014, Eliasson devised the *Ice Watch* project, in which Eliasson had positioned 30 massive blocks of glacial ice, extracted from the waters of Greenland, to melt in London, Paris, and Copenhagen to uplift awareness of global warming.

These are just a few of countless environmental artists/ activists new and old, who continue to spread the message of nature falling victim to the harrowing impact of climate change and human-induced contamination. This boldly inspiring take on protesting for a greener world transcends harsh, obvious facts by appealing to a viewer's emotions, and sparking a cry for action.



Photograph by Nils Udo



Photograph by Aida Sulova



Photograph by Dan Chung/The Guardian

by Charmaine Swasey

Renewable Energy Transitioning in the West vs. Africa

By Lucas Giordano

There is undeniable buzz in the social, political, and economicspheres of international discourse around the need to pivot away from carbon-based energy and into the many renewable alternatives. The imminent threat the burning of fossil fuels poses to our global ecosystem, coupled with the dire humanitarian consequences of rising sea-levels and global temperatures, has many Western nations rushing to implement the alternatives. But how well are these alternatives being embraced in affluent Western Countries, and how will countries with underdeveloped energy infrastructures begin to make this expensive transition?



As the economic trendsetter of the Western Hemisphere, the United States' response to the climate crisis has been somewhat underwhelming in comparison to its European counterparts. A study conducted by the Pew Research Center reports that while nearly 70% of United States citizens are in favor of developing the renewable energy sector, only 31% think that renewables should come to completely replace fossil-fuels, with the other 69% favoring a hybrid system that uses both energy sources.¹ This sort of ideation is part of the reason the United States, despite extreme warnings from domestic organizations like NASA, has only transitioned roughly 20% of its energy usage to renewables.²

Nadeem, R. Americans largely favor U.S. taking steps to become carbon neutral by 2050
² Energy.gov, Renewable Energy
³ Enerdata, Renewables estimated to cover 46% of Germany's power consumption in 2022

Despite being a bit slower to the punch than certain European countries, the United States is by-and-large participating in momentous shifts towards the renewable alternative, a phenomenon accelerated by the current war raging in Ukraine. With global insecurity around oil exports caused by the Russian invasion, investments in renewables have reached all-time highs, with the International Energy Agency reporting an estimated \$1.4 trillion put into renewable projects in 2022.⁴ However, to avert the most severe consequences of climate change, emerging economies in Asia and Africa will need support in making this transition as well. In a fast-changing global economy that celebrates clean energy and looks down on coal-burning, many developing economies may find themselves unjustly scorned by global economic policies that limit carbon emissions, such as carbon taxes and tariffs. In the context of Africa, the potential of renewable energy is known but not as prioritized as it is in more developed economies. This is partly because Africa accounts for less than 1% of global emissions, a statistic that says more about the need for more electrical infrastructure on the continent than it does about the country's need for clean energy specifically. In an interview with the president of the African Development Bank, Akinwumi Adesina, he expresses that Africa is simply in a different point of their energy transition. The continent will be able to reduce emissions by 40% by moving from fuelwood to gas for cooking, an example of how Africa still relies on certain methods of energy generation deemed archaic by developed Western economies. Furthermore, Adesina notes that about 600 million Africans, or half of the continent's population, lack access to electricity. Thus, it is the priority of the African continent to give its people access to modern electrical appliances and capabilities, rather than hinder this development with the necessity of achieving it solely with renewables.⁵

4 S. Sengupta, *The Shift to Renewable Energy is Speeding Up. Here's How.*

As the global conversation around renewable energy develops in the coming years, it is important to understand the relativity of this issue. Countries with a high bandwidth for major industrial overhaul (which are usually the countries responsible for the most emissions) should potentially be held to different standards than a developing nation still trying to have an accessible energy infrastructure. Unless global economic leaders are willing to make sizable investments in renewable energy for developing countries, their transition to renewables can be understood as a secondary concern to providing accessible electricity to the majority of the population.



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St. Patrick's Day Then and Now

Written By: Jason Lee

Every year on March 17th, people all over the world celebrate St. Patrick's Day. This celebration dates back to around the tenth century when Irish people would celebrate the Roman Catholic feast day of St. Patrick.

St. Patrick himself is credited as Ireland's patron saint who brought Christianity to Ireland. Though some details on his life are clouded by myth and tall tales, historians say St. Patrick was actually British. At the age of 16, he was captured by Irish raiders and remained in captivity for six years. He eventually escaped but returned to Ireland having experienced a vision that urged him to become a missionary there.

