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We are overjoyed to be publishing our 31st issue, the Environmental Issue! This publication welcomes voices from multiple schools across the United States – Sacred Heart Preparatory, Dalton School, Cate School, Ethical Culture Fieldston School, Branson School, Oakwood School, and more – and speaks to the issue of the environmental crisis.

There is no issue more pressing than climate change; from Los Angeles fires, to hurricanes in Florida to extreme heat and drought across Europe to rising water levels globally – the environment is changing rapidly. GirlTalk is a magazine written from the perspective of the next generation – our next voters, activists, and leaders. For readers and writers alike: our planet's ability to support human life is dwindling, and it is on each and every one of us to combat this crisis. What will you do?

The Environmental issue covers topics from solar panels and carbon footprint to climate feminism and climate poetry. Each article is unique, informative, and well-written, with accompanying art that has been carefully curated and produced by our amazing team of artists.

As you read each individual article and browse the art, please consider your own personal connection to our climate crisis.

As always, enjoy!

Best regards, Co-Editors-in-Chief Eve Kaplan, Lily Kramon, and Kate Ragatz

Julia Butterfly Hill – Annie Chian

She falls And in that one Seed of time it becomes A clear, cold reality that

There was No chance at all. Specks of light blur in her Grasping eyes, a bloom of spores and pollen

Filtered through the Needles of her ancient redwood Which, unlike her, clung to its roots Through strikes, flashes, and thunders

She falls Received by earth Smelling of coffee grounds, Mushrooms, and hot tears after long phone calls

Suspends In a moment Reality frozen Caught in spirals of dust

Julia Butterfly Hill is an environmental activist who is best known for living in a 180-foot tall, 1500-year-old California redwood tree for 738 days (1997) to prevent loggers from clear-cutting the area. While living in the tree, Julia cooked her own food, was sent supplies from a ground team, and conducted radio interviews with solar-powered cell phones.



Planet Her: Why Climate Change is a Feminist Issue

Riley Hurley

Climate change is not gender-neutral. In fact, it's downright sexist. Long-standing gender inequalities that women face are undoubtedly intensified by the extreme weather conditions that come as a result of climate change. As a 2015 report by Georgetown University explains, "Climate change is a global challenge that burdens all humanity but not equally." So what can we do?

When disastersstrike, women are less likely to have the means to respond and survive. In fact, climate change notoriously disproportionately affects impoverished countries – a majority being women.

According to statistics compiled by the United Nations, 80% of the people displaced by climate change are women. Women and girls have a more challenging time accessing the relief and assistance required in times of climate crisis, which threatens their well-being and livelihood. This also worsens gender inequality, due to an increase in gender-based violence including sexual violence, human trafficking, and harassment.

Women's health is directly affected by climate change. Due to the lack of resources, women are more likely to be harmed by natural disasters. A study from the London School of Economics, in fact, shows that natural disasters kill more women than men. For those who do survive, healthcare is limited and hard to come by. Issues related to maternal and child health also increase at this time, putting children at risk as well.

On top of health, extreme weather condi-

tions affect income and livelihoods. Climate change takes a great toll on those who rely on natural resources to support themselves and their families. In many countries, women are

According to statistics compiled by the United Nations, 80% of the people displaced by climate change are women.

responsible for the majority of agricultural work and food production. When changes in temperature, natural disasters, or droughts strike, harvests are lost, thus putting these women and their children in danger. This results in an increase in workload, which will often require their daughter's help. In response, young girls are forced to drop out of school in order to help produce food for their families, thus furthering the education gap.

Access to education helps girls prepare to enter the workforce, learn how to address the issues that affect them, and become agents of change in their communities. According to the Women's Environment and Development Organization (WEDO), women represented only 22% of the heads of national delegations making decisions about global climate policy. Education for women across the world will narrow this gap. Through education, activism, and community engagement, teens can take a lead in reversing the effects of climate change. Below are three steps you can take to create positive change in your community:

Reduce your carbon footprint: If we all work together, small personal actions can add up to big rewards for the climate. You can help by taking shorter showers and only running water in the sink when you actually need it (don't let it run while you brush your teeth!), bundling up with sweaters and blankets instead of cranking the heat on a chilly day, and walking/biking. It also helps to be mindful of your light and device usage.

