

SO MANUZ

£10 ISSUE #1



Sleep

Sleep

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SO *M*NUZ

Editor-in-Chief and writer – Maria Antônia Nery
Designer – Sarah Cristina

MA Fashion Journalism and Content Creation
London College of Fashion
Issue #1



EDITOR'S LETTER

To the dear companions of long nights, who also find peace beneath the covers...

As I watch my generation face increasing struggles with sleep, I find myself reflecting on how we view this activity and our relationship with it. It was from both dreamers and the sleepless that the inspiration for SomnuZ was born.

At SomnuZ, we believe that sleep is an act that goes far beyond rest.

It begins the moment we enter our room, and in that private world, our rituals are meant to transport us to a realm where boundaries begin to blur.

Our mission is to carve a path through the (sub)conscious of sleep, helping our readers understand that beyond simply closing their eyes, sleep is its own universe filled with galaxies that captivate our imagination.

We want every person who holds a copy of SomnuZ to know that the chaos and complexity of dreams reflect and portray different realities, including our own.

The name comes from the combination of the Roman god of sleep, Somnus, with the playful onomatopoeia ZZZZ to

represent sleep. In this way, I was able to convey the cultural and folkloric aspect that the publication aims for, along with small insights about sleep, creating a unique name for a one-of-a-kind type of publication.

We are a publication for the curious, the thoughtful, and the restless minds that don't see sleep as just something we have to do, but something more. For the ones who seek a deeper meaning for the journey surrounding the unconsciousness.

With roots in diverse cultures and voices, we aim to capture the in-between: the space where fear meets desire, where memory becomes myth, and where sleep is not an escape, but a portal to understanding.

SomnuZ invites the readers to reflect, feel, and wander through stories, visuals, and ideas that uncover the mystery surrounding sleep. From late-night thoughts to existential questions, we are here to give form to the formless and at least try to make sense on those questions you think right before falling asleep.

Get comfortable and don't forget to leave the light on. Our sleepover it's just beginning.

Yours,
Maria Antônia Nery
Editor-in-Chief

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THE GUEST ROOM NOBODY USES

WHY DO WE KEEP THIS STAGED ILLUSION WITH THE FANTASY OF REST

In the adult fantasy shaped by media and everything we consume, one dream to be achieved is a big house or at least a house that can hold your dreams and the people you love. On TV shows dedicated to the search for perfect places to live, there's one requirement almost every family mention: a guest room.

Perhaps it's the result of the American dream so deeply ingrained in our minds, but the guest room carries a certain aura of superiority. You can give up a room in your house to remain frozen in time: forever performative, tidy, waiting for someone.

In my culture, the dream of a guest room becomes impossible - or at least, much harder to achieve. You see, Latinos rarely create this perfect, staged space. Our guest room is a messy little room, a storage space for all the furniture and knick-knacks that don't fit in the rest of the house. It's a cluttered office full of books, a room for the pets.

And when someone visits, well, that's when we show our best. We may not have a dedicated space, but we always have a mattress ready, warm blankets, and plenty of hospitality. No matter the hour or the weather, the door is always open with

a plate of homemade food waiting for you and a tight hug.

Socially speaking, having an unused extra room - forever performative in a superficial fantasy of coziness - is ostentation. It's a way of showing you can afford to have more than you need. Space and solitude have become luxury goods in a society that encompasses billions of people, where cities grow vertically to accommodate individuals, and immigration is stronger than ever.

Guest rooms are impersonal, just a room that doesn't belong to a home, to anyone. Perhaps they have their benefits for those who want a break from routine, a disruption of the norm. Perhaps they're an anomaly we've learned to desire, without really thinking about why.

If our bedroom is our sanctuary and our reflection, then would the guest room be sacred ground, waiting for its worshippers? Or is it merely a fragment of reality without true purpose, but still maintained for the sake of performance? Just another way of showing that yes, you have it?

The fantasy of rest is unmasked in the barren kingdom of the guest room. And its performance, however tidy and well presented on the outside, lasts only until the next crisis.



Bunk bed: Cottonbro Studio - Pexels

SUNK HIERARCHIES

Between climbing up for privacy or fighting for dominance, the saga of bunk beds never ends.

Accommodating several people to sleep in a limited space has always been a challenge humanity has faced throughout history. That's where bunk beds come in with their importance in human life: comfortable beds that fit into different spaces and solve the problem.

But the history of the bunk bed only begins in the 18th century. So, how were sleeping arrangements like before that?

Well, there are records from ancient Egypt of people sleeping in raised beds, or even sailors in hammocks tied to the ship's posts, some higher, some lower.

It was only during the Industrial Revolution, and later the First World War, that bunk beds as we know them today gained more popularity, since they were excellent solutions for places with little space and many people to accommodate.

But why is our first thought always to go for the top bunk?

Many factors contribute to that, and one of them is instinct! On the top bunk, you have a privileged view of the entire place, and therefore more information about what's happening around you. The upper bed also offers more privacy and is the perfect spot for those who prefer light and a warmer place.

On the other hand culturally speaking, when a child is considered "ready" for the top bunk, it means

they've matured enough not to risk falling out of bed at night while moving around, something that usually creates a sense that the child has grown up.

Of course, there are also different situations where bunk bed hierarchy changes. According to an article published in *The British Journal of Criminology* by Anna Schliehe and Ben Crewe in 2022, some prisoners interviewed claimed that the person on the bottom bunk is usually the one who holds dominance over the cell, in other words, the one who makes the rules.

“You feel a bit more comfortable because in a way, the bottom bunk is a status symbol. It’s respect between prisoners. It’s an understanding. When you’re in the bottom bunk, you’re the big man of the cell.”



Prison: RDNE Stock Project - Pexels

That's how one of the interviewees, Jacob, put it.

The popularization of bunk beds also comes from sitcoms, which often depict these spaces as key to building bonds between characters: whether through sibling bickering, heartfelt conversations between friends, or even romantic confessions between couples.

In the end, bunk bed hierarchy depends on where you find yourself at that moment. Maybe it's your

time to show you've grown and claim the top, or maybe you'd rather stay closer to the ground to align your plans. What really matters is that in the middle of the night, between whispered conversations, stifled laughter, and shared memories, your bunkmate accompanies you on the journey to dreamland.

If not, nothing a kick to the top mattress, or throwing something down, won't solve.



Photo: RDNE Stock Project – Pixels

COMA & INSOMNIA

THE TWO SIDES OF HOW OUR BRAIN DEALS WITH THE STATE OF REST.

Among the many states of unconsciousness that humans can experience, coma is one of the most intriguing for both science and society. It can result from various events, whether external, such as an accident or a fall, or internal, such as strokes and infections.

Medically defined, coma is a prolonged state of unconsciousness in which the patient is unresponsive and cannot be awakened, and it can last for several weeks. It can also be induced through medication in an Intensive Care Unit and is carefully controlled to prevent further brain injury.

Many people wonder what goes on in the mind of someone in a coma—whether it feels like a big dream or nothing at all. To shed light on these questions, we interviewed two people who were in a coma and have since returned to their normal lives: **Ricardo (47) and Dalvir (53).**

How long were you in a coma?

R: 55 days.

D: I was in a coma for 38 days.

Could you share what situation led you to be in a coma?

R: Car accident – I crashed sideways into a pole on the road, hitting my head directly.

D: I was placed in an induced coma because I couldn't come off mechanical ventilation after heart surgery.

While you were unconscious, did it feel like a dream, something vivid, or just a deep sleep without dreams?

R: I don't even remember being in the hospital.

D: It felt like a deep sleep, but at some moments I had vivid dreams that I only recalled after being discharged from the hospital.

Could you hear or understand what was happening around you?

R: They say I must have recognized people because I seemed to pay attention to some and ignore others.

D: No.

Do you remember how you felt while you were unconscious?

R: No.

D: No.

Did you experience any kind of hallucination during that period? (Meeting someone who has passed away, celestial beings, revelations...)

R: No, I don't remember anything from that time.

D: No.

Emotionally speaking, do you feel that you changed after the experience? How?

And what about your habits?

R: My habits changed due to the physical limitations caused

by the accident.

D: Yes, I changed. I changed the way I see situations and people. I started valuing things more.

After the event, do you carry any fear that takes you back to the coma? (For example, the feeling of being trapped in sleep)

R: No fear. My sleep is the same: at the end of the day I'm tired, I lie down and sleep.

D: Yes, I feel afraid of needing another surgery that would require sedation and not being able to come out of it.

What impact did this experience have on your life?

R: It wasn't the coma itself, nor just the accident or the physical limitations that had an impact, but the way society treats people with disabilities.