Many Irish people were pagans before St. Patrick devoted his life toward converting those in Ireland to Christianity. It is because of his achievements and legacy that the celebration of St. Patrick's Day first began. It would be a long while before the holiday and its modern celebrations would ingrain itself into American culture. In 1772, Irish soldiers marched the streets to celebrate,



and sparked a growing interest in St. Patrick's Day parades. Nowadays, almost three million people flock to New York City to watch the parade, and even more are able to observe online. Though an everlasting tradition, Covid-19 put a stop to the celebration in 2021.

However, it has since resumed, and promises to ensure a good time for all who choose to partake in the merriment.





There are many ways that St. Patrick's Day is celebrated. People can decorate with shamrocks, eat food, wear green, or do a mix of them all. In Chicago, one citywide tradition is to dye the Chicago River green. This tradition dates back to 1962 when city workers used a dye to monitor sewer discharge into the river. The dye turned the water green and sparked the idea of using the dye to color the river

green for St. Patrick's Day. Thus, the Chicago River is annually dyed completely green for a few hours on that day. Furthermore, other parades occur all over America in cities like Philadelphia, Georgia, and Boston. Arkansas is known for hosting the world's shortest St. Patrick's Day parade with an astounding 98 feet long march. The cities of Dublin all over the country like Dublin, California and Dublin, Ohio hold parades as well to celebrate their Irish namesake. In Ireland itself, the holiday



had been an annual religious feast for hundreds of years. It was only until the 20th century that it became a national holiday. Though there were military parades and Irish pride each holiday, the merry festivities that we know of today would not start until the 1970s. It was by the 1970s in an effort to promote tourism that the parades and spectacles became grand, and green was a color you would find everywhere. Nowadays, the holiday has become a great way to celebrate a rich Irish culture and enjoy time with friends and family all over the world. Happy St. Patrick's Day!



Photograph from www.womansday.com

How Holi is Celebrated

Known as the Festival of Colors, Holi is one of India's most appreciable celebrations which brings new meaning to the arrival of spring and is celebrated every March in accordance with the last full moon on the Hindu calendar. This 2023, Holi starts on March 7th and ends on March 8th .

Typically on the first day of Holi, the yearly ritual known as Holika Dahan is honored through a bonfire to manifest the success of goodness over sin based upon the Hindu tale of Hiranyakashipu, an Asura king who thought of himself as a god and heavily desired all subjects to worship him, until his son, Prahlada, defied him by pledging loyalty to Lord Vishnu, causing Hiranyakashipu to turn to his sister, Holika, to kill his son. Holika's plan to fool Prahlada by asking him to step into a burning pyre with her had failed since her purpose was sinful, whereas Prahlada was good which saved him. Once the bonfire commences, crowds join in prayer to ward evil spirits, then walk around the bonfire several times while carrying vessels filled with water. Once the circulation is complete, the vessels are emptied, followed by dancing, and singing.

The second day of Holi may be more known for its sprightly practices of flinging colorful water balloons and powder, known as Rangwali Holi. But what some don't know is that such vibrant hues signify the mythical love between the Hindu deities of Radha and Krishna. Often recognized together as "Radha Krishna," their legendary relationship may indicate the union between "the human soul and the divine," as stated by the Daily Art Magazine.

In addition to color, each represents cultural value maintained in India. Red, for example, reflects love and marriage. In Hindu culture, traditional brides don red to convey to their groom that they are prosperous, fertile, and will maintain marital bliss. Blue marks tranquility for the sea and sky and is also believed to be the color of the God Krishna. Orange, or saffron, stands for bravery and strength of the Indian people as depicted on the Indian flag. It is also a powerful holy color for religious Hindu groups such as gurus and yogis, which is why all wear orange robes and turbans.

Green stands for joy, nature, and new beginnings. Purple represents wealth and nobility. In Hinduism however, purple signifies wisdom and unity As indicated in Yoga Journal, the Crown Chakra (the 7th stage in yoga tradition associated with spiritual consciousness) is responsible for the awareness and transformation of one's soul to reach divinity. Black and white are not involved in Holi since black specifies evil and dark desires, and white is typically used for funerals.

Several traditional Holi food includes gujiya, a delectable, deep-fried North Indian pastry made with khoya (dried whole milk), raisins, and nuts; lassi, a yogurt-based drink which can be made sweet or savory; malpua, a crispy, fluffy Indian style pancake usually coated in sugar syrup or rabri (condensed-milk dish with a porridge-like texture); and puran poli, a sweet flatbread filled with chana dal (chickpeas cooked with tomatoes, onions, garlic, and spices).