Sharpen your advocacy skills: Being an agent of change means using your voice. While this may feel intimidating at first, advocacy gets easier with practice. Take a speech and debate class at your school to practice your advocacy skills. Learn more about the science behind our climate – how to research, understand, and get involved in the science.

Start an environmental club at your school: A club is a great way to get more students involved and to work toward positive change at your school. Your club can host an environmental fair, a clothing/book swap, work on initiatives to make your school green, or work with the surrounding community to bring in inspiring speakers.

Feminism examines the intersections of a plethora of issues that negatively impact women, and climate change is one of them. In the words of Katharine K. Wilkinson, co-author of All We Can Save, "If you're going to be a feminist on a hot planet, you have to be a climate feminist."



The Disappointing Reality of COP27

Zohar Lindenmann

The United Nations Conference on the Parties of the UNFCCC (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change), or COP27, is an annual conference where leaders from around the world come together to discuss, and supposedly confront, issues surrounding climate change. Last year's conference, held in Glasgow, focused on creating goals and pledges for oil executives to take responsibility for their environmental damages. This year is said to center around devising productive ways to execute said promises. The conference is subject to a substantial amount of controversy - be it activist Greta Thunberg's refusal to attend for two years in a row, the extremely questionable sponsorships it accepts, or the general ineffectiveness of the conversations that it fosters; each year results in a widely felt sense of disappointment from the public. In an interview with journalist Samira Ahmed, Thunberg shared, "As it is now, the COPs are mainly being used as an opportunity for leaders and people in power to get attention when they say, 'We're going to change,' and using many different kinds of greenwashing, lying and cheating and so on."

Greenwashing, when major corporations make obscure or false claims about their company's practices to sustain an image of climate advocacy, is one of the main accusations that the UN has faced regarding COP27. The conference will be held in Sharm El-Sheikh, an Egyptian luxury resort town. This choice of location is hardly a symbol of environmental progress and is certainly not in touch with those most heavily experiencing the effects of climate change. In addition, Egypt has been known to place heavy regulations on human rights activism and political protest and has chosen to disregard the public push to release their many arbitrarily detained prisoners before the conference begins on November 6th. Worst of all, COP27 has accepted a sponsorship from Coca-Cola, the world's number one plastic polluter according to the Plastic Soup Foundation, selling around 200,000 plastic bottles each minute. Activism groups from across the world, such as Beyond Plastic and Just Zero, have begged the conference to stop accepting money from major-carbon emitters such as Coca-Cola; the UN has yet to comment on their choice.

WHEN COMPANIES AGGRAVATE, CONCEAL, OR DISTORT THEIR CLI-MATE FOOTPRINT, THE LINE BETWEEN ETHICAL AND NON-ETHICAL SHOPPING CAN OFTEN BE HARD TO DISTINGUISH, AND THE REALITY CAN AT TIMES BE VERY DIFFERENT FROM WHAT IS ADVERTISED. Environmentalists are concerned with greenwashing's effect on consumers' navigation of the climate crisis. When companies aggravate, conceal, or distort their climate footprint, the line between ethical and non-ethical shopping can often be hard to distinguish, and the reality can at times be very different from what is advertised. This strategy can also make it challenging to place regulations on company polluters, as so many corporations who set ambitious goals, such as fast fashion brand Boohoo and their claim to source sustainably by 2025, have demonstrated no real intention to meet them. By choosing to create their own fantasy where climate change doesn't exist beyond the marketing opportunities it provides, the executives of these companies completely disregard the millions of people suffering from the very real burdens of their climate footprint. This upsetting strategy is taken to an extreme when COP27, a discussion between the leaders who are "saving us," demonstrates that their plans for the future are nothing more than maintaining a good image.

