

By Students, For Students



**RACISM IS A
PANDEMIC**

Anti-Black Racism as a Public Health Crisis

Jennifer Zhong, Associate News Editor

Anti-Black racism has always been a systemic issue, but with the killing of George Floyd in 2020 and the significant COVID-19 inequities playing out in countries around the world with a Black minority population, the issue can no longer be avoided. This spring, the University of Toronto (U of T) will be offering a new graduate course (CHL 7001H S5) analyzing the public health consequences of race-based criminal justice data in real time . . .

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Concerns Over Living in Residence Amid a Global Pandemic

Sharon Lee, The Mike Contributor

For the 2020-21 academic year, during which most classes are taking place online due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, student residences at the University of Toronto (U of T) have indicated that they are continuing their operations and have spaces available for students to live in . . .

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US Capitol Riots, Double Standards of Civil Unrest

Nicole Gordon, The Mike Contributor

On January 6, 2021, people around the world were glued to their television, watching U.S. citizens attack the U.S. Capitol. Since the 2020 election started, Trump declared that he would win, but when he didn't, he said that the election was rigged. After he lost, he desperately searched for a loophole. He fed his supporters lies and encouraged them to use violence to overturn the election results . . .

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The Stillness of House of Hummingbird

Sana Mohsin, Managing Editor

Lately I've been thinking of how much we talk about life when this pandemic ends, how we hold onto this hope that our routines will go back to how they were before, untouched,

or at least with minimal scarring. As pessimistic as this sounds, there isn't an end in sight, at least not yet. So how do we adapt? Do we continue to yearn for a more carefree time, or do we start to adjust? . . .

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A Day in Damascus

A photo essay describing daily life in Damascus, Syria

Maria Kotob, Photo Editor

Years of tragedy and news headlines have masked the beauty of a country that perseveres. Syria, known for its ancient history and now for its suffering, has been overlooked by the majority of the world. The misconceptions and stereotypes could not run deeper than Damascus' plains, deserts, and mountains. Hidden gems make up an entire country as moments amongst kind people form, with a song of acceptance ringing in the background.

Damascus, the capital of Syria, is known as the "City of Jasmine," with these white flowers growing in volumes in front of homes and across deserted land. These flowers, although simple, carry a heavy scent of nostalgia. Their soft and warm smell is an understatement of the scent that dances in the wind.

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Populism and Nationalism: Here to Stay?

Despite Trump's loss, populism and nationalism are still prominent in the United States and the world

Evangeline Cowie, The Mike Contributor

University is a stressful place; with exams, deadlines, and a lot of pressure. On July 14 2015, Donald Trump trademarked the slogan "Make America Great Again," following his announcement of his run for president. This slogan quickly became the essence of Trump's electoral journey, as well as his time in the office, bringing about an era of nationalism and populism. This slogan inspires images of hope and prosperity, painting a world of American dominance. Over the course of Trump's term, nationalism was paired with populism. Populism is an approach to politics centered on prioritizing the people over the elite, whoever the "people" or the "elite" may be. Trump's political strategy rested on a mix of nationalism and populism, focusing on American success while also challenging fundamental American institutions; representing the "voice" of the forgotten and limiting the influence of liberalism. While Trump's term has come to an end, ideas of populism and nationalism have been es-

established within the mind of many Americans, raising the question: are the ideologies here to stay?

Populism and Nationalism

Before considering the resilience of nationalism and populism, it is important to discuss the implications of both ideas. Nationalism is a rather simple idea of essentially placing national interest and sovereignty above all else. Nationalism is hardly a new idea and has often directed the political interests of many countries. This concept invokes the desire to dominate over other countries and inspires national pride within the population. Over the course of political history, liberalism has widely overtaken nationalism as the main concept of political development, prioritizing interdependence rather than prioritizing national interest. However, Trump has replaced American interest above all else, setting a new precedent for American politics.

Populism, on the other hand, is more complex. As stated above, populists develop political action on the idea of working for "the people" against "the elite." Populism can be simplified as "anti-establishment," focused on fighting the status quo for the sake of the people. Populism is not an ideology in itself and does not have particular placement on the political spectrum, though the main forms of recent populism have been associated with the far-right politics. Populism is also illiberal in nature and attempts to disassociate liberalism with democracy, striving for illiberal democratic political organization . . .

