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The Argus

Since 1954

Deep Into Korea's Elderly Welfare

**Korea about to Reach a Super-Aged Society
Shortage and Poor Treatment of Caregivers
Seniors Continue Craving for Work
Nowhere to Enjoy Leisure Activities**

ESTABLISHED 1954

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Editorial

Taking Responsibility

This summer, the world endured an intense heatwave. While Europe continues to battle the heat, South Korea has grown accustomed to temperatures around 30 C, and equatorial regions have been grappling with scorching heat. Struggling to bear the immediate heat, we turned on fans and air conditioners, inadvertently welcoming more heat into our lives. This summer's extreme temperatures not only underscored the dangers posed by climate change but also reminded us of the importance of the responsibilities we carry.

Taking responsibility: what does it entail? Every task demands a moment when we shoulder the weight of responsibility. In those moments, how should those in charge respond? How do individuals shoulder their responsibilities, and how do nations fulfill theirs? In situations where it is challenging to pinpoint where things went wrong, simply blaming the nearest person is not the ideal approach. While efforts to find better-suited individuals are valuable, what truly matters is ensuring that the problems are addressed and not repeated. Before engaging in battles over who did what and how much, we must establish answers to how we can resolve the existing issues. If we share the burden of responsibility, we must consistently care for others without exacerbating their pain or wounds.

In these times, even assuming responsibility for one's own life can feel burdensome. When struggling to navigate a complicated routine, the temptation to evade responsibility for one's choices and actions can be strong. However, facing these challenges head-on is vital. How should we proceed in such situations? It is evident that even in uncertain times, we must hold ourselves accountable for our actions. Making a decision also entails taking responsibility for its outcomes. Whether on an individual or national level, everyone must strive to find better solutions. When confronted with difficult problems, it is essential to judge the right path and then act responsibly.

All of this ultimately ties back to what kind of society we desire, what kind of world we want to live in. We must consider the impact of our choices and actions on society as a whole and assume the responsibility of leaving a better world for the next generation. Even when modern society faces uncertainty and difficulties, it is important to face them courageously and responsibly, moving forward with determination. The transformation and progress of an individual, a society, and a world is in our hands, in our choices, and in our obligations. 

By Lee Jue-hyun
Editor-in-Chief

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Cover Story

>> South Korea's elderly population consistently ranks at the highest level ever recorded, accelerating the aging process within society. To match the rapid speed of aging, the implementation of various measures for the growing elderly population has become necessary. Despite these efforts, the state of elderly welfare in Korea still has a considerable distance to cover. Issues related to elderly welfare are not confined solely to the older generation; they are inseparably connected to all age groups, as everyone will one day become a senior citizen. This interconnection makes it essential for the entire population to pay close attention to the overall elderly welfare system. Now, let's examine the current state of Korea's elderly welfare and reflect on how to ensure a healthy old age for everyone.

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Jamboree's Stay at HUFs Ends Safely

HUFs offered accommodation and board to Jamboree Scouts who departed from the campsite on reclaimed land in Buan, North Jeolla Province, from August 8 to 12. The Swiss participants, numbering 189, arrived at the Seoul campus GLOBEE Dorm at around 4 p.m. on the 8th, while 498 Taiwanese members entered the global campus HUFs Dorm. Despite only hearing the news of the Jamboree's stay at HUFs on the morning of the same day, HUFs urgently formed the "HUFs Jamboree Participant Support TFT," supplied the dormitory with bottled water and tissues, and oversaw the members' meals from dinner on the 9th to breakfast on the 12th. Kim Sunjoong (Department of German '21), charge of interpreting German, noted, "As I assisted with the Jamboree's meals, the overall satisfaction of the members was good."

Meanwhile, the government's sudden notice of the Jamboree's stay at HUFs led to the situation being carried out without clear guidelines. As a result, there were circumstances where the manuals of both Jamboree and HUFs needed to be coordinated. On the morning of the 11th, a Swiss participant complained of a sore throat and subsequently tested positive for COVID-19. Since the guidelines for COVID-19 quarantine were unclear at the time, confusion arose over whether the student would participate in the closing ceremony. Nevertheless, after coordination between HUFs and Jamboree, it was decided to support Jamboree activities preferentially, contingent upon compliance with COVID-19 quarantine rules. Han Seung-yoon (Department of French '21), charge of interpreting for the student at that time, commented, "There was a difference in guidelines for COVID-19 situations between HUFs and Jamboree at the time, but it was resolved smoothly through coordination." The Argus hopes that the Jamboree participants enjoyed their 12-day stay in Korea. 



▲ Taiwanese Jamboree members take a picture at the global campus HUFs DORM.

By Ryu Hyo-rin

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HUFs Newly Establishes the Department of Counseling·UX Psychology

Starting in September, students at HUFs will have the opportunity to enroll in classes from the Department of Counseling · UX Psychology. Counseling delves into fundamental psychology, examining the inherent nature of human minds. UX, an abbreviation for user experience, describes the interaction between a user and service. UX Psychology is a field of study focused on understanding and factually verifying users' experiences and identities on the internet. As a convergent major, it will be available only as a double major.

This major is characterized by its well-organized and systematic curriculum. It consists of a total of four modules: Basic knowledge of Psychology and Data Science, Mental Health and Psychotherapy, UX Psychology, and Digital Mental Health. Depending on the chosen module, students will have the opportunity to enroll in a variety of courses. Graduates of this major have the opportunity to pursue careers as UX researchers, counselors, and data scientists. Furthermore, the major benefits from professional instruction, as the faculty includes a licensed psychologist, a UX researcher from a prominent firm, and a psychiatric specialist.

Professor Lee Ji-yeon, the chair of the department stated, "The major opened in response to the competencies required by technological advancements, and the curriculum has been organized to leverage the strengths of HUFs. As the only major of its kind in the world, I am confident that UX Psychology will be a leading program." The Argus hopes that students find interest in the major, and they are encouraged to ask questions via the department's Instagram page and website. 



▲ Starting in September, students can enroll in classes from the Department of Counseling·UX Psychology as a double major.

By Kim Ji-hyang

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HUFS Hosts Autumn Festival “QUINQUATRIA”

From September 19 to 21, the General Student Council (GSC) of HUFS Seoul campus “Doyak” will host QUINQUATRIA on the Seoul Campus. Since the Daedongje, university festival, did not occur in the first semester of 2023, anticipation for the QUINQUATRIA has heightened. A distinctive feature of the 2023 QUINQUATRIA is that, diverging from previous years, it will be the first exclusive cheerleading festival of HUFS.

The name “QUINQUATRIA” is derived from the ancient Roman festivals for the goddess Minerva. Since Minerva is a symbol of HUFS, it holds a unique and profound significance. This year, the festival will be accompanied by the HUFS’s sole cheering team, Aegis. HUFSSans can enjoy a collaborative performance of Aegis and the band “dongari” along with each group’s solo performances. In addition, QUINQUATRIA is a student-participatory festival featuring various booths and performances by dongari. However, alcoholic drinks are prohibited from sale.

QUINQUATRIA is envisioned to be more than just a series of performances; it is designed to foster a connection between the school and students and to enhance school spirit. The festival aims to cultivate a cheerleading culture that is uniquely HUFS’s own. The Main and Vice Directors of Planning of GSC, Heo Ye-seon (Division of Chinese Language, Literature, and Culture ’21) and Kim Woo-jin (Department of Scandinavian Languages ’21), express their hope that the event will encourage students to feel a sense of belonging as HUFSSans and contribute to forming a unique brand for HUFS. With its inaugural celebration, the 2023 QUINQUATRIA is poised to become a cherished memory for the HUFS community. 📸



▲ Both the official turquoise color of HUFS and the Minerva symbol are featured in the QUINQUATRIA poster.

©Instagram @hufsstudent

By Jang Yewon

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Library Locker Rush at HUFS Seoul Campus

In September, as the second semester starts, students flood the library for various academic purposes such as preparations for upcoming midterms, certification exams, and government tests. The materials needed for these studies, including textbooks and reference materials, are often quite substantial and heavy. Consequently, students prefer to store these items in the library’s lockers. However, at the Seoul Campus library, there is a significant mismatch between supply and demand. With only 556 lockers available and a student population of 17,507, the locker facilities are highly inadequate. This situation underscores a pressing need for the administration to assess and address the locker system’s shortcomings to better meet student needs.

The price for a library locker is 2,000 won (US\$1.51) per month or 5,000 won (US\$3.77) for three months. Students have the option to extend their locker use indefinitely, provided if they make a request 10 days prior to the expiration date. This arrangement allows students to easily monopolize lockers over extended durations, leading to dissatisfaction about the number of available lockers for other students. The shortage has prompted suggestions of higher pricing for locker assignments, discussions of which can be found on the HUFS online community “Everytime.”

Kim Hak-jung, a staff member at the HUFS Seoul campus library, acknowledged, “There have been numerous requests to expand the number of library lockers on the Seoul campus. However, due to limited space within the library, there are no expansion plans.” One alternative for students is to use the newly installed lockers in the Social Science Building and the Humanities Building. Despite this provision, students are still experiencing inconvenience, and HUFS should consider additional measures within the library to address this ongoing issue. 📸

By Jang Yewon

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What Was Your “It Was Summer” Episode?

By Kim Ji-hyang

Staff Reporter of Culture Section

September is typically known as the start of autumn when the colors of the leaves begin to change. Yet, it may be seen as the end of summer. Summer, a season emblematic of youth, leaves behind memories that are refreshing, yet sometimes misty and elusive. A newly coined phrase capturing this sentiment has emerged: “It was summer.” This expression serves to evoke the nostalgic recollection of summer’s fleeting moments. The Argus asked HUFSSans to share their own “It was summer” episodes.



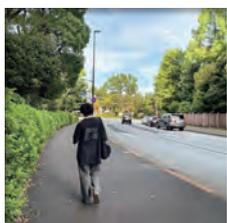
Park Sang-hyun
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It was June of 2021 when I was in my second year of high school. Due to COVID-19, I had to take online classes at home. This meant that there was no chance to play soccer at school. By 2022, when social distancing and the spread of COVID-19 was gradually easing, I was able to play soccer with my friends for the first time since starting high school. I felt the hot air and sweat under the sun that I had not felt for a while because I spent a long time indoors. At that moment, I had a mixed feeling of wanting to run more under the sun even though I was out of breath. This memory was summer for me.

Last year’s heavy rain was a “summer” moment. I was studying at an academy when I received an emergency message warning of flooding. I initially thought, “There is no way it will flood.” But after leaving the academy, I was shocked by the flooding. Nonetheless, my friends and I laughed at the unexpected situation since the familiar alley we used to pass by transformed into something looking like a sea. Even when the water began to seep into the bus, I felt like I was riding a boat at an amusement park. Of course, the flood caused damage, but this day has remained as an unforgettable memory of summer.



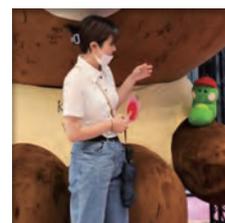
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Right after the start of this summer, I went to Tokyo. I took lots of beautiful pictures since I am the type of person who takes pictures like crazy, thinking “All that is left is pictures!” Plus, I counted on visiting a place from the movie “Suzume” near Ochanomizu Station where the trains intersect. I wanted to capture a video of all three trains passing by at once. The stone railing was boiling hot, and I waited with my phone camera ready. Though I hated the sunlight at that moment, I had no choice but to appreciate the sun’s brilliance after watching the video. It had helped to create a moment that was both visually stunning and emblematic of my summer experience.

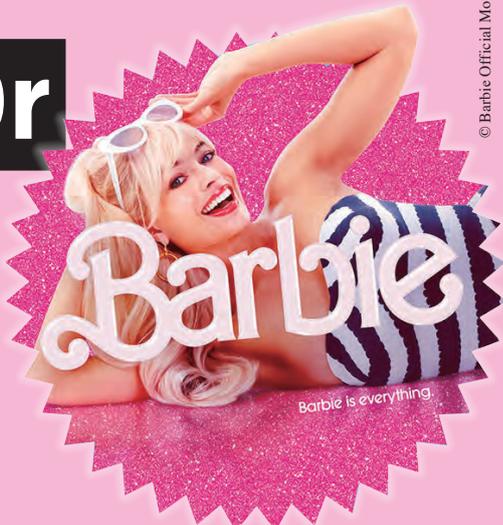
An episode that epitomizes the phrase “It was summer” occurred when I met my high school friends at a water park this summer. We had previously visited the water park during high school, and it was striking to see how our relationships had evolved over the past five years. Back then, we were shy and awkward, finding it challenging to become close. However, as the years passed, we grew into friends joking and laughing without restraint. Reflecting on those shared moments and recognizing the depth of our connection, I was filled with the nostalgic warmth of summer.



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What Kind Of Barbie Are You: Stereotypical Or Active?



