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english magazine

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Oct
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Welcome to Ink, the Externado University's
English magazine.

As always, thank you for reading our magazine, and a big thank you to everyone who sent in articles. We've got a great range this time, from university life to sports, and even some aliens, so we hope you enjoy it. Please remember that contributions to the next Ink are always welcome.

Enjoy!
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The idea of Ink is to display pieces of writing, in English, by members of the Externado community. As the idea is to maintain authors' originality as far as possible, you may find some minor mistakes in the articles. The views expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the Externado University.

Did you know *that...?*

By **María Fernanda Bonilla Pedraza**

(undergraduate Hotel Management student, level 4 English)

Dreams are a mental state, but you probably don't know about the mysteries surrounding it. If you want to learn more about dreams, then you should read the following information.

1. When you wake up, you usually forget about 50% of what you dreamt about, and five minutes later, you forget up to 90%.
2. The people that you see in your dreams are people that you have seen before in your life. For example, a man you saw in a shop could be a killer in your dream.
3. You dream every night, but sometimes you don't remember.
4. When you are sleeping, your risk of getting the flu increases slightly.
5. We only dream about things we already know.
6. The animal that sleeps the least is the horse.
7. A blind man can dream, but his dreams involve other senses.
8. We spend a third of our lives asleep.
9. 12% of people dream in black and white.
10. Randy Gardner has the record for the person who was awake for the longest. He was awake for 11 days.
11. Pigs and rabbits sleep the same amount of time as humans.



Why is music so good for your health and mind?

By **Carolina Ávila**

(undergraduate Accountancy student, level 4 English)

First, I'm going to say that when I was a child, I was definitely not interested in music; in fact, I just thought it was a noise! My parents always played me different types of music and songs from Colombia and other countries. I didn't care about it much, and sometimes it was annoying for me. However, then I started to listen to the music and the lyrics, and now listening to music is my favourite hobby.

Nowadays I love music. It helps to raise the spirits, and becomes a part of people's routines. In fact, there are some types of therapy that include music as a source of relaxation and they help to increase people's quality of life as well as improving cognitive function, motor skills, emotional and affective development, behaviour and social skills.

More amazing still is that music helps to heal pain in some cases because it has the ability to produce endorphins, which act as natural painkillers. This is so good, and helps us to stay more alert during our daily routine as well as developing language skills and helping us to relax.

So what better way to start the day than listening to music? More than just an idea, this article is an invitation to everyone to start to listen and most of all, to enjoy it.



Books and cleats



By David Canal V.
(undergraduate FIGRI student)

During my time at the university I've had a great time learning, studying and meeting new friends and teachers. But certainly until now, I wouldn't associate my college memories with sports.

For me sports are very important, not only as a source of fun, but also as an activity that complements your student life. Maybe it could be because I come from a school that encourages you to practice at least one discipline. We had the opportunity to choose from a wide spectrum of possibilities: athletics, soccer, basketball, volleyball, swimming... you name it, my school had it. Hence I developed a link between my academic life and my sporting life. Having them connected is excellent, because you can offload some of the stress you get from the assignments, stay fit, develop self-discipline and avoid health issues.

As the semesters passed by, I noticed that it doesn't matter if the student comes from such a sports-oriented school as mine, because sport is necessary in one's life. The problem is that our institution, The Externado, doesn't offer students the chance to build up a symbiosis between books and courts or fields. The geographic location of the campus makes it difficult, so the only option that we have is to go and play some table tennis in the student lounge. Nevertheless, we have a sports facility located at Bogota's savannah; the thing is that it is very far from the campus.

But enough of beating up the university, because the lack of opportunity to do physical activity isn't the only thing to mention. In these 3 years I've also noted that we have some of the best teachers in South America, that we are part of one of the toughest faculties in the country and that we go to university to make friends and study like crazy! Therefore, I started to realize that all the guys that were soccer players and wanted to be part of the official team and went to training, started to fail assignments and some of them even dropped out.