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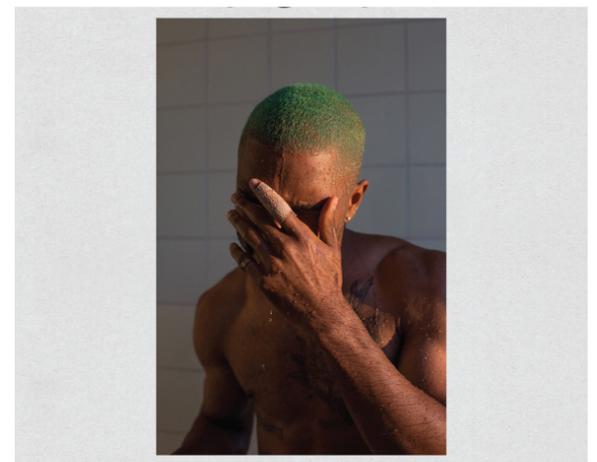
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Advocacy and Allyship

Aloysius Wong, Associate Opinion Editor

Despite COVID-19 restrictions, the advocacy work around numerous causes has continued, many of which were sparked or renewed by tragic events such as the death of George Floyd last May. While Black Lives Matter (BLM) mobilized with protests and marches in the United States and cities around the world — including Toronto — many supported from afar, opting to donate funds or drive the message forward on social media instead. [...] What constitutes an activist, advocate, or ally? . . .

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Research on Student Mental Health During Pandemic Shows Concerning Trends

Fatima Azam, The Mike Staff Writer and Jennifer Zhong, Associate News Editor

As we approach the one-year mark of the COVID-19 pandemic, mental health remains one of the top concerns for students. Social isolation and online learning, on top of other stresses from the pandemic, have continued to put pressure on students and the uncertain future of their academic studies and public safety has only contributed more stress . . .

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Three Ways to Clear Your Mind

Yusra Shafi, The Mike Contributor

The Winter Semester is in full swing, and we've barely had the chance to take it all in! The pandemic marked the beginning of a new and anxiety-ridden lifestyle. The COVID-19 pandemic, in the interests of public safety, has meant social isolation and taking a (seemingly endless) break from our day-to-day activities. I, like many others, have felt extreme stress with regards to current events . . .

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The Best Romantic Comedies to Watch this Valentine's Day

Rosie Rotundo, Arts Editor

Whether you are welcoming Valentine's day with a special someone or on your own, the holiday is always worth celebrating, and what

better way to ring in the holidays than with a lineup of romantic comedies. Everyone knows that all of the greatest love stories come from film. Here at the Mike, we have compiled a list of rom coms that include . . .

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American Exceptionalism and Orientalism in Arab Liberation

Why an understanding of Western perceptions of the East is necessary for understanding American intervention in the Arab world

Yasmeen Atassi, Opinions Editor

To understand American Exceptionalism, one must first understand the United States' perception of itself as the purveyor of global democracy. This perception emerged alongside that of the nation, as the founding fathers debated the future and values of this new nation. Beginning as early as the 18th century, the United States demonstrated its firm stance on democracy as it attempted to bestow this democracy on other nations. But understanding this sense of responsibility towards the spread of democracy is tied to the realization that the responsibility does not stand unbiased by the multiple different facets that define nations across the globe. These facets point particularly to the ethnic and religious identities of the nations and territories that are often the subject

of American interest. The persistent historical interest of the United States in the Middle East relies heavily on the American perceptions of race and religion, particularly through the lens of 'Orientalism', because of prevailing misconceptions of non-European nations and idealization of Western democracies bestowed by American agents over the independent abilities to self-govern.

Beginning from the very emergence of the American democracy after the civil war, the concept of American Exceptionalism continued to grow and spread during the 20th and 21st centuries. What distinguishes the more recent attempts at creating stations of American-sanctioned democracy from previous attempts was the motivation, particularly in

regards to competing political ideologies and the threat to American dominance. This specifically speaks to the tensions created during the second World War and the Cold War as the political structures that slowly gained traction in Eastern Europe and Asia exacerbated American foreign efforts to maintain governing structures that benefited them and their national security.

The most prominent of these tensions can be divided into two distinct historical phenomena; the threat of communism and the spreading sentiments of self-governance in post-colonial nations. These two phenomena are essential in the discussion of the Middle East because they converge to create the second Nahda, or Arab Renaissance, in the

mid 20th century onwards. As the nations of the Middle East slowly shed their state of formal colonialism and began to emerge as independent nation states, efforts of nation building were bolstered by the desire for self-governance and a rejection of imperial structures.

After decades under colonial European rule, the nations of the Arab world, with Egypt and Iraq under British rule and Syria, Lebanon, Morocco and Algeria under French rule, were freed from the counter-productive structures of governance that not only forced European ideologies onto these nations and their people...

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When Can We Proclaim a Return to Normalcy?

