

LEAVES IN MY NOTEBOOK



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EDITOR'S NOTE

October and November help us notice small moments. October, the start of change. We see the leaves turn, feel the cooler air, and sense new beginnings. In November, we reflect. The days grow shorter, our notebooks feel heavier with thoughts, and we quietly revisit what we've written or discover forgotten ideas.

These months remind us that creativity and thinking build on each other. A line written in October can turn into a reflection in November, and a quick idea can grow when we look back at it. October is also Breast Cancer Awareness Month, a time to pause, reflect, and raise awareness about a disease that affects millions of women worldwide. In this edition, our theme, Leaves in My Notebook, celebrates the thoughts, stories, and reflections that make up our inner world. It highlights the personal process of expressing ideas, whether they are carefully planned or quickly written down, and the importance of revisiting what we have written.

As we move from October into November, this edition of The Horizons invites you to reflect on your own leaves, the small pieces of yourself and your thoughts that make each page unique. From your notebook to ours, we hope these pages carry a little of your world, a little of this season's spirit, and a reminder that even the quietest moments can grow into something meaningful.

**HAPPY READING,
Saanjh Balpande,
Editor-In-Chief**



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**INTERNATIONAL DIPLOMATS
AND ORATORS SOCIETY**

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INTERNATIONAL DIPLOMATS AND ORATORS SOCIETY (IDOS)

TRAINING SESSION #1 FOR MUN – SESSION CONDUCTED BY MR. JACOB ON HANDLING CRITICISM, INCLUDING TIPS ON RESEARCH AND BUILDING ARGUMENTS.

TRAINING SESSION #2 FOR MUN – SESSION CONDUCTED BY MR. CHARLES ON DIPLOMACY, FOCUSING ON SKILLS AND PROPER DECORUM IN DEBATES.

TRAINING SESSION #3 FOR MUN – SESSION CONDUCTED BY MS. ROSELDA ON TOPIC-SPECIFIC DISCUSSIONS, INCLUDING UNICEF-RELATED ISSUES.

TRAINING SESSION #4 FOR MUN – SESSION CONDUCTED BY MS. NATASHA, MS. JENAE, AND MS. MICHAELA ON INTENSIVE PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURES AND RESEARCH, CRITIQUE, AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS.

ISMUN DAY 1 – DELEGATES REPRESENTED COUNTRIES IN THE UNICEF COMMITTEE, DEBATING CHILDREN'S RIGHTS AND EDUCATION POLICIES, WHILE THE INTERNATIONAL PRESS COMMITTEE (JOURNALISTS) TOOK NOTES.

ISMUN DAY 2 – DELEGATES CONTINUED THEIR DEBATES. THE INTERNATIONAL PRESS COMMITTEE GATHERED JOURNALISTS AND CARICATURE ARTISTS TO CREATE PIECES ON THE DEBATES, READ ONE REPORT BELOW.

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Most Remarkable Moments (ISMUN 1.0)

The most remarkable moment in this MUN was when delegates started connecting real education problems to real solutions. They brought up things like digital learning for better teacher training, school meals, and ways to help kids who don't have a safe environment. It showed that everyone understood something important: education is not only about textbooks or classrooms but access to equality, safety, and a real chance to learn and grow. Seeing all these solutions come together made the discussion feel real and full of purpose.

The committee discussed the agenda for child safety in educational institutions. Delegates concentrated on the main threats that students face, such as bullying, dangerous school infrastructure, a shortage of qualified personnel, and an increase in cyberbullying. Nations exchanged national problems and solutions. Countries like Finland, Sweden, and Denmark placed a strong emphasis on digital safety and mental health support, while Nigeria and India emphasized the need for improved infrastructure and more robust security measures. In order to enhance preventive measures and make schools safer for all children.

Delegates examined school safety as a multifaceted issue involving physical security, mental-health support, infrastructure reliability, and clear emergency procedures. Representatives noted ongoing challenges such as inadequate funding, limited staff training, and disparities. Working groups discussed ideas to make reporting problems easier, strengthen cooperation with local communities, and create safety guidelines that different schools can use. Delegates agreed that countries should work together to make school safety standards more consistent everywhere.

This is what made the MUN special. It isn't just about giving speeches or sharing facts, it is about seeing delegates actually think and come up with real solutions. From digital classrooms for remote villages to better teacher training, school meals, and help for kids in unsafe homes, every idea showed that education is more than just books. It's about fairness, opportunity, safety, and hope. Seeing everyone go beyond just talking and actually figure out how to help kids was truly inspiring.

Education isn't a privilege, it's a right. And when countries work together, we can make it real for every child.

Written by the International Press (IP) Committee, Journalism (Delegate Al Jazeera English, delegate BBC World News, delegate CNN International, and delegate ABC News)

On Day 2 of the Model United Nations (MUN), the committee also gathered to discuss global education issues. The delegates stressed how important it is to ensure that everyone has fair access, bridging resource gaps, and linking education to sustainable development goals. The delegates highlighted that education includes equality, innovation, and that education is not only about literacy and schooling but also about long-term peace because it equips societies with the tools to prevent conflicts and build stability across generations. When children and young people have equal access to quality learning, they gain not only literacy and skills but also values such as respect for diversity and tolerance. These can, on a large scale, reduce the likelihood of discrimination and any kind of social instability. By bridging inequalities and fostering a shared understanding, education helps nations move beyond short-term solutions and instead build a lasting framework for sustainable development. Additionally, delegates concentrated on threats faced by students, including bullying, harassment, and lack of safety measures. Delegates noted that many schools, particularly in the developing regions, struggle to recruit and retain teachers, counselors and support staff. This lack of qualified professionals directly affects the quality of education overall, as students may not receive proper guidance, mentorship, or protection within the school environment. Without enough trained teachers, classrooms become overcrowded, learning outcomes decline, and children are more vulnerable to issues such as bullying or neglect. These were one of the major concerns raised during the committee. The delegates of the nations made it clear that addressing these issues require investment in teacher training programs, better working conditions, and international cooperation to guarantee that schools are staffed with professionals capable of safeguarding and nurturing every child's right to education and safety.

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THE GAME THAT CHANGED THE WORLD – A FULL DEBATE EXPLORING THE EVOLUTION OF GAMING, ITS CULTURAL IMPACT, AND HOW EARLY GAMES HELPED SHAPE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE. INCLUDED AUDIENCE DISCUSSION AND A SHORT QUIZ.

THE MIND BEHIND THE MACHINE: HOW AI IS REWRITING THE GAME – A DEEP DIVE INTO HOW AI EVOLVED THROUGH GAMING, HOW IT NOW SHAPES MODERN GAMEPLAY, THE ETHICAL QUESTIONS SURROUNDING ITS USE, AND ITS REAL-WORLD APPLICATIONS BEYOND ENTERTAINMENT.

THE SCIENCE OF FEAR (HALLOWEEN) – A SCIENTIFIC EXPLORATION OF HOW FEAR WORKS, COVERING PSYCHOLOGY, BIOLOGY, AND THE MECHANICS BEHIND SHOCK AND SUSPENSE. INCLUDED INTERACTIVE DISCUSSION.

Brain-Computer Interfaces for Women: One-Size-Fits-All Neurotech Doesn't Exist

By Saanjh Balpande

Technology loves the illusion of neutrality.

The promise that data is data, that code is code, that silicon has no bias. It's comforting to believe we can build something purely logical, untouched by the messiness of human difference.

But the truth is, even machines inherit the minds that make them. And if the minds shaping neurotechnology are mostly trained on one kind of brain, one rhythm, then the intelligence we build will reflect that.

For decades, the "average" brain in neuroscience wasn't average at all. It was male. Research methodologies, imaging studies, and normative baselines centered on one physiology and quietly treated the rest as deviation. So, when we build brain-computer interfaces (BCIs) that learn from those patterns, and when we teach algorithms to decode thoughts from electrical noise, we're really teaching them whose thoughts are easiest to hear.

Make no mistake, that silence, the absence of women's data, has consequences.

BCIs read the electrical activity of neurons, translating patterns of voltage into commands for movement, memory, or emotion. These neural signals, however, are not constant. Across a woman's menstrual cycle, hormonal changes alter the brain's oscillations, affecting the amplitude, frequency, and synchrony of signals.

Brain-Computer Interfaces for Women: One-Size-Fits-All Neurotech Doesn't Exist

Estrogen enhances synaptic plasticity, strengthening connections. Progesterone adjusts cortical excitability, changing how neurons fire and coordinate. These shifts influence alpha, beta, and gamma waves, the very signals BCIs use.