Photograph by Ferrantraite // Getty Images



Photograph from www.seattleschild.com

Many communities outside of India also partake in Holi. In New York City for instance, colored powder is thrown, and white is customary to wear throughout the festival. Bushwick, Brooklyn specifically holds an annual spring art and music event which includes performances and a color powder fight. In Melbourne, Australia, Holi is celebrated with multicultural performances such as Bollywood dancing and Indian drummers, as well as spa taring each other in colorful powder. Other countries who celebrate Holi in the same way are Pakistan, Dubai, the UK, Madrid, Berlin, São Paulo, and Toronto.





THE LASTING EFFECTS OF COVID-19 ON EDUCATION

By Ruht Lovos

In 2019, restaurants shut down, countries closed their borders, and even schools closed down because of COVID-19. Although it might've started as only a short break, we later came to find out that these shutdowns would last much longer than anticipated. Due to these unexpected changes, students, teachers, and even technology had to adapt in order for education to continue advancing during a time where everything else seemed to have paused. The seriousness of COVID took everyone by surprise as governments began to announce lockdowns to try and slow the spread of this disease. Despite social distancing, we could not allow for students to lose out on an education. As a result of the long-term shutdowns, accommodations were made so that classes would be able to resume online. Though the concept of online classes was nothing new, transitioning the entire country online was no simple feat.

As teachers began to prepare for what would be their new reality, they attended impromptu meetings, sat through quickly thrown together powerpoints, and knew their plans could change at any moment.

Although this was dependent on each individual school, it seems there were issues teachers faced all across the country. As the new wave of online teaching began, many teachers decided to leave education as well. More and more was expected from them, and many had hit their breaking points. Before COVID, teachers were already working many hours to learn how to utilize different forms of technology. Not only were teachers now expected to transition all of their curriculums online, they were also expected to host virtual meetings with over 20 students and help them troubleshoot. For many, this transition was difficult because they had only ever taught in traditional classrooms with very minimal technology. As a result, many decided not to adapt to this remote teaching style and left the education world.

Other education problems arose because of COVID too, and it affected both teachers and students. Not every student was able to join class at the allotted time due to not having a computer to use, having to share a computer, and possibly not even having an internet connection at home. There were many aspects that were





There were many aspects that were difficult to take care of until after the issue arose. Due to some of these problems, teachers had to record their lessons before class and upload them for students to watch and complete the correlating assignments on their own time. Without someone to hold them accountable, many kids were not participating, submitting work, or learning the required material. As students' grades began to drop, parents were also frustrated, not only with their students but with teachers as well. Teachers had to learn how to work with these new frustrations.

At times, it was difficult for teachers to communicate to their students how to navigate various online platforms, and many were still trying to figure it out for themselves. As many students dialed to join class, others students learned it was harder for teachers to give disciplinary actions or to enforce them. This enabled students to feel comfortable not paying attention to class and doing what they weren't supposed to on the computers. They joined class for the purpose of attendance rather than learning. Now that students are back in the classroom, they are still displaying some of these behaviors.

With education being so rooted in technology, not only has the ways of teaching changed but also what is being taught as well. Many kids are not learning how to adequately spell due to the autocorrect functions that computers offer. This makes it harder to track students' progress. Some teachers have accepted the changes that are occurring and have shifted to guiding their students to use platforms like Grammarly to ensure the quality of their work. Still however, distractions and this new educational system have caused students to underperform and not effectively learn the material

As so many teachers left the academic field, many school districts were understaffed. With less undergraduate students choosing to go into education as a profession there seems to be a shortage of educators. This has led to classrooms having more students than they usually do, lessening the focus they might receive and the quality of learning. Due to this, many districts have waived the requirements they require to hire teachers and have tried to expedite the hiring process for recent college grads. As they begin their careers, this is the only experience they have, making it easier for them to adapt.

Yet, teachers who have been in the field for multiple years voice out their thoughts on the ways school districts could improve the current treatment of their educators. Despite the longer hours and extra meetings teachers used to learn the platforms their schools used for remote education, pay remained the same. Although some districts made appreciation baskets for their educators, many felt that was not enough. Teachers on average make \$65,000 per year. Yet, much of this they must utilize to maintain their classrooms and fund supplies. Although there are benefits offered to teachers such as healthcare and pensions, they don't always outweigh the stress teachers face.

Education is a field which is going to continue to change and adapt to the situations of society. As these changes occur, we must ensure that everyone understands the new advances and are able to transition smoothly for the success of the students. Without a doubt, COVID-19 has altered the education system today, and it's important to change with it and appreciate the teachers who work so hard to educate the youth.

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