

the
Sequitur

Something's in their, and it's not good:

Looks like COVID-19 has brought far more than a global pandemic. Explore how racism has also taken centre stage in these unprecedented times.

Certain imperfections deserve to stay so:

Read the riveting short story on the unnerving nature of "picture-perfect".

Sequitur clothing swap:

Learn about an exciting initiative to bring the school together all for a good cause!

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Hello Westdale,

It's nearing the end of the "official March Break" and we are sitting here, writing to you from our respective homes in self-isolation. Who would have thought this was how our last semester of high school would have gone? We know that you, like us, are probably experiencing a wide range of emotions as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. These might include feelings of fear, panic, maybe even sadness at the possibility of not getting to experience the end of high school events the way you've always dreamed of. That is, unless you are one of those introverts who couldn't be happier to get some time away from it all.

Regardless of where your headspace is right now, we think that we can all relate to underlying questions of "What's next? What does this mean for the future?" This line of

questioning could take on different forms depending on what year you're in. Will you have to take e-learning for the rest of the year? Will you have to do the OSSLT or EQAO next year? Will you graduate? Will you get to see all of your friends for a last hurrah at prom? Will you toss your cap into a crowd of your peers in June after walking across the stage at Hamilton Place, or will you have your graduation online? The next chapter of our lives seems to be a blank, blurry slate that we just want to fill with concrete plans, but we are living in exceptional and uncertain times. We think that we can say without a doubt that is one for the books. Our children will learn about the Coronavirus outbreak of 2020 in their grade 10 history class.

It's really easy to look back and be annoyed at your past self for taking everything that used to be commonplace for granted. Hanging out with

friends, extracurriculars, going out for dinner and for coffee, getting to go to the gym, and maybe even going to calculus class (if that's imaginable). We can promise you, that although it may seem like an eternity away (at the time that we are writing this, the virus has not yet even peaked in Canada) things will one day be okay again. Maybe not exactly the same as they used to be, but perhaps that's for the best.

After all is said and done, we hope we can emerge from this with more compassion and grace. We hope we will value those who stood strong and served the public, even when it was scary and at times unsafe to do so. We are talking about medical professionals like doctors, nurses, EMTs, and medical technicians, who are working tirelessly to fight this horrible virus. We are also talking about the cashiers working at grocery stores, janitors, and other front line workers who cannot work from home, yet

continue to serve a vital role in our society, even after listening to the news and reading fear-inspiring articles all day, many of us get paranoid and allow our greed and selfishness to seize hold of us and lead us around unwittingly in a brash, inconsiderate manner. Though it is difficult, it is times like these that require human cooperation and consideration the most, and that reveal each and every one of our true characters. So Westdale let us take this as a lesson and strive to do better and be more compassionate and selfless citizens, no matter the circumstances.

though they are often not paid a living wage. They are the true heroes of the COVID-19 story. Nobody should work 40 hours a week and live in poverty. Nobody should work while sick because they are too afraid of not being able to put food on the table or pay rent.

Additionally, we believe that this time of self-isolation and panic for many has brought to light some underlying social issues that we tend to forget about, or hope not to encounter. To begin, let's talk about all of those shelves formerly packed with canned goods, hand sanitizer, and toilet paper, all wiped out in a matter of days. These were items that you used to be able to obtain without a worry because everyone only took what they needed for the time being. However, with the introduction of a global crisis, many have begun hoarding years worth of essential items that still need to be shared amongst a large group of people. Yes, there is a call for social distance at this time to help reduce the spread of the disease, but there is no call for stocking up 10 years worth of supplies so that you don't need to leave your house, ever. As long as people respect the need for social distance in essential public spaces like grocery stores, and continue to only take what they need, things could flow a lot more smoothly and equitably. Unfortunately,

We recommend you all read Joanna Wang's article about experiencing racism as a Chinese Canadian during these times when the President of The United States repeatedly refers to COVID-19 as "the Chinese virus". We must keep in mind that this virus is one that impacts the world, regardless of race or ethnicity. Sara Abbas' article on the Wet'suwet'en pipeline protests is also a must-read, as we must also remain aware of other political issues that our society is fighting so hard to combat. If you are looking to escape the droning of current affairs blaring from your television, might we suggest you read Ellie Shimizu's poem and take a moment to immerse yourself in another world. There is also Casey Kisielewski's short story that explains why sometimes imperfection is better than

perfection, a timely lesson for us all.

