



U.S. Midterm Elections

By: Derek Lee

With United States President Joe Biden almost coming to the halfway point of his 4-year presidential term, the midterm election is an important event to bear in mind. This election will take place on Tuesday, November 8th, 2022; eligible voters from across the country can vote for senators for the Senate and representatives for the House of Representatives. All citizens residing in their voting state are eligible to vote for a senator while only citizens of a certain region within each state are eligible to vote for a representative. This year, 35 senate seats are up for elections as senators serve 6-year terms. While in the House of Representatives, all 435 House positions are up for reelection, as representatives only hold onto their role for 2 years.

In two past midterm elections (2010, 2018) the president's party lost control of the House of Representatives, which may indicate that the Democrats will not fare well in this midterm election. However, as stated by CBS, the current status of the elections is neck-and-neck; "In the Senate, Republicans need a net gain of

just one seat to flip control of the evenly divided chamber. CBS News classifies 10 of the 35 races as battleground contests – 4 are considered "tossups" (Arizona, Georgia, Nevada and Wisconsin); 3 are leaning in favor of the Republican candidate (Florida, North Carolina, and Ohio); and 3 are leaning toward the Democrat (Colorado, Pennsylvania and New Hampshire)," (O'Keefe) showing the current tight battle between the two parties.

Many issues will also be on the ballot during the midterm elections. As of now, 6 of the 50 states have ballot initiatives regarding abortions, including California, Kansas, Kentucky,

As of now, with Republicans seeing the uproar initiated by the citizens, candidates have shown evidence of altering their views for a better chance at getting elected.

Michigan, Montana, and Vermont. These initiatives show progressive concern about this topic as it is the greatest number of states voting upon abortion-related ballots in a year in United States election history. As of now, with Republicans seeing

the uproar initiated by the citizens, candidates have shown evidence of altering their views for a better chance at getting elected. There have been "reports from Republicans scrubbing their anti-abortion stances from their websites or seeking to moderate their positions.

In Arizona, Blake Masters, the Trump-supported Republican Senate nominee overhauled his website and tried to paint himself as a moderate on abortion, saying "I support a ban on very late-term and partial-birth abortion... and most Americans agree with that." (Kamrach and Shapiro) This shows the steps that politicians are willing to take just to get elected. Initiatives for

gun control, the Russian invasion of Ukraine, and Joe Biden's student loan forgiveness plan are all issues that voters should be prepared to vote on during the midterm elections.

Two special elections will also be held during the midterm elections. These two elections are to replace the senators that have retired or plan on retiring from the 117th Congress (current). The two members are current Vice President Kamala Harris and incumbent Joe Inhofe. (Ballotpedia) Similarly, state elections for various state-level positions will also be conducted on November 8th.

The most important of them will be the state governor role, of which 36 of the 50 states will host a reelection. Other state elections include the attorney general, and secretary of state, and state treasurer role, which will all be reelected in November.

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NEWS

BIDEN'S PROMISE FULFILLED: Student Loan Debt Relief

By: Audrey Wang

When college tuition fees go up, student loan debts increase as well. The prices of four-year private and public colleges have increased by 1200% since 1980 (see graph below). As working families in the US continue to face the onslaught of economic challenges from the COVID-19 pandemic, President Biden hopes to provide student loan relief to working families. During Biden's 2020 presidential campaign, US citizens in need were promised \$10,000 in student loan forgiveness. Not only has President Biden finally fulfilled this promise, but he has also gone above and beyond to provide student loan relief that extends up to \$20,000 per borrower.

On August 24th, 2022, Biden announced that he will cancel up to \$20,000 of student debt loans for students from low-middle income families. A firm advocate for postsecondary education, Biden said that "12 years of universal education is not enough," (CNN). In the coming years, he hopes that the student loan debt relief plan can help Americans to regain their footing financially and continue helping families that are struggling to afford college tuition. According to the White House Fact Sheet, the Biden-Harris Administration and the Department of Education will do the following three things to help students suffering from financial debt:

1. Continue extending the student loan repayment pause until December 31st of 2022. The student loan repayment program, which includes the deferment of student loan debts and 0% interest. It has already been extended multiple times by Former President Donald Trump and President Biden.
2. Provide student loan debt relief for low-middle income students.
3. Improve the student loan system by cutting monthly undergraduate loans in half, allowing borrowers who have previously worked in the military or non-profit organizations to receive forgiveness, and reduce college tuition fees to make sure colleges don't increase their prices.

Who qualifies for student loan relief?

To apply for student loan relief, the borrower's household must make less than \$250,000 per year or have an income of less than \$125,000 per year. Borrowers from this category are eligible for student loan forgiveness of up to \$10,000. The government will allow forgiveness up to \$20,000

in student loans for students who attended college on Pell Grants, which is another system of financial aid that is provided for undergraduate students in need. For example, if a student has \$12,000 left in debt, the government will cover the remaining \$12,000. The remaining \$8,000 will stay with the government. In addition, student loan relief is only available for those with federal student loans, not private student loans. However, the forgiveness plan will still be able to relieve student loan debts of up to 43 million students and relieve the full debt of 20 million students, which includes borrowers of all ages and ethnicities. The reduction of student loan debts for black borrowers can help shrink the racial wealth gap and further promote racial equality within the educational system. There will not be a perfect solution for everyone. President Biden's decision to provide student loan debt relief for certain families at a certain amount will certainly receive backlash. However, statistics show that many Americans will benefit from student loan debt relief and help improve the country's economy.



The Biden Administration's Student Loan Debt Plan

FORGIVING DEBT

\$20,000 if you went to college on Pell Grants

\$10,000 if you didn't receive Pell Grants

Forgiveness only applies to those earning less than \$125,000

Student loan pause extended one final time through Dec 31, 2022

PAYMENT BASED ON INCOME

If you have undergraduate loans, you can cap repayment at 5% of your monthly income

