



THE
SPINE

Step into Reality

The Good, the Bad and the Yanni

Internship

iPhone 7

The Martian: the Book or the Movie?

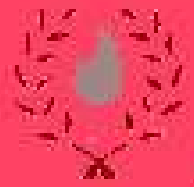
December 2016

ISSUE

07

"AN EXCITING , IMPASSIONED PLAY ABOUT HUMAN ISOLATION &
THE WRENCHING PROBLEMS OF COMMUNICATION WITHIN A FAMILY

FEBRUARY 27,
2017



Cat on a Hot Tin Roof

Tennessee Williams

TWO BROTHERS AND THEIR CATTY WIVES
BATTLING FOR THE FAMILY INHERITANCE. "

THE SPINE

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THE SPINE MAGAZINE



THESPINEABS



THESPINEABS



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Editor's Letter

Welcome readers!

I guess there's one thing good about starting a new year at school, and that's without a doubt the release of yet another issue of the Spine!

We have to be frank, The Spine has pretty much been our savior amidst all our applications, IAs, and exams, so thank you to all you zany readers for allowing us to do what we love to do once again for the 7th time!! (*screams internally*).

Given that we're all going through this "interesting" (or insanely stress-ful) few months together at school, we thought that we might give you a guys a sneak peek into our sleep deprived, video game/movie/book obsessed, and pun-filled lives. And with that, maybe we can even brighten up your days with

our admittedly bizarre anecdotes and life tips (which we don't necessarily recommend you al-ways take).

This is why it only seemed fitting that this issue's theme be "Stepping in-to reality", also known as stepping into a weird labyrinth of things you really don't want to deal with but sort of have to, to later do all the things that you actually want to do.

The thought of "stepping into reality" may seem intimidating, but hey, if we can fake it till we make it, so can you!

Kind Regards,
Elea Taffet & Janine Hadidi
Editors of The Spine

Hello there lovely readers, Seasons Greetings and welcome to another fantastic issue of The Spine!

This term our team have been pondering what it means to 'step into reality..'

From a blatant refusal to grow up and put aside childish antics (although, come on, who doesn't enjoy a Disney singalong), and the very real worries of IB students about whether they can manage to get through tomorrow, never mind the full two years, to the proactive, albeit scary, journey of following passions into internships, your faithful Spine team have got it all!

We also take a look at the very first time international star Yani came to Jordan to give a concert and settled not one but two age old debates! You'll also find out about how to enter the Shakespeare film competition, pitching your talents against students all over the world, as well as the upcoming production of A Cat on a Hot Tin Roof!

All I can say, dear reader, is get yourself a cup of tea and settle in for a real treat.

Don't forget, we're always on the lookout for new talent, whether as staff writers or freelancers. Meetings are held every Monday, 3:15 - 4:45 in the Film and Media room, and yes, we have pizza!

TTFN,
Miss Gill
xoxo

The Good, the Bad and the Yanni

Written by: Rand El Muhtadi

Earlier on in the year, I had the opportunity to go see Yanni live at the Citadel. I concur, I was skeptical because Yanni was a musician that I never listened to, I was expecting old classical music and I thought that I would be getting bored. I was surprised by a completely different outcome. The music was varied all throughout the concert, it had classical music, and it had energetic music. It pretty much had everything and it was epic. As the title says, I will outline all the good, the bad and the ugly from my first concert experience.

The Good:

The good is obviously Yanni. The music performed was so fluid, so easy to listen to and lose yourself in. The pacing of the track list was perfect because he played smooth soothing music and then he would play a more energetic tune to maintain the audience's attention. The music he chose for the concert highlighted not only the musical genius that he is but it accentuated the musical brilliance of his orchestra. The drummer played a solo that lasted for more than 5 minutes, the violinist played a piece which would be usually played by an electric guitar, and the trumpeter actually had a main part. It was beautiful because all of the members and Yanni complimented each other so well. They were a united front that was cohesive, everything worked together perfectly as if the concert was a machine and every member was a gear. It was absolutely fantastic and in a way, it was cathartic.