Many BCI systems are set up using data mainly from men, which means they miss important differences in how women's brains work. Because of this, the algorithms may mistake normal changes in female brain activity for noise. This can lead to less accuracy and slower adjustment. Even small differences in how brain waves occur or where electrodes are placed can make these errors worse. Connectivity between the amygdala and prefrontal cortex fluctuates with estrogen levels, influencing emotion and attention processing. Without accounting for these changes, BCIs can and will misread signals, producing performance gaps for women that are not due to the brain itself but to incomplete calibration.



And that's the injustice of it: the technology doesn't break; it just misses. It performs a little worse. It adapts a little slower. It tells a woman's brain that something's off when really, it's just different.

We call it an error.

Is it though?

Building BCIs that truly understand female neural dynamics means designing for variability, not ignoring it. Adaptive calibration algorithms could adjust in real time, tracking alpha, beta, and gamma oscillations linked to hormonal changes. Instead of using one-size-fits-all thresholds, systems could dynamically scale sensitivity, detecting patterns in synaptic excitability or shifts in connectivity. That's not a "women's feature." That's good science. But we've built an ecosystem where sameness feels efficient and difference feels inconvenient. We train algorithms to flatten complexity because it's faster that way. But biology was never built for efficiency. It was built for adaptation.

We need adaptive calibration algorithms that self-adjust in real time based on each user's EEG signals. AI models must be trained on diverse neural datasets that include variations across sex, hormonal cycles, and stress responses. Companies developing neurotech should adopt inclusive testing protocols, ensuring prototypes are validated on participants with a range of neural oscillation patterns, not just small, male-dominated samples.

If neurotech is meant to merge with the human mind, it has to earn that intimacy. It has to listen better. Because a BCI that only understands half the population isn't intelligent, it's incomplete.

So maybe the question isn't how to make neurotech smarter.

Maybe it's how to make it more attentive.

Attention, after all, is a form of respect.

And in science, as in life, what we pay attention to becomes what we build.

Let Me Try to Explain General Relativity (Because Apparently I Have No Other Hobbies)

Written by An Anonymous Student Who Just Really Likes Space

We've all seen that classic pop-science explanation of gravity where someone pulls out a rubber sheet, puts a bowling ball in the middle, and then rolls marbles toward it as if that alone explains the entire universe. It's a fun visual, sure, but General Relativity is way more elegant, way stranger, and honestly way cooler than a stretched piece of fabric from the physics lab. As someone who spends an unhealthy amount of their free time thinking about black holes instead of doing literally anything else, let me try to explain what's actually going on.

We usually think of space as something flat and orderly, the kind of geometry we learn in school. In that geometry, called Euclidean space, straight lines behave predictably, angles add up the way we expect, and parallel lines never meet. If we add time as a fourth dimension to this familiar space, we get what's known as Minkowski spacetime. This is the mathematical setting used in special relativity, still flat, still regular, just extended to include both space and time so that events can be described by their position and the moment at which they occur.

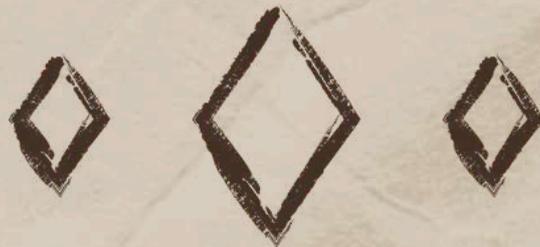
However, not all spaces behave this neatly. One way to detect whether a space is curved is to look at parallel lines. On a curved surface, such as the Earth, lines that start out parallel, like lines of longitude at the equator, eventually converge at the poles. This simple observation tells us that the rules of geometry change when the underlying space is curved. Distances can stretch or shrink, and the straightest possible paths may no longer look straight at all.

This leads to the concept of geodesics, which are the "straightest" paths available within a curved space. They are not straight in the everyday sense, but they are the paths that minimize travel time or distance. On a sphere, a geodesic is part of a great circle, which is why airplanes often fly curved routes when traveling long distances, they are following geodesics on the Earth's surface. More generally, in any space or spacetime, a geodesic is the natural path an object follows if no external force acts on it.

Let Me Try to Explain General Relativity (Because Apparently I Have No Other Hobbies)

This idea becomes central in General Relativity. Einstein's key insight was that matter and energy do not simply sit in spacetime; they change its shape. They cause spacetime to curve. This curvature is not just a visual metaphor; it directly affects how objects move. Instead of being pushed or pulled by a force called gravity, objects simply move along the geodesics of curved spacetime. Their paths may look curved to us, but from the object's own perspective, it is following the most natural, effortless path available.

In this framework, gravity is not a traditional force at all. When an apple falls, or when the Earth orbits the Sun, nothing is "pulling" on these objects. They are simply following geodesics shaped by the mass and energy around them. The only reason we feel weight is because the ground prevents us from following our natural geodesic. Standing still on Earth means that the ground is constantly pushing us off the path we would otherwise take through spacetime.



Once you understand that matter curves spacetime and objects follow the curved paths within it, many of the major phenomena in astrophysics begin to make sense. Black holes, gravitational waves, the bending of light around galaxies, the expansion of the universe, and even the passage of time near massive objects all arise from this simple and powerful idea.

This explanation is still only the beginning. Beneath it lies a sophisticated mathematical structure involving tensors, differential equations, and precise definitions of curvature. But the core concept is surprisingly accessible: spacetime changes shape in the presence of matter and energy, and objects move according to that shape.

For me, this is what makes General Relativity so remarkable. It transforms gravity from a mysterious force into a geometric consequence of the universe itself. And once you see it this way, many of the most fascinating features of the cosmos become both clearer and more astonishing.

Where My Thoughts Live

By Aysha Rafiq Ahemd

People often ask where ideas come from. Some say they appear suddenly, like lightning. Others say they grow slowly, like seeds. For me, ideas drift into my mind quietly, like autumn leaves floating through the air. And eventually, they land in the place where all my thoughts live – my notebook.

My notebook is not neat or perfect. It's filled with quick notes written during noisy moments, deep thoughts written during quiet nights, and random lines that don't make

sense until months later. But that's the beauty of it – my notebook doesn't need perfection. It simply needs honesty.

Every "leaf" inside it has a purpose. Some pages are filled with questions I'm still trying to answer. Some are filled with memories I never want to forget. Some hold ideas for the future, even if I don't feel ready for them yet. And some pages hold feelings too heavy to carry alone.

When I flip through it, I realize that these leaves tell the truth about my mind – not the polished version I show to people, but the real one that's scared, curious, hopeful, confused, excited, and growing all at once.

What surprises me is how my notebook captures all the moments I didn't notice while they were happening. A page from months ago might show me a dream I forgot I had. Another page might remind me of something small that made me smile. Even the messy pages matter, because they show how far I've come.

Notebooks are like soft containers for the parts of us that don't fit anywhere else. They hold the thoughts we don't say, the ideas we're not ready to share, and the pieces of ourselves that feel too fragile to keep in the open.

Maybe that's why the leaves in my notebook mean so much. They are small, quiet versions of me, scattered through time. And when I gather them together, page by page, I can see the story of who I am – and the story of who I'm becoming.

Helen of Troy and Sparta

By Debbie Maleda

Helen

I look over the palace walls and think, all this, all this bloodshed because of me. Is my love for Prince Paris worth these many lives, these many souls headed for Hades?

Over there, I see a soldier of Troy fighting to protect me. But protect me from what? My former husband, Menelaus, whom I loved. Menelaus, who treated me so dearly, whose face would brighten my eyes and lift my soul. Menelaus, whom I chose among all the brave suitors who came before me. My charming Menelaus. In the blink of an eye, the soldier lies dead, a spear through his chest.

I whispered, "Menelaus... what have I done?"



Paris

In my hand lies the golden apple. Zeus has appointed me to choose who shall receive it: Hera, Athena, or Aphrodite. Who is the fairest of the three? Hera, Queen of the gods, stands before me.

"I offer you power to rule all of Asia," this is what she says to me. Athena, goddess of wisdom and war, steps forward.

"But I offer you wisdom and skill in battle, making you the most intelligent and invincible warrior." Aphrodite pushes her aside.

"As the goddess of love and beauty, I offer you the most beautiful woman in the world – Helen of Sparta."

Hearing her words, I step forward and present the golden apple to the goddess Aphrodite. For it is she who will grant me what I desire.

Here I am in Sparta on an official mission on behalf of my father. Menelaus welcomes me warmly and introduces me to his lovely wife, Helen of Sparta, whom the goddess of love and beauty has promised to me. Her eyes, the color of the sky, meet mine, and it strikes me that she truly is the most beautiful woman in the world.

Days pass, and as I feel I am overstaying my welcome, Menelaus entrusts me to the care of his wife as he leaves for his grandfather's funeral. Helen and I, just the two of us, with Menelus across the sea, no one could stop us now.