Looking towards the COVID-19 vaccine and the future impact for students

Chiara Greco, Editor-in-Chief

With the COVID-19 virus now a part of our collective culture, and surely not disappearing any time soon, the temptation to forget its existence and simply return to "normal" seems un-doable. But, with the prospect of both the Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna vaccine, along with many others, there is a hope that we can regain a small sliver of normality; the question of when is all that remains.

In early December, the federal government promised a cohesive and systematic rollout of vaccines for those on the front lines. This initial rollout promised many working in the health care sector and in emergency rooms that they could look forward to some type of optimism. Though, now in mid-January, with

vaccines delayed for Canadians and a Pfizer shortage, this optimism returned to cynicism. In conjunction with this, Ontario is now well into its second lockdown phase, though it's hard to compare Doug Ford's current stay at home orders to the original lockdown measures from April.

Full lockdowns are a necessary part of flattening the curve of the pandemic, a part which Ford has arguably been quite lax about. Despite these stay at home measures and the vaccine rollouts, albeit limited, cases are still growing alongside death tolls. The sentiment of regaining optimism in our government to make the right decisions and regaining optimism in returning back to normal seems almost like a

fantasy, or dare I say, feels utopian.

While Ontario is still taking the hit from COVID-19 outbreaks, vaccine rollouts have tentatively returned to schedule during this first week of February. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, after speaking with the CEO of Pfizer, noted that "despite the slowdown, the company will fulfill its contractual promise to deliver four million doses to Canada by the end of March."

As of February 2, the Ottawa News Bureau reported that Trudeau also announced a deal with the pharmaceutical company Novavax to produce its COVID-19 vaccine in Canada. The deal the federal government signed will allow the com-

pany to make their vaccine at a new Montreal facility that is still being constructed. While this is a major step forward, vaccines produced in Canada most likely will not be seen for quite some time. As such, it remains unclear as to whether or not this deal will help the federal government in achieving its goal of having all Canadians vaccinated by the end of September. A goal which as of now feels pretty unrealistic.

Apart from vaccine rollout, universities and colleges across Ontario have been functioning purely online since the start of 2021. . .

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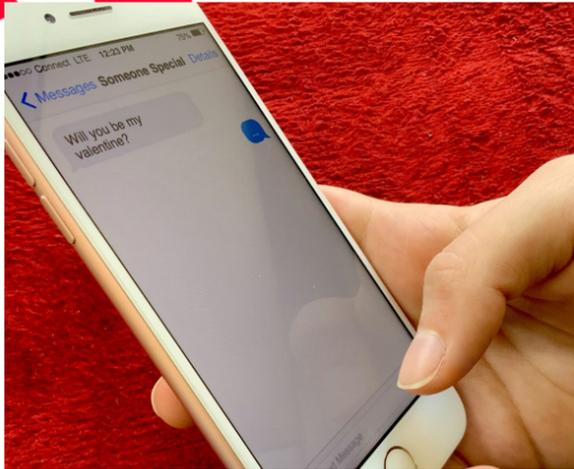
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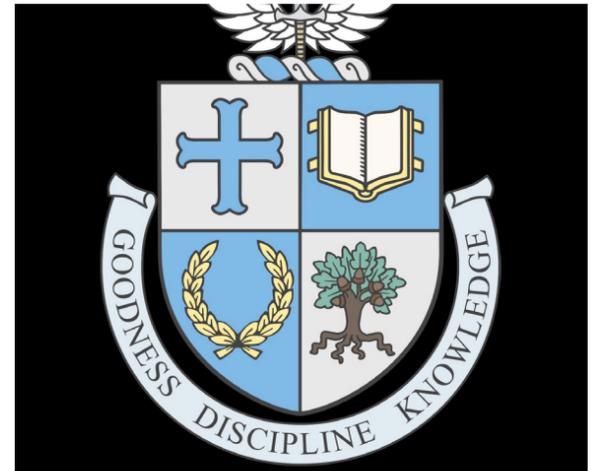