It's not directly about the coma or the accident, but because of the consequences, there are situations where I feel like giving up and letting those without limitations handle things—an option that isn't entirely off the table.

D: After this experience, I changed my perspective on life and on the people around me. I also managed to quit smoking, improving my habits overall.

The Brazilian neurologist, Carlos Ordovás, explains: “By definition, being in a coma means there will be no memory of the period spent in the coma. For example, if a patient is in the ICU on mechanical ventilation, they will not retain any recollection. They may be sedated, and once the sedation is withdrawn and the cause of the coma has regressed (e.g., cerebral edema), the individual

is then sedated but not in a coma, and in that case, they may retain memories.”

In contrast to the state of constant unconsciousness, there are those who can never fully switch off their brains: insomniacs. Diagnoses of insomnia have been increasingly reported around the world, and it's no coincidence - our routines and habits have had an immeasurable impact on our sleep quality. But what goes on in the minds of those who simply cannot shut down?

Check out our interview with Lisiane Carniel, 53 years old.

Q: How long did you suffer from insomnia?

L: Around 4 years.

Q: How old were you when you began suffering from insomnia?

L: I was 37 years old.

Q: When did you realize you were experiencing symptoms of insomnia?

L: When I would wake up in the middle of the night and couldn't fall back asleep, or it would take me many hours to finally sleep again. I tried everything that I thought would “help me” get back to sleep, but nothing worked. The situation worsened with the growing “fear” of not being able to sleep.

Q: Did you ever receive a medical diagnosis of insomnia?

L: I had always been under psychiatric care because I experienced a very acute anxiety disorder when I was 22. At the time of my insomnia, I also worked with my psychiatrist to address the causes and find ways to ease the symptoms.

Q: What kind of thoughts would you have during your sleepless nights?

L: My insomnia started when I began to realize my marriage wasn't going well. So, feelings of doubt, fear, sadness, and anger about the situation would come to me in a disorganized and overwhelming way during the night when I couldn't sleep. The cause was clearly this difficult and unresolved situation that I didn't know how to handle or what to do about.

Q: What would you do when you couldn't sleep?

L: First, I tried everything that could help me stop thinking, relax, and sleep: going to the bathroom, keeping myself warm (or, in hot weather, covering up less), drinking warm milk or tea, eating something if I thought hunger was interfering, reading, praying, singing in my head, etc. These things had always helped me if I “lost sleep,” whether before this period or even now.

But the disorganized thoughts filled with so much negative emotion - fear, sadness, anxiety - were so strong that these actions didn't help me relax or sleep again. Many times, I decided to just get up and work in the middle of the night or do something useful to avoid suffering with my thoughts. After all, I knew that the way they came to me during insomnia would only cause more suffering and a sense of lack of control, rather than helping me solve anything or think clearly about what was happening and how best to act.

Q: How would you get rest?

L: Sometimes I would sleep during the day when sleepiness hit hard, as I was working mostly from my home office at the time rather than visiting clients or running errands.

Q: What made you seek treatment?

L: Together with my psychiatrist—who had treated me since

my daughter's birth—we explored ways to reduce my symptoms. I started taking medication that regulated my mood overall (the same one I had used for about two years after my daughter was born). This medication helped me cope better with the negative emotions brought on by the situation and also greatly reduced my episodes of insomnia.

A “side effect” was that the medication affected my hormones, which made me feel hungrier. So, I would eat to avoid feeling hungry - especially before bed or if I woke up in the middle of the night. I gained about 6 kg and reached the highest weight of my life, haha, since I had always been very thin. I used to weigh around 52 kg and went up to almost 60 kg. Today, I'm back to a more “normal” weight of 54 kg.

Q: What treatment did you end up following?

L: I took this mood-regulating medication and whenever I had trouble sleeping, I used sublingual 0.25 mg Rivotril (the lowest dose). I also tried to exercise more, like dancing, biking, and doing yoga. And I worked on “reorganizing” my life to adapt to the new reality of no longer having the marriage I had once considered very good.

Would you like to share any story from that time or any additional thoughts?

L: The main thing I'd share is that once I felt my daughter was old enough to handle the separation - she was 13 in 2017- and I was convinced that our shared life was only causing harm and there was no way to “fix” the relationship (after many attempts in different ways), I was able to organize myself to rent a nearby apartment and move out with my daughter and our cat, haha. Everything started improving. There was a total sense of a “new life” and that everything would be okay.

I was also able to maintain a good relationship with everyone involved - him, his family, and our mutual friends. We still work together to this day and remain neighbors in the same neighborhood. Our daughter is now 21 and figuring out her own life.

I truly believe that having medical treatment, support from my parents, help from my sister (even living in the U.S.), and understanding friends and colleagues was essential. Even while suffering, we were all able to reorganize our lives so that the hard part would pass and new things could come.

If you need any kind of support due to a brain injury, contact: <https://www.headway.org.uk/>

The cryogenic fashion

How is the Couture on the ice represented? Discover the fashion for the frozen woman.

For the women in capsules waiting to be reawakened on a new planet, even those magically put into an indefinite sleep: what do they wear? Is that outfit really comfortable for the activity they are in or the one that awaits them? What is the meaning of this look frozen in time?

Starting with stories that span generations, fairy tales with their princesses are known all around the world. Two of them, in particular, are represented through a deep sleep: Snow White and Sleeping Beauty. Both are laid in their beds for indefinite rest while wearing elegant, puffed dresses. Hardly practical for a long nap, but once saved by their princes, they are already dressed in regalia to begin their new lives together.



Sleeping Beauty – 1959 Disney



Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs – 1937 Disney

Within our reality, humanity's curiosity to explore space has been and continues to be widely explored by filmmakers. While some choose to portray advanced technology capable of making light-year travel possible, others approach long journeys with something that already exists on Earth: cryogenics.

In *Alien* (1979), we see the crew waking up after several years of travel, and Ellen is wearing a long-buttoned nightgown, aimed at comfort. By the end of the film, after all the events, when she enters her capsule again, there is a noticeable change in her clothing: she now lies down for the next phase wearing only white underwear and a tank top. This can be seen as symbolic, as the lieutenant leaves behind her "fragile" and submissive persona, embracing her rebellious, free nature, fully in control of the situation.



Sigourney Weaver as Ellen Ripley in Alien (1979) by Ridley Scott

In *Passengers* (2016), the outfit Aurora wears in her capsule is more modern, form-fitting, and equipped with technological features that help monitor her vital signs during cryogenic sleep.



Jennifer Lawrence as Aurora Lane in Passengers (2016) by Morten Tyldum

Both representations perfectly reflect the fashion of their respective eras of release and production. While in *Alien* the sleepwear is more conservative and looser, preserving feminine beauty, *Passengers* already shows the influence of tighter clothing and even the growing presence of sportswear.

In the series *The 100*, set in a post-apocalyptic world, the characters enter cryogenic sleep wearing simple clothes that survived their journeys on Earth. Clarke appears in a plain black tank top, made of light material, prioritizing comfort, but the open cut and dark colors reflect her transformation, from once innocent and guided by goodness, she becomes morally ambiguous, willing to do whatever it takes to protect the people she loves.

Still in a post-apocalyptic setting, we see cryogenics represented in the game series, and more recently in its television adaptation, Fallout. With underground bunkers built

by the Vault-Tec corporation for research purposes, Vault 111 was designed to study the long-term effects of cryogenics. In one version, when you play as the male character, you witness the scene of your wife, Nora, being killed, and your son kidnapped. In that moment, the clothing worn by the Vault inhabitants is clearly visible.

The blue and yellow jumpsuit is standard across all Vaults - not only because it represents Vault-Tec's colour scheme, but also because it instils a sense of unity and community among its inhabitants. With its tight, full-body design, it is practical, but at the same time, it unconsciously reveals the immense control the corporation exerts over these people.



Fallout 4 (2015) by Bethesda Game Studios

One thing is common: the ice couture for women will always reflect the society they belonged to before entering cryogenics. But will our heroines be able to break the ice of the expectations waiting for them in the new world? That's a question to be answered when they awaken...

NIGHTGOWNS OF THE DEAD

HOW TO PREPARE FOR THE ETERNAL SLEEP AND WHAT TO WEAR TO THE AFTERLIFE

Throughout our lives we encounter many stages of sleep, but there is one that we will all face one day and from which we cannot escape: the eternal. The history of death has always been linked to sleep, and just as we have rituals before going to bed, the history of funerary rites has also been recorded

throughout human history, including in regard to clothing.

