

OPINION

A RENAISSANCE IS COMING



BY ETHAN KNAUTH

A renaissance is coming. No seriously, it is. I promise. Although currently slumming it through quarantine, better days are ahead. Sort of like karma. First the bad, then follows the good. How do I know it is coming? An educated guess.

A renaissance doesn't always have to be related to art, despite the popular connotation. A renaissance is most simply a revival, a renewal of some sort. It could be a renewed, fortified interest in saving our climate. Or, a revival in basic human decency across the board.

When our world was first graced by the original renaissance, it had just been savaged by the Bubonic plague. Commonly known as "the Black plague," its reign of terror consisted of three years, from 1348-1350, and wiped out nearly a third of Europe.

But, out from the dark isolation, the renaissance came. An explosion in the arts, in thought, in technology like no one had ever seen before. Come 1351, the world and its people were ready to rewrite everything. And rewrite they did.

Initially God-fearing people, the Bubonic plague was a wake up call for some. No divine power was to come down and save them from the plague, so they adjusted their priorities. What came about, according to Barbara

Tuchman, author of "A Distant Mirror," became known as the social contract. No more were people dependent upon (insert otherworldly power), and have since looked out for their own well-being.

Another benefit of the renaissance is what the populous most generally associates it with: art. Da Vinci had his heyday and Michelangelo was in his prime. Other non-art related advances were being made as well. The printing press was invented in order to accommodate the different vernaculars around the world, thanks Johannes Gutenberg. Yes the industrial revolution got us on our way to where we are today, but if you ask me, the renaissance truly kicked off the movement.

Above all, the single most important impact the original renaissance had was people began valuing each other again. According to Patricia Netzley, author of "During the renaissance," this was due to the prolonged suffering the society had to endure. We should hope for a similar reaction.

Sometimes we get so bogged down that we don't realize we are not showing the necessary appreciation for everyone around us. With the ample amount of free time we have been blessed with, why don't we focus on

changing that? Treat whoever you're currently quarantined with respect and show your appreciation. Maybe once we're able to traverse freely again, practice will make perfect.

Also, use this time to focus on you.

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Luckily, through this outbreak, we have been given the opportunity to devote a little bit more time to come to terms with what's important to us: others and our world. We should use this gift of time wisely and improve our social lives,

personal well being and the world while we still can.

Others have been using this time to improve their body (i.e. workout regimens), focus on themselves, et cetera. They've used this time to focus on their passions and rekindle old hobbies. A renaissance is coming. My only question is: are you willing to put in the work to maximize its height and reach?