© Barbie Official Movie Site

By Jang Yewon
Staff Reporter of Culture Section

“PINK goes well with everything!” There is a place where the whole world is pink. This is Barbie Land from the movie “Barbie” (2023). In Barbie Land, houses, cars, and even asphalt roads are pink. Barbie Land invites viewers into a “dream-like world” different from reality. In addition, “On the Basis of Sex” (2018) features a dramatic story based on reality. The movie is about the historic trial of Ruth Bader Ginsburg, the second female U.S. Supreme Court justice. Both films deal with stories that are not likely to happen in real life and talk about equality between women and men. How far has the perception of gender equality come in South Korea? According to the 2022 Regular Assessment Report conducted by Statistics Korea, only 35.2 percent of people feel that women and men are equal. Gender equality still needs to be worked on. In celebration of Gender Equality Week in the first week of September, The Argus tries to break away from gender stereotypes through comparison and analysis of the films “Barbie” and “On the Basis of Sex” from various perspectives.

Before Reading

Gender stereotypes: According to the Journal of the Korean Society of Women Health Nursing, gender stereotypes refer to attitudes or manners that uniformly define the roles of men and women, considering physical, psychological, and sociocultural characteristics of gender. In fairy tales, often fragile princesses and brave princes appear. The princess wears a pink dress, and the prince is dressed in a blue suit. Later, the prince rules the country. This setting, often found in books for children, is an example of gender role stereotypes.




©Teen VOGUE

▲ President Barbie, Supreme Court Justice Barbie, and other Barbies celebrate after restoring Barbie Land.

Barbie Land, where the toy doll Barbie lives, is a world where women are presidents, scientists, and doctors, while men are unemployed. The stereotypical Barbie who has lived a perfect life in Barbie Land encounters the problem of her iconic arched feet flattening. Barbie travels to the real world with her partner, Ken, to solve this situation. Ken, who was disrespected in Barbie Land, is well-treated in the “real world” which is dominated by men, while Barbie, who has always been welcomed, suffers. Later, Ken returns to Barbie Land, and Barbie meets Gloria, who works as a secretary at Mattel, which produces Barbie. Together, along with Gloria’s daughter, they go to Barbie Land to evade the male executives of Mattel who are chasing Barbie. However, Barbie Land residents have been brainwashed by the patriarchy that Ken had preached, it is now Kendom. Barbie despairs, and Gloria and Sasha decide to save Barbie Land. Gloria expresses her struggles with a society rife with gender stereotypes and is eager to deprogram the Barbies. The Barbies join together and eventually get back to Barbie Land. Later, Gloria suggests Mattel create an “ordinary Barbie” who can be anything.


On the Basis of Sex

“On the Basis of Sex” is based on the true story of the second female U.S. Supreme Court justice. Born in an era of gender discrimination, Ruth Bader Ginsberg, who went by the nickname Kiki, and her husband attended Harvard Law School together. Kiki graduated summa laude from law school but failed to get a job as a lawyer because she was a woman. Therefore, she had to be a law school professor. One day, Kiki went to a party with her husband and felt helpless with her reality of being treated as a trophy of her husband, even though she had more talent. To encourage Kiki, her husband suggested that she takes on the defense of a case in which Moritz was denied a tax credit for caregiving because Moritz was a man. Kiki accepted the case but struggled because she did not have enough experience. In addition, due to obstruction from the tax office, Kiki wanted to give up the case. However, with the support of his daughter, Jane, and the firm will of Moritz, she kept preparing for the trial. The trial was tough, but in her final argument, she said, “We are asking you to protect the right of the country to change.” This statement impressed the judges, and she won the case.



©Time

▲ Kiki, the only woman at the Harvard Law School, shows that there is a small number of women in the Legal Profession.

Differences:**1. How Gender Stereotypes Limit People**

Barbie bursts onto the scene as a toy representing women in a world where there had only been baby dolls. Literally, the Barbie “bursts” out suddenly from the sky. The very first Barbie to fall from the sky is the “stereotypical Barbie.” She has blonde hair, elongated legs, and a slender body. The basic form of Barbie, the “stereotypical Barbie,” lives in a pink house without a job. She only goes to parties every night and has “Girls’ Night.” There are many Barbies in Barbie Land with different professions, but what “stereotypical Barbie” does is simply “stay pretty.”

Moritz was a man with a decent job. He was a charismatic field commander of the marching band. However, since Moritz is not married, he has no one to take care of his sick mother. Therefore, he had to take care of his mother. However, he was denied a tax deduction since federal tax laws specifically limited the deduction to a woman, a widower or divorcée, or a husband whose wife was incapacitated or institutionalized. Moritz could not accept this unfair law, so he had two trials but lost both cases. For the last trial, he went to four lawyers but was rejected by all of them. However, Moritz did not want others to suffer the same irrationality as he did, so he had the final trial with Kiki.

Are people free from the mold that society has created? In “On the Basis of Sex,” the stereotyped law penalizes men who do not conform to the gender roles required by society. In addition, women are legally prohibited from being miners or firefighters. This reveals the gender roles enforced by law in the past. In modern times, there are not many legal distinctions between women and men; however, societal normative gender roles remain. Therefore, there is pressure to conform to certain gender roles, which can be seen in “Barbie.” Many compliments that Barbie gets include the word “pretty” rather than “smart” or “charismatic.” Moreover, Ken shows off his muscles and tries to act tough. Woo Myung-sook, Assistant Professor of Public Sociology at

Korea University, says gender roles and gender stereotypes are different. Gender roles are defined by laws and institutions as portrayed in “On the Basis of Sex.” Professor Woo says, “Gender stereotypes are ‘relational’ concepts, not enforced by law.” The elimination of legal enforceability does not mean that gender stereotypes have disappeared, and society still dictates roles for men and women. Hwang Bo-mi, fire lieutenant of Gyeonggi Northern Fire and Disaster Headquarters, said, “The ratio of men to women in the recruitment of firefighters is about 8:2, and even some cities and provinces do not recruit women at all. My female fellows are just as good at handling firefighting equipment as men. However, firefighters are professionals who risk their lives in dangerous situations, so there are still not many opportunities open for women.” The law does not prevent women from becoming firefighters, but the number of female applicants is small. Why? This is because stereotypical thinking does not take individual characteristics into account. Therefore, facing each other’s difficulties is the beginning of equality.

2. Gender Collaboration for Equality

©Good Morning America

▲ Although Ken got injured at the beach, he is satisfied with getting Barbie’s attention.

At the beginning of the film, the narrator says, “Barbie has a great day every day, but Ken only has a great day if Barbie looks at him.” Ken jumps into the sea to get Barbie’s attention and gets injured. However, instead of being sad, he feels a little joy that Barbie is finally looking at him. On the surface,

they seem like an ordinary couple, but they are not in a horizontal relationship, and Barbie puts Ken on the back burner. Then in the middle of the film, Barbie is clinging to Ken. After Ken preaches about the patriarchy, Barbie keeps looking for Ken if he is out of sight. “Writer Barbie” says Ken deserves all the credit for her Nobel Prize. She even adds that she cannot wait to see Ken, but Ken is having fun with the other Barbies. In the climax, the Barbies cause a fight among the Kens to deprogram the other Barbies. Barbies are trying to reclaim Barbie Land, and Ken is trying to keep his Kendom. In this way, the movie “Barbie” shows men and women have different ideologies and opposing positions.

Kiki’s husband presented as a constant supporter of Kiki in an equal position. Kiki and her husband have a complementary relationship while respecting each other’s lives. Kiki and her husband went to Harvard law school together, but her husband was diagnosed with cancer. Although Kiki is busy, to ensure her husband can go back to his normal life, she audits his classes and explains to him the content of the lessons. Thanks to Kiki, her husband is able to graduate from law school and become a lawyer. In the second half of the film, Kiki’s husband also helps her. Kiki could not see Moritz’s situation from a balanced perspective and only tried to convince the judges from a narrow viewpoint. Therefore, Kiki had to answer unexpected questions in a mock trial. When Kiki is struggling, her husband gives her a new perspective and helps convince the judges at trial. Not only that, but they also defend clients together in court, showing perfect teamwork.

In “Sebasi Talk,” Shin Pil-sik, the first man to get a doctorate in women’s studies in Korea, said he gradually participated in house chores and tried to express his feelings to move away from the patriarchy. He says this effort gave his family a chance to break free from their gender roles. He concludes his lecture with the message that society moves toward equality when daughters and sons change together. To realize gender equality, both men and women need to work. Professor Woo states, “The biological characteristics of men

and women are not changeable, and there will be misunderstandings and conflicts caused by the differences. But if people work together to build an equal society, gender stereotypes will be weakened.” The lack of mutual respect between men and women, as portrayed in the “Barbie” movie, is a major obstacle to gender equality. Shin Sang-sook, a researcher at the Institute for Gender Research of Seoul National University, said, “Finding a solution to any problem requires the courage to face the problem honestly and communication based on mutual respect.” As researcher Shin says, when men and women open their minds, trying to understand each other and change, they can break free from old stereotypes, like in “On the Basis of Sex.”

Commonalties:

1. Challenging Gender Stereotypes

On the poster for “Barbie,” the movie slogan “Barbie is everything” stands out. In fact, in Barbie Land, Barbies can be everything they want such as the president, scientists, or even astronomers. Ken, on the other hand, was given the role of cheering Barbie without a formal job. However, in the “real world,” there is a male president and doctor, which is opposite of Barbie Land. At the very end of the film, Barbie decides to become a human and live in the “real world,” contradicting her original goal of “living a perfect life in Barbie Land.” This shows that Barbie can be everything. Ken also faces a change: he throws off the fur coat he has been wearing the whole time in Kendom and takes a journey to find his new self.

It is hard to believe that there was a time when not everyone could get credit cards. In the 1950s, the time period for “On the Basis of Sex,” women were not allowed to get their own credit cards. “On the Basis of Sex” tells the story of how society suppressed women almost 70 years ago. After graduating from Harvard Law School, Kiki applies to famous law firms to be a lawyer, but the employer

said, “We are a close-knit firm, and wives might get jealous.” In other interviews, Kiki was told the firm already hired women, so there was no need to employ more. However, Kiki becomes Moritz’s lawyer. The main issue Kiki addressed at the trial was that “Section 214 of the Internal Revenue Code: Only a woman, a widower or divorcée, or a husband whose wife is incapacitated or institutionalized can get a tax deduction” was unconstitutional. In the end, Kiki wins, and this case becomes a precedent to change other laws that were written based on sex.

Kinder Chocolate Company in Italy makes two colors of chocolate with toys inside: pink and blue. They even put different toys according to the colors like cars and robots for blue chocolate, and dolls and accessories for pink chocolate. Blue is aimed at boys, and pink is aimed at girls. But are children really born with preferences based on their gender? Ruth Bader Ginsburg, who was Kiki’s real-life model, after becoming U.S. supreme court justice said, “The ‘role’ that society has set is a social stigma that oppresses the individual.” Children are not born with favorite colors; they are induced to like certain colors that society has decided. Then how to break out from the social stigma? Professor Woo suggests “Individuals taking action to escape from stereotypes, rather than expecting the other person to change.” In the “Barbie” movie, Ruth, who made the first Barbie doll, appears in front of Barbie and asks if she wants to be a human or remain a doll. Barbie decides to be a human, even though she can get old and wrinkled. Ruth says just closing her eyes is the only step to being human. Movie critic Kim Yesolbi said, “The way Barbie becomes human through simply closing her eyes shows the building of solidarity between women while affirming the potential within Barbie.” Additionally, Kim Miduk, Assistant Professor of the College of Creative Convergence Education at Sungshin Women’s University, states, “An individual’s personal metamorphosis and cognitive enlightenment parallels the broader transformation and illumination of society as a whole.” Despite various movements related to human rights being performed in a group,

individuals must remember that they are the agents of these movements. In other words, proactive action by individuals is the most crucial initial step toward social solidarity and breaking away from gender stereotypes.

2. Awakening for the Future Generation

Gloria played with Barbie when she was a child and imagined a woman with a variety of jobs. Later, as an adult, she became a secretary at Mattel. When she was growing up, she felt depressed by her stereotypical work and conflict with her daughter Sasha. Therefore, she took out the Barbie that she played with in the past. Gloria saw Barbie who was far from her real life and imagined her own realistic Barbie such as Barbie with cellulite and Barbie thinking about death. Sasha and Gloria visited Barbie Land after meeting stereotypical Barbie, but Barbies had already been brainwashed by the patriarchy. Gloria and Sasha were disappointed to see Barbie just crying and decided to return to reality. However, when Sasha saw the Barbie Land sign change to Kendom, she asked her mom if she wanted to give up on Barbie. At that point, Gloria remembered Sasha’s childhood when she and Sasha used to play with Barbie together. As Barbie inspired her and Sasha with the dream of being “everything,” Gloria decided to save Barbie and restore Barbie Land.



©VOX

▲ In the final 4-minute argument, Kiki points out that even if the word “freedom” does not appear in the Federal Constitution, it is treated as important in the US Constitution. Kiki argues that even if the word “woman” is not noted, female rights should be respected.

