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TIMES



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GAM

TIMES



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Hello! We are GAM Times. A part of Global Awareness Movement, a community that brings together teenagers from all around the world. You can say we are a youth that is trying to make an impact since day one. We are online newspaper created by teenagers in Poland, but we work globally. With people all around the world we create a community. Thanks to that we can write articles targeting global issues with certainty that we deliver truth and truth only. And that makes us unique, we have a global point of view. We write and talk about human rights, women rights, politics, climate change, stereotypes everything that matters. We are focusing on spreading awareness on issues that are important to us and we hope, they would become important to you as well. Our goal is to spread awareness mainly among youth, but I encourage everyone to read!

~ Helena Drzazga, editor in chief



GAM SUSTAINABILITY
& WELL BEING



Pola Janowska
Maria Grupińska



Fast Fashion Q&A

What is Fast Fashion?

Fast Fashion is defined as “inexpensive clothing produced rapidly by mass-market retailers in response to the latest trends.” - google. Fast Fashion brands produce massive amounts of clothing very rapidly, most of the time the clothing is not sustainable (synthetic materials, shipping from all around the world etc.) and often exploit their workers by paying them minimal wages.

What are some of the examples of Fast Fashion?

Fast Fashion brands include; Zara, Pull&Bear, H&M, Shein, Nike, Adidas, Bershka etc.

How Fast Fashion affects the environment?

Business Insider says that fashion production comprises 10% of total global carbon emissions, as much as the European Union. The most significant impact has dyes (36%), yarn preparation (28%) and fibre production (15%). Yarn preparation also has a massive effect on freshwater withdrawal and ecosystems quality due to growing cotton. Yarn preparation has the highest Carbon impact as they are highly energy-intensive processes.

"Among the environmental impacts of fast fashion include the depletion of non-renewable sources, emission of greenhouse gases and the use of massive amounts of water and energy. The fashion industry is the second largest consumer industry of water, requiring about 700 gallons to produce one cotton shirt and 2 000 gallons of water to produce a pair of jeans." - earth.org



How Fast Fashion affects society?

Researchers found out that young women between 18 and 24 make 80% of clothes. There have also been found evidence of forced and child labour in the fashion industry, in countries such as Bangladesh, Brazil, Indonesia, Philippines, Vietnam and more! Workers are also exploited, paid minimal wages and in some cases treated like slaves.

In 2013, an eight-floor factory building that housed several garment factories collapsed in Dhaka, Bangladesh, killing 1 134 workers and injuring more than 2 500.



What are some of the alternatives to fast fashion?

- First and most importantly, wear what you already have because the most sustainable clothing is the one you own!
- Thrifting - buying second-hand is an excellent alternative to new clothing. Thrift stores are becoming more and more popular, and you can often find unique pieces
- Try to support local companies in your area. There are often more sustainable, and you are helping the community
- It is also good to borrow/swap clothes with your family/friends
- Try to choose natural over synthetic materials - avoid polyester as it is not biodegradable and will pollute the landfills
- Donate old clothing to people that are in need
- If you are going to buy from a fast-fashion company, try to buy neutral, long-lasting pieces which will match many outfits. Don't jump onto trends