We wish you the best, Westdale. Stay safe and take care of yourselves.

Lane O'Hara Cooke & Kaya Shimizu
Co-Editors in Chief



1 Feature Article

How I have Encountered the Danger of a Single Story: How Racism has Taken Center Stage with COVID-19

By: Joanna Wang

and fear from the public.

During my childhood, I have been fortunate enough to have grown up in a diverse community, where the majority of my classmates were people of colour and never discriminated against anyone for the colour of their skin. I was able to grow and learn without my appearance and ethnicity being a burden or something others looked down upon. This was my life before a recent single story affected it. The story of the Wuhan virus.

With this single story came misinformation from the media

I would say that I am lucky this story has not affected how others behave around me, but on the internet, it seems like for every person that has not made a racist or xenophobic comment another person has. One of my relatives who lives in Mississauga was greeted every morning by the receptionist and after news broke out about the outbreak the receptionist would not look up from her desk when she saw them enter. They overheard comments such as "it's okay that you're sick, but if you were Chinese that would be a problem." in their workplace which made it uncomfortable and unwelcoming to be there.

People started to avoid any contact with anyone with who looked Chinese as if they were the virus. More and more users on the internet expressed their opinions on how Chinese people deserve this and how they had it coming.

Although this story has not affected my life nearly as much as my relatives that live closer to the outbreak and cases in Canada, I have never experienced anything like this and I hope to never have to again. With this single story, it shows how vulnerable and easily convinced we can be, how one story can change how we behave and speak around others and most importantly how one story can harm a whole country and race.



2 Short Story

Certain Imperfections

By: Casey Kisielewski **Deserve to Stay So**

A deathly silence looms in the air, just before the middle of the night. The ground hangs damp and the clouds rest grey, but I can't see them past the darkness obscuring my vision.

The quietness that falls on the earth so subtly at night is something I've loved forever, since I was young. I know that I loved it, even before I can remember, because of the photographs my father took when I wasn't looking. They hang on the walls, all over my house. Pictures upon pictures of my little body, staring into the blackness of the sky, and the almost blackness of the night.

As far back as I can remember, I loved the way it seemed warm when nothing moved. As long as snow wasn't falling, or rain was only slow, I've always felt it warmer in the middle

of the night. I've always felt it warmer when everything seemed still.

If you look at the pictures hard enough, even of the ones that don't show my face, you could tell that I was overflowing with curiosity. Like it was spilling just over the brim. You could see that I leaned forward, hoping to fall into it all. The darkness of the night seems only like a photograph—like a still life image. You could see, if you were to look at the pictures of me, that I was waiting to fall into the stillness of it all. You would see that I was ready to explore.

When the silence falls now, it doesn't put me at peace. I've never tried to think of the feeling as words before, and now, peaceful isn't even close. I don't know if I could say that I'm excited, either, but more thrilled. It's like being in fiction. It's like being in an old-time silent film, where nothing really

happens. It's like being inside of a photograph. There's always that sliver of thrill, edging in, a little. The edge of the thrill of feeling surreal. But I can't say that it makes me curious—not anymore.

When I was as young as I was in the photographs, we moved to this small town, where nothing seemed right. To my parents, everything was perfect. The perfect people and families; the perfect schools and the perfect houses.

I was more scared than curious when we moved to this perfect town. That's when I lost my curiosity.

When I got a little bit older, I turned an age that I can just remember being. My parents sent me to the perfect school in the middle of the village, where everyone was nice, and everything was just right. Controversially, it wasn't right. The

work that we did was so mechanical. Everyone was happy.

Everything was close enough to the same that I only grew bored. That's when I lost my curiosity.