At that point I knew it was going to be difficult to keep up with the degree if I wanted to be competitive in soccer. That's why I chose books over cleats. But the effort is temporary (3 years). Now I'm at a stage at which I have more time. For example, I don't have class on Saturdays anymore. I hope that all my classmates that like sports and that have overcome the hard schedules with me, can now enjoy their free time playing their favorite sport!

The Story behind



By Alejandra Gerena
(undergraduate FIGRI student, level 4 English)

We have all seen or watched the popular series Phineas and Ferb. However, there is an urban legend behind this series that tells a terrible story, and which the Disney Channel allegedly used to create the show.

The story revolves around Candace Flynn, a little girl who lived in the village of Iultin, Germany, in 1993. After her parents got divorced, Candace's mother took care of her, but she didn't pay attention to her daughter.

Everything got worse when her brother Phineas, who suffered from hyperactivity, was born, and even worse when her half-brother Ferb arrived. For a long time, she made up extraordinary feats performed by her brothers, and told her mother about this. Her mother saw what was happening with Candace, and decided to take her to a psychiatrist called Heinz Doofenshmirtz. This psychiatrist prescribed a powerful medicine that controlled Candace's impulses. However, at the same time this drug created an addiction within her that led her to take stronger drugs like LSD.

As Candace felt that nobody, and especially her mother, was paying attention to her, she decided to write a diary in which she described the adventures of her brothers each day.

At the age of 14, Candace was found dead in her room after taking an overdose, and she had left a suicide note written in her diary. Her mother decided to sell this diary to Disney.

Without any doubt, it's a frightening story. However, as I said before, this is an urban legend and it might not be true. It just depends on each person and whether they want to believe it or not.

Trujillo,

A COMMUNITY IN SEARCH OF REPAIR



By Daniel Ospina

(undergraduate Economics student, level 3 English)

After a hectic and fast-paced semester, I decided to take a pause, and for some strange reason I came across a book about a hard reality. I must admit that it didn't seem very thrilling at first, but as it turns out it was not just another academic text. It was the story of experts, victims and perpetrators of what I think was the most significant systematic slaughter during the second half of the twentieth century in Colombia. It was the Trujillo slaughter.

Although this event is already buried away at the bottom of many indolent Colombians' memories, and unknown to many others, it is an issue that should generate social unrest, anger and condemnation. It was a cold-blooded carnage, where hundreds of families were relegated to an uncertain future, a community that grew up under the law of the jungle in constant fear of coming face to face with death at any moment. Generations play on the ground in which the dismembered bodies of their ancestors lie, as if nothing had happened there, without the slightest sign of respect for the blood that flowed into the Cauca River. It is very curious how many of the inhabitants and victims of the slaughter of Trujillo even justify the murder, torture and execution of their relatives by calling them "guerrillas", "snitches", "paramilitary" and "subversives" without any evidence of it.

Now this simple and unsophisticated introduction to this text aims to expose the reality, unconsciousness, cruelty, one might even say a "cultural Alzheimer's" that has happened in Trujillo. Of course, this is an invitation to read and open your eyes through this fragment of Colombian history that assesses the political, economic, social and psychological factors that are discussed in this book.

Trujillo, una masacre que no cesa. (2008)

This publication is dedicated to Father Tiberio Fernandez Mafla (RIP) for his tireless fight against social injustice, and a victim of Trujillo.

"If my blood contributes to the cessation of violence in Trujillo, I will gladly shed it"

Soccer:

A Matter of Passion

By Edgar Andrés Gaona Monroy

(undergraduate FIGRI student)



Every country has one sport that represents it, and which plays an important role in the lives of people throughout the country. It also captures the attention of the people, and investment from the government. This is usually paid back through the joy, trophies and championships that reward this interest.

The passion for baseball or football in the USA is huge, and they can proudly say that they are the best at those sports. What logic dictates is that the main sport of a country must be a sport that the people there know they are good at, for example India and cricket or New Zealand and rugby.

Every rule has its exceptions, and there are some countries that choose a national sport that they aren't really good at. Colombia fits this description.

It is well-known that soccer is the most beloved sport in this country. This leads us to think back on the number of titles that have been won in Colombian soccer history: one. Yes, one. Therefore, why is soccer our main sport if we are not good at it?