Podcast link: <https://linktr.ee/pola.janowskaa>



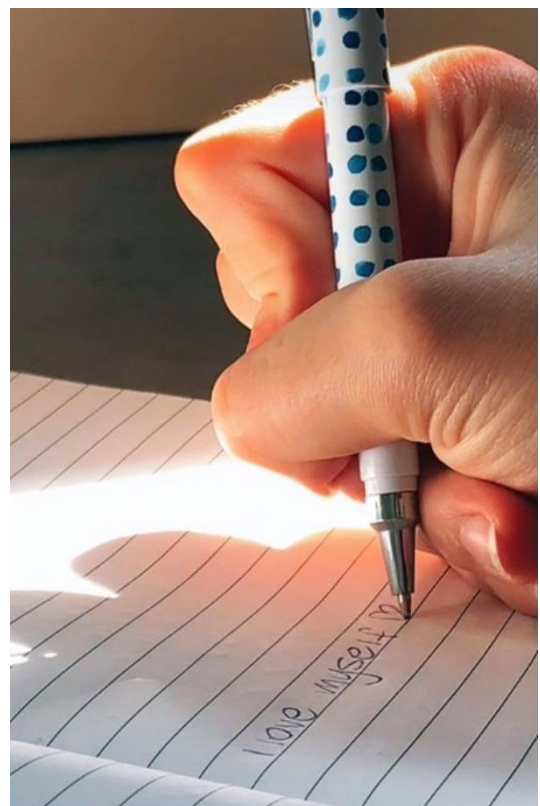
Self love in 2021

Youth in 2021 often lack self love. We sit all day long in front of our computers and study. We think that studying is going to be more effective when we do it without any breaks and for a long time. This is not the way! We have to take breaks, make a proper plan, and above all increase our self love. Without loving yourself we would see our life and ourselves worthless. Self love also means giving our brains space and breaks. This is the reason why self love is so important for the 2021 youth.

Firstly, what is self love anyway? According to “Brain and Behavior” (the link to the website is below) self love means “having a high regard for your own well-being and happiness. Self-love means taking care of your own needs and not sacrificing your well-being to please others”. This gives us more understanding on the topic!

Now, if we want to improve our self love we have to know some techniques to do so! Today I have decided to share some exercises that are going to increase your self love.

- Self love journal - start a journal in which you are going to write all the things you love about yourself and your life!
- Observe situations in which you are doing great! - this is going to make you boost your self confidence as well!
- Practice self care - take good care of yourself (both your mind and body).



In summary, self love is the feeling of high regard for yourself. We all have to start increasing our self love in order to live a happy and conscious life! If you would like to know more about loving yourself, read affirmations and quotes about it make sure to visit our Instagram (@happy.kid.mission)!

Important websites - self love:

- Brain and Behavior - <https://www.bbrfoundation.org/blog/self-love-and-what-it-means>
- Self love affirmations - <https://www.cakestokale.com/20-daily-self-love-affirmations/>
- Happy Kid Mission Instagram - <https://www.instagram.com/happy.kid.mission/>



GAM WORLD



Helena Drzazga
Hanna Okurowska

Sexism, human rights, refugees, those are only a few of the topics we want to raise in this section. Our goal is to publicize different social issues that people tend to forget about. We are going to interview and talk to many interesting people, both valuable experts in their fields, as well as people who have been wronged by the system and are as passionate as us about making a change. With this column we wanted to provide a space for our interviewees to be heard and for our readers to educate themselves as much as possible on those crucial problems

~Hanna Okurowska



HUMAN RIGHTS by GEORGE ABU-ALZULOF

QUESTION: At the beginning, could you please tell me a little about your work? What does the UN and the Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights actually do?

ANSWER: At the beginning, I would like to thank you for the invitation. I am George Abu-alzulof. I am Palestinian.

I started my work on human rights in 1992 in a Catholic human rights organization, when I joined Defense for Children International (an international child rights organization based in Geneva). Then I became a director of the Palestinian branch of the organization, from 1998 to 2008. Later, in 2008, I joined the UN children fund, as a child protector specialist and justice for children officer in Yemen. Later, I was a children's rights protector in countries such as Jordan, Irak, Libya etc. In the years 2013-2016 I was an officer of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, representing Yemen. Right now, I am Jamaica's senior human rights advisor. Under my jurisdiction are Jamaica, the Bahamas, Bermuda etc. At the beginning of my career, I briefly studied and worked in a civil society sector, then I moved on to child rights and general human rights.

When I was a child, I was arrested. And that is what motivated me to focus on children's



rights. I was arrested by Israeli occupation forces. It was in 1981. I was a 14-year-old boy who was tortured, abused and beaten. This had a dramatic impact on myself. In those days, there were no conventions on children's rights. It was an extremely difficult experience. I was held against my will for 18 days. After that, I was arrested several times. I spent almost 4 years in prison, without any kind of fair trial. I was a student activist. Just like you. when I was at a university, to assist other students in education. I took part in a demonstration on the right to education. Back then I was not aware that fighting for my right to education would cost me 4 years of my youth spent in prison. That experience helped me realize that our cause should not be about politics or religion, but about human rights. We all believe in equality, justice and freedom as a principle, that is all we do. We do the same everywhere. When I joined the office of the High Commissioner, I was thrilled that issues that in my opinion needed change became part of my work, it became an opportunity to create a better kind of change.