The evolution of burial garments gradually unfolded alongside civilizations, always taking into account the culture of each place.

In Ancient Egypt,

the deceased were taken to be embalmed and mummified, with their bodies wrapped in linen. Since the mummification process was very expensive, those with less wealth would donate their own used clothing to serve as bandages - this is the origin of the expression the Linen of Yesterday.

In Ancient Rome, the dead were buried in their finest clothes. Common citizens usually wore white togas, while government officials were buried in their uniforms, and a coin was placed in their mouths as payment for Charon in the underworld.

With the rise of Christianity, customs began to change and adapt, though certain traditions from earlier times were

preserved. During the medieval era, for instance, the practice of burying someone in their best clothes continued, but this was mostly reserved for nobility, while common citizens were dressed in shrouds or sheets.

With major events such as the bubonic plague, funerary rites lost much of their importance, and mass graves became common, where people were buried still wearing the clothes in which they had died - often nightgowns.

Whereas before bodies were completely covered, now the faces of the deceased began to be left visible. At the turn of the 17th century, individual coffin burials became standard, replacing mass graves, which triggered a renewed attention to how the deceased would be dressed for burial. At this time, the type of winding sheet used became a long shirt tied at the wrists, neck, and ankles, and in some cases, included a hood.



John Donne in his shroud - Martin Droeshout

During the Victorian era,

shrouds evolved into their more recognizable design, and distinctions began to be made in the garments according to the sex of the deceased. Women's shrouds were usually simpler, since women often sewed them themselves. Cotton, now more popular than linen, became the fabric of choice for burial garments. With the Industrial Revolution in full swing, mass production began to be considered; meanwhile, given the working conditions and the social reality of the time, death became a "commonplace" part of people's daily lives.

Changes continued up until the First World War, with shroud styles and funerary practices evolving in general. During the

war, it was often impossible to recover the body of the deceased, and mourning, as well as funeral customs, began to be understood differently.

Today, some cultures still use shrouds for dressing the dead, though with a more modern design adapted to family needs. Others maintain a simpler approach, such as in Islam, where the faithful are directed to be buried in shrouded white cloths.

In Western culture, a shift in funerary practices can also be observed: today, many people choose to be buried in their best clothes. The outfit is often chosen by the individual themselves before death, as a way of saying farewell to loved ones in something they felt presentable in and loved during life.

Beyond these alternatives, people today are also beginning to choose more sustainable burial methods, seeking to become one with the earth after passing. PhD Pia Interlandi has been experimenting with biodegradable materials for some time, proposing ways to bury loved ones in textiles that can dissipate alongside with the body.

Her research [A]Dressing Death: Fashioning Garments for the Grave, more specifically the first chapter of her doctoral thesis DISSOLVING BODIES: DISSOLVABLE GARMENTS, brings to light the discussion about the ephemerality of clothing and of the human body itself after death.



Devika Bilimoria

In her own words during her research:

Death will always be met with sadness, but the function of this garment, and indeed the intent inherent in the fashioning of Garments for the Grave, aims to gently guide the bereaved through what is one of the most profound and difficult encounters facing us all. The burial garment is the last skin that will be placed upon us, and will literally and symbolically merge with us in our decomposition and dissipation into the earth.

Eternal sleep comes for us all, and it is only a matter of preparing your bed (and your pyjamas) before lying down.

Somnus – Roman Mythology

Somnus is the Roman counterpart of Hypnos. In Ovid's poems, Somnus has thousands of children and is depicted in languid sleep, surrounded by his offspring who represent different aspects of dreams, from humans to animals.



Somnus



Hypnos

Hypnos – Greek Mythology

In Greek mythology, Hypnos is the personification of sleep. He lives in a cave in the underworld and is usually depicted as a calm and gentle god, helping mortals to sleep peacefully.

Tezcatlipoca Aztec Mythology

Tezcatlipoca is a very important god in Aztec mythology. As the deity of the moon, night, war, and celestial phenomena, he is feared for his volatile temperament and his influence over human destinies. He was present in the creation of our world, but also in the destruction of others.



Tezcatlipoca



Altjira

Altjira – Australian Aboriginal Mythology

Altjira, in the Australian Aboriginal mythology of the Arrernte, is the creator god of everything and is generally associated with the Dreamtime. After creation, the god became bored and ascended back to the sky, leaving humanity slumbering in the Dreamtime.

Tutu – Egyptian Mythology

Originally the protector of tombs, Tutu is the Egyptian god of sleep, as he was also depicted as guarding those who were sleeping from dangers and bad dreams.



Tutu

Alp – German Folklore

In German folklore, the Alp is similar to an elf but with powers resembling those of an incubus. It wears a magical hat called a Tarnkappe, from which it draws its powers. The Alp sits on its victim's chest and causes nightmares until the person wakes up breathless and unable to move.



Alp

GODS OF SLEEP

Illustrations: Levy Prado

Nidra Devi – Hinduism

Nidra Devi is the goddess associated with sleep in Hinduism. She is usually described as a motherly, kind figure who shares spiritual power. It is said that she possesses the powers of the tri-devis: Parvati, Lakshmi, and Saraswati, making her a very powerful goddess.



Nidra

Caer Ibormeith Celtic Mythology

Caer Ibormeith is the goddess of sleep and prophecies according to Celtic mythology. In her story, she chooses her partner and appears in his dreams for a year. As a shapeshifting goddess, she is said to transform into a woman for one day, on Samhain, and then spend the rest of the year as a swan.



Caer Ibormeith

Chuángshén (床神) Chinese Mythology

They are the gods of the bedroom according to Chinese mythology, represented by Chuángmǔ (床母) and Chuánggōng (床公). They encompass everything from dreams and meditation to sex and childbirth.



Chuángshén



Tsukuyomi-no-Mikoto

Tsukuyomi-no-Mikoto (月読尊) – Japanese Mythology

He is the god of the moon in Shinto and Japanese mythology. He is the husband of Amaterasu, the sun goddess, and for a time, they shared the sky together. However, after a conflict involving a murder, Amaterasu separated from Tsukuyomi, and now he spends eternity trying to reach her in the sky.

Jaci – Tupi-Guarani Mythology

In Tupi-Guarani mythology, Jaci is the goddess of the moon, fertility, and lovers. She was created by Tupã to illuminate and protect the night while her brother Guaraci (the god of the sun and daytime) rested. In some legends, Guaraci is her lover rather than her brother.



Jaci



Nött

Nött – Norse Mythology

In Norse mythology, Nött is the goddess of the night. Her arrival represents for the gods a reminder of the cycles, and for humans, the time of rest. Every night she drives her chariot across the sky, while her son Dagr (day) accompanies her.



The bedtime rituals

HOW CAN WE FINALLY SURRENDER AND THE THEATRE OF LETTING GO.

In recent years, the topic of sleep has been widely discussed, whether in the news, reports, studies, or everyday life. Difficulties in falling asleep have always existed throughout history, but it has become increasingly evident that people are struggling even more nowadays.

According to a recent Statista report, 1/3 of Americans aren't getting enough sleep, and insomnia also affects 1 in every 5 people in the U.S. The fast-paced lifestyle we're leading, combined with stress, health issues, and the growing use of screens, forms a combination that keeps more and more people awake at night.

To get some rest, individuals are increasingly trying different routines and products that promise to help them fall asleep faster. From multi-step skincare routines to ambient sounds and even more severe alternatives, such as the use of medication.

In 2025 alone, the global Sleep Aids market is expected to generate US\$5.53bn in total revenue. New solutions are appearing all the time, but what are consumers really looking for?

Among some of the trends are the use of wearable products, such as sleep masks that help with relaxation, and smart devices, like smartwatches, that track sleep and provide more accurate insights about the individual.

In more developed countries such as the United Kingdom, Germany, and the United States, people are preferring more natural and organic alternatives, as they are increasingly aware of the substances found in medications and their side effects.

In places like Spain and Italy, where the population is older, medications are more focused on combating insomnia caused by age-related issues, such as sleep apnea. Manufacturers are investing in options tailored to these needs, taking into account the sensitivities of older adults.

In China and India, where stress is also amplified by high urbanization and chaotic routines, people seek solutions rooted in tradition, turning to Ayurvedic and Traditional Chinese Medicine-based products. These often consist of more natural and holistic options, such as sprays and essential oils.

Japan and South Korea also face sleep problems related to work stress and anxiety, and the alternatives people seek reflect this. The solutions used generally aim to provide relaxation, not just sleep, with ingredients that carry calming properties, such as chamomile and lavender.

