



at B is Diverse Systems

Editorial

As we enter a new term, a new year, the School Magazine Novus is always looking for innovative ways to present our amazing articles and graphic design. This term, we took a different approach immediately with the foundation of this entire issue: the theme.

Instead of one overarching theme, we decided to combine two (seemingly opposite) themes – diversity and systems – to create this hybrid theme called Diverse Systems. There is a reason why I say they are seemingly two opposing themes: Systems imply some sort of unity, the complete opposite of Diversity which promotes differences and variety.

However, opposites do not mean mutual exclusivity: in fact, these themes are quite related. If imagining a spectrum, something can approach one end which is being more unified (Systems) or approach the other end and become more Diverse. A System could have Diverse items, like how our school has a diverse community of students. There are many possibilities when it comes to this and we encouraged our writers to explore what it means to be in a System and/or to be Diverse.

Enjoy reading about the diversity in our society, like the beauty industry, education, and language. Maybe learn about the basics of Chemistry and Neurodiversity. Discover the complex world of philosophy.

Whatever it is, I hope you will learn something about this issue's hybrid theme. Happy reading!

To Nguyen Thuc Anh

Contents

The background of the page is a vibrant, abstract collage. It features a grid of blue lines in the upper right corner, with a large, dark blue sphere and smaller blue circles scattered around it. Below the grid, there are large, flowing shapes in shades of purple, red, and yellow. A prominent red shape resembling a stylized figure or a flower is in the center. To its right, a yellow figure is depicted in a dynamic pose. At the bottom, there are green and lime green shapes, including a large, rounded figure. The overall composition is dynamic and colorful, with a mix of geometric and organic forms.

Beauty of Diverse Language
- Minju (Judy) Kang, Y11

Diversity in the Beauty Industry
- Minh Thu Pham, Y12

Guidance of Basic Chemistry Logic
- Jaebeom (Jay) Yang, Y11

Diverse Minds: The World of Neurodiversity
- Danielle Elisha Olympia, Y10

Beginner's guide to Gundam
- Xinyue (Sunny) Wang, Y12

How are dimensional systems are presented
in Edwin Abbotts novel, Flatland
- Dakyung (Olivia) Hwang, Y9

Diversity in Education
- Geonhee Cho, Y13

Decoding Social Contract Theory: Is It Truly A Contract?
- Bui Gia Khanh Pham, Y11

Diversity in Theatre Arts
- Jiyu (Rachel) Lee, Y9

Why is cultural diversity so important for humans?
- Taeyeon Kwun, Y11

Beauty of DIVERSE LANGUAGE

"A language is not just words. It's a culture, a tradition, a unification of a community, a whole history that creates what a community is. It's all embodied in a language." Have you ever thought about how using different languages affect humans' ways of thinking, communicating and even their culture? As a member of a global society where multilingualism habitually occurs, I came up with a question: 'does learning different languages actually benefit us? Why and how?'.



There are around 7000 different languages with their own sounds, vocabularies and structures all around the world. As language is the medium to express our feelings and thoughts, how does it influence our ways of thinking and viewing the world? As the link between ways of thinking and languages is a perpetually argued by people, there are various approaches and research about this concept. Charlemagne said, "To have a second language is to possess a second soul". There are even people who perceive the combination of different sounds, grammar and style as a science and art. From our histories and experiences, we know that languages influence our actions and thoughts. But the question is how, in what way does it alter our life and give divergent visions.

TEXT ORIENTATION

As writing is one way of expressing a language, and there are records of it, we could reliably obtain results of how it affected people overtime. For example, English is written horizontally from left to right, while traditional Chinese writing is written vertically from top to bottom, in columns running from left to right. Also, Japanese books are flipped the other way around as the text progresses from right to left. Article from 'Scientific Reports' says that text orientation affects reading comprehension - visual cognition and reading performance. This means that even if we read the same text, if it is written in different languages with different structures, interpretation would absolutely vary.

English: Left to right

Article 1 All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

Chinese:
Top to bottom

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NUMBERS

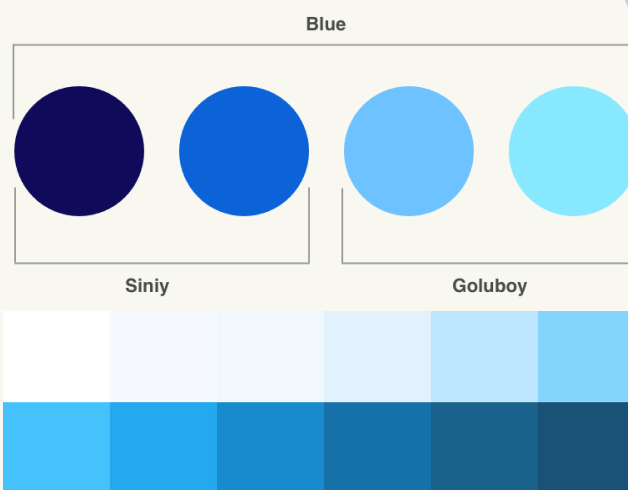
Another factor is numbers. Numbers could be defined as linguistic tricks, a form of language. For example, when we count the numbers in a clock, we say one, two, three...up to twelve. However, some languages like Mundurucu and Piraha which are used in Amazonia are 'anumeric'. They don't have precise terms for quantities, and they can't keep track of amounts or numbers. Still, they have their own notion for quantities. Hóí , a small size or amount, hoí, a somewhat larger size or amount and baágiso for a bunch. This kind of culture has developed in the idea that precise counting is culturally negligible. They have no social hierarchy, no formal leaders and no formal leaders and are extremely self-contained, which explains the absence of numbers. When there is the concept of number, people view world numerically. They start to consider statistics, stages- like hierarchy, and measures. Without numbers, their views are more based on equity as there is no specific measurements.



As English speakers, we could think of how inconvenient and vague the expressions of theirs would be. However, in the colour spectrum, between English and Russian, when English characterises colour blue as blue, Russians categorise blue from goluboy to siniy. It's a sophisticated vocabulary meaning pale blue, light blue, dark blue and deep blue. This results in Russian speakers distinguishing and differentiating colours much quicker than English speakers.

It's simply because even though the colour shifts from pale to deep blue, it still goes under the category of 'blue' in English. Meanwhile, as colours shift from goluboy to siniy for Russian speakers, they could easily identify the shifting of light spectrum and identify it as a separated category. Through Piraha, Russian and English cultures, we could know that depending on culture and lifestyle, languages could develop in different ways. Also, it could work the other way around. Languages shape the way we think and eventually build our culture.

COLOR



VOCABULARY & SENTENCE STRUCTURE

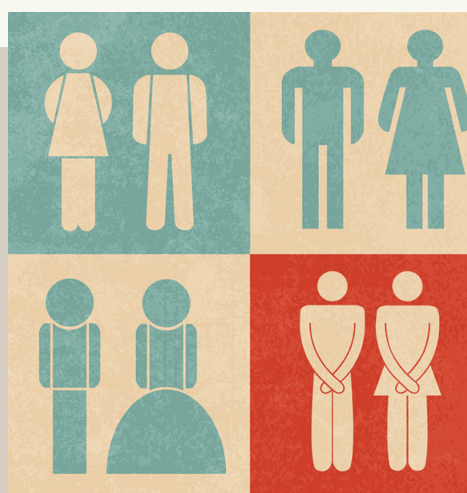
Now the deeply embedded aspects in language, which are the vocabulary and sentence structure, affect the way we think intensely. It changes the subject which means it changes the thing that people focus on depending on the language they are using. For example,



after eating bread, we say "I ate bread". While in other languages such as Spanish, it could be expressed as "Bread is eaten by me". This is because generally, English has the structure of 'subject + verb + object', and Spanish has 'object + verb + subject'. In these cases, English speakers are more likely to focus on 'who' did the action while Spanish speakers could focus on 'what happened', the intention.



So even though we show the same case to two different people, they might end up in an unmatchable conclusion. This might critically affect the world. For instance, if I drop a glass, when we focus on the subject, we remember the fact that 'I' was the person who caused the accident, therefore I'm guilty of breaking the glass. However, when it's an object-based outlook, we could just focus on the fact that glass breaks. The accident happened and that's it. Try to think of this kind of phenomenon affecting the decision of a lawyer in the court. What consequences could happen?



S T E R E O T Y P E S

Some stereotypes happen when words in a certain language have genders.

In Spanish, 'lágrima' means tears with the gender feminine- women. This creates an image of vulnerable women dripping out tears. This could also go the other way around. As tear is associated with feminine traits.

Furthermore, in German, the bridge has a feminine identity. This leads German speakers to interpret the bridges more beautifully and elegant. Whereas bridge is a masculine word in Spanish, and they describe bridges as strong, big and long.

