

NEWS

Read about student experiences with extended dining hall wait times due to the new schedule, 1.

LIFE

Read Clark Wu's '23 review of "Lying in a Hammock at William Duffy's Farm in Pine Island, 5.

OPINIONS

Read about Hannah Henris' '22 experiences with being Ghanaian American at Exeter, 10.

Students Stressed by "Packed" Spring Term Schedule



Students line up at Wetherell dining hall for lunch.

By VIR SHRESTHA, JESSICA HUANG and CALISTA LEE

The Academy returned to a fully synchronous in-person class schedule at the start of spring term on March 23. Many students have been experiencing rushed lunch times due to the shortening of lunch format to 40-50 minutes depending on day of the week, a reduction from last year's 50-70 minute lunch format depending on the usage of long formats. In addition, some students have expressed confusion over the beginning of cer-

tain formats—in particular, on Week One Tuesdays, A format begins at 8:50 a.m. instead of 9:00 a.m. per usual; C/D formats alternate between 10:50 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. starting times depending on the week. Many students also felt that the new schedule was more dense than last term, leading to the feeling of a more cramped, demanding day.

Dean of Faculty Scott Saltman acknowledged the difficulties in adjusting to a new schedule. "There are trade-offs in creating any schedule, and there is an adjustment period to

any schedule," Saltman said. "Students are noticing there is less free time in the middle of the day, particularly compared to last term when there was a lot of free time in the middle of the day. However, the schedule also has a later start in Week 1, a Wednesday without academic appointments in Week 2, and no evening classes."

"We are watching the lunch situation carefully, taking data on wait times and noting the times at which the lines cleared fully," Saltman said. "Every class day there have been three service points. There

have been some lines, and those lines appear extra long because students are spread out by 6 feet. However, the wait times have not exceeded 12 minutes."

Saltman believes that all students have enough time to eat lunch. "On all the days, the lines [have been] clear at least 25 minutes before the start of the next class. Any student who wanted a meal could get one, eat it, and make it to class," Saltman said.

To give students more time for lunch, the Academy shifted C and D1 class blocks forward by ten minutes on Monday and Tues-

SPRING TERM SCHEDULE, 3

Asian, Latinx and Indigenous Perspectives Underrepresented in U.S. History

By ATISHAY JAIN, ATHENA WANG and CLARK WU

Students have expressed concern over the lack of Asian, Latinx and Indigenous representation in the Academy's U.S. History curriculum over the past year, encouraging a curriculum which presents the racial landscape of the United States as more complex than a Black-and-white binary and within the context of international events.

Principal William Rawson detailed the Academy's initiatives for anti-racist work in a schoolwide email on February 24, 2020. "Teachers in the History Department are placing emphasis on globalizing the curriculum," Rawson wrote.

Upper Maddie Saavedra-Bagdonas reflected on a lack of representation in the curriculum. "In the past two terms, I've only had one reading that related to Hispanic culture at all. I remember when Mr. Matsumaru sent it to me;

I was so happy and felt so included, and it was really engaging for me to see part of my history be reflected in the U.S. history curriculum," Saavedra-Bagdonas said. "It really made me feel much more engaged to see that I could relate to what we were studying."

"I've been doing some research for my 333, and I learned about something called the Mexican Repatriation Act, which was basically a mass deportation of Mexicans during the Great Depression," Saavedra-Bagdonas continued. "We studied the Great Depression, but we really didn't discuss this even though it probably should have been covered because they deported basically a million people who were U.S. citizens. I learned that Mexicans faced segregation and also were lynched, and I feel like I really would've appreciated learning about that in class rather than having to study it on my own."

Upper Lekha Masoudi emphasized the lack of South Asian Ameri-

U.S. HISTORY, 2



The Grainger Thyme & Tide dining option has been popular amongst students.

William Park/The Exonian

Academy Addresses Long Dining Hall Lines

By DAVID CHEN, ANNA KIM and CATHERINE WU

Students and faculty have expressed concern over the spring term's new lunch schedule, particularly regarding the unprecedentedly long lines at dining halls.

Dean of Students Brooks Moriarty sent a schoolwide email detailing changes to the lunch block times on March 28. "We are working on some modifications to our class schedule and dining services options on Mondays and Tuesdays to address

the compressed lunch period in our new Spring Term schedule," Moriarty wrote.

Changes included a shortened advising block and less passing time before and after Faculty Meetings to allow classes preceding the lunch period to start ten earlier. Additionally, the Grill Protein Tent changes its hours of operation from 11:40 a.m. to 1:20 p.m. on Mondays and Tuesdays as another lunch option. Moriarty added in another email on April 5 that Grainger Dining services outfit Thyme & Tide would "provide

DINING HALL, 3

Admissions Hosts Virtual Experience Exeter

By ELLA BRADY, MAAME DUFIE AWUAH and HANNAH DIRSA

Students all around the world received news of their acceptance into the Academy on March 10. The Academy offered multiple remote opportunities for admitted students to learn about Exeter in replacement of Experience Exeter—a cluster of campus revisits which were cancelled this year due to COVID-19—before they make the decision to enroll at the Academy by April 10.

In previous years, the Academy has hosted Experience Exeter, a series of one-day revisit programs in the spring for newly admitted students and their families to learn about living and learning at Exeter. Students participating in the program attended classes and events with a current student at the Academy to experience a day in their life. Parents also visited classes and had conversations with students, deans and faculty.

Although the usual Experience Exeter program could not operate this year due to COVID-19 restric-

tions, the Academy hosted a series of student panels via Zoom, where current Exonians shared their thoughts and experiences on topics such as dorm life, athletics, clubs and classes.

Senior Bea Burack recounted her experience speaking at a panel about dorm life. "My fellow panelists and I talked about what it's like to live in a dorm and we gave some specific details and anecdotes about our respective dorms," Burack said. "The attendees had a lot of great questions for us, like what the advantages of a small versus a large dorm are and

EXPERIENCE EXETER, 2

Academy Organizes "Support Her Potential" Fund

By ASHLEY JIANG and ERIN SACKKEY

Honoring its 50th year of coeducation, the Academy recently founded the Women's Leadership Circle (WLC). With generous donations of \$50,000-plus, alumnae are invited to join the Circle, which seeks to amplify "her voice" through community engagement and philanthropy.

Members of the WLC hoped to contribute back to the Exeter community and support future generations of girls through the WLC

Scholarship fund, the Circle's main fundraising priority. The fund covers tuition, room and board, materials for academic and extracurricular interests, travel and other incurred expenses, allowing girls to make the most of their Exeter experience.

The WLC helps show the progress the Academy has made since it began coeducation.

39 girls enrolled at the Academy for the 1970-1971 school year following a unanimous vote by the Board of Trustees for coeducation after decades

of discussion, resistance and calls for change. The next year, six women joined as faculty, including the first Black female teacher Roslyn Grant in Modern Languages.

The presence of women on campus grew in later years. On June 6th, 1974, Harriet Sue Schwartz became the first female recipient of the Faculty Excellence Award, an honor given to the top-ranking student. The Trustees appointed Kendra Stearns O'Donnell as the twelfth and first female principal of the Academy

SUPPORT HER POTENTIAL, 3

News

» SUPPORT HER POTENTIAL

Read about the Women's Leadership Circle's fundraiser, entitled "Support Her Potential", for supporting women at the Academy, 1.