COP27 is beyond disappointing. However, it is crucial to remember that hope for a more sustainable future is far from lost. As young people who will be heavily affected by the climate crisis, we must do our best to research beyond supposed "goals" and show that corporate giants can't mislead us. There is still time to save our planet. While the thought of living in an age where the truth is so malleable is depressing, making an active effort to seek the truth out and think critically can change that.



Artwork by Sabine Fuchs

Climate Refugees

Lily Kramon

Since the 2015-2016 refugee crisis, news coverage of immigration and emigration has largely decreased. Currently, the entire world is dealing with a new wave of refugees who face an unprecedented crisis: climate change. People who are displaced because of climate change are labeled as Climate Refugees. This is a newly found term that is not recognized by everyone, as international refugee laws do not specifically consider climate refugees. The Internal Displacement Monitoring Center estimates that since 2008, an average of 26.4 million people per year have been forced to leave their homelands due to natural disasters. With the effects of climate change worsening, the number of people displaced by climate disasters will increase.

In 2015, when millions of refugees traveled to Europe to seek asylum, many European countries closed their borders and were unwilling to help. With the predicted number of people expected to be displaced due to climate change, this needs to change. Today, it is crucial that governments around the world band together and utilize their resources to help refugees impacted by these disasters.

Economic migrants and refugees who flee war and persecution are the only two categories for refugees currently. Climate refugees need to be recognized by the Global Migration Regime so they can hold the same rights that other refugees have. Climate Refugees, an independent, nonprofit organization works to help people displaced around the world as a result of climate change. They have adopted the term 'climate refugees' to "Provoke conversation" and "To emphasize the political responsibility of climate change." Even just adding this word to one's vocabulary will help spread awareness about the devastating impacts of climate change and encourage conversation. This will lead to conversations within politics and our leaders beginning to prepare for the future influx of refugees displaced by climate disasters.

An Ocean Sonnet

Kate Ragatz

I love you as I love your grace, your sunkissed evenings and your naïve sandcastles. I love the way your waves talk as I dive under your euphoric embrace.

I love you as I love the life inside of you,

the waves that pull me into myself,

taking me back to the little girl who knew

her love for the life inside of you.

My love is like each towering break,

which rush over my golden locks, waves so embittered as to wash away my heart's concave.

But my love for you extends to the depth of every echoing abyss. most of all, I love you just as much as I do not,

for as much as I love you, I can only reminisce.

A Guide to Inexpensive Solar Panel Purchase

Solar power helps the environment. One kW solar capacity is equivalent carbon reduction to planting 200 trees; 75 million barrels of oil saved by global solar panel users. Unfortunately the average cost of installing a solar panel is between \$15,000 and \$25,000. \$25,000 is a number so high it seems hard to justify. Yet, solar panels are an investment. The average solar panel system adds around \$17,000 in value to a home. Excess power can also be used to charge electric vehicles or even sold back to energy companies. Solar panels can eliminate homes' monthly electricity bills, which average around \$122 per month in the United States. The return on the investment of a solar panel can be more than 200% over the solar panels 25+ year life time. Good for the environment and good for your pocket book.

If you can afford the upfront cost of installing solar panels. What is the least expensive way to install solar panels? All solar panels installed between January 1, 2017 to December 31, 2034, are eligible for 30% tax credit. A tax credit is when the federal Government decreases your federal income taxes by a certain amount. Utilities often give a one time rebate of \$1,000 for installing a solar system. To calculate the total cost of installing a solar system you can use the formula: (\$18,000 - \$1,000) * 0.30 = \$5,100. To find incentives and policies specific to your state or region, in regards to solar systems check out the Database of State Incentives for Renewables. This website will tell you if they're are even more ways to bring down the price of the cost of your solar panels.