The cases were the smallest things but that would significantly affect our life and the world we live in. Diverse languages could be considered as one piece of beauty in this world because it opens endless possibilities to us: Having numbers in our language opened a new world such as Maths; sophisticated colour descriptions added flavours as it allowed us to articulate and express our emotions in variety and suggested different meanings in arts. Linguistic diversity reflects the incalculable flexibility of human's brain. Not one but more than 7000 ways of cognitive perception. Learning languages not only allows us to unlock new different words for the same concepts, but it teaches us another way to think - Language shapes the way we think.

DIVERSITY IN THE BEAUTY INDUSTRY

Can the Beauty Industry Ever Become Truly Inclusive?

Revenue in the Beauty & Personal Care market amounts to a shocking number of US\$625.70billion in 2023 and the market is expected to grow annually by 3.32%. As selfcare is bigger than ever, diversity becomes more relevant to the industry, and there are products being marketed to cater to a variety of needs: skin brightening, anti-aging, bronzing & tanning skin, etc. But we know that beauty is not one- size –fits all. This leads me to the question of can the beauty industry ever become truly inclusive?



Source: The Guardian



What defines beauty?

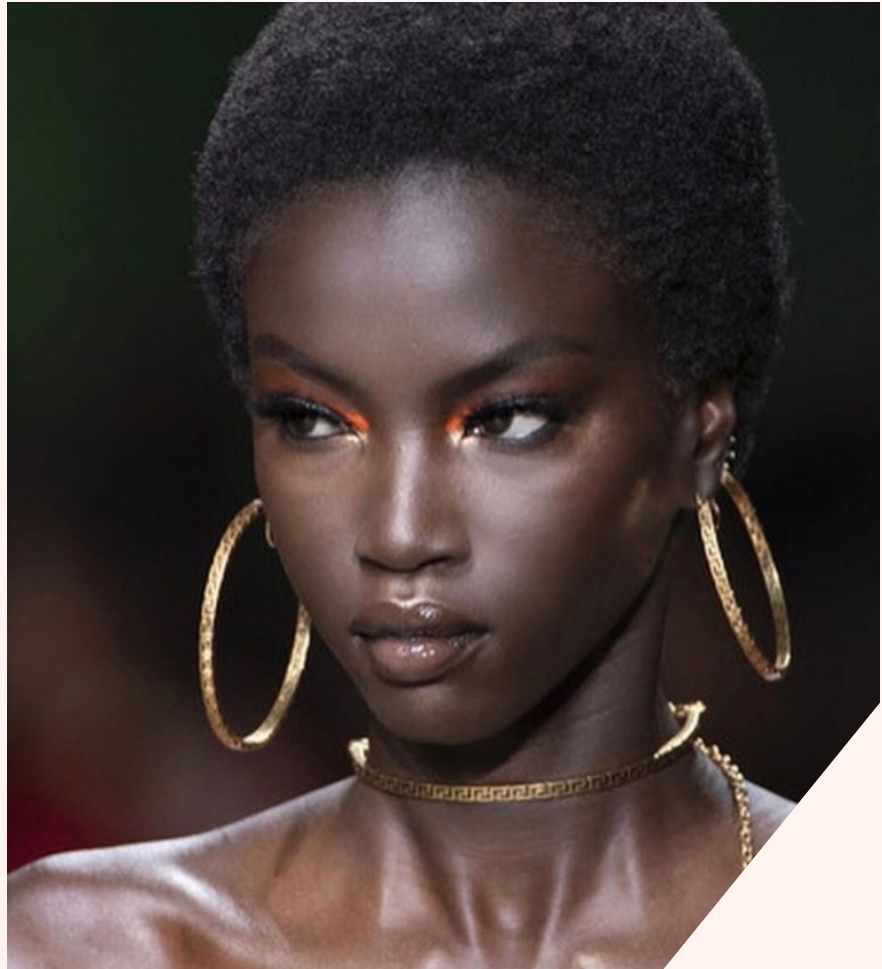
To begin with, some might say that beauty is in the eye of the beholder, but that isn't always the case. If you ask a random person what makes someone attractive, most of them will probably refer to the beauty standards. From a biological perspective, research claims standards of beauty are based on evolutionary ideals: At the end of the day, the human brain is hardwired to reproduce, as it is our biological reason for being. This is Darwin's theory called sexual selection. The theory can be used to explain why, for example, having bigger breasts is considered more desirable,

simply because this signals better breastfeeding during motherhood. Additionally, sexual dimorphism- difference in appearance between the sexes- also explains how having a feminine or masculine face can greatly affect one's attractiveness. Feminine features such as a smaller nose, big plump lips and big round eyes are the conventional beauty standards for women because they signal high levels of oestrogen, a group of hormones that plays an important role in the normal sexual and reproductive development in women. The same goes for men's conventional beauty standards of having a bigger nose, stronger jawline and a lower percentage of body fat – all signalling high levels of male sex hormone testosterone. Hence, despite the beauty standards changing from time to time, beauty icons in the past will still be considered somewhat attractive in today's society.



Eurocentric Beauty Standards...

Having explained attractiveness from a biological perspective, we roughly understand what makes a person attractive. However, this does not fully explain why beauty standards are mainly Eurocentric. According to a study by Toby Chen, Kristina Lian, Daniella Lorenzana, Naima Shahzad, & Reinesse Wong. (2020) "Occidentalisation of Beauty Standards: Eurocentrism in Asia", their findings conclude that colonisation is one of the main factors that mainly attributed to the beauty standards across Asia, alongside with what people see on social media.



<https://pan-african.net/is-the-eurocentric-ideal-of-beauty-changing/>

In the paper, the researchers discussed how Central Asia's beauty standards are heavily based off of the native poetry due to the countries being part of the Soviet Union in the past. These poems emphasised having lighter skin, dark eyes, and black hair. Darker skin is seen as a symbol of lower hierarchy, as lighter skin gives the impression of your family being from urban areas. Furthermore, the rise of social media has also shifted our notion of beauty. With the algorithm constantly boosting creators with Eurocentric features, we start to idealise more of those traits. This is extremely damaging, as it promotes exclusivity. It is impossible for everyone in the world to be considered "beautiful" with these restricted ideologies of attractiveness, as environmental factors from different geological areas can contribute to how you look.



For instance, if one lives in a hot and humid environment, their nostrils will flare more, which goes against the desired smaller nose that usually belongs to someone who lives in a colder climate, etc. Promoting these unrealistic beauty standards can only cause more harm than good. "Black women are particularly vulnerable to the effects of European standards of beauty, because these standards emphasise skin colours and hair types that exclude many black women, especially those of darker skin." - Susan L Bryant " The Beauty Ideal: The Effects of European Standards of Beauty on Black Women".

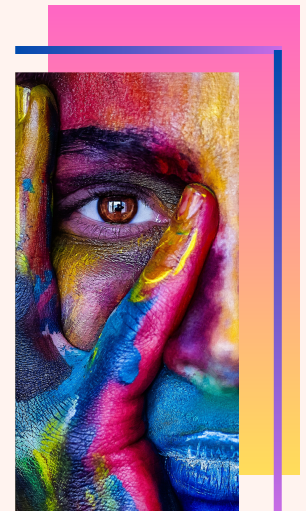
Create a Problem, Sell a Solution.



Next, though there are constant efforts to advocate for diversity in the beauty industry, businesses are still capitalising off people's insecurities by selling solutions to the problems that they created. Did you know that cellulite is not even real? It is a made-up term in the early 1900s by operators of European health spas to sell more of their spa service, increasing revenues. Since when does ageing have such a negative connotation to it that there are all types of anti-ageing products and procedures to go against human's natural ageing process? Suddenly having down-turned eyes is undesirable and getting a face lift is "trending".

Verdict:

The beauty industry and our ideology of beauty is not sustainable. Unrealistic beauty standards have indoctrinated our society into doing borderline absurd procedures merely for aesthetic purposes. There is science and history backing up why beauty standards are the way they are, but it is not an excuse for us to be ignorant. As human beings, we have to rise above it. We are ruining our planet with overconsumption in a linear economy for a quick cash grab. We have to start embracing our differences. Though easier said than done, I strongly believe that one at a time, we can slowly diversify this toxic industry. To save our people's wellbeing. To save our planet Earth.



Guidance of ***basic chemistry logic***

What is Chemistry and Why Do We Need to Study?

Chemistry is one of the subjects in the science world and it learns the properties, composition, and structure of substances, looking at changes they undergo, and the energy released or

absorbed during the process. Many people do not realize the significance of chemistry. Chemistry is a very difficult subject in IB, and it will be extremely useful in the future. If you have ever studied chemistry in primary school and just beginning to start in secondary school, it would be complicated to understand some basic knowledge of chemistry. For example, how is the bond structured in macromolecules or why group 1 in periodic table is an alkali metal. It looks difficult, but you will have a chance to improve your knowledge after reading this.





What are Particles?

Think about rock, air, and water. They all look different, but what they have in common is they are made from particles, a small portion of matter. The reason they look different is because of the different movement that each particle makes. For example, the particles of rock are not free to move around. It is because the rock is solid, and it has bonds in fixed positions. The word 'fixed position' means the particles are attached or placed together, which is immovable. The particles in solids only vibrate because they are packed together and have a fixed volume and shape. The liquid particles are like solids, but instead of particles packing together they are joined by weaker chemical bonds. This means that they do not have a fixed arrangement and their bonds are in random positions.

