

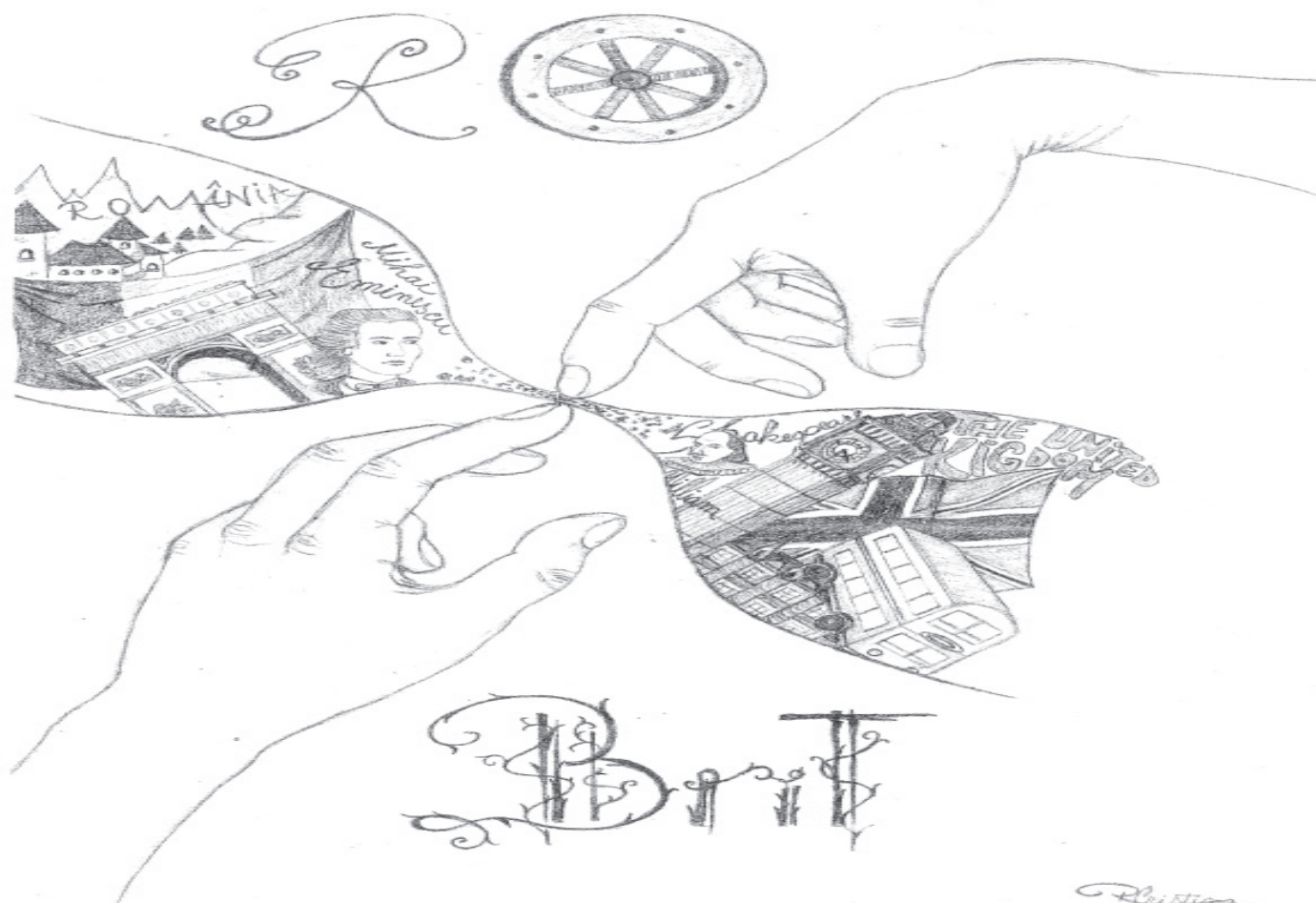


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CERCETĂRII ȘTIINȚIFICE
UNIVERSITATEA „VASILE ALECSANDRI”
DIN BACĂU
FACULTATEA DE LITERE
Str. Spiru Haret, nr. 8, Bacău, 600114
Tel./ fax ++40-234-588884
www.ub.ro; e-mail: litere@ub.ro



RO-BRIT STUDENT JOURNAL

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EDITORIAL

RO-BRIT STUDENT JOURNAL is an annual English journal dedicated to publishing papers written by students in the Faculty of Letters (and not only), under the auspices of the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures from "Vasile Alecsandri" University of Bacău. This journal intends to encourage students to take more initiative in engaging in the English studies, providing at the same time the opportunity for them to have their research and creative writing published. Thus, RO-BRIT STUDENT JOURNAL invites English-speaking students to contribute to the journal through submitting original articles. The journal welcomes submissions on English language, literature and culture, its purpose being to provide a channel for the publication of original work by Romanian students who love the English language. This is an excellent opportunity for students to allow their research to be seen by their colleagues and to participate in a promising endeavour.

RO-BRIT STUDENT JOURNAL este o revistă anuală în limba engleză dedicată publicării lucrărilor scrise de către studenții din cadrul Facultății de Litere (și nu numai), sub auspiciile Departamentului de Limbi și Literaturi Străine de la Universitatea "Vasile Alecsandri" din Bacău. RO-BRIT STUDENT JOURNAL intenționează să încurajeze studenții vorbitori de limba engleză să scrie și să publice în limba engleză articole cu privire la limbă, literatură și cultură, scopul principal al revistei fiind acela de a oferi un canal pentru publicarea de lucrări originale de către studenții români care iubesc limba engleză. Aceasta este o oportunitate excelentă pentru studenți de a permite ca cercetarea lor să fie văzută de colegii lor și de a participa la un efort promițător.

COMPARISON BETWEEN *JANE EYRE* AND *WIDE SARGASSO SEA*

Miriam-Carla Calapod, II, EF

Coordinator: Associate Professor Andreia-Irina SUCIU

In the text that follows, I will be comparing two novels: *Jane Eyre*, by Charlotte Bronte and *Wide Sargasso Sea* by Jean Rhys. The “versus” regards how the female protagonists evolved in similar situations, differentiated by subtleties. This topic seems to be very exciting to me not only because I am a big aficionado of Bronte’s novel, but also because *Wide Sargasso Sea* is very much of a prequel for *Jane Eyre*, in the same way that *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* is for the *Harry Potter* series.

If we tackle the heroines’ childhood, we notice that both Jane and Bertha did not have it easy, at all. Jane Eyre’s childhood struggle consists of being differentiated from her cousins, the Reed children. She is considered the nuisance of the family, usually, for her character does never blend with theirs. Not only do they all ignore her, but the Reed family is also aggressive towards Jane.

Mrs. Reed’s behaviour is very unfair and biased in her children’s advantage. Her cousin, John Reed, is physically aggressive, thinking that this will surely put her in her rightful place. The portrait of the saboteur is gruesome and shows Jane’s weaknesses in comparison to him: he is very big and sturdy compared to little Jane.

In Jane’s situation, emotional distress comes in other forms too, such as life at Lowood. In the beginning of her journey there, she finds herself trapped in a very cruel space, where she learns not to trust people and mistrust herself. She knows that she will always be judged for who she is and due to her previous experiences, she always feels ready/on the verge to be/of being exposed. Brocklehurst proves to be a harsh opponent: he urges everyone to avoid her and have her under a magnifying glass.

For *Wide Sargasso Sea*’s Antoinette, this moment of her life means being victim of reversed racism and her mother’s preference for her little brother, Pierre. We witness the dysfunctional family in which she grows up and the way her brother is pampered because of his health and being a boy. She is hated in Spanish Town (Jamaica) because her family has owned slaves. This causes the entire family to be the victim of micro-aggressions and later, a fire which destroys her life and influences her later on, in her adult life.

Even though both individuals feel misplaced where they are, they do meet people who support them, in the different stages of their existence. Jane’s very first so-called friend was Bessie, one of Mrs. Reed’s servants. They share beautiful moments together when they are alone at Gateshead, on several occasions. These are the only times at Gateshead when Jane feels as if she belongs and is appreciated in the slightest bit. It is also to be noted that Bessie is the only character from the premises that Jane Eyre misses when she goes to Lowood.

Another influence in Eyre’s path comes to be Helen Burns. This girl offers her a new perspective of life and tries to teach her strength, maturity and sometimes indifference towards bad people who might discredit her. The connexion between the two is so powerful that Jane Eyre takes Helen’s death very personally and never forgets her.

Miss Temple is an angel in the house. She is for Jane what the name suggests, which is a temple of femininity, kindness and a teacher who inspires children that come in her path. She is for Jane Eyre an identity shaper, one of the few mother figures that make a difference and possesses the ladylike features so appreciated in Victorian times.

Mr. Rochester is one of the dearest friends. Before they become a couple, Rochester gives Jane a confidence booster and the right to voice her thoughts. He considers the heroine an equal, not something like a slave or servant. He appreciates the fact that Jane has been through a lot and how educated she is.

Antoinette’s confidante is mostly Christophine, who she knows since she was a child. Even in adulthood, they are very close to each other although Christophine’s intentions may not be the best.

While in Jane's case she and Bessie are genuinely attached, in this instance we notice a reversal of power, as the servant controls the mistress. Bertha does whatever Cristophine advises her to do, including furthering herself away from her own husband and beginning to think that Rochester only wants her money.

A major distinction between Antoinette "Bertha" Mason and Jane Eyre can be seen in terms of influence over Edward Rochester; the latter changes him for the better: she has the power to discover his joy, playfulness, generosity and good intentions. They are advisers for one another. Edward seems to prize Jane for what she is and the other way around. Jane Eyre makes the English gentleman be a better human being in general, which is one of the effects of true, unfiltered love. Jane also becomes a better version of herself: more open, happier, less reserved and more hopeful for the future. Edward cares about Jane's opinions, since the first times they converse (he asks her if she thinks him handsome). This relationship makes the heroine feel worthy of affection and not a burden, as before.

Opposed to the previous couple, Bertha and Edward are different. They marry for financial and social reasons; their families push them into doing so. One characteristic that must be noted is their feelings towards one another. It is implied, throughout the entire novel, that the two do not love each other, but they do possess lust. Their relationship is described by respect, lust and even care for one another, but never love in the way we usually regard it. Another dissimilitude is how Rochester talks about Bertha. To him, she is just a mad woman who stepped into her mother's shoes, a curse. He considers himself to be doomed for life because he is married to a lunatic, which is why he tells everyone she is dead when they arrive in England. She makes him consider he is doomed for life, and brings what's bad in him: anger, judgement, conceit, logic and maybe even the intention to end his life.

Jane is exactly what a modern woman in our age strives to be: opinionated, independent but not full of herself, she does not aspire to be a wife or a puppet in a man's hand (at least not until the end), but an individuality of her own; she is modest, not taking pride in her talents, a good listener and friend. She carries herself as straightforward, outspoken and while men like Rochester appreciate her daring personality, we can see that others feel threatened by it, such as her cousin, St. John. Upon further reading, readers discover that Eyre is a fine connoisseur of her own self, a determined woman who is not focused on mundane things, but rather on the more profound side of existence. At last, she has a superior character, for she is capable of reconciliation with the one that had hurt her the most, at least on the deathbed – her aunt, Mrs. Reed.

Bertha is led by how she was formed during a tumultuous childhood and a desire to be loved. Since the very beginning of her life, she must act more reserved, so as to not not to attract violence from her neighbours. Bertha is an outcast and a silent sufferer without friends, while her mother gathers all her love for little Pierre (when he dies, a part of Bertha's mother dies and the daughter becomes basically an orphan, since her mother rejects her). The way in which she speaks is very normal and is not necessarily an indicator of trauma. However, her behaviour proves she is mentally unstable.

Instead of being helped and given treatment to, she is brought to a space she does not know, she loses touch with time and reality. This time and place neutrality makes her incredibly confused and hurt psychologically, adding to her already poor mental health dating back to her life in Spanish Town. Thus, she is not strong enough to combat the odds which are placed against her, unlike Jane Eyre, who, despite her family situation and in spite of how she had been treated, manages to come on top in the end. Compared to Jane, she is not assertive or determined to change her life, because she does not know any different and she is not as loved as Jane is eventually.

In the following table we illustrate, in short, the different dynamics of the characters' lives in an attempt to observe how beautifully the two mirror each other:

JANE	BERTHA
Their trauma sources are extremely similar and their childhoods shape their future adult selves	
she has some people that she can confide into, while...	Bertha's only friend is Cristophine, because she trusts no one else.
Jane and Rochester are an example of true love despite their differences, while...	Even though Bertha and Edward come from similar backgrounds, they form a dysfunctional couple.
she seems to know what she wants, which is due to her experiences; she fights fiercely for her happiness. She doesn't like being controlled, especially by men.	seems to not have any hope left after everything that has happened in her life, a bit weak and easy to control.



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MONSTROUS MOBILITY IN VICTORIAN LITERATURE

Raluca-Andreea Donici, III, EF

Coordinator: PhD Associate Professor Andreia-Irina Suciu

1. A brief introduction into Gothic Literature

Regarding the term Gothic ('gä-thik), we are able to find in the dictionary the following definitions¹:

1a: of, relating to, or resembling the Goths, their civilization, or their language;

b: TEUTONIC, GERMANIC;

2a: of, relating to, or having the characteristics of a style of architecture developed in northern France and spreading through western Europe from the middle of the 12th century to the early 16th century that is characterized by the converging of weights and strains at isolated points upon slender vertical piers and counterbalancing buttresses and by pointed arches and vaulting Gothic cathedrals; **b:** of or relating to an architectural style reflecting the influence of the medieval Gothic.

In what gothic literature is concerned, it is believed that its basis as a genre was established in 1764, with the publication of Horace Walpole's dark and bizarre work, entitled *The Castle of Otranto*. Due to its unusual central points, themes or even motifs, early gothic, horror novels raised a lot of questions marks, including ones of morality, philosophy and even religion. Usually, the plot of a gothic novel gravitates towards the battle between humanity and unique, grotesque, unnatural forces, whether created by humans or of supernatural forces. Also, the plot was reenforced by the typical gothic background, a dark, inescapable, oppressive landscape, created in order to give the reader the famous "chills down the spine".

When it comes to the Victorian Era (1837-1901), we need to mention that during this period there were created some of the best-known gothic horror literary works, such as:

- *Frankenstein* (1818), by Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley (a precursor of the Victorian gothic novel²)
- *The Strange Case of Doctor Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1886), by Robert Louis Stevenson;
- *Dracula* (1897), by Bram Stoker.

2. Monstruous mobility in Victorian literature

In his introduction titled *Monster Theory*, Jerome Cohen explains one thesis out of seven, the one connected to the mobility of characters, affirming that "*the monster policies the borders of the possible*". He continues by comparing the monster with a warning sign against exploration or research and deduces that the monster is that one obstacle which prevents mobility, be it of any kind: intellectual, geographic, even sexual. This is due to the fact that a human person is not able to move under certain circumstances, in our case, because of the danger provided by the monster.

As for this project, it is made to argue this thesis, because, according to other research, monsters are not an element which make their human counterpart freeze with fear, but they promote mobility and evolution, rather than stillness, as the human sympathetic nervous system commands us to either run away or towards the danger.

We will be able to discover how exactly the Victorian literature brought to life moral lessons rather than simply goose bumps stories. This project is examining three significant novels, one as a precursor of the Victorian gothic novel, written by a female author (*Frankenstein*), and two of the same late Victorian period, each written by a male author: *Dracula* and *The Strange Case of Doctor Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, and their ability to cross social, transformative and physical borders.

¹ <https://www.merriam-webster.com/>, Merriam Webster Online Dictionary, accessed on October 20th, 2020.

² *Frankenstein* emerges as a precursor of such later Victorian Gothic novels as Stevenson's *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* (1886), Wells's *The Island of Dr Moreau* (1896) and Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1890).

2.1. Mobility in *Frankenstein*: Crossing physical borders

Gothic literature impressed mostly through its revolutionary idea that a novel should shock in order to draw the reader's attention. Many of its themes shock the public by the use of certain dark elements which celebrate darkness and horror. One of these well-known elements is the fascination manifested towards

There are multiple reasons why Victorians were obsessed with death and why they made a culture, a doctrine out of this natural, yet terrifying moment. First of all, they were surrounded by it. In an era when the medical system was insufficiently developed and when the treatment had more a placebo effect than a real one, ill people were sent to hospital to be, finally, forgotten. The lack of sanitation and the major industrial pollution were also other elements which contributed to death. Thus, people died regularly, and they died, most of the times, at home where everyone could witness the horrific moment. Today, we have removed death from our homes and from our minds in many ways. For the Victorians, death was right in their faces.

On the other hand, the culture of death was a trend imposed by the monarch of the Victorian Age, Queen Victoria, who was obsessed with death after her beloved husband Prince Albert died at the young age of 42. For the next 40 years, the queen wore only black



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On the other hand, the culture of death was a trend imposed by the monarch of the Victorian Age, Queen Victoria, who was obsessed with death after her beloved husband Prince Albert died at the young age of 42. For the next 40 years, the queen wore only black and froze her house in time, having servants continue to lay out her husband's clothing. Just as fashion from Paris is in vogue in America, so were a Queen's mourning practices, which became the proper etiquette all over the world.

But the following novel, written by a female writer, Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley in 1818 and titled *Frankenstein* anticipated not only the mourning culture, but also the fascination for death. The monster here does not have a proper name, the other characters referring to him as "devil" or "monster" due to his origin and appearance. The type of monstrous mobility which gravitates around Frankenstein's monster is resulted by its creation.



The monster is created by Viktor Frankenstein, who is driven by the desire to achieve a title for his creation: *"the energy of my purpose alone sustained me: my labours would soon end, and I believed that exercise and amusement would then drive away incipient disease; and I promised myself both of these when my creation should be completed³".* He created a weapon, a shadow out of arrogance, because he reached for the same place as God in terms of creation of life. But, unfortunately, his plans did not go as expected: *"How can I describe my emotions at this catastrophe, or how delineate the wretch whom with such infinite pains and care I had endeavoured to form? His limbs were in proportion, and I had selected his features as beautiful. Beautiful! Great God! His yellow skin scarcely covered the work of muscles and arteries beneath; his hair*

¹ Shelley, Mary, *Frankenstein or The Modern Prometheus*, John Wilson & Son Press, London, 1869, p. 85.

was of a lustrous black, and flowing; his teeth of a pearly whiteness; but these luxuriances only formed a more horrid contrast with his watery eyes, that seemed almost of the same colour as the dun-white sockets in which they were set, his shrivelled complexion and straight black lips.⁴”

The monster, made of human remains collected from different corpses, not only crosses the physical line, from death back to life, but also from monster to victim. He wasn't the one wishing to live again, he hadn't even existed before Doctor Frankenstein decided to create him, he is just a piece of the puzzle. In return, Viktor Frankenstein transgresses from creator to destroyer, because of the fact that his creation, the monster, was anything but not what he expected, and started to destroy doctor's other forgotten achievements: his mental health, his road in life, his loved ones.