Kiki had the mind of a lawyer who followed the

law and procedures, and Jane had the mind of an activist who valued action. As a result, the two often argued and disagreed. While repeating fights and reconciliations, just like the quote “it never rains but it pours,” bad things came at once to Kiki. She messed up in the mock trial, and the Tax Agency offered Moritz a settlement to end the trial. Even a senior lawyer who had been a strong supporter suggested that the trial was too risky and urged her to stop the trial. Kiki finally was about to accept the settlement with great grief and stop the trial. At that moment, Jane appeared in front of Kiki. Kiki looked at Jane and apologized for the sharp words she had been saying the whole time and for not looking out for her. She then told them that if they stopped the trial, she could take care of her family just as she had before, but Jane was against her quitting the trial and said, “The trial was for me.” Her words gave comfort to Kiki, and Kiki vowed to fight to the end for a “better future” for her children. In her closing, she argued, “We all must take these laws on as long as it takes for our sons’ and daughters’ sake.”

Professor Kim said, “The locus where the contemporary younger generation confronts the most pervasive manifestations of gender roles is in the domestic realm. By observing familial dynamics, this emerging cohort absorbs and

evaluates the intricacies of both masculine and feminine expectations. Within this context, they may either conform to or criticize these prescribed gender norms.” If only the younger generation takes action toward gender equality, leaving parents with their gender stereotypes intact, it will take a long time to achieve equality. What should be done to dissolve gender role stereotypes faster? Professor Kim said, “When mothers, fathers, or other adults exhibit a resolute commitment and lifestyle that espouses gender equality and human rights, they effectively embody a beacon of gender parity for generations yet to come.” In other words, when the older generation sets a precedent of gender equality, the youth can follow the path. In “On the Basis of Sex,” Kiki says, “We are not asking you to change the country. That has already happened without any court’s permission. We are asking you to protect the right of the country to change.” If the older generation cannot take progressive action, at least they should not stop the younger generation from doing so. The older generation is in a position to teach the younger generation or to make a big impact. Therefore, for society as a whole to create a culture of gender equality, it is necessary to cooperate with the older generation.

Ruth Bader Ginsburg said: “We should each be free to develop our own talents, whatever they may be, and not be held back by artificial barriers.” Even if gender roles are not legally enforced in modern times, stereotypes still exist in the minds of both men and women. No one should suffer because of their gender, so society needs to take action to move away from outdated ideas. Remember that change starts from the individual. If individuals work together for a “better future,” a world where everyone is equal will come quickly. 🌟

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Folklore, Stories of the Past, Present, and Future

By Kim Ji-hyang
Staff Reporter of Culture Section

Koreans use spoons and chopsticks when eating at a table full of delicious food. On the first day of the new year, Koreans eat *Tteokguk*, hoping for well-being throughout the year. Folklore concerns such customs that were often taken for granted. In other words, it studies traditional ways of doing things. In September, The Argus will look into shamanism and the seasonal customs of Korea among the various fields of folklore studies. People should learn about these customs including their origins and history since they are deeply related to local traditions and customs. Shamanism is often consulted for guidance on the challenges and dilemmas faced in everyday life. Meanwhile, seasonal customs provide vital insights into the origins and historical significance of holidays such as Chuseok. How much do people know about Chuseok? Chuseok is a day to pay respect to the ancestors, share time with family members, and make *Songpyeon*. Yet, these are mere aspects of the holiday, not reflective of its deeper origins and meaning. Additionally, folklore studies may seem distant or unfamiliar to many. Through the introduction of shamanism and seasonal customs and their impact on modern society, The Argus aspires to stimulate readers' in the rich field of folklore studies.

Before Reading

Folklore studies

The Encyclopedia of Korean Culture defines folklore as a "Base culture handed down and continued to the common people of civilized countries." Traditions linked to civilian life, such as customs, folk tales, songs, beliefs, institutions, and proverbs, are researched in folklore studies.

1. Shamanism

(1) Shamanism in Korea

"The shaman told you to avoid people with O's in their names because they'd bring you bad luck."

The previous line is taken from a popular Netflix drama, "The Glory," (2022) spoken by a mother to her daughter. The mother frequently visits the shaman. A character with the most O's in her name, the mother, betrays her daughter in a decisive moment. This is an example of how shamanism is used as a narrative device in film.

What might be an example from real-life? Every November, parents of students taking the Korean SAT* visit Mount Palgong to wish for good scores and bring luck to their children. Mount Palgong is known as a perfect



▲ The Shaman tells the daughter's mother to beware of people with names including O's.

*Korean SAT: A university entrance exam every second or third Thursday of November, also known as "Suneung."

site for prayers among parents. The Encyclopedia of Daegu Culture and History highlights Mount Palgong as a mountain filled with spiritual locales conducive to shamanistic prayer. Historically, during the “Unified Silla Dynasty,”* ancestral rituals were conducted at Mount Palgong in order to invoke the well-being and peace for the dynasty. Shamanism, as defined in the Encyclopedia of Korean Culture, refers to “a religious phenomenon handed down and continued based on a shaman.” In the context of Korean shamanism, this might involve seeking guidance or advice from a shaman through their prayer, visiting a shaman’s fortune-telling house, and asking a shaman for a gut*(a specific ritual). Shamanism appeared in Mongolia before Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism originated in China. The earliest recorded instance of Korean shamanism can be found in “Dong-i Jeon of Samgukji,”* where it mentions that rituals to honor the heavens were conducted.

In a survey conducted by Hankook Research in January 2022, it was found that 41 percent of the respondents had sought fortune-telling. The survey included 1,000 respondents ranging in age from 18 to 60 or older, and the year 2017 served as a reference point for responses regarding whether they heard their fortune. When asked for the reason behind seeking it, the predominant response was “the desire to understand aspects of their overall life history, fortune, and daily life.” A 23-year-old resident of Busan, Kim, did not personally consult a shaman, but her mother did on her behalf. Kim’s mother provided the shaman with Kim’s name, date of birth, and time of birth. The shaman, in return, stated that Kim was an intelligent girl born with a heavenly blessing and foretold that she would marry a good husband. As per the data from Korea Psychics Association and Daehan Kyungsin Association, the membership of both organizations had reached 300,000 as of 2016, indicating a potential increase in the following years.

*Unified Silla Dynasty: One of the three kingdoms of ancient Korea that achieved unification.

*Gut: A ritual in which the shaman prays to god to grant luck or expel an evil spirit.

*Dong-i Jeon of Samgukji: A historical record of Samguk, the three kingdoms of ancient Korea.

(2) The Shaman: Connector Between the Gods and Humanity



▲ Shamans wear the Mubok during the gut.

A shaman is a priest who acts as a connection between gods and humans. Shamans do a gut to seek divine blessings or attempt to expel evil spirits. Fortune-telling, the practice of divining good and bad luck, is also associated with shaman’s doing. The Encyclopedia of Korean Culture defines “luck” as “a fate that is beyond human control, determined by destiny.”

The clothing worn by shamans during fortune-telling or a gut is referred to as *Mubok*. This ritual attire symbolizes a god and its design varies depending on the purpose of the gut and the region where it is conducted. The primary colors of the design of the *Mubok* are red, green, and purple. Additionally, shamans use a bell called a *Muryeong* during a gut or fortune-telling session

to ward off evil spirits and to summon a god to be present.

Shamans reside in ordinary living spaces, just like anyone else. Their homes can be found in typical residential areas and may include apartments, single-family houses, and other common dwellings.

In addition, some fortune-tellers maintain a high profile online, while others practice discreetly without displaying signs. The compensation that a shaman receives for fortune-telling is referred to as the “fee for revealing one’s fortune,” and it typically varies widely depending on what you want to know. The fee usually starts at 30,000 won (US\$22.6). Fortune-telling can encompass various subjects such as predictions about the future, compatibility with spouses, family health, and children’s well-being.



▲ Yeongji Seonyeo tells her experience of going through Sinbyeong.

During this process, the deity that a shaman worships is referred as *Mushin*, and there are 273 types of *Mushin* in Korea. *Mushin* is divided into “natural gods” and “human gods.” Natural gods control natural elements such as the sky, land, sea, mountains, water while human gods are based on the souls of outstanding figures such as kings, queens, and generals. Within the *Mushin*, there exists a hierarchy in which the *Cheonshin*, a deification of the sky, is considered the supreme god.

Yeongji Seonyeo is a shaman living in Yangju-si, Gyeonggi Province; a location 34km north of Seoul. Although a Catholic, she became a shaman. Even before attending elementary school, Yeongji Seonyeo started to hear drum sounds and found herself paralyzed in nightmares. She also suffered from having an upset stomach when eating. These symptoms are referred to as *Sinbyeong*, a spirit sickness that happens to a person whom the gods have chosen to become a shaman. Feeling fatigued, she thought to herself, “I want to live.” A voice responded, “Give in. Then I shall save you.” Yeongji Seonyeo explains, “Not everyone must become a shaman despite suffering from *Sinbyeong*. But there are irresistible cases.” Regarding fortune-telling and life reading, she describes, “When a spirit comes to me, there are times when the answer comes out in words, and there are times when I feel it or the words come to my mind.” Yeongji Seonyeo’s taste changes according to the spirit that enters her body; she eats sweet things when a child’s spirit enters but eats vegetarian food during the prayer period when her mind and body needs to be clean.

2. Seasonal Customs

(1) Chuseok: A Holiday to Welcome the Full Moon



▲ Every August 15 of the lunar calendar is Chuseok.

Seasonal customs are customs repeated at a specific period during the year. These are occasions when families gather together and share delicious food. What seasonal customs occur in September? Chuseok falls at the end of this September. Chuseok’s origin is documented in “*Samguk Sagi*,” a historical record of the three kingdoms in ancient Korea. During the rule of King Yuri of Silla, women’s families in the capital were divided into two groups, and the royal daughter led them to weave hemp cloth for a month from July 15 to August *Hangawi*. *Hangawi* refers to a significant day in the middle of autumn, which corresponds to August 15 in the lunar calendar.

Like most seasonal customs, the date of Chuseok is based on the lunar calendar. The lunar calendar became a standard in seasonal traditions because our ancestors were interested in the moon’s shape. This attention to the moon’s form was due to the changes observed, such as the transformation into a half moon, full moon, and new moon over time. Consequently, the date of Chuseok, falling on the 15th day of the 8th month in the lunar calendar, changes yearly. *Dalmaji* is a custom of praying to the full moon, a tradition practiced by ancestors by holding a festival during Chuseok. It originated from the belief that the full moon symbolizes prosperity and good fortune. According to the Encyclopedia of Korean Culture, the full moon is “Yin,” and is regarded as a goddess based on Yin and Yang. This belief transformed into the worship of Jimosin, a goddess of land symbolizing the feminine divinity that gives birth to all things. Therefore, at a time when farming was a vital means of life, a ritual of gratitude was held to the full moon to pray for a successful harvest.

(2) Rice Cake on Holidays



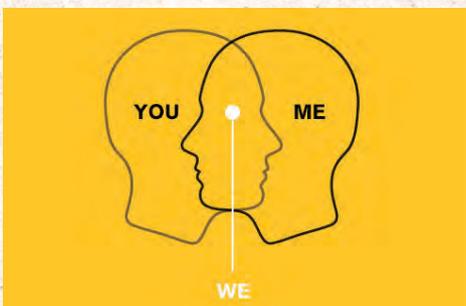
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▲ Songpyeon is the shape of a half moon.

On Lunar New Year's Day, people eat rice cake soup. On *Dano*, May 5, people make Mugwort Rice Cake. On July 7, people eat *Snow White Rice Cake and Songpyeon* on August 15. All the dates are based on the lunar calendar. Why do Koreans eat rice cakes every holiday? Korea's agricultural culture since ancient times allowed people to make rice cakes with grain. Rice cakes symbolize health and longevity, appreciation of the harvest, and fortune, among other things. In "The Narrative Meaning and Archetype Symbol of the Tteok in Tales" (2020) written by Kim Bok-sun, a lecturer in the Department of Korean Language and Literature at Kangwon National University, describes rice cake as "A food that mediates between God and humans as a symbol of prayer." Likewise, rice cake is a food offered in thanks for the grace of ancestors. This helps to explain why rice cakes have become inseparable from holidays.

These days, the role of rice cakes extends to various social gatherings and ceremonies such as feasts, weddings, and funerals. *Songpyeon*, a type of rice cake commonly made for Chuseok, is shaped like a half-moon, symbolizing hope and growth. The shape is also connected to the lunar cycle of Chuseok; though the moon starts as a full moon and wanes to a half moon, the half moon shape of the *Songpyeon* suggests a promise of renewal, signifying that it will soon become a full moon again. Lee, a twenty-year-old college student in Jeju, said, "Whenever I made *Songpyeon*, I thought, 'Why is *Songpyeon* a triangular shape? Now that I understand the hopeful meaning, I will be able to take greater pleasure in the moment of making it.'" Rice cakes, in this context, go beyond mere sustenance: they become a means to forge cherished memories with family during special occasions.

3. Prospective



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▲ Professor Lee emphasizes that the key of folklore studies is understanding others.