Moreover, the particles in a liquid 'flow' instead of vibrating. A similarity between solid and liquid is that they have a fixed volume. The solid can change into the liquid. For example, think about having ice, which is a solid. A few minutes later, the ice starts to melt slowly, and we call this melting. The particles in gas are way more different. They do not have either a fixed volume or a defined shape. Their particles move and collide randomly. The liquid could change into a gas, and we call this evaporation. For example, you put a cup of water into a beaker and set it on the table for some days. The water will evaporate and there will be less water left. This happened because the liquid particles at the surface become heated from particles moving and as the bond between these particles and the rest of the liquid breaks, they become gaseous. All this changing is called a changing state (such as solid to liquid, liquid to gas).



What is metal and non-metal?

First, to understand metals and non-metals, we should know about what atoms, elements, compounds, and mixtures are (also about atoms). An atom is the smallest part of an element that displays its characteristics. An element is a substance containing only one type of atom like carbon. The compound is formed when two or more atoms of different elements are joined together by a chemical bond or bonds like water. Mixture is where two or more chemical substances are found together, but not chemically bonded like milk. Once you understand those four, now you can clearly know what metal and non-metal are. Metals are a material that is positioned on the left side of the periodic table (we are going to learn this soon). Non-metals are materials positioned on the right side of the periodic table. The main difference between metal and non-metal is that metals can conduct electricity while non-metals do not. Since every reaction that happens in our world is to become stable. Which means that each of metal and non-metal atoms form a positive and negative ion (an atom that carries a charge). For example, when metals form positive ions, they lose electrons from their outer electron shell because the atom is trying to become more stable. There are some properties of metal to remember: Shiny, malleable, ductile, conduct heat, conduct electricity, large atomic mass. The properties of non-metal: Dull, brittle, not conduct heat, not conduct electricity, smaller atomic radius.

What is a periodic table?

A periodic table is a table that shows the arrangement of chemical elements into rows (Known as group) and columns (Known as period). It is ordered by an atomic number, also known as a proton number. In the previous text, we learned about particles and about metal and non-metal. By looking at the periodic table, we could know where metal or non-metal is and their properties. The left side of the periodic table is metal, and the right side is known as non-metal.

The group number that each element is in tells that element's properties. For example, sodium is in group 1 (Alkaline metals) and its properties are low density, low melting point, and low boiling point. Also, group 1 metals are soft and vigorously react with water. Since sodium is placed on the top of the group 1, its reaction is smaller than other metals in group 1. In group 1, the reactivity increases when you go down because their atom loses their outer electrons, to gain a stable outer shell. When you go down each group, the period increases so the number of shell increases. The more shells there are, the further the outer electron is from the positive nucleus – so the easier it is to lose. In group 7 (Known as halogen), it is different than group 1. The reactivity of element in group 7 decreases when they go down. It is because the more shells there are, the further the outer shell is from the nucleus, so attracting an electron becomes more difficult which means the reactivity falls

A standard periodic table of elements, color-coded by groups. It includes element symbols, atomic numbers, and names. The table is organized into periods (rows) and groups (columns). A legend indicates the states of matter: Solid, Liquid, and Gas. The table also shows the Lanthanide and Actinide series at the bottom.

Next to group 7, there is group 0, the noble gas. The noble gas is group 0 because they already have full outer shell. It means that they are always unreactive. Because they are unreactive, many of them are used in industry. For example, argon has been used as a filler in tungsten light bulbs because if air were used, the oxygen in it would react with air and burn the tungsten filament away. Lastly, at the middle of the periodic table where it is colored yellow is called a transition metal. The main property of transition metal is that they can form more than one charge (For example, Cu^+ , Cu^{2+}) and can replace the catalyst (A substance that speeds up a chemical reaction); could be used in industry. For example, iron is used in the Haber process to produce ammonia.

DIVERSE MINDS: THE WORLD OF NEURODIVERSITY

Written by Danielle Elisha Olympia Y10
Designed by Yoonwoo Jang Y10



"Just as the human race's physical differences between race, gender, sexuality, and such, the human mind has an equal amount of diversity to offer. Our mental state is so intricate, so complicated, we could not all have the same experiences and yet, people can tend to forget that; just as people can forget that not everyone is raised in the same culture or with the same beliefs in them. Neurodiversity is an open landscape to explore for anyone willing to open their minds to the existence of it. And just like that, it is time to be more open to talking about the tribulations of neurodivergence, but also the enlightening, hopeful aspects.

WHAT IS NEURODIVERGENCE?

Neurodivergent and neurotypical, two different experiences that lie under one large category of mental health. Unlike neurotypical, neurodivergence includes a range of mental health conditions, disorders, learning disabilities, and the like. All our brains have chemical reactions and systems

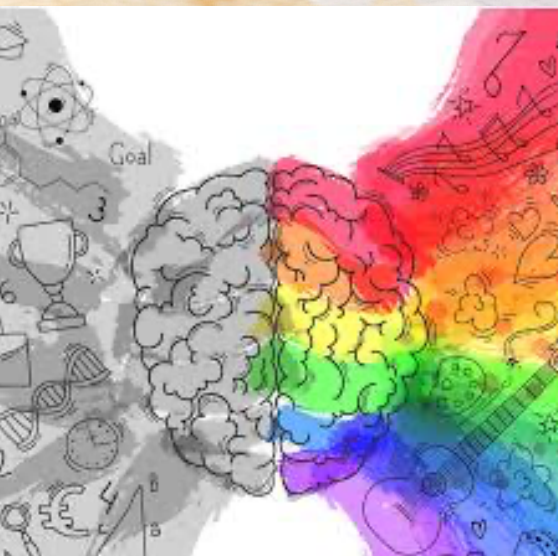
that help us function as a being and body, but some of us have brains wired differently, brains that impact how we function in what would be a typical lifestyle.



These conditions are some of what are considered as being under the neurodivergent spectrum as stated by the Cleveland Clinic:

- Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
- Bipolar Disorders
- Down Syndrome
- Dyscalculia
- Dysgraphia
- Dyslexia
- Dyspraxia
- Intellectual Disabilities
- Obsessive Compulsive Disorder
- Prader-Willi Syndrome
- Sensory Processing Disorders
- Social Anxiety
- Tourette Syndrome
- Williams Syndrome
- and more...

SIDES TO NEURODIVERGENCE



Neurodivergence is commonly associated with bad connotations sadly, but really, it is not all like that! There are multiple sides and points of views to being neurodivergent. I am a neurodivergent person myself, and I suffer from OCD or Obsessive Compulsive Disorder. OCD can tend to make life just really suck, but the result of being able to connect with the neurodiverse community and help educate others lends a rewarding feeling.

Then again... the point of view of one person with OCD is not going to represent the entirety of the neurodiverse community. However, I can do my best to help clear up misconceptions on this disorder, and in turn, I hope this helps anyone realise that neurodivergence is not always what they think it is.

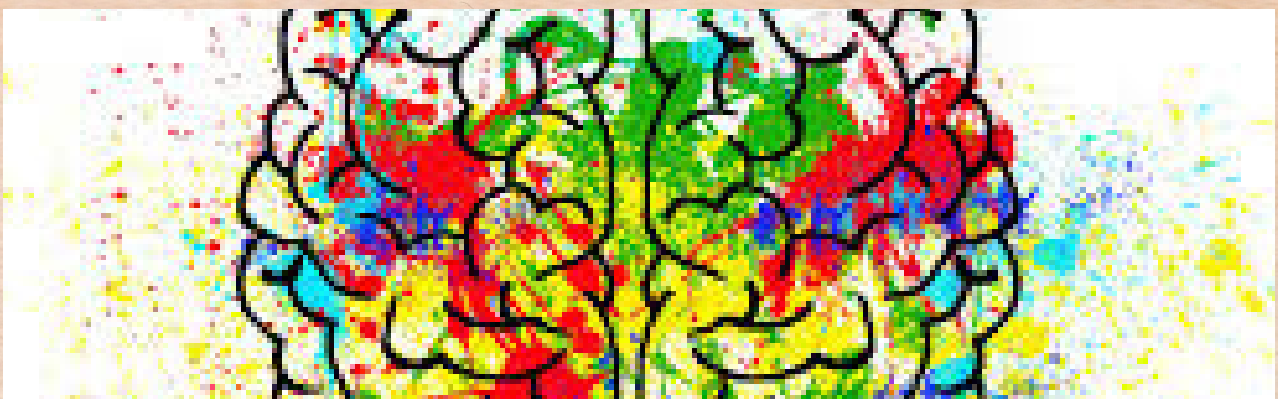




WHAT IS OCD?

Obsessive Compulsive Disorder is a time-consuming condition that causes irrational fears (otherwise known as obsessions) and gives the affected rituals (otherwise known as compulsions)* that help alleviate some of that anxiety. However, it only works for a limited time, and when the fear emerges again, the compulsions will have been already mentally assigned as a way that they can ease up that fear. This starts a time-consuming and mentally and emotionally draining loop that becomes increasingly harder to escape.