The monster is the one which, by his unnatural origins, shouldn't be wise or smart, but in fact, he is the tutor, the teacher that Frankenstein has. The creature teaches him how to love, respect and appreciate what he already has, but in a violent, brutal way. His violent actions, even though they are unforgivable, they are just the result of rejection and loneliness faced by it, as the doctor himself confesses: *“All men hate the wretched; how, then, must I be hated, who am miserable beyond all living things! Yet you, my creator, detest and spurn me, thy creature, to whom thou art bound by ties only dissoluble by the annihilation of one of us. You purpose to kill me. How dare you sport thus with life? Do your duty towards me, and I will do mine towards you and the rest of mankind.”*⁵

All in all, the monster's mobility changes the world of humans, and draws attention upon how superficial and arrogant humans usually are and how quickly they forget how small they are in this world.

2.2. Mobility in “The Strange Case of Doctor Jekyll and Mr. Hyde”. Crossing transformative borders

During the late Victorian times, medicine developed a big interest in mental illnesses due to that fact that most of the physicians thought they finally had the means and the courage to study such medical conditions. We can mention mania, dementia and even melancholia, but also mysteries, such as the bipolar disorder.

The first notes about the bipolar disorder date to the 1st century Greece, by Aretaeus of Cappadocia, who mentions the fact that the connection between mania and depression was insufficiently studied. For the terms “mania” and “depression” the Greeks and the Romans were responsible, because they were the ones to acknowledge the fact that these two soul illnesses could be cured by means of lithium salt baths. As a result, nowadays, lithium is widely used as a treatment for bipolar disorder.

Years passed and another large amount of information regarding the bipolar disorder was discovered during late Victorianism, and through that it was mentioned that the Victorian science and medicine

tended to associate physical appearance with mental illnesses. During this period, scientists made reports on anatomy, physiology and phrenology in order to categorize persons that were believed to suffer from bipolarity: criminals, the insane and the sexually deviant. In this respect, Robert Louis Stevenson had plenty of information when he created, in 1886, his well-known horror novel, *The Strange Case of Doctor Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*.

In order to analyse this novel, we will have to get acquainted with the two dimensions of the main character, and his monstrosity. Mr. Edward Hyde, the monster in this novel, has its monstrosity flowing from his appearance. All the characters and even the readers are able to view Hyde: he is “downright detestable” and he gives a “strong feeling of deformity”, but all this without being that deformed⁶. This idea explains why, even without a proper description, Mr. Hyde is perceived as monstrous.

As I have mentioned before, Mr. Hyde's inner evil can be easily observed through his hideous ap-



² Idem, p. 98.

³ Shelley, Mary, *Frankenstein or The Modern Prometheus*, John Wilson & Son Press, London, 1869, p. 116

⁴ Stevenson, R. L., *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, Oxford University Press, London, 1886, p. 10

pearance. His monstrosity is written on his face and body. This is why the two dimensions of this character are opposite to one another: doctor Jekyll embodies the good, empathetic part of oneself and Mr. Hyde the evil and vicious counterpart. From this concept, the following question appears: How is possible for this type of monstrous mobility to change the other characters' personality and reactions?

The answer is simple, Mr. Hyde is that mysterious element which determines the others to reflect and have curiosity for his existence and origin. Hyde is no ordinary man, his body and personality are unique, and they make Utterson. His body constitution is bizarre, incomprehensible, due to his construction following the Gothic canon: that the human mind should experience fear, curiosity and pleasure when facing something beyond its understanding, exactly as in the monster's depiction.

The tension intensifies when the monster acts just as his name depicts: Hyde is hidden so as not to be properly seen, examined or described. Due to this kind of behaviour, Utterson claims that "the man seems hardly human"⁷. In his nightmares, Utterson sees Hyde "*glide more stealthily through sleeping house, or move the more swiftly, (...) even to dizziness*"⁸.

Mr. Hyde is the result of the human being surpassing certain borders, transformative ones, due to the desire of knowing more and of discovering both new dimensions of the human personality and mechanisms through which there can be made a transition from one to another.

As Hyde moves into the society, he denotes the opposite of the Victorian gentleman and forces the ones around him to change. Where once was a peaceful, dull routine, now there is chaos. Hyde has the capacity to change the society, and this depicts the magnitude, how great this impact of his monstrous mobility was.



2.3. Mobility in Dracula. Crossing social borders

Count Dracula, in the novel written by Bram Stoker, is a monstrous entity who provides mobility in terms of gender roles. As we already know, during Victorianism, a woman had two options of existence: to be a pure, virgin, unmarried woman, or be a wife or a mother. If she was neither of these, she was considered a prostitute, a woman without honour. In this novel, the gender roles are reversed, the presence of Count Dracula is the one which makes the woman be the one who becomes aware of their sexuality, who explores it and is capable of using it. As for the man, he is the one who needs help, who is weak.

In this novel, Dracula is the one who determines a woman to cross the line, to break the traditional Victorian assumption about her gender. Because of his presence and his evil magic worked upon Lucy, her personality changes. Initially depicted as a true, pure, chaste woman, Lucy transforms into a woman noticed for her power and hunger. After each meeting with Dracula, Lucy's appetite, physical and sexual, grows: "*I have an appetite like a cormorant, am full of life, and sleep well... Arthur says I am getting fat*"⁹.

Furthermore, she gains control over other men, because as part of her treatments, she receives blood transfusions from four different men. During Victorian times, this type of therapy was a sign of physical relationship between two persons, because of the exchange of blood, so that Lucy is considered to manipulate, through her anaemia and her need of blood, the men around her. She is not considered an embodiment of chastity anymore since her medical condition determined her to have relationships with different men. Each one of them felt after the transfusion "*as if they two had been really married and that she was his wife in the sight of God*"¹⁰.

But Lucy receives not only human blood, but also unnatural blood, through her relationship with Dracula. This is also an element that contributes to her transformation from pure to tainted.

⁵ Idem, p. 18.

⁶ Idem, p. 14

⁷ Stoker, Bram, *Dracula*, Oxford University Press, London, 1996, p. 119

⁸ Idem, p. 188

As part of her change, Lucy rejects all the criteria, specific to a Victorian woman. First, she acknowledges her sexuality, her desire and uses it to be the opposite of a pure woman. Secondly, she rejects the possibility of being a mother. Transforming in what the Victorian society would not approve under any conditions, her actions make it clear for us that she draws the portrait of a wicked woman, who has a single goal, to fulfil her desire, according to her behaviour with children ¹¹.

Van Helsing executes Lucy and the Weird Sisters, women perverted by the bite of Count Dracula, and makes them regain their peace and purity through the ritual of execution.

On the other hand, the influence and the consequences of Dracula's actions manage to transform Mina too, but in a different way than Lucy. Mina releases her professionalism and her ability to be independent. She embodies in perfect harmony two dimensions which seem at first sight, opposite: her desire of working and her efforts for the good of her husband. She manages to be both a wife and a hard-working woman: "*so true, so sweet, so noble, so little an egoist*"¹². She is opposed to Lucy, because, all in all, she wants to be respected for everything she is, a beautiful, good, intelligent woman.



Also, the monster, Count Dracula, is the one which indirectly forces her to transgress her social borders, in what concerns her abilities and the tendency towards technology: "*I shall get my typewriter this very hour and begin transcribing*" so that "*we shall be ready for other eyes if required*" ¹³.

All in all, Count Dracula is one monster which promotes mobility, due to his capacity of pushing people to become the opposite of what they would normally portray. His presence brings the whole community together and allows women to switch places and roles with men.



3. Conclusions

The implication here is not that none of the authors intended to create a monster which was more relatable than their heroes. None is likely to have venerated their own monster since all three were moral, if not religious, persons who strived to be liked by their contemporaries. Despite their intention, however, they depict their monsters with a mobility that is complicated and complicating and, therefore, attractive. Because their personal lives reflect the complicated interrelations of class and gender that are evident in their monsters, both men likely identified with their monster instead of, or at least as well as, their heroes. This experience is, arguably, shared by readers. To their original audience, the movement that these monstrous border crossings made possible was frightening. This was, however, an audience known to enjoy things that frighten them. Indeed, it is the essence of Gothic literature to amuse with terror. The fear these monsters invoke is, in part, one that is based on conservatism since the concern is that a monster will challenge or change the society he attacks. Perhaps the interest in these monsters, historical and abiding, is rooted in their liberating mobility. The same movement that frightens with its potential for change is welcome because it signals growth. Evident in Dracula's interest in the New Woman, the movement these Gothic monsters offer their victims is often indicative of the beginning of a new social order. The interest that the authors of these monsters share with their original and modern audiences is that they and we simultaneously both crave and fear movement and so are entranced by the mobility of the monster.

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Raluca-Andreea Donici, III, EF

Coordinator: PhD Associate Professor Mihaela Culea

1. Henry VIII: A short introduction

When it comes to the Tudor Dynasty¹, Henry VIII was definitely one of the best representatives. King from 1509 to 1547, he presided over the beginnings of the English Renaissance and the English Reformation

². He excelled in book learning as well as in the physical exercises of an aristocratic society, and, when he ascended the throne in 1509, great things were expected of him. Also, his determination to engage in military adventure was very serious.



While the greatness of England in Europe was being displayed, the regime was also losing its great popularity at home. At this point, the king entered affairs unmistakably and spectacularly. Among his failures, there can be mentioned his inability, or his first wife's, Catherine³'s, in order to provide a male heir to the Tudor England's throne, as well as multiple miscarriages or many early deaths of children, finally leading to a one daughter, the princess Mary⁴, who was born in 1516, and whose role was to carry on the line, and no one relished the thought of a female succession with all the dynastic and political uncertainties it would bring.

By the 1520⁵, Henry had become infatuated with Anne Boleyn, a young woman in his wife's entourage. He also worried that his marriage to Catherine had been cursed by God because of the Old Testament ban on marrying the widow of one's brother. The king decided to seek a papal annulment that would free him to remarry, but Pope Clement 7th denied his demand. Eventually, he created his own church and married in 1533 his love, at that time, Anne Boleyn.

After Anne, who was beheaded at her husband's order, the Tudor King had four more marriages with Jane Seymour (died due to childbirth complications), Anne of Cleves (from he divorced), Catherine Howard (accused of adultery and beheaded) and, finally, Catherine Parr, the first woman who survived her tyrant husband. He died at the age of 55, on January 28th, 1547, being succeeded by his 9-year-old son, Edward VI⁶. It is worth mentioning that three of his children, Edward VI, Mary I and Elizabeth I, went to rule England after him, and, ironically, after his desperate attempts of having a male heir, it was his daughter, Elizabeth I, who went on and become one of the greatest monarchs in English history.



¹House of Tudor, an English royal dynasty of Welsh origin, which gave five sovereigns to England: Henry VII (reigned 1485–1509); his son, Henry VIII (1509–47); followed by Henry VIII's three children, Edward VI (1547–53), Mary I (1553–58), and Elizabeth I (1558–1603).

²The English Reformation began with Henry VIII of England (r. 1509–1547 CE) and continued in stages over the rest of the 16th century CE. The process witnessed the break away from the Catholic Church headed by the Pope in Rome. The Protestant Church of England was thus established and the English monarch became its supreme head.

³She was King Henry VIII's first wife

⁴She was known as Mary Tudor and "Bloody Mary" by her Protestant opponents, was the queen of England from July 1553 until her death.

⁵was Queen of England from 1533 to 1536 as the second wife of King Henry VIII

⁶Was the King of England and Ireland from 28 January 1547 until his death. He was crowned on 20 February at the age of nine

2. The Tudor Monarch represented in Literature

Throughout literature, we are able to find many books written about King Henry the VIII and also his six wives, and this fact is due to his significance in the British history. Henry VIII is often remembered mostly for his tendency to trade in wives. Unfortunately for the country he ruled, Henry VIII left the country in pieces. He left behind a 9-year-old child as king, a divided country, and a massive royal debt. All the money that his father, King Henry VII, had spent years building up and saving was spent on wars of little significance to gain the well-known honour of England.

But while there are a lot of minuses to focus on, especially later in his reign, Henry VIII did many good things for his country, or at least actions which affected the entire course of his nation, examples, he made peace with many countries.

Henry's reign was turbulent, but effective. He managed to take a tiny country and begin to shape it into a major world power. He also brought Wales into the kingdom of England, which gave the country an important part of valuable land.

Usually, in literature, he is portrayed as a ruler with both his qualities and flaws displayed in front of the world. His had a quite amazing personality, his intelligence, learning, and curiosity which impressed even the world-weary ambassadors who entered his court are mentioned countless times. In certain books it is mentioned that he did spend his entire reign reading dispatches, scribbling notations, meeting with diplomats and politicians.

In addition, we can't deny that Henry VIII and his wives still have an undeniable hold over people today, and the books are read massively, even though they are non-fiction or not.

Firstly, we may mention a few interesting, engaging, and fascinating books about the King and his six wives, such as: *The Six Wives of Henry VIII*⁷ (by Alison Weir), *Catherine of Aragon: An Intimate Life of Henry VIII's True Wife*⁸ (by Amy Licence), or *The Lady in the Tower: The Fall of Anne Boleyn*⁹ (also written by Alison Weir).



But this paper focuses on the best-known works which portrayed Henry VIII best and which attracted a massive number of reads, such as: William Shakespeare's play, entitled *Henry VIII*, Hillary Mantel's *Wolf Hall* and Phillipa Gregory's *The Other Boleyn Girl*.

2.1. *Henry VIII*, play wrote by William Shakespeare

Published in the First Folio, in 1623, and being an important part from a transcript of an author's manuscript, *Henry VIII* is a chronicle play in five acts, written by the great William Shakespeare, historians estimate around 1613. Widely known as Shakespeare's last completed play, *Henry VIII* had a long and interesting stage

history, furthermore, since the middle of the 19th century, a large number of critics have doubted that William Shakespeare was its one and only author.

The play tells the interesting story of the Duke of Norfolk, who tells Buckingham of the meeting between Henry VIII and Francis I, king of France at that time, at the Field of the Cloth of Gold. On the instigation conducted by Cardinal Wolsey, Buckingham is arrested and charged with high treason (*My surveyor is false. The Buckingham, /Whose figure even this instant this cloud puts on/By dark'ning my clear sun.*)¹⁰

The Queen interrupts the indictment of Buckingham to demand that the king undo a tax imposed by Wolsey to finance the French war. At a party held by Wolsey, Henry meets Anne Bullen¹¹ and falls in love with her. Buckingham has its trial, found guilty and is executed. Henry, questioning the legality of his marriage to Katherine (*The more shame for you! Holy men I thought you,/Upon my soul, two reverend cardinal virtues;/But cardinal sins and hollow hearts I fear you/Mend 'em, for shame, my lords. Is this your*

⁷Published in 1991

⁸Published in 2016

⁹Published in 2009

¹⁰ Shakespeare, William, *Henry VIII*, Washington Square Press, New York, 2007 (act 1, scene 1)

¹¹ Anne Boleyn (variant).

comfort?)¹², sets up a tribunal, presided over by Wolsey and the papal representative Cardinal Campeius.

Anne Bullen is made Marchioness of Pembroke. Katherine walks out of the tribunal and demands that the case be decided in Rome. Wolsey and Campeius fail to convince the queen to throw herself on the king's mercy. Anne secretly marries Henry. Stephen Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester, attempts to charge Cranmer for heresy. He fails through Henry's intervention. Elizabeth is christened and Cranmer predicts the glory of her reign.

In this particular play, King Henry VIII is portrayed as a man who begins to play under the powerful influence of Cardinal Wolsey¹³, an important figure for that period, and, in addition, he is influenced and manipulated by him to take certain decisions. Furthermore, he continues to be manipulated by Wolsey as he convinces him that the marriage between him and Catherine of Aragon, his brother widow, is illegal and doomed. In this respect, Shakespeare portrays Henry a naïve man, who has fallen into Cardinal Wolsey's wickedness.

Finally, he reassures his position as the intelligent king by understanding that Cardinal Wolsey is manipulating him and by punishing him and marrying Anne Bullen (Boleyn).

By portraying the King as an influenced (in the beginning) character, William Shakespeare managed to bring in front of our eyes a vivid, young King, before his transformation in a cruel tyrant, whom he was towards the second half of his reign.



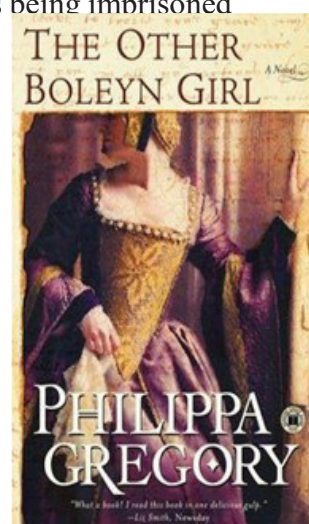
2.2. Hillary Mantel's *Wolf Hall*

Published in 2009, this contemporary novel is written by the British author Hillary Mantel and it represents a fiction based on the fast rise to power of Thomas Cromwell in the court of King Henry VIII.

In opposition to the portrayal made by Shakespeare's in his play, King Henry VIII can be characterized as a study in contrasts, regarding this novel. He is depicted, on the one hand as a brilliant ruler, whose qualities (generosity, intelligence, pragmatism) do help the country during his reign. On the other hand, he transforms into a vicious, cruel man, a man who tortures and kills the one who, he once has loved or praised.