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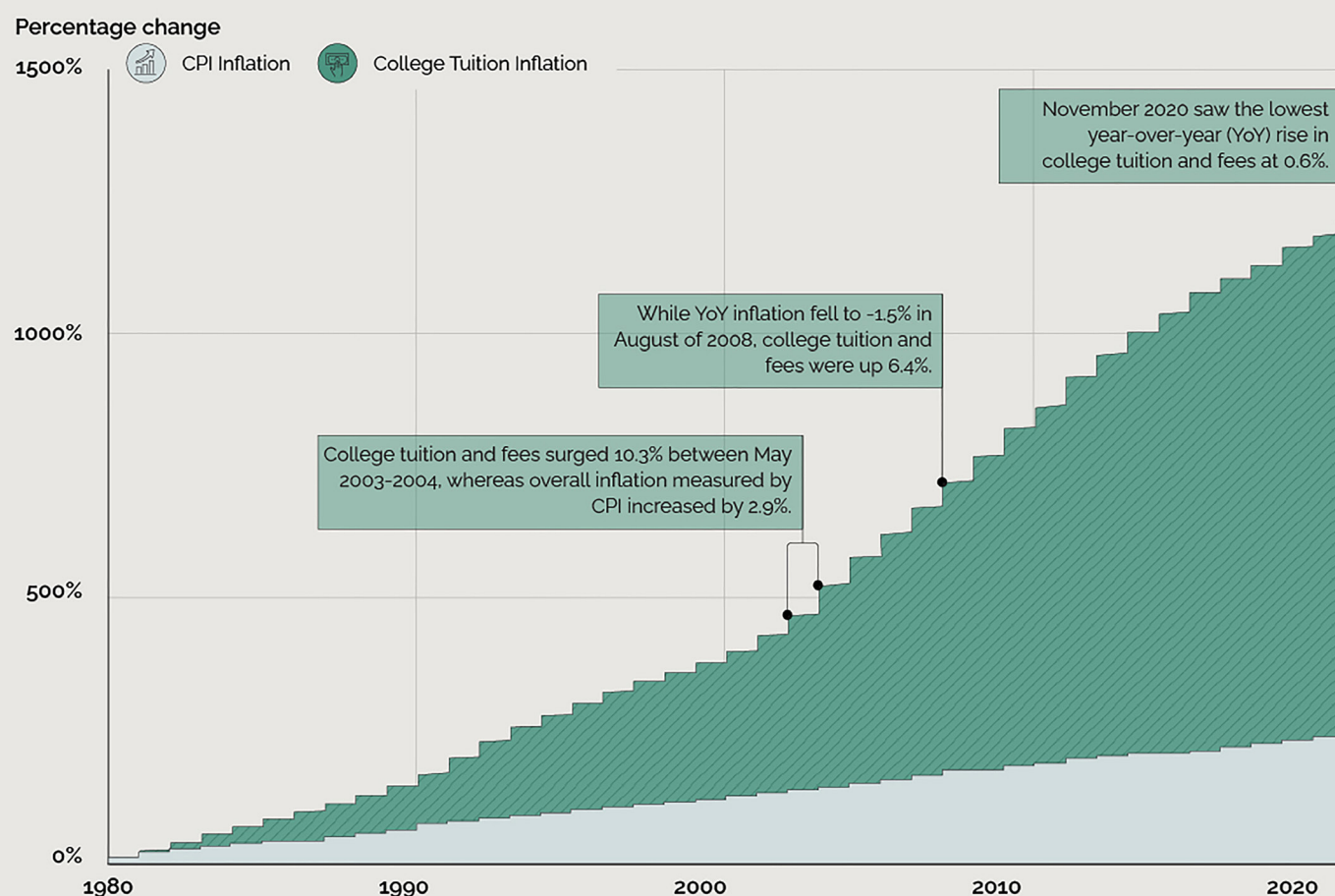
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The Rising Cost of College in the U.S.

The costs of obtaining a college education in the U.S. have ballooned relative to overall inflation. Average college tuition and fees have increased by **1200%** since 1980, while inflation is up **236%**.



Based on seasonally adjusted CPI data. Index values based on 1982-84 = 100.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics - Consumer Price Index
U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics - Consumer Price Index for College Tuition & Fees



What Really Is Vida?

By: Hope Yang

From September 9-11, students and teachers from the three Morrison campuses gathered at MAC to attend the 6th Vida Nueva. Since its conception, the confidentiality surrounding Vida has led to much speculation. Is it a cult? A cross-campus socializing event? An extended edition of Chapel? Maybe you've heard it pitched as a vaguely good experience, but what really is Vida? And should you go?

The Basics: Vida Nueva

In short, Vida Nueva is a three day spiritual retreat. The term

with one another and Christ. This also relates to the other aspect of Vida that makes it different from your everyday retreat: amigos aren't shown the time of day. For this Vida, activities began around 3:30 PM on Friday and ended around 2:00 PM on Sunday, but apart from that, no other knowledge of time was provided. At Vida, clocks are covered and time-keeping devices are prohibited. Workers notify amigos as to when one event ends and another begins. Exceptions can be made for people who aren't comfortable with such an arrangement.

meet people from different campuses gave me a lot of food for thought, ultimately encouraging me to take a more active role in engaging with God.

After the Vida experience, amigos are able to return as workers. During this time's Vida, Mikayla served as Rectora, one of the student leaders for the event. She reflects that though she found the experience "difficult" due to little sleep and greater responsibility, it still proved "really rewarding." Serving on the Worship Team, Celine reflects that students were able to "come together as one" and "bare their vulnerability to [Jesus]." It was especially heartfelt for her to see students from all

campuses putting their arms on each other's shoulders in worship, a scene that she found both "breathtaking and emotional." And for those of you critical of Vida, Ryan reflects that going into Vida definitely felt like "[entering] a cult" at first. But, even if you have similar qualms, he still encourages you to go. Once you experience it, you'll be able to make your own judgment. Ultimately, Ryan believes that "you won't regret it."

Should you go?

So, finally, should you go to Vida? Everyone has different reasons. For Celine, it was curiosity regarding what made students "willing to skip school and...vacation" for such an event. For some, it might be to make new friends. Personally, I went to Vida in part to find out about the surprises and in part to confirm the spiritual direction I wanted to take. I believe that though not all questions you bring with you to Vida will be answered, it's a good place to sort through your thoughts, gain more insight, connect with others, and enjoy the process. For those of you who've already heard a lot about Vida from others, Mikayla states that Vida is nevertheless a "wild experience." She believes that you'll best be able to understand it once you personally encounter it.

Even as a worker, students are able to gain a lot. "I will definitely go back again," Celine says, "and again, and again, and again." So maybe it's for curiosity, for God, for friends, or even just to try something new. Whatever the reason for going, Vida is a valuable experience that you will get something out of.



"Vida Nueva" means "New Life" in Spanish. A lot of Vida vocabulary is also derived from the language, with newcomers known as "amigos" and such. In accordance with the theme of "New Life," the tone and content of Vida loosely follows the death and resurrection of Christ and how we engage with it, whether as Christians or as non-Christians. So what even happens at Vida? Well, all amigos are split into table groups and go through various activities and lessons related to the theme of New Life. Table groups are given the opportunity to discuss and share with each other, and all come together to worship. Meals are taken at the cafeteria, plenty of snacks are provided, and amigos dorm together. Both in table groups, dining, and dorms, amigos from different campuses are assigned together.

Now, you've probably heard about the secrecy surrounding Vida activities. This is because many of the events at Vida are surprises, and we've agreed not to spoil them. A slogan you might hear at Vida is, "Don't anticipate, participate." By taking out rigid structures and expectations, Vida seeks to encourage amigos to engage

Reflections

Each individual experience at Vida varies, whether as an amigo or a returning worker. According to MAK junior Celine Kung, as an amigo, the community at Vida enabled her to strengthen her relationship with God. When asked about her first experience, she states, "It changed my life, perhaps forever." Similarly, Mikayla Tam, a senior at MAK, reflects that the "encouraging and loving" community at Vida felt like a safe space since her freshman year as an amigo. But Vida is more than the community. MAK junior Ryan Tsai says that beyond making friends, he "learned a ton about Jesus."