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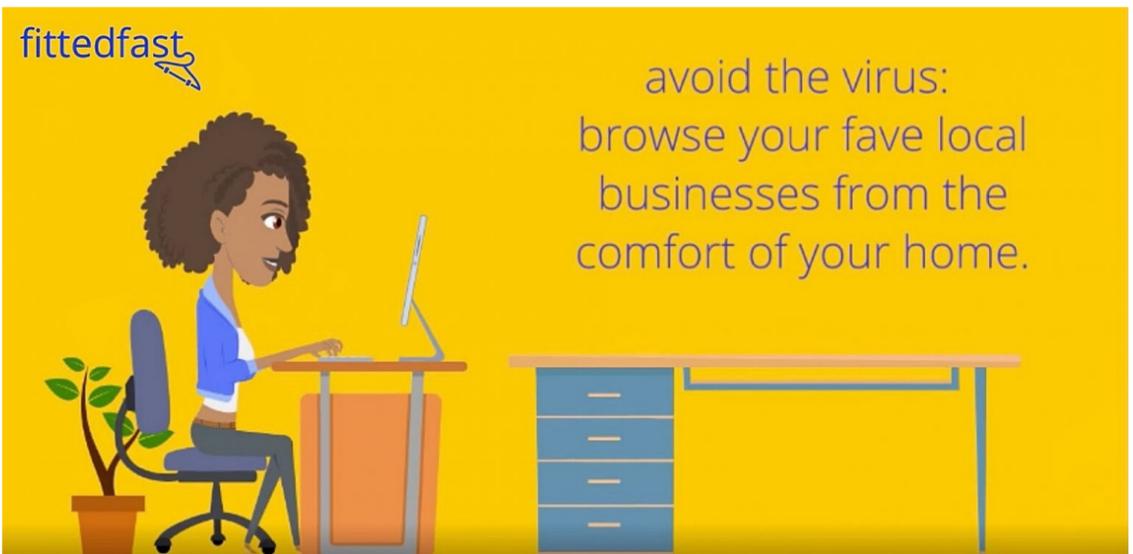


Canada's Lagging COVID-19 Vaccination Efforts

Emily Allison, Associate News Editor

The COVID-19 vaccine roll out is beginning to accelerate worldwide, yet there is still confusion and frustration as to why Canada has been lagging so far behind. While President Joe Biden projects that every American adult will have access to immunization by May, Canada's unofficial timeline aims for September. With supply shortages and delays in distribution, Canada faces a long road ahead before it can expect the country to return to normal . . .

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Shopping Local with Fittedfast

Chiara Greco, Editor-in-Chief

Fittedfast is a student-led organization working to bridge the gap between on-line shopping and the local business scene. The organization has been featured on Breakfast Television Toronto, and it has also won the annual pitch competition hosted by U of T's The Hub for \$2,000. The organization was originally developed back in 2019 by fourth-year U of T student Keturah Osinde, and has since grown . . .

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The Art of Nonchalance

Josephine Murphy, The Mike Contributor

We all aspire to be masters of nonchalance, individuals with a certain effortlessly elegant style and natural charisma. We chase what the Italians call "sprezzatura," or the 'sprezzy style': to "make whatever is done or said appear to be without effort and almost any thought about it." Sprezzatura is not a mere sentiment, but a classic beauty ideal in the world of fashion. Its secret lies not so much in what one wears, but how one wears it. It's all about cultivating and projecting finesse . . .

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The Important Role of Pets in the Pandemic

Alessia Tenaglia, The Mike Staff Writer

The global pandemic has changed and still is changing many of our lives. We have downloaded apps out of boredom. We have felt isolated and disconnected regardless of

how many social media accounts we had. There were days we had to shut off the news, deciding to focus our attention on something we could control. Most of us were given plenty of time and with this new and unexpected allocation of time . . .

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For the Love of Sports!

St. Mike's Breanna Veneruz on mental health, body image, and academic success

Hannah Mercer, The Mike Contributor

Breanna Veneruz is a fourth year St. Mike's student majoring in Human Biology and minoring in Psychology and Italian. Breanna is also a close friend of mine, and I think that her story can inspire students to balance their academic life with movement and fun.

Breanna has played hockey from ages 8 to 18 in her hometown of Thunder Bay, Ontario. She has expressed her love for playing sports and practicing with a team as they work towards a common goal. Breanna has explained that she "never had to worry about getting exercise" when she played

hockey growing up. "It was already provided for me...it was there." It was a part of a familiar routine. Breanna has reflected on the comradery of her hockey experience, she tells The Mike that she "really enjoyed spending time with other girls in that sport setting; that team setting that I loved."

But as she progressed through her first year at the University of Toronto (U of T) without playing a team sport, Breanna noticed a difference in herself. "Reflecting on my year I said, wow, this is probably the worst year I've experienced...I was crying because

of grades, feeling sorry for myself not being the perky, happy self that I normally was," she recalled.

Breanna knew she needed to shake things up. "This year it became evident . . .

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Soccer's African 'Slave Trade'

How thousands of young African children are given false promises and sold fake dreams

Lorenzo Canneri, News Editor

For many athletes, a trial at one of Europe's elite soccer clubs is a dream come true. The prospect of being able to play at the highest echelons of the club is extremely tantalizing for any would-be player. This is especially the case for young players in Africa, where making it on any European team would mean the possibility for social mobility and a brighter future for their family. Many African players look up to stars like Didier Drogba or Samuel Eto'o for inspiration. However, players like those are sparse and far between. The reality for many players is almost the exact opposite to fame and stardom. Behind the value of European soccer hides

a world of trafficking and abuse, directed towards young African kids deceived with fake promises.