» DINING HALL

Read about student perspectives on and Academy changes for unprecedentedly long lines at dining halls, 1.

» EXPERIENCE EXETER

Read about newly admitted students' peek into Exeter through Zoom student panels, 1.

Asian, Latinx and Indigenous Perspectives Underrepresented in U.S. History Curriculum Cont.

can representation in the curriculum. "There is no mention whatsoever of South Asian American history in the U.S. curriculum, and I think this is a really big shortcoming because there have been South Asians living in America for centuries," L. Masoudi said. "In the 19th and 20th century, there was a lot of controversy surrounding whether or not South Asians should be allowed into America, or if they were considered white or Caucasian. I feel like that would be really important to explore, especially with the very arbitrary nature of racial delineation in the United States."

"I'd like to talk more about the Korean and Vietnam wars, the occupation in the Philippines, and South Asian immigration. It would also be important to try to look at it in a non-Eurocentric perspective," L. Masoudi said. "The War on Terror and a lot of current wars in the Middle East actually do affect South Asians in America a lot because we are seen under this nebulous banner of a Brown person. Often now, we're associated with terrorism by the actions of the U.S. government and other governments."

Similarly, upper Jannessa Vargas believed the Academy's U.S. history curriculum should cover different identities in greater detail. "I think there is hesitation from teachers to go deeply into

different ethnic movements," Vargas said. "In fact, I've never read any Latinx perspectives in history... Civil rights, [the way I think it's taught] is narrated as a dichotomy, anti-Blackness and white supremacy, when in fact civil rights in the United States was probably one of the most intersectional histories to exist."

Vargas mentioned the way different groups are covered in history courses. "Whenever we discuss [Asian, Latinx and Indigeous] groups, it's seen as a departure from the curriculum, which I think is inherently flawed because it implies that these groups or marginalized groups in general are not meant to be part of the main narrative of [United] States history," Vargas said.

Upper Anne Chen added on the pressure of experiencing the burden of representation. "It's a curious situation to be in, because of course I want our curriculum to include the experiences of Asians and Asian Americans in developing America! At the same time, when we have read about it in the past, I've always felt pressure discussing these topics in class and that strange burden is something I'm never looking forward to," Chen said.

Upper Kaylee Bennett believed the coverage of different groups depended on the history instructor and class. "I think that [the coverage of margin-

alized groups] is actually based on the curriculum. Sometimes we'll talk about race more and sometimes we'll talk about it less, but a big part of just talking about race in general at the campus of Exeter is [also] the teacher," Bennett said.

Upper Catherine Uwakwe argued for greater standardization within the History Department to ensure a comprehensive racial education for all. "Some classes will talk for months about race while some classes won't talk about it at all. We need everyone to have a base that is more diverse and inclusive," she said.

Upper Garrett Paik also emphasized the importance of the representation of minorities in the U.S. History curriculum. "Certain groups are always underrepresented and there are so many narratives left out of the history books and readings—this is not groundbreaking information, this is the nature of learning about history," he said.

Paik acknowledged the Asian Americans and Asian immigrants readings already included within the curriculum. "We did cover the Chinese Exclusion Acts as well as Japanese internment during World War II thoroughly. I feel the current curriculum does an adequate job in regards to representation," he said. Other students reported

not reviewing Japanese internment and instead studying the World War II to the Civil Rights movement.

History Instructor Troy Samuels highlighted the importance of navigating difficult conversations. "Meeting with students to gauge where there are inherent discomforts in the material and using that sense of discomfort as a teaching tool can be very promising," Samuels said.

History Instructor Eve Southworth noted that student identity impacted engagement. "I strive to represent the races and ethnicities of students in my classes because my observations, educational best practices, and research demonstrate that inclusion will help my students feel seen and connect to the past," she said.

Southworth seeks to create a personal connection between the course material and the student by including more perspectives. "My goal is to expose students to current scholarly role models of a variety of identities, as well as the different perspectives they may bring. Students have a heightened interest in histories that relate to their own identity. Students often choose to write their research papers related to their own race, ethnicity, religion, or gender identity," Southworth said.

Upper Alexander Masoudi enjoyed when U.S. History conversations ex-

tended beyond the Black-and-white binary. "Today in class we talked about U.S. relations with the Middle East, a personal topic for me. My grandfather grew up in Iran and participated in protests against the Shah after Mossadegh was overthrown. It's important to have these serious conversations and bring in non-U.S.-centric views [and] evaluate non-U.S.-centric sources and evidence," he said.

Southworth hopes that her background in environmental history will enrich her focus on a variety of race and ethnicities to move beyond the U.S. nation-state narrative. "I designed my U.S. history sequence to begin with the voices and experiences of Indigenous people," she said. "Why? If we asked the North American continent what happened to its people, the land would speak mostly of the numerous Indigenous communities who have stewarded, lived and grew with this land for thousands of years. Then, the Earth might find time to reflect on the European invaders' conquest, enslavement, and colonization of the plants, animals and peoples."

Senior Max Tan suggested that the Academy adopt a more fluid curriculum. "I think it's difficult for teachers to include more substantial, analytical histories for Asian, Latinx and Indigenous peoples," Tan said.

"I don't think teachers should have a definitive race curriculum to follow, but we should constantly revise our course readers to add perspectives of underrepresented groups when they are crucial to understanding the historical context."

L. Masoudi encouraged the practice of consulting people of color with expertise in history in order to revise the curriculum. "If, and when, Exeter decides to revamp its U.S. curriculum, I think what they really need to do is get input from various people of color. Not random students of color at Exeter, because that makes them assume the burden of representation, but speaking with Asian American, Indigenous, or Latinx history professors," L. Masoudi said. "We need a more diverse curriculum, and it's important to have recognition of how America and American foreign policy has adversely affected people, especially people in global South countries."

"I know it's tricky to incorporate every culture, especially when we're talking about the U.S. It feels not personal to me, and I'm sure it feels that way to a lot of other students," Saavedra-Bagdonas said. "You can have sympathy, but there's a certain lack of empathy from not being able to connect it to your own experiences or your own history."

Experience Exeter Cont.

what sorts of items new students should bring with them on move-in day."

"I think the webinar helped paint a clearer picture of life at Exeter for prospective students, something like that would have been so helpful to have when I was applying," Burack added.

Upper and panelist Carson Bloom expressed appreciation for the opportunity to tell his experiences directly to newly admitted students. "Your experience at Exeter is very personal—it's different for everyone, and it depends on what clubs you're involved with and how you spend your time, but I think the best way to connect with people is often through stories," Bloom said. "We can tell [new students] all the facts and figures and we can tell them all the courses and classes we have, but the times I felt most connected were when I could see the participants nodding and smiling and showing that they understood and appreciated what I or someone else said."

In addition to synchronous panels, the Office of Admissions hosted numerous student takeovers on their official Instagram account, @pea_admissions.

Lower Jackie Wood, who did a 'day in the life' on the account around Decision Day, explained the goals she had for her takeover. "The main thing that I want new students to take away from this is see-

ing how normal our lives are. They hear a lot about Exeter, especially on the Internet and from friends and things like that, where it's all work, no play and lots of studying," Wood said. "One thing I tried to focus on was showing how people can find time to hang out with friends and do sports and relax, but at the same time, find a really great education."