I find her leaning on the balcony, the night's cool breeze blowing through her shiny hair, and her robes fluttering in the wind. The moonlight illuminating her more than pleasing silhouette. She hears me coming and turns in my direction. I walk towards her as she watches me. I reach where she stands and proclaim my love for her. She seems taken aback by my words, perhaps thinking of her husband, but something sweeps across her face, a trance-like state, no doubt the work of Aphrodite, for which I am grateful. I reach out and tuck a strand of her hair behind her ear. She smiles and says,

"How brave of you to come to me like this."

My hand glides toward the small of her back. She leans in, places a hand on my broad chest, and looks at me with desire in her eyes. Her gaze shifts to my lips as I whisper a reply.

"Indeed, how much braver need I be to ask thee to come with me? Come with me to Troy. Be my queen."



Menelaus

"Finally, I'm home,"
I take a look around.

"But why do these halls seem so quiet?"

I enter the courtyard, but no one greets me. No voice of sweet melody sings from the balcony. There is only silence. I see a servant girl scampering by, in her hands a jug of water. I call for her and ask,

"Where is my wife, Helen? I have travelled for weeks, dreaming of her gentle face. Tell me, where can I find her?"

The servant girl bows her head, perhaps in reverence or fear. In a frail voice, she croaks out the words,

"My lord... the queen is gone."

Tears trickle down her cheeks, and the reason she bows her head reveals itself to me. She is afraid, scared of what I might do to her for bringing me such grave news. I move past her and make my way to Helen's bedchambers. I burst through the doors. The room is cold and empty, the sheets lie in a tussle at the edge of the bed, her jug of water, now shattered, lies in pieces on the floor. This can only mean one thing.

"Where is she?" I ask, my voice barely escaping my throat,

"WHERE IS SHE!"

I yell for the guards. I can feel the anger rising in me like the waves of a thunderous storm. I kick the chair at the dresser across the room, breaking a few of its legs.

"This is the work of Prince Paris, no doubt. How can a man such as he carry out such an offensive ordeal? How dare he steal my wife!"

"Guards send a message to my brother, Agamemnon, King of Mycenae. Tell him that we shall summon all the noble kings who came before Helen as suitors. Tell them it is time to fulfil their oath! And bring Helen back to me, her noble husband!"



“Who is That?”

By Synkova Sofiia

I moved from one place to another several times in my life. I've changed many schools and got to analyze how social life works there, joining invisible hierarchies and defining social positions.

Unfortunately, I've seen a lot of traumatic and terrifying experiences between individuals that made me think deeply and question myself: why do they act like this, where does this come from? Are they trying to assert themselves this way? Maybe they just want to be seen, to feel that they matter. Does “the older you are, the stronger you are” really work, and what does a “good student” mean?



I learned people so fast that it felt like I could predict future dialogue between a classmate and a teacher. A glance, a tone, small talk - and I could already tell a person's mood or how the story would unfold.

Every new school gave me a special experience of theirs, painful or joyful, it was still an experience and one more page in my story. I gained skills in seeing a lot about people insides, and now meeting a new one, I can quickly define them briefly.

The Notebook That Shouldn't Change

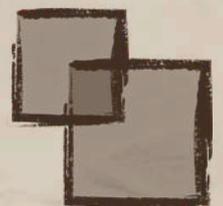
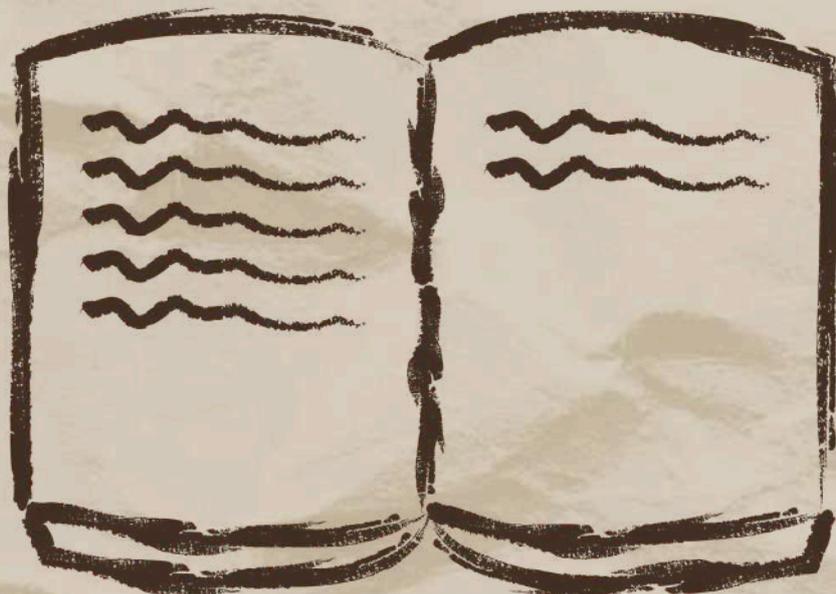
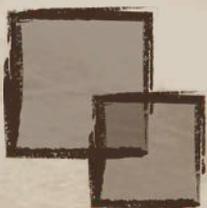
By Wania Badar

I don't know when my notebook started acting strange. At first it was just small things. A word I didn't remember writing. A page that looked a little older than the rest. A sentence in handwriting that was almost mine but not quite.

I thought maybe I wrote things half asleep or forgot. But then the pages started showing up in places they shouldn't be. Once I opened the notebook in class and a page fell out. It wasn't torn. It wasn't crumpled. It just slipped out like it didn't belong to the notebook at all. It had a short message on it that simply said look again.

So I did. I flipped back through the notebook and found a page squeezed between two I had definitely written the night before. The paper felt different. Lighter. Colder. On it there was a short story about someone who kept losing parts of themselves until a notebook started giving them back.

I tried to show it to my friend but when I opened it again the page was gone. Like it had never been there.



After that more strange pages showed up. Sometimes they had drawings that looked like places I had been but couldn't remember exactly. Sometimes they had descriptions of moments that felt real even though I couldn't tell when they happened. A few pages had little warnings. Nothing dramatic. Just short things like keep watching or you forgot something.

Every time I reached into my bag the notebook felt heavier even though the number of pages never changed. And sometimes when I opened it the pages flipped on their own like the notebook was trying to show me something.

I tried to ignore it but last night before sleeping I opened it again. A new page was there. It had my name written on it in the handwriting that was almost mine. Under it there was just one line. You finally found the beginning.



I don't know what beginning it meant. But the next morning the first page of my notebook was blank again even though I know I had written my name on it when the school year started.

I don't think the notebook is finished changing. And I don't think it's done showing me things.

The End

Ethical Issues of AI-Powered Hiring: Lessons from Amazon's Biased Recruiting Tool

By Yousef Al Fayed

Businesses put in a great deal of time and money searching for the ideal applicant for a job opening because it could mean the difference between success and failure. A recent report from LinkedIn claims that there is an increasing trend in middle-to-top-level openings for time-to-hire and cost-to-hire matrices. As a result, even though it costs more, important positions remain vacant for longer than usual. This prompted businesses like Amazon to search for creative ways to use artificial intelligence (AI) to cut down on such costs and times.

As per reports from 2014, Amazon Inc. assembled a team to develop a resume review tool that employed machine learning (ML) and natural language processing (NLP) to identify the most suitable candidates for a given job description. Once in place, this software would employ advanced artificial intelligence algorithms to gradually identify important characteristics from the resumes of hired candidates, then search for those same markers in resumes that were submitted for screening. Afterward, based on how much the candidate resembles the previous successful candidate, this tool would rate them on a 5-star scale, similar to the one used to rate products on Amazon.

By the end of 2014, the company had adopted this experimental tool widely, with few people relying heavily on it due to its significant time-saving benefits. The company became aware in 2015 that ratings for technical jobs such as software developers and architects were not gender-neutral. which prompted the business to assign one of its engineers to look into the main reason. Following extensive research, engineers determined that the data used to train the AI system was biased because it primarily included the resumes of male employees, reflecting the then-current trend of male dominance in the company and the tech sector.

Ethical Issues of AI-Powered Hiring: Lessons from Amazon's Biased Recruiting Tool

Such unknowingly biased training data led the algorithms to create an association that downgrades resumes that included words like “women’s” as in “women’s chess club captain”. It was also reported that the engineers identified cases where the system downgraded graduates of two all-women’s colleges. These findings prompted Amazon to modify its algorithms to make them more neutral in that situation, but it was also determined that an AI system of that kind might eventually create a system of candidate sorting that might be somewhat biased.