The cost that remains is still not one accessible to most of the United States of America. As most and millions of Americans live paycheck to paycheck, the only way to make solar panels fully accessible would be to make them free. For others, for a small percentage of society, who the cost of installation can be taken out of a travel budget or is money that would otherwise go in savings, this is an opportunity and investment that is worth taking. Advocates for the climate often talk about small changes, vegetarianism, running your dishwasher less frequently, taking

public transit, each of these changes hold impact in the long term. Solar panels should be on top of this list. Solar panels provide the opportunity for significant near-term impact. They can help our environment today, as soon as they are installed.



Artwork by Sabine Fuchs

Everything YOU need to know about Carbon Footprints

RYKA KASHI

What is a "Carbon Footprint"? Carbon comes from carbon dioxide, a greenhouse gas released through cellular respiration, factories, and vehicles. The more carbon dioxide or CO2 humans release into the air, the warmer our planet grows, the higher the oceans rise, and the more unpredictable weather becomes. Carbon dioxide and other

on where we source our items: if we are buying clothes through fast fashion and/or items that contain non recyclable materials or plastics. Regardless, every item has an impact on our environment. Additional factors that contribute to our carbon footprint include the amount of waste we sort into recycling, compost, and trash, and how electrical-

greenhouse gasses are major causes of climate change. Now the "footprint" piece of "carbon footа print" represents the carbon mark left behind by individuals. Just like footprints literal that leave marks on our Earth, the

amount of carbon each human produces in their life leaves a footprint. This footprint is not completely made up by the carbon our bodies release, rather, it is a total of the lifestyle choices we make. Our diets, for example, impact our carbon footprint: pork, beef, poultry, and shellfish leave a greater carbon footprint in comparison to greens and locally sourced food. Oftentimes mass-produced meat comes from factory farms, which use up expansive amounts of land and clear out forests to raise livestock; consequently, the factory's livestock produces large quantities of methane, a potent greenhouse gas, through digesting grasses and plants. Vegetable-based diets are highly important in combating the effects of mass-produced meat, as they elicit less greenhouse gasses, and locally grown foods are often grown in more environmentally friendly conditions. In addition to the food we eat, the number of products we purchase affects our carbon footprint. The severity of this impact, in fact, depends



ly efficient our homes are. Lastly, our means of transportation – through gas or electric vehicles, individual rides or carpools, and our own cars or public transportation – and how often we use them.

All these aspects impact the greenhouse gasses you produce: your carbon footprint.

Why Should You Calculate Your Carbon Footprint? Carbon use is embedded in our lives - it would be almost impossible to cut everything carbon dioxide and greenhouse gas related out of your life. However, calculating your carbon footprint can be a great first step in lowering your emissions and saving our planet. A great carbon footprint calculator is https://www. footprintcalculator.org! Based on your information, the website produces a number of Earths necessary to provide humanity with the same carbon resources as you, thus giving you a sense of the overall impact of your actions. The calculator gives an overshoot day, or a date when all of Earth's resources would be used up if everyone had an equivalent carbon footprint to you. Simply filling out the calculator can give you a sense of which areas you may need to improve your

Artwork by Sophie Hung

SMALL ACTIONS TO REDUCE YOUR WASTE BY PAIGE MACY		
 Limit animal products especially redmeat Reusable to go items-water bottle, cutlery, thermos/drink container Reusable pads/menstrual cup, shampoo + conditioner bars, safety razors Composting - curbside, backyard 	Growing your own food - sprouts/microgreens, herbs, regrow food scraps Shop secondhand - online platforms (Thredup, Poshmark, Depop, Mercari), in person stores Wash on cold + air dry clothes Hold corporations + governments accountable Keep an eye out for greenwashing	

lifestyle based on carbon emissions. For example, if you eat less beef compared to others, your score will be lowered (along with the number of Earths needed to sustain a world of everyone living like you); however, if you don't recycle all of your paper and plastic, then the website will advise you to focus on meat consumption as an area for improvement.