Another system that the Office of Admissions implemented was PeerPal, a private messaging platform that allows admitted students and their families to connect with current students and parents via chat. These students and parents serve as PeerPal Ambassadors, who help prospective families feel more comfortable with the school community and replicate the one-on-one student host experience that is characteristic of revisits during a non-pandemic year.

Senior and PeerPal Ambassador Yulian Ye described the role as enjoyable and fulfilling. "A lot of kids are a little overwhelmed by the prospect of having a new schedule and Harkness and everything, so I've been answering questions about all that," Ye said. "I'm definitely really excited to do this. I'm thinking about how I felt when I was first coming to Exeter: excited, but also scared. This is a way to pay forward and help facilitate their transition."

Upper, tour guide and PeerPal Ambassador Riley



Bissell House, the home of Exeter Admissions.

Ethan-Judd Barthelemy/*The Exonian*

Valashinas shared similar thoughts. "Doing work in the admissions department is one of my favorite things to do at Exeter. I love being able to meet new people and share some cool facts and some of my favorite stories with them! It's been so great to be able to adapt this to a virtual format. I missed doing this so much last spring!" Valashinas said.

The Office of Admissions also provided virtual tours for admitted students to see and hear about campus from current Exonians. "We stopped in front of the usual tour stops, and the camera would rotate 360 degrees to show them around," Bloom said. "For example, in the science building, we'd talk about how we integrated Harkness into science class because people had questions about how Harkness works with science... people who were watching the tour could really see the places we went to class

or the Assembly Hall, and we would describe which events occurred there."

Members of many interscholastic sports teams also sent personalized messages to prospective teammates. Incoming prep Chloe Richards reflected upon her experience having a member of Girls' Soccer reach out to her. "It was really wonderful because I was nervous I wouldn't make many friends, and even though the students were asked to reach out to the new preps, she did a really wonderful job making me feel excited and like she was reaching out as a friend, not a classmate," Richards said.

While incoming students do not have the ability to see Exeter's campus, student classrooms in-person, Exeter's adaptations to the pandemic has led some students to consider remote panels becoming a regularity.

"For me, what was so important about Experi-

ence Exeter was being on campus and seeing its vibe, seeing the students smiling and having fun, seeing that it was so different from what I had heard about Exeter—all work, no play—so it was really important for me to see how kids behave in class, on the paths and in the dorms. That's something that you can't get virtually," Bloom said. "In-person Experience Exeter is definitely the best, but as for other online sessions, I think it would be good, especially for the first visit. I personally didn't visit Exeter before applying, so for someone in a situation like mine who lived far away from boarding school, an online option could make more sense economically and provide more access to boarding schools, especially for people that didn't really grow up with boarding schools or don't live on the East Coast."

"I think that, as soon as it's safe, we should go back

to offering in-person tours and admissions events, because the virtual world can never be a perfect substitute for in-person connection, and it's much harder to make the huge commitment that is saying yes to Exeter when you've never stepped foot on campus and seen what the vibe is like," Valashinas said. "However, I think virtual admissions events are so valuable in their own ways—most importantly that they are infinitely more accessible than the in-person events."

"I relied a lot on YouTube and conversations with friends of friends who had gone to boarding school, but it would've been so nice to be able to get important information on Exeter life directly from current students," Burack said. "I hope admissions keeps doing events like this one even when we're back to in-person Experience Exeter."

Dining Hall Lines Cont.

grab ‘n go alternatives during the lunch period out of the Pizza Truck location on Mondays and Tuesdays.”

On March 25, Administrative Manager Lee Rollick sent an all-school survey on behalf of Facilities Management about dining services to gather student opinion. According to the email, further action is expected to come from the survey with involvement from Student Council. Campus Planner and Architect Heather Taylor said, “We established the survey to get input from the students regarding the dining program. This information will help the design team when thinking about various aspects of the design of the new Dining Hall... At some point this month, the design team will attend a StuCo meeting to go over the responses of the survey,” she said.

Many students agree that the updated schedule meant to shorten waiting times has not been beneficial. “I don’t think that the revised lunch scheduling will lead to much shorter of a line, I think it will just postpone them,” prep Eden Fisher said. “I go to Wetherell because it is both close to the academic buildings and my dorm, but the line is always so long so everyone is running to not be at the end.”

“I think the revised lunch scheduling is understandable in the context of the revised schedules, but is still very problematic,” lower Ina Mason said. “The extra time is a bit more helpful but the issues really come down to the fact that a staff-served buffet can only process so many people so quickly.”

“The revised schedule is definitely helpful, but since it only applies to Monday and Tuesday once every two weeks, it’s not that effective,” upper Krishna Deora said. “Elm still feels a little cramped to me, there are pretty long lines especially if you don’t walk directly there from your class.”

“One of the biggest challenges with the current schedule is having enough time to eat lunch. I understand that the lunch situation has been greatly impacted by COVID safety regulations and guidelines, but it’s been really difficult to get in a long line, eat, and then get to class on time,” lower Jenna Silvestri said.

“It takes around 10-15 minutes to stand in line for lunch at all three dining halls, especially since everyone has lunch at the same time and a very short window to get to the dining hall. It is still a little tight, at times I am late for my class because I don’t fin-

ish lunch on time, but it is manageable,” upper Vinusha Narapareddy said.

Many students noted that the lunch situation has taken away the community aspect of lunch at the Academy. “Lunchtime this year feels a lot less communal than previous years since COVID guidelines have limited seating capacity in the dining halls and our tight schedule,” senior Allison Hanlon said. “I used to always go to Elm to hangout with my friends while sitting around a table and eating lunch. Lunch was always the highlight of my day, so it’s definitely weird and frustrating to not be able to have that experience anymore, especially during senior spring.”

“Not having as many opportunities to sit inside dining halls with friends during lunchtime has made it difficult to connect with other people and feel a greater sense of community here. Of course, I understand that COVID measures are put in place to make sure that everyone on campus stays safe and healthy,” Silvestri said.

Maintaining social distancing guidelines while dining has also been difficult. “If there are ever too few chairs, which is common after sports practice or in between classes, someone might pull one over that does not maintain

6 feet,” Fisher said.

The updated hours and change in location of the protein and smoothie tent sparked mixed views from students as well. “I think the line is definitely moving faster now that it’s outside. It’s easier for them to serve and the COVID guidelines are easier to follow outside,” upper Naisha Deora said.

“The smoothies in the morning seem a lot better since it’s open for longer hours, but post-class lines can still get pretty bad,” Narapareddy said.

“I would appreciate longer hours for the smoothie tent. I don’t really think the line size is changing, it just looks that way since it’s outside now. I spend all my time in EPAC so I can get a smoothie as soon as it opens, but many others can’t get it as easily. It’s definitely not something that you can just grab on your way to your next class,” prep Advay Nomula said.

Students also shared their opinions and concerns on the food options and portions served at the dining halls. “There needs to be more variety in the food served and especially more proteins, and I think even moving the protein tent hours back in the day to dinner time could help solve this,” Fisher said.

“Given the circumstances, the dining situation is much better than I expected it to be. However, one thing I think could be done better is the food offerings at the dining halls. There are very many vegan protein options, but very few sources of meat. Sometimes I find it better to just eat a protein bar and fruit for lunch,” upper Jose Vivanco said.