Everybody was named after things in this town. I met a girl named Jupiter who I became friends with because she was the closest to me out of everyone. She was just different enough to be interesting. Together we spoke, and together we played, and together we stayed for ages. Everything seemed

It was then that I realized I was trapped in a perfect photograph. It was then that I knew my curiosity was gone.

At home, I wasn't lonely because my parents and I usually got along alright, even if they'd turned perfect. There was nowhere to go in this perfect town. There were only houses, and supermarkets, and yoga studios. On the days that Jupiter wasn't over, and I wasn't at her house, I just read books, because it was my only escape from the perfect world. It's like when someone stares at the camera through a photograph, it's like they're staring right at you. I knew I was insane, but I felt like through the books I read, I was getting a glimpse of the real world.

Through the fantasy and fiction worlds I'd read my way in and out of, I'd found a new type of curiosity. I was curious about something that wasn't real.

Jupiter and I, we'd grown up together, in a rare way. Best friends since we could remember, only keeping each other steady since then. I remember the worst night, still so vividly. It was so not long ago.

Jupiter was calling me lately, a lot, on my cell phone. I don't even need a cell phone, but my parents see me as someone perfect, and the perfect kids need to have cell phones. She'd been calling me after school instead of coming over, which, I mean, is fine, but there's no point in just suddenly stopping. She came on the phone ranting one day about how much she

less boring with her around, like she shoved it all away just enough to be hidden. It was like she was my cloak from reality.

As we grew older, she became more fond of the other perfect kids and began to befriend them. Then, I almost lost my curiosity.

Jupiter was my dearest friend. She was my only real friend in this stupid, perfect town. I remember so vividly how she told me that the other kids wouldn't change her. I remember so vividly that the other kids didn't change her. I had a treehouse in my backyard, and she would come over during the night, and we'd sneak into it and watch the silent street together.

I remember how she pointed out the dark between the stars, and I remember finding back my curiosity.

When we started at the dumb, perfect high school, Jupiter was the one to keep me from going insane. I hated all those stupid, perfect teachers and the stupid, perfect students, and by then I just ignored my parents, because by then they were long past turning stupid and perfect too. The only person I didn't hate was my friend Jupiter, because she made sure I didn't go crazy. She understood the perfect people, and she understood me more; she was the one who always talked reason into me, before I shouted at anyone.

likes this perfect boy, Ocean. I can see how she'd like him because he is less perfect than the others. That isn't an excuse to like a perfect boy, though, because he was still one of the perfect kids. But I didn't want to try and change her mind or anything, so I just held my breath. I didn't like to get involved in high school boy trouble. I didn't want to get involved in the perfect people's world.

She came over the next night, after school. She came late, just when I was supposed to be going to sleep, but as if I cared about my stupid bedtime routine. We went out to the treehouse, and she was being a little distant, and when I asked her why, she told me she was just tired.

When I kept asking why she was laughing, she told me she was thinking about that boy. When she told me how cute he was, I felt my face turn red, because no perfect boy deserves my Jupiter. She's so perfectly imperfect, she'd have to find someone from out of town. When I accidentally mentioned this is when we had our first fight. It was more pouting than yelling because our perfect neighbourhood was asleep. I hadn't meant to say anything in the first place, and when she told me how nice he was, I tried to say that I was excited for her. She told me to realize that this is reality and that we had to snap out of our dream world eventually. She told me I had to wake up. She muttered that they had already been on a date, and I think it was the first time I'd cried because of her. She'd seen me cry so many times before, but she was the

one to hold me until I felt alright again.

When my only true friend stopped telling me important things, that's the heaviest I'd ever felt. It was the surest I'd ever been that I lost my curiosity.

When I explained to her that I was only upset she didn't tell me, of course she understood. Of course she knew what I meant. When she told me that she needed to keep some things private, I didn't tell her that it hurt me. I only told her that I understood. I think she knew completely what I was feeling, though, and she held me until I stopped crying, just as she'd always done.