K-pop, K-drama, and K-food are leading the new wave of culture. But with this global fascination, why should Koreans be interested in folklore studies? Lee Jin-gyo, a professor at the Department of Cultural Heritage at Andong National University, provides an insightful response: "Studying folklore shows why Koreans act, think, speak, and express in certain ways. In essence, it is a field of study that is instrumental in unraveling the core identity of the Korean people." For example, in December 2016, the construction of a wind plant was scheduled in Mount Ju, Yeongyang-gun, North Gyeongsang Province, located 300km east of Seoul. The elderly in the region strongly opposed this decision, going as far as blocking construction equipment and conducting rituals in the honor of the mountain god. To those unfamiliar with Mount Jusan and its significance, the construction project might have seemed like a positive development. However, for the elderly villagers, the mountain embodies an extraordinary meaning, considered a god believed to protect them. Through this example it is possible to see how folklore study can facilitate understanding of others' thoughts and actions by unearthing deep-seated cultural values and practices. In addition, Kang Jeong-won, a professor at the Department of Anthropology at Seoul National University, stated, "It is the significance of folklore to draw people's recognition by properly explaining individual unconsciousness on folklore culture

in the memory of the people.” Understanding folklore studies is more than a mere academic endeavor; it helps establish an individual’s identity and fosters a sense of pride in Korean culture, according to Kang.

“Research topics such as the modernity of folk culture, and the correlation and interaction between the world and Korean folk culture are essential areas for future folklore scholars to explore,” said Professor Kang. He stresses the need to understand how traditional culture has evolved to generate new leading cultural trends. This requires a concerted effort and interest from Koreans in folklore. Professor Lee further elaborates on this need, adding, “I hope people do not find folklore difficult and instead embrace it as a ‘culture of joy and sorrow of life.’ The beginning could be as simple as visiting a folk museum or participating in a local festival.”

©Visit Korea



▲ Professor Lee recommends to visit folk museum as a start of getting to know what folklore is.

Despite the evident need for a deeper understanding of folklore studies within Korea, there is no Department of Folklore within Korea. In 2013, the closure of the Department of Comparative Folklore at Chung-Ang University was prompted by a low major selection ratio. More recently, in 2022, the last remaining department dedicated to folklore studies at Andong National University changed its name to the Department of Cultural Heritage. This shift is due to the government’s criteria when determining restructuring, taking into account factors such as the recruitment rate, the employment

rate of graduates, and the admission rate. These indicators underestimate folklore studies as an area of pure learning. Such an approach not only stifles the creativity within universities, but also eliminates students’ opportunity to build humanities knowledge. The goal of “strengthening the competitiveness of universities at a world-class level” remains vital, but the trend of devaluing folklore studies and its contributions to the broader academic and cultural landscape warrants reconsideration.

The understanding people know about folklore can be likened to “a drop of water from the sea.” The field of folklore studies encompasses a vast array of subjects related to Korean culture. Topics of folklore studies that need more research are mentioned because it is a study that embraces the past, present, and future. If society disregards this expansive sea of folklore studies, it risks rendering powerless the endless possibilities and prospects that this field of study presents. Folklore studies can shine if everyone gets involved rather than just one person or group enjoying it. The path to engaging with folklore begins with efforts to incorporate it into everyday life. This might include visiting a folk museum or participating in local festivals. With Chuseok approaching, why not plan to visit a folk museum with your family to deepen your understanding? The Argus hopes readers will explore and discover what “the sea of folklore” is by fostering a genuine interest in this rich cultural field. [A](#)

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No One Is Born Old

By Kim Jun-hong
Associate Editor of Social Section

In May 2023, a photo posted on an online community showed a cafe with the words “No Senior Zone” written on the door. The phrase, which was mainly used to deny the entry of young children, has now spread to the elderly. Unfortunately, this cafe will lose a lot of customers in the near future. This is because South Korea is aging at a furious pace, with South Korea expected to become the world’s second oldest country by 2050. According to the “2022 General Population and Housing Survey Results” released by Statistics Korea in July 2023, the number of elderly people reached about 9 million, an increase of 4.9 percent compared to the previous year. As a result, the proportion of the elderly population in South Korea has reached a record high of 17.7 percent, constituting a significant segment of the nation’s demographic structure.

Is South Korea, on the brink of entering a super-aged society, adequately prepared? Though the number of elderly individuals is rising, welfare measures are, regrettably, not keeping pace with this growth. In recognition of South Korea’s Social Welfare Day on September 7, it becomes necessary to understand the true state of the country’s elderly welfare system. This understanding is essential not only for the current elderly population but for all citizens, who will eventually reach senior age. The Argus delves into South Korea’s elderly welfare system, revealing a society where external expressions of respect for the elderly may mask underlying indifference or harshness.

Problem 1

Faltering Care Services due to a Shortage of Caregivers



As the elderly population grows, the number of people who have been recognized for Long-term Care Insurance exceeded 1 million for the first time in 2022. The Long-term Care Insurance System is a household activity support service provided to the elderly, specifically those who are over the age of 65, and who are unable to carry out daily activities alone due to advanced age or age-related diseases. According to the “2022 Statistical Yearbook of Long-term Care Insurance” published by the National Health Insurance Service in July 2023, as of the end of 2022, about 1.3 million people applied for Long-term Care Insurance, an increase of about 5 percent compared to the previous year. The increase in the number of applicants means that more people are unable to manage their daily lives independently. However, the assistance provided to them is absolutely insufficient. Cho Moun-gi, a professor at Korea Soongsil Cyber University, says “16 out of 89 corporate medical care institutions in South Korea have reduced their capacity because they could not recruit caregivers. The reduction in the number of institution admissions due to a shortage of caregivers underscores the seriousness of the problem.”

In order to become a caregiver, one must pass the qualification exam. After completing a total of 240 hours of training, which consists of theory, practical skills and exercises, a certificate is given if one scores 60 points or more on the written examination. As of 2022, the pass rate of the caregiver qualification exam is over 90 percent, which is the highest pass rate among certificate exams in South Korea. Due to the low level of difficulty and the ability to take retests immediately, the number of people who obtain a caregiver’s license is increasing every year. However, the number of people actually entering the field is not increasing. As of April 2023, there are about 2.5 million people who have obtained a license, but only about 610,000 people, or 24 percent, are actually working as caregivers. In addition to the shortage of personnel, the high age of workers is also considered a distinct feature and problem. According to the statistics on the number of caregivers by age group released by National Health Insurance Service in April 2023, among caregivers, those in their 60s ranked first with about 300,000 people. People in their 50s took second place, with about 180,000 people, followed by people in their 70s or older, numbering around 70,000. Forty thousand people were in their 40s or younger. This data allows one to infer the high average age of caregivers. The phrase “the elderly take care of the elderly” has thus become a reality. What is problematic is that the high age of caregivers directly affects the quality of the overall care service.



▲ The average age of caregivers is high, making the elderly take care of the elderly.

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Problem 2

Insufficient Job Opportunities for the Elderly: Both Quantitatively and Qualitatively



In July 2023, the Korean government announced that it would increase the number of jobs for the elderly to 10 percent of the elderly population by 2027 in preparation for the country’s entry into a super-aging society. The plan aims to increase the number of jobs for the elderly, which is currently about 883,000, to more than 1 million, addressing the issues of an insufficient supply compared to demand. Kang Kyu-Sung, Director of the Korea Labor Force Development Institute for the aged, says “Considering the financial capacity and supply environment, it is appropriate to provide job opportunities for about 10 percent of the total elderly population. By 2025, approximately 1 million

jobs for the elderly will be needed as South Korea becomes a super-aged society, with a number of 10 million seniors in the total population.” While it is important to increase the number of jobs that are lacking, it is necessary to look beyond the simple number of jobs and see how the senior employment program is going and whether there is a need to change the method.

Issues regarding senior employment can be approached both quantitatively and qualitatively. Quantitatively, there is a shortage of supply compared to demand. Senior jobs are only available to those who meet certain selection criteria. Although there are differences in each type of program, the selection is made based on the income level. Consequently, despite a significant number of elderly individuals desiring to work, the opportunities remain restricted. Seo Dong-min, a professor at Baekseok University, observes, “When there is a specific criterion applied for obtaining a job, there is bound to be a blind spot. At the beginning and end of the year, a lot of seniors come to the senior center to get a job, but they are often turned away because they do not meet the income criteria.” Qualitatively, the problem is the lack of diversity in job opportunities. According to the “2023 Distribution of Senior Employment Program by Type,” published by the Ministry of Health and Welfare, only one-third of the jobs for the elderly provided by the Ministry are akin to those in a general workplace; the remaining two-thirds are service-type roles that fall within the category of social activities. These service-type positions involve simple and non-diverse tasks such as environmental cleaning, managing public bicycle rental stations, and patrolling schools. As a result, jobs currently provided to the elderly population in South Korea are limited in both quantity and quality.



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▲ Seniors are in counseling sessions for employment.

Problem 3

Local Variation among Leisure Welfare Facilities and Uniform Recreation Programs



Medical assistance and care are not the only welfare needs of the elderly. Leisure welfare facilities, which provide pleasant daytime activities for elderly individuals without significant daily living difficulties, are an essential welfare component in an aging country. There are three main types of leisure welfare facilities for the elderly: the silver hall,* senior center* and school for the elderly.* In line with the increasing size of the elderly population, the number of leisure welfare facilities is also steadily increasing. In the case of silver halls, there are about 68,000 of them in South Korea, and the number is continually increasing. Traditionally, silver halls were spontaneously located within villages. However, in recent times, their number has been growing due to regulations requiring the establishment of silver halls when constructing a residential area with more than 150 households. Hur Jun-soo, a professor of Soongsil University, explains that this leads to local variation. “Silver halls are more likely to be constructed in metropolitan areas and large cities where



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▲ Seniors are having a good time playing games in the silver hall.

there is a high concentration of residential areas. Relatively few are constructed in rural areas. In terms of facilities, silver halls in apartment buildings are comfortable and spacious, compared to those that remain old and inadequate in rural areas.” This discrepancy is not limited to silver halls alone; elderly welfare centers exhibit a similar pattern. There are about 360 elderly welfare centers in South Korea, but these are also primarily located in metropolitan areas.

Recently, Korean companies have launched various businesses aimed at the growing number of seniors. These include premium silver care services offering a range of cultural classes, and even services that harness artificial intelligence (AI). For instance, ESTsoft, a company specializing in AI services, plans to build a smart silver hall with AI individuals that replicate real humans based on AI technology. This endeavor includes providing leisure activities like singing lessons using the AI representation of singer Taejin-ah, who is popular among the elderly. As such, premium silver care services in private facilities are evolving day by day. In contrast, public leisure welfare facilities appear somewhat uniform. Leisure programs for the elderly mainly include physical education activities such as dance sports, hands-on pursuits like calligraphy, and information education. Regrettably, there is a lack of diversity in these offerings, with most senior centers providing similar programs.

*Silver hall: A facility that provides a place for the elderly to socialize and pursue hobbies independently.

*Senior center: A facility that provides various information and services on the education and hobbies of the elderly, and provides various services necessary to promote their welfare.

*School for the elderly: A facility that provides learning programs related to hobbies and daily life for the elderly.

Cause 1

Ghost Licenses and Poor Treatment of Caregivers



Why has the number of caregivers actually working fallen short of the growing number of people with caregiver’s licenses? Kim Byung-jun, Planning Director of Korea Federation of Senior Welfare, cites the implementation of the family care system as one of the reasons. The family care system is a structure in which a licensed caregiver takes care of a family member who has received a long-term care rank directly at home, and earns a certain amount of income by assisting his or her parents. Regarding this, Director Kim says “Since it is possible to make legal profits just by living together with their family, the number of people who hope to obtain the caregiver’s license in order to have the benefits is increasing year by year. That is why fewer people actually go to work to help the elderly outside their families, and the number of those with ghost licenses is only increasing.” There have also been criticisms that the meaning of family care has been undermined as the money given is perceived as extra profit, which indicates a large number of caregivers with ghost licenses.

Meanwhile, poor treatment leads to the departure of those who entered the field for the genuine purpose of caregiving, rather than for family care. Caregivers’ professional status is low; they are not recognized as professionals, and despite the intensity of their work, they are paid only around the minimum wage. As a result, the perception that they are merely individuals who perform household chores is an unavoidable reality. In particular, in the case of home visit caregivers, there are cases where the boundaries of their duties are not clear since they assist with the overall household chores. Yoo, a 55-year-old home visit caregiver, says it is difficult to avoid additional requests outside of work during non-working hours. She says, “I often get calls from the elderly even when it is late after work or on days when I don’t go to work. Once, on a holiday, she called me and asked me to call a taxi for her. Since it was hard to refuse, I tried to grab a taxi through the application. It took

quite a long time, and I suffered a lot because it was hard to communicate about the exact location.” There are no guidelines to clearly draw the boundaries of work and protect caregivers from unfair treatment, so any frictions, large or small, that occur on the job are borne solely by the caregiver.

Cause 2

Senior Employment Program that Does Not Listen to the Voices of the Elderly



The senior employment program is broadly divided into public, social service and private sectors. Among them, public employment is a program that provides work directly supported by the government. Basic pensioners over the age of 65 are paid 270,000 won (US\$202) if they work 30 hours a month. This salary is lower compared to the social service type and the private sector, which offer a monthly salary of about 600,000 won (US\$450) and 2.6 million won (US\$1951), respectively. Public employment mainly consists of simple labor jobs and accounts for 66.5

percent of the jobs provided for the elderly. The government recently announced plans to drastically reduce public employment, noting that they are simple part-time jobs that earn little money. Instead, the government aims to provide more substantial job-like positions by increasing opportunities in the social service and private sectors. However, experts criticize this as a policy that “does not know the field,” indicating a potential disconnect between the policy’s intentions and the real needs and conditions in the field. Professor Seo says, “Reducing public employment and increasing market-like employment because of low salaries is only looking at the issue from a limited perspective. Some people depend entirely on senior employment for their livelihoods, but in many cases, it acts as a supplementary concept. Even if they actually earn a small amount, satisfaction is very high among the elderly.” Jobs for the elderly are not just a matter of how much they earn, but also represent the identity of the elderly as participants in social activities, which is an important factor in enhancing life satisfaction. Therefore, increasing the working population of the elderly might be more significant than raising the unit price of work.