“I wish there was a wider variety of simple foods and non-vegan protein options. I know a lot of people who are running solely on rice, chicken breast and salad right now, and I’m not sure if that’s the most sustainable, especially for athletes,” senior Julia Norsworthy-Edghill said. “One thing that could be helpful is extending the protein tent hours so athletes can get a good source of protein after practice.”

Some athletes have found that cramped lunch times and smaller portion sizes have impacted their performance when playing sports in the afternoon. “I really enjoy that the Academy made adjustments to dining services and hours, but a downside of the current lunch situation is that we haven’t been able to get adequate portions of food,” upper Nathan Zhou said. “By the time I have lacrosse practice in the afternoon, I’m really tired

and I feel like I don’t have enough food during lunch to sustain myself throughout practice.”

“Students aren’t prioritizing lunch now because of the limited time that we’re given to eat. I don’t think people are recognizing the immediate effects of not eating proper meals, but I’ve seen many students just have fruit and snacks for lunch, and it’s definitely a problem. During sports and afternoon activities, there are a lot of people who are really tired or weak,” upper Gretl Baghdadi said.

Students noted that some teachers began letting them out a couple minutes early to avoid lunch lines, or being lenient with late arrivals to class following lunch period.

Biology Instructor Anne Rankin shared suggestions for Dining Services. “Maybe having bagged lunch options available somewhere central for pickup. The options could be simple and clearly labeled. For example, PBJ, apple, chips, and a cookie or hummus veggie wrap, banana, and a brownie. This would allow interested students to just grab a lunch and have plenty of time to eat and do whatever they need to do,” Rankin said.

“Support Her Potential” Fundraiser Cont.

in 1980.

Women continued to hold leadership positions at the Academy throughout the 90s. Carmen Stewart ’92 became the first girl to be elected Student Council President in 1991.

In the 1988-1989 school year, 424 out of 985 enrolled students were girls, making up 43 percent of the Student Body, nearly half of overall Exonians. Female enrollment continued to expand; the Academy reached a 50-50 split in male and female student enrollment in the 2000-2001 academic year.

The Academy has adopted new changes to promote inclusivity during recent years. Revisions to the dress code were made in May 2011, including more gender-neutral guidelines that no longer

required neckties for boys and all students could wear a dress shirt, sweater, turtleneck, dress or ethnic attire to appointments. The Academy offered its first all-gender residencies, Williams House and Kirtland House, in 2017.

The WLC hopes to promote similar gender inclusivity with the WLC Scholarship fund.

“A lot of the extracurriculars that I do probably wouldn’t be possible without this fund,” senior Audrey Yin said.

Some students mentioned the pressure that comes with identifying as female. “I see the glaring differences in how male and female students act and are perceived in class. This is especially apparent in some of the elective courses I’ve

taken in the past two years,” senior Bea Burack observed. “There tends to be a sort of ‘boys club’ of students—Harkness warriors’ if you will—who feel that their comments should somehow carry more weight than whatever their classmates have to say. I say ‘boys club’ because the students who act in this way, at least in my experience, overwhelmingly identify as male.”

“I felt a lot of the need to appeal to the male gaze or to be a girl in the way that a man would define a girl, especially when I was younger and more insecure,” Yin said. “I’ve often felt like I’m too loud, too political, too outspoken.”

Assistant Principal Karen Lassey mentioned additional avenues the

Academy could take towards equity. “[The] initiatives that we’ve committed to as a school [goes] beyond diversity... it’s about inclusion,” Lassey said. “I’d like to see us continue to live into our commitment to youth from every quarter... There’s work to do with admissions. I think we have a pretty diverse community but I won’t say that we’re done.”

Despite many unresolved gender disparities, alumnae and students alike credited the Academy for instilling crucial skills in its female-identifying students. “Exeter taught me the importance of being authentic to myself and of being comfortable within my own skin,” Circle member Ayanna Lonian ’94 said.

“I’ve learned to think for myself, because it’s so easy to want to agree with men. But Exeter has taught me that it’s cool to think for yourself,” Yin added.

Many alumnae found such skills benefited their career pursuits as well. “Exeter taught me to never be afraid to use my voice,” Lena Papadakis ’17 said. “Most people would describe me as being a very shy, very quiet fellow, but once I came to the Academy, where my viewpoint was encouraged, where speaking out was encouraged, I grew into that, and it has definitely helped me move forward in my career, especially as a woman in STEM.”

Circle member Emily Barr ’76 commented on the challenges women

face with leadership. “Sometimes when you’re in a room full of young men and they’re all very eager and they all assume that they’re going to be the future leaders of tomorrow and you’re sitting there, the odd woman out,” Barr said. “You have to be more aggressive. You have to be witty and a quick thinker, a quick talker.”

Lassey shared similar advice. “I would just say, follow your passions, and try not to listen to, to self doubt, or, or perceived barriers that, that, you know, are there for whatever reason.”

Yin expressed her wishes for the future of the WLC. “I hope it continues to create more clubs and opportunities for women, to empower female Exonians.”

Spring Term Schedule Cont.

days. The Academy extended lunch service points to Grill and the protein tent, and added a grab-and-go pick up from Thyme & Tide.

Upper and Student Council President Siona Jain shared mixed opinions on the new schedule. “I love that my classes don’t go until 8 p.m. and that there’s no random asynchronous turn-in times at noon, but I’m struggling with the packed lunch and lack of reserves,” she said.

Jain also expressed empathy for students frustrated about the schedule. “I feel the same way—our schedule is insanely packed. I think it was a rough wakeup call when I had a class meeting four times a week for 50 minutes, so I’m concerned about our workloads,” Jain said. “I’m also finding that these ‘off Wednesdays’ are packed with sports/clubs, and they don’t provide an adequate break. Students have been working nonstop since February, and I’m worried about burnout. I

think we’re all exhausted.”

Many students agreed with Jain’s assessment that off-Wednesdays did not actually serve as breaks, due to the nature of commitments at Exeter to spill over into any available time.

Jain conducted an informal Instagram livestream to gather students’ opinions on the schedule. “I took all of the students’ opinions and suggestions directly to Mr. Saltman. We included ideas such as cutting classes to their previous 45 minutes and compounding the extra 5 minutes into a break in the middle of the day or collapsing D1D2/B1B2 to the Friday schedule every day,” she said.

Student Council also addressed student concerns about the short lunchtimes. “We suggested a snack cart be permanently kept outside or near the entrance. We also suggested, because lunch opens at 11 and most students can’t go until 12:30, that D-hall prepacks a few meals with the

standard hot food options,” Jain said.

Many students felt overwhelmed by the cramped schedule. “Because the schedule is so compact and I have sports right after class ends, I begin my homework at maybe 7 p.m. at the earliest, which I believe cuts back on my productivity severely,” upper Stella Shattuck said.

“As an online student, the new schedule has been a challenge. With so many classes back to back, I have been stuck starting at a screen for far too long,” remote senior Ethan Wasylina said. “I do like getting rid of 8 p.m. class, but I feel there needs to be more separation between class for online learning.”

Additionally, some students voiced concerns about the timing of classes. “My challenge is knowing when to do homework since I have a lot of random frees between classes. It is harder to separate learning time from mealtimes or

even times to take breaks,” upper Hannah Henris said.