The United Nations has a clear mandate to promote and protect all human rights. The United Nations is built on 3 pillars, development, peace and security and human rights. So human rights are one of the pillars of the UN. The Human Rights declaration starts with article one: everyone is born free, equal in dignity and rights every human being without any kind of distinction or discrimination is entitled to those rights. My work gave me an opportunity to transfer the experience I gained in Palestine, to other countries. North Africa, Caribbean, American continent, the Middle East region, issues related to women, children and so on.

Here in the American region most people die from crime and violence. The reasons might change, depending on a region, but the results are always the same - people are dying. This region has the highest homicide rate and crime rate in the world. It has double of the average number of gender violence and violence against women. It is catastrophic even with existing laws and legislations. Women and girls suffer due to lack of protection systems, awareness and support. We try to create a change. In this situation, to ensure protection of women and girls from violation. Here we

do not have wars, but we have natural disasters. In the Bahamas, it had completely destroyed one island. We started from scratch, we tried to build what was destroyed. If it is a natural disaster or a man made the result is always almost the same. You can see an increase in violations, for example on women and girls after a hurricane, and the same thing happens during wars. If it is a war or a natural disaster, always some specific groups in society are more vulnerable to human rights violations than others. And that is exactly what we do, we work hard to ensure that there is protection, and this protection is equally addressed to everyone, and it is not selective protection.

QUESTION: Human rights, we all know what that is. Cambridge dictionary, for example, defines it as “the basic rights to fair and moral treatment that every person is believed to have”, but could you explain what it actually means? How can we apply human rights in our life?

ANSWER: If you take a look at the convention against torture or discrimination against women, they were drafted by the UN general assembly and approved by consensus. When drafted, they are open for ratification. When a country ratifies a convention, they commit to implement it. This is how it all starts. If any country ratifies or joins a convention, it becomes an obligation to protect, respect and indicate. Each convention has two parts, rights holders and duty bearers.

In the child convention, rights holders are children below the age of 18. So they are entitled to protection under this convention. Duty bearer is the state, including the government, parliament and judicial power. Parents are also included; they are responsible for the upbringing of the child. If you take the convention on eliminating any form of discrimination on women, the right holders are girls and women and the duty ? is the government. Back to your question, there is responsibility on the state that they take all legislative matters, judicial matters and other matters to ensure the implementation of each convention. And if we take for example, women’s participation in political life as a human right, the state should take legalization matters such as allowing women to take part in an election and

nominating themselves. In Saudi Arabia, women still don't have that right. They were given the right to drive just one year ago. Legislation matters are often not enough; there is quite a big possibility that people would not vote for women. So matters such as education, awareness raising etc. should be taken under consideration as well.

If anybody violates your rights, you can access justice. If the judiciary is not independent and fair you would not be able to claim your rights. Here in Jamaica, we have a big issue around sexual violence and rape. Cases are not reported. When victims try to claim their rights, the judicial procedure takes years, and cases are very difficult to prove. So the perpetrators are not held accountable for their actions. If the parliament does not have legislation that has severe penalties on crimes, the problem will continue to happen. The key is responsibility of the state and all its institutes. The participation of all, to ensure that human rights are fulfilled.

Social movements have a major role. You are like watch dogs. You watch and monitor your state and its institutions. If they are not doing a great job you raise your voice. You do advocate, you lobby, you mobilize the street. Go through all the struggle to create this kind of change.

QUESTION: Could you tell us how we, young people that want to make a world a better place, can help in achieving this?

ANSWER: States always tend to find excuses to avoid their obligations. That is why you have a very important role as a movement, as an international community to hold the state accountable. The government has obligations and responsibilities, but it does not always live up to them. And here your role comes, not just the awareness raising, using social media or education - sometimes you have to go to the streets and raise your voice.

Now things are changing, we are struggling for human rights. This is why I think you have a very important role to play. Everyone, youth, old,

women, children need to raise their voice and make their voice heard. Hold people accountable, hold accountable those who deny your rights.

I remember when I was in Palestine's prison, many social movements used to send me letters. And solidarity in those messages played a very important role. I did not feel alone, I felt stronger. Secondly, they sent letters to the Israel's government asking for my release. Any simple step, from any person counts, any letter, any email, believe me, every small step that you take, will create a positive impact. At the end of a day it is not just you alone, there are thousands, millions of people like you, taking these small steps.

This is what always gave me the strength, that you, the young generations are very strong, ambitious, creative and innovative in a way of doing things. As a result, you manage in so many ways to influence word leaders. You keep reminding everyone that you are there and you hold them accountable and they should change.