Traditional Hiring

There is no set procedure for how traditional hiring should be carried out. Typically, it begins with the business determining that there is a vacancy, and then an analysis that yields a job description follows. Next, either or both internal channels – such as the company job portal – and external channels – such as LinkedIn, Monster, or head hunters – are informed about this. Following their sourcing, CVs are combined and reviewed by HR staff members and subject-matter specialists. Interviews are then conducted with the shortlisted candidates to determine the final candidates. The time and expense associated with hiring are the primary drawbacks of this tried-and-true, human-touch method of hiring.

AI in Traditional Hiring

While the idea of artificial intelligence has been around for a while and has found applications in a variety of scientific domains, it has only been further developed and applied in a wide range of organizational settings during the past ten years. Though Tecuci lists knowledge acquisition, natural language, and robotics as the three primary areas where AI can be implemented, the possibilities are seemingly endless.

Through the process of natural language processing, or NLP, knowledge and information can be extracted from plain text by scanning it. By automating the resume scanning process and gathering pertinent data, this type of knowledge extraction process can be used to rank candidates according to how well they fit a particular job description. In order to build these kinds of AI systems, training data is needed. This allows the underlying algorithm to learn how to correlate different resume traits with job profiles and determine which applicants are most qualified for the position. According to reports, businesses like Amazon have developed comparable systems to help with hiring; we will go into more detail about this in the section that follows.

Challenges In Adopting AI

Adopting AI presents a variety of challenges, broadly categorized as technological, ethical, and privacy-related. The adoption of these technologies in contemporary hiring workflows is hampered by ethical and privacy concerns, although technological obstacles appear to be surmountable given the industry's rapid pace of innovation.

Before being used, the majority of AI systems must be trained. To do this, they need to be given access to a training data set, which in the hiring context may include the personal information of both successful and unsuccessful applicants. This allows the systems to identify common characteristics between the successful and unsuccessful candidates. Data consent and personal data privacy are called into question by this.

Ethical Challenges In Adopting AI

The application of AI raises some difficult moral issues and moral conundrums. These difficulties prevent this technology from being used in hiring on a large scale. Among these conundrums and questions are important ones such as how AI guarantees equity, how the system handles conflicting ideas, how diversity will be preserved in an organization, whether the system has enough contextual integrity, and whether relying too much on AI technologies is risky.

distinct interpretations of justice. It was discovered that there are about 21 definitions of fairness in computer science. In many cases, fairness entails equal opportunity. Fairness could also mean not having any prejudice against people based on their gender or race. Another would be to treat everyone equally in all domains, such as legal, interpersonal, and so forth. In conclusion, even though it is ambiguous, this moral principle is still very important and what people expect from an AI system, but it is also frequently one of the common ethical problems with intelligent software.

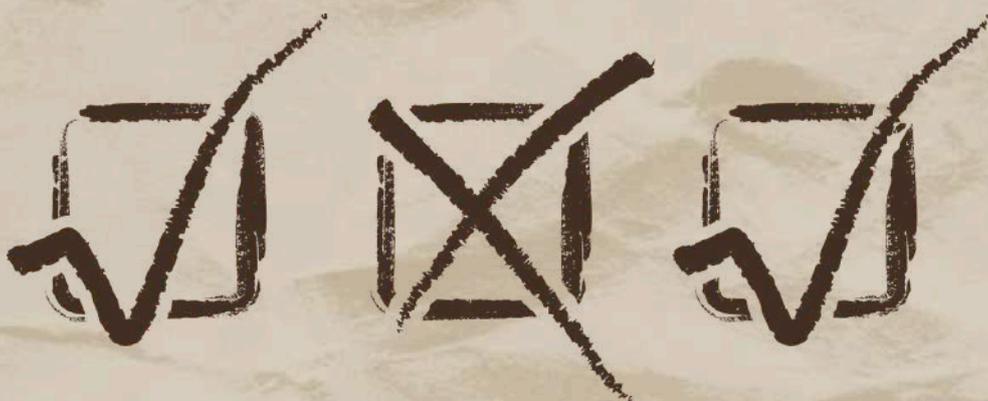
It is difficult to optimize AI systems for fairness because fairness encompasses a wide range of concepts, some of which are antagonistic to one another. For example, a business may want to offer equal opportunities to all people without discrimination, so it cannot take into account a concept of fairness that makes up for societal injustices or historical or inherent disadvantages.

Ethical Issues of AI-Powered Hiring: Lessons from Amazon's Biased Recruiting Tool

Putting in place an AI that handles both would be difficult and might require making compromises frequently. The hiring process is fundamentally biased, with some candidates receiving offers and others not, depending on specific characteristics deemed indicative of a "good" candidate. Over time, these positive attributes foster diversity within a comfortable level organization. Should the AI project's functional requirements include these parameters in order to achieve optimal performance? Or does it go against equity? The appropriate use of personal data that complies fairly well with the individual's expectation of privacy at the time of disclosure is known as contextual integrity. There is an implicit breach of trust when a candidate provides their personal information to an AI system during the job application process. Now, one could counter that since the company received these data for review, it owns them and is free to do with them as it pleases. This viewpoint will, however, raise a number of additional ethical concerns about data ownership.

An organization may start to rely more on AI than on human judgment as AI systems become faster and more accurate at simulating human decisions. Will the company eventually be unable to hire people without the assistance of an AI in such a situation?

The aim of integrating AI technologies into conventional hiring processes is to alleviate human labor from various tiresome tasks involved in the hiring procedure. Even though this method of hiring is relatively new, it is expanding quickly. Before implementing such a system, any organization should carefully consider the implications regarding data privacy, ethics, labor law, technology, feasibility, and the necessity of such a system in hiring. After adoption, the AI system should be regularly examined to make sure it is operating within appropriate bounds. It is undeniable that using AI to hire more quickly and reduce the need for human labor can save time and money, but if done improperly or unethically, it can also damage a company's reputation and financial standing.



Beyond “That’s So Last Season.” What are the Environmental Costs of Fast Fashion?

By Valeria Santos

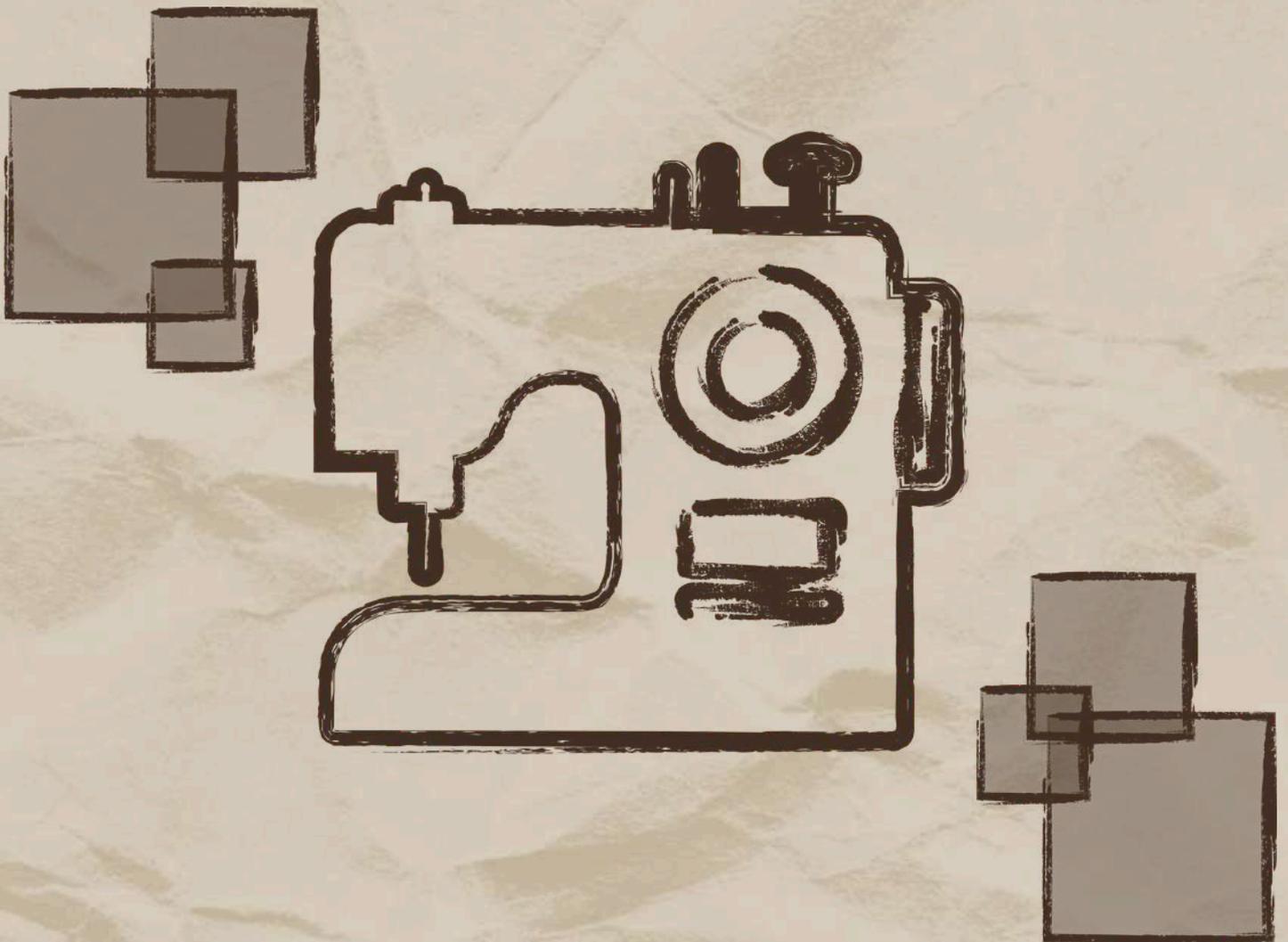
The Venus flytrap is a symbol of persistence because it never gives up. It'll find a way to allure its prey. Its beauty and flashiness attract prey and then it strikes. The fast fashion industry is the Venus flytrap of the capitalist animal kingdom, attracting consumers with flashy trends, relatable marketing, and enticing words. Once trapped, consumers are caught in a cycle of overconsumption and ultimately environmental harm.