It is estimated that more than 15,000 children are trafficked into Europe every year with the false promises of trials and the ability to play in Europe. The Culture Foot Solitaire (CFS), a non-profit organization aimed at protecting the rights of young players, stated that they have found 7,000 reported cases in Paris alone between 2005 and 2014. The best-case scenario for many is that the promises of trials at top soccer clubs were completely false and they are left alone in countries they do not know.

In the worst case, they are subjected to abuse and forced into illegal work just to be able to survive.

This is an issue that has been present in the world of soccer for more than two decades to the extent that in 2003 the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) introduced Article-19, banning the transfer of players . . .

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Need Something New On Your Timetable?

The best electives to take at U of T

Athena Bucci, The Mike Staff Writer

Whether you need to fill a breadth requirement, gain an extra credit, or are looking for something new to learn, electives are a great way to freshen up your timetable with something different. We asked some students to share some of their favourite electives. If you're not sure what to take next term, check out the list we've compiled of the best electives.

1. MGR100H — Introduction to Modern Greek

If you're interested in learning a new language, take Introduction to Modern Greek. The professor, who is born and raised in Greece, includes lessons on Greek culture and makes it easy for non-Greek students to learn. You can even take the continuing courses for a deeper knowledge of the language and culture!

2. SDS381H — Intro to Trans Studies

This course looks into transgender issues — legal, historical, political, healthcare, media representations, etc. — and how they play an important role in everyday life. The assignments are mostly creative based, which help make the class really fun.

3. WGS271Y — Gender in Popular Culture

This course is designed to analyze the different elements of pop culture, such as music videos and TV shows. The class gets to discuss these elements through a feminist lens and queer representation.

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The Importance of Movement and Its Benefits on the Brain and the Body

Alessia Baptista, Lifestyle Editor

For as long as I can remember, sports and fitness have always been a big part of my life. Keeping active has played a crucial role in maintaining good mental and physical health, as well as being a source of entertainment with friends or on my own. This being said, the importance of exercise is important now more than ever in our current lockdown situation. There isn't nearly as much exercise in the majority of our day to day schedules now that we no longer have the privilege of walking around campus. . .

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Moving Forward: U of T Fall Plans For Return To In-Person Activities This Fall

Jennifer Zhong, Associate News Editor

As COVID-19 vaccinations increase, the University of Toronto (U of T) is hoping that it can return to in-person activities this fall. "Starting this September, we are optimistic that most courses, student services and co-curricular activities will be able to proceed in person, with the possible exception of large-scale gatherings," says U of T President, Meric Gertler, in a letter to the U of T community on March 8. Gertler also noted that U of T plans to maintain flexibility . . .

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New COVID-19 Travel Regulations: Roadblock for International Students

Lorenzo Canneri, News Editor

Languages Canada, a national non-profit representative for 203 accredited English and French Language education programs, has recently spoken up against the new stringent regulations. "The latest requirements imposed by the government is taking away the ability to work for the 19,000 Canadians employed in our sector by unnecessarily choking the flow of international students," said Gonzalo Peralta, Executive Director of Languages Canada . . .

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Quarantine Hobbies: Reflections from a Non-Creative

Demetra Nikolakakis, The Mike Staff Writer

I'm not what you'd call a creative person. Before the pandemic, most of my time at home was spent watching Netflix or playing video games. While

I've dabbled in baking and photography over the years, I never really stuck to any hobbies and my art skills are basically nonexistent. I've always wanted to try things like painting and pottery, but between clumsiness and always being busy, I never actually started . . .

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History and Investigation

While Uyghur Muslims have historically faced discrimination, there is an alarming increase in proactive policies that have codified discrimination towards Uyghur Muslims into law in recent years. Since 2014, an increase in policies directed at infringing on the freedoms and basic human rights of these ethnic groups have been observed. This includes government sponsored monitors deployed to reside in Uyghur homes as well as the implementation of video surveillance. Since April 2017, internment camps have been operating and the Chinese authorities have detained up to a million Uyghurs and other Muslim minorities. While they have been framed as “re-education camps,” detainees have been subjects to physical abuse, psychological torture, forced labour, sexual violence, forced sterilization, and other attempts at preventing Uyghur births. Furthermore, symbols and items associated with Islam are prohibited, which can be seen as an attempt to erase Uyghur culture. These atrocities have not been limited to detainees in the internment camps. The prevention of procreation within Uyghur women is common as an attempt to prevent the Uyghur population from growing.