Personally, as an amigo attending Vida for the first time, I definitely echo similar sentiments. Oftentimes I find it difficult to open up about my views on religion and where I'm at spiritually. For me, though Vida can appear a little silly at times, it is ultimately a well-thought and executed event that enabled me to have that type of discussion and to gain further insight on what Christianity might mean for me. Moreover, being able to hear various perspectives and

The Rise of Clubs

By: Joongi Kim

High schoolers do clubs after school on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Currently in MAK's high school, there are 31 clubs. These clubs vary in experience and give a variety of fun. Last year, the high school had 24 clubs. Compared to last year, the number of clubs has increased! This shows the activeness of our students! Way to go, Sharks!

What helps keep a club going? What is so good about a club or interesting about a club that keeps it going? Luby Chiu, a leader and co-leader of various clubs, says, "I think it's ultimately down to 2 things.

1. Having a club leader who takes initiative to find fun opportunities for the club.
2. Having enough people in the club to be able to pull off what the club wants to do. Making sure the leadership transitions smoothly when the club leader graduates/leaves are also very important."

Having many clubs can have positives and negatives. Margret Tsai, leader of the Social Justice Club and Photography Club, says, "This year's a pretty interesting [club] year. ... Some clubs meet more regularly whilst some meet exclusively just for organizing events... [One] negative of having so many clubs this year is that people are constantly busy! Flex Periods are often taken up by meetings and as a club leader myself, many High Schoolers have told me that it's hard to attend meetings because there are timing/scheduling issues. That being said, a positive of having so many clubs is that there are a lot of opportunities for students to be leaders. It's also a great opportunity for students of different grades to hang out and bond over their common interests." This year in highschool, there are a lot of clubs. Ms. Brown, a club sponsor and high school teacher, would describe this year as "the Rise of Clubs."

China is Tightening its Grip on Hong Kong; Not Everyone is Happy

By Claire Yang and Jasper Lai

When Hong Kong was handed over to China back in 1997, Beijing promised the former British colony it would retain its capitalist system and granted executive, legislative, and judicial powers for the next 50 years until 2047. However, 25 years after the handover, many questioned Beijing's promise after they attempted to pass the extradition bill in 2019 and implement the National Security Law in 2020 (BBC).

In April 2019, the Hong Kong government introduced the extradition bill that allowed fugitives extradited to mainland China (BBC). This means anyone in Hong Kong could be arrested and tried in the mainland without being guaranteed a fair trial.

Alarmed by China's poor record on human rights, the bill immediately triggered anger and opposition among the citizens of Hong Kong. Although authorities claimed this bill only serves to fill legal loopholes, many feared it would undermine Hong Kong's judiciary independence and increase China's influence in the city. In June 2019, millions marched to the streets to protest the bill. After weeks of protest, Chief Executive Carrie Lam suspended the bill and eventually completely withdrew it in September (BBC).

Despite the withdrawn bill, protests escalated; protesters often clashed violently with police. By the end of 2019, protests took place all over Hong Kong and affected most in the city – schools were sometimes suspended, hundreds of flights canceled, and there were blockades on major roads (BBC). Many were also concerned about police's excessive use of force when handling protests as they often brutally suppressed protesters with tear gas and pepper spray. Over 10,000 arrests happened throughout the protests, while more than 2,800 were charged (SCMP).

All protests eventually ended when China implemented the National Security Law (NSL) in July 2020, where all anti-government protests were virtually banned (Reuters). With the enforcement of NSL and failing to achieve most of the goals in the protests, many lost hope in Hong Kong and decided to leave the city.

More than 113,000 residents left Hong Kong in the past



12 months, around a 1.6% drop in population (SCMP). The United Kingdom became the most popular destination, as holders of the British National (Overseas) passport, the passport for people born in Hong Kong before 1997, are allowed to settle and are eligible for permanent citizenship in the future (BBC).

Especially in the younger generation, many people in Hong Kong believe they are different from their peers in mainland China because

they grew up in a completely different system. Hong Kong is still part of China despite its huge social and cultural difference, but most residents would not consider themselves Chinese. According to a survey by the University of Hong Kong, only 10.8% of people in Hong Kong identify as "Chinese," while 52.9% identify as "Hong Konger" (University of Hong Kong).

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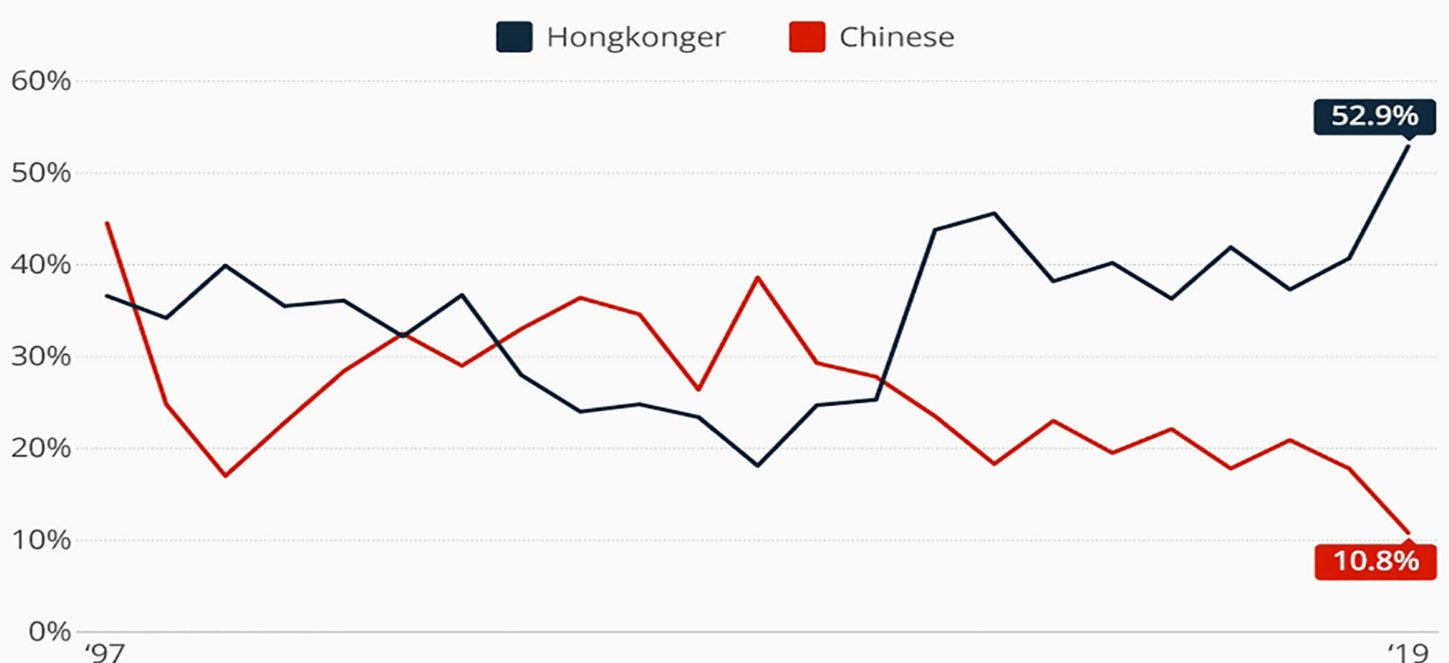
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Fewer People In Hong Kong Tend To Identify As Chinese

"Would you identify yourself as a Hongkonger or Chinese?"*



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@StatistaCharts

n=1,000+ Hong Kong residents
* Respondents also had other identity choices in the poll.
Source: Hong Kong University

statista



"I am taking care of these kids and trained them to be missionaries in their schools."- Mark Naw Naw Yet

Myanmar's Prayers

By: Candace Brown

I've wrestled with how to talk about Mark and my students in Myanmar for some time. It felt like I would be attention-seeking if I talked about them because of how we met. I realize now that I cannot hold their needs for prayer to myself; I need to tell their story, even only the pieces that they have shared with me.