*Some people with OCD suffer from Pure O, which is a form of OCD that comes up as obsessions only, without much notable compulsions.



OCD has a few common misconceptions, however. Here are two of them that I have seen often whether said straightforwardly or implied subtly.

1 No, OCD is not perfection or cleanliness

Sure, some people with OCD suffer from their obsessions revolving around cleanliness, dirt and germs, or order and uniform. However, having OCD is not about being a clean freak — it is about that does not bear benefits. In fact, even if we were to have an obsession revolving around cleanliness and dirt, like me, it also has a strong potential of counter-productiveness as my perception of what is clean and what is not is warped and shaped to a very personal and irrational standard.

No, everyone is not "a little bit OCD every now and then"

2



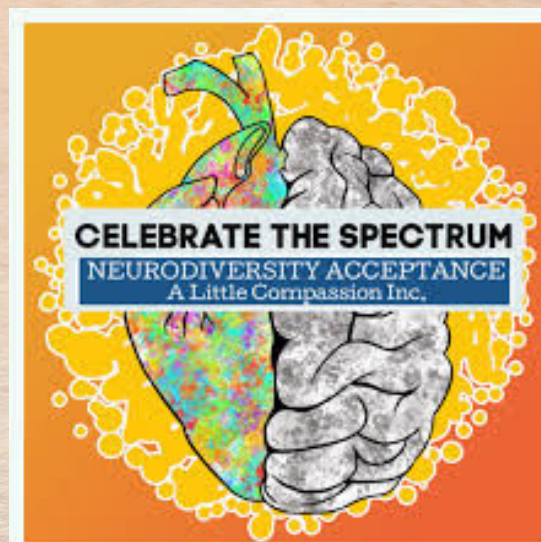
You can display OCD tendencies - everyone can show those tendencies, but if it is not persisting over an extended period then it is not likely that you suffer from the disorder itself. When people say that they are "a little bit OCD," it downgrades the actual extent that those affected must suffer through.

MY EXPERIENCE BEING NEURODIVERSE WITH OCD

Even as a kid, I had started showing symptoms. Repetitive actions, falsifying beliefs, and guilt. A lot of guilt. OCD gave me so many intrusive thoughts over the years, some that I've had to dwell on longer than others, but once I reached around 12 years old, that's when it all got so much worse. It wasn't the typical form of OCD that the media always portrayed, so I honestly had no idea that what I was going through was OCD.

After figuring out that what I was going through was indeed OCD, I'd gone to the doctor for a diagnosis, for therapy, and medications. Did it help? It's supposed to. But it's difficult, and it's hard. It's hard to take into advice and account what the therapist says, because my mind has gotten so used to the life this system has imposed upon me.

But it's not so bad. After all, there's diversity in our minds, and many people experience a similar kind of struggle or a difference. And a lot of the others in this diverse system's community are so wonderful to have around. I personally know that I'm not alone in this, and that no one else is alone in their struggles too. Even if I've felt so alone and misunderstood many times, humiliation and guilt as the sour cherry on the top, there's someone out there that I'll one day find, and someone who will find me.





BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO GUNPLA

Written by Xinyue (Sunny) Wang Y12 | Designed by Jingbang Chen Y11

Gundam Plastic Models, known as Gunpla manufactured by Bandai was derived from Japan's legacy mecha anime, Gundam. It has some of the most loyal fanbase compared to many others. This guide is going to be all about the tools and techniques needed for assembly and the different kinds of models available on the market.

Assembly guide

Gunpla do not require any glue to assemble as most of them are snap and ball jointed. But speaking from personal experience, I recommend keeping a tube of 502 or other type of superglue handy in case fragile parts snap during assembly, which is most common with accessory head pieces. However, in cases where the damage is severe, such as when a dog chews on the bone structure, you may want to purchase a Gunpla replacement kit online. Replacement kits usually don't have to be the same model, as many of Bandai's models share the same construction.

Gunpla are manufactured as a grid of interconnected plastic rods that hold the actual model parts in place, but the rods attached to the parts are often too fragile to be removed with bare hands. On some Bandai models, the translucent wing parts can be difficult to remove from the mesh. Because without certain tools, the broken area connected to the plastic rod will be damaged at the edges, which when obvious, will damage the beauty of the entire model. These are called nub marks, so having a sturdy set of pliers is a must.



1:1 Transformable Unicorn Gundam Statue in Odaiba, Japan

Models

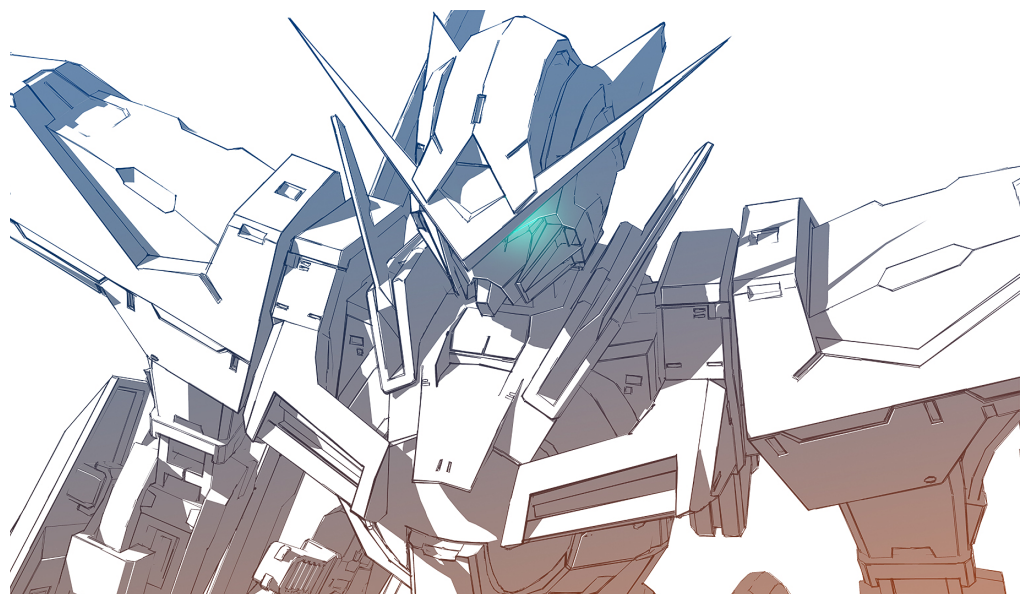
When a beginner buys their first Gunpla, they may be bombarded with weird abbreviations like HG (High Grade), RG (Real Grade), MG (Master Grade), PG (Perfect Grade), etc. But what do they mean? Don't worry, they are just quality levels.

To begin with, HG stands for high grade, a very solid and affordable choice for you to test the waters. They are very playable with good joint durability and have decent detail for their price.

Next up we have RG, which stands for real grade, they are more detailed and visually appealing than HG models, but they do not offer much pose-ability compared to the HG models. They are very fragile and therefore are more commonly used as a piece of desk or shelf decoration.

Stepping up further, MG, standing for Master grade, has an entire skeletal inner frame accompanied with cool LED lights, and is extremely detailed and accurate, but they cost way more.

Many of the MG models have electroplated assets, so be careful when handling them as your fingerprints tend to leave marks.



Lastly, perfect grade models, known as PG, are the highest quality Gunpla Bandai has to offer, they push details and looks to a whole other level, but is very expensive averaging about 200\$ with some of my favorites going up to over a grand at auctions.

Nippers

To prevent nub marks as mentioned before, you would need a pair of nippers. Nippers exist in many shapes and sizes, but when given the economic chances, you should get a pair of "GodHand" nippers. It has superior sharp cutting and force management capabilities that cuts through the rods like butter, therefore I personally think it is the best nipper in the industry. However, if in the case of less fortunate economic circumstances, other nippers like Tamiya are relatively cost-effective. Furthermore, sharp nail clippers also provide a great deal of support compared to using bare hands. Although this method is not recommended, it has carried me forward when starting out.



CUSTOMIZATION GUIDE AND CONCLUSION

Customization guide

Customizing the Gundam Gunpla after finishing can be quite rewarding as it makes the model have more personality. Since the Gunpla has grooves along the pieces representing the armor panels, panel lining is a great method to add depth to the models' look. Personally, although brush pens and ink perform a great job, I prefer using a permanent fine tip marker found in any stationary store as it is both cheap and easy to use. When I first started scribing, the stress and indecisiveness of where to draw the line grew to me, and I had the shakiest hand on Earth. But because of the wobbly lines I drew, I realized that the permanent inks can be wiped away with alcohol, which was a lifesaving discovery I wanted to share.

Another method that enhances the effect of armor plates is scribing, which is a method that involves carving out armor panels to improve the visual texture of the model. This method is more commonly used on HG (High Grade) models as they lack the details bigger models have. However, this takes a lot of practice to get complementary lines going together as I have previously broken off many delicate pieces due to mishandling my force on the craft knife.