Lower Sinna Oumer shared similar thoughts. “There’s been tons of schedule confusion in the time since it was implemented—I missed up to 20 minutes of class in several classes due to either the teacher or one of the students mistaking the time,” she said. “The irregularity doesn’t help anymore—usually I set alarms for my class times, but now I have to set a new set of alarms every day! It’s really confusing, especially when the changes are so subtle.”

Some athletes have also had trouble adjusting to the tight schedule. “I need to manage my time especially, so I am ready for sports right after my last class,” prep Solu Ajene said. “During last term, I had a few hours before my sports period, so I need to get used to the smaller break between my final class and sports.”

Despite the difficult ad-

justment, many students expressed satisfaction with their new schedule. “I’m able to get more sleep in the morning with this spring schedule, and I really enjoy it,” lower Kenny Chen said. “Compared to the fall and winter, I had more classes and a busier schedule.”

Lower Angie Wah, who is learning remotely from Hong Kong, preferred the new schedule over the fall and winter schedules. “I feel that the educational and learning flow helps boost the effectiveness of classes, while the fall and winter schedules really [broke] things up and were messy and hard to get used to,” she said.

“I think the new schedule does a good job of designating subjects to different times of the day, so you aren’t overwhelmed,” Ajene said. “The schedule does a good job at giving large breaks for homework, self-time, etc..”

Prep Luke Davis attributed the stress to the

Academy’s switch back to in-person instruction. “I hear a lot of people complaining about school this term and how tiring it is, attributing it to the new schedule. I’d agree that school feels more taxing nowadays, but I would say that it’s more due to the constant stream of in-person classes,” Davis said. “Even though we had classes for hours on end last term, being online gave us built in breaks— even if it was just a minute of time to breathe with the camera turned off.

Saltman noted that the schedule is important in creating a community on campus. “Now, we are returning to in-person classes as our backbone, and with that we created a schedule that gives us more of the class time that our community has always valued,” Saltman said. “While there is more class time in this schedule than in any of the other pandemic schedules, it is less than in the pre-pandemic schedule.”

Life

» THE HERMAN TWINS

Read about Seniors of the Week, Leila and Zoë Herman, and how they impact campus both together and separately, 4

» VIRTUAL ARTIST TALK

Read about alumni Dustan Knight '76, Brittany Otto '08 and Wendi Yan's '18 art and their inspiration behind it, 6

» POETRY REVIEW

Read Clark Wu's '23 review of "Lying in a Hammock at William Duffy's Farm in Pine Island, Minnesota" by James Wright, 5

Seniors of the Week: Leila and Zoë Herman



The Herman twins smile in front of the Academy Building.

Joy Chi / *The Exonian*

Seniors Leila and Zoë Herman arrived at Exeter from two perspectives: one worried if campus would ever feel like home, the other eager for change in her daily regimen. Though Z. Herman had the initial idea for them to apply to Exeter, both sisters have managed to become an integral part of the Academy's spirit. Even as they followed diverging paths and magnified their own unique identities throughout their four years on campus, the one thing that keeps them inseparable is their shared ability to light up any room.

Z. Herman's Exeter revisit day was a driving force in developing her eagerness to join the Academy. That day, spent strolling along the Academy's paths as a prospective student, pushed her to reflect on how moving to Exeter would allow a switch-up in her daily routine. "I remember I would walk to my school every day [for] 15 minutes. I didn't want to walk the same walk to school for the next four years. So I thought I should change schools."

"I know when she sets her mind to something, she decides that she wants to do it," L. Herman said. Growing up in London until aged 10 and then moving to New York, the Herman sisters weren't completely unfamiliar with the idea of shifting toward a new home. And though in the beginning L. Herman "wasn't really sure [she] wanted to come here," the Herman sisters embarked together towards prep year at the Academy with courage and anticipation.

When L. Herman first came to Exeter, she didn't expect to fit in. "I applied and I remember just thinking, 'this place is so big.' How does anyone deal with all these brick buildings and not get lost?" she said.

Living within the Academy's brick walls was also a source of intimidation for Z. Herman despite her initial drive to move schools. "I remember thinking it was so big and so scary and everyone was so tall," she recalled. "[They] had their life together and, you know, I

was just like the stereotypical, super scared [and] shy prep."

If you've had the pleasure of crossing paths with either Herman sister today, you'd be surprised to hear that they worried about fitting into the Exeter community — today, their impact on campus is unmatched. Regardless of how they first felt coming into Exeter, both sisters are now driving forces in the community as students, athletes, and well-loved Exonians.

The Hermans serve as role models for every hesitant incoming student, demonstrating how to find community and thrive in a place with buildings and people as tall as they are in Exeter. "If I were a new student, I would say to myself, 'Ahhh, so this is how it's done!'" said

Z. Herman's advisor English Instructor Patricia Burke-Hickey. Upper Ginny Vazquez said that "when I think of seniors that I look up to the most, I would say Leila is easily one of them. She's got a kind of cool personality and it always looks like everything she does is with ease and elegance."

Senior Regan Thomas described the comfort of Z. Herman's presence, and that "there's a noticeable difference when she's not here."

"She has made me feel so valid here...she makes me feel safe. If I'm nervous about something, having Zoe there eases my nerves," Thomas said. "It's nice to have someone I know I'll always feel comfortable around."

"Leila has helped me be honest with myself," Senior Audrey Park said. "I feel like she knows me really well, and I can always go to her when I need reassurance or advice. 'Zoe is great at making decisions, and is unafraid to speak her mind, which I think makes her a great leader. She also walks really fast so we just end up trailing behind her anyways.'"

They've also found ways to engage within their passion for STEM. Currently, both sisters are co-heads of Exeter's Science MATTER Magazine. The Magazine opened Z. Herman's eyes to the world of STEM in a way like never before, despite

being initially intimidated by the prospect of contributing. "I was terrified, but it initially got me thinking STEM could be for me. I really like the creativity that came with it," she said.

L. Herman continued, "I think being at Exeter specifically has told me to think of science in the context of society and think of how humanity and science are linked and how one overlaps the other. The goal of scientific advancement is to help society," she said.

While the Hermans are passionate about STEM, they also found their community in sports. Z. Herman joined the swim and softball teams her prep year, and then the hockey team her lower year. "Even if I'm not good at sports," she said, "I've always really, really enjoyed sports teams."

Math teacher Tim Whittemore spoke about L. Herman's abilities. "She's a good example of a well-rounded student who's taken advantage of a whole bunch of opportunities," he said. "You can fill the sentence 'Leila is a _____' with a lot of different nouns. I'd say she is a well-rounded and happy person."

Upper Lindsay Machado said that L. Herman's personality was what drew her to L. Herman. "Her attitude is so refreshing to be around," she said. "I think at Exeter it's really easy to fall into the attitude of pretending that nothing is wrong, but I like how transparent she is about what the struggle is actually like," she explained.

Park added, "She can make anyone feel good about themselves—especially when you see her across the quad and are greeted by 'HEY SEXY!'"

"I really like her humor. I think it can be applied to a lot of different situations," Machado added. "It's something that I've learned from her myself as I'm transitioning into more leadership roles. Oftentimes the best way to deal with the challenges is through humor and it can really bring a team together," she said.