The Bad:

Yes, unfortunately there is a bad part. I am going to be frank, but the organization of the event was horrendous. In the beginning, we had to wait for half an hour at the meeting point, (which was in the middle of the street might I add), with people practically squashing each other trying to get as close as possible to the bus so that they can get in. as soon the

bus pulled up, everyone trampled anyone they could. Feet were stepped on, people were being pushed in all areas. And don't even get me started on the girl who started screaming shrilly at everyone because she did not get on the bus first. Once we got on the bus. My parents and I were separated, sat in different seats and we did not move for half an hour because of one guy who was literally standing in front of the bus protesting because he did not get on the bus. Later on, we took around an hour to get to the Citadel and we already missed three songs. So to the organizers I just want to say, I will never forgive you.

The Ugly:

The ugly and the most disappointing was the audience throughout the entire concert. We had an aisle seat, therefore we were subjected to the ultimate disturbance, people going in and out of their seats and it was so annoying considering they were ruining the view with their passing. And the part which broke my heart. While Yanni and the orchestra were playing, the stage was set out for the audience to see everything and vice versa. People were stomping loudly on the wooden stairs in order to leave. The one thing that was utterly disappointing though, was when Yanni was introducing his piece One Last Moment, he was talking about how precious life is and how we should cherish every single moment until the last one. After that speech, the whole crowd was stunned into silence, until the clanging of feet echoed throughout the stadium. People were taking advantage of this incredible opportunity just to say that they went. They had no consideration for the music whatsoever and that is the most saddening of all. So that was my experience, it was a weird one yet I loved it. Yanni obviously outweighed both the bad and the ugly and I am so grateful for the opportunity and I am thankful that Yanni was my first ever concert experience. What an incredible Greek masterpiece.

Why Hippies Should Rule the World

by Janine Hadidi

I Janine Hadidi, declare myself to all? be a fully fledged hippie. Yes, you heard me, a hippie! While hippies are known for being extraordinary, and often peculiar, I for one find them incredibly fascinating. Although I don't know exactly what it is about them that I love most, there's just something about the way they sit, chill, and talk that exemplifies everything I want to be.

Let's start at the beginning, shall we? Hippies first emerged in the late 1950s. Much like many of us, they decided that the military and/or homemaking life was not for them. By 1965 they were pretty much pioneers for pacifism and peace. Unfortunately, they're not remembered for that nowadays; they're viewed as the weird outsiders of society who spend their days lazing around and discussing peace all day.

I mean, sure, just like other groups of people, they most definitely have their kooks, but at the end of the day, don't we

I'm sure many of us wish we could adopt this lifestyle. Just think about it: spending your days under trees meditating and preaching for peace, love, and kindness to random strangers. Consider the notion that you could find yourself 'at one' with your surroundings and yourself.

The harsh truth however is that most of us aren't ready to give up all our possessions and items for a minimalistic and easy life.

Hippies emerged with great intentions of ending a time of war and making sure that none of us have to ever experience that again. Yet we have and we are!

You may not agree with me, but I dare you to look into yourself for a moment. You just might find a little hippie in you!



The Intern

Written By: Jude Barwalsa

A 17-year-old living abroad all alone for one month. No parents, no family Fridays, no Scottie (my Chihuahua); just a debit card and a teenager. Oh, and an internship at one of the world's best up-and-coming Arabic news channels, Alaraby TV.

This past summer was one to remember, from losing my passport to losing my mind at Selfridges, this experience was an exceptional one. Spending a month living like a London Local unquestionably gave me insight into The University life we're all looking forward to living (OK secretly dreading too). To this day, I still ask myself how on earth my parents sent their seventeen-year-old off to London unaccompanied, but I guess its basically training for when I'm off to university. I need to practise living alone, feeding myself, staying healthy and swiping the credit card- all vital elements of life.