The novel is also based on the bond created between the King and Thomas Cromwell, who, in the beginning, is valued and respected by the King; he seems to treat him like a cherished friend, even going to visit Cromwell at his house when he gets sick. However, when Henry feels that Cromwell does not agree with him or might not follow his orders (as an example, when Cromwell tells him it might be challenging to prosecute Thomas More for treason, Henry makes it clear that he has overlooked his inferior status and keeps him around only because he is "*as cunning as a bag of serpents*"¹⁴ and can accomplish his objectives), he becomes aggressive. Henry tells Cromwell, "*You know my decision. Execute it*"¹⁵. This implies the fact that it would be very dangerous for Cromwell to refuse the monarch or to disobey his strict orders ("*I once heard him say I looked like a murderer.*")¹⁶. Henry's wilfulness makes the Tudor court a dangerous, wicked place, since anyone who falls out of favour with the King risks being imprisoned or even executed.

The historical figure is portrayed as a man in an unusual position, because his fear and rage seem to stem from a position of insecurity since he is hemmed in by the Catholic Church and that he is constantly also threatened by various claimants to the throne. Henry thinks that having a male heir is the guarantee that his child will rule England after his death, but Catherine has several miscarriages and isn't able to give him a son. From this point, similar to the reality, the King



¹² Shakespeare, William, *Henry VIII*, Washington Square Press, New York, 2007 (act 3, scene 1).

¹³ Was an English archbishop, statesman and a cardinal of the Catholic Church. When Henry VIII became King of England in 1509, Wolsey became the King's almoner

¹⁴ Mantel, Hillary, *Wolf Hall*, Fourth Estate Publishing, London, United Kingdom, 2009 (part 5, chapter 3)

¹⁵ *ibidem*

¹⁶ *ibidem*

begins to struggle with his heir-related obsession. Furthermore, Henry is disappointed when Anne Boleyn first has a daughter and then has a miscarriage, again, his obsession with a male heir is speaking (*“And perhaps God intends some peculiar blessing by this princess”*)¹⁷. At the end of the novel, we remark that even though Henry seems to be tired of Anne Boleyn, who is in fact the woman for whom he created a new church and a new legacy, he is full of hope that, eventually, she might honour him with a male heir.

2.3. *The Other Boleyn Girl*, by Phillipa Gregory

Based mostly on the story between the two beautiful Boleyn sisters and their common relationship with the King Henry VIII, the novel's lack of historical accuracy does not make the number of readers drop, even though some specialist and historians do argue that it is indeed a problem with this view. This particular novel, published in 2001, is attracting readers ever since, regardless the opinion of specialists.

Here, in this novel, the monarch, Henry VIII, even though that, after finding out that his wife, Catherine of Aragon, does not have the capacity to provide him a male heir, he begins his adulterous relationship with Mary Boleyn, and then, he is taunted and tempted by her older sister, Anne Boleyn. Anne does not agree to have a physical relationship with him unless he makes her the queen of England. In this novel, Henry VIII is depicted as a man, wrapped around Anne's finger, but, in the end, he turns out to be cruel and, out of impatience and anger, he beheads Anne.

3. Conclusions

All in all, the literary depictions of the Tudor King, Henry VIII have, more or less, historical accuracy, and they do tend to be the first choice when reading historical fiction. As for the main, central character, he cannot be forgotten due to his massive and important contribution to the British, and yet, global heritage.

He is famously known for the formation of the Anglican Church which was also known as the Church of England, due to his intention of divorcing his first wife in favour of his second one, Anne Boleyn. Even though, this fact acts as the main reason, Henry was motivated to break up from the Roman Catholic for a number of other reasons. This event influenced not only the future of his country, but also the future and the image of both Catholicism and Protestantism/Anglicanism. Henry had to use the parliament and his own appointed bishop to achieve his mission, because the annulment took many steps for it was the sole reason as to why Henry separated the English church from the Roman Catholic Church. Also, both his daughters massively influenced the future of England, leaving behind both a cruel tyrant known as “Bloody Mary”, and the “Virgin Queen”, who was really loved and appreciated by her people.

All in all, he was an emblematic monarch, with a problematic reign.



¹⁷ Mantel, Hillary, Wolf Hall, Fourth Estate Publishing, London, United Kingdom, 2009 (part 5, chapter 2)

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MAGIC IN *THE TEMPEST*

Ștefania-Vasilica Roșu, I, RE

Coordinator: PhD Lecturer Cătălina Bălinișteanu-Furdu

The Tempest is a composite work with elements derived from multiple sources. However, the most substantial borrowing for the plot of *The Tempest* comes from William Shakespeare's own previous plays, so much that scholar Stephen Greenblatt described *The Tempest* as "a kind of echo chamber of Shakespearean motifs"¹. Therefore, *The Tempest* is believed to be a mature reinterpretation of many Shakespearean motifs and is seen as the peak of the author's talent.

The Tempest is often described as Shakespeare's most magical play. As a motif, magic in *The Tempest* takes many different forms and is used to achieve several goals throughout the play. Beyond the plot points and other stylistic devices, even the language in this play is particularly magical.



In this play, magic is a powerful motif used as a way to highlight the true nature of humanity. Magic appears as the only tool that Prospero uses to exercise his power over others and it reveals the character of those enchanted by Prospero's spells. For instance, Antonio reveals his murderous tendencies by threatening the boatswain with hanging if he does not rescue them from peril. Sebastian, too, shows his true colours when he plots with Antonio to kill his brother Alonso in order to take his throne. Both Antonio and Sebastian were under Prospero's magical control, however, Prospero's magic does not alter their personalities/their true nature (from kind-hearted to evil or from wicked to kind and dutiful), it seems to intensify their intentions and desires.

Shakespeare's magician, Prospero, also derived his power ("*the liberal arts*") through "*secret studies*" and learned how he could influence world events as a godlike figure: he makes himself invisible, he disarms his enemies, he charms the men's minds. His magic is based on understanding the natural laws of science and his art is described as having stronger powers than Setebos' black magic, the god Caliban's mother worshipped. Therefore, Prospero's magic is considered as originating from a superior source, the intellect. The magic based on his intellect being the tool, that Prospero uses to exercise his power, this proves Michel Foucault's belief that knowledge generates power. In his famous book *The Archaeology of Knowledge*², Michel Foucault describes the discourse of power and sets forth the idea that knowledge and power are intimately connected. According to the French philosopher, there is a 'sovereign power' which structures power in the form of a pyramid. In *The Tempest*, too, knowledge is seen as a complementary thing to power. At the top of Foucault's power pyramid is Prospero, while at its bottom there are his victims on the island. Another type of power mentioned in Foucault's theories is the disciplinary power which either rewards or punishes in order to establish a hierarchy. This is another way through which Prospero exerts his power: he promises rewards to Ariel and punishments to Caliban based on their behaviour towards the master.

All the scenes that offer the characters illumination are illusory. Yet, it is through these illusions of magic that the characters come to understand reality.

The two powerfully opposing forces that use magic in *The Tempest* are: Sycorax, the witch and Shakespeare's magician, Prospero.

Sycorax's charms are evil. They are composed of things associated with black magic, darkness and night. William Shakespeare illustrates a very conventional picture of this witch as in *The Tragedy of Macbeth*: foul, old and bent-backed. For a character who does not actually appear in the play, William Shakespeare takes great care in emphasising the evil magic of which she was capable, so her influence is strongly felt. On the other hand, Prospero uses magic to control the natural elements and the spirit world. According to

¹Stephen Greenblatt, *The Norton Shakespeare*, 1997, pp. 3046-3047

²Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, New York, Harper and Row, 1972

his long speech in Act V and from his various conversations with Ariel, we understand that it is through his control of spirits that Prospero controls nature. His magic is considered to be originating from a superior source to that of the witch Sycorax. Anna Brownell Jameson concurs, stating that Prospero's power derives from his "superior intellect" rather than a "compact with evil spirit"³. However, we can also argue that these characters contrast each other through the source of their magical powers. Many consider Prospero's

magic is white, whereas Sycorax uses black magic to deceive and hurt.

In the Elizabethan era, people strongly considered magic as evil and inspired by the devil. The Witches in *The Tragedy of Macbeth* or in our case, Sycorax, that had magical powers, were associated with darkness and night and people thought that they had received these powers by selling their souls to the devil. Caliban's mother is accused of having committed the ultimate act in witchcraft: the intercourse with the devil, when Prospero refers to Caliban as the bastard son of the devil himself.

In *The Tragedy of Macbeth* the witches use their magic for evil and they create chaos in Macbeth's ordinary world. Without the witches, Macbeth would not have killed the king, they influenced him with their prophecies that made him kill Duncan. Lady Macbeth also uses black magic. In one scene she lets evil spirits flow through her to take away her womanhood. But black magic only exists to destroy and create chaos, so in the end, the evil spirits take her over and she kills herself. Her husband exposes himself to black magic as well, through the witches. In the Elizabethan times there was a strict way how life should be, a strict order. If the king was on top of the hierarchy, everything was good. But Macbeth killed the king, therefore he destroyed that established order, while under the influence of black magic.

In *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, magic is the attribute of the fairies and has a comical effect, more likely as a prank. It is not used to harm the characters, but to help them. In this Shakespearean comedy, magic is not fatal, but helpful. Magic is performed with the help of the magical potion. Whereas, in *The Tempest*, magic is a tool used by Prospero to manipulate, control and cause sufferings in order to fulfil his desire for a biased revenge. Prospero's intention is to confuse, disorientate and trouble the crewmen so that they no longer know what illusion and what reality is.

Although Prospero accepts to return to Milan, he realizes the cost of his return is to give up his ability to perform magic. Knowing that it was exactly his eager pursuit of magical knowledge that gave Antonio the opportunity to usurp him, by taking his title, Prospero declares: "*This rough magic/I here abjure.../I'll break my staff*" (V.1.) and renounces the magic that has both given and taken away his power.



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³ Anna Brownell Jameson, *Shakespeare's Female Characters: An Appendix to Shakespeare's Dramatic Works*, Cambridge University Press, 1980, p. 160

PROSPERO'S ROLES IN *THE TEMPEST*

Gabriela-Miruna Irimia (Hârțan), I, RE

Coordinator: PhD Lecturer Cătălina Bălinișteanu-Furdu

Prospero, the main hero of William Shakespeare's late play, *The Tempest*, is a complex character, embodying many different roles: ruler, father, master, manager of the performance, creator and symbol of the author himself.

First of all, Prospero is a **ruler**, the Duke of Milan, a title which he lost after he had clearly shown more interest in studying sciences than in governing. The Duke entrusted his brother Antonio with the activities of reigning, but soon Antonio became blinded by power and together with Alonso, the King of Naples, planned to take Prospero's place. After twelve years, we find Prospero banished on an island together with his daughter, Miranda, trying to re-gain his title and to rule again. This means abandoning his Art (the practice of white magic) and re-joining human society. In Act I, scene 2, Prospero tells his daughter the whole story of his usurpation and reveals to her their noble origin: "Twelve year since, Miranda, twelve year since, / Thy father was the Duke of Milan, and / A prince of power." (V.2.53-55).

Secondly, Prospero is Miranda's **authoritarian father**, demanding obedience, controlling his daughter's life, her education and every step the girl takes, shaping her view on reality, even deciding when she has to go to sleep. He sets up his daughter's marriage with Ferdinand, son of the King of Naples, for his own political interest. Prospero's goal is to create an alliance between the dynasty of Milan and the one of Naples, thus gaining control over both regions. This relationship between father and daughter raises the problem of gender roles in the Elizabethan Age and symbolizes the women's role during an era characterized as a patriarchal society. In this traditional world, women held an inferior social position, they were perceived as the men's property (their father's and then their husband's) and were marginalized if they dared to think for themselves or attempted to take initiatives of any kind.

The master-and-servant¹ theme of the play provides the third role of the main character, that of a **master** for Ariel (the good airy spirit) and for Caliban (the witch Sycorax' ugly and primitive son). Ariel (former slave to Sycorax, freed by Shakespeare's main hero) represents the faithful spirit helping Prospero with his magic. Although opposed to Caliban, Ariel is also a servant continuously searching for his freedom showing his position as the master's servant. Caliban (as it has been suggested, a possible anagram of the word cannibal) is an exponent of the colonial ideology, according to which the white man is born to rule and the natives are due to provide him food and manpower ("We cannot miss him. He does make our fire, / Fetch in our wood, and serves in offices / That profit us" – I.2.315-317). In this role, probably one of the most important the hero assumes during the play, Prospero stands for the type of the colonizer, a symbol of the imperialists who oppress other peoples. At first, the colonizer treats the colonized well, teaches him his language and other skills, but little by little he will be turning him into his slave. From this point of view, we could consider Prospero as both **the victim of a usurpation** by his brother and a **usurper** himself, since he removed Caliban as *de facto* master of the island.

Of course, the unexperienced, uncivilized native puts all his trust in anyone who pretends to be his friend, without guessing the colonizer's real intention of submitting him in the end (in fact, Caliban is so childish that he makes the same mistake again, seeing Stephano, the King's butler, as a god who should be the new king of the island). But Caliban is also to blame for not being honest, thankful and constant in the relationship with the newcomer: in the beginning, he seems friendly ("When thou camest first (...) / I loved thee, / And showed thee all the qualities o' th' isle" – I.2.337, 340-341), but afterwards he tries to sin against Miranda and does not seem to regret his action. The 'savage' learned the colonizer's

¹Friedrich Hegel, *Fenomenologia spiritului*, Ed. Univers, București, 1999. The master-servant dialectic opposes the master to the servant; the former's position is recognized by everybody, but constantly challenged by the servant. The latter is always trying to usurp the master and take his position in the centre of society.

language, but he is unable to adopt the latter's moral values, so he is not worthy of receiving a good treatment. Caliban is, for Prospero, the "Abhorred slave, / Which any print of goodness wilt not take, / Being capable of all ill!" – I.356-358.

In the spirit of the British cultural materialism of the 1980's, *The Tempest* is an allegory and represents one of the first literary echoes of the British colonialism, with Caliban being the archetype of the first Amerindians discovered by the European explorers, who provoke disgust and then become slaves of the European world. Taking into account this, Prospero seems to be the prototype of the white Americans or the refugees coming from Europe.

Also, Prospero is the **manager of the performance**. By using the frame narrative technique and the motif of the curtain in the fifth act, William Shakespeare, through his character – Prospero – invites King Alonso and the public present at the performance to observe Miranda and Ferdinand playing chess. During that time, the game of chess was the privilege of the aristocracy, as well as a strategy for a man to enter a woman's bedchamber. The two lovers transfer their parents' political ambitions from the real world on the chess table.

Throughout the entire play, Prospero assumes the role of the **creator** throughout the play, the creator of situations, of conflicts and he is also the one who provides the solutions. He is a God-like representation who orchestrates all the events in the play and the other characters are just pawns manipulated by the almighty central hero.

Prospero was also considered by the critics as standing for **Shakespeare himself**. At the end of the play, in the Epilogue, the hero / the author addresses the public directly, trying to receive a response from the audience: he asks for applause that will set him free. The direct communication to the public represents an innovative technique in the dramatic art, a strategy that has the power of transforming the audience from passive to active. It was said that Prospero's magic books, his source of white magic, symbolize Shakespeare's own writing, which he too abandons at the end of the play. Finding himself at the end of his career, the great English author gives up creating magic on the stage and abandons his writing powers just like Prospero abandons his Art: "Now my charms are all o'erthrown, / And what strength I have's mine own, / Which is most faint. (...) / But release me from my bands/ With the help of your good hands. / Gentle breath of yours my sails/ Must fill, or else my project fails,/ Which was to please. Now I want/ Spirits to enforce, art to enchant;/ And my ending is despair, / Unless I be relieved by prayer, / Which pierces so that it assaults/ Mercy itself and frees all faults. / As you from crimes would pardon'd be, / Let your indulgence set me free." (V. Epilogue 1-3, 9-20).

We end our paper with Mark Van Doren's quote which intends to summarize William Shakespeare's intentions in *The Tempest*: "Is Shakespeare Prospero, and is his magic the art with which he has fabricated thirty-seven plays? Is he now burying his books – abandoning the theatre and retiring where every third thought will be his grave? And does *The Tempest* so signify? Answers are not too easy. Shakespeare has never dramatized himself before, and it may not have occurred to him to do so now. Also, *The Tempest* is not a cantata; it is still a play, and it is ballasted with much life. It can be doubted that Shakespeare sat down solemnly to decorate his life's work with a secret signature. (...) But a better signature was the play itself, which, if its author had been given to such exercises, he might have recognized as one of the most beautiful literary objects ever made. He would, scarcely, however, have been so conscious of what he had done. He is more likely to have let the moment go with four simple words: Now I will rest"².

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RESPECTABILITY, STABILITY AND DOMESTICITY (OR THEIR LACK) IN *ALICE'S ADVENTURES IN WONDERLAND*

Denisa Moraru, II, EF

Coordinator: PhD Lecturer Cătălina Bălinișteanu-Furdu

Respectability, stability and domesticity are typical principles associated with the Victorian Age in particular. These traits commonly pointed out the way people were labelled in their community according to their social status. They also depicted the usual Victorian family, bonded by unity, the very principle they acknowledged as essential. Victorianism was a symbol of order, social stability and progress.

1.a. Respectability in the Victorian Period

Respectability was a code of behaviour that governed every aspect of the lives of the Victorians¹. Respectability was perceived differently by the two genders, from which the society had certain expectations. On the one hand, men were expected to function in the public sphere, to attend business activities and master properties. The particular reason for these circumstances was that the man in those times represented the image of control. On the other hand, women were, as we would call it today, disadvantaged, in spite of the fact that they considered it as an ordinary thing. Their area to control was, mainly, their homes, and their activities consisted more specifically in giving birth, raising and educating children.

1.b. Respectability in Alice's Adventures in Wonderland

The aspect of respectability in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* is conflicting. The book actively demonstrates that respectability completely lacks or fails to be given the right place in Wonderland's society. Even though the kingdom had a ruler, in the person of the Queen of Hearts, the principle of respectability was not applied, because her word had no genuine effect upon her people anymore; the so-called servants did not listen to her orders, or comply with her commands, thus, we can say, she lacked authority: "It's all her fancy, that: they never execute nobody, you know" (chapter IX "The Mock Turtle's Story"). "Throughout the book, the reader observes how Alice has a 'voice' (she is not silenced by the author), but her discourse is not worth being taken into consideration"² – the exact reason why nobody even bothered to answer women's questions in the Victorian Age. They were seen as inferior to men therefore, they had no voice of their own, a voice that would equal or surpass men's.

Nobody seems to care or has any intention to treat women respectfully, nobody seems to be interested in respecting the neighbour, or the companion, or the master. So, we can easily come to the conclusion that respect and respectability do not exist in this land, the remnants of Victorian reality simply vanish.