Of course, there are also other alternatives that can contribute to a good night's sleep. In the U.S., for example, 21% of adults who admitted to using some kind of sleep aid in a 2022 survey said they prefer leaving windows open or using air conditioning at night. Meanwhile, 12% rely on sound machines, and 11% turn to non-medical options such as melatonin and teas.

Alcohol and coffee are also major culprits for sleepless nights, as their substances contain actives that disrupt the brain's sleep patterns. A study published in the Journal of Medical Internet Research found that sleep quality decreased by 39.2% on the participants who had high amounts of alcohol per day.

Another important point to consider is that we are constantly surrounded by screens, and the blue light they emit can affect our circadian rhythm, which regulates sleep. That's why it's best to avoid contact with such lights, whether from TV, computers, or smartphones before going to bed.

Things left under the bed



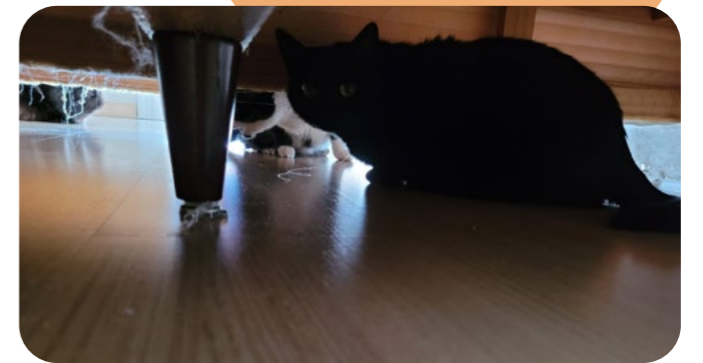
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Larissa, 30



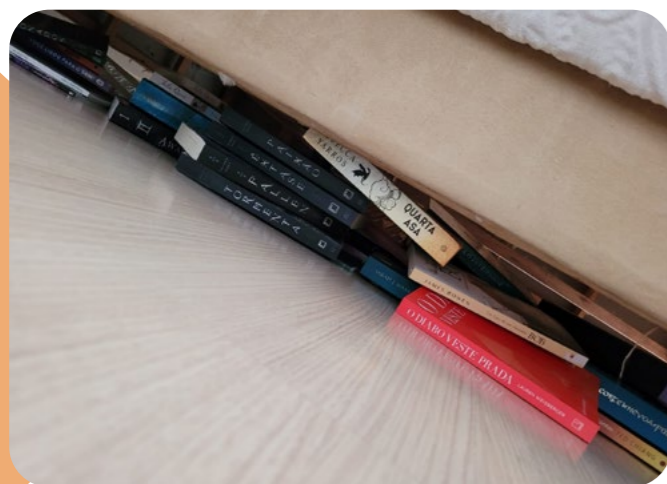
Marcos, 25



Flávia, 53



Murilo, 21



Maria, 25



Suzana, 22

How ROYALTY SLEPT:

FROM VERSAILLES TO VICTORIAN BEDROOMS

UNCOVER THE CLOSED-DOOR SECRETS FROM ROYAL SLEEPING HABITS, RITUALS AND FURNITURE.

The opulence of Marie Antoinette has never been a mystery in history. From her extravagant clothing to decorations that exuded the nobility's ostentation, her sleeping habits and bedroom were no exception. During her youth, the monarch preferred to sleep late, waking between nine and ten in the morning, but after some time, she began opting to rise at eight o'clock in order to have more time to choose her clothes for the day.

After making her choices, the queen would take a bath, a habit that seemed common at the court of Versailles, and then return to her bed in a kind of nightwear, until the time of her dressing ceremony.

Usually around noon, the so-called "Chamber" took place,

when high-ranking individuals entered the room and Marie Antoinette acknowledged their presence with a slight nod of the head. She would then wash her hands, and her hair began to be prepared. After this, the men left the room, and the women remained with the queen to help her dress for the day.

With this ritual complete, the monarch would proceed to mass.

Her bedroom reflected the ostentation she displayed in a France on the brink of poverty. Shades of gold covered the entire room, complementing crystal chandeliers and brocades. Still, the queen preserved some features from her predecessors, such as the partitions on the ceiling and the wood panelling.



The queens chambers - Thomas Garnier

The theme of gold seemed to be a common element among the great women of the era. Although her palace was heavily bombed during the Second World War, Catherine of Russia also maintained her own ostentatious habits. Using photographs and old blueprints, architects were able to reconstruct the palace and create an image of what was once a true royal residence.

Catherine's bedroom was decorated in shades of blue and green, with golden details in the Rococo style. The furniture was extremely detailed and custom-made by the French craftsman Georges Jacob.

There are rumours that Catherine owned furniture depicting highly sexual scenes, with erotic details. It is said that the surviving photos were taken by German soldiers during World War II, but since much of it was bombed, there is no proof of their authenticity.

As for her habits, they were quite similar to those of Marie Antoinette, rising early and attending to trivial matters. However, she was an avid coffee drinker, and accounts also mention that Catherine liked to have her hair combed in bed before sleeping, as a way to help her relax.

Napoleon Bonaparte, also well known for his egocentric habits and obsession with his image, was another who indulged in the luxuries and ostentation offered by royalty. However, his nighttime habits were far from healthy.

Maintaining his military background, Napoleon was known to sleep only a few hours per night - around 3 to 4 hours. He would then rise to continue his work, such as the French Civil Code. To compensate for the lack of rest, he was known to take several naps throughout the day.

There are theories suggesting that the emperor may have suffered from sleep apnoea, which would have contributed to his poor nights of rest. As a result, it is believed that later in life his brain may have suffered consequences from chronic sleep deprivation.

At the Château de Fontainebleau, Napoleon refused to sleep in the former king's chamber; and therefore requested that his own bedroom be on the first floor of the castle, where he had the space remodelled. The smaller room, once his private library, was transformed at his request, with a small iron bed with a gilded bronze crown and green curtains. A large mahogany table was also part of the furnishings, allowing the

emperor to alternate his nights between sleeping and working.

In the main bedroom, however, luxury was more evident. It was remodelled in 1808, with the addition of a sculpted bed where each column had pedestals representing the figures of Nobility, Glory, Abundance, and Justice.

At the Château de Malmaison, however, his quarters were simpler and resembled the tents in which he had slept during his military campaigns. Cream and yellow decorations predominated, with little ornamentation. He and Josephine slept in separate rooms.



Napoleon's bedroom, Chateau de Malmaison © Christina Mackenzie

By contrast, Queen Victoria had a somewhat less lavish style, not indulging in gold decoration as much as the queens before her. Of course, gold still appeared in certain details, but her wallpaper was crimson, and the walls contained portraits of her family and of Prince Albert.

During her childhood, she was not allowed to sleep alone due to her mother's overprotectiveness. After turning 18, she gained more freedom. Throughout her life, the queen is said

to have had a voracious sexual appetite, describing her nights with Albert in her diaries.

When Albert died, Victoria spent countless sleepless nights, suffering from insomnia caused by the loss of her husband.

And how did we go from Rococo to "boring millennial grey?"

Well, that's a topic for another night.



RITUALS PEOPLE DON'T GIVE UP BEFORE SLEEPING

Regardless of age or where in the world you are, everyone has a ritual that helps them drift straight into the realm of dreams.

- Alice K.
→ Think of three beautiful things from her day
- Maria Eduarda W.
→ Skincare
- Laura T.
→ A cup of tea
- Flávia O.
→ Watch TV on bed
- Ash G.
→ Sleep gummies and a bath
- Julia B.
→ Water and putting rain sounds on
- Romulo Z.
→ Watching a film or series
- Amica B.
→ Reading on kindle and stories podcast
- Eduardo B.
→ Masturbate
- Ludmilla
→ Skincare
- Serene H.
→ Skincare
- Amanda R.
→ Scrolling social media
- Mariana M.
→ Chapstick and refill water bottle
- Marcos T.
→ Reading manga



Photographer: Maria Antônia Nery
Model: Hsiang-Hsi Tu

B U N K E R S

BLANKETS AS BUNKERS

Dive on the ways people retreat into cloth. From childhood forts, wartime quilts to adult nesting.

If you stop to think about it, throughout our lives we are surrounded by fabric and consequently, by its protection. But they are also architects and backdrops of important moments in our lives, forever engraved in memory.

As children, we built blanket forts, little citadels where we lived out our adventures. It is one of our first encounters with architecture: draping blankets over sofas, using brooms to balance tents, and pillows for comfort, where fabric became roof and walls. Inside our forts, there were no hierarchies, no parents, only imagination and a flashlight.