The fast fashion industry is a significant environmental issue we must address promptly. Fast fashion involves quickly replicating recent trends and high fashion designs, mass producing them at a low cost to meet demand. “Fast fashion can be defined as cheap, trendy clothing that samples ideas from the catwalk or celebrity culture and turns them into garments at breakneck speed to meet consumer demand.” The fast fashion industry has experienced substantial expansion over the past twenty years, posing an increasingly significant threat to the environment. This rise has popularized phrases such as “That’s so last season” and “outfit repeating,” implying that wearing the same outfit more than once is socially unacceptable. This societal pressure leads to overconsumption as people feel compelled to constantly purchase new clothing. Ultimately, it’s a tactic to drive individuals to spend more money, effectively turning them into pawns in a much broader game. “The stigma around wearing the same outfit twice is fueling consumerism, and pushing us to buy clothes we don’t need.” The societal pressure against repeating outfits is contributing to excessive consumerism, leading to unnecessary clothing purchases. Rather than buying out of necessity, people are often driven by the desire to conform to trends and indulge in hedonistic impulses. Rapidly changing fashion trends benefit the industry but have detrimental effects on the environment, resulting in increased water and textile waste and further pollution of the atmosphere.

Beyond "That's So Last Season." What are the Environmental Costs of Fast Fashion?

The fast fashion industry doesn't just exploit the environment it also exploits those in developing countries that are working day and night to make sure that these clothes are being pumped out to the public. Fast fashion companies often prioritize low production costs and high profit margins over the treatment of their workers often leading to workers in factories, particularly in developing countries facing unsafe working conditions, low wages, and abuse. "The fast fashion industry employs approximately 75 million factory workers worldwide. Of those workers, it is estimated that less than 2% of them make a living wage. This leads to workers living below the poverty line and the European Parliament has even described the conditions of factory workers in Asia as "slave labor". Many garment workers work up to 16 hours a day, 7 days a week. The textile industry also uses child labor particularly because it is often low-skilled, so children can be exploited at a younger age."



THINK PINK



BREAST CANCER
AWARENESS MONTH

NOTE FROM THE HORIZONS TEAM

Breast cancer affects millions of women every year, and it remains the most commonly diagnosed cancer worldwide. In 2022 alone, 2.3 million women were diagnosed, and 670,000 lost their lives. It accounts for roughly one in every four cancer cases among women. These numbers are huge, but the impact behind them is even bigger; families, routines, and entire lives changed in ways we often don't see or talk about enough.

Since October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month, we have decided to include a small 'Think Pink' section in this October–November edition to help raise awareness and remind readers why conversations about breast cancer are important. It's something that impacts so many people, directly or indirectly, and understanding it even a little more can genuinely make a difference.

And really, that's the point of adding this section. To make space for something important, because awareness starts with just knowing, and sometimes knowing is all someone needs to take the next step for themselves or someone they care about.

Happy reading,
The Horizons Team

BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH BY TIA MOHAMMED SAEED MOHAMMED SALLAM

Some people say their thoughts come in neat, straight lines – like a road trip with planned stops and a working GPS. Mine? Oh, mine show up like a glitter explosion at 3 a.m., halfway between a philosophical crisis and a meme. I'll be thinking about the meaning of life one second, and the next I'm debating whether cats secretly judge us for our fashion choices. (Spoiler: they totally do.)

I've always believed the best ideas come from a little chaos – not the kind that burns your toast or makes your room look like a crime scene, but the kind that sparks creativity. My notebook, my brain, my world – they're all messy in the most beautiful way. Every random thought I jot down, every doodle or dramatic half-sentence – it's like a leaf from this weird, colorful tree that's me.

Sometimes I overthink everything (okay, most times), and sometimes I laugh so hard I forget what I was stressing about. I love mixing deep thoughts with jokes, like, "What if we're all just side characters in someone else's dream?" but also, "Anyway, do you think ramen counts as a personality trait?" That's basically how my brain runs on vibes and curiosity.

I don't think life's about having perfect pages. It's about scribbling, crossing things out, spilling some coffee on the edges, and still calling it art. My reflections might not always make sense, but they feel like me – full of humor, honesty, a little fire, and a whole lot of sparkle.



So yeah, this is my leaf – a mix of deep thoughts, random chaos, and warm energy. It's not perfect, but it's real. And maybe that's what makes it beautiful. Every October, the world turns pink – not just for style, but for strength. It's Breast Cancer Awareness Month, a time to honor fighters, survivors, and the people who stand beside them. The pink ribbon isn't just a decoration; it's a symbol of courage, hope, and love that refuses to fade.

Thinking pink means more than wearing a color. It's about caring enough to learn, to speak up, to remind others that early checkups can save lives. It's about supporting those who are fighting and remembering that no one should battle alone.

Pink used to be soft, sweet, and simple. Now, it's powerful – a reminder that even in hard times, we can shine, unite, and heal together. ❤️

BREAST CANCER SURVIVORS EXHIBITION

BY HARI RATHAN

This October, in honor of Breast Cancer Awareness Month, Art on Main Gallery in Dallas hosted The HeART of Resilience, an inspiring art exhibition and healing initiative for breast cancer survivors. The event brought together local artists, cancer survivors, and nonprofit support groups to explore personal journeys of healing, resilience, and empowerment through creativity.



The exhibition was curated by Andrea Lamarsaude, a two-time breast cancer survivor and founder of Art on Main, in collaboration with survivor-advocate Farahana Kassam of Flaunt Flat Revolution and mixed media artist Rachel Larlee. Together, they aimed to create a space where survivors could express their stories visually while also providing an opportunity for community connection and reflection.

Prior to the exhibition, participants attended a therapeutic art retreat led by Larlee and psychologist Alyssa Strenger. During the retreat, survivors explored their experiences using mixed media, stitching, fabric, and canvas. The goal was to transform personal stories of struggle and recovery into artwork, offering participants a mindful and creative approach to processing their journeys. The pieces created during the retreat became part of an interactive installation at the exhibition, allowing visitors to engage with the healing process themselves.