What brings us all together is much bigger than what divides us. We are stronger when we come together to preside over our rights, our freedom, dignity and mother earth.

QUESTION: Thank you for your answer, I agree with you 100%. I think I can speak for my whole generation by saying that we would do our best in trying to make a world a better place.

Are human rights universal or can they change, for example because of religion? I have in mind Saudi Arabia, their law is based on Qur'an and women there are treated horribly, for example they need permission of a male guardian to fulfill their basic human rights such as education or even health care. Do you think it is our obligation to stop this system or is it understandable, because that's their religion?

ANSWER: Those are just excuses. Human rights are universal, interdependent and mutually enforcing each other.

This discussion took place before 1993; many countries were discussing if human rights are universal. Many of them claimed “human rights are something nice, but it is not applicable in our context”. And it is just not correct. All the Muslim countries and all the eastern, western, north and every other country, voluntarily decide to join a convention or not. Let’s give an example and take into consideration the cultural differences. If you take a look at the Convention of the Rights of the Child, this convention talks about adoption. But adoption in the islamic law is not accepted. They have a kafala system, very similar to the adoption; the difference is that the child will not receive their parents’ family name. If you read this convention it says clearly that the countries that did not apply the adoption system can apply the kafala system. So they give you different choices to apply to your cultural context. But you cannot say that human rights can be applicable in one place and not applicable in the other. As I said, there was this kind of discussion in 1993. On this convention they decided that human rights are universal, interrelated, interconnected and mutually enforcing each other.

Interrelated, interconnected and mutually enforcing, what does this mean? Sometimes people claimed that some rights are more important than the other ones. What do you think is more important, your right to vote or your right to food? Some of them would answer that my right to food is more important than my right to vote, because if I don’t eat I would die. I could live without voting. This type of argument existed for many years. That some human rights are more important. But we said NO. All of them are important, even if you have food, you live, but you have a right to live in dignity. Almost 30 years ago it was discussed and agreed that all the human rights are equal in importance and are applicable everywhere, without any discrimination. And every human being is entitled to these rights.

QUESTION: How can we help people in those countries, when they genuinely think that what is happening in their country is understandable and acceptable? For example, I am working on a project on child labour in

Bangladesh, with people from there. And they think that there is no child labour happening, because a child is choosing to work.

ANSWER: The Convention of the Rights of the Child is not against child labour; it says that a state should establish a minimum age of employment. Most states decided that the age of 15 is the most appropriate. The convention includes some conditions which must be fulfilled in order to legally employ a child. First of all, work does not affect a child's education, second of all it does not affect a child's physical, mental and spiritual development. Third of all, it is not exploitation. If the child works under those conditions it is okay; it is my personal opinion as well. But usually those conditions are not implemented in reality. Most of those children are deprived of the right to education because of labour. Most states do not respect those conditions. They put children in hazardous conditions, often in the chemical and agricultural industry, so it affects their physical wellbeing. They work for long hours, and they don't go to school, deprived from their right to education.

When you look at the context, try to study reasons why something is happening, why do we have high levels of child labour and school dropouts? You will find that there are several social-economic reasons, but the main one is poverty. Those people cannot afford to live. In order to make their living, children need to work. Also, they do not receive enough care and support from the government. I think that there are many ways to stop exploitative child labour and to ensure that children are living in dignity and enjoying their social and economic situation. The first thing is that those countries where people live in poverty, and the government cannot afford dignifying living conditions for all its citizens, needs international support. Secondly, look at the government. Even though they don't receive external support, how do they try to reduce this problem? We need to look at their economic policies. What is the poverty rate in Bangladesh? What is the government doing about it? What are the taxation policies? What kind of economic policies are emplaced to eradicate poverty? You will find that it is a system where the rich become richer and