Meanwhile, another factor hindering both the quantitative and qualitative development of senior employment is the poor treatment of professionals. These professionals are arranged for the management of the senior employment program and are responsible for overseeing the entire process, from job placement to satisfaction surveys. However, the conditions and compensation for these workers are substandard, reflecting a lack of investment and appreciation for their crucial role in supporting the elderly workforce. Professor Seo explains, “People in charge of the senior employment program are often on one-year contracts. Typically, those who are just starting their careers take these roles, receiving only about the minimum wage. Since the person in charge changes every year, the work itself becomes a simple administrative task and lacks expertise.” The transient nature of the employment hinders the ability to fully grasp the real needs of the elderly. While creating jobs for the elderly is important, for the overall development of the senior employment program, support must be allocated to improve the treatment of managing personnel and secure their expertise.



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▲ Senior citizens who participated in the government-provided public employment business are doing patrol work.

Cause 3

Leisure Welfare Facilities Run by Local Governments and Programs with Weak Spots



In the field of elderly welfare, three principle sectors receive investment from the central government's budget: the long-term care insurance system aiding seniors with age-related illnesses, the basic pension paid for living expenses, and the senior employment program. These areas are fundamentally tied to aspects of health and economics. Conversely, in the case of leisure facilities, financial support is inadequate since it is not within the scope of the central government's full support. Among leisure welfare facilities, only senior centers are included in the central government's welfare budget. Silver halls and schools for the elderly are managed through the budgets of local governments, leading to regional variations. The extent of support from each local government fluctuates depending on its budget, thereby creating disparities in the quality and level of leisure welfare facilities across different regions. Professor Hur explains, "The operation of leisure welfare facilities is entirely dependent on the determination of local governments. Therefore, aside from a few financially independent cities like Seoul, Gyeonggi, Busan, and Daegu, the financing and support for leisure welfare facilities are considerably insufficient." Ultimately, only those local governments that have a surplus budget to allocate to the domain of leisure can maintain and continue to manage such facilities.

Meanwhile, South Korea's leisure programs for seniors often overlook the unique characteristics of the participants, leading to a deficiency in specialized guidance. A significant portion of the programs available at senior centers may not be appealing to all seniors, with disparities existing across gender and age groups. Professor Hur points out, "What can be considered peculiar is that there are relatively few programs that male seniors can enjoy. Activities held in senior centers tend to be dominated by women, and it is relatively difficult for men to participate." There is also a shortage of professionals to lead leisure activities. Enhancing the variety and quality of programs necessitates the recruitment of more skilled guides and connect them with senior centers. "Several senior centers in Seoul, including the Yongsan Senior Center, specialize in teaching physical education to the elderly through cooperation with professional local sports associations. It would be a good idea to use this kind of expert linkage program as a model and expand it nationwide," adds Professor Hur.



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▲ Seniors are taking Korean language classes at the senior center.

Solution 1

Influx of Elderly Care Industry into the Public Domain



The inadequate treatment of caregivers and the absence of guidelines trace back to a single underlying cause: care for the elderly is not considered part of the public domain. All other areas of social welfare consist of non-profit organizations that do not seek profit and are supported by public assistance. Therefore, they operate solely on national subsidies. In addition, the Ministry of Health and Welfare publishes guidelines for workers' labor costs every year, and operations are carried out under strict compliance. In



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▲ There have been constant demands for arranging guidelines for the caregivers.

the case of salary, treatment is stable, since it is based on the annual pay system, in which salaries increase regularly every year.

On the other hand, elderly care operates under the cost of the long-term care insurance, not subsidies. It functions solely on the insurance fees paid by individuals. Since actual payment accounts for only 15 percent of the total insurance fees, the operating costs permitted in the area of elderly care are quite limited. Director Kim explains that in the case of elderly care business, the market is open to individual businesses, distinguishing the financial nature from other social welfare areas. “Only 12 percent of elderly care facilities are run by nonprofit organizations. The remaining 88 percent are operated by the private sector, which tends to minimize labor costs, where most expenses are incurred. Also, since there are no guidelines for labor costs, only a small amount is paid out as wages to caregivers.” Ultimately, since the elderly care business relies on insurance fees and is unbound by regulations, the improvement of labor conditions for caregivers does not proceed smoothly.

Therefore, the ultimate and most ideal solution is to bring the elderly care business into the public domain. Operation within the confines of the government based on stable subsidies and guidelines is necessary. Director Kim explains, “It is practically impossible to raise the insurance fee, which currently acts as the fund of elderly care businesses, as a purpose of improving the treatment of caregivers. The insurance fee that individuals have to pay will increase significantly, so no one will stand by idly. Eventually, the only key is to run the elderly care business at the national level, and that is what elderly care facilities and associations have consistently been insisted on.”

Solution 2

Jobs as a Foothold to the Elderly's Social Participation

In order to guide the senior employment program effectively, changes must be made both quantitatively and qualitatively. Quantitatively, it is necessary to lower the income standards for providing jobs so that more seniors can have the opportunity to participate in society. There may be differences in the nature of work, but it is important to guarantee a job for every senior who is eager to work. In terms of managing personnel, it is necessary to recruit full-time workers rather than contract workers in order to foster specialization and ensure the continuity of the program. Increasing the number of workers is also necessary for tighter management. In the qualitative domain, it is important to diversify jobs. It is essential to provide a variety of jobs suitable for each individual, so that the elderly can reutilize their competence by making use of their previous work experience, qualifications and specialties. Professor Seo explains that talent donation can serve as a guide. “We need to help the elderly give their capacities back to society. That is what makes elderly volunteering different from volunteering in general. For the elderly, work is often not a goal, but a means to social engagement and a healthy retirement. That is why it is important to develop individual skills and connect them to jobs.”

Other than quantitative and qualitative development, there is also a need to change society's view towards senior employment. Senior job placement services, which have mostly been referred to as “senior employment programs,” have recently been rebranded as “promotion of senior social participation.” The underlying concept is that jobs for the elderly are more than just economic activities, serving to help seniors fulfill their roles as members of the community. Professor Seo proposes to apply the concept of “Healthy Age,” which means aging in a healthy way. “Living to a healthy old age indicates living independently and fulfilling one's role as a member of the

community. As a means of doing so, jobs for the elderly should be developed from the perspective that the elderly are resources that should be utilized in society.” It is crucial to redesign senior employment from the perspective that the social participation of elderly people is helpful for society as well as to seniors.

Solution 3

Expansion of Support for Leisure Welfare and Diversification of Programs



In order for all the elderly to be able to enjoy their leisure life, it is imperative to reduce the variation between regions. When it comes to budgeting, it is necessary to consider the differences in budgets between local governments and vary the allocation of budgets by region. It is important to provide more support for the establishment of sufficient leisure welfare facilities, especially in areas with a large elderly population. In addition, efforts should be made to ensure adequate recreational facilities at the local level. In this regard, it is necessary to refer to Japan’s case. Japan provides a “community-based” service that secures leisure welfare facilities needed in every region. This eliminates the inconvenience of people in areas without leisure welfare facilities moving to other regions to enjoy their leisure since such facilities are scattered throughout the whole country, ultimately reducing the qualitative variations between regions.

In addition, leisure programs for the elderly in South Korea need to enter a new phase. Firstly, it is important to provide a variety of recreational activities based on the employment of professional instructors. In addition to ensuring diversity, the creation of intergenerational leisure activities can serve as an approach. At present, most leisure activities and leisure facilities are clearly divided by generation, such as leisure activities for the youth and rest zones for the elderly. It is necessary to move away from segregated generational leisure activities and pursue leisure without dividing generations, enabling intergenerational exchange from teenagers to those in their 70s. “When we go to a community center in Europe, it is easy to spot all generations doing their favorite sports together in the same space. Rather than clearly dividing the space that can be enjoyed by each generation, inducing generation-integrated leisure activities can lead to healthy leisure for the elderly and at the same time, break down the boundaries between generations,” Professor Hur adds. The transformation of the leisure welfare program for the elderly will be the first step towards a healthy retirement for everyone.



▲ Recreational programs for the elderly should become more diverse.

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No one is born old. The elderly are not different entities, but a future that everyone will face at some point. People today, who continue opposing increases in national pension and free subway rides for the elderly, tend to consider the issue of elderly welfare as someone else’s business. Even if it seems distant right now, it is essential to examine and understand the reality of elderly welfare in order to prepare for old age, which will inevitably be part of everyone’s future. South Korea should keep pace with the rapid aging of the population by implementing welfare services that are open to all, fully reflecting the voices of the elderly, before it is too late. 

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Morphia



Ratatouille: The Best Way to Read Someone's Mind

By Ryu Hyo-rin

Associate Editor of Theory & Critique Section

What comes to mind when thinking of September? September is the month when the crops cultivated during spring and summer mature, and the fruits are ready for harvest. Various fruits and vegetables are harvested during this season, and an array of seafood such as oysters and octopus is also in season. Additionally, this time of year is marked by many food-related anniversaries and events. In addition to these environmental factors, is there a connection between stress and increased food intake? Indeed, beyond mere survival, there is a significant psychological foundation underlying this behavior related to food consumption. Eating food is more than mere sustenance; it is an act of exchanging psychological effects with others and stimulating the brain through taste and smell. This psychological dimension of food is poignantly illustrated in *Ratatouille*, a prominent food-themed film released in 2007. Remy, the mouse, and Linguini, the novice chef, both consume and utilize the food in their daily lives. The film explores various food psychological behaviors related to food, providing insights that are often overlooked. The Argus aims to analyze the behavior of characters in the renowned food-themed movie *Ratatouille*, and to explore the underlying food psychology, during September, the month celebrated for gourmet experiences.

Movie Ratatouille

Produced by Pixar and distributed by the Walt Disney Company, *Ratatouille* was directed by Brad Bird and released in 2007. The film tells the story of Remy, a mouse with extraordinary taste. After being separated from his family in an unexpected incident, Remy finds himself in Paris, France. There, he meets Alfredo Linguini, a novice chef. Remy hides in Linguini's hat, allowing him to indulge his culinary ambitions at Gusteau's, considered the best restaurant in Paris. However, Remy's passion for cooking is threatened by Gusteau's greedy chef, Skinner, and the harsh food critic, Anton. Yet, Remy's culinary creation, ratatouille,* garners high praise, enabling him to overcome these obstacles and continue cooking.

*Ratatouille: According to the World Food Name Encyclopedia, ratatouille is a representative dish of Provence, France, and is a vegetable stew made by boiling vegetables such as eggplants, pumpkins, bell peppers, and tomatoes with herbs and olive oil.



©Pixar Animation Studios

▲ *Ratatouille*, directed by Brad Bird, was released on June 29, 2007 in the U.S.



Is Super Taste Real, Allowing Everything to Be Tasted with Just One Bite?

©Pixar Animation Studios



▲ Remy is a supertaster who has more sensitive taste buds compared to others.

Remy possesses a “super taste” that enables him to identify every ingredient in a dish just by smelling or tasting a bite of it. In addition, eating the same food as others, he experiences a more diverse range of tastes and smells. At the beginning of the movie, Remy tastes a combination of mushrooms, cheese, and rosemary baked together, exclaiming, “It’s burny, melty... It’s not really a smoke taste. It’s got like this ‘ba-boom, zap’ kind of taste!” However, when his brother, Emile, tastes the same dish, he simply says that he does not know what it tastes like. Anton Ego, the renowned and fearsome food critic, shares a trait with Remy. He can identify the origin of wine just by tasting it. If there is a change in the chef, ingredient, type of seasoning, or measurement in a dish, he immediately detects it and becomes angered with the restaurant manager. People often watch TV shows where a renowned chef or sommelier tastes the food and identifies the season of origin and the year of production just by tasting the wine. Observing this, Remy and Anton Ego, who possess a “super taste,” could indeed exist in reality.

Is the so-called “super taste” which perceives more flavors than ordinary people actually real? Food Columnist Hwang Kyo-ik says, “In fact, taste cells only have five flavors: sweet, salty, bitter, sour, and umami.” Therefore, there cannot be a super taste that identifies ingredients with flavors beyond these five. In reality, sensations other than these five flavors are often perceived through the sense of smell. Additionally, taste is controlled by the brain. This can be likened to the placebo effect, where a patient’s condition actually improves when administered an inert substance to the patient, where the patient believes it to be a real and effective drug. In a similar way, perception of taste can be influenced by belief and expectation. According to “Why You Eat What You Eat” (2017), a book by Rachel Herz, Professor in the Department of Psychology at Brown University, the placebo effect can be applied not only to medical treatment for improving a condition, but also

to the perception of taste in food intake. In 2001, Frederic Brochet, Doctor of the Institute of Vine and Wine Science at the University of Bordeaux conducted an experiment involving 57 wine experts. He served the same wine in two different bottles, labeling one as a luxury brand and the other as an ordinary brand. Despite the wine being identical, the experts rated the two as completely different. The wine presented in high-end packaging was praised: “Rich, smell of ripening wooden barrels, and complex subtle flavors are harmoniously balanced, and goes smoothly to the neck.” Conversely, the wine in packaging was described as “low-smelling, fast-running, low-presence, bland, and tasteless.” This experiment illustrates that taste and smell do not insole rely on passive reception by the tongue and nose. Rather, the brain actively controls both the physical and cognitive aspects of taste and smell, demonstrating how expectations and perceptions can shape our sensory experience.