There can be no doubt that soccer is the most popular sport in the world. However, in Colombia we have a lot of other options regarding our main sport that have many merits. Colombia has had a large number of world champions in different disciplines such as boxing, roller-skating, cycling, BMX and weightlifting.

Apparently the excitement generated by an Olympic medal or a world championship in those disciplines

isn't even close to that which is generated by a match of the Colombian soccer team. This even truer if it is against Argentina.

Soccer seems to awaken some sort of passion that flows through the body that causes us to isolate ourselves from the world and the only thing that seems important to us when the game is on, is watching our team.

Soccer is so popular in the world, and also in Colombia because it is very compelling, it is a recurring topic of discussion, and we can even see this as the reason for the confrontations between fans of rival teams.

Nowadays, the Colombian soccer team has awoken our hope because apparently we are ceasing to be a mediocre team, and we have demonstrated that our team can have a decent performance in the next World Cup. For me, the reason for that mediocrity was more a matter of the conviction of the players than a real problem of skills.

We can't be resigned to the fact of being a mediocre team. We can't accept that our main sport is a sport that we could never be good at. This generation of soccer players, together with a new coach, has completely changed the idea of the team and can represent that turning point that we have been waiting for. This could be the opportunity to step forwards and become a nation where the main sport is one that we are actually good at.

Does Beauty have only one Face?

By Angie Parada Suárez
(Undergraduate FIGRI student)

Nowadays, the concept of beauty has managed to become a major topic, not only for teenagers and for kids, but also for grown-ups. However, wanting to be beautiful is not the problem. The problem is when we believe beauty has only one face and then issues such as racism, anorexia and bulimia start to arise in society.

Sometimes it is difficult for many people to understand that we are different in so many ways, not only physically but also mentally. For example, some people may love romantic music, but others enjoy rock music more. Also, if we talk about beliefs, religions appear to be a really important part of our lives, or maybe if we talk about food, some of us love meat, while others may love a different type of food, such as vegetarians, for example. What's important about all this is that those specific things may greatly influence the way we want to be or the way we want to look.

In modern society, people have created an illusion about perfect beauty, that in some ways shows us beauty as a specific type of person. For example, the first thing that comes to mind when we think of a beautiful girl or handsome guy is a perfect body, nice hair, slim, tanned, toned muscles and blue eyes. When it comes to reality, however, we see fat women with curly hair and brown eyes, or teenagers who claim to be emos, punks or even rappers. So, according to the modern concept of beauty, are these people ugly? What I don't understand is how people can be so stubborn about perfect beauty, as if it was some kind of shirt that should fit everybody.

In my opinion, beauty has become a bigger issue than it should be. However, what is interesting is that nobody seems to care. They are all so busy trying to be beautiful that they don't even realise that they are already are. It is really sad to find girls and boys of all ages having different types of eating disorders such as anorexia or bulimia, just because the media and society in general, shows beauty as models with such thin bodies that you can count their bones, one by one.

Most of these problems start with regular diets that, if we are honest to ourselves, we all do, but then people become obsessive and start controlling everything about what and how much they eat. People become insecure; they don't like the way they look and in most cases they start feeling rejected. Beauty has become so radical, that even being born with a different skin tone has become a sin. I mean that the concept of beauty is so twisted that you are not even allowed to be different from the rest, even if this is not something you can decide.

Thus, everybody should ask themselves if it is really worth it to become somebody else so they can be accepted in a society that doesn't even know what real beauty is. Maybe it is time to open our minds to a new concept of beauty which starts with the beauty of being unique.



Lies: A way to survive?

By Carolina Chaparro Alba
(undergraduate FIGRI student, level 4 English)

Sometimes in our lives, depending on the situation, we use lies or show things that we really don't feel. For example, when your grandmother gives you a present and she asks if you like it, would you answer her that you don't?

Or, when you arrive at a place and you begin to say hello and there is a person that you don't like, but she says hello to you, would you also say hello?

Why do people act like that?

Is it to be accepted, or maybe because they are scared?