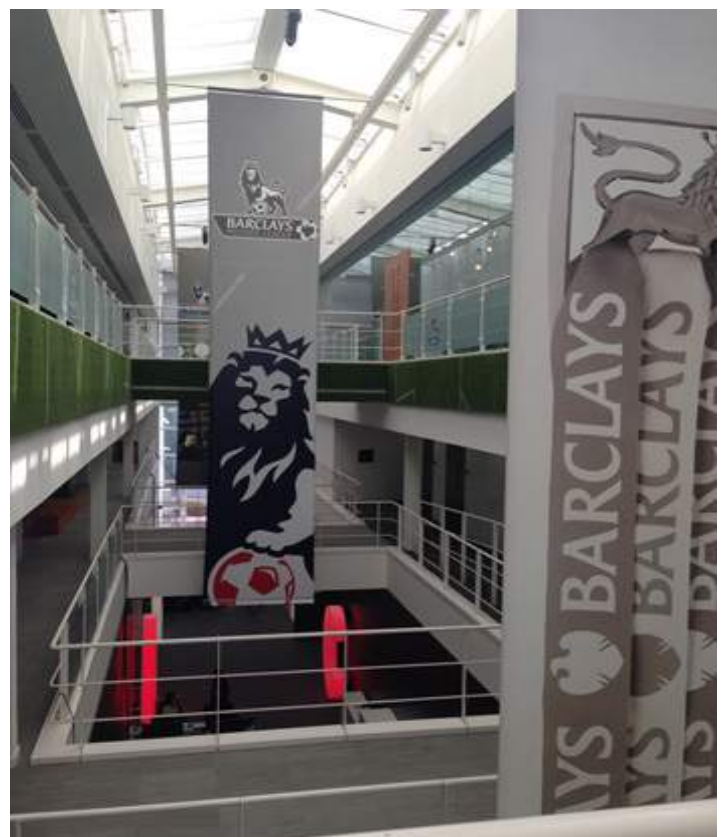
I had the incredible opportunity of interning at Alaraby TV, competitor Al Jazeera and BBC Arabic. Its unbelievable studios shared with the Premier League Productions/ BARCLAYS headquarters were certainly not too shabby. If only I had gone two days earlier, I would've bumped into the Chelsea F.C. team in the lobby, so yeah, not too shabby...

I worked with the producers of the programme and assisted in the scriptwriting, video editing, file ingestion, and footage archiving of their news programmes. The studio lots and offices were fifteen minutes away from Heathrow Airport, meaning they were pretty far from central London, which is where I was living. I used to wake up at 7AM, wash up and get dressed, go pick up my favorite Power Shake from Joe and the Juice, take the tube to Ealing Broadway, switch to the train and get off at Hayes and Harlington Station, then take the bus to the offices. In total, it took me around an hour and fifteen minutes to get to work, an hour if I was lucky.

The work experience I gained was indescribable, because there truly is nothing like first-hand experience and practical work. Sure, theory is helpful, but you can't compare it to personal experience and first-hand knowledge. Some things just aren't explained in the books, and the awareness you can gain from an internship is one of those things. To all the soon-to-be IB students, complete as many internships as you can because there is no better feeling than experiencing the career you want to pursue before university, you might even change your mind and realise it isn't your passion. But most importantly, the people you'll meet will stick with you

forever, they'll join you on your journey to success and help you grow into the person you wish to become (especially the managers, they might even ask for you to come back and work for them). This experience gave me a glimpse of what my life could be like after studying journalism; a life full of opportunity, travel and connections, which is the basis of most career paths, so make sure you have plenty.

Thank you to Alaraby for welcoming me into your family. I already miss our spontaneous two-hour lunch breaks, our pizza parties, our morning breakfasts together, and the hilarious conversations that made time pass faster than I had hoped. The irreplaceable personas that I have met still cross my mind daily. Thank you for teaching me how to get to work everyday, I couldn't have made it without you, literally. I am and will be eternally thankful for this opportunity, it helped me recognise my passion, make connections and become one step closer to a five-year Student Visa (dreadfully long process). How did I get such an opportunity you ask? I sent an application to the Manager of Training, including my CV and a covering letter, sent an application to the Manager of the channel, mailed them a package full of my previous experiences and had an interview with one of the producers. Just kidding! My mom knows a guy.



Film Interview

By: Hashim Ahmad

Film, is sadly, an undermined and somewhat unloved subject. It's like that one kid in school who has zits and smells weird but after you get to know him (and give him a stick of deodorant) turns out to be really nice and fun to be around. Ok, maybe not exactly like that, but you get the point. Well, in an attempt to tell everyone how great film is, I interviewed a student who went to a film internship and asked her these following questions.

HA: Hey Yara

YN: Hi Hashem

HA: So.... Let's start with the obvious questions.... Where was your internship and what was it about?

YN: My internship was in the royal film commission, it was basically learning about how to produce films, what goes on behind the scenes, as well as learning the risks and possibilities as well as opportunities that occur when a movie is made.

HA: Did you help in the making of any movies in your time at the internship?

YN: Yes, in fact we worked on two different movies. The first one was called "Qrban" and was directed by Yahya Abdullallah, and the second is called "Ghyda" and was directed by Mohamed Darraji.

HA: How would you describe your experience with this internship?

YN: It was a once in a lifetime and unforgettable experience, as the people who worked there were as enthusiastic as I was.