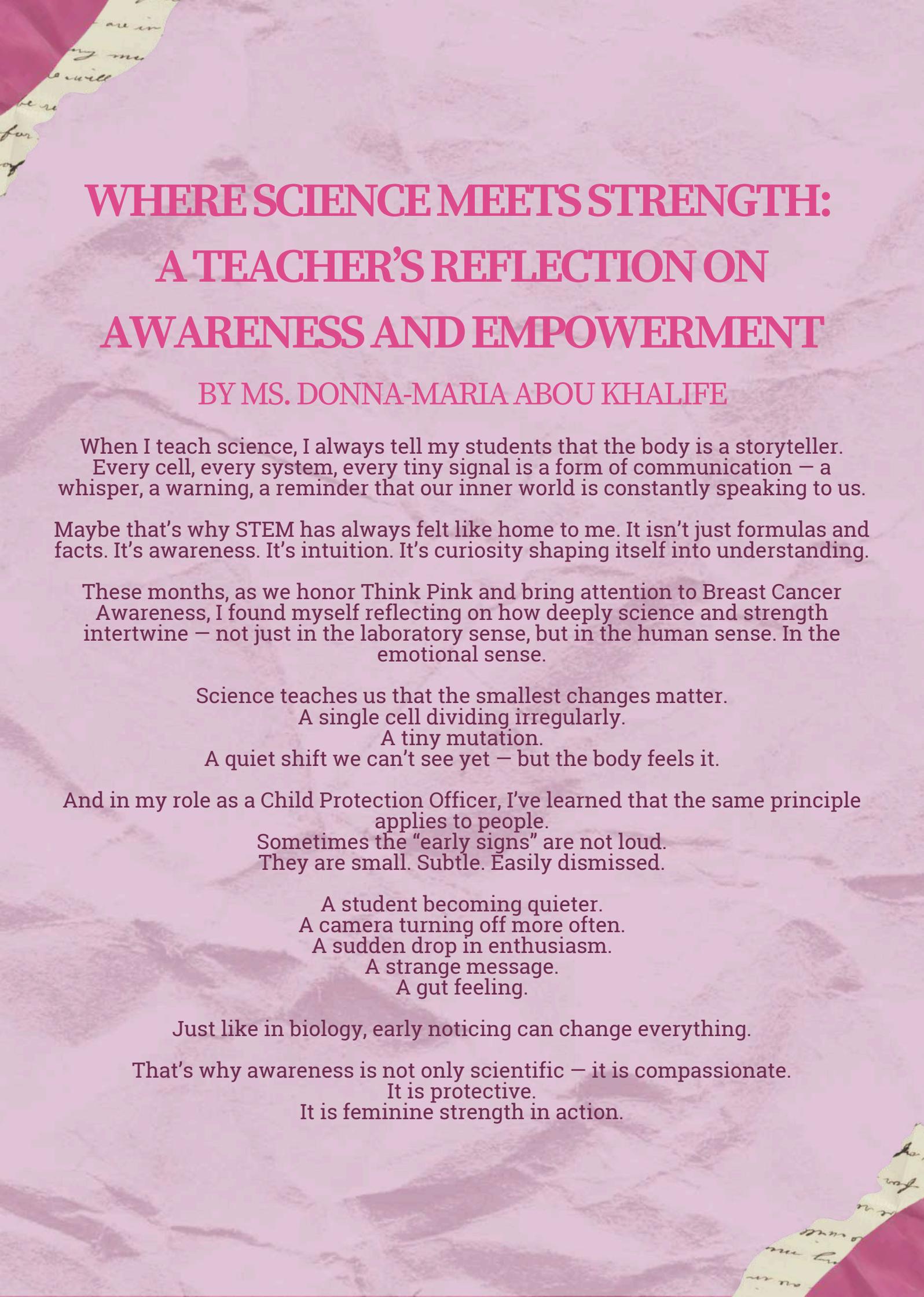
The exhibition featured a wide range of art forms, including painting, sculpture, drawing, photography, ceramics, and mixed media. Each work reflected not only the survivors' personal experiences but also a broader celebration of strength, body positivity, and self-expression. Young artists and emerging creators were invited to participate alongside seasoned professionals, creating a diverse dialogue on resilience, transformation, and empowerment.

Farahana Kassam, co-founder of Flaunt Flat Revolution, emphasized the importance of informed choices for women with breast cancer and highlighted how her nonprofit supports survivors in reclaiming confidence and self-acceptance. Rachel Larlee shared how art can be an incredible tool for mindfulness and healing, offering participants a reflective and comforting space to process their experiences.



Visitors to the exhibition were invited to participate in the interactive installation, creating their own contributions to the artwork. At the exhibition's closing reception on November 7, the installation will be auctioned, with proceeds supporting local nonprofit breast cancer support organizations, further extending the impact of this collaborative and empowering initiative.

The HeART of Resilience is a powerful example of how art, community, and personal storytelling can come together to celebrate courage, inspire hope, and support survivors as they embrace life after breast cancer treatment.



WHERE SCIENCE MEETS STRENGTH: A TEACHER'S REFLECTION ON AWARENESS AND EMPOWERMENT

BY MS. DONNA-MARIA ABOU KHALIFE

When I teach science, I always tell my students that the body is a storyteller. Every cell, every system, every tiny signal is a form of communication – a whisper, a warning, a reminder that our inner world is constantly speaking to us.

Maybe that's why STEM has always felt like home to me. It isn't just formulas and facts. It's awareness. It's intuition. It's curiosity shaping itself into understanding.

These months, as we honor Think Pink and bring attention to Breast Cancer Awareness, I found myself reflecting on how deeply science and strength intertwine – not just in the laboratory sense, but in the human sense. In the emotional sense.

Science teaches us that the smallest changes matter.
A single cell dividing irregularly.
A tiny mutation.
A quiet shift we can't see yet – but the body feels it.

And in my role as a Child Protection Officer, I've learned that the same principle applies to people.
Sometimes the "early signs" are not loud.
They are small. Subtle. Easily dismissed.

A student becoming quieter.
A camera turning off more often.
A sudden drop in enthusiasm.
A strange message.
A gut feeling.

Just like in biology, early noticing can change everything.

That's why awareness is not only scientific – it is compassionate.
It is protective.
It is feminine strength in action.

Where Science Meets Strength: A Teacher's Reflection on Awareness and Empowerment

I think of the girls in my classes – bright, curious, intelligent. I want them to understand science not as something distant or intimidating, but as something that belongs to them.

Something that protects them.
Something that gives them a voice.

In the STEM Club, when they experiment, build, ask questions, or simply reflect, they're not just learning content. They're building confidence.

They're learning the same mindset that supports early detection:
observe, question, notice, act.

And in Think Pink, we extend that same pattern to our well-being. We honor the women who fought, the women who survived, and the women who were loved.

We remind each other that listening to our bodies is a form of respect. We create space to talk – because silence never saved anyone.



My hope for this edition is that our students feel empowered by both science and self-awareness. That they understand how strong their bodies are – and how strong they themselves are.

That they realize awareness isn't fear; it's love.

It's protection.

It's knowledge meeting intuition.

Where science meets strength, we find empowerment. And we remind each other that we're not just learning about life – we're learning to live it with understanding, courage, and care.

By Miss Donna-Maria Abou Khalife
Teacher | Child Protection Officer | STEM Club Faculty Advisor

PINK RIBBONS IN MY NOTEBOOKS

BY MARISSA BULLARD

April 2nd, 2025

I skipped the law shadowing opportunity my dad set up during the weekend. I partied instead. I mean... It's fine, right? There's going to be plenty of internships later on. I've been offered many opportunities already. I don't know why I don't go, to be honest. Is it laziness? Is it the fact that I take these opportunities for granted and that I know there's going to be more in the future? I don't know, but like, whatever to be honest. I'll think about it later. I mean, the party was really eventful, so I feel like it's worth it. Live your life to the fullest, right? My outfit was so good. I was wearing a dress, short and cute. It even had a slit on the side up to my hip! Besides, they actually played good music for once. I was euphoric, no exaggeration. If my parents knew... God. If they knew, they would be pissed out of their minds. Wait, Brayden sent me a text. Oh my god. He's literally the hottest guy in the school. During the party... I don't even want to say what happened between us two. He looked so good the whole time, though. Wait, let me text him back. Okay, I'm back, anyways, they keep telling me the same things over and over again, as if I don't already know. "Jasmine, you have to think about the future," "Jasmine, you have to spend less time on your phone and appreciate what's going on in front of you," Jasmine this, Jasmine that. Can they just shut up? Their words have been engrained in my subconscious for a long time now. Even my friends are starting to say the same thing. "Jasmine, you have to lock in," COME ON! I know, why does everybody have to keep telling me the same things? I get good grades and I show up when it matters, I just party, so what? Can't a girl have some fun? Damn.

April 15th, 2025

I was walking in school as usual, then you know what I saw? I see Brayden talking and giggling with... SARAH?! What the hell?! I'm so confused right now. He sweet talks me all the time when we call or text... Is he playing me? I'm not going to entertain this further. Out of anyone, Sarah? Sarah over ME? He picks Sarah, who doesn't even care about her future over someone like me who's actually going somewhere? You have to be kidding me right now, because that is a huge insult to me. Sarah barely shows up to class and doesn't even try! At least I get good grades. At least I work out, okay? Sarah has a D for all of her classes.

This is actually insane. I am so perplexed. Whatever, I can't keep thinking about it even more than I am now. Can't give energy to manipulators like Brayden and his little assistant Sarah. Also, Lila told me today that Olivia has been talking about me behind my back. I know Olivia's not like that, I've known her for years, so I don't know what Lila is spewing. What if Lila's right though? I don't know. I guess the most reasonable thing to do would be to be wary of both of them. Ew, Shawn just sent me a snap. Let me see what it is... Oh my god. Ew, why would he send me that? My eyes need a deep cleansing. It doesn't even look good. Also, I've got a law seminar my parents signed me up for this weekend. I might actually go, since I do have to compensate for the last one. Depends if I have other plans. You know, I was thinking about my future. Am I doing the right thing? Partying instead of going to the shadowing opportunity? I'm only in high school though, cut me some slack. Besides, I've got other things to worry about. I'm still confused about Olivia and Lila, but I don't have to keep thinking about that. I already have a solution to that issue.