the poor become poorer. Many people think that charity is a solution. But charity is never a solution. Even if you sent an enormous amount of money it would not solve the problem. Human rights approach is the solution. You need to put an end to the cycle of poverty, not to help a single family or person. You need a comprehensive, strategic human rights approach, not a charitable approach. First you need to insure that the government is doing it the right way. For example, by investing in an education system, not the military. If Bangladesh adopts such policies, but they still have lack of resources, the international organizations have an obligation to help. This is what we are doing here now, in Jamaica and the Caribbean, the government is adopting the budget for Jamaica. The UN and international donors are helping Jamaica to secure enough resources to assist them to eradicate poverty. It is a dual effort: there is an obligation by the international community and there is an obligation by the government itself. As your individual role as a human being you need to monitor the situation and see how you can influence it. You can influence it through support of social activism in Bangladesh. I am sure there are several social movements that are trying to assist. The charitable approach is always there. Speaking for myself, we always collect money. In my kids' school, in my work. There is always a charity that needs a donation or help. It is part of our human nature. But believe me, you do it because you feel with others. This would not solve the problem. The only way to solve it is to influence people in Bangladesh to advocate that the state should change its policies, the government should adopt new approaches and the international community, such as, western countries, should give more support for development collaboration. If you look at the Netherlands, for example, they locate about 1% of its international income for development collaboration. Which is nothing, 1%. But the Netherlands is considered as one of the main donors in this area, highly appreciated. All the millions you hear about, is just this 1%. I'm not criticizing the Netherlands, but what I am saying is that all the money is just 1%, so imagine what would happen if western countries would allocate 2% or more. This would help a lot. It is really important to be aware of your country's allocations. To look

how much they put for international collaborations. And encourage them to locate more. It would help in achieving equality among countries.

QUESTION: Let's move on Covid-19 pandemic, does this unusual situation should or could influence the way we view human rights.?

ANSWER: Yes, I personally think that the pandemic revealed how fragile our systems are. Very fragile. Even in the countries that were considered rich with modern and well-developed health systems. The high number (we are talking about around 2 and half million) of people died as the result of the pandemic. The virus itself doesn't discriminate, but its impact discriminates. There are people that are more vulnerable: the minorities, migrants, people living in extreme poverty, women etc. All they will be disproportionately affected by the pandemic because they are more vulnerable. So, this is one of the main issues revealed by the pandemic: why it doesn't discriminate but its impact discriminates. Secondly because it's revealed how fragile our systems are. All world leaders should commit to rebuild stronger. After the pandemic, to become stronger, we cannot rebuild our societies in the same way they were before. We don't want to remain in square number one, because it already revealed its fragility. And what we need to do now is to more emphasize on the economic and social situation, especially the right to health. Secondly, we need to invest more in research. While the whole world was focusing on technology development, we did not invest enough in the health care system. The pandemic revealed so many things that should open our eyes.

If you take a look at the vaccine, it revealed some shameful results to the global community. We all know that the vaccine is the immunization. It should apply to all because if we are not all protected nobody is protected. This is real, this is a fact. To achieve a full protection for any given society, or for the global community you need to immunize around 70%, I am not a health expert but it is around that. Our goal is to end the pandemic, not to end the pandemic in X and Y countries. I see some countries have now

vaccinated 90% or 60% or 40%. They might have achieved some illusional protection, protection for a period of time for a specific group of people, but this is not sustainable. If not everybody is protected, nobody is protected. What we see now is clear discrimination in the purchasing the vaccines, fair distribution of the vaccines and the vaccination process, despite the initiative created by the UN and many donors contributed for the fair distribution of the vaccine, but still we see there is not enough fairness and equality in this process.

QUESTION: Do you think vaccinations should be mandatory or should it be a choice?

ANSWER: Choice. From the human rights perspective you have a freedom of choice. But how you see, there is a lot of propaganda happening right now. But what is going on, is that this propaganda means that some people try to mobilize the others that the vaccine is dangerous, that they are trying to put chips affecting our minds, so many stories, funny stories sometimes. Those are not true stories, but at the end of the day, from the medical and health rights perspective you have the right to know to know the truth. After that you decide. We expect that you will make responsible decisions, you know what I mean. The responsible decision, if the health professionals, the global health experts, say that for the protection of ourselves and our humanity we have to take the vaccine, we assume that at least the majority of people will be motivated to take it, not just for personal reasons, to protect the communities as well. It's a responsibility but it will never be mandatory. It is always voluntary, vaccinations and things like this are always and will continue to be your freedom of choice and this is guaranteed under your human rights. In any given context, nobody can force you to take the vaccine. As I said, we expect people to be responsible.

QUESTION: I would like to finish with a big and scary question. Do you think universal peace and freedom are even achievable to the human race? Do people have enough compassion to do so?

ANSWER: Is it achievable?

QUESTION: Yes, can we one day live in a world where no one is hungry or struggling in their country. Could it happen?