Terms, employed to designate Uyghur populations, have presented them as dangers to society. The Chinese government has framed the Uyghur population as “backwards,” “untrustworthy,” and “terrorists.” They have presented the internment of Uyghurs as attempts to protect the Chinese population through the reeducation of the Muslim populations. The process of mass internment has also been described as “eradicating tumours,” according to a report published in early March 2021. As the situation worsens . . .

What is the World to do?

Taking a look into the international response to the Uyghur Genocide

Evangeline Cowie, The Mike Staff Writer

Against all hopes, extreme human rights violations have yet to become a thing of the past. Since 2014, there have been active attempts by the Chinese government to repress, assimilate, and eradicate the Uyghur (Uighur) Muslim population in the autonomous Xinjiang, located in northwestern China. An ethnic minority native to the region, Uyghur Muslims have faced rising instances of discrimination, culminating in the detainment of approximately one million Uyghurs in internment camps. In the past decade, the implemented policies have been demonstrating the characteristics of a genocide while the international community fumbles to put together a response.

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Women in Business: Getting to Know Whitney Wolfe Herd

The youngest self-made billionaire in the United States

Rosie Rotundo, Arts Editor

On February 11, 2021, Whitney Wolfe Herd, 31, became the youngest woman to take a U.S. company public. Within hours, the company’s newly public stock listing BMBL had increased by 63% to \$70 a share, making her a billionaire. As the youngest woman in the world to create her billion-dollar success, everyone is itching to know exactly how she did it. It was through Herd’s past humiliation that she had been inspired to create Bumble, one of the largest dating apps in the world.

Bumble was founded with the vision of promoting healthy relationships. Wolfe Herd branded Bumble as a social network that empowers users. Users have the option to filter their settings whether they are interested in a romantic connec-

tion, expanding their professional network, or simply growing their social circle. If members seek romantic relationships, women are responsible for making the first move within a 24-hour window, when it comes to heteronormative pairings. Wolfe Herd was adamant about creating an application that places women in the power position to avoid unsettling messages and stimulate healthy relationships with clear intentions. While Bumble as an app prioritizes user feedback to maximize user experience. The app advocates for equality, respect, empowerment, and kindness as members meet and form relationships with one another.

Over the past 12 months, 559 companies have gone public in the U.S, only three of which have been founded by women. The same trend is seen by blank-check firms, currently popular among Wall Street as a wealth-enhancing vehicle. Of the 349 special purpose acquisition companies (SPAC) that were listed in the past year, those that had been women-sponsored account for under fifteen. We are currently experiencing one of the fastest wealth-creation booms in all of history, and we see success being divided disproportionately across all genders. According to the Bloomberg index, last year the 500 wealthiest people in the world earned \$1.8 trillion, and 91% of the value had been distributed among men.

With a disproportionate representation of women in business, it is no surprise that some of these industry leaders feel they are not taken seriously for their accomplishments. In Whitney Wolfe Herd’s case, she thought the media had painted her in a negative light; rather than recognized for what she stands for, she noticed that others saw her as merely a woman seeking vengeance for unsatisfactory experiences in her own personal love life. When Wolfe Herd attended press conferences to discuss her personal experience with growing her business, much of the coverage had narrowed in on her previous employment at Tinder. The media was fascinated by Wolfe Herd’s early executive years at Tinder, where she had been allegedly harassed by another executive, who just so happened to be her boyfriend at the time. Not long after, Wolfe Herd was let go by the company . . .

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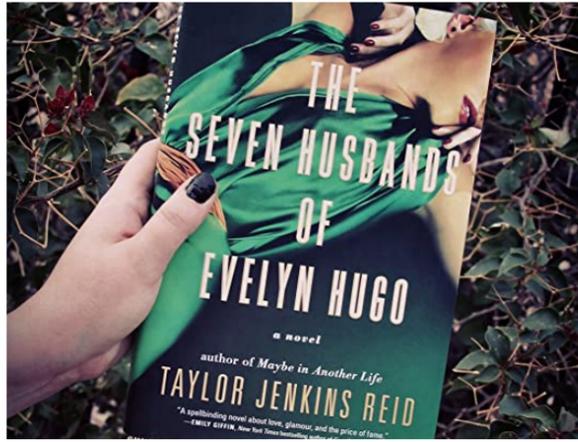
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By Students, For Students



SMCSU 2021–22 Election Results

Lorenzo Cannari, News Editor

The University of St. Michael's College Student Union (SMCSU) general elections have ended, and the winners were announced on March 21 on all of SMC-SU's social media pages. The electoral period took place from March 15 to 19. Eleven positions were up for elections this year: President, Vice President (VP), VP of Academic Affairs, VP of Arts, VP of Athletics, VP of Communications, VP of Community Life, VP of Finance, VP of International Community Outreach, VP of Mental Health and Accessibility, and VP of Religious and Community Affairs . . .