Yet another way you can customize Gunplas is kit bashing, a process of customization where you take pieces from other models and combine them into a new model. This process may sound easy, but it is the harshest thing for a person to do to their wallets. Not only are spare parts costly, but you also need to buy a whole painting set, because most of the time the parts that you “bashed” together do not belong in a harmonious color scheme. I would suggest using parts from the HG (High Grade) models to kit bash, as they are easier than the RG (Real Grade) models because you do not need to take care of the inner frame.

Conclusion

Gunpla is not only cool looking plastic models to collect, but an entire art community for you to innovate on the base of what is given. Now that you know how to customize your very first Gunpla, I welcome you to join our widespread community! Remember, there are many creative ways to present a well-made Gunpla, different techniques, and unique style preferences. But it is the people who keep the “culture” of Gunpla alive.



The picture is a 1:1 RX78-2 Gundam fully movable statue in Yokohama, Japan.

How are dimensional systems are presented in Edwin Abbotts novel, Flatland

Written by Dakyung (Olivia) Hwang Y9

Designed by Jin Ho Seo Y12

Every society is propped up by its own systems — whether good or bad, it is required for a community to function in order “*as parts of a mechanism or an interconnecting network.*” (Oxford Languages).

However, as systems tend to generalize the individuals of a society into a couple of laws, public outrage and controversy are bound to spark. Throughout human history, we have cycled through numerous diverse social systems, including the major social movements during the Victorian era (19th century). Though barely recognised at the time, Edwin Abbott’s novel, *Flatland* (1884), explores Victorian culture, society and its norms through the narration of a two-dimensional inhabitant simply referred to as a Square. The novella was both an introduction to the theories of higher dimensions beyond 3D and a satire of Victorian society, simplifying big concepts onto a flattened surface to address the issues concisely.

Flatland is inhabited by **geometric shapes**, where men have innate **polygonal characteristics** and women are distinguished as **line segments**. The narrator is a **Square**, directing us through his journey across **multiple dimensions and describing the systems of the two-dimensional world**.

Regarding the public stereotypes and mannerisms, the social system in *Flatland* **resembles that of the Victorian era**.

One of the most difficult things to do during the Victorian era was to **present new scientific or philosophical revelations** without being perceived as a lunatic. During the era, a lack of scientific knowledge and understanding was ever-present, resulting in the development of its opposing brother, **religion**. It was only nearing the end of the era when the scientific developments were publicly approved of. To reach this reborn diversity and acceptance, **however**, countless social movements had to be built against the people's prison of stereotypes.

The Industrial Revolution, **for example**, was as much a mental change as a physical one. With religion driven by conviction, this confined Victorian environment was the source of the many controversies against philosophers and scientists that dared to challenge the beliefs of a religion. **For instance**, *Galileo Galilei* was **banished** by the Roman Catholic Church **for simply defending the opinion that the Earth orbits the sun, not the other way around**.

The **Square** also faces similar difficulties like **alienation** from the **public and liability with taxes as he questions the big philosophical question of the two-dimensional world** — “*where does light come from?*” Whether it be the two-dimensional world or ours, the **big question always seems to be the origin of all matter and the arrangement of our world**, especially challenged during the Victorian era.

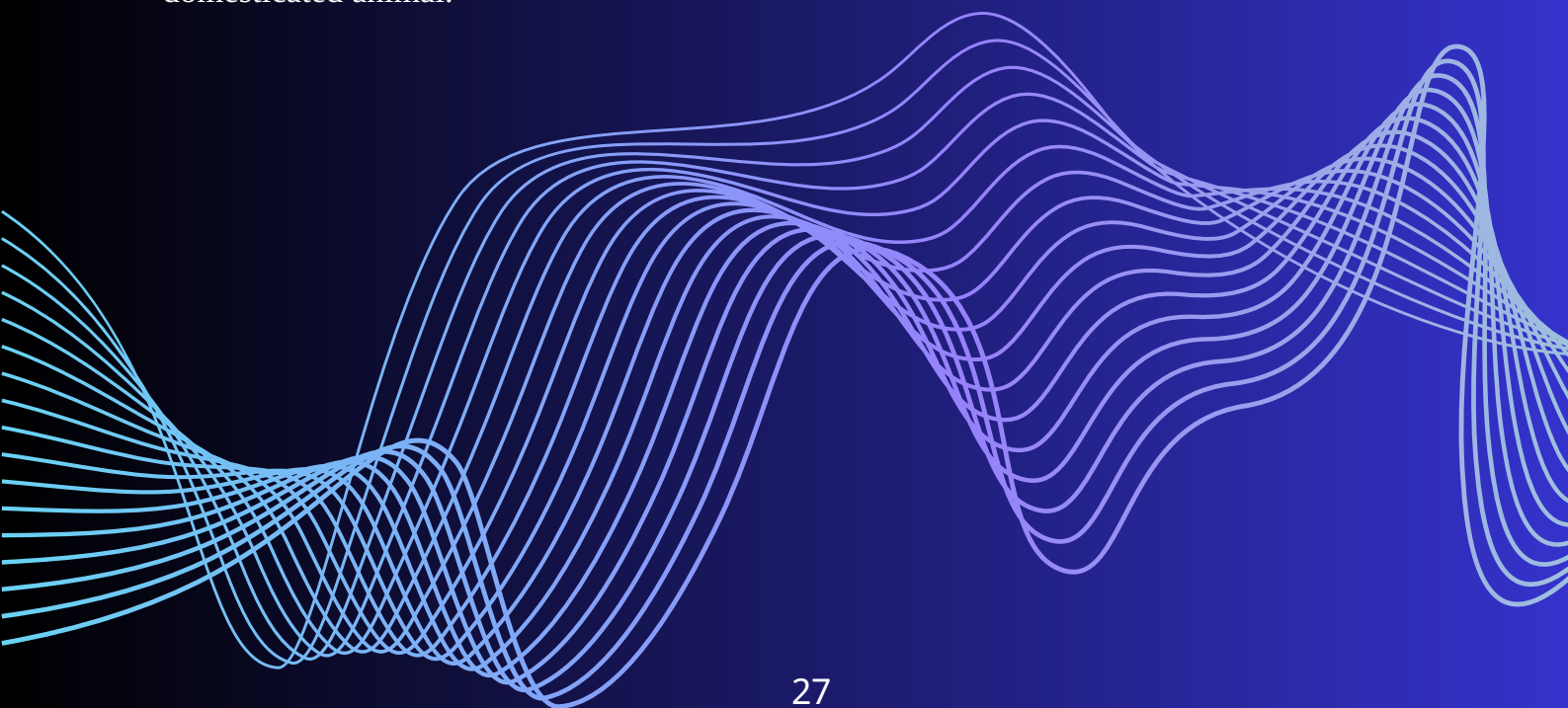
Social systems in Flatland

Science and philosophy aside, **the Victorian society's differentiation of class** in an old-fashioned hierarchy sparked even more controversy, compelling Edwin Abbott to write the satire novella. Through Flatland's simple shapes and lines, the author illustrates the **delicate structure of the social classes**. Starting at the very bottom of the hierarchy, there are the **lowest classes** of workmen and soldiers represented as **isosceles triangles**. Above that is the **middle class** of equilateral triangles, followed by the professional men and gentlemen of **squares and pentagons** like the narrator himself. **Ranking higher** than the two is the **hexagons** that claim the **nobility title**. And last but not least, overseeing all stands the priestly order also known as the **circle**. Despite the rigid pyramid, **Flatland's Law of Nature** states that *"a male child shall have one more side than his father, so that each generation shall rise one step in the scale of development and nobility."* However, even the Law of Nature discriminates against the lower class of the workmen and soldiers, who are hardly treated like living beings due to their uneven sides. **Those that are isosceles tend to remain isosceles.**