So, how can food experts identify all the ingredients in a dish? According to Food Columnist Hwang, this ability stems from the fact that taste can be trained. He explains, “People who specialize in combining various ingredients in diverse ways have undergone more delicate sensory training than ordinary people.” Thus, their refined ability to discern and describe flavors comes from specialized practice and experience rather than a naturally occurring “super taste.” For example, a person who has never eaten food containing lemon would not be able to identify the presence of lemon in a dish. Conversely, if an individual has had abundant experience with different foods, he or she will remember the tastes and can subsequently identify the ingredients in a given dish. In a 2013 study led by Oliver Braubach, Doctor of the Brain Research Institute of Korea Institute of Science and Technology (KIST), evidence was found to support the idea that the brain processes smell by dividing it into innate smell information and acquired smell information. In other words, certain olfactory stimuli related to danger or sex, such as toxic gas or pheromones,* are innate and present from birth. Conversely, food-related olfactory senses are learned and remembered by the brain as an individual grows and experiences various aromas. This supports the notion that sensory experience with food can be cultivated and refined over time. Therefore, individuals referred to as “supertasters,” who appear both in movies and in reality, are actually products of diverse taste experiences, rather than possessing special abilities with which they are born. Additionally, regardless of the breadth of their tasting

Morpheus

experience, they can still be susceptible to errors influenced by the placebo effect. This highlights the complex interplay between innate sensory perception and learned experience in the realm of taste and smell.

*Pheromone: A substance that animals, especially insects, secrete and release to cause certain actions to their kind. There are alarm pheromones that signal danger, and sex pheromones that attract the opposite sex.



Finishing a Day with Wine and Cheese

©Pixar Animation Studios



▲ Remy and other characters in this movie have their own comfort foods.

with Remy, enjoying a view of the Eiffel Tower at home with fragrant wine and salty cheese. Similarly, Anton Ego, who has become a regular at the restaurant after a series of events, ends the day contentedly by savoring Remy's ratatouille for dinner. Like the characters in the movie, many people desire to conclude their days with their favorite foods. When ending a stressful or tiring day, people often seek out salty or sweet, stimulating foods such as spicy dishes or sweet cakes, echoing the preferences and behaviors of the characters in the film.

Why do people seek food that comforts them when they are weary? The term “comfort food” refers to dishes consumed to provide rest and alleviate fatigue, and this preference involves the chemical actions within the brain. According to Lee Dong-gwi, Professor of Psychology at Yonsei University, when people are feeling depressed or stressed, they tend to gravitate toward foods rich in sugar and carbohydrates. This inclination occurs because consuming such foods reduces the brain's stress response, a reaction made possible by the stimulation of the brain's reward center through sugar and carbohydrates. According to Park Hyung-ju, Principal Research Scientist at the Korea Brain Research Institute (KBRI), the brain experiences pleasure when dopamine is secreted in response to external stimulation. The secretion of dopamine during the consumption of food or water occurs primarily in two instances. The first secretion happens immediately upon ingestion, triggering feelings of taste and satisfaction. The second occurs when the

Alfredo Linguini, aided by Remy to become a renowned chef in Paris, ends a day

food or water is absorbed from the intestines, allowing for the nutrients to contribute to the experience. Therefore, when people eat food, especially when they feel hungry, dopamine is first secreted to provide immediate pleasure and satisfaction, and subsequently, to enhance the experience as various nutrients are absorbed. Scientist Park explains, “Dopamine secretion is not induced solely by stimulating taste; it also increases as high-calorie nutrients that accompany the taste are absorbed.”

If dopamine secretions are constantly over-activated, an individual may seek more stimuli and thus desire for more comfort foods is desired. According to Scientist Park, when dopamine is secreted in response to external stimuli such as food, the brain feels pleasure, and so it attempts to repeat actions that cause the secretion of dopamine. These characteristics of the brain can lead to addiction of seeking comfort food whenever one is stressed. Professor Herz explains, “The taste of something sweet is innately rewarding; it triggers the neural circuitry and neurochemistry of reward and pleasure, instantly making people feel good and want more.” If one consumes too much sugar quickly and does not balance it with proteins and fats, he or she is likely to experience an energy crash shortly after metabolizing it, leading to feelings of discomfort. Finding comfort food when stressed is not necessarily harmful, but how about stimulating the happiness hormones in a different way?



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▲ The more people take sugar, the more they want it.



A Ratatouille of Memories That Makes Even the Cold-Hearted Cry

At the end of the movie, Anton Ego, who becomes furious when the food is delayed, tastes the ratatouille made by Remy.

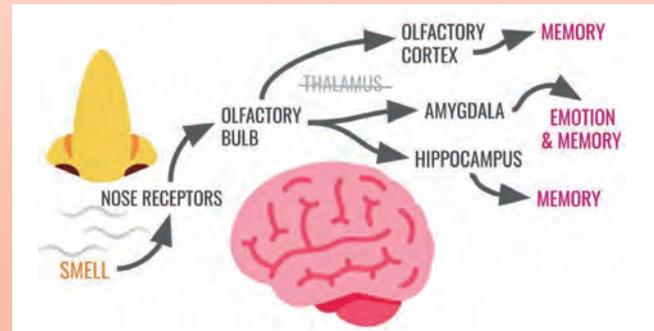


©Pixar Animation Studios

▲ Anton Ego, one of the most cold-hearted food critics in Paris, is moved by his food of memories, ratatouille.

He takes a bite and naturally recalls his childhood memories with his mother. Then he becomes mesmerized and starts to savor the ratatouille. After returning home, Anton Ego becomes a regular visitor to Remy's restaurant for his ratatouille, leaving a favorable review, saying, "I will be returning to Gusteau's soon, hungry for more. Remy, it was a great night." What is the secret of the ratatouille that melted Anton Ego's heart, renowned for its picky taste, akin to that of a child? This can be attributed to the Proust effect. The Proust effect refers to a phenomenon in which memories of the past are revived through smell. It originated from the epic novel "In Search of Lost Time" by French author Marcel Proust. In this work, the main character Marcel recalls his childhood by smelling a madeleine, a snack soaked in black tea.

So how does the Proust effect occur? Each space carries its own distinct smell, created by a combination of various factors or objects such as paint, rusty iron, mold, moisture, and damp air that comprise the environment. Typically, this unique spatial smell is not consciously registered at the time, as one becomes accustomed to it. However, if that smell changes over time or if people encounter a similar scent while living in another place, the memories associated with the original smell can become vividly clear. Moon Che-il, Professor at the Department of Brain Sciences at the Daegu Gyongbuk Institute of Science and Technology (DGIST), explains, "When memories linked to a scent are entered into the brain and connected with other memories, the brain recalls those associated memories, allowing people to fully recall their past experiences." He also adds, "With the action of the amygdala,* the smell is also involved in memory as it travels through the Papez circuit, the memory circuit of the brain." Unlike other sensory memory processing processes, olfactory memory goes through the Papez circuit, a distinct circuit that sends information to the amygdala. For this reason, smell can be intimately connected with emotions. Unlike memory linked to vision, memory



▲ With the activation of the amygdala, smell is involved in the brain.

associated with smell is accompanied by the memory of emotions, owing to the characteristics of smell that govern emotions.

In addition, memory-related information transmitted from the senses remembers surrounding details such as who one dined with or in the atmosphere present when one consumed a specific type of food. In Professor Herz's paper, "A Naturalistic Study of Autobiographic Memories Evoked by Olfactory and Visual Cues: Testing the Proustian Hypothesis" (2002), the researchers reminded the participants of their personal memories of emotion while smelling a specific scent. Then, at that moment, the activity of the amygdala, the emotional center of the brain, increased noticeably in brain imaging. On the other hand, there was no response to visual stimuli. She says, "Scent is deeply connected to emotions and nostalgia,"* adding, "If people do not have the smell of their mother's cooking or living room candles at a home they visited for the first time in a long time on Thanksgiving, they will not be reminded of their childhood." Certainly, due to the brain's unique mechanisms associated with smell and taste, memories related to these senses can persist more vividly in our recollections.

*Amygdala: A region of the brain primarily associated with emotional processes.

*Nostalgia: A sentimental longing or wistful affection for the past, typically for a period or place with happy personal association.

What moved Anton Ego's heart in the movie was the simple dish of ratatouille, not the service of the restaurant, the atmosphere, or the high-quality food replete with rare ingredients. Indeed, the essential element in food seems to be the memories and emotions that it invokes. In today's world, food choices are incredibly diverse, influenced by individual tastes and preferences. However, among the myriad dishes, the food that truly resonates with the heart often comes from the memories and emotions they conjure rather than their aesthetic appeal. Thus, as September brings an abundance of various ingredients, one might consider satisfying not just the physical hunger but also the hunger of the heart by choosing dishes that carry personal memories and emotions. 🍷

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Pop-up Retailers

Pop Up Everywhere



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By Kim Su-yeon

Associate Editor of Theory & Critique Section

#ChanelPop-up #OpeningRush #ProxyLineup. Searching “pop-up” on a mobile trading platform, one can observe the number of posts saying that he or she will stand in line for someone else in return for a commission. This phenomenon clearly shows people’s efforts to grab the limited-edition products that are only available at pop-up stores. The opening rush, where you wait in line before a store’s opening hours, has become a necessity rather than an option. The Seongsu neighborhood in Seoul, which has emerged as a hub of pop-up retailers, is filled with a plenty of pop-up stores from luxury brand Dior to online shopping platform Shop Cider. The stores’ entrances are always crowded with visitors.

On the 2nd weekend of June 2023, about 43 pop-ups were held simultaneously in the Seongsu neighborhood. The Hyundai Seoul, a well-known shopping complex in Seoul, has held a total of 321 pop-up stores in the past two years, drawing a total of 4.6 million visitors. This figure indicates that the pop-up shops cycled every two days and about half of Seoul’s citizens visited there. On the one hand, pop-up retailers that entertain people with different experiences have become near and dear to people’s hearts. However, there are concerns about the waste left behind by pop-up stores and the ripple effect that these cultural spaces will have on the city. Beginning as a fad and now becoming part of the culture, are pop-up retailers really “sustainable?” In celebration of Resource Circulation Day on September 6 and Architecture Day on September 25, The Argus explores the future sustainability of cultural spaces by closely looking into the impact of pop-up stores on the surrounding area and the consumption activities that take place within them, illuminating the shadow behind the “Instagrammable” lure of pop-up stores.

What is Pop-up Retail?

A pop-up store, like an internet pop-up that suddenly appears and then disappears instantly, is a store that a company operates for a short period of time, aiming at introducing a new product or promoting its brand. The pop-up store began in 2002 when Target, a major American retailer, set up a temporary shop instead of setting up a permanent store. In South Korea (hereafter Korea), such stores have been actively run in recent years, mainly in the Seongsu neighborhood and in The Hyundai Seoul. Regardless of the field of business, from entertainment industries to fashion brands, pop-up stores have become a means of communication between companies and customers.



The Light of Pop-up Retailers



Innovative Transformation of Unused Space: Economic Revitalization and Local Branding

©Porsche Korea



▲ The red brick wall of Porsche NOW Seongsu reminds the building's history as an industrial facility.

The red brick exterior, high floors, and moldy interior walls of “Porsche NOW Seongsu”

held in the Seongsu neighborhood of Seoul in November 2022 recalled the image of an old factory. It was a pop-up store that was made through interior renovation while the original shape of the abandoned factory was well-maintained. The Seongsu neighborhood, which was once the center of the Korean handmade shoe industry in the 1970s, was formerly home to large shoe manufacturing factories. As urbanization accelerated in the 1950s, many of the small and medium-sized factories producing steel, printing, and making wigs and handmade shoes moved to Seongsu, and Seongsu became a distributing center of production plants. However, due to deindustrialization and the transition into an information society, the industrial paradigm was reorganized. Therefore, factories lost their original function and were left as abandoned industrial facilities, becoming unused spaces.