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5 Easy Sustainable Changes to Incorporate In Your Everyday Life

Alessia Baptista, Lifestyle Editor

These days, protecting the environment and doing everything we can to reduce our carbon footprints is crucial in order to preserve the

world and prevent climate change and global warming. One simple way we can help the environment is to make more sustainable decisions. Sustainability means that something can be sustained, or held up at a certain level, for a long period of time . . .

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Student Choice Initiative Brought Back to Court

Chiara Greco, Editor-in-Chief

The Student Choice Initiative (SCI) was originally introduced back in 2019 by the Ford government and the Ontario Ministry of Colleges and Universities (MCU) as a means to reduce student fees deemed “non-essential” according to the provincial government's standards. Though, in October of 2019, the York Federation of Students (YFS) and the Canadian Federation of Students—Ontario (CFS—O) brought this legal challenge before the Divisional Court, arguing that the SCI was an “unlawful” mandate that interfered with the internal affairs of student associations . . .

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The Year That Shall Not Be Named

Lisa-Marie Lofty, The Mike Staff Writer

2020. Need I say more? The year that needs no introduction. It is almost shocking how there is so much power, meaning, and sentiment, in the chunk of numbers that seem to roll off the tongue ever so effortlessly. However, I believe most will agree that 2020 was anything but easy. The year felt similar to being on a rollercoaster that you are not well strapped into, that is slowly catching fire, where the only viable option is to cling on for dear life and let the ride take its course

The past year moved in waves, washing over the world, exposing the depths of systemic racism, white supremacy, sexism, and class divides, among other pertinent issues, as society continued to poorly paddle through the pandemic . . .

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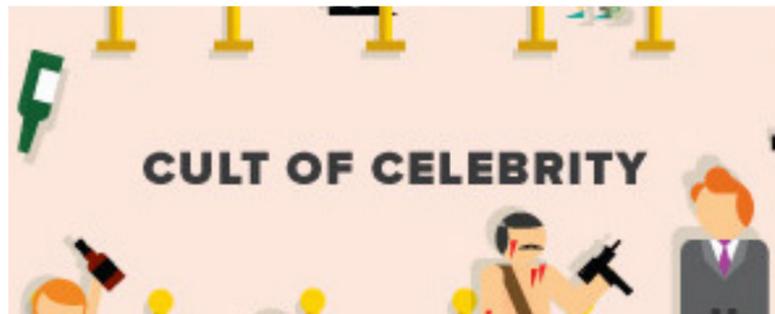
Join The Mike's 2021–22 Masthead

The application period is from April 4th to April 21st

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By Students, For Students

CHECK OUT THIS ISSUE'S FEATURES



Rebuilding the Pantheon Has the pandemic exacerbated celebrity worship?

Marcella van Run, Editor-at-Large

You can find them on prayer candles and posters; on movie screens and cell phone backgrounds; billboards and T-shirts. Merriam-Webster calls the cult of celebrity “the tendency of people to care too much about celebrities.” Typically, the term cult refers to the usually undue and excessive veneration of a person or object by a group of people, completed with manipulation, coercion, and control from higher-ups. Cults are distinct from traditional religion, and, as a result, they can be elusive and difficult to define. The cult of celebrity is no exception.

Understanding the cult of celebrity instead as a ‘celebrity pantheon’ is one way to parse how our society tends to approach celebrities in light of similar patterns in history. In his book, *Battle for Mythic Britain*, Christopher R. Fee calls a pantheon

“an overview of a given culture’s gods and goddesses, [which] reflects not only the society’s values but also its sense of itself.” In a sense, celebrities are the gods and demigods of our day. We look up to them and mimic them, we gather in their presence and vie for their scraps, like Scarlett Johansson’s used tissues or John Wayne’s toupee. We make up stories about them in tabloids and fan fiction building up personas and compiling mythology of information on their lives, as they connect with one another and with ourselves . . .

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The Obsession With Youth, Potential and Fleeting Time

A reflection on university from a soon-to-graduate fourth-year student

Joy Fan, Logos Editor

People always say that time flies. It was something that I believed in, but never really believed. Every new semester, I would tell myself that I wouldn’t procrastinate any of my work anymore.