My dad works for a mission group called First Priority Global. It's FPG's mission to equip young people to be the church rather than waiting for them to become adults before giving them resources. First Priority began with student-led clubs to middle and high school students in the US and is now on every continent (other than Antarctica) (First Priority). My dad doesn't know I'm writing this article. During one of our facetime sessions last year, he asked me if I would be willing to teach English to a group in Myanmar once a week. I agreed to it and was connected to Mark Naw Yaw Yet.

Mark and I have been joint-teaching an English class to students from elementary to college once a week since the spring. We usually start with questions for students to answer one by one after introductions such as "What is your favorite food?" and "What made you smile today?" I realized early on that talk of games or music would be limited as the students do not have access to expensive game equipment or the latest music. It is sometimes difficult to keep our weekly appointment as the internet in Myanmar, coupled with regular power outages, makes Zoom more challenging (even this paragraph reeks of my privilege but I feel I must give context). Mark has begun talking more openly about the situation in Myanmar in recent weeks. Mark, a fluent Burmese and English speaker, teaches his dozens of students out of a facility built by First Priority. The facility was intended

to be a meeting place for students away from the school, but it has truly become a safe haven for them ever since the Myanmar military coup d'état in February 2021.

"Since the military coup in February, many people don't have jobs or food. Many young people are running away from home to China, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, even Iraq. My niece just ran to Iraq to be a housemaid," Mark explained.

The bloodshed from the military coup "caused several thousand refugees to flee into [neighboring] countries and displaced over 200,000 people within Myanmar, adding to 370,000 existing [internally displaced people] in urgent need of humanitarian assistance," a report from the UN's Refugee Agency reads. Mark adds, "You know that Russian money is good here now because of [the general]. They are very close with Russia." Myanmar has been in talks with Russia to barter using rubles "and will begin using Russian currency to lessen its dependence on the US dollar" (Laotian Times). Mark says that the military government, or junta, is angry with Facebook. "When they post, Facebook takes it down, so they are threatening to start their own social media. I think this is why the internet has gotten slower and slower for us." The junta "imposed rolling nationwide internet blackouts and blocked access to social media and messaging platforms," according to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in the United Nations.

General Min Aung Hlaing heads the Myanmar military called "Tatmadaw" and is responsible for the coup in February 2021 (AP News). Mark describes him as a "very short guy but crazy. He killed many children, young people, innocent people. His army bombed a school here and many children died."

According to a September 23rd New York Times article, the recent strike on a schoolhouse that killed 11 children "hardened [Malaysian] resentment against the military and renewed their anguish at the world's failure to intervene." "Satan is always trying to scalp us," Mark says.

Thankfully, Mark feels that his students are pretty safe. "Even though the situation is bad here, we are safe and can study, so we are happy. We are not doing any political things so we are okay. We are proud to be citizens of this country. We praise God for the opportunity. These young girls and boys are crazy for the Gospel." Mark and the students are in the Yangon division, one of the 7 divisions in Myanmar [Ayeyarwady (Irrawaddy), Magway (Magwe), Mandalay, Bago (Pegu), Sagaing, Taninthary (Tenasserim), and Yangon] together with 7 states [Chin, Kachin, Kayin (Karen), Kayah, Mon, Rakhine (Arakan), and Shan] (Britannica). One of the students, a girl named Bantueh, fled from Kayah state to the school, which is in the far north of the country.

According to Mark, the states have mostly tribal groups that are Christian while the divisions are mostly Buddhist communities. He says, of speaking to Buddhists in Myanmar about Jesus, "It's difficult, of course. They are friendly, but when we talk about Christ, they are reluctant." He explains that the Buddhist communities around him oppress the tribal groups. Mark asks for prayer. "We need protection from God. We are tribal people and Christians. Pray God will protect us and that the military will not come to our house." One of their ministries to the neighborhood involves giving food. "Every month, we share food with our community. When we share, we share the Gospel. We want to share the Gospel with more people this year

in our schools and communities. Pray that we will receive wisdom and power from God." Mark mentioned a Christian group from Taiwan that is teaching Burmese young people to speak Chinese. At a certain level, they can get scholarships and grants to come to Taiwan to work.

At the end of our last weekly meeting, Mark asked me for a favorite song of mine. The first song that came to mind was "Heart of Worship"; he pulled up the Youtube video and we promptly sang the song together with the class over Zoom. It was a profound moment of laggy internet running into God. "Our biggest need is prayers. We want to be faithful in sharing the Gospel. Many children lost their lives. Many houses burned. Many churches were torn down. But we don't want to go back. We want to serve God." We haven't met in a few weeks due to power outages.

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"We share some food with our neighbors."- Mark Naw Naw Yet

Tension in the Taiwan Strait

By: Claire Yang

After U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's whirlwind visit to Taiwan on August 3, 2022, the People's Liberation Army (PLA) immediately conducted a multi-day military exercise around Taiwan; after the U.S. senator visited Taiwan again on August 14, the PLA's Eastern Theater announced on August 15 that it would organize a multi-services joint combat patrol and combat drills in the sea and airspace around the island (Kuo). The Communist Party's military exercises around Taiwan have become the "new normal," treating the Taiwan Strait as the "new status quo" and the "new threat" of violating Taiwan by force at any time (Focus).

It has been almost half a century since the U.S. government decided to abandon the government of the Republic of China (ROC) in Taipei and recognize the government of the People's Republic of China (PRC) in Beijing at the height of the Cold War in the 1970s (Focus). During that time, the relationship between the United States and China has been marked by ups and downs and constant friction. Taiwan has always been one of the most important and sensitive core issues. Since the severance of diplomatic relations with Taipei and the establishment of diplomatic relations with Beijing, the highest-ranking political figure to visit Taiwan has been the Speaker of the House of Representatives in Congress (Kuo). In April 1997, the then Speaker of the House, Newt

The PLA is trying to obscure and obliterate the median line and air defense identification zone in the Taiwan Strait.

Gingrich, visited Taiwan. Therefore, the whirlwind visit of U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi to Taiwan on August 3 attracted the attention of the Chinese Communist Party officials (Focus). Chinese Leader Xi Jinping has said that the reunification of mainland China and Taiwan is a must and a certainty - and has not ruled out the possibility of unification by force (Culver). At the heart of the cross-strait confrontation is the fact that the Chinese government sees Taiwan as a provincial administrative region under its sovereignty, which will eventually revert to being part of China. However, Taiwan sees itself as an independent body of government with its own constitution and democratically elected leaders (Culver).