Link Flatland to real life

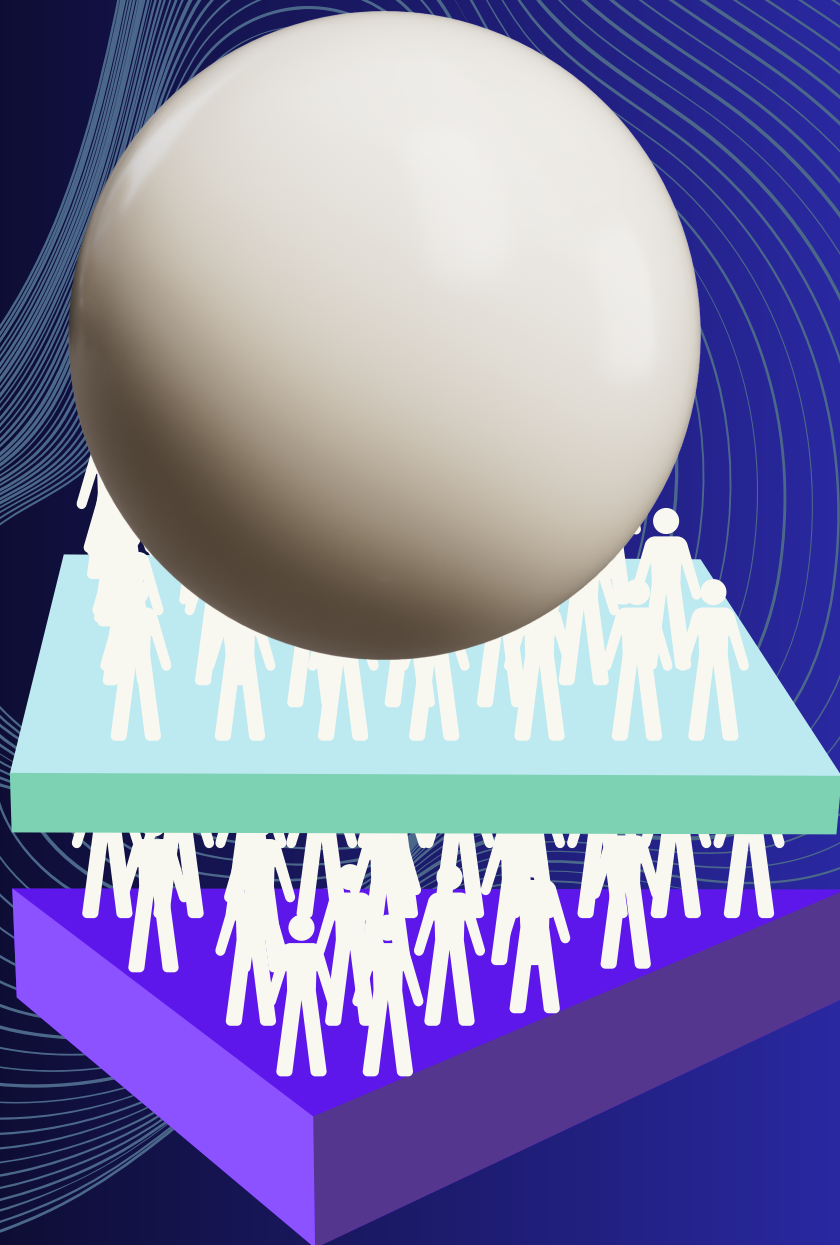
The Victorian Era similarly included the **Upper class**, **Middle class**, and **Lower class**, where the Lower class had to perform manual labor for the wealthier. Which social class you belonged to **depended heavily on the family you were born into**, and social class mobility was not common. This restricting lack of opportunities is **depicted through the isosceles**, with which the author ridicules the society's system solely built around the convenience of the Upper class. The less fortunate had to submit to their higher class as they had absolute political and economic control. Victorian society's systems also included their **strict behavioral expectations** in which they were to **follow a moral code** and **never question those above them in the social hierarchy**. These expectations made it easier for discriminations against slight oppositions, as for the Square's fear of alienation with his questions towards society. The author criticizes the oppression of these systems through the emphasis on the **equal sides of the geometric shapes** in Flatland. The evenness of the sides represents the proper **moral code expectations**, where 'even' is a respected quality. On the other hand, the **'deformities'** of an Isosceles is **unfixable** and Victorian society does not provide opportunities for them to escape **discrimination**. This is a critic of society's preference of supporting **equality instead of equity**, where equalising opportunities hide the lack of equal outcome.

Deeper down the social hierarchy, where there is a lack of fair opportunities in addition to more targeting laws repressing their freedom, stand the Women. Throughout history, women were often **considered inferior to men** simply because of their difference in behaviour and capabilities. In Flatland, these features are characterised by line segments – estranged and considered dangerous. For the two-dimensional Flatlanders, **a woman is a needle** on a table at eye level. From the side, they appear a line, but from the endways, they are nothing but a sharp, penetrating point. As a result of these **unpredictable and destructive capabilities**, these creatures are forced by death penalties to restrict their movements and public outings. While Isosceles still had extremely slim chances of ascending the social hierarchy, **a woman was born a woman and stayed a woman forever**. Any society, it seems, set sharp distinctions between men and women's rights, especially in the Victorian society. Gender norms and expectations placed men above women: Victorians believed that a woman's purpose in life was to be kept within a household, marry, have children, and take care of their home, while men oversaw economics and business. As the narration is by a professional man, his judgement and viewpoints give us a satirical insight on how women were seen. The Square saw that "they shall have no memory to recall, and no forethought to anticipate, the miseries and humiliations [...] are at once a necessity [...]" This treatment resembles that of a domesticated animal.



CONCLUSION

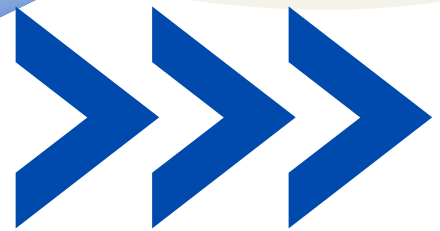
The Square still remains physically lacking in the direction of height in his dimension, but mentally, his knowledge starts growing into multiple dimensions. The Flatlander's analogy of the complex social systems of the Victorian era breaks down the concepts into the very foundations of a general 'system'. With mere shapes, the author is able to criticize the blueprint of the social hierarchy and expectations. Countless revolutions took place through literature and creative artworks around the controversy of gender, race, and political power. It was novellas like these that helped the society grow out of its fixed, geometric mold that the author was so criticising of.



DIVERSITY IN EDUCATION

Written by Geonhee Cho Y13

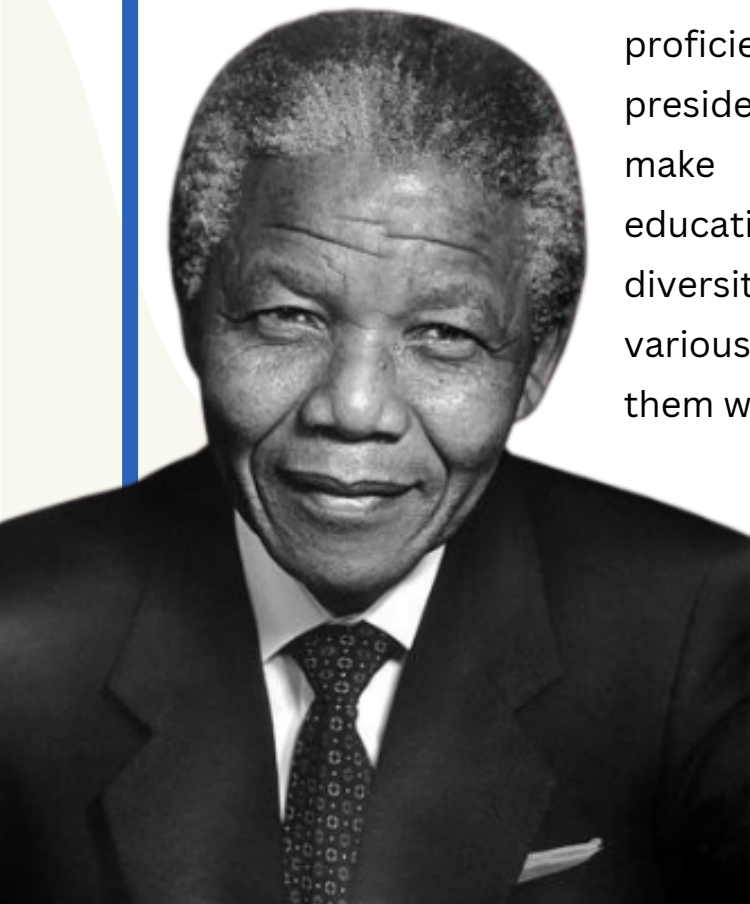
Designed by Sua Hyun Y7 | Hyerin Yun Y13



These days, globalization throughout the world has progressed a lot. In this tendency, the idea that students should be exposed to various educational circumstances for them to prepare globalization and to be potential person that 21st century really needs is drawing attention. For example, Nelson Mandela, the former president of South Africa, emphasized that the driving force of a country's development is to

cultivate many potential students who are proficient in world affair. Throughout his presidency, he proposed a lot of projects to make young students learn in various educational environment. He illustrated diversity in education can expose students to various cultural and social groups and equip them with knowledge to aid their communities,

while the country is developing. As I also believe that diversity in education is important, I will analyse advantages of it more.





Diversity in education offers a myriad of advantages that extend beyond the classroom. First of all, exposure to a rich tapestry of cultures fosters a sense of connection among students, promoting not only camaraderie but also the development of refined learning abilities. Engaging with peers from diverse racial and cultural backgrounds cultivates empathy, not only towards different cultures but also towards oneself and others. Moreover, collaborative learning experiences with individuals from varied backgrounds contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of subject matter. This exposure equips students with the skills to harness their unique strengths and perspectives, preparing them for success in a multitude of work environments in the future. Embracing diversity in education thus not only enhances the academic journey but also equips students with invaluable life skills for navigating an increasingly globalized world.