I think that we must begin a sincerity campaign and not worry about what people think about you. Throw out all the fear that limits your life, and doesn't let you be happy or be free with your personality. We all have differences, and we need to accept this.

I have already begun my sincerity campaign – what about you?

By María Paula López Moreno
(undergraduate FIGRI student, level 4 English)

Most men and women, at some stage in their lives, have asked themselves, “do I have a reason to continue with my relationship?”, or they simply avoid being in one.

First of all, everybody knows that we have some reasons to stay single. You are wrong if you think that boys and girls can understand each other mutually. They try to do this, but it is really difficult.

Also, both boys and girls are really jealous. “Why is he / she looking at you?”; “Why are you dressed like that?”; “What did you do last Friday?” Hey! If I wanted to be interrogated, I would go to a police department! “I was with a couple of friends.” “Oh! Really? That’s nice.” “Yes, and they are only my friends!” Try to believe this when someone tells you.

If you are laughing or if you remember someone when you read this, that is the reason why you have to continue with your relationship, because if you can understand that even though a relationship might be so complicated, it is unique.

Remember, if we try to understand each other mutually, it is difficult to be able to do this. Perhaps it is even impossible, but this also has value to it, and gives value to everything. Believe that things are possible, and be happy.

Why Stay Single?

Extra-terrestrial Life DOES exist!

By Cristhian Mauricio Porras Vecino
(Undergraduate FIGRI student)

Extra-terrestrial life has always been an interesting issue for human beings. Questions like “are we alone in the universe?”, or “were we visited by aliens in ancient times?” have been considered by not only common people, but also the scientific community.

A while ago, I heard that Stephen Hawking was saying on TV that his mathematical mind suggested that it is very likely that extra-terrestrial life existed. However, if some day we make contact with them, we have to be very careful because the result could be compared to the time when Europeans came to colonise America. Hearing this kind of statement is frightening, but at the same time, exciting for me.

However, there are some people who say that planet Earth has already been visited by aliens, but the government is hiding information from people because they believe that human beings are not prepared to meet alien life. According to British UFO experts like Nick Pope and David Clarke, revealing that kind of information would end up creating social chaos and general panic.

Another astonishing fact comes from the writer Erich von Daniken. For several years, he has developed the theory that aliens came to Earth in ancient times, stating that there is evidence which supports this idea. A clear example of this is related to the construction of the pyramids in Egypt, because according to archaeologists,

the average time in which these pyramids were built is around 20 years. This means that each stone had to be placed in around four minutes. The even more “magical” part of this tale is that the weight of each stone varies from 25 to 80 tonnes, and the stones were transported from Aswan, which is located 800 kilometres away.

Given that, the question which comes to our mind is, “how could the ancient Egyptians develop a project like that?”, or “did they have any previous knowledge that we don’t know about, in order to build the pyramids?” Erich von Daniken suggests that they did in fact have this, but that this previous knowledge came from aliens who visited the Earth at this time. Even with the technology we have nowadays, it would be a tremendous task to construct the pyramids, so the idea of aliens helping ancient people to construct the pyramids doesn’t seem weird or out of place.

Nowadays, there has been some progress in terms of getting involved with UFO information. In 2009, the British and French governments decided to disclose documents related to UFOs, so people can now have access to files that only the Ministry of Defence had. My opinion is that the human race should be prepared, and also politicians should take the initiative in creating an exopolity, which means the discipline of managing the relations between humans and non-terrestrial civilisations, because the idea of being alone in the universe sounds so arrogant at this time.



THE SPIRITUAL POWER OF YOGA

Natalia Granados Segura
(Undergraduate FIGRI student)

Have you ever reflected about your inner side and soul? Have you ever had the impression that you do not truly know yourself? All these questions and many others are commonly thought about, but people often leave them as questions and do not search for the answers. Yoga, as a spiritual transition and introspection, offers not only a peace-filled heart and soul, but also a healthy mind. The main objective of this practice is enlightenment, to gain discipline and, as Buddhism and Hinduism describe it, to receive “spiritual orientation.” These goals can be achieved through meditation, because when body is relaxed and you are able to control your thoughts, you connect to yourself and truly gain power and positive energy.