Yet here I am, writing what will be my final piece for The Mike in the final issue of this school year. And what a year it’s been. I can’t say I ever imagined that my convocation would be online in first-year, as even a year ago when the pandemic started to spread across Canada, I still believed that it’d be over in six months tops. It’s a bitter-sweet feeling, which is not even fully sinking in. As I’m surrounded by peers who plan on taking an extra year, consider going on to some form of graduate or professional studies, or have job offers lined up, I’ve had moments where I wondered if I would sim-

ply graduate into unemployment, and even when I did eventually find a job, I thought that leaving U of T would be the beginning of the end of my life. Dramatic, I know.

However, there’s something about youth, or rather being an undergraduate student, that just feels different. The feeling of having all the time in the world and yet no time at all to get everything done. Not knowing that you’re growing up yet perhaps not feeling like you’ve changed until you realize it’s been 4 years . . .

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A PANEL DISCUSSION ON ANTI-ASIAN RACISM

featuring Cianna Choo, Fiona Li, Maya Martin-Spisak, and Warren Liu.

USMC’s Anti-Asian Racism Panel

A self-reflection on St. Mike’s anti-Asian racism panel and the importance of speaking up

Cianna Choo, SMCSU president

On Monday, I was privileged to serve as the facilitator of St. Mike’s Anti-Asian Racism Panel. I would like to thank Maya Martin-Spisak, Fiona Li, and Warren Liu for serving with me as panellists, and the St. Mike’s College (SMC) students who worked in the background to advocate for this event. Additionally, I would like to thank the Dean of Students Office for their efficiency and help in hosting this panel.

The inspiration for this panel was sparked by the violent events in Atlanta. Overall, this pandemic has emphasized the prevalence of Asian hate. There has been an increase in aggressive actions, avoidance, and hateful speech directed toward Asians, especially those of East Asian descent. This has been experienced by our own students living in Toronto. Our panellists spoke about times they had been avoided or jeered at while in

class or walking around the city. Anti-Asian racism has been present in this country and others before the pandemic, but COVID-19 has highlighted how ignorance has led to violence and Asian hate sentiments.

However, anti-Asian racism goes beyond acts of violence or microaggressions like asking “where are you really from.” In addition to these, our panel focused on stereotyping and the detrimental effects they have on the mental health and development of individuals of Asian heritage. Stereotypes surrounding ideas . . .

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A Letter From The Editor: A Year in Review

Dear Readers,

This year has been quite the experience to say the least. At the start of my time at The Mike, I never imagined that I'd be navigating a global pandemic while holding the position of Editor-in-Chief in my graduating year. But, nonetheless, I am thankful for this experience and all that I have learned. This year at The Mike, we have had to go through immense changes and throughout it all the masthead has remained dedicated to the wider goal of student journalism in serving student voices across the community.

When preparing for this role over the summer of last year, I was perhaps a bit naive about what exactly this pandemic had in store. The biggest change The Mike has undergone due to COVID has been our shift to online delivery. At first, I was hesitant to entirely forgo our print copy, but in moving to an entirely online method we have been able to expand readership and reach all those across the St. Mike's community who may not be anywhere near campus this year.

While we did experience the struggle of moving entirely online, we have seen success in our delivery and increased engagement from returning and new readers. We were also able to expand our focus because of this and become more flexible with our content. In the news section, we created a subsection entitled 'From a Wider Lens' allowing students the opportunity to voice their concerns about international news. We introduced a new column in our lifestyle section entitled 'A Day in the Life' which helped connect St. Mike's students, and we've accumulated so many new and dedicated student writers and contributors. Despite all that has happened this year, the masthead at The Mike has had a sharp focus on serving our readers and fellow students.

This year we also amassed one of our largest mastheads, totalling 31 dedicated editors and managers, 18 staff members,

and numerous other student contributors all spread out across Canada and beyond. Thinking about the community we have been able to cultivate this year is extremely humbling, and I am honoured to have provided everyone with the space to have their voices heard and their experiences represented. Our upcoming election for the 2021-22 team, running from April 4th to the 21st, will also be important to the continued growth of The Mike. So, with that, I encourage you all to apply for a position. Writing for a campus publication and having your voice heard at a school as large as U of T is not only important but also is extremely rewarding.

Being Editor-in-Chief this year has been an invaluable learning experience on the importance of student journalism to campus life here at U of T and St. Mike's. Without student journalism, campus life would truly not be the same. It is because of all our student writers and our masthead that we have been able to represent the student experience here at St. Mike's on such a wide scale.

I want to take this time to thank those of you who have stuck by The Mike's side, who have subscribed to our newsletter, who've read each issue, and who continue to come back for more. Without you all, The Mike would not be where it is today, and I am hopeful that in the future The Mike will continue to be a standing stone and pillar of student solidarity within the St. Mike's community.

With thanks,
Chiara Greco, Editor-in-Chief
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