When we lay in silence, watching the photo of the road for hours, I had a hard time thinking. My thoughts were all too messy. All I could do was watch the dead road. All I could do was feel close enough to being in a still life.

When we fell asleep in the treehouse that night, I think it was the closest I've ever been to being at peace.

When I woke up during sunrise she was gone, the breeze was strong and I felt cold.

While I keep on living in this perfect town, I have to find how to make light of it somehow.

As Jupiter spent less time with me, I had to remember that I was the only sane one around. Unfortunately, being the only sane person turns you insane. It's alright though, because in this perfect town, those two things are just the same.

In the midst of the night, the only noises are those of the wind. When there is none, it's perfectly silent. The only thing that moves is you. When you watch the road, it is dark and ever silent. When you see the sky, it is raging with stillness.

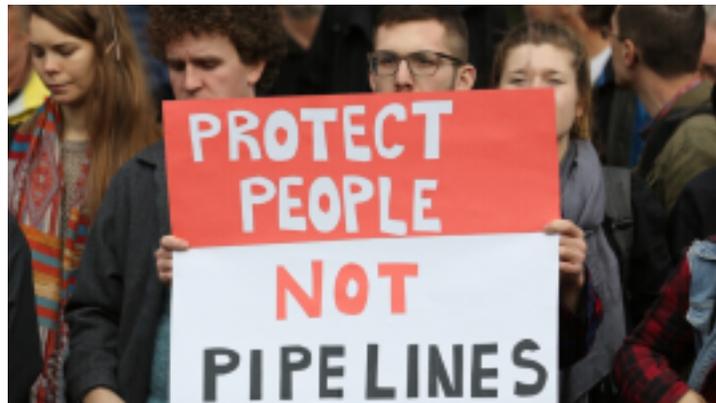
I haven't found my curiosity again, but I'm trying. But that wasn't really what I wanted to find. I really don't know, now, what it is I've been looking for. Maybe it's hope. Maybe it's sanity. Maybe it's inner peace, or perfect imperfectness, or maybe it's happiness.

It's an indescribable feeling, when you are outside—part of the entire world—yet you seem to be the only thing there. It is an amazing stillness that I can promise you have never known. It's like you're inside of a photograph.

I can't be sure what I was looking for. I can't be sure that I've found it. For now, I can say that it feels like I have, or at least, I feel that I will.

3 News Report

The Pipeline Protests



By: Sara Abbas

The Wet?suwet?en protest s m ay ring a bell for som e, but there are a num ber of people that don?t know the origin of these protest s. There?s a lot of inform ation to cover, so sit tight and get ready to hear the full story.

happens to be around the end of  2019 when plans for a pipeline in et?s start at the beginning, which

British Columbia were proposed. This \$6.6-billion pipeline was outlined to transport natural gas across northern BC, with its route cutting through Indigenous land. Although the pipeline company—Coastal GasLink—claimed they had an agreement with all 20 First Nations about this route, the Wet’suwet’en chiefs—who are a part of the 20 First Nations—opposed the pipeline going through their land. The chiefs also believed that no others, including the other First Nations, should have a say in whether or not a project is approved in a location they are not responsible for. The company did claim that they considered the rights of Indigenous people as well as the environment when finalizing the setup of the pipeline, but many have debated its veracity.

When this problem went to court, the

The Pipeline Protests (Continued)

people who supported the pipeline, especially the pipeline company that still believes their court ruling is more important than the rights of the people who live on that land. The pipeline is seen as a way to build the economy, and so people started to look for ways to remove these protesters to continue the creation of the pipeline.

This led to the police getting involved. At the beginning of February 2020, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, or the RCMP, began asking the protesters to leave the blockade and allow the workers to continue working. When the protesters refused, they were arrested.

BC Supreme Court ruled against the Wet’suwet’en people, allowing the company to continue on with their plans for the pipeline. The ruling included removing all types of obstacles, such as roads or bridges, in order for the pipeline to be built. It is important to note that the land is still lawfully in ownership of the Wet’suwet’en Indigenous people.