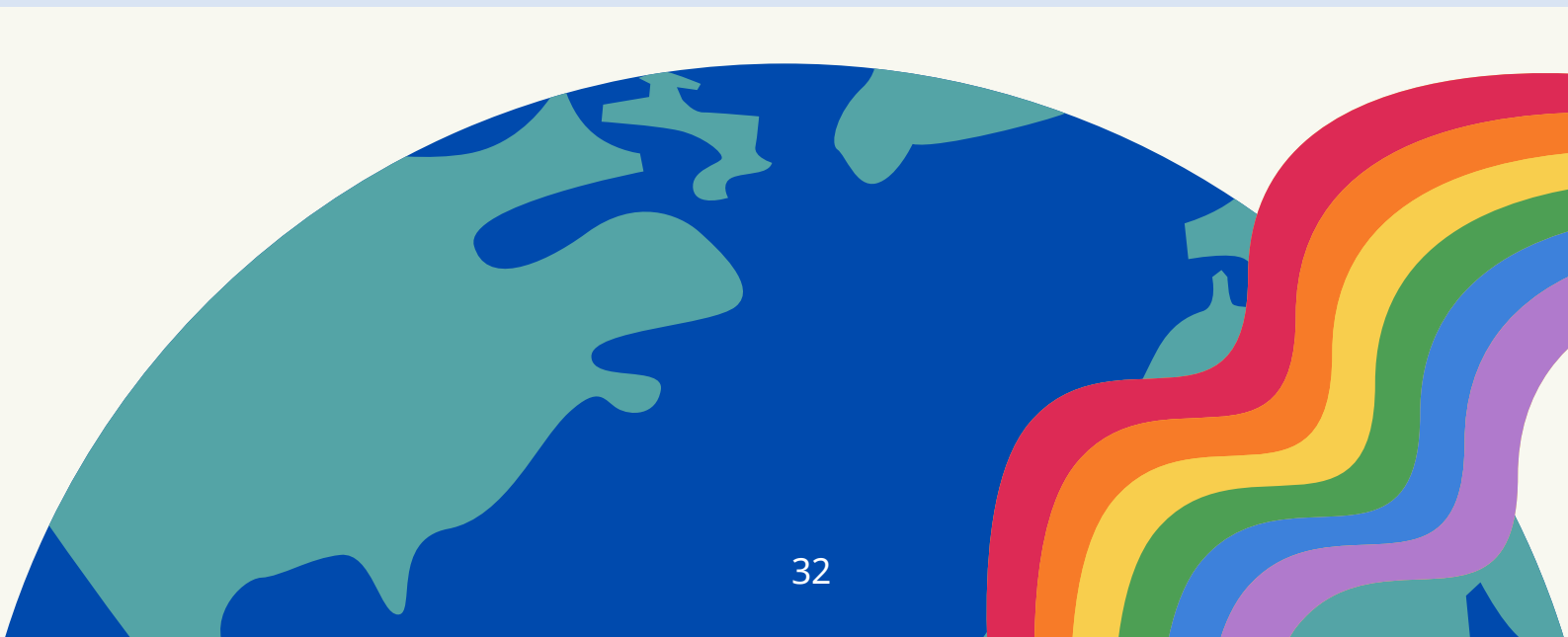
Secondly, the presence of diversity in education plays a pivotal role in fostering open-mindedness among students. Exposure to a spectrum of opinions, ideas, and cultural backgrounds stimulates a broadening of perspectives. This exposure encourages students to be receptive to new concepts and enhances their understanding of specific topics by considering various viewpoints. Furthermore, this openness to diverse perspectives not only enriches the learning environment but also equips students with the crucial skill of critical thinking. It empowers them to navigate the complexities of the world, appreciating the nuances that come with different cultural, social, and intellectual viewpoints. In essence, diversity in education not only encourages open-mindedness but also cultivates a mindset that actively seeks out and values diverse perspectives.

Lastly, students who learn about other cultures during their education will be more likely to adapt to other cultures in the future than those who have not experienced much diversity. This allows them to interact with a wider range of social groups and feel more confident in their interactions with others as well as themselves. With globalization, it is becoming more important to be able to work with people of various cultures and social groups. If students are exposed to diversity and learn cultural awareness in the classroom, it will make them better treated when they have jobs later.





In conclusion, diversity in education provides students with countless benefits of enriching learning experiences and many opportunities in the future. As a result, students will contribute to creating an inclusive and tolerant society with expanded cultural understanding. Also, schools composed of students from various cultures promote critical thinking and problem solving by exposing students to various perspectives and thoughts. Eventually, students will be prepared for a globalized world where communication and cooperation are essential skills. Therefore, diversity in education should be introduced as soon as possible.



DECODING SOCIAL CONTRACT THEORY: IS IT TRULY A CONTRACT?

Written by Bui Gia Khanh Pham Y11

Designed by Phuong Bao Ngan Nguyen Y12

Political philosophy has always placed individuals at the centre of its inquiry and exploration into the role and rights of individuals within a society. A fundamental question of **philosophy** concerns the extent of governmental authority over individuals, or, in other words, the scope of individual liberty. This essay will examine Jean-Jack Rousseau's famous Social Contract Theory and discuss the inherent tensions that could redefine the extent to which individuals can exercise their autonomy regarding freedom and diversity.

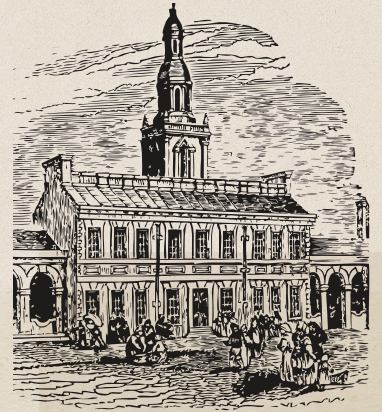


Jean Jacques Rousseau

To first examine the theory, we must define the term “contract”. In its most common usage in the business world, a contract involves two parties, who come into an agreement to conduct the terms within the contract. Similarly, in a political landscape, this contract compels citizens to give up some rights in exchange for the government's provided benefits, such as infrastructure and services



As encapsulated in the definition, the Social Contract Theory proposes that societies come into existence through “an implicit or explicit agreement among individuals”. It acknowledges the diversity of people in society, each with their own needs, values, and interests, which influences governance and social organisation.



John Locke

It all begins with John Locke's concept that individuals inherently hold natural rights to “life, liberty, and property.” However, the initial society is often described as the state of anarchy, marked by constant conflict that makes it challenging to safeguard these natural rights as outlined by Locke. To bring this into more concrete terms, in a society one does not possess absolute freedom, such as the licence to roam into a stranger's house. Nevertheless, this trades off with them at the end of the day possessing a greater scope for freedom and security, for others will not, by the same logic, intrude their house. This is known as

the common good, which is the shared denominator of what people agree on to be an important value, in this case, security and freedom.

To uphold such rights, both Rousseau and Locke propose that people voluntarily come together and consent to relinquish certain rights to a governing authority. In return, this authority must align with the collective will of the citizens and promote the common good. This also means that the sole role of the government, in Locke's view, is merely to protect such rights and not intervene in further matters, which are rather determined by individuals.





To bring back this theory into a more practical landscape, we rarely see individuals truly having a voice in the decisions of the government, simply due to a huge clash of individuals' interests that render it ambiguous as to which interests must be prioritised — order of importance itself already infringes the very foundation of Locke's idea of individuals all being equal. This leads to people being resentful of policies that do not align with their interests, and one might question on which basis is the government justified to impose policies that are not in agreement with the individual. One of the pillars in Rousseau's theory is that individuals have given consent when entering the system, which can appear very assumptious to some, given that they do not explicitly agree to relinquish their rights to the government, such as their right to keep the money earned in place of tax.



Here, we can discuss two types of consent that one often overlooks: tacit consent and hypothetical consent. An example of tacit consent can be demonstrated: by living within the territory governed by a political authority or simply travelling on roads that are provided by the authority, individuals are actively engaging with the services and infrastructure of the state, thereby implicitly consenting the authority that makes these provisions possible.



However, one can still argue that they have no choice but to exist on a sovereignty of which there is already a political authority. This can also be seen as a coercive choice, for it being the only option into which individuals can opt. The second type of consent can address this — a hypothetical consent assumes an idealised scenario

where individuals make rational choices based on their own self-interest. This refers back to how individuals make decisions to enter a society, which are based on their rational choice that they must exist in a system where people would receive in exchange for their independence a better kind of freedom.



To step back and look from a bird-eye view, discussing consent gives a much deeper insight and potential tensions within the seemingly idealised Social Contract Theory. It questions the very foundation of whether individuals are capable of making a non-coercive choice to a system. This is crucial because if individuals do not have autonomy over their consent, it is not justified for them to be subject under a political authority. Even if every single individual can consent to being in such systems, there is no guarantee that their decision and interests can be taken into account, given the challenge in defining the common good. This eventually prescribes a loose framework for the extortion of authority in practice, which raises concern about how, once established, governments remain accountable to the people.