An increase in the number of unused spaces in certain areas soon results in a downturn in commercial activity. Therefore, reducing the vacancy rate* is a top priority for economic recovery. Vacancy is caused by an oversupply resulting from not meeting the needs of people who want to consume the space. In other words, there is a lot of available space, but few people really want to use it. In “Vacancy in Market Analysis and Evaluation” (2002), Rabianski presents the concept of “structural vacancy.” Structural vacancy often derives from a mismatch

between the attributes of a space and the attributes desired by users. For instance, if “commercial” buildings such as restaurants are concentrated in region A while there are many people who want “residential areas,” the buildings in region A are bound not to be used. Therefore, structural vacancy is a problem that can only be solved by changing the appearance of existing spaces. The space must be renovated so that it can meet the users’ desired purpose. Many pop-up stores in Seongsu neighborhood have eliminated the trouble of structural vacancies by repurposing old buildings. By converting abandoned industrial facilities into multi-purpose spaces, the Seongsu neighborhood proved its potential as a commercial area. The flexibility and impermanence of pop-up stores have resulted in the successive turnover of tenants, reducing the vacancy rate in the Seongsu neighborhood. According to the Seongdong Ward Office, as of the end of 2022, the vacancy rate in the Seongsu neighborhood reached nearly 0 percent. This is quite impressive compared to the vacancy rate of 15.9 percent in the Seongsu neighborhood in 2014 presented by the Korea Real Estate Board in its “2014 Commercial Real Estate Rental Trend Survey.” The vacancy rate of the Seongsu neighborhood in 2014 was even higher than Seoul’s overall vacancy rate of 10.6 percent. The significantly lower vacancy rate compared to that of 2015, before the urban renewal program began, confirms that the economy of the Seongsu neighborhood is more active than in the past.

In addition to economic revitalization, building renovations that occur in the process of reducing structural vacancy bring another benefit of urban revitalization. Urban revitalization is a method of giving a new identity to a city that had become relatively underdeveloped as the industrial paradigm changed into information-oriented industries such as high-tech and IT by introducing new functions. Urban revitalization combines existing aging facilities with new values of culture and art to bring out the feasibility of old places, adding new color to the city. The harmony of red bricks, which symbolize the “past,” and pop-up stores of various brands representing the “latest” trend, have helped the Seongsu neighborhood

escape from the stigma of being an underdeveloped area and acquire a new identity as a center of Newtro.* In Seoul where neighborhoods compete with each other, the Seongsu neighborhood has claimed its space as a hub of offline pop-up stores, distinguishing itself from other regions.

*Vacancy rate: The rate indicates the proportion of the degree to which a shopping district or building is empty.

*Newtro: As a combination of "new" and "retro," newtro is a reinvention of past trends with a modern interpretation.

Reduction of Construction Waste: Off-Site Construction

Entering the "Bellygom" pop-up site held at Lotte World Tower in Jamsil, Seoul in April 2023, one could spot the pink



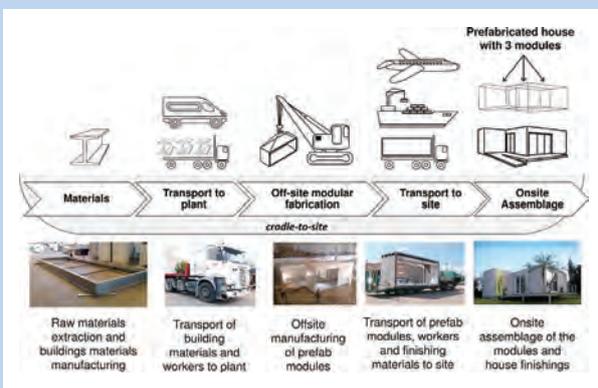
▲ The Bellygom pop-up store, is made up of containers, utilizing the OSC method.

containers that were elongated from side to side. From the back of the containers, a gigantic Bellygom doll caught one's eyes. Container buildings commonly used in outdoor mobile pop-up stores reflect the strategies of companies that prioritize economic feasibility. Building a new, immovable store makes it difficult for companies to withdraw easily when an unexpected situation occurs, such as an economic downturn or when related industries suffer greatly, which increases a company's risk. A pop-up store is one of several strategies to resolve corporate management uncertainty, and construction methods are also thusly affected.

Mobile pop-up retailers are mainly built using prefabricated construction methods. It involves shorter construction periods and is more environmentally friendly. Moreover, the prefabricated buildings can be dismantled quickly compared to normal construction methods that use wet construction with water and a mixture of cement and

various aggregates that are transported to the construction site through a vehicle called a Remicon. However, cement causes significant environmental pollution during the manufacturing process. According to Kang Tae-woong, Professor of Architecture at Dankook University, cement is made up of limestone and other chemical materials. Limestone is turned into lime through a so-called firing process. In order to be fired, it is necessary to maintain a high temperature, but pollutants are generated during the process of burning materials at a high temperature. Furthermore, during the firing process, limestone undergoes a pyrolysis reaction,* during which a large amount of carbon dioxide is emitted. Professor Kang explains, "The world produces about 4 billion tons of cement per year, and the carbon dioxide generated at this point accounts for 8 percent of the total emission on the planet." In contrast, the container-type pop-up retailers can contribute to reducing the usage of cement by using the dry joint method, which uses bolts, inserts, and welds instead of exploiting a wet joint* method.

Off-site construction (OSC) is an emerging eco-friendly construction method. Mobile pop-up stores resonate with the shift to a new architectural paradigm that aims to reduce environmental destruction. The container-shaped building located in the aforementioned "Belly Bear" pop-up store is one example of OSC methods. OSC is a construction method of assembling preparatory factory-built materials on a construction site rather than



▲ OSC consists of a series of procedures that mainly assign most time to manufacturing building materials in a factory and save time on a construction site by only assembling the preparatory materials.

completing the whole process on site. OSC includes four methods: Pre-cut,* Panelizing,* Pre-fabrication, and Modular. Pre-fabrication is a method of manufacturing walls with insulation materials, interior materials, and exterior materials in a factory in advance, shortening the construction time on site. Modular, which appears to be similar to pre-fabrication, is a method of assembling factory-produced prefabricated walls into several chunks and just stacking them like LEGO blocks on site. Therefore, the modular method can reduce on-site construction time by about half. Containers commonly utilized in outdoor pop-up retailers are built with the modular method. According to Professor Kang, modular building makes it possible to reduce various anti-environmental factors that occur during site work. During on-site construction, fine dust and ultrafine dust, which includes harmful allergens and heavy metals, scatter into the atmosphere. In contrast, the modular construction method, which reduces the proportion of on-site construction, is free from environmental destruction. Moreover, the extension of field construction requires a large amount of electricity. Since most processes of modular construction are done in factories, renewable energy can be actively used during the manufacturing process. In other words, it is possible to save electrical energy by manufacturing building materials utilizing solar photovoltaic, geothermal energy, and wind energy, which are produced by factories.

*Pyrolysis reaction: The chemical breakdown of a compound into a simpler substance when heat is applied.

*Wet joint: The method of jointing building materials using a liquid form of cement paste, a mixture of cement and water.

*Pre-cut: The method of assembling materials that have already been cut in a factory.

*Panelizing: The method of assembling factory-built walls on a construction site.

➤ Maximizing Company's Sales by Stimulating Consumers' Desire to Spend

The Samsung Galaxy S23 Studio pop-up store, which was installed opposite the schoolyard on the Seoul campus in March 2023, clearly shows the company's marketing strategy. Why did Samsung select the Hufs Seoul

campus as a standing point among many other places? The studio is permeated with a "shopper marketing" strategy. Shopper marketing distinguishes "shoppers" who are willing to buy the products from ordinary consumers and then targets shoppers as their main customers. It is a kind of customer segmentation strategy. Companies often focus on a group of consumers with similar needs and devise pop-up stores in order to satisfy their needs. In this regard, the reason why Samsung located the pop-up studio on the Hufs Seoul campus is that it determined that college students in their 20s-30s are more likely to purchase smart devices compared to other age groups. Alternately, perhaps the company sees the necessity to secure young people as their future shoppers, even if their purchasing power is currently low.

After categorizing individuals into these specific customer groups, companies add fascinating elements to pop-up stores. The pop-up store contains not only displayed products, but also offers an element of play like through a photo zone. This allows consumers to learn about the context and outlook surrounding the company's product. In other words, it conveys what the brand intends for the consumer using the space as a medium. Pop-up stores take advantage of the consumer's favor of scarcity. Regarding this, Lee Eun-hee, Professor of Consumer Studies at Inha University, says, "Unlike a normal store, which is fixed in one place, the date and place when and where a pop-up retail will be held is irregular. This spurs consumers' impatience." If the store is fixed in one place, consumers can go there at any time, so regular stores are not likely to feel attractive due to the lack of scarcity. In contrast, the flexibility and randomness of pop-up stores makes the consumer feel like they must go there immediately.

An attractive space design is the core of a pop-up store. An Se-yun, Professor of Industrial Design at Hanbat University, says, "The spatial configuration of the pop-up store should aim to stimulate consumers' senses in various ways and thereby convey the company's identity to consumers." First, the "spacious" features of the pop-up store allow a company plenty of room to convey its

message to consumers. According to the “Butt-Brush Effect” suggested by Paco Underhill, a specialist in consumer behavior psychology, people frequently contact others inside a crowded store and are then more likely to lose interest in buying a product. Due to this, a company can increase its sales profit by extending the inside of the store and allowing consumers to maintain personal distance. Indoor pop-up stores with vast experience zones and outdoor pop-up stores are optimal choices for minimizing the negative effect. Retail marketing* is another way to enhance the spatial appeal of pop-up stores. Furniture manufacturing company IKEA’s pop-up store, held in the Seongsu neighborhood in November 2020, demonstrated the positive effect of retail marketing. IKEA usually takes advantage of the home furnishing marketing strategy, by which interior accessories such as furniture, lighting, and wallpaper are used to stimulate shoppers’ desire to make a purchase. Rather than displaying the products in a row, IKEA creates actual rooms using its own furniture. This allows consumers to imagine the positive results of the product in advance and to experience the benefits they will get after purchasing the product.

*Retail marketing: Overall sales strategy carried out in offline stores to arouse consumers’ desire to make purchases.



The Shadow of Pop-up Retailers

Gentrification and the Loss of Placeness

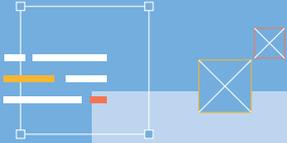
The chain businesses’ pop-up stores, which are spreading like dominoes in the Seongsu neighborhood, make small business owners look forward to the trickle-down effect. The trickle-down effect is the theory that economic policies that promote the growth of big companies and high-income groups stimulate the economy by expanding consumption and investment, and therefore, the benefits are naturally distributed to small and medium-sized enterprises and low-income groups. However, the trickle-down effect quickly brings about another side effect called “gentrification.” Gentrification,

a concept proposed by British sociologist Ruth Glass, refers to the commercialization of local business areas, which indirectly displaces small business owners who cannot afford rising rents and the urgent influx of chain businesses with large capital. “Characteristics Analysis of Commercial Gentrification in Seoul,” (2020) written by Jina Park, classifies gentrification into three main stages. In the first stage of “traditional stores,” a particular area consists of both residential facilities and commercial buildings, including a variety of independent shops. In the second “creative store” stage, small-capital shops create and form the distinctive atmosphere of the area. At the same time, there is an influx of stores run by various industries, and at this point, franchise stores gradually enter the area. The final stage of “chain stores” is where the franchise stores predominate in a specific area, and the place becomes increasingly competitive.

In neighborhoods with a high concentration of old buildings near the downtown area, low rents attract creative artists and independent businesspeople who deal with unique products such as handmade shoes. They revitalize depressed neighborhoods and rebrand the area. After that, with the revitalization of commercial activities, tourists come in, and the industries that consumers need are largely limited to a few categories including clothing and catering. As a result, industries are homogenized in the process of meeting the outsiders’ needs, and the commercial facilities are constantly replicated, while facilities for residents are not supplemented. In addition, if the business is doing well, a large amount of money from chain businesses flows into the area, and the rental fees there increase accordingly. Consequently, facilities for residents decrease while rents rise, which sometimes forces locals to leave the area.

This trend soon blurs the placeness of Seongsu neighborhood. Large companies that are attracted by the “retroneess” and “Instagrammable” characteristics of Seongsu neighborhood are building pop-up stores in the area, which in turn leads to the commercial consumption of images, while the essence of the space is ignored. Richard Williams introduced the concept of urban spatial





reformation due to transformation in industrial structure in his book “What Makes the Face of the City” (2021). He said, “Those who have worked in factories cannot romanticize the space of a factory. Rather, those who can take pleasure in the space that was once used to be factories are the only ones who have nothing to do with factory labor.” In other words, modern people tend to be interested in the unusual changes of the working space, but they consume only the image of the place while ignoring the essential meaning that the space implies. In the case of the Seongsu neighborhood, which has become a hub of pop-up stores, the abandoned factories that used to be industrial spaces have been renovated to provide visual enjoyment. However, if only its romantic images are consumed by young people, the historical meaning of the factories as “working spaces” is forgotten and the original placeness of the Seongsu neighborhood can be blurred in the end.

Green Washing: Excessive Use of Fiber in Reinforced Plastics and Dyes

The hyper-authentic noodle sculpture at the entrance of the pop-up store for Nongshim, a Korean food enterprise, immediately caught the visitors’ attention. Temporary pop-up stores using prefabricated construction do not require additional construction of new buildings, which can reduce construction waste such as cement and concrete. However, in the process of repeatedly decorating and disassembling the interior of the space, several tons of waste are generated. According to the 2022 International Forum on Exhibition Design Trends, the exhibition industry, which is similar to pop-up stores, left behind about 270 kg of waste per vendor on the basis of one booth measuring 9 m². In pursuit of new concepts all the time, the reuse of existing items is improbable. Indeed, decorative sculptures are even more troublesome.