May 14th, 2025

I haven't written in this for a while, I got distracted by things happening in my life. Let me write what has happened since the last time I wrote in this. I ended up going to the law seminar, it went well. See, I'm not a bad student. Lila and Olivia seem to be acting normal, and I ended things with Brayden. I don't like him anymore after seeing how he operates with women. Now Brayden and Sarah are always together. It makes me want to gag every time I see them, but what can I do about it? It's like they amplify it whenever I'm around, because it's always so over the top. I've been feeling drained for the past week though, I don't know why. Probably because of my stupid parents. They keep pressuring me, saying "Jasmine, you're going to graduate next school year, you have to be serious and stop playing around," like okay? I know, now what? I still get 8 hours of sleep, so I don't know what's going on with me. It's probably just school and family stress. Also, I was in the shower last night, and I felt a lump in my breast. I hope it's not what I think it is. I googled it, which is always a bad idea, and it mentioned breast cancer, but there's no way. I'm like, too young for that, so it's almost impossible for me. It's probably because my period might be coming soon, nothing serious. Now that I have no guy to obsess over, going to school feels like a chore. Crushes are a way for me to romanticize school, so now that I don't have one, it doesn't feel as fun. School's going to end in a month anyways, so I don't have to deal with this any longer. I can't wait for summer, my friends and I are going to have so much fun. I swear on my life. Lila's going to go to summer camp though, since her parents signed her up for it. Sad, right? Thank god my parents aren't THAT crazy.

May 21st, 2025

I'm so tired. Maybe scared. I'm scared. The lump's not gone. I told my mom about it. Appointment is tomorrow.

May 22nd, 2025

Life doesn't feel real right now. The doctor diagnosed me with breast cancer. No way in hell I have breast cancer, I'm 16. I don't believe it. If you act like it's not there, then it's not there. My heart sank when the doctor diagnosed me. It didn't show on the outside, though. My parents let out a long sigh. Were they disappointed? Did they think I did something wrong? God, I even think I failed somehow. Am I still going to go to school? How will my friends even think about this? Do I even tell them? I guess I could tell Olivia or Taylor. Probably Olivia, since she's the one I've known for the longest. Not now though, I still don't know what to think about all of this... how am I supposed to feel? This is the first time Google was right. I hate that it's right. I hate that stupid doctor and I hate my parents and I hate that my body did this to me. I hate that I'm sick. I hate feeling weak. No normal high school girl is supposed to deal with this! Am I not normal? Why did God do this to me? Why not some other girl! God, why not Sarah? I mean, I feel tired, yeah, but I can still function. I can still act normal. I have to. I hope I don't have to go bald, I feel like I would look ugly bald. Ugh, I hate everything that's going on. When I came back home, my parents tried to talk to me but they didn't know what to say, it was insanely awkward. They moved on quickly and started to make calls to family members and research frantically while I just sat there, watching them. No words of encouragement? No hugs? Nothing? They give me hugs whenever I do well in school and encourage me for tests and stuff, but not for this? It makes me want to cry, but I don't want to be even weaker than I am now. I just hope that my friends will be there for me during all of this. I'm going to tell Olivia soon.

June 1st, 2025

I just had my second doctor's appointment today. Turns out, the cancer cells are in my lymph nodes now, and I have to get chemotherapy. As if my life couldn't get even worse. I don't want to be bald, I'm going to start wearing wigs when I turn bald so I don't have to face the pain of looking at myself and being reminded of the fact that I'm sick. I also told Olivia about my breast cancer at school. She hugged me and gave me a few words of encouragement, something I wish my own parents would've done. My friends are even better than my own parents at consoling me, that's just crazy on their end. Pity is only fine when it comes from her. She was always so understanding towards me and my problems, and always listened to whatever I had to say. I knew I could trust Olivia. We've been friends since freshman year for a reason, after all. About school... I've been dissociated these past few days. I haven't been able to listen to the teacher at all, or let alone my friends. I'm always zoning out, thinking about nothing most of the time.

My friends check up on me, but I always brush it off and say that I'm fine, even though it's clear that I'm not. They let it pass though. End of the year exams came a few days ago, and I couldn't focus at all. To be honest, I was too tired to even study for the exams, but I knew most of the material that was in the test, so I hope I at least passed.

June 7th, 2025

Results for the test came in. I got a B for most subjects except for English, which I got an A. For once in a while, I feel sort of proud of myself. My parents didn't react like they did before to the news though. They just gave me a quick thumbs up and a "Good job," before continuing whatever they were doing before. They used to hug me, what happened? Aren't they supposed to be more supportive since I'm sick? I'm confused by their behavior. So confused.

June 10th, 2025

This might've been the worst last day of school in my life. Olivia revealed to everybody that I got diagnosed with breast cancer. Some of the guys started laughing, including Brayden, god. I felt so humiliated. None of the girls laughed, they just looked at me pitifully. I hate both of those reactions. Lila and Taylor are angels though, they came running to me and consoled me. They even defended me in front of everybody else. I should've listened to Lila earlier about how Olivia was a snake. Why didn't I? Jasmine, why didn't you? At least I removed her on every social media platform. I'm never talking to her ever again, it's over. All those years of trust are destroyed, and for what? For the boys to laugh for a few moments. She can have them. My future husband would never laugh at the fact that I had breast cancer. Tomorrow I start chemo, by the way. I'm not ready to lose my hair, but I guess it's time to say goodbye to these precious brown locks, but I guess it's time to say goodbye. The fact that I have breast cancer still didn't even hit me yet. I spend all these days living in denial of the fact. I know that I do, but I don't. At this point, I don't think I'll ever process the fact that I do have breast cancer. Maybe it's better that way. I don't want to cry even more than I did today, I've cried enough, for God's sake. I feel so alone. There's just this feeling of loneliness that comes when you're faced with the possibility of dying. You realize that no one's really there for you. Sure, I have friends, but they're not going to be here for the summer anyway. My parents are still treating me the same as before I got diagnosed, talking about college and opportunities that I could take over the summer. Come on, don't they know that I'm sick? Hello? I hope they don't pull a Lila on me and send me to summer school. I don't think they can anyways, what am I saying? I'm going to turn into a hospital patient soon enough.

June 11th, 2025

I did my first chemo treatment today. I thought my hair would fall off all at once, but it seems to be fine for now. I went to the park after, just by myself. I sat down on a bench and watched the sunset. It looked more beautiful than it ever had during my entire life. The colors were vibrant, and the smell of fresh air... It felt so fresh. I don't know why, but watching the sunset for the first time with truly no distractions (Except for this one family that walked by laughing with each other. I wanted to scream at them.) made the fact that I had cancer finally process in my brain. I couldn't run away from the truth in denial anymore. It was the first time that I had cried like that in a long time. Tears were streaming down my face like a waterfall. I realize now how much of my life I had wasted by focusing on distractions like my phone and partying excessively. I hate who I was. God, I was such an idiot. I wasted everything. Even then, I still took everything for granted like the brat I was. I wasted all of those opportunities my parents gave me, even if I didn't want them. At least they cared enough to try. Why couldn't I appreciate the fact that they were trying? I regret letting my parents define my path. I wasted so much time... Why did I have to get cancer in order to realize my mistakes? Was that how entitled I was? My parents kept telling me to appreciate what was in front of me. I hated hearing it, but they were right, weren't they? God, they were right. I was always so preoccupied for some reason! Why didn't I ever realize which friends actually cared for me? I should've spent more time with Lila and Taylor. I never appreciated my health and my body, either. I never appreciated the moments where me and my friends were giggling together in class and the moments where my parents and I would talk normally during dinner... I was looking through my past journal entries today, the entries before I got diagnosed. Specifically April 15th. I was so close to addressing the problem, then I just... I just dismissed it! In order to talk about something as unimportant as school drama! Why was I focusing on things that wouldn't have mattered in a few years? For example, the whole thing with Sarah and Brayden, and Lila and Olivia... why was I wasting my time, my energy, and my life by thinking about it?! Thinking and caring about people who didn't care about me back, spending energy on useless topics instead of focusing on what really mattered... Why, Jasmine? I don't know... I don't have an answer. I just... I just wasted it all. Now all I can do is sulk and reminisce about my mistakes and all the time that I took for granted while I was in a perfectly healthy body. When you're faced with the possibility of knocking on death's door, it forces you to think about topics that you've repressed for god knows how long. Everything seems to come out, which is a blessing and a curse at the same time. I feel helpless, and there's nothing I can do about it.