To go vegan or buy an electric car are large undertakings. If you focus on five doable changes, you are more likely to stick to this lifestyle and help the environment. A few examples could be waiting for a full load of laundry or dishes – or turning the faucet off while you're scrubbing your hands. These are just a few simple yet impactful ways to reduce your water consumption. Additional improvements include eating more greens and less meat, buying sustainable products that contain fewer materials like plastic, and committing to the 3 R's: Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle. There are hundreds of simple actions to reduce our consumption and production, and taking these small actions can build up to a great change in the way we are using Earth's resources. Next time, think before you buy. Think before you dispose. Think before you use, and think about the ways you can reduce.

Breaking Down the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act: What Does It Do for the Climate Crisis?

Sophie Saxl

Being a crucial bill with \$1 trillion of funding for the framework of our future, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act is bound to carry a lot of weight. In the one-year anniversary of this bill's passing, in order to understand its magnitude and projection for the future, it's important to break down the bill and understand each portion- understanding especially how this bill is addressing the world's climate crisis. The legislation aims to get many important, basic rights of passage such as clean water and highspeed internet. But how, specifically, does it attempt

to address climate change? The climate-related sections of the bill can be split and attributed to six categories: access to electric car chargers, public transit reinforcement, climate resilience plans, energy tech, rebuilding for climate change mitigation, and pollution/oil management and cleanup.

To begin, reinforcement of public transportation. The bill allocates \$39 billion to modernize and repair public transportation systems that have fallen into disrepair, and addresses the huge backlog of obsolete and dilapidated systems that can barely stay in use. The entire bill provides, in total, almost \$90 billion to fund public transportation for the next five years to come. In our country, public transportation use already saves the U.S. the equivalent of 4.2 billion gallons of gasoline annually — and over 11 million gallons of gasoline each day. Communities that invest in public transit play crucial roles in the system and reduce the nation's carbon emissions by 63 million metric tons annually, and these statistics are all prior to this latest investment. Not only does public transportation enforce a living that is so much better for our climate, but it is immensely helpful in our economy. Every \$1 invested in public transportation generates \$5 in economic returns, and 50,000 jobs are created and supported with every \$1 billion invested in public transportation. Being the largest investment in public transportation in U.S. history, the outlook for the future of public transit has gotten significantly better.

Climate resilience is one of the biggest topics covered by this bill, but what does the term really mean? The phrase doesn't always have to be directly tied to a changing climate, but it simply means the ability of communities to respond and react to a natural disaster or the effect of climate change. Climate resilience does not mean ignorance of the climate crisis, and especially in tandem with the promise of climate mitigation in the bill it can be a great feature. Climate resilience and mitigation together create a goal of safe responses to catastrophic events, while acknowledging the huge climate issue and alleviating the outcomes. Along with a push for clean energy and pollution cleanup, this bill makes a strong effort to fight the climate crisis.

Unfortunately, though the legislation has been important and a huge step in the right direction, Congress has become burnt out and members have begun to believe that they can't push out anything more after the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. It's completely up to us, the people of the United States, to push more out of Congress, especially before the shift in power in January as a result of the recent midterm elections.

Youth's Role in Climate Awareness

Elianna Rothstein

Why is climate awareness so important to Generation Z?

Members of Generation Z have noted that they will be affected the most by this. Many members of Generation Z cannot partake in voting to change climate policies but we can involve ourselves in protests, activism and more. However, if people aren't even knowledgeable of the full capacity of climate change, then they cannot take action.

How can Generation Z spread awareness?

One way to help is to do some programming at your school. This can mean starting or joining a climate awareness club, organizing a workshop for your school about climate change, or asking your school to host a guest speaker who is experienced with environmental causes.