In 1997, a previous court case gave the Wet’suwet’en people the rights to this specific area of land as well as the ability to extract resources from it when they see fit. Nothing was done since to take their proprietorship away, so this law still holds. The BC Supreme Court was fully aware of this information but still ruled in favour of Coastal GasLink.

While many would just stand back and accept whatever the court laid out for them, the Wet’suwet’en Indigenous people did not. They continued to

Despite the arrests, the number of protesters increased as more and more people realised the injustice in northern BC. This pipeline problem started to gain national recognition due to the brutal and unlawful treatment of the Indigenous people.



Because the arrests and harsh handling remained, blockades popped up across the country. People in Winnipeg, Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal, and more are standing alongside the Wet’suwet’en Indigenous people,

fight for their land, including sending the pipeline company a letter of eviction stating they were trespassing. As the situation continued to escalate, the Indigenous people had more and more meetings with the province in order to try to resolve the issue. This, however, did not end with a resolution.

While all of this negotiation was going on, peaceful protests were taking place in northern BC. To halt the progression of the pipeline, many Indigenous people gathered in solidarity on the construction site to stand against the court’s decision that took away their right to decide their land’s fate. This angered

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mirroring their protest in different pipeline locations. This led to many scheduled shipments via the pipelines being cancelled.

As more blockades appeared, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau declared it a national crisis and ordered the protesters to leave the blockades. He called these protests “unacceptable and untenable”, and is allowing criminal charges and more arrests to be made for those who decide to continue organizing legal blockades. The goal is to continue with the work done on the pipelines and not have any more interference. After a blockade was taken down in Belleville by the police, more appeared as a way of standing up against the

government's decisions. Due to the growing number of blockades, it is becoming increasingly more difficult for companies to continue their pipeline function.

A note from the author

It is important to note that although the issue seems to mainly concern the

Wet'suwet'en Indigenous people being against the pipeline, the true crux of the matter is the removal of rights from the Indigenous people. What the police are doing is against many ethical rules laid out, but nothing is being done to stop them. Some may support the pipeline company while others may support the Indigenous people and their fight

for their land, but regardless of the side taken, it can be agreed upon that the treatment of the protesters has been inhumane and is unacceptable. Something needs to be done to stop it. This issue doesn't seem as though it will end any time soon, so you can voice your opinions on the matter. Just remember to stay safe in the process.

“ It is important to note that although the issue seems to mainly concern the Wet'suwet'en Indigenous people being against the pipeline, the true crux of the matter is the removal of rights from the Indigenous people.

Even though many around the country have voiced their abhorrence with police cruelty, it continues to happen to this day.



4 News Report



By Sonya Pallapothu

*Plans may be subject to change because of school cancellations

As a student of Westdale Secondary, I'm glad that I've spent the last three years in this amazing school. Over this time, I've noticed something major about not only the student body but the staff, as well: we have awareness. Westdale is home to a majority of clubs that support social issues, especially ones that are targeting our world today, such as WE Club, Model UN, the environmental club, and so many others. It's clear that the

students of Westdale have a vast knowledge of and completely support ethical and environmentally-friendly methods. So, it does not come as a surprise that The Sequitur will be holding a clothing-swap fundraiser to raise money for the club itself and an organization called Room to Read in the near future.

A clothing swap is essentially a method of thrifting where a group of people bring clothes that they wish to donate or sell, and others can buy them from the person at a reasonable price. Thrifting is an amazing way to be ethical and environmentally friendly! By reducing the amount of new clothing you buy, you can in turn



The

Sequitur's Clothing Swap

reduce the amount of waste that piles up in the landfills. Thrifting helps to prevent climate change, even if it's in the slightest. And a major plus point for thrifting is being able to purchase your favourite clothing at an affordable price.

In Westdale, a team of people from The Sequitur will be facilitating the clothing swap. Any student or teacher who wishes to purge old or unwanted clothing can simply donate it to the facilitators between the announced dates, and your clothing will be ready for sale! Triune will be organizing a semi-formal in the springtime, so we encourage semi-formal wear to be

donated to the clothing swap – however, any type of clothing is acceptable! People wishing to buy clothing only need to bring a minimum of \$2; with \$2 you can buy three articles of clothing, regardless of their size, popularity, or any other factor. The drop-off and purchase dates, as well as the location for the clothing swap, are to be determined, so please stay tuned for any announcements concerning the fundraiser!