Outside of the classroom, L. Herman is an avid athlete, which she

grew into after coming to Exeter. "I didn't really have any specific interests. I just started sports teams here just because I wasn't super athletic growing up and now I'm on three teams."

L. Herman talked about the community and friendships that come out of sports. "It's just about being on a team and hanging out with people and getting to know everyone," she said.

One such friend is fellow cross country and swim teammate upper Lindsay Machado. "[Leila] is just a comfortable person. Someone who will actually understand the struggle and be able to laugh through it with you," Machado described. "She's a teammate in multiple senses of the word in that she is a friend, but also a staunch supporter."

One of Machado's favorite memories with L. Herman was at the start of their cross country races. "The second before the race started, right on the starting line for the cross country race. And most people will tell you at the cross country, the starting line, 'Oh, don't worry about it. It's going to be fine.' Leila was not afraid to acknowledge how much pain we were actually about to be in," she said. "It was so helpful to have somebody to actually acknowledge that they're going through the suffering with you and being able to laugh about it and actually relieved a lot of my stress."

Park, a fellow swim teammate, admired L. Herman's free spirit. Park recalled a funny memory: "I remember when I went to watch Leila's first swim meet. She was doing the butterfly one, but suddenly she stopped and began to sink. At first no one noticed, but my friends and I all started yelling at the lifeguards to do something. Luckily, someone from the other team noticed and dove in to save her," she said. "It definitely was not a near-death experience, but Leila decided to treat it as such. Immediately after the whole fiasco she decided to reassess her life and drop death chem so she could live a more full life."

Like her sister, Z. Herman also excels in athletics. "I joined the swim team and the softball team, and I had never played softball before. I started my lower year. I did field hockey, which I also had never played before. I just like to try new sports and this spring, [I'm] joining the cycling team." Z. Herman said. Teammate and upper Lila Busser, who met Z. Herman last year on the field hockey team, mentioned Z. Herman's determination as an inspiration. "Her determination, her work ethic...[Zoë is] a very hardworking person. When she knows what she wants, she will get it."

Z. Herman certainly embodies resilience as well. Park recalled the time when "when a stall door fell on [L. Herman's] foot and broke all of her toes. Everyone should ask her about it, it was quite the experience. She was on crutches for a few weeks and had all her toes in casts," Park said. "She used the excuse to make everyone do everything for her—she had me bringing her meals and carrying her up the stairs with [her friends] Nuki and Oia."

With L. Herman's experience as an Exeter student and athlete, she shared pieces of advice she would give to younger students — L. Herman jokingly said that good sleep habits were in shortage at Exeter. "If there's one takeaway from this interview, it's that preps and lowers need to learn to develop healthy sleeping habits," she admonished, laughing.

She continued, "I think prep year was definitely very focused on grades," she said. Although I still care about my grades now, there's more than just your transcript and your GPA."

Z. Herman also shared advice with her prep self. "I would say be more confident because I was really just so shy. I was terrified of everyone. I spoke to in my classes. I also think telling myself that it would all be okay," she said. "I was very stressed out for no reason. And I think just like reassuring myself that it would all work out in the end."

"My big thing that I

learned this year is to take advantage of Exeter while you're here." L. Herman said. "I didn't realize, especially because we were away for a time [spring 2020]. I didn't realize how quickly the years go. We have some really special people on campus. I wish I'd made more of an effort to get to know people out of my classes and clubs."

Z. Herman agreed, saying that the backbone of her time at Exeter was the connections she has made along the way with students. "The friends I've made have really made Exeter a place for me." Z. Herman reminisced. "I really feel like I belong at Exeter because of the friends I've made, not because of any academics or clubs or anything, just friends."

L. Herman said, "I remember [as a] prep [I was] looking up to seniors in my dorm and thinking [that] these people have everything together. They seem like they know exactly what they want to do, [but] then only to realize, as I grew up, that seniors are just the same as everybody else and still don't really know how everything works," she encouraged. "But I feel like throughout my time at Exeter, I grew into the person that I am now."

Park, however, thinks that both sisters have not only excelled at being friends and upperclassmen mentors, but have demonstrated an impressive development in character. "I think Zoe and Leila have both become more outspoken and confident over the years. They're definitely not afraid to tell us if our outfits look terrible," she joked. "I'm really lucky to have been friends with them since prep fall, so I've also been able to see their humor grow."

Z. and L. Herman have each breathed life into various communities on campus throughout their time at Exeter, serving as a pillar of support, love and dedication. They've spent their years at Exeter laughing, growing, and drawing everybody in for the ride.

Faculty of the Week: Kelly Flynn



Courtesy of Communications

By **ETHAN-JUDD BARTHELEMY, MAXIMILIAN CHUANG and MAAME DUFIE AWUAH**

“Throw yourself like seed as you walk, and into your own field... From your work you will be able one day to gather yourself.” —Miguel de Unamuno

These words guide English Instructor Kelly Flynn’s approach to life and teaching. “It has to do with how I think about writing. You give yourself to life, just show up and pay attention, and life sends back ideas, wisdom about connections you might not have seen in the moment,” Flynn said.

Flynn grew up on a farm in rural Missouri, and didn’t ever expect to be teaching at Exeter. “My parents were farmers and my brother and I were the first generation to go to college,” Flynn recalled. “My parents had beef cattle and raised corn and wheat and soybeans. We lived in a house on top of a hill and I really miss it sometimes because the sky was so big there, and we could see the storms rolling in.

“Not many kids from my high school went to college: it was a very small public school. I went K-12 with the same kids and I got out of my class when lots of kids were going into factory work or becoming

farmers,” Flynn added.

Flynn applied to Harvard, the University of Missouri, and Washington University in St. Louis. After expecting to only get into the University of Missouri, Flynn was accepted into Harvard and went to the Northeast for the first time. “Harvard was a huge culture shock for me,” Flynn said. “I didn’t visit it before I actually attended, and I’d never been to the Northeast. I’d never been inside a bookstore. I didn’t know how to cross a street that had traffic lights.”

In college, Flynn started out as a physics major. “The physics major had come about because I’d gotten a strong message when I was in high school that if you were a girl who was good at science and math, you should do science and math to represent girls,” Flynn recalled. “My older brother majored in biochemistry and math, so I felt like I should be in there with the science and math.”

But after discovering a newfound passion for literature and music, Flynn ended up focusing on English and music courses. “I did figure out that I wanted to be an English major and I ended up feeling for me that English was more challenging than STEM because there’s so much ambiguity involved in it,” Flynn said.

After college, however, Flynn struggled with adapting to teaching in a boarding school environment. “When I started teaching, it was, ‘I’ll do this

until I figure out what I really want to do.’ I was a teaching intern at Andover, where I had an incredibly difficult first year, so I second guessed myself a lot through that first year of teaching,” Flynn said. “I kept thinking, ‘Okay, I’ll patch things together financially until I figure out how to make a career in the arts.’ I was planning to go to the Berkeley School of Music and study orchestration and music production. And then my money fell through, so I ended up teaching for a second year and I was still kind of feeling like, ‘Ah, man, if I only had money, I’d be free to go and do.’”

But for Flynn, a turning point came about in her teaching career. “I remember this sort of crystallized moment when I was teaching poetry, when this boy in my class said, ‘You know, I’ve always hated poetry, but I feel like I’m starting to have an idea of what it’s for.’ And it just lit up my heart,” she said. “A few years after that time, I thought, ‘Okay, I’ll teach a little longer, I’ll put up with it.’”