There are online resources to take a look at such as UNICEF (United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund). UNICEF has created a platform called Voices of Youth, which is for young advocates to offer inspiring insights on issues that matter to them. This enables young ad-

Artwork by Sabine Fuchs

vocates to discuss climate awareness and participate in programs correlated to environmental issues and actually make an impact. If you have social media, you can also use this platform to post about climate change and educate your followers on what is happening in the world.

Tell your friends, classmates, and family about

current issues and how they can stop it.

What can we talk about?

You can not only spread awareness by discussing sustainable lifestyles, conserving nature, supporting renewable energy, and adopting environmentally-friendly practices but also engage in these practices yourself.



Artwork by Simone Carr

Thirteen Ways of Looking At a Honey Bee

Kate Ragatz

I

Among the blissful flowers The only moving things Were the nimble wings of a honey bee.

Π

Despite the calm, my mind buzzed, Like a swarm of bees Giving life to the plants beneath.

III

I watch a honey bee dance atop a lilac-toned flower, An intricate piece of nature's show.

IV

The Earth and its inhabitants are one. Girl, flower, honey bee; they too are one.

V

I know not which to dwell upon, The beauty of individuality Or the wonder of the natural system, A hone bee Or its relationships in nature.

VI

Honey bees seize the moment With the decisive sacrifice of a sting. The honey bee flutters on the tips of my eyelashes, Zipping, to and fro. The tension Traced in the furrows just above my eyes My imagination running faster than my fluttering heart. recycling Craig Santos Perez, recycling Wallace Stevens

VII

O people, Why do you let fear blind you? Can you not see how your companion, The honey bee Labors for the lives of your kin?

VIII

I know the outside And beautiful, respected patterns, But I know, too, That the honey bee is entangled In what I know.

IX

When the honey bee ceased to buzz, It marked Yet another day.

Х

In the absence of the honey bee, And the silence of a once vivid buzz, The flowers grow still and Their presence begins to fade.

XI

She darts across the twilight fields In search of her bee companions. Now, a fear pierced her, In that she believed The bees Were gone forever.

XII

A weak buzz sounds from the distant grass. The honey bee must not yet be gone.

XIII

It was dusk all afternoon It was silent And the silence would remain. The honey bee teeters on the edge of existence Threatening us in our oneness.

The California Climate Gap

Tara Sridharan

Wildfires, high-temperature heat, frequent and intense droughts, risk of floods, coastal flooding, and erosion are the five major climate change hazards affecting California. These catastrophes are only going to increase in severity. The effects of California's climate crisis disproportionately affect people of color temperature during the summer months, which leads to illness and even death – particularly among the elderly and infants. These risks will most likely occur in lower-income areas, as they typically have fewer trees and roofs made out of materials that easily absorb heat. Moreover, a majority of low-income

and lower-income families due to factors such as the geographic areas in which they live and their access to resources. The notion of climate change's disproportionate effects on certain groups is known as the "Climate Gap". According to a report, Minding the Climate Gap, "People of color experience over 70 percent more particulate matter emissions within two and a half miles from the facilities listed as major GHG emitters as non-Hispanic whites, and the disparity is



communities have little to no access to resources like air conditioning, which privileged many Californians take for granted. Communities and families who are faced with climate dangers such as flooding, increased heat, and wildfires, often lack access to disaster-preventative resources. Older homes, for example, may not be equipped with modern insulation needed to combat extreme weather patterns.

A recent report stated that over the next 40-100 years, there will be a four-foot increase in sea level

particularly sharp for African Americans." Lower-income neighborhoods in California are often crowded with families who are largely exposed to contaminated water and air pollution; these neighborhoods may be near air-polluting factories and freeways that generate toxic gasses.

One major effect of climate change is the increased

that will eventually lead to 13,000 existing homes in California being uninhabitable. Beyond the change in California's landscape, the climate crisis will plague certain lifestyles; its impact is determined by the ability of individuals to "anticipate, cope with, resist and recover from direct and indirect impacts of extreme weather events." The Climate Gap is one that will not disappear over time, nor will it vanish