In 1895, after the "Sino-Japanese War," the Qing government was defeated and Taiwan was ceded to Japan under the Treaty of Shimonoseki, and in 1945, after Japan's defeat in the Second World War, the government of the



A Chinese drone is suspected to have left this food package in the Taiwanese frontline region of Kinmen.

Republic of China (ROC) recovered Taiwan (Kuo). However, the civil war between the ROC government's Nationalist army and the Communist army in mainland China continued, and eventually the Communist Party, led by Mao Zedong, won the civil war in mainland China in 1949 and declared the establishment of the People's Republic of China in Beijing.

The defeated Kuomintang government fled to Taiwan to continue the Republic of China (Focus). Beijing cites history as saying that Taiwan began as "a province of China," but Taipei also cites history as saying that Taiwan was never part of modern China - the People's Republic of China established by Mao in 1949. Only 14 countries in the world currently recognize Taiwan as a sovereign state (Focus). China exerts tremendous diplomatic pressure on countries around the world to prevent recognition of Taiwan's status, or to do anything that would imply recognition of Taiwan's status. Since 2021, it appears that China is gradually increasing its pressure by sending military aircraft into Taiwan's Air Defence Identification Zone (ADIZ) to monitor and control foreign aircraft in the area on national security grounds (Kuo). In recent years, the Communist forces have been pushing Taiwan harder and harder, with military aircraft and warships crossing the Taiwan Strait's

median line becoming commonplace.

Between September 2020 and the end of July 2022, there were only 23 recorded overflights of the Central Line by Chinese military aircraft; however, in August this year, there were a record 300 overflights by Chinese military aircraft. The People's Republic of China has erased the centerline of the strait. Naval ships and aircraft are crossing almost daily, trying to exhaust the energy of Taiwanese pilots and maintenance personnel and instill a sense of psychological desperation in the population.

Recently, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has been frequently using civilian drones to intrude into the Kinmen and Matsu defence zones at close range, spying on Taiwan's frontline positions (Culver). The PLA has continued to use drones to attack and threaten Taiwan's defence zones, testing Taiwan's reaction to each harassment ("Pla"). Previously, the PLA did not return fire in order to avoid conflict. As early as the afternoon of 16 August, the Ministry of Defence discovered a drone intrusion on Futian Island ("Pla"). The officers on duty at the time dealt with the situation in accordance with procedures, while the resting officers in the vicinity spontaneously threw stones to disperse the drones. However, since the UAVs' skill in dropping high explosive bombs in the Ukraine war is well known to the world, on August 30, ROC President Tsai Ing-wen ordered the Ministry of National Defence to take

timely and strong countermeasures to safeguard the country's airspace (Focus). On September 2, the army's Kinmen Defense Command again broke into the small Kinmen outlying islands, with two batches and two sorties within four hours, briefly passing overhead and then darting away. The drones were dropping food wrapped in rubbish bags in the waters of Guishan, Xiaojinmen, in a mockery (Focus). The army's Kinmen Defence Command said the drones were spotted in the area of Leyu and flew off quickly into Xiamen after the garrison sent a signal bullet to notify the nearby garrison (Focus).

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Rising Temperatures and Heat Waves: What Does This Mean for our Well-Being?

By: Michelle Huang

This summer, affairs regarding the rising temperatures filled the headlines of newspapers. In England, the scorching heat of London had exceeded the flaming hot temperatures of Dubai (Dewan). Following suit, Portugal, Spain and other European countries experienced groundbreaking temperatures, suggested the Spanish meteorological agency and climate statistician Max Herrera (Orie). Broiling temperatures dominated China and regions of the United States (Dewan).

The blistering heat that struck India and Pakistan in May is to become 100 times more probable as climate change pushes on, according to a study conducted by the Met Office (Abdelbary). The statistics from the Ministry of Health and Welfare suggests that in parts of Taiwan, temperatures surpassed 40 degrees Celsius, and over 444 citizens had visited the hospital for heat-related injuries (Tseng). "We shouldn't be surprised by heatwave events. They're exactly what we predicted and are a part of a trend: more frequent, more intense, and all over the world," said Bob Ward, the policy and communications director of the London School of Economics Grantham Research Institute on climate change and the environment. All in all, the rapidly increasing temperature is a worldwide issue. Not only is it impacting the planet and our physical health; it is also taking a toll on our behavior (Ramirez).

Extreme temperatures are related to an increase in hate speech, a study by the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research indicates. Using the definitions of 'hate speech' as defined by the United Nations, the research team analyzed four billion geolocated tweets on Twitter and compared it to temperature patterns. Hate speech containing homophobia, racism and misogyny increased by 22% when outside temperatures



In Boa Vista, Portugal, the man with sheep on his back escapes from wildfire, a result of heatwaves.

reached 42 degrees Celsius. This research strongly indicates that when the temperature exceeds the climate comfort zone, hate speech starts to increase. Violent tweets occur in people of all incomes, religion and political stance (Ramirez). "Being the target of online hate speech is a serious threat to people's mental health. The psychological literature tells us that online hate can aggravate mental health conditions especially for young people and marginalized groups," Annika Stechemesser, the lead author of the study, reported on Euronews.

While the previous study studied the effects of climate change on human behaviors, other studies closely linked extreme temperatures with our mental well-being (Jaynes). A study conducted by Gallup shows that global well-being decreased by 6.5% from 2008 to 2020, where the amount of heat waves have tripled.

Another study from the Met Office Hadley Center of the United Kingdom has shown that the heatwave that ruled over Europe this summer will become the "norm" by 2035, and global well-being is expected to drop by 17% by that time. Nicole Willcoxon, the research director of the Gallup project, suggests that although many other factors are in play, this study is a clear indication that there is a relationship between climate change and our well-being (Jaynes).

Over the last 50 years, extreme weather has occurred in a location at least once a day, as suggested by the World Meteorological Organization. "As we project that we're going to see a lot more high temperature days and extreme weather events, looking at that and tracking that over time will be important and key to providing the data that policymakers and leaders need to help provide solutions to this issue," Willcoxon added.

An environmental epidemiologist and an incoming assistant professor at Columbia University, Robbie Parks, weighed in on this issue. "While people understand that climate change is awful in so many ways, when people start to understand how it affects their daily lives -- and particularly their health and well-being -- I find that is a really good stimulant to political motivation for action and change."

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Federal Reserve Raises Interest Rates Violently in Response to Pandemic-Induced Inflation

By Claire Yang

On March 17, 2022, the U.S. Federal Reserve announced a 25 bps rate hike to a range of 0.25% ~ 0.50%. After the FOMC meeting on July 28, 2022, the FED announced a 75 bps rate hike. The July rate hike raised the federal funds rate from 1.5%-1.75% to 2.25%-2.5%.

This is the fourth consecutive rate hike in the current tightening cycle. Following the rate hike in March, May, and June, this is equivalent to a 2.25 percentage rate hike in just 4 months. On September 21, the FED again announce for the fifth interest rate hike of 0.75% to reach a range of 3% to 3.25% (Goodkind).

The most fundamental reason for the FED to raise interest rates is to curb runaway inflation by combating the high demand side (CNBC). When the economy accelerates or recovers from a trough, demand for goods and services rises due to the abundance of capital, and the supply side may not be able to catch up, causing prices to rise. The central bank will then raise interest rates to curb hyperinflation (Horsley).