In adolescence, the blanket no longer leaves the bedroom as much, but it remains the first place we turn to. Our nest, our safe place, where pillows witness both tears and laughter. The blanket becomes our cape and protector; making us invisible to the world. It is also the moment when we start wearing oversized clothes: to disappear or temporarily hide from society, while our minds revolve around our changes.

Later, in adulthood, we notice that blankets are now present in different corners of the house. A nest on the sofa, ready to become a cocoon of comfort, shielding us from the troubles of adult

life: deadlines, weather, and long nights out.

We are also introduced to weighted blankets: a form of resistance in the shape of a covering. Oppressive in one way, yet liberating in another - our armour against anxiety, like a shield.

In times of conflict, humanity has also turned to fabric to find familiarity. Wartime quilts are relics of protection that tell stories of separated families and resilience in times of scarcity. Made from scraps of fabric, each piece carries a fragment of the community that once embodied protection. Now, the quilt is a tangle of memories and an armour - symbolic or not - that warms the individual and keeps stories alive.

The blanket, in its own way, is also a form of architecture of resistance. Its freedom and malleability allow it to be collapsible, impermanent, always in motion - unlike walls of concrete. They embody fragility but also strength: their delicacy is what makes them protective.

The blanket is never just fabric. It is a bunker, womb, shield and shrine. When people withdraw into cloth, they aren't simply keeping warm, they are building small architectures of refusal, intimacy and survival.



HISTORY OF PAJAMAS

The history of pajamas as we know them only begins in the 18th and 19th centuries, after the presence of the British Empire in India, but this garment has been documented for a long time.

13th century

Loose pants tied with a cord, mainly used in the Middle East and South Asia.



Middle Ages

People slept naked, with something covering their heads.

Ancient Greece

Chitons, which were also worn during the day.

Early 18th century

British colonists began bringing clothing from the Middle East to the West. For now, nightgowns were long and loose, and if you had purchasing power, you could decorate them with lace or buttons.



16th century

Only those with greater purchasing power could afford a special set of clothes just for sleeping, such as a long white linen smock and head scarves. In some cases, they could also be made of wool to keep individuals warm.



Late 18th century

The clothing brought by the colonizers started to gain popularity, and men's garments began to show stronger Middle Eastern influences, with loose pants and a tunic.



1920s

Society shifted, and influences such as Coco Chanel began transforming nightwear. The line between public and private was no longer kept so secret, and undergarments became more widely showcased.

19th century

With ideals of purity and virginity, women began to reflect at night the opulence they displayed during the day, but they still needed to be covered from head to toe. Here, we can see inspiration from Japanese kimonos and the Indian banyan. Men's sleepwear, on the other hand began to show more detail.

1940s

Cotton for men, and the creation of the baby doll for women.



1930s

Floating, dreamy styles now dominated the bedroom. Long, delicate, and lightweight.

1960s

Asian influences began to spread across the market.

1970s – present

Anything goes, as long as you're comfortable.





Photographer: Maria Antônia Nery
Models: Hsiang-Hsi Tu, Serene Hassouna
and Kanu Garg

SLEEPING POSITIONS ACROSS CULTURES AND WHAT THEY MEAN

Dive into the bed and discover how the world likes to tuck itself for a night of sleep

One of the hardest tasks to tackle when trying to fall asleep is finding the ideal position. Is the bed comfy enough? Are the blankets cozy? Is the pillow too soft? It's not uncommon to toss and turn until you find the sweet spot that truly makes you feel relaxed.

Whether it's lying on your stomach, back, or curled up in a fetal position, everyone has their favorite, one that makes you let out a long sigh and think: "Now this is it.". But have you ever stopped to think that around the world, nighttime habits and sleeping positions vary? Each country's sleep culture is influenced by several factors, from climate and geopolitical factors to traditions and even social hierarchy.

When it comes to sleep wellness in general, there are some positions considered the most universal and recommended by experts. Of course, it's important to consider if you have any specific condition such as: lower back or neck pain, sleep apnea, acid reflux or snoring.

If you suffer from low back pain, the recommended position is to sleep on your back. For sleep apnea and snoring, sleeping on your side or stomach can help keep the airways open and relieve those symptoms. Meanwhile, for people who suffer from heartburn and reflux, sleeping on your right side can worsen the condition so it's best to lie on your left side instead.

What is the best sleeping position?

Many organizations that conduct sleep studies – such as the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine – recommend **sleeping on your side** (especially the left side) or **on your back**, as these positions help support your spine and allow your muscles to relax. However, everything depends on each person's individual needs and circumstances!

Other common positions

Fetal – Just as the name suggests, it mimics the position we were in while in the womb: curled up and hunched forward.

Starfish – Lying on your back, taking up the whole bed with your limbs stretched out wide.

Freefall – Like a skydiver, you're lying on your stomach with both arms placed under the pillow or alongside your head. There are variations where one leg is slightly bent.

Log – Sleeping on your side with your arms straight down, aligned with your body.

Yearner – A side-sleeping position where your arms are extended out in front of you, in the direction you're facing.

Sleeping around the world

Since sleep is an integral part of human life, it has been documented throughout history, with each civilization developing its own beliefs and customs around the act of surrendering to sleep.

For example, in Traditional Chinese Medicine—where the act of sleeping is deeply connected to the body's energy—feng shui techniques are used to help individuals relax as much as possible. According to these principles, the ideal sleeping position is on your right side, with your legs slightly bent, the right arm bent, and the left arm resting on top of the left leg. The face should be turned toward the east.

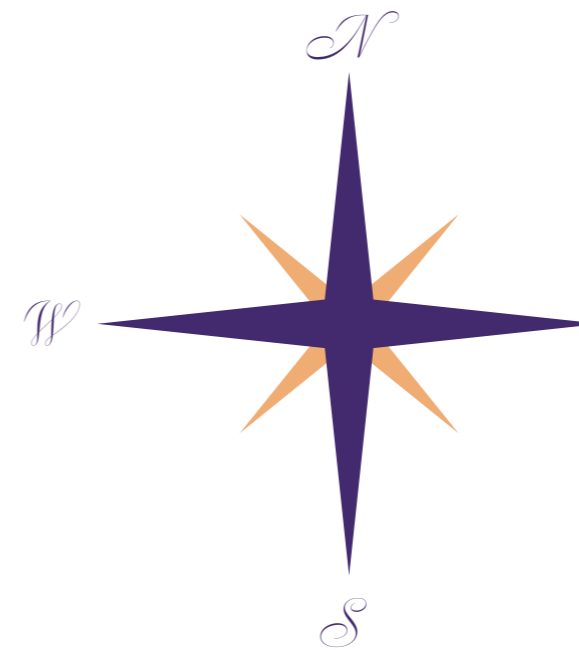
According to the Chinese Medicine Council of Hong Kong, there is also the alternative of placing medicinal herbs inside the pillow to help promote relaxation throughout the night. These practices are said to aid in the preservation and generation of Yang Qi energy, which is responsible for regulating the body's functions.

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Within Vastu Shastra, there are four main sleeping directions



Sleeping facing South: Considered the best position for sleeping, as it aligns perfectly with the Earth's magnetic field, promoting deeper and more restful sleep. Recommended for people seeking emotional balance and clarity.

Sleeping facing East: Encourages concentration and supports the flow of positive energy. Recommended for students and professionals.

Facing West: Focused on bringing stability and can lead to material gains. This position may be beneficial for people in leadership roles.

Facing North: Not recommended, as it disrupts magnetic alignment and may result in poor, unrestful sleep.

In Japanese culture, the use of a futon - a thin, flexible mattress - for sleeping allows for better posture alignment, which can help alleviate lower back issues. Culturally, it is believed that sleeping facing north brings bad luck, and the position is associated with death, as ghosts are said to travel north, and it is also believed to be the position in which Buddha passed away.

In Japan, sleeping close to the ground is also seen as a way to stay connected to nature and remain grounded. According to a 2023 survey by Rakuten Insight, the most common sleeping position was on the back, with 46% of respondents, followed by 30% sleeping on the right side, 19% on the left side, and 5% on the stomach.

In countries with cultures based on Islam, sleep holds great importance, as it is mentioned multiple times in The Quran and considered a sign of the greatness of Allah. Certain positions are encouraged, such as sleeping on the right side with the right hand resting on the cheek. The Prophet Muhammad said:

“Whenever you go to bed, perform ablution like that for the prayer, and lie on your right side.”

(SAHIH MUSLIM 2710)

On the other hand sleeping on the stomach is discouraged:

“Allah and His Prophet dislike this position”

(SUNAN AL-TIRMIDHI 2768)

this quote refers to a man who was lying in the prone position.