HA: Can you give us a small explanation about what did during your internship?

YN: My position in each film differed as in the "Qrban" movie I played the role of producer, where I was in charge of finding sponsors as well as finalizing budgets and arranging suitable equipment for the film. As for "Ghyda" I was the continuity supervisor, where I had to make sure that the actors looked the same in every scene as well as the props, angle of the cars. Overall I helped every department so that I can achieve a full experience in all aspects of film.

HA: Did you enjoy and learn from working with these two prestigious directors?

YN: That was my favorite part of working in my internship, because I learned so much from each director, as each director had their own stories and experiences to tell. Although I didn't like one director's style, the way that the style was created still taught me so many ways of creating films as the style has very unique transitions and a creates a very peaceful way of looking at the film.

HA: Thank you for your time.

YN: It was my pleasure.



Oldies are Goldies!

Written By: Rand El Muhtadi

Ah. Remember all the good days of the past. Those days where we had more love, more sincerity and more simplicity. Some may consider simplicity to be a bad thing, for me I consider simplicity as vulnerability. And everything had much more of that back then. When I think of oldies, I immediately think of music. 20 years ago, we had two of the most emotional songs you will ever hear: "I Will Always Love You," and "My Heart Will Go On." I just want to know, what happened?

Lyrics:

I remember when music actually used to have words, words to sing along to, words to understand the meaning of the song. Now, everything I hear is literally made up from songs made with a machine, not even using a real instrument. I am okay with songs that have a bit of EDM, but then again use it in moderation, don't make it into an entire song just filled with pulses and electronic riffs. I get that some of them may be great songs for parties, but I want to relate to a song, really get the story behind. I can't do that with music produced by DJs. I want to feel, let me feel.

Melodies:

We have to admit. All the melodies and the tunes we hum come from the past. How is it that many of us know the iconic clap from the Friends theme song? Back then, melodies were actually remembered and well-thought out.

Artists then concentrated on making

Joshua Forbes. Pink Floyd. Digital image. Pinterest. Web.

a mark that was suitable to their own sounds. Nowadays, how many allegations do you hear about artists making songs that sound similar to other songs. Everyone cares about making a hit, no matter the dirty trick they play, as long they make money off that song. Where is the individuality and the originality? Be creative, be unique.

Disclaimer:

Disclaimer! Disclaimer! Just because I wrote all of that does not mean I don't think that songs of today are cool. Some of them are very catchy and fun to listen to. Now I still stand by the fact that not many of it makes me feel but many of them I do know the words and I find them suitable for dancing. Sam Smith is great, Bruno Mars is great and obviously Adele and Sia are wonderful. But these are some of the very rare artists that tell a story through their songs. Why can't we make all songs like that? Songs are made to tell a story, it is not that hard to write about true, honest and genuine love instead of a fleeting promiscuous meeting. In a time where we all need vulnerability and emotion, why don't we convey it through an anonymous yet universal way. Music. It has always been said, that music is a gateway to your soul no matter if you are an avid listener or not. Let us revert back to simplicity. I've said all that there is to say. Oldies and Goldies because of the combination of simple words, melodies and emotions. This simplicity is enough for anyone it enough for people of the past and the people of the present.



Cats vs. Dogs

Written By: Elea Taffet

This is a huge debate, one that is very important may I add, that has been going on for way too long. It is finally time to settle this; cats or dogs? Here are just a few points that can resolve this debate once and for all (funnily enough, I am sitting right next to a cat when writing this, so you probably already know how this is going to turn out).

First off, I know that this isn't a real fact or a piece of evidence that is groundbreaking or anything, but cats are so darn cute! They can be really fluffy, and just make you want to make funny noises and faces at them all day long. To be fair, some dogs can be cute too, but most aren't treated this way; they are more treated as adults who people occasionally pet. Continuing on this train of thought, cats basically are there for people's enjoyment; they can't be trained like dogs can to fetch someone a can of soda or anything like that.

Next, this is an enormous point, one that can sway your judgment and make you pick one over the other; when people pet dogs, they are just happy to be there and stay where they are as long as they are being pet. However, when patting cats, it is a whole other story; they start purring. Now, I know what you are thinking -- that this is literally the most useless comment -- but honestly, it is a huge added bonus. It was been proven that when cats purr, it not only soothes and relaxes them, but it also has that same effect on the person petting the cat.