As the COVID-19 epidemic led to a recession and rising unemployment in the US, the Federal Reserve cut interest rates twice in March 2020, bringing interest rates closer to zero and buying a staggering amount of public debt and mortgage-backed securities (MBS) to increase the amount of money in circulation, which in turn stimulated corporate borrowing and investment and indirectly boosted employment and spending (Horsley). Although this saved the economy and the unemployment rate, too much money

When financial institutions fail to turn around, there is a high risk that a country's economy will collapse; thus, it is important that the country raises interest rates in order to stop such regrets.

in the market led to an increase in asset prices (stock and housing prices) and higher prices, which in turn led to inflation.

There are many ways in which a rise in interest rates can affect inflation. Take investment and home buying, for example; these are economic activities that require large amounts of capital and are usually financed by borrowing from banks.

On the other hand, when banks raise interest rates, the demand for savings rises, reducing irrational purchases of non-essential goods. When the rate of inflation is greater than the rate of wage growth, people's real consumption will fall, and they will not be able to enjoy the fruits of their labor when they are paid more for it. When financial institutions fail to turn around, there is a high risk that a country's economy will collapse; thus, it is important that the country raises interest rates in order to stop such regrets.

From the 1960s to the present day, the US has experienced a cycle of 12 interest rate hikes, plus the post-epidemic hikes to curb inflation (CNBC). The reasons for these increases— with the exception of the normalization of monetary policy following the recovery of the economy— have all been to curb severe inflation from rising prices, either as a precautionary measure or to stop inflation from worsening.

Interest rate hikes during the period of monetary policy normalization have been more moderate, partly to allow a transitional period for society to get back on track, and partly because there is no immediate need to do so (Horsley). Interest rate rises to curb inflation are usually rapid and short, and the rate of increase is obviously more drastic than the rate of monetary policy normalization.

The impact of interest rate rises on the economy is immediate, and the most significant effect is that they may reduce the willingness of firms to invest. When the Federal Reserve raises interest rates, the higher

cost of financing will discourage companies from investing; when this is coupled with the potential for a future recession, banks will lend on stricter terms in view of the increased difficulty of repayment. When a country's investment decreases, the pace of its future economic growth will slow down, or even cause a recession (Goodkind).

Consumption is also an item that will be affected by a rise in interest rates, and as the US is a major



domestic demand nation, its gross domestic product (GDP) will decline significantly when domestic demand

of a recession in the next 12 months is estimated at 47.5% (CNBC).

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falls.

As the Fed has raised interest rates, the US economy has started to slow down, the housing market has weakened, technology companies are hiring less, and the number of people claiming unemployment benefits is rising slightly (Person). But inflation remains high. If the pressure on prices is to be significantly eased, a recession is likely and unemployment will rise significantly (Person). The probability

Thank You, Mr. Biden

By: Demopublican Reccratic

On August 24, 2022, the Biden administration issued an executive order providing college debt forgiveness to millions of Americans. The plan will “forgive” \$10,000 of debt for individuals making less than \$125,000 per year and up to \$20,000 for those receiving the federal pell grant. At first glance, this seems like great news. But, such an order sets a dangerous precedent and will only serve to continue increasing college tuition costs without any real change to how the college/university economic complex works.

According to the White House fact sheet on the executive order, US President Joe Biden “believes that a post-high school education should be a ticket to a middle-class life.” Let’s just pause there. Many of us have bought into this belief that post-high school education (typically four-year college, university) is the only or best way to lead a good, successful life. While this may be true for certain professions, such as law, science, and engineering, some college degrees, especially those in the humanities and arts, often deliver much less than they promise. The median yearly salary for

an art major with a college degree is roughly \$50,533; an education major with a college degree makes roughly \$44,860 a year. Many such graduates exit college with tens of thousands of dollars in student debt.

For comparison, a job as a welder or solderer, which does not require a college degree, has a median annual salary of \$47,010. The median annual wage for an electrician is \$56,900. The fact that the human population consistently requires plumbers, electricians, carpenters, technicians, and other skilled craftsmen as well as the emergence of new tech-related fields that don’t require a four-year degree, mean that some portion of the workforce has “a ticket to a middle-class life” without a post-high school education, and hence, without crippling student debt.

A closer look at the higher-education economic complex yields several problematic and troubling trends. First, the number of Americans with a college degree has consistently increased since the 1950s, from roughly 5% of the population to nearly 35% of the population in 2021. The more common something is, the

less valuable it becomes. The more people have a college degree, the less valuable it becomes. Second, the cost of a college degree, even adjusted for inflation, has increased at a faster rate than the salary earned by those college degrees. Colleges count on federal aid and subsidies as well as the overall belief that everyone needs a college degree to jack up prices. This \$10,000 gift to colleges will only incentivize them to increase tuition more. Frankly, there’s no economic reason for colleges to charge less, given the circumstances. The government keeps feeding them money and convincing the populace that college is “a ticket to a middle-class life.”

Student debt is indeed tough. So, let’s forgive some debt, shall we? Hold your horses! Let’s clear this up right away. “Forgive” really means “make someone else pay for” because nothing in this world is free. Someone has to pay for it. The total cost of this executive order is roughly \$500 billion US dollars - yes, \$500 billion. In fact, it holds the record for the US’s most expensive executive order to date. So who gets to pay for this? You guessed it: the taxpayers. The exact people who are getting a portion of their debts “forgiven.” In addition to paying off their own student loans, they and future generations will be compelled

to pay for someone else’s choice to go to college to pursue a degree in art, theater, history, miscellaneous fine arts (an actual college major) or whatever else. I’m starting to become less of a fan of this type of forgiveness.

Debt forgiveness is also a bit frustrating for two groups of students - those who have worked hard to save up and pay off their debt or haven’t started accruing debt yet. The former group, those who have paid off their student loans, have been thoroughly duped. It’s infuriating to the point of being comical. They’ve been made to look like fools because, surprise, they aren’t getting any of the \$10,000. Their fellow college graduates, who’ve simply waited to let their debts pile up, some of whom make more than \$100,000 per year and living comfortable lives, just got their debts forgiven. The latter group, those who haven’t started accruing debt, are also in a tough position. They’ll come to expect a \$10,000 bailout (or even more if Joe keeps this up) and they may even be willing to take up more debt counting on this assistance now that colleges are more expensive. If they don’t get \$10,000 off, is that even fair?

The premise of Biden’s executive order clearly states his allegiance. With midterm elections coming up, this is a purely political move to sway voters without solving any real problems. Biden is interested in supporting the continual growth and expansion of the higher-education economic complex because this is one of his party’s key voter blocs. After all, Uncle Joe and his Democratic friends have “forgiven” your crippling debts. What’s not to love?

Direct quotes from White House Press Releases website - “Fact Sheet: President Biden Announces Student Loan Relief for Borrowers Who Need It Most.” The White House, The United States Government, 24 Aug. 2022, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/08/24/fact-sheet-president-biden-announces-student-loan-relief-for-borrowers-who-need-it-most/>.