2.a. Stability in the Victorian Period

For the Victorians, the family was a symbol of order, and social stability. Children were expected to act exceptionally, so, in the 19th century parents treated them harshly, sometimes asking/demanding too much from them. The child was never exempted from the rules or free from social orders. In the Victorian period, only boys were allowed to go to school, meanwhile, a governess would teach girls at home. This fact puts stability in the balance. The legal and political restraints were meant to assure the recognition of order

¹<https://repository.up.ac.za/bitstream/handle/2263/26917/02chapters3-4.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y> (page 2)

²Bălinișteanu-Furdu, Cătălina, Subversion of Authority in "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland", in *Limba și context. Revistă internațională de lingvistică, semiotică și știință literară*, nr. V, volume 2, Ed. Universității de Stat „Alecu Russo” din Bălți, Republica Moldova, 2013, pp. 69-79; p. 75.

over disorder and to reduce chaos and the essential goals of law³. These could be set up with the help of order and stability.

2.b. Stability in Alice's Adventures in Wonderland

In *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, Wonderland is seen as a card game and a rule would be to win the game in order to gain a higher position among the creatures. This is what Alice actually wants, to be recognized in this world, to have authority over the land. The entire world is understood as a set of rules for different games which cannot be completed because the Queen of the land had no authority over them. For example, the game of croquet which Alice is forced to play. This game lacks order and stability due to its changeable rules and to its bad structure. The mixture of cards (taking up the role of hoops) which are unstable, so the goal is unstable, flamingos (as mallets) which can be attractive for a child due to its colour (pink), and hedgehogs (as balls) create various problems since these parts of the game are all living, each having their own identity and selfish interests. The lack of stability and order leads to absurdity and reduces the interest of playing the game.

This example can express the children's incapacity to understand the rules in real life, life seen as a game which eventually leads to chaos. Wonderland seems to be an upside-down version of reality and Alice cannot integrate in this world, because she is not a typical Victorian child taking into consideration the courage with which she speaks her mind and protests against what she does not like.



3.a. Domesticity in the Victorian Period

The cult of domesticity held a dominant place in the Victorian private discourse and its realization in everyday life. The values of domestic life were highly appreciated and, like respectability and morality, the cult of domesticity blurred class relations for it came to appear above class. Domesticity held an idealized view of the home, and its power exercised over the middle class remained undiminished. When Victorian writers talked about home, they invoked a range of ideas and complex effects about the material. They also imagined a space where one's self and society meet. Domesticity organized beliefs about family, gender, identity, sexuality, class, work and civilization. As a form of domesticity, the image of the family hearth represents comfort, coziness and good cheer; it is often seen as a glimpse of heaven in a heartless world.

On top of this, a home offered women an area where they could wield some power and influence within a social sphere; home was the wife's centre, where she could bring her influence to the good of her family. The Victorian authors introduced the reader to two different categories of gender stereotypes: stories for boys (crimes, adventures, fights and investigations) and stories for girls (he insisted upon romantic love, marriage and friendship). These two types have been introduced into the literature to fix certain things in the mind of the reader: boys were taught to be strong and fearless, whereas girls learned their lessons of domesticity, politeness and modesty.

3.b. Domesticity in Alice's Adventures in Wonderland

The fantastic novel opens with the appearance of Alice and her sister and we can see that their parents are absent, although throughout the novel we see their influence mark Alice's life. With her journey, Alice tries to evade domesticity (everything she learned in the real world, the Victorian world) and to embrace a new behavior in order to fit into this fantastic world full of strange creatures, trying to adapt and set up a new lifestyle.

In this world, Alice is surrounded by the lack of domesticity. For example, the duchess's house is a place with a lot of deficiencies. What Alice encounters here is completely different from what she has learned and seen in her world. The cozy place near the fire is replaced with violence, the warm welcome is replaced by a cold welcoming in the middle of a battle between the duchess and her cook, and on top of that, a careless baby in a room full of smoke. Not a place for a baby, that is for sure. As a comparative note, we can discuss about Son, from the novel *Dombey and Son* by Charles Dickens:

"Dombey sat in the corner of the darkened room in the great armchair by the bedside, and Son lay tucked up

³Bălinișteanu, Cătălina, "Mastering the Rules: A New Strategy of Subverting Authority. The Case of Lewis Carroll's Alices" in *Studies on literature, discourse and multicultural dialogue* (volum coordonat de Iulian Boldea), Editura Arhipelag XXI, 2013, pp. 905-911, p. 907

warm in a little basket bedstead, carefully disposed on a low settee immediately in front of the fire and close to it" (*Dombey and Son*, p. 1). The child was growing up in a warm environment under the protective gaze of his father, while, in Alice, the conditions were unfavorable. The lack of stability and domesticity here is striking.

To sum up: in my paper I tried to analyze concepts such as *respectability*, *stability* and *domesticity* as they were perceived in the Victorian period and how they were described by Lewis Carroll in his book. My analysis shows how the author defied the established Victorian principles and aimed at suggesting new approaches to life without the traditional restrictions imposed by the 19th century society.

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Raluca-Elena Dominte, I, Marketing
Coordinator: PhD Associate Professor Mihaela Culea

We are living in difficult times, because of this new world's enemy-COVID19 and we almost forgot how it felt when everything was natural. The pandemic affected and it is still affecting all parts of the economy on a global scale. Unfortunately, these long-term effects will last and it will take a long time for things to get back to normal. COVID-19's impact on small businesses all over the world is significant.

On the one hand, this year put a 'closed' sign to a lot of small businesses' doors. Some companies went bankrupt, while others doubled their profit during the pandemic (Amazon, Microsoft, Apple, Tesla, Facebook, Netflix)¹. The ones that suffered most were travelling agencies, airlines companies, restaurants, hotels, clubs and business areas based on human interaction.



On the other hand, even some companies faced some difficulties during the pandemic, they managed to overcome this economic crisis. In Romania, the result of a questionnaire showed that only 7% of the companies were immune, while 72% had to face some challenges because of this financial blocking.²

We are experiencing a crisis that requires quick thinking when facing uncertainty. However, entrepreneurs may have a hard time making a decision due to overthinking. Here are some general challenges entrepreneurs in the time of COVID-19³ have had to cope with:

1. Money management – it is probably the most common problem and also the most difficult to solve, because it involves a lot of things to consider, such as: bills, payments for suppliers, salary, technical unemployment and the list of expenses goes on. Because of the pandemic, some businesses were forced to reduce the work force. These actions will have an impact on local economies as well.

2. Human resources issues – business owners are handling million concerns at once and it's difficult to know how to deal with time and resources in order of priority. They need to think about what is truly important to their business. For many of them, it's their people—employees, customers, partners. When it comes to employees, things are difficult, because some of them are in the situation of technical unemployment, or trying to work from home. Some are afraid to come to work in public places, and the list continues. As a manager, you have to find solutions to all of these problems in order to maintain your workforce and the proper running of the business.

3. Legislation and data overload – there is a lot of legislation concerning protection measures at the office, state loans, inspections by authorities and it can get difficult to stay up with all of them, so entrepreneurs have to pay attention so that they avoid future problems. While having access to the most recent news may be a blessing, it can as well become a burden. The COVID-19 pandemic brings changes and businesses have to reorganize and build new strategies in order to survive.

¹ <https://www.ft.com/content/844ed28c-8074-4856-bde0-20f3bf4cd8f0>

² <https://www.startupcafe.ro/afaceri/criza-covid-afaceri.htm>

³ <https://www.biz2credit.com/blog/2020/09/03/the-top-five-challenges-small-businesses-face-during-the-covid-19-pandemic/>

4. **Protection** – here, we are talking about all safety measures. Standards should guarantee that workers are supplied with healthy workplaces, sanitized workplaces, and the ability to respect social distance.

5. **Digitalization** – it is not as easy as it sounds. It takes time and money to create an audience. Social media apps can keep customers aware of updates. Switching to online stores is another way to advertise the products and using social media to develop a new customer base may be a workable solution.

In conclusion, the coronavirus has brought plenty of challenges that companies are attempting to pander to. Existing issues have increased during this time. It is important that companies address these new challenges early in order to reevaluate other options and find the best solutions. And what is also important is to remain calm and safe. Eventually, things will come to light.

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1. Introduction

The teenager's anxieties, ignorance and curiosity are affecting the quality of their lives. The number of teenagers that are using drugs is continuously increasing. They are using different drugs, and it does not matter what their family social status is, education or age. There is no difference between a soft, hard or recreational drug, all are dangerous, and their use can lead to addiction. Addiction is not only related to drugs; it can also be a consequence of excessive use of all kinds of substances. When we ask ourselves what the word addiction means, we might think instantly only at alcohol and drugs. Still, the reality is that people have all kinds of addictions such as medicine, cigarettes and even glue. There is a difference between them in the fact that some of these substances are more addictive than others. The most addictive from all mentioned above are crack¹ and heroin²; these two make the user lose control even from the first or second-time use. An addict³ is a person who has no control over using a drug, alcohol, or any medicine.

2. Teenager drug problems in Britain in the past and in the present

As John Oakland revealed in his book *Contemporary Britain: A Survey with Texts* (2001), in the article *Drug-taking Britain is "worst in Europe"* written by Victoria Fletcher and Ian Brodie (originally published in *The Times*, 2 January 1999) abridged⁴, a decreasing number of drugs use can be achieved more efficiently by means of advice centres.

In this short article, we will try to make a short analysis and comparison between how things were back then, in the 1990s, and how things have changed, for the better or worse, in Great Britain. In order to do so, we will use as background the article provided by John Oakland in his book *Contemporary Britain: A Survey with Texts* and a more recent article "Bristol named cocaine capital of Europe following sewage study" written by Tom Barnes⁵, published online in *The Independent* newspaper, Thursday 14 March 2019.

According to the article from John Oakland's book⁶, we can see that in 1999 in the United Kingdom it was not uncommon for teenagers to try drugs or drink alcohol in their teenage years. There has been a continuous struggle for teachers and politicians to implement and find ways to slow down the high number of teenagers taking drugs but, sadly, with few positive results. There were also debates whether drugs like marijuana are soft drugs when, in reality, they are all dangerous, and a simple message would have been more efficient such as this: all drugs are bad, either soft or hard drugs. The use of marijuana is affecting productivity in schools, and it is also the second after alcohol, which causes car crashes. Even in Alaska, they incriminated marijuana after many years of not doing it because of an increase in its use as a substance

¹ Crack cocaine - is a form of the drug cocaine which has been purified and made into crystals available at <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/crack-cocaine>.

² Heroin-Semisynthetic drug derived from morphine. Discovered in 1874, it was introduced commercially in 1898 by the Bayer company in Germany. The name heroin was coined from the German heroisch meaning heroic, strong. Heroin is stronger (more potent) than morphine; a strongly physiologically addictive narcotic C₂₁H₂₃NO₅ that is made by acetylation of but is more potent than morphine and that is prohibited for medical use in the U.S. but is used illicitly for its euphoric effects <https://www.rxlist.com/heroin/definition.htm>; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/heroin>

³ An addict is a person who has become physically or psychologically dependent on a chemical substance, <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/addict>.

⁴ Fletcher, Victoria; Brodie, Ian, *Drug-taking Britain is "worst in Europe"*, in Oakland, John, *Contemporary Britain: A Survey with Texts*, 2001, Routledge, London, pp. 230-231

⁵ Barnes, Tom, "Bristol named cocaine capital of Europe following sewage study", Thursday 14 March 2019 18:39, in *The Independent*, available at: <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/bristol-cocaine-capital-europe-uk-most-used-city-sewer-research-mdma-methamphetamine-a8823331.html>

⁶ Oakland, John *Contemporary Britain: A Survey with Texts*, 2001, Routledge, London, pp.230-231.

causing overdose cases, and also because of the significant number of car accidents⁷.

Schools also tried to implement a clear and detailed drug education programme, after the government appointed a drug czar⁸, Keith Hellawell. He was a counterpart of America's drug czar, Barry McCaffrey, both in charge of coordinating national drug control policy and reaching out to the government's important leaders. Campaigns such as "Just say NO"⁹, fighting for the fact that all drugs are dangerous and campaigns fighting for the thought that teenagers and not only, all children of all ages should be given in schools more information regarding the use and consequences of drugs.

However, in the end, it is the parents who have the most significant influence in a teenager's life. This is because families, mostly parents, have a significant role in a teenager's life. The parents are supposed to know their children's behaviour and the change of it, habits, and friends. Also, the way in which they are present and involved in the teenager's life, the quality time provided, and all the support they can offer, all have a significant role in a teenager's development and the choices that he/she will make in life.

As we may see, in the more recent article written by Tom Barnes in 2019, unfortunately, things have not changed for the better. According to a recent study examining traces of drug in the sewage across the continent, teenagers in the United Kingdom are still on the first place in Europe for drug use and addiction. The study results were based on analyzing wastewater in 73 cities in 20 European countries, including around 46 million residents, in March 2018. According to the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction, there is a higher use of cocaine in the southern European cities, the top 4 countries being the Netherlands, Spain, Belgium and the United Kingdom. In eastern European cities, the situation was different, and the research study found lower drug use levels.

In 2018, Bristol was on top of the list, having the medium daily concentration of benzoylecgonine (BE)¹⁰ in the city's wastewater reported at 969.2mg per 1,000, while in 2017 it was only of 754.7mg. The difference is made only by the new type of drugs (Xanax¹¹, ketamine¹² and cocaine in 2019) compared with marijuana¹³, ten years ago, and also the combination of all of them for even higher experiences. Ketamine became the United Kingdom Teenager's Drug of Choice.

After the researcher's willingness to understand drug-taking habits by testing wastewater in dozens of cities, Bristol was found to be the first city in the list, followed by Amsterdam and Barcelona. From all The United Kingdom's cities, Bristol was the only one participating in this research; London was omitted because in the previous studies it occupied the first place in Europe for cocaine use.

Conclusions

⁷ Fletcher, Victoria; Brodie, Ian, *Drug-taking Britain*, in op.cit., p. 231

⁸ Ibidem

⁹ Ibidem, p. 230

¹⁰ Benzoylecgonine is a compound produced when the body breaks down the Class A substance - Barnes, Tom, "Bristol named cocaine capital of Europe following sewage study", Thursday 14 March 2019 18:39, in The Independent, available at: <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/bristol-cocaine-capital-europe-uk-most-used-city-sewer-research-mdma-methamphetamine-a8823331.html>

¹¹ Xanax is a powerful benzodiazepine that is often prescribed to treat generalized anxiety disorder (GAD), panic disorders and insomnia. It is extremely addictive when used long-term. Xanax is the number one prescribed psychiatric medication in the United States. Seventy percent of teens with a Xanax addiction get the drug from their general practitioner's cabinet. <https://www.addictioncenter.com/benzodiazepines/xanax/>

¹² Ketamine categorized as a "dissociative anesthetic" (dissociative anesthetic: a drug that distorts perception of sight and sound and produces feelings of detachment (dissociation) from the environment and self), is used in powdered or liquid form as an anesthetic, usually on animals. It can be injected, consumed in drinks, snorted, or added to joints or cigarettes. Ketamine was placed on the list of controlled substances in the US in 1999. Short- and long-term effects include increased heart rate and blood pressure, nausea, vomiting, numbness, depression, amnesia, hallucinations and potentially fatal respiratory problems. Ketamine users can also develop cravings for the drug. At high doses, users experience an effect referred to as "K-Hole," an "out of body" or "near-death" experience. Due to the detached, dreamlike state it creates, where the user finds it difficult to move, ketamine has been used as a "date-rape" drug. <https://www.drugfreeworld.org/drugfacts/prescription/ketamine.html>

¹³ Marijuana is a drug that is mostly smoked — in a joint, a bowl, a bong, or other device — but sometimes it can be eaten. Marijuana is illegal, but it is considered a "soft drug" — as opposed to hard drugs like heroin or cocaine, which are killers. People call marijuana "pot" and "weed" and a hundred other slang terms. There's also medical marijuana, which sick people, especially cancer patients, can get to relieve their pain. <https://www.vocabulary.com/dictionary/marijuana>

There are more ways in which we can help a teenager with drug addiction problems; there are specialised health care centres, psychologists and, most important, the love and support of the family. Explaining to them why drugs can be dangerous and what problems they can cause, such as influencing their judgment and making them regret something the next day or making them aggressive and violent. Talking, openly and honestly, about the potential dangers of drugs, but also listening to them, not just talking, as they need to know they are heard. The society should encourage sports, hobbies, and social activities that keep them busy.

Sometimes teens have to make their own mistakes to realise that what their parents have said is true. Spoiling them too much, giving them everything too easily, too fast and without deserving it, trying to “buy” the absence of love is only making things even worse.

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Smoking (introduction)

Unhealthy behaviour may be as old as the human race. An ancient philosopher (Seneca, cited in Widisto, n.d.) wrote that “making mistakes is human nature, but persisting with the same mistakes is demonic behaviour.” “Mistakes are a huge part of learning. In fact, it’s the only way to learn. We must make mistakes if we want to improve”, and interpret them both in a “learning context” and in a “moral context” (Widisto, n.d.).

Smoking has roots in history, culture and habits. The puff of smoke was rarely advertised as an addiction. People got used to tobacco cigarettes, cigars, e-cigarettes, or vape pens. Illnesses and behavioural traits of addiction are slowly tied to beliefs (smoking calms nervousness), circumstances (playmates share a joint), symptom perceptions (routinely spitting phlegm), conditions (lack of entertainment), decisions (smoke more or less). A prevalence of smoking-related behaviour will be studied below and will show connections to individual or peer group beliefs.

Smoking behaviour analysis (SCM, HBM, PMT, TPB)

Using four main models (Ogden, 2019, unit 2), we identify behavioural relations between smoking and individual health beliefs, such as attitudes and perceptions of control, risk, efficacy.

The Stages of Change Model provides a decisional balance for the smoker weighing in costs and benefits, positive and negative features of smoking. As a decision maker, the concerned smoker will elicit and maintain a desired behavioural change, aided by solutions tailored accordingly. From no intention to make any changes (“I am still young and I am feeling well”) to considering a change (“I want to give birth to a healthy child”), then to making small changes (“I am not smoking in front of any child”) and to actively engaging in a new behaviour (“I spend more time playing with children”), the smoker may focus on maintaining the new situation over time (“I am playing with my children”).