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IMAGES

- Drawing of John Locke: <https://www.tefrikayayinlari.com/john-locke>
- Puppet master: <https://openclipart.org/detail/281267/puppet-master>

Diversity in Theatre Arts

Written by Jiyu (Rachel) Lee Y9 | Designed by Suah Yoon Y12

Diversity in the theater arts is important for inclusivity and empathy. It can create a space where a range of voices and experiences can be celebrated. By embracing ethnic and cultural diversity, religious diversity, ability and disability diversity, and age diversity, the theater becomes a mirror of our diverse world. This article explores the significance of diversity in theater and its transformative impact on artistic expression and audience perception. Through diversity, theater becomes a powerful tool for promoting empathy and creating a fairer society.

ETHNIC AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY

Ethnic and cultural diversity in theater involves representation of different racial and ethnic backgrounds on stage. It aims to traditions, various cultures and promoting understanding and appreciation of different heritages. This can include casting actors from diverse backgrounds, telling stories that highlight the experiences of cultural groups, and incorporating diverse cultural elements such as language, music, and dance into theatrical productions. By embracing ethnic and cultural diversity, theater arts can create opportunities for cross-cultural dialogue, challenge stereotypes, and provide a platform for underrepresented voices.



RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY

Religious diversity in theater is a practice that aims to represent diverse religious beliefs, practices, and perspectives on stage. It aims to challenge stereotypes, promote interfaith understanding, and create opportunities for cross-cultural dialogue. By incorporating religious themes in plays, presenting stories reflecting the experiences of individuals from different religious backgrounds, and involving artists, writers, and directors from diverse religious communities, theater can create a space where different perspectives are respected and given voice. This fosters a deeper appreciation for the diversity of human spirituality and promotes empathy and unity among different religious communities and audiences.



ABILITY AND DISABILITY DIVERSITY

Ability and disability diversity in theater promotes inclusivity for individuals with disabilities, both visible and invisible. It involves promoting accessibility in theater spaces, providing wheelchair-accessible seating, captioning or sign language interpretation for hearing impairments, and creating sensory-friendly performances for sensory sensitivities. It also allows actors and artists with disabilities to showcase their talents, challenging traditional notions of casting and representation. By embracing this diversity, theater arts can break down barriers and celebrate the unique perspectives and talents of individuals with disabilities.



AGE DIVERSITY

Age diversity in theater arts involves various age groups, ranging from children to older adults, creating opportunities for artists and performers of all ages to contribute to the theater community. This approach allows for the exploration of intergenerational relationships, celebration of different life stages, and sharing diverse perspectives on stage. By incorporating actors and performers from different age groups, theater arts can reflect the richness and complexity of human experiences across generations. Age-diverse theater not only challenges age-related stereotypes but also fosters intergenerational collaboration and learning, allowing for the exchange of skills, knowledge, and perspectives between artists of different ages. This promotes a more inclusive and representative theater community and encourages a deeper appreciation for the diverse range of experiences.



Why is **cultural diversity** so important for humans?

Written by Taeyeon Kwun Y11

Designed by Riria Takagi Y12



The concept of cultural diversity emphasizes dynamism above all else, and is not fixed in a coagulated form, but is a concept that accepts destruction and creation and is recognized at the same time.

So, while preserving and managing specific ethnic groups, historical sites, and heritage is considered cultural diversity in the passive sense, cultural diversity in the active sense aims for an open culture by actively accepting newly emerging and created cultures and creating conditions for them to coexist. It is done.

In this context, cultural diversity is not related to the numerical dimension of how many different cultures exist, but to the more fundamental issue of how the cultural rights of the socially disadvantaged and minorities can be guaranteed. Another concept of cultural diversity is that the development of humanity as a cultural being is possible only when the identity of various cultures around the world is continuously guaranteed.

Manifestation of cultural diversity

Cultural diversity refers to the existence of a variety of cultures within a particular society, region, or organization. It encompasses the beliefs, customs, languages, traditions, and values held by individuals or groups from diverse ethnic, religious, linguistic, and social backgrounds.

Cultural diversity recognizes and respects the unique identities and perspectives of various cultural groups, highlighting the richness and complexity of human societies.

Cultural diversity can manifest in many ways, including differences in language, food, clothing, music, art, literature, religious practices, and social customs. It is influenced by historical, geographical, and socio-economic factors, and interactions between diverse cultures over time. Cultural diversity is not limited to national or ethnic boundaries but can also be observed within smaller communities, workplaces, educational institutions, and other social contexts.

Embracing cultural diversity promotes inclusivity, encourages mutual respect, and fosters a sense of belonging for individuals from diverse backgrounds. It recognizes that every culture has unique contributions to make and that interactions between diverse cultures can lead to innovation, creativity, and a broader understanding of the world. Cultural diversity also plays a crucial role in shaping social, political, and economic systems, as well as promoting peace, tolerance, and cooperation among diverse populations.



The fundamental basis of cultural diversity

The fundamental basis of cultural diversity lies in the recognition and acceptance of the following principles:

Firstly, Respect for Differences. Cultural diversity is built upon the principle of respecting and valuing the differences among individuals and cultures. It means recognizing that no culture is superior or inferior to another and that all cultures have inherent value and deserve respect.

Secondly, Equality and Inclusivity. Cultural diversity promotes the idea that all individuals, regardless of their cultural background, should be treated with fairness, equality, and dignity. It emphasizes the inclusion of diverse voices, perspectives, and contributions in all aspects of society, including social, economic, and political spheres.

Third, Openness to Learning and Understanding. Cultural diversity encourages an open-minded and curious approach towards understanding diverse cultures. It involves actively seeking knowledge about other cultures, their traditions, customs, and beliefs. This openness fosters empathy, tolerance, and the ability to view the world from multiple perspectives.



Diversity



Fourth, Dialogue and Communication. Cultural diversity emphasizes the importance of engaging in respectful dialogue and communication between people from diverse cultures. Meaningful interactions and exchanges of ideas promote mutual understanding, challenge stereotypes, and build bridges between cultures.

Fifth, Preservation and Promotion of Cultural Heritage. Cultural diversity recognizes the significance of preserving and promoting the cultural heritage of all communities. It involves safeguarding cultural practices, languages, traditions, and knowledge, ensuring their continuity for future generations.

Sixth, Collaboration and Cooperation. Cultural diversity emphasizes the value of collaboration and cooperation among individuals and communities from diverse backgrounds. By working together, sharing experiences, and leveraging the strengths of diverse cultures, societies can address familiar challenges, promote mutual development, and foster social cohesion.

These fundamental principles provide the basis for embracing and celebrating cultural diversity. They guide individuals, communities, and institutions in promoting inclusivity, equality, and understanding among diverse cultural groups. By upholding these principles, societies can create environments that value and appreciate the richness of cultural diversity and harness its potential for positive social, economic, and intellectual growth.

In a world that is increasingly interconnected and diverse, cultural diversity has emerged as a powerful force shaping our societies. It is not merely a matter of tolerance or political correctness; cultural diversity is fundamentally important for humanity. It enriches our perspectives, promotes inclusivity, drives innovation, and fosters social harmony.

Cultural diversity exposes us to a tapestry of beliefs, customs, and traditions, opening our minds to new ways of thinking and challenging our own assumptions. It encourages us to appreciate the beauty and complexity of human existence, as diverse cultures offer unique insights into the human experience. By embracing cultural diversity, we expand our intellectual horizons and cultivate empathy and understanding for others.



Moreover, cultural diversity is a catalyst for innovation. When individuals from diverse backgrounds come together, their varied perspectives and experiences spark creativity and drive problem-solving. It is through the blending of different ideas, traditions, and approaches that we find novel solutions to complex challenges. Inclusive workplaces and communities that value cultural diversity become hubs of innovation, fostering economic growth and societal progress.

Cultural diversity also plays a crucial role in fostering social cohesion and harmony. By respecting and celebrating cultural differences, we create an environment where individuals feel valued and included, reducing social divisions and conflicts. Embracing cultural diversity promotes mutual respect, cooperation, and dialogue, paving the way for peaceful coexistence and stronger communities.

As we navigate an increasingly globalized world, cultural diversity becomes even more important. It enables us to better understand and navigate different cultures, facilitating international cooperation and collaboration. By recognizing the value of cultural diversity, we can build bridges between nations, promote mutual understanding, and work towards a more harmonious and interconnected world.

In conclusion, cultural diversity is not a luxury but a necessity for humanity. It is a wellspring of creativity, a source of enrichment, and a pathway to social cohesion. By embracing cultural diversity, we honor the richness and beauty of human existence, foster innovation, and forge a more inclusive and peaceful future. Let us celebrate and nurture cultural diversity, for it is at the heart of our shared humanity.



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The background is a vibrant, abstract collage. It features a variety of organic, flowing shapes in shades of red, orange, yellow, green, and blue. A faint, light blue grid is visible in the lower-left quadrant. In the upper-left corner, there is a small, stylized molecular structure with blue spheres and connecting lines. The overall composition is dynamic and visually rich.

What's
Your
System?