Nowadays, in the globalised and modern world we are living in, it is common to see people who are obsessed with work, alcohol or technology. These trends diminish our time and the attention we dedicate to ourselves. We tend to fill our minds with many topics, events, and thoughts. Every day, a new illness appears, and common illnesses such as gastritis are linked to high levels of stress. Over-productive machines – that is what people have become in modern life. The good news is that there are ways to control these effects and make a difference.

Just as Brahma Baba (founder of Brahma Kummaris) had realised by the age of 60, anyone can find in yoga the peace that they lack. This man decided to impart his knowledge all over the world, and this idea became a very important project. Brahma Kummaris is a well-known worldwide institution that has led a lifestyle revolution which currently links more than a hundred million people around the world from different cultures, religions, social classes and races.

This well-known institution in Colombia now has ten locations all around the country, and five in Bogotá. You are free to attend any of the locations, because the engaging part of Brahma Kummaris is that, due to the fact it was created as a free university in India, all the activities it offers are completely free. At each of the locations they offer several activities, and the most outstanding ones are: radja-yoga courses for beginners and professionals, mediation workshops, and conferences with important teachers from the field.

This institution works as a non-profit association that survives through donations and all of its members are volunteers who have completed their formation process at the institution and nowadays teach the benefits and applications of yoga. Furthermore, when I had the luck to get to know their work three months ago, I was excited. I attended the rdja-yoga meditation course which lasted two days at their centre in Cedritos. This weekend completely opened my mind, and I learnt many things about meditation and it helped me to be more aware of myself, of my thoughts and to gain spiritual power. It's true you have to experience this type of activity to understand how meaningful they are. I invite everyone to be engaged and discover their soul through the great world of yoga. As a free activity, it is the best way to stop by the side of the road, and start building the basis for a spiritual life and a healthy mind. Do not let time or any other barrier of modern life block your spirit and free soul; my invitation is to work on yourself by either trying yoga or any other practice. Be aware that all the problems and worries that people handle right now are consequences of forgetting about the need for introspection.

For more information, visit: www.brahmakumaris.org/colombia



What can we expect when we grow up?

By Lorena García (Undergraduate FIGRI student)

Are you in the seventh semester of Finance? Or maybe in the ninth semester of Economics? How many of you are ready for a big change in your way of life? How many of you are scared of growing up and becoming an adult?

Life comes without instructions and, in some stages of life, emotions are stronger than we would like. It is absolutely normal to be afraid of change and it is normal to have doubts, but it is part of us and our personal growth to face this fear!

Have you ever heard your teachers telling you that “what comes after college is terrible and hard to get used to”? Nothing in life is easy, and when we want big returns, our effort must be greater, and so must our sacrifices.

Alejandro Fernandez is one of my many cousins. He graduated from college five years ago, and when I asked him about the big step between university and work, he told me “when you finish college, the most important and helpful stage in your life begins.” And then he admitted, “when we start working, we only know the basic things from college, so working becomes a learning stage!”

Once he told me about one of his experiences. One day, his boss called him to his office and asked him, “do you think you are at a BBQ at the office?” Alejo was extremely surprised, and he didn’t know what to say! His boss reproached him because even though that day was Friday, he had to attend the company dressed appropriately. And what was he wearing? Khakis, a T-shirt and a pullover – not a suit.

This anecdote demonstrates that there is a lot to learn during our first years at work, and my cousin suggests

some tips about our behaviour when we are getting used to our new jobs. Here are some of the most important:

You are the newbie, so you have to recognise the style inside the company and become part of the group in terms of how you dress and speak, for example. You cannot impose your own preferences.

You must be best friends with the security guard (as a strategy, in case you need some kind of help some day), and of course have a good relationship with the people in management positions.

Never – listen to me – NEVER talk about anyone else, no matter what. You have to keep your personal opinions about people at your work to yourself.

Do not pay attention to appearances. Take the opportunity to meet people and don’t judge them.