The Health Belief Model (HBM) researches the set of core beliefs (costs and benefits) about smoking and identifies cues to action (mainly, for a compliant, conscious, confident smoker, willing to maintain health). Smoker’s perception is redefined in time and in socioeconomic environments, as behaviour changes.

The inventory of health beliefs a smoker has may include susceptibility of ill health (“nobody in my family had serious health problems”), severity of smoking (“spitting blood is not good”), perceived control (“If I wanted, I could easily quit”), health motivation (“smoking endangers health”). Revealing them may empower a smoker to observe appropriate emotional ways to change smoking habits.

The Protection Motivation Theory predicts behavioural intent similarly to the previous model, but one more component (fear). Severity (e.g. “Bowel cancer is a serious illness”). Susceptibility (e.g. “My chances of getting bowel cancer are high”). Response effectiveness (e.g. “Changing my diet would improve my health”). Self-efficacy (e.g. “I am confident that I can change my diet”). Fear (e.g. an emotional response “I am scared of getting cancer”). Hearing an example about how smoking relates to chronic obstructive pulmonary disease may cause more fear and perceptually increase beliefs in the seriousness and the likelihood of diseases. Now more conscious and more confident, the smoker may consider new beneficial options and new intentions - away from smoking.

The Theory of Planned Behaviour looks at attitudes and intentions of a smoker as the outcomes of combined beliefs. Predictors of such beliefs are found in stances (both positive and negative), in opinions (both internally and externally) and in past behaviour (Ogden: “the measure of perceived behavioural control”). For example, when the smoker is not able to quit because of a belief that the smoker’s age is too advanced to

make any change, this would predict a smoking plan and behaviour rather than an intention to quit smoking. Intentions are “plans of action in pursuit of behavioural goals” (Ogden). If reducing smoking ensures a wealthier or healthier life, if even a little bit of change benefits grandchildren, and if the smoker has a perceived success in behavioural control, planned intentions emerge. Even without intentions, a smoker with good behavioural control or respect for norms (e.g. social and environmental factors) may be able to develop a behavioural change plan.

Conclusive argument on smoking and beliefs

The four models above (SCM, HBM, PMT, TPB) consider behaviour as a continuous human learning process and possible adjustments to desired outcomes. Psychosocial influences leading smokers toward smoking may be emotional, social, or financial. Planning a behavioural change involves confronting addiction through a conscious, informed reassessment of personal or social beliefs. Writing about smoking as a behavioural concern gave me an opportunity to reflect on beliefs and intentions.

While universities should engage in an active campaign of discouraging on-campus smoking, I believe health beliefs should become the academic, social and personal issue of the century. An increase of human potential and a reduction of healthcare costs are but two of the significant benefits to a civilized society. As we grow older, cherishing youthfulness and health come first!

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IN TOO DEEP

George Andrei Trif, I, MK Distance Learning
Coordinator: PhD Associate Professor Mihaela Culea

Let's face it, quitting the rat race is one of the things that everybody talks about these days. And you cannot blame them for it! If you take a step back and think about it, you'll notice that jobs are quite difficult to find these days. Not to mention that keeping your job gets very difficult due to Covid-19 crisis. People realize that they could turn their job into something they could do for themselves. Instead of working for a boss, they'd work for themselves!

More than ever, the perspective of spending ten or twenty years in the same company, on a 9-17 work routine isn't appealing anymore. The race to climb to the top of the corporate ladder is losing interest. The usual work perspective has become a rat race to escape. Resulting from that is the idea of quitting the rat race and the goal of building a passive income to escape society as we know it.



1. How can you get out of the rat race?

I am writing this from the seat of the guy who has tried this before and failed. Now, don't start judging me and don't start saying things like "How can you give us advice if you failed?". Learning from your mistakes gives you the opportunity to analyze more deeply what you have done wrong and it helps you build a better foundation for the next shot.

Now that we got to this point, let me tell you a few things about how I got to fail at what I loved to do most. In 2012 I got employed at a local company. This company's main activities were typography and digital printing and the job interview was for a graphics designer. I had no legal experience in that field, but being a self-taught type of person, I took contact with most of the software when I was in high school. Nevertheless, I got the job. It took me four years to get bored of that job; I wasn't paid very well and there was no opportunity to get a promotion. I was very sad about that and it started to eat me alive. So, in 2016 I quit my job. Being a biker, I saw a business opportunity: starting a motorcycle workshop. I had some money set aside so I started investing in tools and I started taking classes so I can get a mechanics license.

I was right on the money with that decision. Those were the best three years of my life even though I was working 10h/day, 6 days/week, sometimes on Sundays as well. I was able to take a vacation whenever I wanted. I had the feeling that I was doing something for myself for a change. Money wasn't bad either. I got to travel for 3 weeks in Morocco during that period, took a couple of holidays outside the country with my bike, visiting quite a few of Europe's attractions.

That doesn't really sound like a failure does it? Well it was! And I will demonstrate to you why it was a failure as we "travel" through this article.

Some people run successful businesses and have the luxury of living a life they want to live. To get there, however, they've worked hard to build not only a business, but a business structured around processes, and which can therefore work without them. The key to that success, though, is that they know exactly what they want to achieve and why they want to achieve it. The question you have to ask yourself is, do you?

I didn't. I did not know what I wanted to achieve. I had no goal. All I wanted to do is work for more money. And I did work, and I made more money, but I had no real goal.

The bare truth is this: if you don't know what you want to achieve you will end up working very hard, spending a lot of energy and many hours to get things done without thinking for a second about planning and structuring your business so that it works for you and not the other way around.

You will eventually get tired of what you do, because managing people, money and time is all about managing pressure. You'll get tired of what you do because working INTO your business doesn't produce the

results you get when you work ON your business.

That is exactly what happened. I worked INTO my business. When I started the business, it was a one man does it all business. I was doing the mechanical work, I was placing orders for the parts, I was responsible for the marketing campaigns. Every little thing was done by myself. And I never got out of that bubble. The bubble called “control freak” :). What I should have done is trust that someone else can do some of the work at least as well as I could do it and take a step back and get an eagle’s eye point of view on the business. That would have helped me realize that I was making no progress after a while even though I was constantly investing in new equipment and learning new things.

So, let’s get back to the basic question. The basic question is not “How can I quit my 9 to 17 rat race job?”. The basic question is “Why do I want to quit my 9 to 17 rat race job, and what is the ultimate goal that I have in mind?”. You have to set smart goals for yourself because that is what it will make you hold on and persevere when the bills don’t get paid and the things go slower than expected.

After you’ve set your goals you should think about what can you do. Do you want to start something that is from your field of expertise? Do you want to start something fresh? What are the resources that you need to be able to start something from scratch? Does that create value for others?

E.g.: If you’re sure the value is a matter of selling made-in-china drop-shipped stuff, then go for it. But think also about the kind of thing you know how to do, the kind of problem you can solve for others, and about the unsolved problems people talk about. Your options lay wherever you can create value people will be happy to pay for. It’s that simple!

A portion of your options relates to your skills, and to the means you have at your disposal to get where you want to get. If you need to take classes or get a degree, get it before you quit the rat race.

2. Have a safety plan

Dropping everything isn’t something you should do in a haste, however talking about building a financial strategy, planning, and keeping a safety net is the smart way to go.

And this is where it all went south for me. I used my financial safety net to invest even more in the business trying to overcompensate for the control freak state of mind that I had :). There is only a certain amount of work that one can do in a given period of time. So instead of taking that step back that we were talking about earlier I got In Too Deep and tried to do even more by myself. That combined with the fact that for the next eight months the weather got pretty bad and slowed business, which got me quitting and getting back into the rat race.

From a financial perspective, you want to make sure that you have a safety net available. That safety net should allow you to live decently for at least twelve months. And it should help taking the pressure off of you until your dream business starts making enough money.

Having a successful business takes time. It will not happen overnight! So, the best thing you can do is to protect yourself from the uncertainty that comes with your future life as an entrepreneur. Save liquidity and build yourself some personal financial security.

3. Personal emotional safety

Sometimes overlooked, your emotional safety can really impact your decision-making ability. You have to be able to separate your business life from your personal life and emotions.

There will be times when you will worry about your ability to stay on track and to keep up with the surrounding business environment that changes faster than you ever imagined. JUST STAY FOCUSED!!! You’ll wonder if you have the training you need to keep thinking forward. You’ll wonder if you’ll be able to take on a leadership position in your business. And you’ll tend to feel on your own when that happens. Remember this: Your emotional safety will play an important role in your ability to quit the rat race, and



chances are that training yourself could make a massive difference.

Now I'm employed at a multinational company, learning new things about business, climbing my way back to the point in time when I will be quitting the rat race once again accompanied by the past experience and the new things that I have learned.

JUST STAY FOCUSED!!!

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TREATMENT OF C-SECTION ADHESIONS IN CAESARIAN POST-PARTUM PERIOD

Adriana Agavriloaei (Beța), KMS

Loredana Casian (Panait), KMS

Coordinator: PhD Professor's Assistant Gabriela Andrioai

Caesarean surgery is a major surgery involving incision of the uterine wall to extract the fetus. Whether the caesarean section is scheduled or performed as an emergency procedure, it is important to reiterate that this is a major surgery and affects the body and its recovery more than natural birth. Regardless of whether or not the woman had physical activity before the birth, it is recommended that in the postpartum period to go through a set of exercises correctly targeted and executed, which will lead to a faster recovery of the changes that have occurred during pregnancy and to prevent the appearance of others. The purpose of this work is to address the methods for preventing the abdominal adhesions with physiotherapy in order to avoid surgical removal of the adhesions.

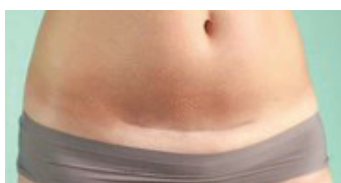


Fig. 1. C-section scar

Abdominal scarring after caesarean surgery is correlated with increased intra-abdominal adhesions therefore, the postpartum physiotherapeutic program following cesarean surgery should also address the prevention or treatment of abdominal adhesions. A caesarean may lead, in 90% of the cases, to a new caesarean section. In repeated C-sections, abdominal adhesions are associated with an increased risk of complications such as bladder and bowel damage, pelvic pain, bleeding, infections and hysterectomy.

The postpartum period is the period following the birth and lasts up to a period of 6-8 weeks (about 40 days). According to specialized studies, there has been proven an increased efficiency in the recovery of the quality of life after caesarean birth by approaching a program of physical therapy beginning with the early post-caesarean period.

In the first few weeks, an elastic abdominal belt, specially conceived for the postpartum period can be helpful in maintaining the abdominal wall, especially when standing.

Although the lower layers of the incision will heal quickly, in the area of the scar you will feel numbness that can last a variable period, depending on the personal physiological specificity. Besides the abdominal muscles, the pelvic floor muscles may also stretch and weaken during pregnancy. In order to fix this problem, certain abdominal and pelvic floor exercises are encouraged from the very first days to prevent urinary incontinence and other pelvic floor pathologies.

In order to prevent or treat abdominal adhesions (intra-abdominal tissue bridges that form around an incision, as the first step of the body in the healing process), studies have proven the efficiency of kinesio taping applications. When treating a recent scar with tape, the abnormal growth of lymphatic vessels in the area is stimulated, this procedure can begin only after healing, because the tape is not sterile.

The method consists in the following steps:

1. measure in such a way that the base and the fixing end of each strip stretches beyond the area to be treated.
2. apply several strips 1-1,5 cm wide, leaving a space of 1 cm between them (or without any space in case of highly adhesive scars), use the ligamentary technique, apply the band perpendicularly to the scar and

throughout its length, stretching each strip as necessary, the ends of the strip remain without tension;
 3. apply a second layer of strips according to the same technique and method in such a way that the strips cross with the first.



Fig. 1. Kinesio taping applications

In order to recover the elasticity of the scar tissue, manual therapy will be applied according to the Wurn Thenique, which is a 5-day treatment, 20 hours of manual therapy specially adapted to the identification of the abdominal adhesions and concludes with the following steps:

1. localization of adhesion (scar tissue, lesion, etc.)
2. manipulation of adhesion by longitudinal passage along the fibers of the soft tissue and with the lesion of a contact object, keeping the tissue completely elongated.



Fig. 2. Wurn Thenique®

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1. Lesson 1: To be or not to be (de)pressed by Covid-19

Ever since the end of last February we have been experiencing a fight with an invisible enemy. No one has ever been prepared to take this fight, nor has known how to deal with it. We were thrown at the mercy of a challenge that not even doctors knew about. The *danger* was even bigger as we did not know what to expect.

As no one understood what was going on, we needed to adapt to what was to come. There were no “recipes” or tips for *how to cope* with it. But we have been learning new things ever since as there was no way of turning back.

Professionally speaking, there have been hard times, not only for me as a teacher but for almost every employee. Many fields from all over the world have collapsed. Schools have been closed and online challenges set in. Even if we were not so good at using technology, we have not surrendered or worse, *suffered from* technophobia. It was then, more than ever, that we have been challenged to do more for our students. We might have often felt stressed out that we could not face it but we did it eventually. All the pedagogy seemed to fade away in front of a digital device. All we had to do was think of those devices as instruments that could help us do wonderful things for our students, by taking risks and getting out of the comfort zone! I have seen it as a connection between me and my students even if we were apart, as they, as digital natives, have been able to teach us, teachers, how to handle the online tools and I have been improving my way of mastering those tools. This way of being interconnected has helped us ensure a very pleasant atmosphere and make virtual classrooms even more comfortable than at school.

That was *the first lesson* that I have definitely learnt during the lockdown: focusing on what I have to do, on what I enjoyed most, learning how to cope with stressful situations or pressing deadlines have made me more resilient to what was yet to come.

2. Lesson 2: To have or not to have.... time. (Re)organizing life

Whenever you stay indoors so long, sometimes you feel like you can master time, but it is only a wrong impression. You get the feeling that time stops for a moment and you can be anywhere you want. It is time to wake up! Instead of counting the days, try make the days count. I was grateful in a way for those moments spent in company of my dear ones as I have never seemed to find enough time to do it.

Personally speaking, there were times when I felt trapped in a cage but I learnt not to surrender. We, Romanians, as a nation, have always fought for our freedom throughout history and we have done it honorably so far. This time we haven't found the way to do it anymore. No people has. Being “locked” in our houses, being deprived of what we liked most, being told what to do or how to behave turned us into some kind of “caged creatures”, as we were being stolen what we had the most precious: our freedom.

Due to this long period away from each other, being *physically separated* from what we were used to do, and I like to think of it as a virtue, helped us (re) set our lives. How could that happen, you wonder? Yes, it can and it did happen as we needed to *interact* differently and not only with *each other* but also with *ourselves*. It has been as another type of dialogue, seen as a dialogical communication in which one can reach knowledge, self-knowledge and truth. So, what is the point in being true to the others if you are not true to yourself? Spending so much time with ourselves has taught us who we really are and how we could act and (re)act in different circumstances.

Learning *the second lesson* during the pandemic context: be true to yourself and enjoy every single moment with your dear ones as time never comes back.

3. To (inter)act or not to (inter)act. Quarantine as absence of interaction

The Coronavirus has had unexpected negative effects on everyone by threatening our place in society. The question is not “why” but “how harmful?” This imposed lockdown has become a matter of great concern for the entire world. Everyone needed to adjust to new ways of going on. How to do that? People had to invent strategies of survival. We had to give up everything that we were used to and “build” a new life, a new reality.

No more holidays to celebrate, no more visits to pay, no more hugging, no more anything...we were doomed to a life barely (in)visible. We have been reduced to a “mask”. All we had was the hope leading us into the next day. How to explain to children that they were not allowed to see their relatives anymore when not even we, as adults were able to explain it to ourselves? We have been experiencing all types of *threats* due to this **absence of interaction** as we weren’t able to act, (re)act or (inter)act anymore as we began to develop a sort of *a minimalist behaviour* reduced to few gestures due to the lack of proper communication.

The more we were deprived of what we did before, the more we wanted to keep on doing those things. It was not an easy „task” for anyone but we had to find all the resources inside ourselves in order to adjust to that new virus-shaped reality. There were so many people struggling with the virus for their lives. Some of them did succeed, others did not, unfortunately. I was, fortunately, among the first.

This pandemic crisis found us weaker than we knew we were and because we have been struggling against an unknown enemy made us even weaker.

The third lesson was eventually on its way: “Carpe diem!”, meaning “Seize the day!” as nothing is forever and no one is ever sure if tomorrow still comes.

The danger is far from being gone but having these lessons learnt in some years’ time, we will have known how to deal with ourselves and especially how to adjust our own reality.

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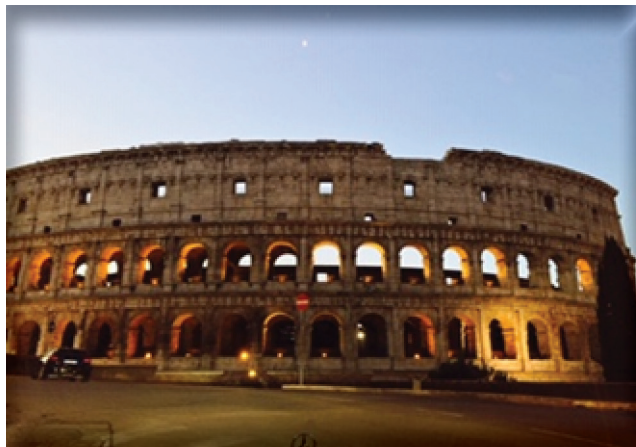
MY DREAM CAME TRUE IN ROME

Petru Ursache, I, Marketing

Coordinator: PhD Associate Professor Mihaela Culea

I would like to share with you a beautiful experience that has personally changed my life. As far back as I can remember, even in my dreams, when I wanted to achieve something, I knew that with hard work, patience, perseverance and positive attitude, anything was possible.

I left Romania after graduating high school with my twin brother Paul, touring Europe with its most charming countries and capitals and their unparalleled diversity. Our travels stopped ten years ago in the Italian capital of Rome, known around the world as the “Eternal City”, with its most fascinating history and beautiful architecture.



Colloiseum, Rome

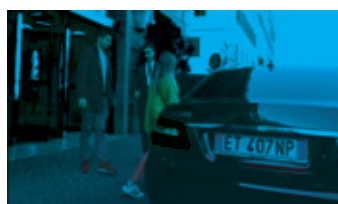
Who are we?

