

THE STARS ARE DEFINITELY CRAZY

HORRORSCOPE FOR THE WINTER MONTHS OF 2020:

To allow for the vagaries of the universe and interpretive inexactitude, it might pay to read everyone else's stars as well.

LEO

When all else fails perhaps it's time to repurpose some childhood rhymes. Hickory-Dickory dock, the prez wants to ban Tik Tok; Or sell it to Bill for five thousand mil, Hickory-Dickory dock. Sing a song of five cents, I really need a pie; I'm racing down to the beach, on the sand to lie. Round and round the Rec ground, like a stupid lair; gear crunch, diff snap, anyone home in there?

VIRGO

Speaking of Tik Tok for those who don't know — it's the sound of your life passing by as you sit captivated by an endless stream of short video clips. Amazing, dull, self-exploitative, tragic, funny, educational, tireless and relentless. It's junior Facebook without words or two-way interaction. It remembers what you linger on though as it builds your profile as an advertising recipient (see page opposite).

LIBRA

Communication hang-ups will feature more and more. Questions about your future employment prospects should be discussed on any, or maybe every, weekday between 9 am and 11.15 am when the hold music finally takes its toll and you yearn for the good old days when you could slam the phone down and not just meekly press the red bit on the screen.

SCORPIO

To stay sane this month, try thinking of yourself as living in a painting. Perhaps you started as a Hans Heysen or Clarice Beckett. By morning tea perhaps a brush with Van Gogh. After the lunchtime sherry, life stills with Margaret Olley until tea time when, realising that the day has disappeared, it all goes Jackson Pollock.

SAGITTARIUS

The statue of Albury stands proudly in the middle of the Murray River. It says: "Give me your tired, your poor; Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, the wretched refuse of your teeming shore." Not any more mate, you just stay on your side you virulent Victorians.

CAPRICORN

Some of you may work for what's left of the main-stream media. If your boss is a certain anti-green ancient type he will want more anti-renewable, 'intermittent' energy stories. "No worries, I've been breaking wind for years", you say as you look forward to another stay at his exclusive resort as your reward.

AQUARIUS

This week you'll yearn for teaming up, partnering and relationships. Remember though, those who were once the life of the party might now be the death of it. Wallflowers, this is your time.

PISCES

Who needs doctors and scientists? Take your advice in these weird times from the media pundits who know for sure that the only reason hydroxychloroquine is not routinely prescribed for people hospitalised with Covid-19 is because Donald

Trump takes it. It is a well-known fact that all clinical drug tests and trials are controlled by leftists and ABC viewers.

ARIES

The sun continues to move through your solar second house. Unfortunately so too does the high tide. It's no joke when you notice the houses in the next street back are now advertised as 'having looming ocean views'.

TAURUS

The spit will really hit the fan later this year when the impecuniosity caused by Covid-19 surfaces as Visa-20. You might have become blasé about waving that card at the checkout while all the time forgetting that the only interest rate more usurious than the hit on a credit card is the stuff of a William Shakespeare play.

GEMINI

A new service is coming your way this month. It's called UberZoom. Dinner parties are out of course because of the virus but CyberSmartyPants have you covered. You and your friends order your food online, set up a ZoomDin™ for the required time and bung the computer on the dining room table. The food arrives simultaneously to all participants, so log in, drink up, pig out. You can even mute that boorish guest who as usual tells the same anecdote you've heard a hundred million times.

CANCER

Have you ever wondered why so many comedians die early, either deliberately or accidentally though careless ingestion of drugs of choice? Perhaps it's because humour comes from a mysterious place that cannot be reached with force or money. If you lose the way you're on your own.



Tell them to zook off

Do you ever feel like Facebook has the uncanny ability to advertise you things that you've never looked at within the site itself? Maybe you decide you want to purchase a shiny new mop, and so you Google 'best mops 2020' to see how far mop-technology has progressed, and whether it's worth upgrading to the hottest new product.

But as you search, you begin to remember all the good times you've had with ol' faithful. Sure, she don't swab like she used to, but a mop's a mop and this mop has mopped faithfully for many years. So, you decide against buying a new one.

But it's too late. Facebook has smelled blood. The fine-tuned advertising algorithm whirrs into motion. Suddenly you're getting bombarded with mop ads on Facebook. They line the sides of your screen like the brooms in Fantasia, marching towards you, desperately shouting their virtues. 'I have a built-in bucket', 'I have a broom on the other end', 'I play classical music while you work'.

And then there it is, the hyper-twist Slop-mopper 5000, with 6-speed wet-jet technology. Buckling under the weight of this mop onslaught you buy it, and the algorithm is quelled ... for now. The advertisements return to the usual fare, and you have to reckon with what you've done. No amount of mopping will make those hands feel clean.

But how did Facebook know to do this? You never searched for a mop within Facebook, and surely Zuckerberg and his army of ad-bots can't detect what you're doing outside of his own website?

Well actually ... he can, and they call it Off-Facebook Activity. This is a system where Facebook is able to extend its



Towards the future with Leo Alder

long tendrils beyond the confines of the site and monitor what you're looking at and doing elsewhere on the internet. Other websites need only a small piece of Facebook connectivity and it's enough for them to add the information gained there to their ever-expanding pile of your data.