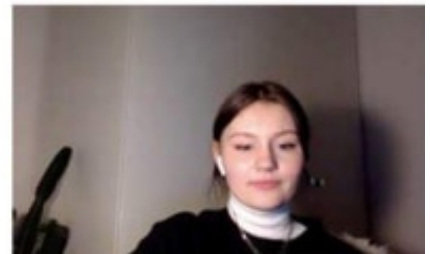
ANSWER: Yes, I am confident on this one, and this is our main motivation. Maybe not in my times but I hope in yours. But since I was young this has been my main belief. When I was in prison, I did not spend my time sitting and just thinking, I spent it studying and reading. I used all my time to study. I read a lot of books on human history that I would probably not have the chance to read outside. But I read a lot about our history. If you take a look at the human history, it all started because whatever we got we shared.

The socio-economic development of mankind passes through several phases. From the first phase when human beings lived like animals, but at least, at the first primitive stage we were all living in equality. There was no “this is for me, not for you”, no private properties. But what happens when you look at today’s socio-economic context many people are frustrated and lose hope that this is how it is, and this is how it will continue to be. And whatever you change, you just make some cosmetic changes here and there, but the ugly face of our reality will stay the same. This is very pessimistic. But I see a light at the end of the tunnel. Peace, justice, equality and human rights will prevail one day. In order to shorten this period of time the more we reach people, educate people, mobilize people, mobilize resources we make this period shorter and shorter, the less we do the longer it will be.

But at the end of the day it is coming, I am confident that it is coming. The world is improving, everything is changing. Changing slowly, but it gives us strong hope, belief and trust that history is on our side. This type of

slavery-like phenomena, because I believe when you talk about human trafficking, abuse, exploitation it is a new face of slavery and we buried the slavery one thousand years ago, but we started to see now new forms of slavery and exploitation. But we will bury it again, and the human socio-economic realities are changing always for the better, and this is the direction of history.

Hundreds of or even fifty years ago nobody was talking about climate change, nobody was talking about preserving our Earth and our nature. But now we are, and we are making every effort. So, it is



changing, slowly yes, but we should always keep the hope alive and mobilize more resources, especially among youth, social movements like your movement, I'm sure with your struggle, dedication and commitment the future of the world will be much better.



GAM HIGHLIGHTS



Hanna Okurowska

GAM Highlights is a place where you can read a summary of the most important political and social events of the month. We think it is crucial to be aware of what currently is happening in the world, all of it, and to achieve that every month we will publish here a collection of diverse news.

~Hanna Okurowska



APRIL'S HIGHLIGHTS

Sentencing of Derek Chauvin

Last May Derek Chauvin was seen kneeling on neck of George Floyd on streets of Minneapolis which eventually led to the passing away of the man. But now, after 11 months the former police officer was convicted for all three charges (second-degree unintentional murder, third-degree murder and second-degree manslaughter) and is now facing up to 40 years of prison time. Although since October, Chauvin was out on a bail, the judge decided to revoke it and until his sentencing in June he will be held at the Minnesota Correctional Facility-Oak Park Height. The conviction aroused a lot of emotions among people from all around the world with many of them going out into the streets to show their satisfaction with the verdict.

Mass shootings in USA

Since the beginning of 2021 the US has seen at least 140 mass shootings. In April alone, 64 people died due to the gun violence. Joe Biden is calling it a “national embarrassment” and saying that Congress should ban military-style “assault” weapons and large-capacity ammunition magazines.



<https://edition.cnn.com/2021/04/16/politics/mass-shootings-america-guns/index.html>

Car explosion in Quetta

On April 21st in Quetta, Pakistan a car explosion in front of a luxury hotel has wounded 12 and killed four people. It was initially reported that it might have been an attack on Chinese ambassador who at that time was staying at the hotel. Days later a Pakistani Taliban claimed responsibility for an attack but without mentioning the Chinese official in their statement.



<https://edition.cnn.com/2021/04/21/asia/pakistan-bomb-blast-chinese-ambassador/>

Alexei Navalny finished his hunger strike

Alexei Navalny is a Russian publicist, dissident and lawyer. He graduated from Yale University in 2010 and began his career in Russian politics. As an outspoken opponent of the government, he often faced charges and repressions. Most recently this January when he was arrested and sentenced for two and half years in prison colony. Due to the significant decrease of his health and lack of medical support he decided to start a hunger strike on March 31st hoping it would force the government to agree for a doctor consultation, finally ending it on April 21st after being granted one. If you want to participate and help, we encourage you to sign the petition by Amnesty International, linked below.