We are two young entrepreneurs with over 10 years of experience in the Italian tourism industry. We’ve always had a dream: to share our passion for art and history with visitors travelling to Italy, by offering them exclusive and memorable tour services. Our tours begin in Rome, the “Eternal city”, which arguably boasts the most beautiful and popular masterpieces that the world has to offer, as well as Vatican City where we play the role of hosts to visitors from every continent.



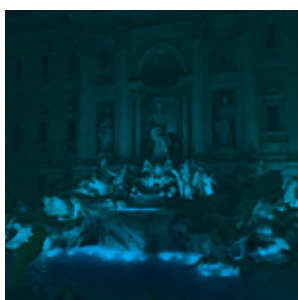
Vatican City, St. Peter's square

Working in some of the most decorated travel agencies of Rome, gaining significant knowledge and experience, we felt confident enough to start our own business, partnering with a longstanding tour operator specializing in the VIP guest traveller. With their help, we established our agency, an online tour operator, whose mission is to offer exclusive tour experiences at competitive rates. We like to call it: “an affordable luxury”.



Our car and security service

The most popular destinations and the best services



Trevi Fountain



Paestum Temples



Capri Island

Our exclusive tours include Italy's most popular destinations, such as: Rome, Naples, Amalfi Coast, Pompeii, Florence, Venice, and many more. Since our ultimate goal is to provide the ultimate tour experience for our customers, we only collaborate with professional tour guides including university professors that possess a background in Art History or Archaeology in order to deliver a knowledgeable, articulate tour experience in a luxury and intimate environment, without suffering the pressure of overcrowded groups.

With luck I also met some VIPs



Nicholas Cage and my twin brother



Earvin "Magic" Johnson



Jean-Claude Juncker

Thanks to our strong relationships built over the many years of cultivating relationships, we are able to offer tours in areas usually closed to the public. We met VIPs including Nicholas Cage, Earvin "Magic" Johnson, Eddie Vedder, Mariah Carey, Bugzy Malone, Bill Gates, Mel Gibson, Jean-Claude Juncker and many others.

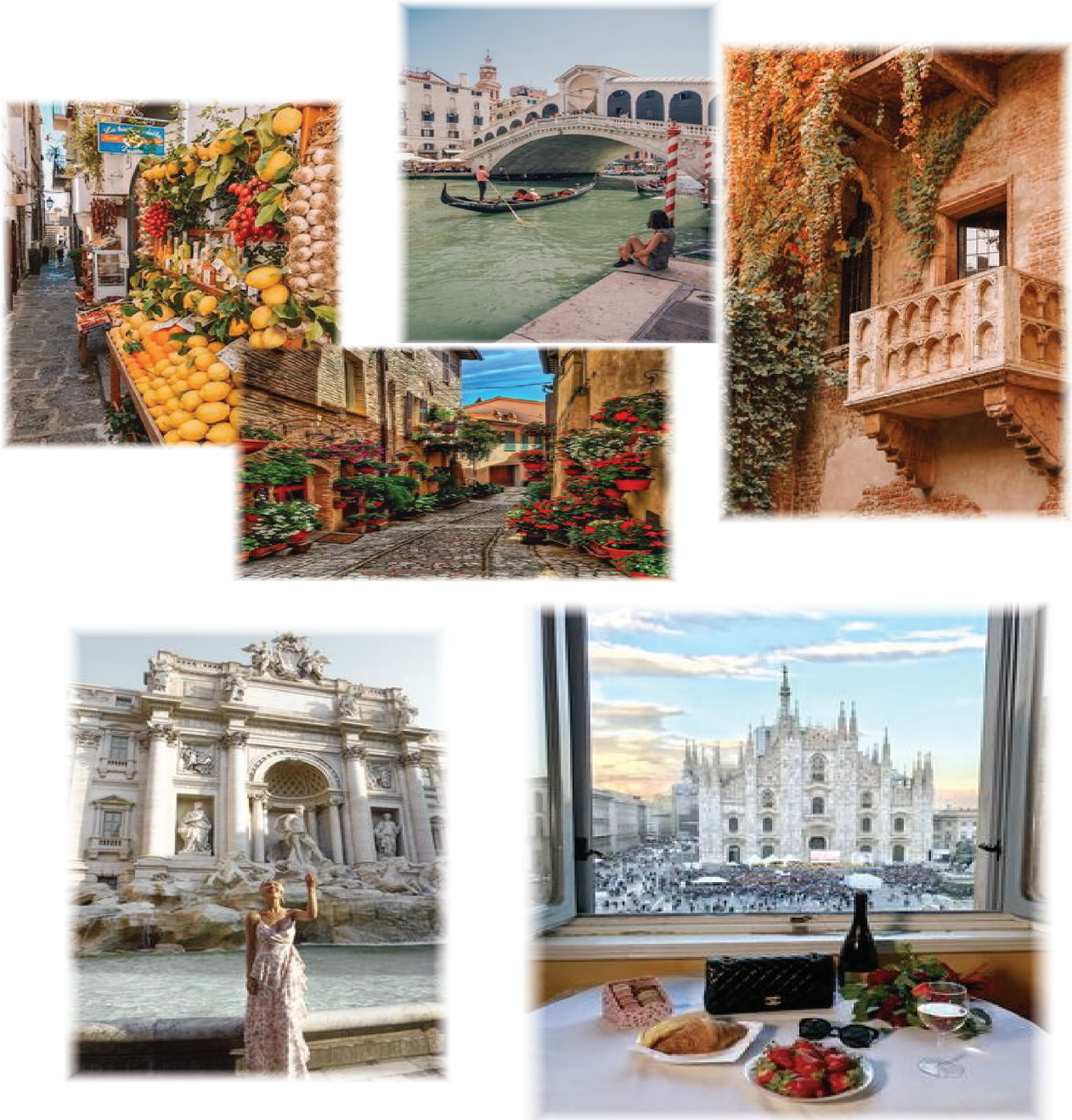
Some tips for young people who want to become entrepreneurs

My personal advice for anyone who wants to become an entrepreneur would be the following: you should know that it takes a lot of sacrifice and passion in what you do, to be humble, to learn from the best in your field, and add your own unique touches.

Success often follows after failure, therefore if you don't succeed at first, keep yourself ahead of the curve to accomplish your dream of being a respected entrepreneur. Never forget your roots!

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MY WORKING AND STUDYING ABROAD EXPERIENCE OR HOW I FELL IN LOVE WITH ENGLAND

Rodica-Maricica Cârlan, II, English Professional Conversion

Coordinator: PhD Associate Professor Mihaela Culea

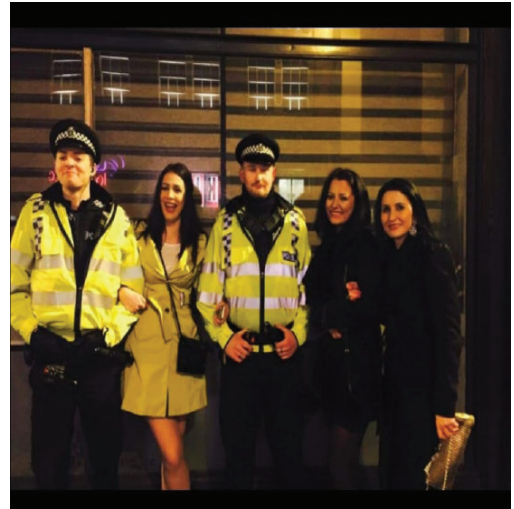
Arriving in a country on the other side of Europe at only 22 years old was quite an overwhelming experience. I ended up living there for 16 years, in a small idyllic village, very close to the well-known Oxford. At first, I did not know at all what to expect. I only knew that cars drive on the wrong side of the road and that the food is rather unsavoury. These both proved to be true, but other incredible facts and experiences made me fall in love with England.

After getting a secure job and taking a short marketing course, I decided to go further with my academic adventure and applied for a place at Buckingham University. I had always enjoyed reading about legal issues and thought that the subject really suited me. I chose Buckingham University because I was allowed to complete my degree within 4 years, rather than 3 years. I took fewer modules per year and it also meant I was able to continue my demanding, full-time job which I quite needed to support myself. As I was deemed to be a “mature student”, I did not need to prove my previous academic record. I was offered a place to study LLB Law straight after a short interview with a tutor. And, of course, I had to pass the IELTS exam (it assesses the English language level of a non-native English speaker; it is almost always needed when applying for a university place in the UK).

The academic experience was very intimidating at first. All those massive law books, my colleagues with their perfect English accents and so on... But I got incredible support and help from my tutors and some of my fellow students. In order to succeed, I highly recommend to those considering to study abroad to make friends at their courses, to get a job, to use their annual leave wisely and plan their workload ahead. During those 4 years I needed to complete my degree, I spent almost all of my time off work writing assignments, presentations or preparing for exams. Working throughout it, I gained financial security and I did not need a life-long loan for my studies. After graduating, a degree is not always enough to get your dream job. Most of the employers are looking for more than just knowledge of a certain field. They require skills such as numeracy and IT literacy, problem solving aptitudes, communication or commercial awareness skills, so a job may be very useful. And if you are lucky enough to find a job somehow connected to your studying field, it will enable you to put theory into practice, it will also help you develop ideas for your final year projects.

Living there was also challenging at times. In my early days there, I had to pay great attention when crossing a street, I could not understand why they needed separate taps for hot and cold water, why people would spend a fortune on their food at lunch breaks, why the young ladies would wear really short skirts and sandals during the winter while queuing for minutes if not hours only to get into a popular night club or how people can eat beans on toast with sausages at 7am.

However, after a couple of years, I did find myself dressed up in a skimpy outfit and wearing sandals queuing to enter a nightclub while outside was snowing. Although I can now eat sausages and beans on toast very early during the day, there still are a few things and habits that I do not fully comprehend. Now, even if I no longer live there, I love it as if it were my very own country.



Have you ever thought of travelling? I bet you have and maybe you have already seen many places but have you thought of leaving everything and starting from the beginning in another country which you know nothing about? Well, I did. In the following article, I will take you on a trip from Damascus, the oldest city in the world to the mysterious Romania.

I come from Syria and I have lived in Damascus all my life. Those who are passionate about history and culture will tell you that Damascus is a mixture of beauty, authenticity and a prevailing sense of history. However, Syrians will sum it up by saying: “Those who drink Damascene water can never leave it,” but the war has changed that.



I am an English teacher and an English-Arabic translator. I have worked hard to establish good life conditions with a fixed job, a good salary, a lot of friends, and an exciting style of living. I have always tried to learn new things to improve my skills and to find new opportunities. I have been so passionate about teaching and I still connect with my students from previous years. For me,

teaching was not just a job; it was a hobby that I was lucky enough to be able to turn into a career.

Unfortunately, the war has erased all that joy. Fear, stress, and uncertainty about the future took over the country. Teaching was still going on but the sparks in the students' eyes were fading. I lost a lot of people there and it was painful to stay in the same place. I felt paralyzed with neither hope nor safety. Thus, I started looking for ways to change my life. I began my search for opportunities to study or work in other countries that are known for their educational systems and teaching methods, English, Arabic or German-speaking, and perhaps those which have a way of living that I am familiar with. However, destiny had other plans for me.

When I started applying for universities, a friend of mine told me about studying in Romania, a country that I knew nothing about, except its history with communism, suffering from the war and its connection, in the movies, with Dracula. I sent my application anyway, not taking this option into consideration. Nonetheless, it was the first to come true. So, I decided not to wait anymore, to be adventurous and just to go with the flow.

My first days in Romania were a huge change. Everything was different: the streets, the laws, the currency, the weather, the people and the language. Being a Syrian, I had a lot of complications regarding travelling so I arrived late at Vasile Alecsandri University in Bacău, which left me with a short time to prepare for my programme of study. The curriculum was totally different from what I am used to. In Syria, I had to study a lot of materials, memorize a big amount of information and to do projects according to fixed rules. On the contrary, the Romanian ways of teaching were more flexible, with a lot of freedom for the students to express their thoughts and passion. That was refreshing but at the same time hard because I was not used to it. On the surface, it looks easier, but for those who are smart enough it is a chance to excel. For me,



it was exciting and mind-changing and still is.

Trying to comprehend all of this, I rushed to getting to know its people, who are the key to every culture. Unlike the Syrians, the Romanians are not easy to communicate with; they are nice, but more formal. They are very hardworking and very serious about it. Nevertheless, as you get closer to the Romanians you will find very communicative people who are hospitable, caring, they love life and know



how to enjoy it. Those very formal relations would suddenly turn into a spontaneous euphoria, a thing that I was not familiar with before. Coming from Syria, that trade of sudden joy seemed very refreshing to me. A little bit of music could make everybody in a place start dancing, just what I needed to regain my joy. I think that the natural beauty of the country gave this relaxing nature to the people, it was reflected in the throbbing music

and delicious food and even in the simple way of living. I could not even imagine Romania to be this beautiful. It feels like each place has its magic with a lot of marvelous varieties in sceneries that can attract any nature lover. The weather can be cruel sometimes, but it is purely charming.

Although my experience in Romania might not even be slightly close to normal with COVID-19 pandemic, it has been amazing. I have to admit that it was really hard to face all that anxiety and fear away from family and friends yet, in these times, you can discover your own self and the true nature of the people around you. It was nice to have some great Romanian friends who truly care. It was inspiring to see that we can get through hard times together. Now, I just imagine all the adventures I could have had in Romania if it wasn't for Corona Virus and those I am aspiring to make very soon.

Finally, I would like to invite you all to make changes in your lives for you will never know who you truly are until you see yourself in different situations. My experience in Romania has been rewarding so far. I feel like this adventure has given me some of the peace my soul was seeking, it made me more tolerant, and it was a revealing journey for now I know what I am looking for in my life. And now it is your turn to discover a new part of the world and, most importantly, yourself.

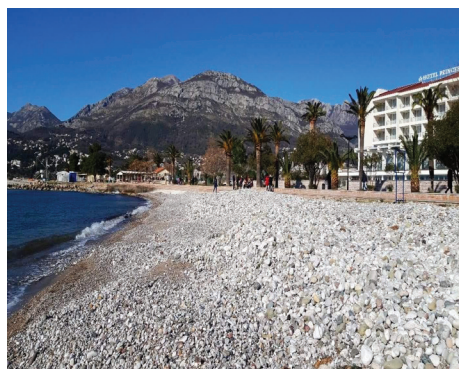
MY ERASMUS EXPERIENCE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NIKŠIĆ, MONTENEGRO

Bianca Cernat, III, EF

Coordinator: PhD Associate Professor Mihaela Culea

My Erasmus experience was unique, breath-taking from the very beginning when, at the airport in Bucharest I had to re-buy the ticket a few hours before catching the plane and up to the point that I had to leave Montenegro, being driven by the Ambassador of Romania in Montenegro's chauffeur and eventually, escorted by police all the way from the Serbian- Romanian frontier to ...Giurgiu (where I spent two weeks in quarantine, somehow unjustified)?! I won't talk too much about these aspects, as they do not make the subject of this article but what I learned is that life is majorly unpredictable.

I won't lie to you, it wasn't all just happiness and trips and having fun with American, Nigerian, Portuguese and Turkish friends, but fortunately, I was enjoying each and every of the best and the worst moments of my adventure.



I have to admit, at the beginning, I was a bit sceptic about this amazing chance to go abroad: why bothering? I said. But I was gradually starting to embrace the unknown because my goal was to live something unique, to overcome my fears and to see where my limits were. Even though I had second thoughts I did not give up this experience because I knew it was going to be BIG!

"Six months would eventually feel like six days", I said. Besides, I was already told that I would have someone waiting for me there. Yup, right at the airport! The thing is that the Erasmus-Buddy Network consisted in only one person, but he was able to handle properly all the matters about the Erasmus students and their needs. The most annoying thing I faced during my stay there was that people would not speak English. In some cases and sometimes even in important situations, I needed my "buddy" to facilitate the conversation.

On the 11th of February, 2020 I made it to Montenegro! I was taken to the dormitory, the city didn't look so welcoming at the beginning, but I tried to get familiar with the reality. From the very first hour in the campus, I met the Erasmus group. We discussed a lot that night. I got to know everyone very quickly because we were enthusiastic to share a part of ourselves and of our countries one with another. I was totally exhausted, hadn't had a sleep for 40 hours, but I was happy!

My university was in Nikšić, 1 hour away, but the road was crawling through magnificent mountains and depressions and I could always find something to think about during this two-hour trip, every day. The teachers enjoyed having a foreign student there and I enjoyed it ten times more! My colleagues were also interested in finding out more about Romania and my former university. We always talked about this subject; some of them told me they would like to go abroad with the Erasmus program but they were

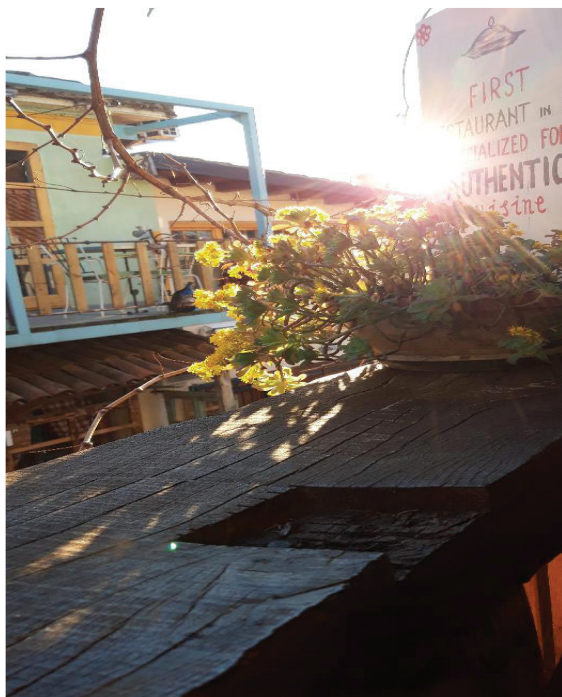


pulled back by insecurities. I always told them to do it; no one could help you better than yourself!

The accommodation was very good and cheap, the food was acceptable, I would often choose to cook in the tiny kitchen that we had. But that kitchen was almost exclusively used to prepare tea and coffee that were preparing us for long and deep conversations.

The weather was almost windy or rainy. Most of the time I spent there, I would complain about the weather. But once I discovered some of the most attractive and full-of-majesty places, I arduously wanted to be outside in my free time. We used to hang out every weekend or to have little trips to other towns like Bar, Budva that were near the sea.