“If you love teenagers and you love your subject, it’s kind of ideal,” Flynn said. “It’s kind of worth it. And I like how everyday is different. I laugh almost every day. I feel like I’m connected to other human beings that my work is real. And so here I am, I’m grateful.”

According to English Instructor Eimer Page, Flynn’s love for the practice of writing

goes hand-in-hand with her passion for teaching. “I love hearing her read her poetry, and strongly advise attending if you ever hear she is doing a reading,” Page said. “She is hilarious in her descriptions of how her writing came about, and the poems themselves contain a huge range of moods.”

English Instructor Alex Myers has also been inspired by Flynn’s readings, even vividly recollecting an instance from years ago. “She read a story she’d written that was really great – and I’d never heard her read her own work before. That stuck with me.”

Flynn ascribes her reading methodology to the empathy and understanding words afford. “When I read poems or prose that I love, I realized what I love about it is that it kind of explains to me some experience of life that I’ve had that I hadn’t ever put into words before,” she said. “One lesson I would say is that reading literature gives us practice for deciphering people around us and thinking about what their intentions are.”

Similar ideas guide Flynn’s process of writing—in particular, her recollections of growing up in a time when television was not widely available. “There was that mystery of that no TV time when there was nothing on to watch, and what do you do with yourself if you’re up late at night?” she said. “I’m trying to write about that because for people my age

and older, they remember that. And for people younger than I am, they’ve never known a time when TV and entertainment, the internet, isn’t feeding stuff at you all the time.”

“There are good things and bad things about both worlds, so I write just to communicate something about the world we live in and how amazing it all is,” Flynn said.

Flynn’s great attention to the details of life and implications of events are visible when she approaches other texts, including Jane Austin’s works, which she teaches in ENG542. “Austin’s novels are formulaic. You can see that there’s a heroine who has an adversary and some man whom she doesn’t like, but you can see that they’re going to end up together,” Flynn explained. “We’ve seen that formula again and again, but within that formula, there are infinite variations of how we go from point A—here they hate each other—to point, I was going to say B, probably point Z, where they married happily ever after.”

“I love that idea of a formula in art, or even other fields like sports, where something like the rules of football and the way the grid is on the field provides this structure for all of the beauty of the passes to unfold,” Flynn said. “Looking at Austin, it’s almost like we know where the 50 yard line is, we know where the end zone is, but how are we going to see these beautiful plays unfold? When I taught Moby Dick, it’s kind of multi-genre in the sense that not only is there no formula that novel, but parts of it feel like an encyclopedia, parts of it feel like biography, parts of it feel like a sermon, and it’s this weird collage that’s all over the place. I love the messiness of that.”

Senior Will Viotor has benefited from Flynn’s thoughtfulness in both reading pieces and teaching them. “Ms. Flynn truly lives up to her teaching philosophy of approaching the table as if she were a student — it feels like she learns as much from the students as they do from her,” he said.

Students and teachers alike have described Flynn to be very playful and curious. “[Ms. Flynn] has a very bubbly, kind of spunky personality. She’s always so excited to talk, and she always can connect to you in some way. She’s so sweet to everyone,” upper Lucy Weil said. “As our adviser, she’s like a second mom to us.”

Page praised Flynn’s kindness and charisma, noticeable upon first impressions. “I first met Ms. Flynn when she came to interview for her position at Exeter. She came to dorm duty with me during her interview, and after she left, the students requested that we make her a dorm affiliate for the following year since they had so enjoyed meeting her. Now, I

teach across the corridor from her, and she often pops in just to catch up or share a moment from class. If I walk past her room when she’s teaching, I usually hear explosive laughter coming from behind her door,” Page recalled.

When describing her perfect day, Flynn mentioned playing a Bach fugue on the piano. “I love the rigor of memorizing music. I think because it demands my entire brain to memorize a difficult piece of music, I can’t be worried about anything else. It’s a perfect form of one pointed meditation.”

“And then I will dance in my kitchen,” she said. “I will turn on Chance the Rapper, or even some old school Lady Gaga or some nineties music like Mary J. Blige, and I will dance in my kitchen and that’s my workout.”

Flynn has been unafraid to carry her playful spirit into the classroom and advising meetings, also connecting with her students through dance. “I love dancing. I could go dancing every night if I had the opportunity,” she said.

Flynn has shared the gift of dance with her students. “There’s this one advisory tradition that we have, where Ms. Flynn plays this Bob the Builder video. It’s like a dance routine, a tango of sorts, and it gets the whole advisory laughing. It really plays to her playful side. I’ve heard that she also does this in her classes too,” Weil added.

Flynn’s caring personality is not only appreciated by her students, but also by her five-year-old chocolate labrador, Pete. “She’ll often come into the dorm with her dog and knock door-to-door and say hello to everyone,” advisee and upper Bona Yoo said.

Over quarantine, Flynn and Pete hosted dance party workouts. “Dogs can tell when we are happy or sad, and they pick up our energy, I’m sure of it,” Flynn reflected.

“If somebody is really wanting to milk every minute of their Exeter day for content and intellectual rigor, it can feel like a waste of time to spend four minutes watching a puppy video or to do a Bob the Builder dance,” Flynn said. “But I feel kind of retroactively vindicated because all of the brain science that’s out there now tells us that relaxation and laughter help groups bond, and also the relaxation that comes from that creates a fertile field for learning.

“Being present in your body, laughing with other people, taking a moment to meditate on loveliness all help you grow and expand your imagination,” Flynn mused. “That’s why I’m a believer in laughter, dance, meditation, and kitten and puppy videos.”

Poetry Review: “Lying in a Hammock at William Duffy’s Farm in Pine Island, Minnesota” by James Wright

By **CLARK WU**

*“Over my head, I see the bronze butterfly,
Asleep on the black trunk,
Blowing like a leaf in green shadow.”*

I hold much fondness in my heart for the image of a butterfly. Perched on spring daffodils and snowdrops they flutter their wings ever-so-slightly but with incredible constancy. The bronze butterfly is often characterized in Mongolian myths as the sign of a new life or a fresh start.

In this poem, we start with such a fragile creature both at rest and in motion. In my mind, the butterfly is swaying in the soft wind, perhaps a mirror image of poet James Wright in his hammock. Immediately the oddly dark color palette brings out the meditative mundaneness.

*“Down the ravine behind the empty house,
The cowbells follow one another
Into the distances of the afternoon.”*

Now it’s really feeling like a prep spring narrative, isn’t it? It’s also from this point onwards where you notice the restrained and lulling vowel and consonant combinations in this piece. One could probably read this softly in a guided meditation.

The cowbells also intrigue me. The word certainly appeals to my ears and adds some clarity and ringing brightness to the poem. I took the meaning of cowbells (if there were any, to begin with—the poem up until now feels like the mindless ramblings of a student trying to make up for observational journal entries) in two ways.

Firstly, cattle ranchers use cowbells to locate their herds, so the bells may be symbols of ownership and boundaries. In this scene, fading cowbell sounds paint an idyllic picture that sends me Sound of Music meadow vibes, adding to the meditative mood. However, some professional farmers find that the sound of cowbells bothers the cows themselves. Suddenly the bells become a stark reminder of the poet’s self-indulgence; his pleasant afternoon may be built upon

another’s misery. But such is all of our own pleasure. Perhaps we’re playing a zero-sum game; pleasure always comes at a cost.