Furthermore, cats are just really calming to have around in the house, compared to dogs that are usually always full of energy (especially the younger ones) and never stop nagging you. The smaller dogs are the worst, not because of their size or anything, just because since they are so small, they get scared of many things, and they think that barking louder is the solution to defending themselves. What they don't realise in doing so, though, is that they just end up bothering everyone around them instead of actually scaring off the "threat".

Another very positive aspect about cats is that they are very independent beings. They don't need that much attention (if they are left alone at home, they don't destroy all of the furniture for example), and on the contrary to dogs, cats don't require a big outdoor space. This can become very inconvenient for dog owners, as it means they have to find a house (or apartment) with a garden or some kind of open space for their dog to enjoy itself. Dogs are much less independent than cats, and need to be shown affection a lot of the time, as well as needing to be kept entertained a lot. Also, since dogs can't stay locked up in a house for very long, their owners can't leave them home alone and expect their house to stay as clean and tidy as it was before.

If you hadn't noticed yet, I may be a bit biased towards cats. This is because there are a lot of cats that come to my house, and lucky for us, they come at an early age so we are able to quickly get them to become used to us and pet them. We get very attached to these cats, and can nearly even consider them as our own. Also, I have always been pretty scared of bigger dogs, as there was one we always saw in France every summer that I used to think was basically "attacking" me, although he was only trying to say hello (and was very excited to see people). I clearly remember one time when we went to see his owners (our very good friends). I had gone into the garden with the other kids and left my teddy on a chair. When I came back, my mom held up my teddy and told me the dog had chewed on it. I was devastated and started crying (even though it was completely fine, it just had some saliva on it), and I think this dog might have affected my opinion on this largely debated topic, even though the dog was extremely nice.

So here they are, all the facts clearly laid out in front of you, so choose wisely and defend your opinion (cats are better). I hope this settles the debate for you all, and that you now know to get rid of your pet and adopt a cat instead.

I Can't Do This

Written By: Bana Biltaji

As university application deadlines creep closer the nightmares of sitting for the pre-mocks and mocks in addition to the externals are now more vivid than ever. I have come to the deep dark conclusion that I really can't do this. I realise that I am splitting myself into several alter egos which I've allocated to separate tasks, however the impending doom still manages to cloud the thoughts of all these alter egos and I really can't do this. I am not joking when I say that I have spent hours doing nothing with my face poking out from underneath the duvet just wondering if time is real. It is times like these where work seems to pile up and the ending of one task summons the beginning of another. It is in times like these, that I find myself asking the most existential questions. When stressed, my mind is fueled to function with thoughts that would make Albert Camus himself proud. Was time constructed by humans? Will I ever truly be finished with IB? Are muffins just ugly cupcakes? All questions I've asked myself during all nighters...philosophical eh? Okay maybe not the question about the muffins but let's face it, stress eating is a reality. I am asked on several occasions by non-IB parents and students if I'm "having a good time so far", and I say non-IB for the reason that there has not been a single occurrence of an IB person talking to me about a "good time" for grade 12. In fact, you can tell in almost an instant that someone has experienced the

IB in one way or another simply by stating that you are part of the system...if they look at you like they'd look at a toddler spouting profanities, you know they've seen what it can do to people.

I really can't do this...I've had to fill out a university application prompt question about "the most challenging thing" I've done and I had to resist the deep urge to write "wake up the morning after handing in extended essay". I've got a video of me brushing my teeth with face cream the morning I finished the first draft of the extended essay. But how hard is the IB system really?

Now that I've expressed every last cliché about the average IB system students, I must admit that I probably will do this...though I've said over three times that I can't. I will do this because the fear of redoing the last year of IB is one worse than any pre-exam anxiety. The thought of not coming back next year with a visitor pass around my neck sends shivers down my spine. But I must say, my true primary motivator is the idea of never having to study IB calculus ever again.



My Childish Antics

Written by: Rand El Muhtadi

I admit. I am unbelievably tiny, I have a baby face and some may mistake me for 13 years old. It's definitely degrading to hear that you don't look your age, to hear that you don't look like the sophisticated person you claim to be. After years of being displeased with this phrase, I have learned to accept it. Who knows maybe my baby face will help me in the future? No plastic surgery to look younger? I could work with that. But the main reason why I'm happy to look younger than my age is that it gives me the advantage to act upon my childish antics. Yes, I'm openly confessing to being a childish teenager. GASP! Most people know me as shy and professional but when I'm around people I'm comfortable with, I become a child trapped in a teenage body and there's no chance of anyone getting to my reasonable side. Here are two of my many childish acts.