June 25th, 2025

I did another chemotherapy session last week. My hair's starting to fall out. I washed my hair last night, and clumps of my hair were falling out. I've decided not to get a wig. I researched chemotherapy, and it said that all hair from the body falls out, not only the hair on the head. I think I would look pretty stupid with no eyebrows or eyelashes and a full head of hair. I just have to accept the fact that I have cancer. It's the truth, and I can't run away from it anymore. I argued with my parents today, it was horrible. I told them my dream isn't to pursue a career in law, and they went berserk. They called me all sorts of names, for example, calling me a failure and useless... It might just be because they're angry and stressed out from all that has been happening, but it still hurts. I'm sick, and they know that. I'm sick, and they still have the audacity to argue with me and stress me out even more. If they keep this up, I'm going to snap. I'm going to tell them everything. Every time they hurt me, every time they made me feel as if I wasn't enough, maybe then they'll finally get it. A part of me still wants their approval, even now. Even after everything. God, why can't I just stop caring about what they think? Even though I don't know what I want to do instead, I know that I don't want to do law. I keep going to the park and thinking about my life, beating myself up about how I was in the past and also thinking about how I would spend my last months if this is really the end. I keep replaying this one memory. Joshua's party last year. Walking down the streets, the streetlights turned everything orange. My feet hurt because of the heels. I didn't care though. I felt alive. I miss it. I hope that I'll be able to live those memories once again, and make even better memories with the knowledge that I have now. If I even survive, that is. My body is weak. It's taking all of my concentration to even write this entry. My hands and feet feel numb. I hope that this will go away soon.

July 4th, 2025

I wished we could have spent the 4th of July as we always did, watching the fireworks. Instead, my parents and I fought. I told them everything. How every achievement felt conditional. How they hugged me for good grades but barely looked at me when I got diagnosed. I asked them two questions, "Why do you only love me when I'm succeeding?", and "Why do you still argue with me when I'm faced with the possibility of dying?", they had no answer. They were silent. They kept looking at me and then back at each other. My mom then started to break down, fully body sobs. I've never seen that from her. My dad started to console her. I feel partly guilty for making her cry like that, nobody wants to be the cause of their mother's pain, but I feel partly freed too. Freed from all of these thoughts that I kept for so long, freed from the pain that I kept inside... They ended up hugging me at the end, but it didn't feel the same as when they had hugged me before. Now I felt nothing. Does chemotherapy turn you numb? Because I feel more numb than ever. I just hope that they change for the better after that conversation. I had a brief conversation with Lila over the phone.

Seems summer camp wasn't as bad as we thought, she seems to be having fun with some new friends she made there. I'm glad that she's happy. She checked in on me and I lied to her. I don't like lying, but I did it anyway. I lied to her and said that I was doing all fine. I'm the opposite of fine right now, but I didn't want to ruin all of the fun that she's having at summer camp. I wish I could spend this summer normally. Instead, I'm stuck with a sick body and parental issues. Funny. Happy

4th of July.

July 10th, 2025

I'm bald. Not a single hair in my body survived. Sort of feels freeing, not having to worry about bad hair days or greasy hair. Why am I lying to myself? I look hideous. Every time I look in the mirror, I'm reminded of the state that I'm in, and it makes me feel horrible. My parents definitely changed in a way, but it's not in the way that I wanted. They treat me like I'm a bomb. It's like they're always walking on eggshells. What I wanted was for them to treat me with some decency, to treat me like their daughter. I just wanted unconditional love, no matter what state I was in. I don't even know if I should confront them about it. I feel like I'm just finding issues to be mad about. I mean, they're not arguing with me anymore, right? That's a plus. It's not what I wanted, though. Why can't you stop arguing with me while not treating me as fragile glass? I know I'm weak right now, but it's been known that I hate pity and babying. At this point, just feed me with a spoon like I'm a baby. On a different note, I've started to appreciate the world more. Whenever I go on walks, I look at the architecture and just spend a moment appreciating the world that us humans built. These might be the last few months I spend in this beautiful world, so I spend every second appreciating what I already have. I stopped beating myself up about how I was in the past. There's nothing that I can do to change how I was. I can only redeem myself in the future. That is, if I survive. I started to draw and paint. It's one of the only things that I can do while on chemotherapy. I enjoy it quite a lot, it's a way for me to release my feelings, displaying my soul on canvas. Why haven't I done this before? Guess I was too preoccupied with other things, but as I said before, I can't do anything about what I did in the past. I've reached the stage of acceptance. I made a painting. It's a painting of the sunset that I watched in the park. The moment where the fact that I had cancer finally processed in my mind and I broke down. I'll keep it up in my room to remind myself of how strong I am for going through all of this.

August 3rd, 2025

I'm in remission now. Thank god. My body feels more alive, less numb than it has in months, but I still miss my hair. The doctor said the symptoms of my cancer have decreased drastically, which made me feel relieved. They hugged me, unlike when I got my diagnosis. Funny, right? My parents seem to be relieved too. I feel happy, but I don't know... I'm scared, I guess. Scared of what's going to happen next with everything. How are my friends and my family going to treat me after this? The same as before, or will they never treat me the same ever again? What am I going to do after I get better? What am I going to plan to pursue? I don't know what comes next. That scares me. A part of me feels undeserving to have lived while others have not. Why me? Why someone who has neglected many responsibilities in the past? I was a selfish person, but I thank the doctors and God for this opportunity to redeem myself from my past mistakes. I sort of feel a need to redeem myself, to live life to the fullest because my past self didn't. I'm scared of wasting my life again.

September 20th, 2025

School opened last week. I bought a wig since my hair hasn't completely grown back yet, but my eyebrows and my eyelashes are back thankfully. Well, to answer the question about how my friends and family are treating me after beating cancer... not that well. I'm not satisfied. My friends are babying me, just like my parents still are. It's annoying, I want to be seen as someone who can be respected because of all that she has gone through, not someone to pity. My parents seem to be overcompensating from how they acted while I was sick. They keep spoiling me with showers of gifts, even though it's not what I want. What I really want is to be treated humanely by everybody around me. It feels alienating. I'm grateful for surviving the cancer, but I'm burdened. I'm burdened with the question about what I'm going to do next. I'm still figuring it out. I found a few things that I like to do. I seem to like a variety of things, actually. I joined the science club, I love to experiment with things. I also play guitar and I still paint. I look at that painting that I made every night before I sleep. It's a reminder of how far I've come, and I'm thankful of my past self for making it. I feel more alive than before I got sick, I feel like getting sick was a situation that I needed to go through in order to start living my life. You never realize what you have until you almost lose it. I feel different though, I look at life in a different perspective. I keep having this mindset of doing what I would if I was living my last months on earth. It helps me, but it makes me unable to stop thinking about the possibility of dying. Nobody realizes that you could die at any moment, and that life is a thing that you should cherish until it's too late. I hope that one day people will see me for who I am now, not just the girl who had cancer. For now, I'll focus on finding what I really love and living life to the fullest, even if it feels like compensating for my past self. I don't know who I'm becoming. The old Jasmine is gone, and the new one is still forming. Some days that feels freeing, others, it feels terrifying.

But I'm here. I'm alive, and I guess that's enough for now.

■ MANAGING EDITOR'S NOTE ■

As the final leaves turn to November's thoughtful gold, we reach a moment of necessary pause. This season of autumn, defined by transition and reflection, reminds us that growth follows quiet letting go. Our entire edition has demonstrated that the search for understanding requires both purposeful action and intimate attention.

The work of our delegates in the IDOS MUN was a call to action, reminding us that "Education is not only about textbooks or classrooms but access to equality, safety, and a real chance to grow." This commitment to a "lasting framework for sustainable development" shows us the power of collective purpose.

This external focus is incomplete without internal awareness. Miss Abou Khalife's reflection in Think Pink  teaches us that in both science and life: "The smallest changes matter... Early noticing can change everything." Her message is clear: Awareness is not fear; it's love and protection. We must listen better, as the STEM article on BCIs urged, for what we pay attention to becomes what we build. The personal journey shared in the special submission reinforced this, finding profound truth in the moment where denial broke, and a simple sunset made clear the regret of wasted time.

Ultimately, autumn is our chance to gather the lessons from the year, the "leaves in our notebook," and prepare for the future. The elegant complexity of General Relativity and the simple tragedy in the creative piece "Helen of Troy and Sparta," where Helen whispered, "Menelaus... what have I done?" both remind us that all grand systems and events rest on personal choices and consequences.

A new beginning is never truly new; it is merely a shift in perspective. As we embrace the wisdom of this season, let us reflect on the enduring cycle of time.

As the poet William Butler Yeats said:

"Every beginning is but a continuation."

And similarly, every end is but a beginning.

**Until next month,
Shreya Maharaj Chettiar
Managing Editor**



THANK YOU FOR READING!



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