All money that is raised for the clothing swap will be going towards funding for The Sequitur and the Room to Read, a non-profit literacy

organization. Room to Read's objective is to provide quality education in low-income communities, as well as improve education for girls in countries where they are deprived of a proper education. The organization's focus is to introduce and strengthen literacy and reading skills in children so that they are able to find and be comfortable in their job in the future. Funds raised will also be going towards the Sequitur, our very own newspaper. The Sequitur is a platform for student voice and expression, but also a reflection of Westdale's unity.

Clothing swaps are a fun and friendly way to add new clothes to your closet for an affordable price and since the Sequitur is holding a swap very soon, this is an amazing opportunity for Westdale students to find their new favourite outfit. Stay tuned for announcements about the fundraiser, and come support your school newspaper and Room to Read at the swap!



5 Interview

Humans Westdale



By: Anonymous

I don't really know how to express it, but I just hate it. I'm always way too conscious of how much room I'm taking up, always asking: "What is everyone else seeing?" and never really wanting to know the answer. And I know it's not a really healthy way to look at life but I can't really help it. It's ingrained. On other days though, I just want to push all that out the window, you know? Just bag it all up and toss it out. I want to be able to say, "Hey! I don't care at all what you think about me!" As long as I'm enjoying what I'm doing and I'm not hurting anyone, right? Yeah, I know it's a pretty simple concept but I don't really know, I just have a hard time coming to terms with it. But you know? and actually, I think all that forced positivity stuff is a little bit unhealthy too? I'm trying to be more optimistic with it. If I can brighten up someone else's day, why shouldn't I? So I'm trying to be braver about that too; if I see someone on the street and I really like their pants, I'll try and say so! Really, I think we should all get better at giving people compliments.?

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6 Poem

Shhhh...

Can you hear it?

Hmmm...

Can you feel it?

Can you see it?



Can you smell the copper leaves?

The sun is casting its brilliant rays onto a lone bench

Forgotten. Abandoned. Lonely.

It all feels a little ancient,
The way scattered leaves dance through the air And
the way a streak of gold rushes through the trees.

The colours are so vibrant?
Deep and dark magenta
A luscious green
And copper yellow too

It reminds me of a memory,
One I can't quite remember,
It's distant but feels close to me

There is a whisper.
A soft one.
The voice feels warm and hidden.
It feels as if it is hiding away from the world
But for some reason, wants me to know;
Needs me to know.

It's overwhelming,
The nostalgia that I feel in this place
It's safe, it's real.

It feels like a secret
A place only I know
Only for me.



I know where I am
But I'm lost
I see my surroundings
But I feel blinded by their beauty.
I can hear a soft east wind,

But my ears deceive me.

Suddenly I crave to hold this feeling
Of getting lost in a place I know
Of believing that magic might exist
That there are undiscovered mysteries around us all.

I feel dizzy standing here
Like I'm in a lull,
A coma.

It's ok though, because I'm here
I'm safe
I know where I am
I'm in my palace of leaves.

Palace of

Leaves

By: Ellie Shimizu



Prototypes In Politics

Have you ever felt annoyed by politics? Like all these decisions are being made at Queen's Park and you don't know how it's happening? Or maybe you want to be more involved in politics? I personally felt a disconnect from politics. I was interested in political issues but felt as though I could only truly be a part of democracy once I reached the voting age. But that was all before I accepted a very special opportunity that has since changed my mind.

It all started back in February when I was given the chance to attend a three-day conference at the Ontario Legislative Assembly. This conference was hosted at Queen's Park and was attended by 95 high school students from all over the province, ranging as far south as Essex, and as north as Timmins. The purpose of this event was to get youth engaged with and aware of the inner workings of politics. Overall, it was a very positive experience and one that I will never forget.