- **Singing Disney Songs, Loudly and Off Key:**

I take the pleasure of memorizing every single word from every Disney classic you will ever hear. *Mary Poppins*, I know it. *Beauty and the Beast*, I know it. I know them all. I will not hesitate to belt out any Disney song if I have the opportunity to and I will easily mimic the voices while doing so. For example: I will proudly sing *Be Our Guest* whenever we have someone over for dinner. I will sarcastically serenade a couple with *So This is Love* with no problem whatsoever. And I will sing *Part of Your World* whenever someone tells me about a system that is not IB. Basically, if you are hanging around me, you will be subjected to my loud off-key Disney singing and you had better accept it.

- **Putting my feet up:**

My feet have never been able to touch the floor when I sit down. Here I am, at 16 years old, and most times my feet are not planted onto the floor. Because of that, I tend to put my feet up whenever I take a seat. I sit cross-legged, I put one leg on the chair and put the other over

it, I sit with my legs to the side, I sit with my legs upright. I only ever sit with my legs up. I don't know why I do it, I just do. And I don't mind if people look at me weirdly, I will still do it because it is ingrained in me and I cannot do anything about it. The child in me has adjusted to dangling feet hovering over the chair and I resorted to putting my feet up from the start instead of feeling bad about my short stature. So far, it's working.

There is one thing I would like to discuss and that is being young at heart. Teenagers seem to think the older you look or act, the better. I disagree with that, don't be harsh on yourself by placing expectations of being a grown up. Allow yourself to be a child sometimes, experience that simple happiness that comes from trampolining, swinging and blowing bubbles. I feel giddy when I jump around with my cousins like a child, that innocent happiness brings about a high that lasts for days and memories that last a lifetime. We are all still young, -I know that most of us don't want to admit it but we are. Sadly we go out of our way to look mature. Girls use makeup excessively, boys start to physically hurt each other to prove that they're strong. Why? Why would you do that? You have the blessing of being young. Sooner or later, you're going to end up in a job, looking around, screaming "What I am doing with my life!" and you will wish you still had that young spirit to enjoy little things in life, like running through parks without a care in the world.

I wanted to look older, I wanted to seem more mature. But I was brought out of that reverie by my aunt who told me, "You have a choice. You can either act and look older than your age and miss out on life in many years, or you can play and enjoy life through all years." This is something that stuck with me and it encouraged me to embrace my childish antics. So I did and I'm happy that I did that.

The iPhone 7

Written By: Ali Ibrahim

About a month ago, the new iPhone model was unveiled. Apple said it is the best iPhone they've ever made. I'm glad they had to clear that up for me, since I didn't know that the newest iPhone would obviously be the best. All joking aside, Apple has introduced many changes to their latest flagship. The iPhone currently has the strongest processor in a mobile device, making it one of, if not, the fastest available mobile phone in the market. Apple has also revamped their camera, introducing a very complex system to produce the highest quality photos and videos. They've also made it water and dust resistant, which is a blessing for me, since I always jump in the pool with my phone in my pockets. Unfortunately they were overshadowed by one major change. Apple made a bold move to remove the 3.5mm headphone jack from the iPhone 7. Apple has called this move courageous and brave. However, others call their decision idiocy and pretentious with the sole intention of being different to everybody else. Nevertheless, I believe Apple's decision is rather interesting, but also fairly spontaneous.

As a Computer Science student and an aspiring electronic engineer I take a great interest in the newest technologies and innovations being introduced in our interconnected world. I welcome change, and I embrace new ideas with the sole request that it is convenient and not absolutely gimmicky. As we approach a more wireless world, developers and phone manufacturers are trying to ditch ports such as VGA's, USB, CD drives and SD cards. This is both a blessing and a curse. Removing these ports allows developers and engineers to work with more space. This means devices can be much more powerful, smaller and thinner. However, we have to trade power and efficiency for convenience. Having to connect from Bluetooth or adapters can be a huge pain and may be unreliable. Nevertheless I believe sacrificing ports for power is much more valuable in the long run.