Sleep Anthropologist, Hellen Ball, comments on the variation of sleeping habits across cultures: Sleep arrangements vary considerably with some societies practicing communal sleeping and others preferring individual or partnered sleep. Some cultural groups prefer to sleep outside despite having access to build accommodation (e.g. Indigenous Australians). Those who sleep outside or in insubstantial shelters have polyphasic sleep, waking regularly. Those who sleep in sound-proof built environments tend to sleep in a single block or two.

Other Sleep Habits Around the World

Not all culture sleeps or views sleep the same way, which results in habits that may seem strange to outsiders but are deeply connected to the history and traditions of each people. In some cases, these habits have adapted over time, evolving alongside technological or social advances, while in others, traditions are preserved and passed down.

You have probably heard of the siesta, the traditional nap after lunch that can last anywhere from a few minutes to several hours. Although it is widely practiced in European countries with warm climates, like Italy and especially Spain, the origin of the siesta comes from Ancient Rome.

With the day divided into twelve hours, the siesta

was the sixth hour; that is, midday, when the sun was at its highest and hottest, calling for a moment of rest.

In some Nordic countries, there is also the tradition of letting babies or children nap outside in cold temperatures. Well bundled up and covered with blankets, many parents, daycare centers, and schools encourage children to sleep for at least an hour a day outdoors in the cold. It is believed that this practice helps children be less susceptible to catching colds, although research findings are mixed, as pediatrician Margareta Blennow points out in a BBC article.

However, according to a 2008 study by Tourula and Hassi in the city of Oulu, children who napped outside actually slept more than those who napped indoors.

Among the Asabano, a tribe living in central New Guinea Island sleeping is a communal act, as described by Lohmann in his chapter in *Sleep Around The World* (2013). In large communal houses, spaces are segregated by gender; with women sleeping on one side and men on the other; while young children tend to sleep next to their mothers.

The belief is that during the night, people are more vulnerable and susceptible to witchcraft, and therefore should not sleep alone. Lohmann recounts in his chapter that during the first moments of his arrival in the tribe, different men offered to sleep at his place, insisting he should not sleep alone. He also notes that they see this gesture as intrinsic to their hospitality.

Other common positions

To better understand human behavior related to sleep, we interviewed anthropologist and researcher Helen L. Ball, who is a professor of anthropology and the director of the Durham Infancy & Sleep Centre.

Q From your point of view, what differentiates human sleep from the act of sleeping in other species?

H Not much really. The process of sleep is very similar in all mammals including humans. There are differences in sleep environment – some species create dens or nests to sleep in, others sleep in groups. Aquatic mammals alternate the sleep of one side of their brain and the other (so they can keep breathing and don't drown in their sleep). Humans spend less time asleep but more sleep time in REM sleep than other species do. Human sleep is monophasic or biphasic in western settings and animal sleep is typically polyphasic.

Q Would you say that younger generations are creating new sleep habits or returning to those that were once popular?

H This depends in part where they are. Our research in Mexico showed that urban teens slept alone, used technology at night and so had compressed monophasic sleep that started late and ended early due to school schedules. Rural teens slept communally with family members and were more often disturbed by them. The slept earlier and woke later. All teens seem to experience a phase shift in their sleep where they go to sleep later and wake up later.

Q In your research, what would you say is the most important factor connected to our sleep culture?

H I would say ‘who sleeps with whom?’ is a hugely important issue that reflects the individualism or collectivism of the society to which one belongs. My particular interest is children sleeping with their parents

Q What would you say is something common across all cultures when it comes to sleep?

H We all need sleep and can't function without it. Exposure to daylight is also crucial to ensure our sleep is synchronized with the natural world.

Hellen also adds:

All non-western cultures sleep close to their babies – why don't we? Why do we have such big brains and yet need much less sleep than animals with much smaller brains than ours?

And what about sleeping naked?

Well, this habit is neither seen as inherently healthy nor harmful. There are arguments both for and against it, and it ultimately depends on the individual's choice. Pajamas serve as a barrier against bodily fluids released during sleep and help regulate our body temperature.

Sleeping naked can be beneficial for women, reducing the chances of yeast infections since the genital area has more ventilation. Being nude also helps prevent overheating caused by wearing an extra layer of clothing in warmer temperatures.

Now that your bed-sutra is filled with new meanings and positions, it's time to start experimenting!



*“Sleep, those
little slices of
death, how I
loathe them”*

– EDGAR ALLEN POE

The In-Between


In that exact moment of no longer being fully awake, yet not asleep either; the veil separating consciousness from imagination tangles. The real crosses the border of the possible, and the impossible becomes tangible. For a brief instant, adventure calls to your soul without fear of what comes next. The time to wander has arrived.

Direction: Maria Antônia Nery
Makeup: Darcey Sarah
Photography: Tony Ngan
Collection: Clara Gröning
Styling: Serene Hassouna
Models: Mimi Morley and Julia Kazakova – By FlowModels Management

Everything begins


with a thin veil between consciousness and the unreal.

In a paradise of silk chiffon and cotton jersey, Julia loses herself in the Hypnogogia Maxi Skirt, styled as a dress.



It is where hypnagogia reigns.
Its subjects made of neoprene,
lycra, tulle, and satin.

Mimi wears the Lunar Bunny
Hoodie, Shooting Star Bodysuit,
and Shooting Star Basketball
Shorts.



As the dream deepens in sequins
and chiffon, the Narco Corset
and the Magical Girl Hoodie make
their presence known.



The connection to reality becomes even more tenuous.



It's a modern surrealistic fantasy, brought to light by designer Clara.

With one foot in a dreamy aesthetic, she plays with inspirations from Sailor Moon's transformations, as seen in the Magical Girl Hoodie.

The piece showcases the delicacy of chiffon and satin, while the sequins add the final magical touch.

Together, it's possible to get lost in the surreal world of our subconscious, heading toward the next journey.

The Lunar Corset makes its appearance in satin, crepe, and dreams.





*That is,
until the
moment of
waking.*

WHAT DO MY DREAMS MEAN?

Photo: Tuesday Temptation - Pixels

You know that dream you have, and when you wake up, you spend hours thinking about it trying to understand what happened or what it might mean? No matter what culture or part of the world you come from, there will always be explanations that attempt to decipher the meaning of your dreams. The goal is to translate them into real messages that your subconscious might be trying to convey.

These answers usually come from old legends or sayings passed down from generation to generation, but one thing is certain: the art of interpreting dreams is everywhere.

To help you in your quest, we've prepared a brief guide to the most common dreams and their possible meanings.

Dreaming that your teeth are falling out:

This is a very common dream and is often linked to anxiety. It may mean you are feeling insecure in some area of your life where you feel you have no control. The fall of teeth can represent this absence of control but also the loss of something in your life, such as a person or an opportunity.

Dreaming that you're pregnant:

This is not a premonitory dream. Dreaming of pregnancy is usually associated with something positive. It signifies that you are starting a new cycle or opportunity in your life, or that you are nurturing a project you've been working on and seeing it grow. It can also mean that some emotional need of yours is not being met.

Dreaming that you are being chased:

This type of dream is directly related to anxiety. It suggests that you are avoiding a situation or decision that needs to be addressed.

Dreaming that you died/are dead:

This dream points to a major change in your life. A chapter has ended, and now a new phase begins.

It's time to leave behind what no longer serves you. If you can remember how you died, pay attention: a violent death might mean that the change was impulsive and you still have doubts, while a peaceful death represents certainty and calm as you face this new cycle.

Dreaming that you pooped yourself:

Many cultures believe that this dream means you will soon receive money! On an emotional level, it can reflect embarrassment about losing control or fears related to social situations, such as public speaking. It represents your fear of being ridiculed in such circumstances.

Dreaming that you are naked:

When you dream that you are suddenly naked, it indicates that you are feeling exposed and vulnerable, with some fear related to the situation. It can also mean you were caught off guard by some news or event in your life. If you are naked but not embarrassed and/or not trying to cover yourself, celebrate! Your subconscious is showing your confidence in dealing with these situations.

Dreaming about a snake:

Snake dreams are more complex and usually depend on the context in which the snake appears and even the species of the snake in your dream. Although snakes often carry a negative connotation, they are frequently linked to a person's sexuality, whether repressed desires, traumas, or even curiosity. Because of their ability to shed their skin, snakes can also symbolize preparation for a new stage or a fresh start.