▲ The noodle sculpture is made with FRP Polystyrene.



▲ The sculpture is colored with automotive paint, which is a similar process to painting cars.

Sculptures placed in pop-up stores are often made up of Styrofoam, consisting of FRP Polystyrene,* which is durable and anti-corrosive. The first step involves carving the shape of the structure out of the Styrofoam, which is followed by a painting process. At this stage, automobile varnish is used to color the sculpture, in order to prevent discoloration of the sculpture from the external environment such as from ultraviolet rays or humidity. However, oil-based coatings of automotive varnish contain volatile organic compounds (VOCs).* According to the Chemical Engineering and Materials Research Information Center, VOCs volatilize into the atmosphere, causing odors and generating oxidizing substances such as ozone when exposed to sunlight. The resulting ozone reacts with nitrogen oxides and turns into secondary particulate matter, which again pollutes the atmosphere. In addition, after the painting process, the sculpture is coated with a tenderizer called urea, which protects the surface of the sculpture from external cracking. The series of processes, including painting and coating, makes it difficult to recycle FRP sculptures. In fact, only white and clean polystyrene can be recycled. On the other hand, colored Styrofoam, patterned or coated Styrofoam, and Styrofoam with debris on the surface cannot be recycled and are incinerated or landfilled instead. Moreover, FRP Styrofoam undergoes a powdering process before incineration. In this process, the glass fibers contained in FRP polystyrene are powdered, and fine dust is created, which pollutes the air and harms the respiratory system.

*FRP Polystyrene: A fiber-reinforced plastic, a mixture of polyester resin and fiber reinforced materials. The material is known for being lighter and stronger than aluminum.

*Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs): Hydrocarbon-like substances that are emitted in the form of gas into the atmosphere at room temperature.

➤ Reproduction of Social Class through Consumption

The Chanel pop-up store located in Jamsil, Seoul in the winter of 2021 induced people's consumption in a new way. Only customers who purchased more than 100,000 won (US\$75.3) at Lotte Tower Mall were given access to Chanel's skate rink pop-up site. The brand's strategy of raising purchase desire by giving scarcity to the space of the skating rink shows the "distinction" characteristics that consumption indicates. In this regard, Yoon Tae-yeong, Professor of the Graduate School of Human Environmental Sciences at Yonsei University, says, "A pop-up store is a device that helps people to achieve their goal of distinguishing themselves through consumption." In other words, a pop-up store is a border line that separates those who can participate in consumption and those who cannot. Similarly, visiting a pop-up store, taking pictures as evidence, and uploading them to social media is also the result of the desire to reveal a "distinctive self." Professor Yoon explains that these behaviors originate from the human instinct to make a socially meaningful difference.

Then where does the desire for people to distinguish themselves from others come from? Urbanization is the source. As urbanization progresses, the population is concentrated in a specific area. In this process, communication between people becomes more active than necessary, which "homogenizes" society. Professor Yoon regards social networking services as the driving force that prompts the homogenization of people's desires. Through social media, people are exposed to similar experiences and their own similar objects, so they can easily imitate



▲ Chanel's skate rink pop-up site is only available for people who purchased beyond a certain price.

and resemble each other. In contrast, German sociologist Georg Simmel describes the city as a space of indifference in his book "Metropolis and Mental

Life" (1903). According to him, there are dazzling differences and numerous stimuli in the city, and if one tries to respond to all these stimuli, the fatigue felt will be considerable. Therefore, "indifference" has become a constant in the big city. Professor Yoon explains that amidst homogenization and the indifference of others, an individual's desire to express his or her individuality and uniqueness increases, and the desire manifests in the form of consumption behavior. Classification through consumption is a natural consequence in accordance with the appearance of a capitalist society. In the caste society of the past, innate status was the synonym of personal identity. However, as the caste system was abolished after the French Revolution, the expression of identity through innate status was limited. Later, as the world moved toward a capitalist society, consumption through money took over the role as a means of class reproduction. Regarding the pattern of consumption spreading as a device of class reproduction, Professor Yoon says, "When a consumption trend limited to a certain class is exposed to many people as 'general' one, and when it becomes an object of envy, the self-centeredness of consumers collapses, and they might blindly follow them, so people need to be cautious of the side effects."

A "space" is more than just an artificial building. It is often sensed and recalled in various ways by different people. As an emerging space, the pop-up store offers a tantalizing experience and has become a product that attracts many people. However, in the midst of pursuing novelty and fun, concerns about urban uniformity, environmental degradation, and the spread of an upwardly leveled consumption pattern cast doubt on the sustainability of pop-up stores. As "value consumption," which involves investing in what one believes to be valuable, has assumed vast proportions of the consumption trend, it is essential to consider not only the product itself, but also the various contexts surrounding the product and to reflect on what is truly valuable. As consumers, the valuable choices and decisions of Argus readers will be a great guidance that will lead pop-up stores to a sustainable space. 📍

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The Lost Values, The Lost Lives

By Cho Eun

Editorial Consultant

On July 5, 2023, a 23-year-old woman, Jeong Yu-jeong, murdered a woman of her age. She even disposed of parts of the deceased body in a carrier and dumped it. The victim, who was in her 20s, had met Jeong through an internet app, and the day she was killed was the first time she had met Jeong face-to-face. Most recently, on August 3, 2023, Choi Won-jong, a 23-year-old man, drove his car onto the sidewalk near Seohyeon Station in Seongnam City, Gyeonggi Province, hitting a passerby. Then he entered AK Plaza, a shopping center near the station, and started on a knife rampage, leaving 14 people injured or even dead. Random crimes targeting strangers are constantly dominating news headlines. This is not exclusive to South Korea (hereafter Korea). Recently, there have been stabbings on airport trains in Japan, and the U.S. has consistently experienced shooting incidents.

Why are these occurring? Recent indiscriminate crimes have shared several similar characteristics. Firstly, the victims of these crimes are not individuals the perpetrators were familiar with; rather, they are people the criminals encountered for the first time. Secondly, the suspects appear to have struggled with adapting to social life. These recent crimes focus on targeting unknown people whom the offenders have never seen before, as opposed to targeting specific individuals out of revenge, for example. Their crimes can be attributed to dissatisfaction and anger with society or with their life. Social maladjustment also plays a significant role. The detachment from society diminished their capacity to empathize with others, subsequently intensifying their aggression. Furthermore, experiences of personal failure, the resulting feelings of inadequacy, and comparison with others contributed to a growing resentment towards present society, culminating in a self-perpetuating cycle of social isolation.

It is important not to simply dismiss several crimes with

similar underlying causes as merely the result of the mental anguish or psychopathic tendencies of certain individuals. Within an increasingly individualistic society, meaningful and substantial conversations among people have significantly dwindled, resulting in a struggle for individuals to foster profound relationships. Making it worse, Koreans are suffering from the employment shortage, inflation, and a widening wealth gap. Many young individuals are now even forsaking pursuits of happiness and lives beyond houses and cars, facing various stresses and unchanged realities. Amidst the harsh and seemingly unchangeable circumstances, the culture of ostentatious consumption has fueled comparative psychology and a sense of inferiority, and for those whose deep interpersonal connections have frayed, their only outlet often becomes venting their frustrations on the internet.

We are living in an era where love is in short supply. Society has fragmented, leading to smaller and more diverse family units, and the significance of communication and community has waned. With the breakdown of meaningful communication and community ties, people have lost the chance to exercise the consideration, patience, and cooperation vital for group life. Consequently, the affection for neighborhoods has waned, turning them into objects of competition or newfound hostility. Even minor inconveniences now trigger an anger that has become a universal emotion for us, one that we can barely tolerate. In the midst of constantly advancing internet technology and shifting societal values, the fragmentation and decline of communication within communities, including families, might appear to be an unavoidable consequence. Nevertheless, it is imperative that we remain conscious of and ready to address the accompanying side effects and risks. At times, we must assess how convenient and comfortable technologies and thoughts inadvertently eroded our cherished and indispensable values. In the midst of what are undoubtedly unforgivable crimes, we must no longer underestimate the gravity of their underlying causes. 🇰🇷

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Embracing New Challenges

Lee Jue-hyun

I have taken my first step as the Editor-in-Chief leading a newspaper, The Argus. Amid the duties that come with the title, the responsibilities, and the worries, there is still so much to learn—a multitude of things to grasp. However, I strive not to doubt myself. I view this period as an opportunity to bring about the changes I wanted and see them through, a challenge in itself. I may not always be a kind leader, but I hope at least it will be a time for me to learn how to be a trustworthy leader.

Kim Su-yeon

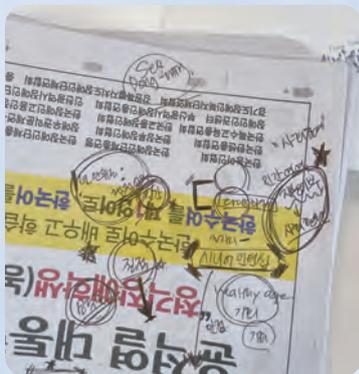
Deciding what to write about is always challenging. Finding a satisfying subject matter and convincing myself that it was worth writing about was the most time-consuming aspect. Then another challenge came up when I tried to figure out how to handle the subject. Discerning the appropriateness of certain perspectives and applying them to interpret the subject matter is quite tricky, but the thrill of finally having all the pieces fall into place is indescribable. I sometimes felt as if my head was going numb, but the fun that only comes from trial and error keeps me going.

Kim Jun-hong

I tried my best to enjoy writing the article. It might sound awkward that enjoying the process was a challenge, but my greed and anxiety sometimes tortured me last semester. Fitting the form and fashioning content was my urgent priority, which made me quite passive. But this time, I truly immersed myself into the process, solely paying attention to my curiosity and interest. I was able to find myself actively controlling the article, making it truly “mine.” I am still not sure whether I am doing this well, but one thing I can be sure of is that I am sincere in writing articles!

Ryu Hyo-rin

My challenge for the September issue was conducting an interview. This was my first time as a reporter for The Argus to interview a professor in a foreign country. I interviewed a professor at Brown University in the United States. As I expected, it was not that easy because of the time difference and the deadline. However, it went well, and I succeeded! How nice! Isn't it?



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3. 3-2 소비 지상주의에서 현대의 인간들은 도시화로 인해 남들과 다른 소비 방식을 선호한다 -> ~ ~ ~
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간략히



Kim Ji-hyang

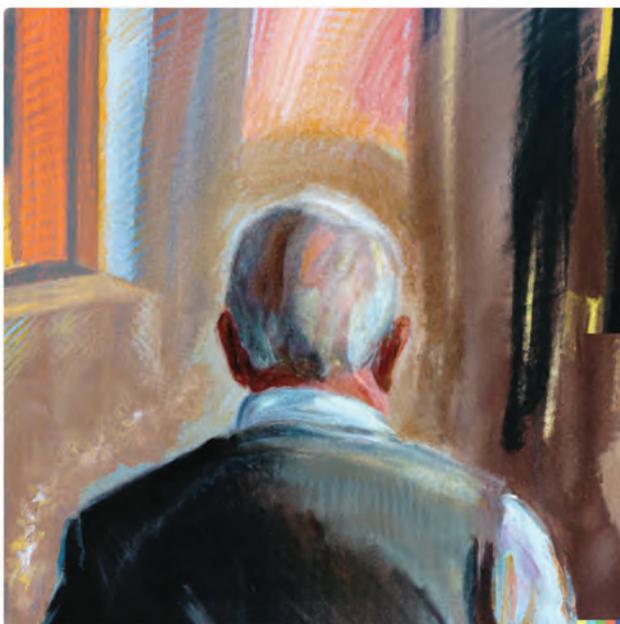
The last two weeks of mapping out possible items, writing articles, contacting interviewees via e-mail, and waiting for their responses was agonizing. In other words, preparing the article itself was a new challenge for me. Nonetheless, I have never asked more questions in my life. Though I usually tend to solve problems and find answers on my own, this time that was not the case. I had to ask the members of the Argus for help, and their feedback was invaluable to me. Through this epilogue, I would like to show my appreciation of their support for helping me out.

Jang Yewon

As it was my first semester as a reporter, writing the article itself was challenging. Since it was my first time writing a formal report, finding the interviewee and waiting for their response was highly nerve-racking. Moreover, thinking of the proper questions that could improve my piece was challenging. However, it was a great experience having conversations with professors, researchers, film critics, and firefighters. The process of preparing for this issue made me more confident in myself.

Cho Eun

The new challenge I faced in this issue was to establish some distance from The Argus. As an Editorial Consultant, my role now requires me to be a helpful advisor when necessary, but I must also keep in mind that the current Editor-in-Chief, Lee Jue-hyun, is the leader of The Argus. At times, I find myself curious about what the reporters are writing and how they are doing, as I love both The Argus and the reporters. Setting aside my expectations and concerns, I want to extend my best wishes and good luck to all the reporters, particularly to Lee Jue-hyun!



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“an oil painting depicting the back view of an elderly man”

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