I believe Apple removing the headphone jack isn't as big a deal as people make it out to be. The removal of the headphone jack is inevitable, and soon many phones will also remove them. Apple just happens to be a tad early in removing them. Fact of the matter is that ports always see an end to their life cycle sooner or later. The floppy disk has been dead for over 10 years, and now the CD drive is experiencing its death. The headphone jack is no different, and it is rather old technology dating back to the 1960's. In my opinion, the headphone jack is currently going through a slow and painful death like my motivation towards life. Putting that aside, I actually applaud Apple for their decision and I believe the iPhone 7 is a great phone with many great functions and capabilities. Nevertheless at the end of the day, no matter what Apple produces, people will always buy it if it has their logo on it.



Apple. iPhone 7 Plus. Digital image. Apple. Web.

Apple. iPhone 7 Plus Pink. Digital image. Apple. Web.



Ask Alice & Alex!



Welcome to Alex & Alice, the Spine's resident Q&A experts!

1. What is an IA even?

Alice: It is one of those "Internal Assessments" that help you learn all about perseverance! They are great for testing your abilities in critical thinking!

Alex: A tool used by the Spanish during the Inquisition to torture their victims until they converted, rumor has it that some still use this grisly practice in a local school.

2. How does one pass CS?

Alice: Always ask for help. Be dedicated and go to all your lessons. Focus! It is worth it.

Alex: Step 1: print a thousand pages of pure code
Step 2: proceed to eat the paper, results will show in 4-6 weeks.

3. Coffee or tea?

Alice: Tea! 100% all day.

Alex: On one hand you have a drink that will make you as energetic as a little kid high on candy canes, and on the other you have a drink that will make you feel like a depressed woman going through a mid life crisis. I'm gonna say coffee.

4. Who is the one with most power in the IB?

Alice: We are all a team here!

Alex: Niki, without a shadow of a doubt.

5. The cameras are always watching...

Alice: They are there to monitor suspicious events. They are there for your protection!

Alex: The administration is making a documentary that studies the behaviors of apes when they are placed under great amounts of stress, IB in a nut shell.

6. Why am I unable to manage my time?

Alice: Well, sometimes we are just too stressed. I'm sure your judgement is clouded by the stressful times you are facing. You can always ask your teachers for help, they are there to support you!

Alex: Why? Because you interact with people. You should cut off all connections with everyone you know, then you'll have loads of time.

7. How can I get food from the cafeteria? Everyone beats me to it.

Alice: Oh sweetie! I'm so sorry about that... you can always ask to go before the people in front of you, as long as you ask politely. Explain that you are very hungry and you don't usually get the chance.


Alex: The real question is why would you want food from the cafeteria, do you enjoy eating cat food?


8. Cactuses or Cacti? Octopuses or Octopi?

Alice: Ask an English major.

Alex: Ask Niki, if you have the courage to do so that is...

Ask Alice & Alex anything on SurveyMonkey!
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 The Spine Magazine

The Martian: the Book or the Movie?

Written by: Mika Taffet

Many seemingly unresolvable problems have been resolved, and today is the day for another resolution. The Movie or the Book? In an attempt to resolve this thousand-year-old problem, that could not even be settled by Aristotle and his mates, I will be using the best Book and Movie combo: The Martian. This was my favorite movie of last year, and hands down my favorite book.

But first, the movie. The movie is the story of an American astronaut, who supposedly died on Mars, and thus was left by his crew. He then attempts to survive until the crew come back to get him. It starred Matt Damon, which already makes it a great movie. But the movie was beautiful, and the story was very well played out. There was suspense the whole way through, and with CGI that good, you don't even need sound to appreciate the film. But then again, without sound, you would not be able to enjoy Mark Watney as much. His bullet-proof wit and his unstoppable sarcasm were that extra touch that made me rate that film with a solid 9.1/10. This is because it was a fantastic film, yet it was a bit too predictable, in a sense that we all knew that Mark Watney would come home safely. It was done in a fantastic way, with realistic suspense, and with correct science, which always makes for a great recipe. The only real drawback was the ending. It was too rushed, and you were left hungry for more, as if they were too lazy to finish off the script.

The book was probably the greatest book I have ever read. I would rate it at 9.9/10, just because some of the parts such as some journal entries were redundant, and one could easily go without reading them. This book was phenomenal in and out, and hands down my favorite read this year, if not the best (I've ever had.?) The book was a piece of gold, and I thoroughly recommend it to just about anyone who can read. The book well written, and it captivates you, like only a good ol' cage would. But it is the kind of cage that you would not dream of leaving. You really do get attached to the legendary Mark Watney, and he is even wittier and more sarcastic in the book. Andy

Weir, who has only written 2 books, really made this book an entertaining read. The science has been backed up to be accurate, and no-one would expect a man this good at physics, who was also a programmer before writing, to be this creative. The plot twists are fantastic, and the whole story is almost believable. The ending was way too abrupt though, but that is probably because I was in denial of finishing this book.