Lastly, and most importantly, be yourself and be happy! The only way that we can achieve this is to do what we like to do, and find the right place for us where we can do what we love to do!

You cannot imagine how reassuring those words were for me. Of course, those words do not mean that it is going to be easy, but at least I know I don’t have to be wise and know everything about everything.

All we have to expect as students is that when the stage comes, we must give all of our potential, all of ourselves, and not pretend to be what we are not yet! I hope you all have enjoyed this little article, and that this could be a great help to you too.



How to succeed as a student in the Social Communication and

Journalism faculty



By Daniel José Gallego

(undergraduate Social Communication and Journalism student, level 6 English)

Social Communication and Journalism is a profession that is constantly being updated. Many people think that it is an easy degree, but it depends on you and your engagement with the subjects. For example, if you do not go to class, you will not learn so well.

Firstly, the most important thing to succeed as a student is to be constantly up-to-date because you have to read, listen to and watch news. It is not only for the classes but also for all your life. You can listen to the radio while you are in the bus, for example listening to Caracol Radio, an important news station. Sometimes in the classes you have to know what happened yesterday or in the morning. The radio class is one example of these classes.

Another thing that you have to do to succeed is to prepare for your classes. The teachers give readings to you. You should read these carefully because they are the topics of your next class. For example, in “Theory” you have to read a lot, and there are many copies. When you arrive to class with the readings you understand the topics better and you can have a discussion with your classmates and your teacher. In “Semiotics” we usually do this; we prepare the readings and we discuss them in class.

These are my tips if you want to study Social Communication and Journalism and want to succeed. It really depends on you whether the degree is difficult or easy.

How can we be happy?

By Mileidy Johana Malagón Tovar
(undergraduate Social Communication
and Journalism student, level 4 English)

According to studies by the World Database of Happiness, happiness is not in the places where we might expect to find it, but in our own hands.

The director of this database, professor Ruut Veenhoven, says that, amongst the participants in a recent study, he found that there is a negative relationship between “objectives” and “happiness”. The reason for this is because people who are not happy are more aware of their goals as they try to improve their lives.

It's also important that, although Professor Veenhoven told the BBC “to lead a happy life, a fulfilling life, you need to be active, and participate in different activities,” an active lifestyle does not always have a stronger relationship with happiness.

So, what must we do to be happier? Studies compiled by the World Database of Happiness point out that, for people to be happier, it is advisable:

- * to go to dinner with friends
- * to have close friendships
- * to be in a long-term relationship
- * to be actively involved in politics
- * to be active at work and at leisure

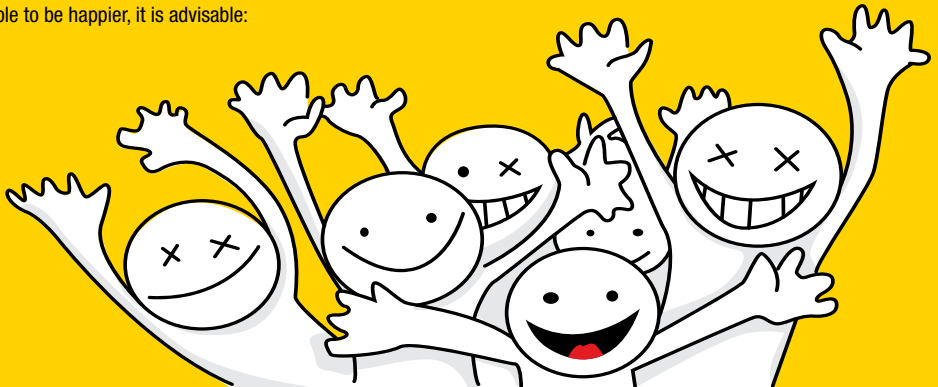
Surprising findings:

- People who drink alcohol in moderation are happier than people who do not drink alcohol.

- You are happier if you think you're attractive.

- Sadness is actually useful to us, as it acts as a “red traffic light” that stops negative behaviour. It's good to be sad up to 10% of the time.

- If you are a workaholic, you will feel happier if you do exercise to relax after work, instead of having a beer on the couch.



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