Why Pixar's *Luca* is a Must-See Film

By: Hayden Brandt

With some of the highest grossing films of all time being Marvel movies, Top Gun, and the Fast and the Furious franchise, it’s clear that action blockbusters are a tried and true format to making a successful movie. People want to see big budget action scenes with explosions and high stakes. Some movies have the fate of the universe on the line, but Pixar’s *Luca* goes against the grain; Pixar created a movie where the

stakes are merely dependent on if the protagonist can win a local Italian children’s triathlon. Luca strives and succeeds to create an emotionally powerful and compelling story without using the fate of the universe as a crutch.

This will be a spoiler-free review as I am here to recommend this movie to you. Just for a bit of context, however, here is the main idea: a fish

boy lives with his fish family with the dream to go out and experience the town near the ocean he lives in. He ventures out one day and meets a friend loitering on the coast of the town. From there, they go on wacky antics in hopes of winning a triathlon with the cash prize to buy a scooter so they can “travel the world.”

The most important part of a movie has to be its characters. If your

characters are fun to watch interact with the world and each other, they can do the heavy lifting. Luca can’t rely on the plot too heavily because, as mentioned before, nothing in the plot is too dramatic. The conflicts have to be character-based and the writers have to make you care about its characters and their own personal futures. Luca does a grand job with this as the main trio, Luca, Alberto, and Giulia, are

Luca, Continued

insanely fun to watch. When they fail, you feel sad, and when they succeed, you feel happy. It sounds simple, but this is tricky to pull off, honestly. The production team definitely made the viewer care for the characters by the

end of the movie. We've all heard of the supervillain who is just inherently evil for the sake of it, the twist villain who reveals their true intentions to the audience and characters, and the villain with a tragic backstory who

makes you feel bad for them. Luca does something completely revolutionary with their villain: the main antagonist in Luca is just a pretty obnoxious kid from Portorosso, Italy. This idea for an antagonist works because it's realistic. The kid is so annoying to the main characters that I personally wanted him out of there as soon as he spoke his first line of dialogue. "The dark knight of the soul" is a story beat where all seems lost for your characters. Almost every movie has this as it leads into the climax where you realize that not everything is hopeless.

Luca, without spoilers, has a really strong emotional moment like this that makes you feel hopeless for your characters, even though the plot

seems so simple on the surface. They create a moment like this without resorting to cheap tropes; that makes the moment special, in my eyes.

I would highly recommend Luca to pretty much anyone, especially if you read this review thus far. It was pure joy when I first watched it, and I feel as though it went under the radar. The animation is expressive and fantastic (but it's Pixar so it should be expected), the character conflicts are poignant and compelling, and the movie does a great job with realistic and earned emotional moments as well as fun, high octane scenes. All in all, I cannot recommend Luca enough if you haven't seen it yet.



Finding Her Future, Taylor Swift Records Her Past

By: Shannon Lee

It's nothing new when you hear Taylor Swift's name. She has been a fixture of the music industry since 2006, dominating the charts each time she's released a new album. She is the quintessential American artist, spanning different genres and eras in her career.

Her debut, *Taylor Swift*, is an iconic country music medley that tells the story of a teenage girl, growing up in the "All-American" dream. *Fearless*, her sophomore album, has some of her most famous hits, such as Love Story and You Belong With Me. She wrote *Speak Now* in 2010 by herself when her ability as a songwriter and composer was called into question. *Red*, with fan favorites such as "All Too Well" and "I Knew You Were Trouble," was her last country album. 1989 transitioned her into pop with commercial successes like "Blank Space" and "Shake It Off." *reputation* (stylized in lowercase) catapulted her back into the spotlight after conflict with Kim Kardashian and Kanye West.

However, there is one thing these albums share in common: Swift does not own them—well, at least not the original versions. Long story short: in 2019, Scott Borchetta, the owner of the label Swift was signed to, sold Big Machine Records to Scooter Braun against Swift's wishes after she left the label in 2018 when her contract expired.

She had first signed with Big Machine Records when it was a fledgling company when she was only fifteen, chasing fortune and fame. Swift had bad blood with Braun, which she stated that she had expressed to Borchetta. Her opinions were disregarded when the sale took place.



It included the rights to the masters, or the original sound recordings and by extension the copyright, of her first six albums.

Swift publicly called out Borchetta and Braun in 2019 on Tumblr, stating that "my musical legacy is about to lie in the hands of someone who tried to dismantle it." Swift's fans, also colloquially called Swifties, were quick to stand with her, citing respect for her work and her desire to own them. Soon after, Braun too sold Swift's masters—this time to Shamrock Holdings. Business-wise, it was a tactically smart move. Whoever owns an artist's masters will profit when the songs are played, and with Swift's popularity and reach, her creations would have garnered anyone a small fortune.

Thus began Swift's journey to begin again—re-recording, re-releasing, and regaining control over her music. She gained the legal right to do so in 2020, leading to an attempt to silence her by Borchetta. The first album to be re-recorded was *Fearless (Taylor's*

Version), which included songs from her "vault", or never-released-before tracks. Swift chose to include "Taylor's Version" in parentheses after the album and songs' titles to indicate in a visible manner her ownership of them. *Fearless (Taylor's Version)*, or *Fearless TV* as fans of Swift call it, was a resounding commercial success. It had the biggest first-week sales of 2021 when it was released and marked the first time a remastered album had ever topped Billboard's charts.

Swift wasn't stopping there, however—she released *Red (Taylor's Version)* in November of 2021. It was her third chart-topping album of 2021, alongside *evermore*, her ninth studio album, and *Fearless (Taylor's Version)*. She has also released re-recorded versions of "Wildest Dreams" and "This Love" from her fifth album, 1989. Swift's re-recordings of her ever-recognizable hit songs are impeccable. They respect the original source material while bringing her now-mature voice.

She also chose to make minimal production edits, which while on the first listen isn't quite noticeable, provides a refreshing originality while not interfering with enjoying the song as a re-recording instead of a re-make. Swift's fearless choice to actively advocate for herself and re-record her stolen albums is certainly better than revenge. While she isn't *out of the woods* yet—there are still four albums to re-record, which Swifties who refrain from streaming them out of consideration know *all too well*—she's better poised than any snubbed artist has ever been to get closure. *Call it what you want*, but she's a trailblazer in the music industry, and it seems that her *afterglow* won't be fading any time soon.

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M&M Advice



By: Mikayla Tam & Margaret Tsai

What song should I play during a karaoke session with my friends?

Everybody Wants to Rule the World - Tears For Fears

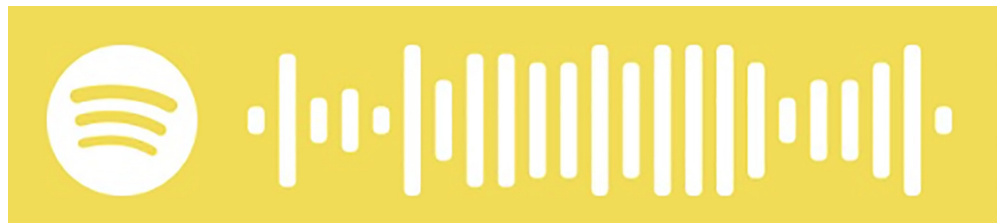


Classic - MKTO

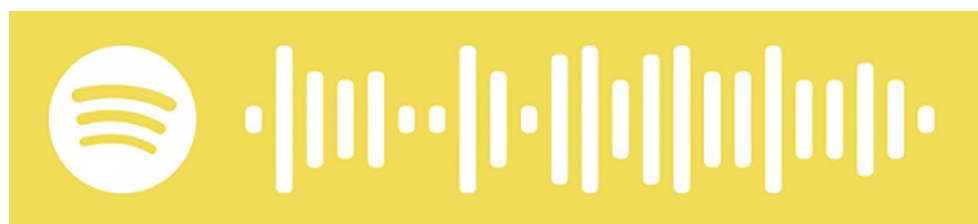


What song should I add to my study playlist?