Prior to the conference, we had the chance to learn about the people who work at Queen's Park along with their specific roles. We were given an explanation of the duties of a clerk and the process through which bills get passed in the house. Then, we had the chance to take a test determining our stance on the political spectrum before picking a party to join for a simulation. I chose to join the New Democratic Party, which ended up becoming the official opposition for the Liberal government. As a party, we elected Dawoud Najmudin, a grade 12 student from Niagara Falls to assume the role of leader. I hadn't seen someone lead a group of people so calmly, yet so effectively at the same time until I'd met Dawoud. We each got to write a bill about something we cared about and wanted to change in Ontario; that we later had a simulated debate in the Chamber on. It was really interesting to observe how the bills that have the ability to change and create new laws in Ontario get written. The bill I wrote advocated for making post-secondary tuition free for all Ontario students. I believe that this was an important issue to address as it gives all students equal opportunity to pursue post-secondary education and increase their knowledge to help them attain career goals. But, in the end, the bill we voted on as a group to debate was about implementing tax credits for families paying for children and teens in extracurricular activities.

On the first day of the conference, we were given a tour of Queen's Park. Afterward, we witnessed the questioning period in the Chamber. This is when the opposition gets the chance to ask the government's Cabinet Ministers questions about their plans for Ontario. Andrea Howarth, the leader of the official opposition and the MPP for my riding of Hamilton-Centre, officially welcomed

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7 News Report

Prototypes in Politics
(Continued)

me to Queen's Park. That was a really cool moment! Many current topics were being debated in Question Period such as the education cuts to Ontario schools, healthcare cuts, and Hamilton LRT cancellation. After the debate, we got to meet staff members of the legislature and MPPs in a networking session. I met and spoke to MPPs, such as Jill Andrew, Sam Osterhof and Peggy Satler. We were also able to meet the leader of the Ontario Green Party, Mike Shruener, and the Liberal leader, John Fraser.

It was really inspiring to meet all of the women involved at Queen's Park. We were extremely fortunate to get to meet the first female Sergeant at Arms at Queen's Park—who is responsible for all the security at Queen's Park and in the Chamber—and the first female Lieutenant governor of Ontario—the Queen's representative here in Ontario. I thought they exemplified what it meant to be a strong and powerful woman.

An MPP we met named Lisa Gretzky gave all the women in the house really important advice, specifically saying, "To all the young women. Don't let anyone turn your sky into a ceiling."

Our final speaker of the house was Kathleen Wynne. It was an honour to meet her and even be in her presence. She was the first woman and first openly-gay premier of Ontario.

The most climactic moment of the conference was the debate. It was really exciting to get to debate in the Chamber where the actual MPPs sit. We all worked really hard and it was amazing to see everyone contributing. I was really nervous at first because I had written my speech at 5 am on the train and it was out of my comfort zone. I was stuttering at the beginning but ended up loving it; I felt powerful and in my element. I love to debate, and this was the next level of debating that I had been missing out on.

At the conference, I got to meet amazing youth from across the province who I believe will and can change the world. I think they summed up really nicely what the whole experience meant to them. Some of the things they said are:

"An unforgettable and unique experience that every high school student must try! If you try hard enough, one day you could actually sit in these seats."

-Yazdan, Windsor-Tecumseh

"My favourite part was when they would tell us orders during the debates. I just found it fun to be there and hear the commandments and comments of the speaker."

-Kailey, Nickel-Belt

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?I honestly had no expectations coming into OMP because I didn?t know anyone who did it before me. However, as soon as I walked in, I was welcomed with the biggest smiles and knew this experience would be unforgettable! Shoutout to all the amazing people I met who I won?t forget and know are all going to great places.?

-Huda, Etobicoke North

?My favourite part of the Model Parliament program was being able to sit in the Chamber and learning a lot about how the legislative process works. It was also a pretty great opportunity to confirm what I already knew: that I wanted to be a politician.?