Dreaming about someone who has died:

In some cultures, dreaming of someone who has passed away means that the person has come to visit you and deliver a message. In others, it suggests that they may need help in the realm they are in. Another meaning - aside from being a way for your subconscious to process grief - is that you may be seeking closure, whether by forgiving them or helping yourself heal.



UNDERSTANDING: NARCOLEPSY



WHAT IS NARCOLEPSY?

This rare chronic autoimmune disorder affects 1 in 100,000 people, and has no cure or treatment. Classified as a severe disability, it is caused by the body falsely identifying a part of its own system as dangerous and thus destroying it, similar to diabetes type 1.

In the case of Narcolepsy, the body has destroyed a specific group of cells in the brain that produce Hypocretin, which is a neurotransmitter responsible for regulating wake/sleep cycles, as well as some emotional responses. This results in an inability to effectively enter deep sleep at night, which results in immense sleep deprivation rather quickly as the body is getting an insufficient amount of rest.

Narcolepsy includes a wide range of symptoms making it hard to diagnose. Symptoms include; fatigue, immense sleepiness, inability to control falling asleep, short term memory loss around the time you fall asleep, weight gain, frequent nightmares, sleep paralysis, hypnagogic hallucinations, auditory hallucinations, lucid dreaming, waking up 4-7 times per night, trouble completing very repetitive or sedentary tasks, and Cataplexies.

A Cataplexy is the momentary loss of muscle control in one or usually numerous limbs/joints, resulting in said area of the body going limp for a few seconds at a time, which ends up looking like the person is jerking or spasming as they switch between losing and regaining control of that limb. They are triggered by strong emotional stimuli (laughing, nervousness, excitement, fear, shock, relief etc.), and caused by the brain momentarily interrupting the electric chain reaction.

Cataplexies are the only symptom that is exclusive to Narcolepsy (meaning it is not associated with any other illness) however not all narcoleptics experience them.

To get a better glimpse on the life with Narcolepsy, we interviewed the fashion designer Clara Gröning, a recent graduate at London College of Fashion.

Q: How is the treatment?

C: Narcoleptics can use Stimulants (Ritalin, Methyphenidatehydrochloride, Adderall, Modafinil etc.) to regulate/manage their symptoms (mostly the daytime sleepiness), but usually will still have to take one or more scheduled naps per day. Other options include rigorous routines, specific eating habits, and in special cases maybe even narcotics (CBD Oil, Melatonin, Liquid Chloroform etc.) to help with interrupted sleep at night.

The irony of Narcolepsy is that you always sleep but you never feel rested.

Q: How was your journey until receiving the diagnosis of narcolepsy?

C: Not great, wouldn't wish it on anyone. I genuinely believed I was losing my god damn mind. That's just what happens when you can tell that something is very very wrong with your body but you don't know what, and everyone around you, including doctors, keep telling you it's either nothing or it's your fault.

The sad part is that comparatively speaking, for someone with Narcolepsy I had a remarkably fast diagnosis. Mine took 7 months, the average for an accurate diagnosis is 16 years. Narcolepsy is rare, not well known and not well studied, additionally it is very individualistic with every case looking slightly different and all the symptoms of narcolepsy (with the exception of cataplexies) could be so many other more common illnesses.

My "fast" diagnosis that was only possible because I lived somewhere with very good free healthcare and my parents are very supportive and believed me, thus for I was able to see five different doctors, some of them multiple times, in a short period of time. And even then, the only reason I ended up being diagnosed after 7 months was a string of extremely lucky coincidences, mixed with the fact that I had sooo many very hard to ignore symptoms.

1. One of the doctors ended up pulling me aside and telling me that "this is not professional medical advice" but he remembered a story about his great grandfather who had been discharged from the army because he kept falling asleep and had almost fallen in a well while on shift. Years later it was discovered that he had a sleeping condition, so maybe I should go see a neurologist

2. After the neurologist had very quickly determined via EEG that I had irregularities that were in line with narcolepsy she referred me to a specialist sleeping clinic. Because I was just 16 at the time it had to be a sleeping clinic that was also speci-

atically for children. Germany has 3 of those I believe, and one just happened to be an hour away from where I lived

3. I was told that it was gonna be 3 months before they had an open spot for a sleep study which was too long considering the mental and physical state I was in at that point. I ended up getting a spot just three days later because someone got sick and had to defer their study.

I sometimes think about this, and it is really terrifying to me that without what were essentially strokes of luck it might have taken so much longer to get a diagnosis, and I was already just barely hanging on after 7 months of this. I really don't think I could have taken much more.

The not knowing was the worst, so much worse than being sick/disabled. Because when you don't know what you are dealing with then you can't fight it, you can't explain it to others or yourself, and you just end up feeling so helpless or even crazy. It is one of the worst feelings ever, in my opinion.

Q: What is your daily experience living with the condition?

C: It is interesting to think about, but I honestly just don't remember what it was like before. Even though I was 15 when I got sick so I should technically have perfectly intact memories of how it used to be, but I don't really remember. When you are dealing with something like this it just starts becoming part of everything, not in a bad way nor in a good way, it just does. You learn to live with it and around it, because what else are you going to do? It obviously actively and/or subconsciously affects all my decision making and the way I go about things, but I wouldn't say it rules my life, it's just an integral part of it.

Q: What are the biggest challenges you face?

C: I mean apart from the actual illness and physical symptoms and all of that fun stuff, I would say it is lack of understanding, or misunderstandings. Most medical professionals don't really know much about narcolepsy, let alone the average person you meet on the street. You live in a constant loop of having to explain yourself to others and justify your actions or certain needs you have. And even though I don't mind doing that most of the time - in fact I like it when people ask respectful questions to try to learn something - but it just gets so very exhausting. It is exhausting to constantly explain yourself to others and hope that they'll be understanding. And with narcolepsy you really have to tell others or else it will cause major misunderstandings. After all, how is your manager supposed to know that you aren't falling asleep on the job because you are lazy but because you are

chronically medically sleep deprived? Additionally, narcolepsy is pretty much impossible for others to empathise with. They can sympathise but there is no way for them to know what it feels like, and that makes it very hard for people to understand. Sure, I can tell you that me not being medicated would feel equivalent to someone not sleeping for 48h and then having to go to work, but that doesn't even begin to encompass all the symptoms that come along with the sleep deprivation, let alone the mental load and things you have to do on the daily just to function in a semi normal way. That can feel very isolating, knowing that no one truly understands, without wanting to sound melodramatic.

Another big part to this is how people view disability, but more specifically invisible disability. People have a very specific idea of what a disabled person looks like; frail, helpless, pitiful, and obviously (physically) impaired. I am young, self-sufficient, competent and outwardly fine. Narcolepsy is a chronic autoimmune disorder and severe disability but from looking at me you wouldn't be able to know I am sick. People don't like being wrong and they also don't like to have their perception challenged. The phrases "but you are not like really disabled, right?" or "But that's not like and actual disability?" or "But you don't look disabled." all are annoyingly common occurrences. Me looking fine gets misconstrued as me being fine. And me doing a good job at dealing with my situation gets misconstrued as my situation isn't all that serious. That then gets turned into accusations of "faking it" or used as a justification for not wanting to provide certain accommodations or for being hateful. It is incredibly frustrating to deal with. Making something look easy doesn't mean it is simple. In fact, it is really really hard.

I would say that majority of people are understanding and maybe even interested in learning. Some are understanding but sort of ignorant. And only a few are ignorant and hostile, but they really make everything harder, especially when they aren't just random strangers but happen to be a teacher, a boss, a coworker, a doctor, a family member or even a friend, you have no control over where they pop up.

Q: Would you say that narcolepsy can be portrayed through art? How would you depict it?

C: It is hard to say. I don't think you'd be able to depict Narcolepsy in all its facets and intricacies or at least I couldn't, it's too complex for that. I recently talked to a Finnish designer via social media who also took inspiration from her narcolepsy for her graduate collection and our approaches are nothing alike.

I suppose if I had to find some words to depict/describe narcolepsy it would be; foggy, hazy, blurry, heavy, erratic, quiet, loud, confusing, disorienting, ironic, wet cotton balls

Q: If you had to create an image of narcolepsy, what would it look like? What elements would be present?

C: If you know German artist Gerhard Richters series of blurred portrait oil paintings, I think to me that feels the closest.

Q: Your graduation collection was somewhat inspired by narcolepsy. Could you elaborate on the ways this inspiration appears and how it can be seen in the collection?