<https://www.amnesty.org/en/get-involved/take-action/russia-aleksei-navalny-putin-moscow/>

Link to the petition: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/get-involved/take-action/russia-aleksei-navalny-putin-moscow/>



GAM FEMINIST



Maria Kuderska

The world is made for men, this is what Caroline Criado Perez proves in her book called “Invisible women”. Years of neglecting “the second sex” created unequal reality in which we are living. Although some issues are easy to point out, many are still ignored such as invisible labor or under-researched women’s health problems, not to mention discrimination of women of color and members of LGBT+ community. That is why we raise up our voices here, so that those without one can be heard. This is an intersectional feminist section. Because feminism is for everybody.

~ Maria Kuderska



My Body, My Choice.

Imagine a woman that's hot but not beautiful. Now imagine a woman that is beautiful but not hot. Most people have no problem in doing so, and that's exactly the problem with today's concept of sexuality. Hotness and beauty are by definition two somewhat related, but distinctive traits.

Sex sells very well in all media. Whether it is a fashion commercial or a burger advertisement, a woman is often portrayed as seductive, vulnerable, and playful, with her mind detached from her body. In other words, such advertisements depict a greatly distorted and unacceptable concept of 'femaleness'.

As fashion represents trends and is a form of manifestation of personality, it has a huge impact on society. Fashion ads create an unrealistic image of women and the group that is harmed the most is children. In the words of Madonna Badger, an advertising executive and founder of 'Women Not Objects' campaign, *'little girls are growing up thinking that how they look is more important than how they feel and who they are and little boys are growing up thinking that it only matters how a woman looks.'* This leads to some serious consequences such as girls' negative self-image, mental illnesses, sexual assault, and rape. They often think that their sexuality is for others, so as they enter womanhood, they feel that they're becoming more visible to society as sexual objects. Quite often, it eventually leads to women objectifying themselves permanently. Therefore, when we're captivated by beauty, we should not stop at the superficial. We should not stop where society tells us to stop.

Instead, we have to distinguish between empowerment and objectification. I recently saw a YouTube video entitled 'Is provocative clothing truly empowering for women?' In it, a man talked about how women objectify themselves and provocative clothing is only empowering to them because they can 'control and manipulate' men. Sadly, this is the kind of thinking

we see worryingly often. It all boils down to the idea that a woman looks pretty because she wants to get attention from a man or she looks sexy because she wants to seduce him. Many people don't understand that women want to look beautiful for themselves and are often empowered by their own bodies. Moreover, what we don't acknowledge most of the time is the impact that advertisements have on such thinking.

Have you ever seen a perfume advertisement with a woman that's almost naked in silk sheets and a man instantly seduced by her after she uses the scent? Ads like this convey no other message than 'use this perfume and a man will desire you' instead of 'use this perfume to smell beautiful for yourself and love yourself'.

Society is organized along the lines of patriarchal ideology, as gender roles and inequalities are primarily socially constructed and not based on biological differences. One feminist sociologist, Walby, recognizes 6 structures embedded in patriarchy. These include 'the state', i.e. policies are primarily in men's interests; 'sexuality', i.e. there are different standards of behavior for men and women; and 'cultural institutions', such as church, media, and education, which reinforce patriarchy.

We can perfectly see how this is reflected in the current situation in Poland, where women were recently deprived of their right to abortion, the fundamental right that allows them to decide about their bodies. However, it doesn't stop there. Women in Poland also rebel against oversexualisation, male gaze and false image of natural beauty that media presents to them. It can be seen in women's strikes or some of the campaigns that have been launched recently.

One of the most famous Polish models and activists, Anja Rubik, did a special Vogue January issue called 'Women Power'. On her Instagram, she said: *'I am naked in the photos. In patriarchal systems a woman's body is sexualized, it's shamed and it's shown as something wrong and indecent. Hence, nudity has become a symbol of the female revolution. Currently in*

Poland, the state is depriving women of their reproductive rights and the right to decide about their own lives and bodies.'