Facebook's primary goal is to build a comprehensive profile on you and your buying habits.

They do this by combining off-site information with the large collection of personal information you've already provided straight to them through normal use of the site.

Get them off your back

You can turn Off-Facebook Activity tracking off, but Facebook has made it as hard and convoluted as possible to do so.

- Go to 'Settings and Privacy'. On a phone or tablet this is found by selecting the three lines on the bottom right of your screen. On a computer select the downward arrow at the top right of the webpage.
• Now select 'Settings'.
• From here, on a computer you will first have to select 'Your Facebook In-

IT'S YOUR LIFE

formation' before 'Off-Facebook Activity' appears. On a phone or tablet you can find it by scrolling down.

You should now be able to see 'Manage your off-Facebook activity'

- Now, if you're on a phone, select the three dots on the top right and press 'Manage future Activity'. On a computer, this option is under 'More options'.

You now have the option to toggle 'Future off-Facebook activity' to off.

While you're on this page, take the opportunity to have a look at all the websites you've visited that Facebook has collected advertising data from. Even if you don't wish to turn Off-Facebook Activity off, this is worth having a look at.

Also, have a little explore through some of the other options in settings. It's possible to access all the information Facebook has been collating in their quest to facilitate your purchase of junk.

Some may like these personalised advertisements, as it undoubtedly allows you to see products at least somewhat more relevant to you. But I personally find it deeply weird and unsettling. I don't know if it's something hard coded into the millennial psyche, or if it's just me, but if I see something advertised, I cannot let myself buy it. That would be to let the corporations win — a sin worse than any other.

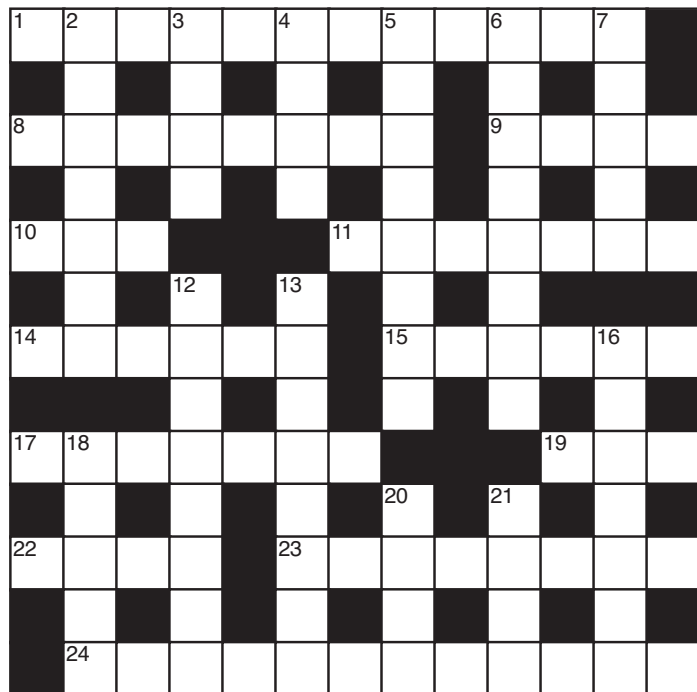
Advertising is where the money is, it's how your presence on these sites is translated into profit. Because of this, we're going to see some radical changes to advertising technology as new methods of collating your user-data into laser-targeted advertisements are invented.

Groups across the world are currently hard at work inventing the best possible ways to part you with your money as efficiently as possible. In the early days of the internet, an ad was as simple as smacking a 'You are the millionth visitor' onto a vibrating box and calling it a day.

But as users become increasingly technologically literate, ads will have to get so much more sophisticated to keep up until we may not even be able to tell we're being advertised to. They'll be subliminally inserted into every piece of media we consume, and anything could turn on you at any moment to try and sell you on the new iPhone.

There's only one way I can think of to fix this, and that's through purchasing the Mop-Master Mop-o-matic with new dirt destroying capability (patent pending). It'll clean your troubles away! And play soothing music while you're at it!

BRAIDWOOD BAFFLER BWD 23



CLUES ACROSS

- 1. BRAG Arts Centre was one on July 4th (7,5)
8. One involved in public administration (8)
9. Centre (4)
10. Single (3)
11. Consumed slippery steel at sea? (3,4)
14. Scold, condemn (6)
15. Rebuked (6)
17. Advocate of centralised control (7)
19. The sword is less mighty than this. (3)
22. "Baby its cold outside!" (4)
23. The Corona Virus has become one (8)
24. Prunings or dodgy politics? (6,6)
7. Register, sign on (5)
12. Type of biological cell (8)
13. Homer's Odyssey is a collection of stories referred to as an _____. The collection of Harry Potter stories, for instance, are ____ (4,4),
16. An instant, a short moment. (7)
18. Pulsate steadily (5)
20. Do they justify the means? (4)
21. The WW2 forces sweetheart who recently died (4)

CLUES DOWN

- 2. An illegal act (7)
3. Grief, sorrow (4)
4. One on each finger and toe (4)
5. "One of the penalties for refusing to participate in ____ is that you end up being governed by your inferiors." Plato (8)
6. Provide recognition that standards have been met (8)

SOLUTION TO BAFFLER BWD 22