C: It was interesting because I wanted to make a collection that includes and talks about my experience with narcolepsy, but I never wanted it to be about narcolepsy. I don't like to centre my disability in my work, nor my life but I obviously acknowledge how it influences every aspect of my life. I mostly played with hypnagogia (the state between conscious and unconscious during which one might experience visual and/or auditory sensations) and that strange fuzzy feeling I get when I get tired (I think it feels like wet cotton balls in your brain) mixed with all the weird dreams/nightmares I get. I took those things and incorporated them in a sort of modern surrealist fantasy. The hazy blurry imagery and layered collages, I did for my development are reminiscent of that. My collection isn't about narcolepsy, narcolepsy just plays a part in it, even though I don't think that would necessarily be obvious to someone looking at the collection that doesn't know me or the story behind it.

But I did allow myself a bit of a morbid moment of self-irony by naming my brand Narco, for obvious reasons. Because I am funny like that.

Q: What do you wish someone had explained to you earlier about living with narcolepsy?

C: Well, no one really explained anything about living with narcolepsy. It very much was a "Figure out as you go" situation. Most of what I know is from personal experience and trial and error. I mean to this day I don't know anyone who has narcolepsy, not personally at least. I talk with a few strangers on the internet from time to time but that's not really comparable. I don't think I wish someone had explained things to me as much as I wish someone had told me or demonstrated to me that I would be "fine", well as fine as you can be while being chronically ill.

Final glimpse

If you know someone who has narcolepsy just asking them what they need and assuring them that it is fine is worth a lot. When I look tired my friends ask me if I need to lay down for a quick nap or if I want to try and take a quick walk. When I am walking around in the city, they link arms with me so that in case I get a cataplexy they can support me, and I don't drop to the floor. Asking questions and actually listening and remembering. You might not realise how big of an impact these seemingly small things have but to someone like me they mean a lot and they make a big difference.

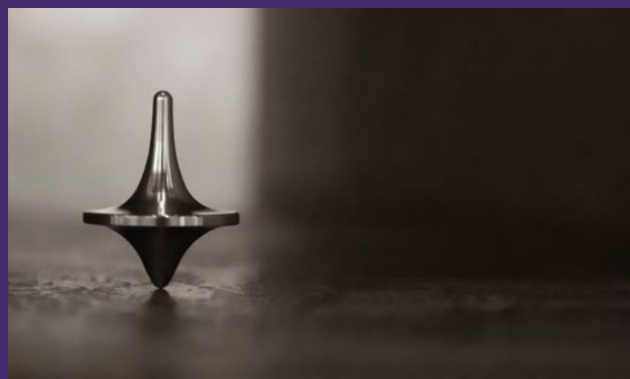


How do we talk about sleep...

On Music ✦

Fireflies - Owl City
I'll Sleep When I'm Dead - Bon Jovi
I'm So Tired - The Beatles

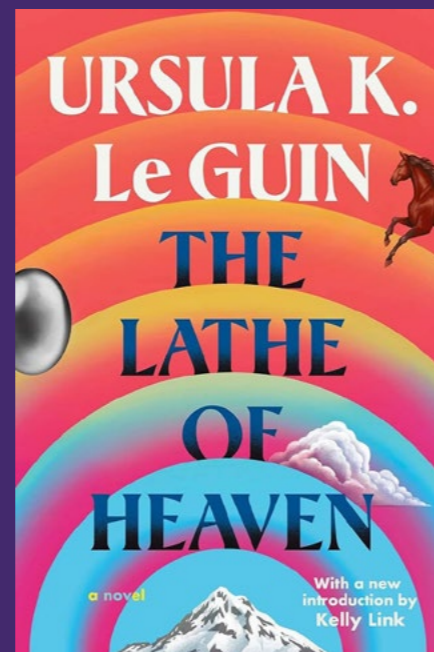
Movies ✦



Inception (2010) - Christopher Nolan
A Nightmare on Elm Street (1984) - Wes Craven
Dreamscape (1984) - Joseph Ruben

Books ✦

The House of Sleep - Jonathan Coe
Insomnia - Stephen King
The Lathe of Heaven - Ursula K. Le Guin



Paintings ✦



Flaming June - Frederic Leighton



The Nightmare - John Henry Fuseli



Noon - Rest from Work - Vincent van Gogh



WHY DO WE
USE “ZZZ” TO
REPRESENT
SLEEP?

Photography by Tony Ngan

A history that definitely won't leave you counting sheep.

For those who prefer a lighter read before bed and opt for comic books, you would have come across a scene of your favourite character having sweet dreams, accompanied by an illustration of big “Zzzzzz” floating across the panel. But have you ever wondered where this “Zzzzzz’s” came from?

First, it's worth explaining that “Zzzz” is an onomatopoeia, meaning a figure of speech created to imitate sounds from our surroundings, such as those made by animals, people, or objects. When this device is used in written media (comics, books), it creates a mental sound and helps the reader feel more immersed in the story. The origin of the word onomatopoeia is from the Greek onoma (name) and poiein (to make), in other words, “to make a name.”

However, the first time the term “zzz” was used, it wasn't to represent sleep. It appeared in 1853 in the journals of Henry Thoreau, an American naturalist, poet, and philosopher. Where, in Volume 6, he described the sound of locusts as a “dry z-ing.”

Over time, it's believed that this expression became associated with the sound of sleeping as people often associate the sound of locusts with serenity, and consequently, falling asleep. It wasn't until 1918 that “zzz” was “officially” recorded as a phrase related to sleep. This association can be found in Dialect Notes Volume 5, published by The American Dialect Society, in the section Exclamations in American English, where the definition appears as: “z-z-z (buzzing, or snoring).”













The little “z's” were popularised by comic books as authors chose to use this little figure of speech to represent a sleeping person. Due to the limited space available in comic panels they preferred to save the space for more important dialogue.

As language and usage evolved, the meaning of “Zzzz” became unattached from just snoring: simple speech bubbles with just

one “Z” were enough to illustrate that a character was asleep. Panels with uppercase “ZZZ” could indicate louder snoring. There are other theories about the origin of “Zzzz” as well, such as borrowing letters from the word snooze, or even the idea that the sound of “sawing logs” resembles that of someone snoring.

And of course, it's important to consider that every language has its own way of representing the onomatopoeia of sleep or snoring!

Besides the famous  you may also find...

-  Brazilian portuguese: **Ronc Ronc**
-  Japanese: Gu Gu
-  Polish: Chrrr
-  Bulgarian: W Hurrr
-  Korean: **DE REU RU**
-  Vietnamese: Kho Kho
-  French: Ron Pchi
-  Estonian: **NORR**
-  Arabic: Akhkh
-  German: **Schnarch**
-  Ukrainian: Bul'k-Bul'k
-  Lebanese: **Kkuuhhhhh**



Tips to sleep better

Now, in a magazine where we talk about sleep and falling asleep, we couldn't leave out some tricks to make your nights a little easier: Check out a few techniques and tips that will help you lay your head on the pillow and drift off.

The 4-7-8 Technique

To help calm the mind, the 4-7-8 breathing technique is a classic for anyone looking to slow down.

1. Inhale for 4 seconds;
2. Hold your breath for 7 seconds;
3. Exhale for 8 seconds;

Muscle Relaxation Technique

Popularized by the military, muscle relaxation is also excellent for "forcing" your body to unwind.

When lying in bed, focus first on the muscles in your face to relax them: forehead, eyes, cheeks, and jaw.

Then move on to your neck, abdomen, arms, legs, and so on.

Focus on each muscle group and feel the tension releasing.

For those who don't like to sleep in silence...

White noise.
Or maybe the sounds of nature?

And before going to bed, don't forget:

Try to stay away from screens for at least an hour before sleeping;

Avoid consuming stimulating products such as chocolate and sodas;

Do calming activities before bed to help your brain shift into relaxation mode.

And if you haven't fallen asleep in 15-20 minutes...

It's better to get out of bed and do something quiet, like reading a book or watching something calm, until you start feeling sleepy again.

Products that may help you sleep better

Need a new routine or something to help with your sleep?

Check out a few products that will make your nighttime ritual even cozier:

Noise cancelling headphones:
Sony
£69.00

Ergonomic Cervical pillow
Ergonomist
£59.99

Blend of calming and relaxing teas
Fortnum&Mason
£10.95

A White noise machine:
Zello
£29.99

Moisturising Lotion
£16.50
£11.25

Gua Sha
Botanics
£11.25

Weighted Blanket
Snooze Therapy
£69.99

3D Sleep eye mask
Snooze Therapy
£49.99

Diffuser
The White Company
£70.00

An 800 Thread Count Egyptian Cotton Satin Bedding for a luxury night of sleep
Jasper Conran
London
£270.00

for your nightly skincare routine

All images courtesy of brand website.



SO *M*NUZ