Montenegro may not sound so popular to you but it is totally worth trying! The landscapes, the affordable prices and the exploration of a different but somehow similar Balkan culture and people would offer you a whole range of feelings and things to remember. All in all, I acknowledge that I have no regrets and I would wholeheartedly recommend everyone to go for such an experience!



HOW TO BE A MODERN WOMAN – THE TRIXIE AND KATYA VIEW

Miriam-Carla Calapod, II, EF

Coordinator: PhD Associate Professor Andreia-Irina SUCIU

Hello there! Presumably, as a woman, you've been wondering "Should I get bangs?" or "Do blondes really have more fun? And if so, what's the fun differential on colour temperature? Do yellow blondes have more or less fun than cool-platinum ash blondes?"¹ . Maybe you've been confused as to what tools you should use in your beauty routine or you've surely been bombarded with a cacophony of voices that say you aren't good enough. Either way, those days are over. I'll be talking about Trixie and Katya's Guide to Modern Womanhood, where you can find answers to these questions and possible solutions to your doubts and not only!

Let's start with some background details here. In September of 2020, I started diving into the very depths of Rupaul's Drag Race, no idea why. But I started respecting drag queens and what they do, their performing, acting and makeup skills. After that, I discovered my two favourites, Katya and Trixie, who cannot be "more" opposite to each other than they are. This book was written with love and humour by the two. The title is pretty ironic because, as we might all know, drag queens are men under quite a lot of makeup (well, most of them). While Brian Firkus (Trixie Mattel) exaggerates the Barbie doll attributes, Brian McCook (Katya Zamolodchikova) embodies the seductive, maybe even crazy and creepy, Russian woman. And their writing styles are easily distinguished, too.

This book is very dear to my soul because not only is it whimsical, funny and relaxing, it's also very helpful in many ways. Trixie and Katya may be joking a lot (dad jokes!) and making many puns, but it might also help other young women like me who have been at a crossroads numerous times.

The almost 200 pages are sectioned into articles and conversations that tackle beauty and style, homemaking and relationships. The writing is a genius blend, by being licentious at times and serious at others. The style is adventurous, especially with Katya's parts, as she inserts neologisms and creepy stories (like the red flag she is). Trixie's fragments are the emblem of today's youth: simple, straightforward and sometimes personal. A nice trait of whatever Trixie writes is that she takes her time to make conclusions as well and put everything into perspective.

Here are some ideas that I learnt from this book and which I will put into practice when it's needed.



Beauty and style

- One thing that I agree with and will be keeping in mind is that owning books or even reading them doesn't make someone intelligent. There are lots of factors which contribute to that intelligence and the level of smartness. Such as applying what you've read in life.

- Beauty is in the eye of the beholder. You might have already known this, but whenever you feel ugly, just remember that the ideal of beauty is not the same for everybody. For example, Trixie considers herself to look like "Caillou with foetal alcohol syndrome"² , in and out of drag (out of drag, she does look like Caillou, which is crazily accurate).

- You don't have to tell people what to love about you. They have to discover by themselves and the other way around. Whoever will meet you will know whether to love you or not and what exactly to like, don't worry.

- Take care when wearing heels! Some of them are death traps for your feet and you are going to regret it.

- It doesn't matter what your personal style is, you just have to have it defined, for yourself and those

¹ Trixie and Katya's Guide to Modern Womanhood, part I, chapter "Hair: Hair Today, Gone Tomorrow" (by Katya), p. 15

² Idem, "Introduction: You as a Human Person" (by Trixie), p. 4

around you. The difference between taste and style is that you take some time to educate your taste, and even then you might not be sure of what you're doing.

- One thing that I love so much is the following quote: "Creating a morning hygienic ritual is a way to reset the body and mind as you scrub off (...) yesterday's shame and prepare for whatever trials and humiliations the new day inevitably has in store for you"³. This is very relatable. Why? I have observed over the time how much more prepared I am to face the struggles of the day, when I take a shower in the morning or at night. I feel more powerful, more beautiful, a lot more perceptive to whatever's around me.

- The legendary RuPaul Andre Charles said multiple times "If you don't love yourself, how on earth are you going to love somebody else?". Self-love is crucial for your wellness and good mood. YOU HAVE TO LOVE YOURSELF. People notice when you don't, because people who don't love themselves tend to not take care of their bodies and minds. The most beautiful assertion that I have read was written by Katya: "I am a good person and I deserve to be happy". A runner-up is "I have a bright future ahead with wonderful possibilities in store for me".

Homemaking

- A good piece of advice when it comes to money management, that actually makes sense is, building up a three-month emergency fund. If at some point I have the financial means to do it, you best believe I will! This fund will support you in the darkest times of your life, for example when you lose your job and world seems so dark without money.

- If there is something you don't like on your social media, block the people who caused it. Or mute them. Fighting with people is not worth it, let them be mad and jealous.

- A wild and funny quote that makes me laugh every time I see it: "If your heart is telling you to hang a framed poster that says EAT, LOVE, INSPIRE in your kitchen, go for it. Just also know that your guests will JUDGE, STARE AND IMMEDIATELY LEAVE"⁴. There is nothing more cliché than having a poster like that, since a lot of people who own it are not very nice (such as the Karens that they make memes about).

For more tips, tricks and jokes about heels, read the book! Relaxation and laughs guaranteed (but first get into drag culture for a bit).

In short, I recommend this book because it is infused with sense of humour, advice and dark stories that'll make you lose your mind in the best ways possible!

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³ Idem, chapter "Personal Hygiene: Whoops, I'm Disgusting!" (by Katya), p. 61

⁴ Idem, chapter "Interior Design: Show Me Your Insides" (by Trixie), p. 121

DARK, TWISTED, THOUGHT-PROVOKING - International Bestseller

Eeny Meeny, by M. J. Arlidge

Adina-Roxana Petrică, I, CRP
Coordinator: PhD Lecturer Raluca Galița

I'm a big fan of thriller novels. I feel that they spice up my life and I look for them every time I want to escape from the monotonous daily life. *Eeny Meeny* is the first volume in the series having as the main character a policewoman, Helen Grace, and was published in 2014.

The novel is written by M. J. Arlidge who is an English author of crime novels. He has also worked in television for 15 years, specializing in dramatic productions. Arlidge was the producer of several police series, including *Torn*, *The Little House*, *Undeniable*. He currently writes for *Silent Situeze* and produces films. *Eeny Meeny* is his debut novel that has enjoyed international success.

Eeny Meeny is a remarkable thriller, written in an alert and captivating rhythm that impresses with its complex characters, their psychological sides and with a murderer of remarkable intelligence, inventive and unscrupulous. The novel is the proof that a sick mind has no limits when it wants to cause pain.

What turned out to be the story of two hostages later becomes something more complicated. I thought there must be a lot of madness, a lot of action for the case announced in the description of the book, without knowing that everything will end with a series of murders.

Eeny Meeny captivated me from the first lines because the story begins in force. "Sam is sleeping. Now I could kill him. He turned his back on me – it would be very simple. Would he wake up if I made a move? Would he try to stop me? Or would he just be happy that the nightmare is ending?"

The heroine of the book and of the series is inspector-detective Helen Grace, an energetic, ambitious woman, dedicated to her profession, with an imposing physique and a firm attitude. A non-conformist who drives a Kawasaki motorcycle dressed in a leather suit, a poker face with a mask that is difficult to penetrate but who carries strong emotions in her soul. Helen has a dark past and physical pain is the only way to "wash" her guilt that burdens her soul. I love Helen Grace, she's one of my favorite characters in all the novels I've read because of the unique way she was created by Arlidge.

Helen coordinates a team of officers that she appreciates, presses and stimulates them. Notable among them is Charlene „Charlie” Brooks – a lively, smart and extremely ambitious

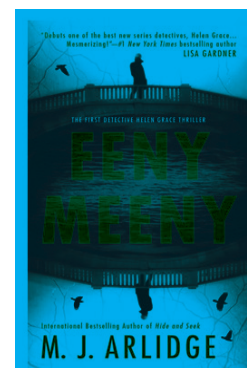
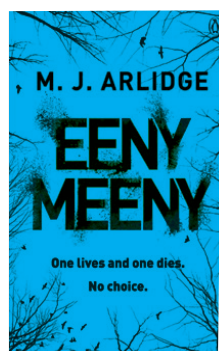
policewoman and the handsome, talented detective Mark Fuller who goes through an ugly divorce that almost turned him into an alcoholic.

The novel's action takes place in Southampton-Great Britain, the author managing to transpose the reader in the settings of the interesting English city, in the suburbs full of ugliness, poverty, bullies and drug addicts.

The case that Helen Grace has to solve is that of a serial killer who doesn't kill directly, but kidnaps pairs of people and locks them up in places from where they can't escape, leaving them with only a pistol with one bullet, an encrypted phone and the ability to choose. The escape condition is for one of

them to kill the other if they don't both die of thirst and hunger. The closer are the hostages, the harder is the choice. Lovers, relatives, work colleagues go through this psychological torture, but also physical because everyone's first idea was to resist this nightmare as much as possible in the hope that they will find another way to escape. It's a game more twisted than any other Helen Grace has ever seen. If she hadn't spoken with the shattered survivors herself, she almost wouldn't believe them. It is unimaginable what people can do to survive, how they behave when the meat on the bones is melted, thirst burns the throat, tongue swells, intestines tighten and hunger and thirst drive them crazy that their brains cause hallucinations. When the body gave in because of the shortcomings, they began to consider the saving solution that would turn them into criminals. Who will survive? The strong or the weak? There is no reasoning, only instinct for survival. Who could have conceived such a sinister scenario in which the victims commit the crime?

Tortured by fear, despair, thirst and hunger, for the hostages there is only one way to end this nightmare: one of them must die. At first glance, you would think that the survivor escaped that nightmare



but another one is waiting for him once he is released. The guilt of taking someone's life knocks them down and drives them even crazier. The one who really escapes is the one killed, he has found his true freedom. Apparently the victims seem chosen at random having nothing in common with each other (two lovers, two prostitutes, a mother and a daughter, two co-workers). As more people go missing, nothing will be more terrifying than when it all starts making sense. This was one dark book.

I do not recommend this book to weak people because certain scenes in the novel are difficult to digest, but thriller lovers will definitely love it. Some sequences seem to be taken from the Saw movie series, especially since everything looks like a sick game from which you can't escape. The atmosphere is similar to *The Silence of the Lambs*, a movie worth watching.

I recommend *Eeny Meeny* to all those passionate about thriller, those passionate about character psychology, puzzles, mystery and darkness. It gave me a feeling of danger and kept me reading to the end. The whole novel is built so as to challenge you to guess what will happen next (hence the title I think is very appropriate) and to ask a lot of questions, including "What would I do? Would I become a murderer or a victim?".

A LOVE FROM ANOTHER WORLD

Mădălina Maximciuc, II, CRP

Coordinator: PhD Lecturer Raluca Galița

I am going to tell you about the first volume of the book „A love from another world” written by Silviu Iliuță.

Divided into the Old World and the New World, the chapters are distributed as follows: the years 2311-2312 from the perspective of David and Poe; and the year 3615 from the perspective of Amn and Kayana.

The present of the world in which David lives is one composed entirely of technology. People no longer walk, no longer travel, no real jobs, everything is paid for in hours spent on social media, giving likes and watching videos. Even life partners are robots, which can be set to do and behave to the liking of the owner.

“Everything depends in 2311 on technology, robots, holotechnics, online. How did people live without all this?”

The moment of breathing came immediately. All the machines and inventions went crazy. A virus that has affected everything related to technology has caused the beginning of a New World.

“Survivors urgently gathered in caves, or in the middle of plains, on hills or on beaches, in places where there was no electricity, no magnetic sockets, could not be found by robots, and everything around them did not explode. They then decided to do the only thing that should and could be done: to stop the Big Server, to destroy it! Then, once stopped, all the robots controlled by him were to be melted to the last. All the equipment in the world, the same.”

The World on the Hill and The World at Sea

From the World on the Hill is Amn. He is 64 seasons old, that is 16 years old, he lives in the happiest and most colorful kijiji among the 8 on the hills, together with his grandfather whom he calls Baba. Amn enrolled in the Teachers’ House because he believes this is his mission: to learn things to pass on. Kayana lives in The World at Sea. She is 62 seasons, which means 15 and a half years. She has officially become a woman, and the rules say she has to choose 10 candidates to participate in the Four Trials. The winner will be her husband. She can’t stand the idea that her role is to find a husband to have children with, so that her kijiji not to die.


For some reasons, generations have grown up with the idea that the inhabitants of the Two Worlds are adversaries. So, no one is allowed to walk on the territory of others, not even in the Neutral Zone of the Great River that separates the Worlds.

In search of the 10 suitors, Kayana ventured into the Neutral Zone where she met Amn who, curiously, broke the law in the same way. Knowing each other, although scared of each other, they found that none have 3 heads, none eat people or other nonsense speculated in each World.

As I guess you already think, Amn and Kayana had a connection from the beginning, there was a spark, chemistry... What did they do and how did they handle the situation? What happened to David and Poe and what did they leave behind? All these questions are answered in volume 2 which has a totally unexpected ending. I will just give you a little detail: Kayana chose Amn as the 10th contender even though she was not allowed to, and the War between the Two Worlds began.

The author’s imagination exceeds any limit, the result being these two very beautiful and well written books.





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In Autumn the Corpses are Counted is the volume that follows the one entitled *The Winter of Perfect Crimes*, another season, other mysteries to be solved. In just 243 pages, the author managed to give birth to a full-fledged detective novel, reaching very quickly and even exceeding my expectations.

In the first chapter we meet Gigi Alexa. Queen Alexa, as she likes to call herself since she was little, is a forensic doctor, works with the police when there are more difficult cases, has a PhD and plans to do another one. In addition to her professional life, Gigi is very insecure. She thinks she has to prove certain things and she does not think she is good enough. She knows she has to make a change but she does not plan anything in this regard, she has a boyfriend she has been living with for a year but she does not know exactly what her feelings are about him. She has no children and does not want to. She does not like tourists or the congestion caused by them.

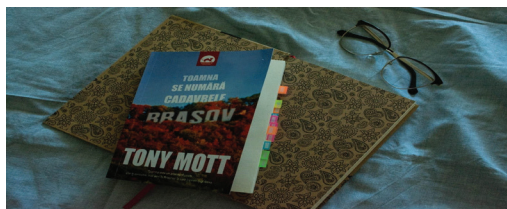
Chapter two introduces us directly to the story. So, when the crimes start to appear in Brasov, Gigi is called for help. One by one, the actress Andreea Vasiliu, the owner of a hair salon, a Knossos marathon runner and a few others ended in a totally unexpected way. Murder after murder, with no connection between the victims or any pattern to help the police in their search, the investigation is moving with difficulty. Eventually it was found that they were dealing with a serial killer, so they sought to figure out how he was choosing his victims.

“He starts crouching almost instantly in his chair, leans back and closes his eyes. His breathing becomes jerky for a few minutes, after which its rhythm slows down.”

I liked the way the author combined the different aspects of the book: Gigi’s inner conflict, the clues about the murderer and at the same time the strange clue that Gigi finds after some analyses of the victims. The inclusion of the Caracal case, the discussions about Dragnea, etc., give authenticity to the whole book.

I admit that I would have liked to know later who is behind these crimes, but at the same time I am happy that I had finally deduced who it was before I finished the book. That does not make the book any less good, on the contrary, it is the first book I read in which the murderer follows such an elaborate and, at the same time, mysterious plan. It goes without saying that Gigi fully deserves her place because she is the only one who made the connections, a bit strange, but still true.

For fans of detective novels and more, the book can be purchased on the website of Tritonic Publishing House. Books can be read individually, not necessarily as part of a series.



IG: @travel.books__

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STARCRAFT II: HEAVEN'S DEVILS

By William C. Dietz

Radu-Corneliu Ghimpu, I, Biologie

Coordinator: PhD Associate Professor Andreia-Irina Suciu

Heaven's Devils is a science-fiction, western novel based on the RTS (Real Time Strategy) game series 'StarCraft'. This novel was released in 2010 with the occasion of "StarCraft II" launch.

The main story of the game regards an intergalactic conflict that happens at the end of 25th century, in a far galactic sector called Koprulu, between 3 species including humans, also known as terrans, the zerg, an insectoid alien race, and the protoss, a highly advanced alien race, all of whom are represented by numerous factions, but that's something for another time.

The book's story takes place before the game series and before the terrans' first contact with the aliens, to be more precise, between 2488 and 2489, 300 after years the crash-landing of supercarrier space ships from Earth in the Sector Koprulu on 3 planets later known as Tarsonis, Umoja and Moria, carrying with them thousands of so-called criminals, outlaws and bandits that were exiled from Earth and left to wander the far corners of space to settle down, and write a new chapter in humanity's history.

300 years later and humans are still at war with each other, now divided in 3 factions: the Confederacy of Man, the Umojan Protectorate, and the newly formed terran faction that broke from the Confederacy and started a war against it, the Kel-morian Combine.

The war between the Confederacy and the Combine, also known as the 'Guild Wars' have made a toll among the already suffering confederate colonists due to their ever growing taxes from the government, and now with a war raging on, the taxes are higher and so was the need for soldiers to protect the Confederacy from this threat.

James Raynor, an-18-year-old boy from the confederate colony planet, Shiloh, joins the confederate army to provide a revenue to support his parents and their farm financially, and also to pay for college when he returns from the army.

Tychus Findlay, a-23-year-old man, was a confederate officer who tried to make a profit off stolen confederate military equipment by selling it to the kelmorians, but he was caught and arrested. After 6 months in detention he was sent to Turaxis II. But his intentions of early-retirement hadn't changed a bit, and so he included his new formed squad into his schemes with a hope he might have a chance to the long awaited pay-day.

After 6 months of instruction, Raynor is sent to the frontlines of Turaxis II where he joins a squad of a STM (Special Tactics and Missions) platoon, alongside Tychus Findlay, the leader of the squad, Hank Harnack, anti-infantry specialist, Ryk Kydd aka Bennet Ark, sniper, Max Zander, regular trooper, Connor Ward, anti-armor and ordonnance specialist, Miriam Feek, technician and mechanic, and Lisa Cassidy, medic.