I Got You - Jack Johnson



Falling For U - SEVENTEEN



What song should I play when it's raining?

Rockland - Gracie Abrams



Double Take - dhruv

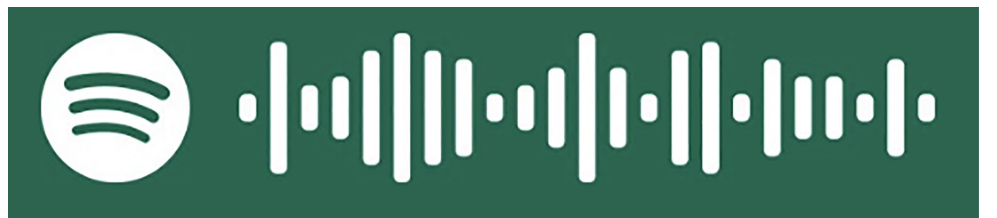


What song should I play to impress a girl who likes Kpop?

Stay with Me - Chanyeol and Punch



Love Countdown - Nayeon (feat. Wonstein)



What song should I play when I'm dying over my APs?

Wake Me Up When September Ends - Green Day



hope ur ok - Olivia Rodrigo



What song should I add to my workout playlist?

Centuries - Fall Out Boy

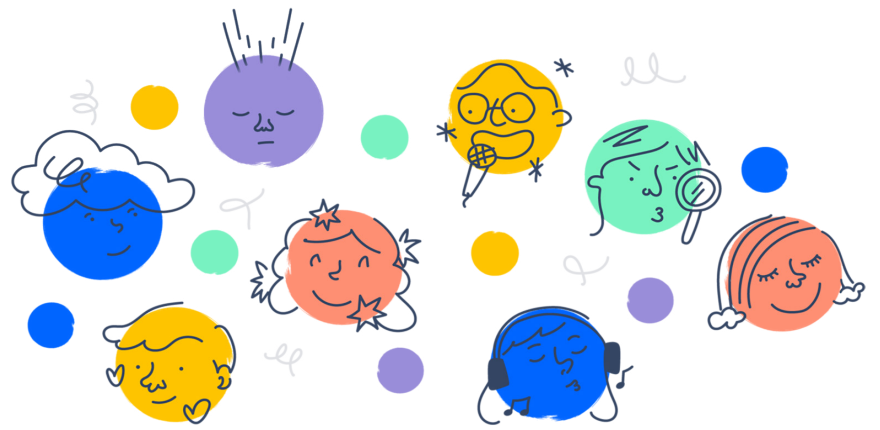


Hala Hala - ATEEZ



Personality Quiz

By: Abby Janssen



- 1. What is your favorite activity?**
 A. Hanging out with my friends
 B. Playing my favorite sport
 C. Helping people
 D. Trying something new and interesting
 E. Having a snowball fight and hanging out with my pets
- 2. What is your love language?**
 A. Quality time
 B. Acts of service
 C. Physical touch
 D. I don't show my love...
 E. Giving gifts
- 3. Which pet would you own?**
 A. Snail
 B. Owl
 C. Spider/insect
 D. Dog
 E. Reindeer
- 4. How would your friends describe you?**
 A. Happy/enthusiastic

- B. Compassionate/courageous
 C. Smart/committed
 D. Sneaky/tough with a soft side
 E. Warm/caring
- 5. What is your favorite ice cream flavor?**
 A. Bubblegum
 B. Chocolate
 C. Strawberry
 D. Banana
 E. Peppermint
- 6. Where would you most likely want to go on vacation?**
 A. Somewhere near the ocean; soaking in the sun on the beach while eating some pineapples sounds nice.
 B. Into the city to buy some cool candy. Going into a forest to explore sounds fun, too.
 C. I don't have time for vacation! Between school and work, I'm way too busy!
 D. Relaxing alone in my house would be ideal.

E. Somewhere cold! Wherever I go, I'll bring back some gifts for my friends and family.

MOSTLY A's: Congratulations! You are Spongebob Squarepants! Your friends enjoy your company and happy spirits. Make sure to use your powerful imagination. This is your sign to buy a pet snail and eat some Crabby Patties.

MOSTLY B's: Congrats! You are Harry Potter! Everyone loves your courage and willingness to fight for what you believe in. Be careful not to get yourself expelled.

MOSTLY C's: You are Spiderman! Your

smarts can get you quite far, but your "spidey senses" and your care for others can get you even further! Juggling multiple identities can be hard sometimes, but I couldn't think of a better person for the job.

MOSTLY D's: You are Gru from Minions! Even though you can be selfish and tough, once the right people are with you, you become a nicer person. Remember to shoot for the moon, but try not to be too despicable.

MOSTLY E's: Congratulations! You are Santa Clause! Your presence can warm up almost anyone. This is your sign to grow a beard and eat some cookies.

Sudoku w/ Answers

Can you solve it in 5 minutes or less?

		6						1
	7			6			5	
8			1		3	2		
		5		4		8		
	4		7		2		9	
		8		1		7		
		1	2		5			3
	6			7			8	
2						4		

4	5							
		2		7		6	3	
							2	8
			9	5				
	8	6				2		
	2		6			7	5	
						4	7	6
	7			4	5			
		8			9			

6	1	4	8	3	6	7	5	2
8	5	1	7	4	9	6	3	2
7	6	9	5	2	1	8	4	3
3	4	7	6	1	5	8	2	9
4	3	7	6	5	1	8	2	9
5	9	1	2	8	7	3	4	6
6	2	8	7	3	4	9	5	1
7	1	9	5	6	3	2	8	4
8	6	2	8	9	4	1	5	3
9	7	3	2	6	7	4	1	5
1	7	2	9	6	4	3	5	8
2	8	5	3	4	6	7	2	9
3	9	4	1	5	3	2	6	7
4	1	9	7	2	8	6	3	5
5	3	6	8	2	7	9	4	1
6	4	8	7	9	6	3	1	5
7	2	4	8	7	6	9	3	1
8	7	1	3	4	5	9	6	2
9	3	5	2	1	8	4	7	6
2	9	6	8	4	7	5	1	3
3	2	9	6	8	4	7	5	1
4	9	8	6	1	3	7	2	4
5	8	6	1	3	7	2	4	9
6	7	1	4	9	5	2	8	3
7	1	4	9	5	2	8	3	6
8	1	6	7	4	9	3	5	2
9	2	5	7	1	6	3	4	8
4	5	3	8	2	6	1	9	7

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