Now to the part that y'all have been waiting for, the war to end all wars, the answer to end all questions: The Movie or the book? As most would agree, the book wins once more. Adaptations are always worse, and seeing that there are very few Movie-to-Book adaptations, the book wins once more. For a first book, Andy Weir really went all out with an outrageously incredible book, and it was a blast to read. It is one of the rare books that made me beg for more at the end. That is mainly because both the book and the film had atrociously abrupt endings, and the ending was apology worthy, which was a disappointment for both parties. The only part that was better in the film was the horrendous ending, which was not as abrupt in the film. The Film once again over-dramaticized everything and left out some interesting specs of dialogue which would have taken a few seconds to include, and so I really is deceiving that Ridley Scott did not pick up on those details. Overall, the film was incredible, but the book was better, and this, unlike in The Martian, is a great ending to an age old question.



“Outliers” Review

Written by: Noor Abdel Nabi

I've never been a fan of “how to be...” books. Never have. Never will be. I don't understand the hype of some bloke telling you what to do to become something he probably isn't. But when it comes to Malcolm Gladwell, I just had to give it a go. I mean, it's coming from a guy who's supposedly one of the '100 most influential people'. Who knows? He might have a few tricks up his sleeve that he's willing to share. Well, to spare you the trouble of reading it, he doesn't. He'll spend 300 pages going on and on about how hard work is the key to success, supporting his seemingly scientific claims with a load of baloney. To put it in a gentler way, Christopher Chabris, US psychology professor accused him of “telling just-so stories and cherry-picking science to back them up.” And that, my friend, is exactly how he managed to write more than 300 pages and convince millions of people that his brilliant, innovative theories can actually help people become successful, while in fact, they're nothing more than claims that proved to be capable of duping his entire, gullible fan-base.

So why am I going down on this book so harshly? Personally, I started the book with a let-down. Not more than 30 pages in, Malcolm Gladwell had already told me that the odds are against me when it comes to my chances of being successful, since I was born at the end of the year. “Be open-minded,” my dad, who I can confidently say is the #1 member of Gladwell's gullible fan-base, told me “he doesn't mean it that way.” Well, guess what? There is no other way. He flat-out said it from the start: end-of-year children are simply much less likely to become successful. Nonetheless, I continued the book in an attempt to see if his words might become a bit more encouraging; after all, it's supposed to be a self-help book. He proceeded by referencing famous examples that had reached where they are through sheer hard work. From the Beatles to Steve Jobs, the examples he gives are seemingly

endless. Being the wannabe neologist he is, he comes up with several new terms to define his supposedly innovative ideas, along with the 10,000-hour rule which claims that any person who works 10,000-hours can become exceptionally successful regardless of what innate talent he may or may not possess. Seems legit, but no sooner had he published *Outliers* than an army of scientists began attacking him with solid proof that this rule is nothing more than a figment of Gladwell's imagination. You can't create a theory and justify it with 3 examples: it just doesn't work that way. I hate to be so traditional, but not everyone is born with Santana's guitar skills. Innate skills do matter. In fact, a recent study proved that practice accounts for just 12% of skill mastery and subsequent success. Other factors such as age, talent, passion, and intelligence tend to play much bigger roles than practice. And if science has proven it, then I'm afraid Gladwell's words won't do much to convince me otherwise.

So why do Gladwell's books attract so many readers? The answer is simple. He's a master at creating magnetic thesis' that you just cannot possibly not want to read his books. He has you at hello, then spends the rest of his book feebly attempting to keep you engrossed by using unproven theories to justify weak claims. I mean, look at all his books! *Blink* tells you that trusting your gut instinct is the best thing you can do, “*The Tipping Point*” tells you that small things can make a world of a difference, and the rest of his books have similar premises that want to make you feel better, to think that you're on the right track, when you're not. You're actually nowhere near the right track, but according to Gladwell that's just the key to success. So before you take Gladwell's words as life guides, think twice. Learn from my mistakes. I'd hate to see someone else waste 349 pages reading this load of nonsense! 1.6 million readers are more than enough.

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