With their skills, talents and the courage shown later this squad and the whole platoon would be known as the 'Heaven's Devils', a nickname given by a reporter working in the confederate media, UNN (Universal News Network). These 'devils' are constantly put up to test, having no biases for neither the Confederacy or the Combine, both being seen equally bad in the 'devils' perspectives, raising the questions: when they desert the military and go AWOL, what will they do when the time comes, and what will become of their lives, if they manage to escape with their lives and minds at all, and not end up dead or brain-washed to serve the Confederacy for the rest of their existence?

In my opinion, this novel is a good read, especially for those who like the S.F. genre or who are familiar with StarCraft in general. The story, besides some cliché moments or a few boring paragraphs, is ok. It also includes lots of humor, intense action and cruel moral lessons and may give an obscure image about a bureaucratic and corrupt government, like the Confederacy or an extremist, almost anarchic faction, like the Kel-morian Combine, and their effects on the common people who are doing nothing more than living and surviving in these dire times. The novel is only available in English and it might be harder for people who are not used to reading large texts in English to keep the pace with the narratives, especially when this novel uses a rather American style in narration. Otherwise, if you have the possibility of buying this book

and you're into the S.F. genre peppered with some good ol' action and fun, along with grimy situations, greed, despair, hatred and other constant emotional feelings, then I, whole-heartedly, recommend this. I assure you that you won't, most likely, forget parts of the story anytime soon.

The author, William C. Dietz, is an American science fiction writer, born in Seattle in 1945, who served both the Navy and the Marine Corps as a corpsman. After he graduated the University of Washington he moved in Africa where he lived for half a year. His expertise and experience in the military have helped him in producing realistic military narratives in several series of books like *Halo* and many more.

The story continues in *StarCraft: Devil's Due*, connecting the story of *Heaven's Devils* and the first *StarCraft* game.

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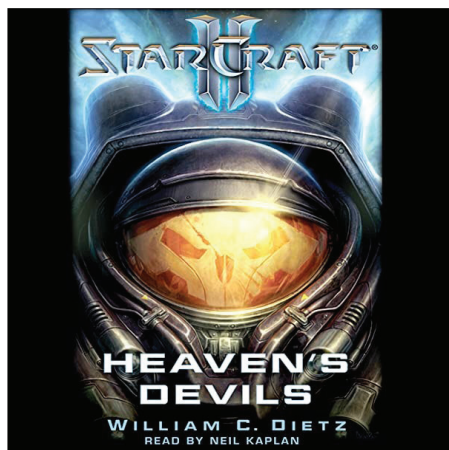


Fig. 1. Cover-book with Raynor in his powered combat armor

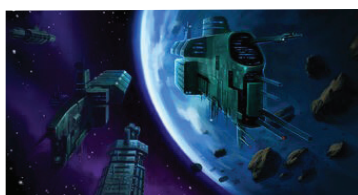


Fig. 2. The terran supercarriers



Fig. 3. The confederate flag
(NOT the South Union's)
This is where the story begins.



Fig. 4. The protectorate flag



Fig. 5. The combine flag



Fig. 6. A picture of the 'Heaven's Devils' first squad
(From left to right: Harnack, Zander, Ward, Raynor, Feek, Findlay, Kydd, Cassidy)



Fig. 7. An image of William C. Dietz

I'M JUDGING YOU: THE DO-BETTER MANUAL

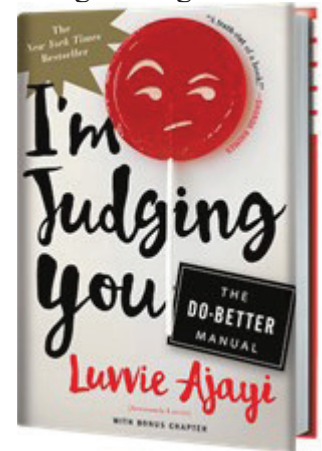
BY LUVVIE AJAYI

Agneza-Tadeea Roca, II, LEPC

Coordinator: PhD Associate Professor Andreia-Irina Suciu

In a world of contrasts of good and bad, it seems that it is still questionable what is moral and what is not. This is the main reason why, after 13 years of blogging, Luvvie Ajayi decided to write her first book and publish it in 2016. Besides being now a famous *New York Times* best-selling author, Luvvie Ajayi is a speaker, a podcast host and “professional troublemaker”, as she calls herself.

As the author states in the introduction, *I'm Judging You: The Do-Better Manual* is “a playbook, a guide to help people get a bit of common sense and some behaviour as they navigate today's hyper-obsessions with pop culture, social-media sharing, and outright navel gazing” (p. 5). In other words, the book could work as a guide inspiring people how to behave in nowadays' society, making us laugh while letting us know the truth about ourselves and others in this world. Ajayi divided the book into four separate sections: life, culture, social media and fame. Each of these sections is split in chapters which work as her own collection of stories and lessons, with her personal opinions on several topics, being so much similar to complex essays debating world's biggest issues. The book is filled with a lot of hilarious parts and even the chapters are named in a humorous way: *Gosh, You're the Worst*, *Why Must You Suck at Friendship?*, *When Baehood Goes Bad*, *Your Facebook Is My Favorite Soap Opera*, *How to Succeed at Business Failure* etc. The author describes to us the motivation she had to write the book: “I'm judging society. Because everyone hates how they look, everyone wants what we don't have, and everyone is stuck in a cycle of so-called self-improvement that is really self-defeating. Do better, everyone” (p. 7). She draws our attention towards the things which are many times accepted as a norm, such as women beauty standards and she depicts conflictual aspects of our world, such as gender inequalities, race discrimination, sexism and rape, religion and so on.



Apart from these “judgements”, the author comes up with solutions in order to improve, to make the world a better place, an aspect which can be seen first of all from the title: *The Do-Better Manual*. This is basically the reason I would say this is self-improvement book. You can learn a lot about important topics, but you can also make an introspection starting from her classifications of friends, which are “the bonus gifts of life” as she calls them. The book opens your eyes, since you can easily see if you are a mean friend to others and you can examine closely the friends you have around you. As typologies of friends, I will mention the frenemy, the flake, the Holy Roller, the SOS pal, the adventurer, the competitor, which you can find better described in the second chapter of the part I, entitled “Why Must You Suck at Friendship?”. You can find out how to be a better friend, a businessman and a better human being in general, simply by letting go all the stereotypes we have in our minds and by giving up at preconceptions. We are often ready to point the finger at someone without knowing the story behind.

In my opinion, this book should be read by everyone, since it shapes your mindset. After reading it, I felt more motivated to speak up, to be a better me and to pay more attention to my actions. I really consider it a “do-better manual” and a guide on the path of life.

<https://awesomelyluvvie.com/>

Ajayi, Luvvie (2016): *I'm Judging You: The Do-Better Manual*, Halt Paperbacks, Boston



FIRST WEALTH IS HEALTH!

Raluca- Elena Dominte, I, Marketing

Coordinator: PhD Associate Professor Mihaela Culea

Nowadays it's very important how and what we choose to eat, because our planet becomes more and more polluted and so is the food we consume. Also, it is the century of fast-food and other processed food types, and unfortunately, even though it might seem a handy choice when you have a busy life or when you are on a tight budget, it is definitely not wise when it comes to your body, mind and health. If you want to live longer, you have to make a change in your lifestyle and get out of your comfort zone.

We all want to be successful and wealthy, but what we do not understand is that our first success comes from our mind and body working harmoniously. How can we make it happen? Food is the answer. Food is our “fuel” and just like an expensive car, our brain functions best when it gets only premium fuel, so we have to pay attention to what we put in our shopping cart. For example, here is a quick shopping list¹ that can be helpful if you are not sure what to consume in order to reach your maximum potential and preserve your health.

Bakery& bread	Whole wheat bread or any other whole wheat products
Meat & Seafood	Turkey, skinless chicken, salmon, mackerel, cod
Breakfast food	Eggs, cereals (muesli, multi-grain cereals), yoghurt
Frozen food	Vegetables, frozen fruit with no added sugar
Cheese	Cottage cheese
Snacks	Fruits and vegetables, peanut butter, hummus, dark chocolate, almonds and other nuts and seeds



When eating healthily, one thing we must consider is nutrients. Nutrients are compounds that our body cannot make or does not make in sufficient quantity. According to World Health Organization², these nutrients come from food and they help preventing disease, growth and health. Examples of nutrients are: water, proteins, carbohydrates, fats, vitamins and minerals. Eating a varied diet full of fruit, vegetables, healthy fats, and whole grains is the best way to get enough of these six nutrients.

¹ <https://www.webmd.com/food-recipes/guide/grocery-list#1>

² <https://www.who.int/elena/nutrient/en/>

In these difficult times it is essential to be briefed about all the possible ways of how to keep ourselves healthy and how to improve our immunity system. There is way more information people should know about, but it is not always their fault. Society should promote and give us this type of information and education. Our society defines our lifestyle, which means that our diet is influenced by incomes, food prices, cultural traditions, geographical and environmental aspects. Promoting a healthy food environment requires the involvement of multiple sectors, such as government or other private or public sectors. In my opinion, they should give greater support to nutrition companies and other small businesses which promote and provide healthy food. In Romania, nutrition and bio foods area is at the beginning of its way, even though last year eco products reached 65 million USD sales. We cannot compare ourselves with Germany, which owns the largest organic food market in Europe (€9.5 billion last year)³, but it is a good start which has led to the conclusion that people have become aware of the facility of eating clean. I sincerely hope their activity will be maintained and will develop in time, because it is worth it. They had the courage to do something for the planet and for people's health, instead of doing something that could make them wealthier.

The first ecological company in Romania is ECOFRUCT⁴ which provides mushrooms, berries, fruits, vegetables, cereals and organic honey. Besides organic products, the company sells a wide range of conventional products. But it is not the only one. In the last few years, small producers and companies have also appeared on the market and enjoy their success as they should. There is also one site, which is Romania's first online bio shop and it sells countless quality certified goods such as sugar free products, bio cosmetics or cleaning solutions. If you are interested and ready to improve your eating, check this out: <https://republicabio.ro/pages/categorii-produse> . They can help you discover the large amount of benefits you can get by living a healthy life.

Another site that might be able to help you, which is also a leading source of information on the healthiest ways of eating and cooking is <http://whfoods.org/> . There you can find a lot of useful advice, recipes and shopping lists for dieting. It is a life-changing site!

In conclusion, we have to listen to our bodies and provide it with what it needs. Filling your plate with plant foods like vegetables, fruit, nuts, seeds, and whole grains will help protect your body, your soul and your mind. Our body's mission is to keep us alive, so don't think twice. Let's make it happen!

Webograhya:

1. <https://www.webmd.com/food-recipes/guide/grocery-list#1>, accessed at November 12, 2020.
2. <https://www.who.int/elena/nutrient/en/>, accessed at November 12, 2020.
3. <https://financialintelligence.ro/analiza-vanzarile-de-produse-alimentare-ecologice-au-atins-65-milioane-usd/>, accessed at November 12, 2020.
4. <http://www.ecofruct.eu/en/about-us>, accessed at November 12, 2020

³ <https://financialintelligence.ro/analiza-vanzarile-de-produse-alimentare-ecologice-au-atins-65-milioane-usd/>

⁴ <http://www.ecofruct.eu/en/about-us>

Ana Maria Bostan, II, LEPC

Coordinator: PhD Associate Professor Nadia-Nicoleta Morărașu

Have you ever had online classes? What was the main challenge throughout your online teaching classes?

These are just two of the questions which I could not have answered before 11th of March 2020. It is that time of the year when the Romanian educational system had to face one of its biggest challenges and opportunities. I daresay opportunities because it is really important for each of us to see any difficult time as an opportunity.

Up to that day the classes I had were dynamic, I have always encouraged my students to express themselves, to share their ideas so we could make the most of our classes. Having students motivated and active is one of the ideal situations for a teacher, this being the best environment to help students and to educate in order to fulfil objectives, to develop competences and build up learning communities.

Teaching a foreign language is one of the best professions one could have. The reason I use the word profession and not job is rendered by the mission one decides to commit to, when choosing this way. Teachers are the ones who shape personalities, activate motivation and train students for life not just for the subject they are teaching. Teaching a foreign language, English in particular, is a privilege, as we guide students in expressing themselves by means of a new language, as if building up their first linguistic passport.

Coming back to March 2020 we could somehow think that a new teaching methodology has arisen, the digital pedagogy. The majority of Romanian teachers have been trained in a traditional manner, with books, notebooks, blackboard and pens as the basic instruments. The digital teachers are now making use of digital books, the notebooks and board have been replaced by the Jamboard or the Wifiboard, pens have been replaced by the keyboard and the mouse.

All classes have been transferred to Google Classroom, Teams or other platforms which could facilitate the students and teachers access to classes. These platforms are the new school, the access codes and links are the new classrooms yet what has not changed is the desire to learn and become better. One could not say it was or it still is easy, but what or whose mission is simple?!

Teachers are the ones who learn all along their career, cannot show up unprepared in front of the students, they should somehow predict what students need, how students learn, when students need to be left alone so to succeed or motivated so as not to give up. I would define the online teaching during the pandemic as: *talent, emotions and collaboration*.

Talent refers to each student's ability and personality. Nowadays, children are keen on using computers or gadgets for playing games. Some would say they lose time by doing that, yet they can easily use these devices, they are tips and tricks experts. It happened to me to have been helped by a student so to teach my how to use the Jamboard or to create a group account on StoryJumper. Some other students who were shy or introvert during English classes at school proved to be a great surprise when presenting a video created on a given topic.



Emotions are a special ingredient for both teachers and students involved in the teaching learning process. Even if we could see our students by means of a webcam we could find the path to our expressing emotions, feelings and needs. I dare say this helped us all understand we are equal, teachers are not just robots, as one student has once told me, kids have shown us their favourite environment. In other words, we have been guests in each other's houses, we experienced happiness, sadness, joy and motivation together.

Collaboration is the key for a great community. Students could work together, teachers could collaborate with other teachers no matter the part of the world, parents could be class observers or even refresh their knowledge in different subjects. School or education cannot exist without collaboration, humans cannot exist by themselves, we are all part of the world we live in.

To conclude, this period has been both a challenge and opportunity. I have learnt that my students have their own needs, abilities and emotions and that one could learn and become a better person no matter what devices and platforms we use. In the end, "technology won't replace teachers but teachers who use technology will probably replace teachers who don't".

PERSPECTIVE(S)

Cătălin Bărbunță, II, LEPC

Coordinator: PhD Associate Professor Andreia-Irina Suciu

You open your eyes. You get outside your house, in the cold evening. You see an interestingly dressed man at the end of the street. Or maybe it's a woman. It's hard to tell... but they are wearing exactly the kind of outfit that you love. You know exactly which that one is. They look at you for several seconds, and you feel threatened by their intense eyes. But, at the same time, you want to see those eyes better. You want to identify their nuance of blue. Or maybe green?

You move closer, although your heart thumps to you that this is not a wise move. You put yourself in danger only to catch a glimpse of some stranger's irises. This is what your heart is telling you, isn't it? It tells you that this is wrong, but why do you feel so thrilled, so amazed, and delighted with every step you make on the cold pavement?

Your legs are weaker and weaker and they almost let you down when the unknown figure chooses to show you a tiny portion of their white teeth... as an animal that prepares to attack its prey. Are you their prey? What do you think? Why would you be so enchanted by and go so gently towards your attacker? Unless you are blind and choose to ignore their threatening canines. Or maybe you only see a smile. That's a shy smile that you perceive, isn't it? And you even like it, don't you?

They turned towards the opposite direction. You no longer have access to their face, but you can see the way they are stepping in the darker and darker alley. What's your move now? You know it's a trap, you know they are luring you as if you were a naive child that has come across a fairy in the woods and follows it without realizing that it leads you to a dead end. You choose to follow this path. You follow them into the dark.



From time to time, they turn their head a little to make sure that you still follow. They smile to you, making you desire to be near them even more. In your enchanted state, you don't even realize that there's nobody else in the dark alley. It is completely empty and also covered in darkness. There's only you and, of course, them. But it's fine. Your eyes got used to it, and you're only interested in the stranger in front of you anyway.

Suddenly, they stop. They are in front of a door. You notice that that building is also covered in darkness and silence. Your steps lead you closer to them. They open the door for you and you enter the old edifice. You feel a fabric touching your hand. It's leather. Their hands are hidden inside a pair of leather gloves that denies you access to their fingers. These might have given you a hint related to their gender, but it remains unknown. The man or the woman stops you and reaches for your face. You feel their leather gloves on your cold skin, which automatically starts to get warmer, and then you feel their lips pressing on

yours.

You've waited for this from the moment you saw them, haven't you? And now you have it. Your body no longer senses the cold. It is high from the kiss. Your lips are almost burning with pleasure from their lips which taste just like the sweets you devoured when you were younger. It's almost as if they'd known your favourite desserts. But don't worry, it is only a coincidence. It really is. So, you continue devouring their lips.

In no time, you are at their door and they gently push you inside. Your clothes fall one by one, liberating portions of your now-warm skin. Another thing you've waited for. At this point, you don't even care if the stranger is a man or a woman. You don't kiss a body, but a soul. It feels as if you two were fusing into one big soul. A special soul. A unique soul. A perfect soul. Just the kind of chemistry you've ever wanted. Naive people often want that.

But you're not naive, are you? Of course, you're not. How could you be when their body trembles with joy and pleasure between your arms? It feels like you are home. And they are so gentle with you. Their kisses on your warm skin are just like melted ice-cream on your lips. A little clichéd your way of understanding their kisses, but it's fine. At least you feel great. Actually, you feel perfect. Just perfect.

You open your eyes. You feel your body extraordinary light. As if you no longer had a body. You get out of bed. Something near the exit door draws your attention. For a moment you can't believe it. You get closer enough to finally see the nuance of their eyes. They are wide open now, it's easy to identify their colour as the stranger is hanging dead from the ceiling. Or they are not the stranger? You don't know their eyes, you haven't seen them in the light. And you haven't even seen the stranger naked in the light. It might or it might not be the stranger you so much adored last night.

You turn your head towards the bed. You scream. But the room remains covered in silence. You have no voice. But how could you when your voice lies on that bed inside your dead body... It is covered in blood. You are covered in blood. It lacks the arms. You lack the arms. You move towards the window to get some air. Unfortunately, your lungs stopped functioning some hours ago, and they also lie on that bed, inside your corpse. You look outside. On the street, you see a pair of arms. They are yours. They are the arms that the stranger kissed last night. You feel the ache of your lost arms.

But, as I said, we – naive people – often want this kind of chemistry. We crave it.

And we die for it.