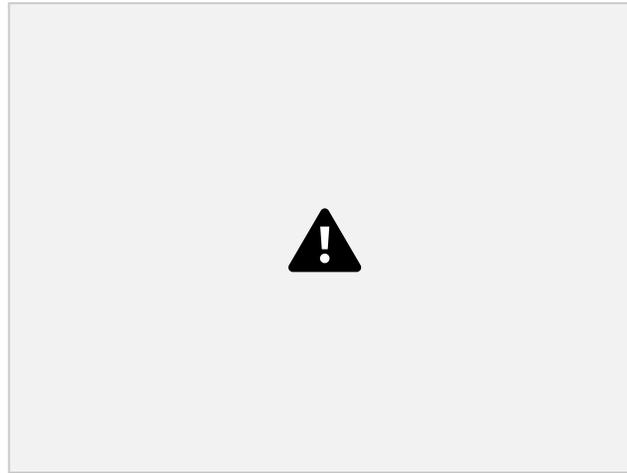
-Emmanuel, Timmins

Overall, the Model Parliament program was a life-changing experience. It showed me how students can be a part of democracy and help bring it to life. There, I strengthened my public speaking skills and grew more confident as a person. I met incredible like-minded youth from across the province who are going to go off and do great things. I can now confidently say that I want to work in politics in the future. I think this is an excellent opportunity for all Ontario youth who are civic-minded and want to learn more about the government but don?t know exactly where to start. I would 100% consider applying because you never know what you?ll get out of it. If you want to know more about the program, visit the OLA website under Model Parliament.

Please don?t hesitate to email me at kfolsett6636@hwdsb.on.ca if you have any questions about the program. I?d be happy to answer them!



APRIL



HOROSCOPES

ARIES (March 21 - April 19) ? ?

Try a little bit of mid-spring cleaning! It's the perfect time to freshen up, get rid of your old weaponry, and find something new. A great way to do this sustainably is to hold a yard sale! Plus, you might be able to finally make some friends.

TAURUS (April 20 - May 20) ? ?

Hey, Taurus. Did you know that violence isn't always the answer? Did you? Are you sure?

GEMINI (May 21 - June 20) ? ?

A man who sleeps with a knife is a fool every night but one.

CANCER (June 21 - July 22) ? ?

Alright, Cancer. The jig is up. The case has been cracked. The metaphorical light bulb has lit up. The sandwich has been eaten. The roaches have been found. The strings have untangled. The wrinkles have unfolded. They've found you. Luckily, Aries is holding a yard sale, and you might just find some allies there.

LEO (July 23 - August 22) ? ?

Let us impart some wisdom upon you, Leo. It is time to listen to the stars and start your very own morse code. You'll be needing it to distinguish between friend and foe.

VIRGO (August 23 - September 22) ? ?

Hey. Loosen up! You're not dying yet, so you might as well live.

LIBRA (September 23 - October 22) ? ?

It's time to buckle up and settle down yet again. You've got what, two months left? Believe me when I say that we **all** think it's time for you to pave your path into a routine instead of following the lead of others.

SCORPIO (October 23 - November 21) ? ?

Want a hot tip? Time doesn't have to be linear if you don't want it to be! Make the most out of it.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22 - December 21) ? ?

Welcome back, Sagittarius! If you look in the right direction, it's turning out to be clear night skies ahead! In fact, it's a perfect night to fool around with Gemini and go give them a surprise. Make sure to do so in the witching hours to really have

a night you won't forget.

CAPRICORN (December 22 - January 19) ? ?

Remember when you thought that insulting someone was a good idea? Someone with bigger muscles than you? Well, it's time to prove yourself and truly one-up them by becoming more buff than they are! Do this by any means possible?-your life depends on it. The Stars recommend a Jigsaw-esque maze.

AQUARIUS (January 20 - February 18) ? ?

Thanks, Aquarius! Not for singling out the Stars and blaming all of your benign problems on them, but thanks for getting me that cookie. It was greatly appreciated in all possible aspects. Hope you live to buy another.

PISCES (February 19 - March 20) ? ?

Hot Wheels aren't only for children and funerals aren't only for adults. Give Gemini some space.