Many people from the fashion industry, like Anja, also strongly stand behind women. There are a great number of fashion brands that actively support women, such as MLE Collection: *'Not everyone is against the government's decision; however, remaining silent just because we may make less money is not our style.'* LAU Jewellery decided to support women's strikes financially: *'Dear women, we're here for you and we will support you as much as we can.'*

There are also special collections and special products launched by brands in order to support and show solidarity with women's demonstrations in streets throughout Poland, e.g. Umiar made earrings with the logo of the women's strike and Nago decided to print and sell t-shirts with the logo. All profits from selling those products went towards the women's strike.

The influence that fashion can have and already has on women's empowerment is evident.

It could be argued that fashion became political. It supports and unites women. The massive protests resulted in women dressing similarly in order to show their solidarity, i.e. they started to wear black outfits that symbolize grief and anger towards the government, as well as the death of the Polish democracy. In other words, fashion reflects the society we live in. It is always influenced by social changes, social problems, terrorism or, most recently, pandemic. That is why, as most advertisements exploit women's sexuality, fashion itself can help them to express themselves and rebel against it. The fashion world is no longer focused merely on 'pretty clothes', but something deeper, more meaningful that brings about change. Its main focus is on provoking conversations, not 'provoking men'.





GAM CULTURE



Maja Pszczoła

GAM Culture is the highlight of world events, festivals and holidays. Each month we focus on the biggest celebrations from around the world to bring you closer to the traditions from the people around you, ones you may not be aware of yet. In addition to that, we dive into the cultural differences that, at first glance tear us apart, but at the end of the day can bring us all together.

~ Maja Pszczoła



RAMADAN

Regulated by the five pillars of Islam, Ramadan is a time of community and reflection with the intent to prove one's devotion to God. It starts on ninth month of the Muslim calendar. It begins and ends with the appearance of crescent moon. Ramadan's time is depended on the lunar calendar, therefore the dates change from year to year.

Islamic people believe that on Laylat al-Quadr (Night of Power), one of the last nights of Ramadan, God gave Muhammad the Quran. It is a holy book, that is a guidance for people, provided by God.

During this time followers fast during the day, with one meal before sunrise, and one after the sun goes down. When the sun goes down people break their fast. Often in large groups, they enjoy Iftars - evening meal that ends the fast.

Ramadan is much more than fasting, it is important celebration for over 1.6 billion people across the globe. Many countries developed their own traditions and rituals to follow during this one month period. In countries across Middle East it is a custom to fire cannons to signalize that the fast has ended. It is known as midfa al Iftar. It was started over 200 years ago in Egypt, by Khosh

Qadam. Qadam was testing a new cannon and accidentally fired it. People thought it is a signal that the fasting is over. Many were thankful for this invention, a new way to communicate that sun went down. Qadam's daughter - Haja Fatma, encourage him to make this a tradition.



In Pakistan when the Ramadan comes to an end, women and girls buy themselves colorful bangles. They also paint their hands and feet with complex designs, drawn with henna. This is a sign that Eid-al-Fitr started, and with it that Chaand Raat festivities in Pakistan. The spirit of crowded

market, filled with decorated shops stalls, local women applying each other henna is really beyond description.

Ramadan in Florida – Interview with Alae Balkhatir

QUESTION: What is Ramadan?

ANSWER: Ramadan is a month in the Islamic calendar and first part of the five pillars. So basically, what we do during that month is not eat or drink from sunrise until sunset. Many Muslims decide to participate in this tradition. One of them, is to get into the position of poor people, who barely get something to eat. The fasting just makes us appreciate our food more. Another reason is that during that month you just dedicate yourself to God and strengthen the connection.

QUESTION: What does this time mean to you personally?

ANSWER: I personally just have a better connection to God, during Ramadan. Additionally, you also learn how to control yourself more.

QUESTION: Is it hard to go through everything away from your family?

ANSWER: Yes, definitely. This is the first time for me, fasting without my parents and it is really difficult being on my own in this time.

QUESTION: What is your first memory of Ramadan, if you remember it?

ANSWER: My first memory of it is probably me being a little girl, trying to fast with my dad. But at the end I broke my fasting with the entire family.

QUESTION: Has King's (a Christian school) made this experience difficult for you in any way?

ANSWER: I think, the only difficulty this year is doing it without my parents, but King's doesn't really have anything to do with it.



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Global Awareness Movement is an initiative created by young people from Poland, which is spreading all over the world. Our mission is to spread awareness amongst young people by educating them and engaging in the social and environmental issues of the modern world. We believe it is important to show global problems from local perspectives, in order to highlight that they affect all of us and our everyday lives no matter where we are.



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