*“To my right,
In a field of sunlight between two pines,
The droppings of last year’s horses
Blaze up into golden stones.
I lean back, as the evening darkens and comes on.
A chicken hawk floats over, looking for home.”*

In comparison to the ordinary afternoon views in the previous excerpts, Wilson uses quasi-mythical language here. He compares horse droppings to “golden stones” and describes a vagabond “chicken-hawk,” a species with a majestic name. The earthliness of this poem is still there, but we’ve seemingly reached a climax, a fleeting moment of extraordinary.

We’re reading Frankenstein in my English class, in which Mary Shelley suggests that nature is a healing and nurturing force. To be able to “observe outward objects with

any kind of pleasure,” to “perceive that the fallen leaves had disappeared and that the young buds were shooting forth from the trees that shade [your] window” is a true privilege. Nature is forgetful of ambition because all human ambition is but a speck of dirt in the passing of time.

“I have wasted my life.”

Yes, this is the last line of the poem. I hope this was a saucy twist for you.

Wasting one’s life is (hopefully) an overstatement that carries with it a mix of emotions.

First, a pinch of regret. Wilson, like many of us in the evenings of Exeter, probably wishes he had better employed his time. Did he enjoy his rest on that hammock? Maybe. But was he preoccupied by his work and obligations during his rest, or fully immersed in the natural beauties? We have no idea.

Or perhaps his observations made him realize that he’s wasted his life pursuing

his dreams and passions when (I’m sorry about this cliché) beauty could often be found right before us. We find appreciation in the unexpected niceties that melt our hearts. Last Monday, when I was sitting on the Academy quad I watched a plane draw out two lines of cotton candy steam in its path, glowing a cantaloupe-silver color as it reflected the setting sun. If I hadn’t looked up to the sky, I may have well forgotten that time.

Wilson must certainly also feel a little nostalgic. Oh, I’ve wasted my life. How unfortunate. He doesn’t take pride in the “waste,” or ask for pity, but rather finds it unfortunate that he recognizes his ill-spent time. When in our childhoods have we felt we’ve wasted our lives? I would hope not often. It’s because we weren’t exposed, just yet, what a “good life” meant. When there is no good option, there is no waste. Back then, we didn’t care about the meaning of life. We didn’t care if we had a purpose. That was a time when your productivity didn’t affect your self-esteem when play was just play and nothing else.

I miss that so much.

And finally, I believe Wilson experiences transcendence. Does he care that he’s wasted his life? The very open conclusion to the poem itself suggests there is no definitive manner in which our lives become empty and meaningless. We determine whether our lives hold meaning.

I wonder if the poem is a commentary on poetry. We take note of and appreciate the minutiae of life, perhaps over-interpret its every detail to find meaning in their presence only to understand and reflect ourselves. I had a conversation with an English teacher about what poetry really looks like. I think needless to say words are vessels. They carry whatever you choose to put in them. Good poetry makes you feel, but no two people feel in the same way. Therefore poetry cannot be controlled by the poet; the poet is merely one who takes the time to build the dock for people to board the vessels and experience their own beyond.

Is that a waste of time? I don’t know, you decide.

Alum of the Week: Zoha Qamar

Teja Vankireddy / *The Exonian*

By ELLA BRADY, ASHLEY JIANG and NICHOLAS ROSE

Zoha Qamar's surge to success developed from immigrant family roots that shaped her religious consciousness, female identity and a connection to her South Asian culture.

Part of what compelled Qamar to attend Exeter was to fight back against sexism in her hometown and ethnic community. "I wanted to go to boarding school in the first place [because of] stigma in my home Muslim Pakistani-American community against girls going away to school outside of California," Qamar said. "There was backlash toward my family, especially my parents and me, as I set my sights on New England boarding schools."

Qamar felt daunted by the Harkness table when she first

set foot on campus. "I didn't enjoy talking on the spot and articulating myself, especially to challenge other people," Qamar said. "[Learning to] assert myself, without the fear of defending myself if someone challenged me, was a whole process."

Throughout her four years, Qamar became interested in a variety of interests, from Feminist Union to lacrosse. Some even stemmed from her early hesitance in the humanities. "I was really not a good writer when I entered Exeter, and I was struggling in my humanities classes, so I honestly joined *The Exonian* as a way to just force practice my writing, and have some semblance of a deadline," Qamar explained.

Growing up Muslim-American in the time after the tragedy of 9/11, Qamar developed

a significant interest towards Middle Eastern studies. "She understood as a young Muslim-American woman what systemic oppression felt like, looked like and how it operated," English instructor Mercy Carbonell said.

This understanding materialized in her curiosity about Exeter's unique educational opportunities, which propelled her to explore and connect with her identity. "Having an Arabic program, even if only for seniors, was part of the reason I was even interested in Exeter to begin with," she said.

After taking HIS586: Contemporary Middle East in her senior fall, Qamar went on to tackle a senior project with dorm-mate Saisha Talwar '15 to further educate herself and the Exeter community on contemporary issues in the Middle East. "The girls conceived,

planned and managed three evening programs over the course of the term, including a lecture by a noted expert in the Middle East, Reza Aslan. It was a really sophisticated project and I enjoyed every minute of it," History Instructor and project adviser Michael Golay said. "The programs drew big crowds, too."

Crediting the Academy for her confidence and newfound passions, Qamar left behind a lasting impression on many faculty and classmates. "She really changed the way I acted in school because she would always connect the material we were studying with important social/political/cultural issues," Phillip Tsien '15 stated.

"Zoha is just one of those people who has such deep personal integrity that she is deeply influential. She almost doesn't have to mount a campaign or try. She can articulate things the rest of us are still fuzzy about," former History Instructor and JV lacrosse coach Amy Schwartz added.

The summer after her graduation, Qamar criticized the Academy's approach to sexual assault in an article for *Jezebel* titled "When I Tried to Talk to My Prep School About Rape Culture, They Wouldn't Listen."

"It was prescient, appearing as it did a year before some quiet public revelations about specific cases, and I've always thought it nudged the school closer to examining the issues and doing something about them," Golay explained.

This singular article inspired students across campus to challenge social constructs and power structures. "I had a group of advisees who really looked up to Zoha; their campus activism and political values were strongly influenced and shaped by her example," Schwartz recalled.

After graduating from Exeter in 2015, Qamar furthered

her studies at Columbia University, where she majored in computer science and minored in English literature. However, she quit her writing position at the *Columbia Spectator* after a week, after realizing that breaking news was not her passion. However, Qamar gained valuable insight from some of her classes. "The English classes I took were mostly in either South Asian literature or gender studies. There was a really good mix of my interests and kind of my background in those classes, and I feel I really learned a lot there," she explained.

Qamar believed she also learned about hitting her limits at Columbia, which she wished she had realized earlier at Exeter. "I think I definitely hit a breaking point. For a while in college, it was unsustainable, and I just was not really happy and not really focused," Qamar shared.

The experience and depth of knowledge that Qamar possesses is vast. She worked at CNN and Vice News after graduating college, and is currently working at the *New York Times* as a Senior Analyst. "[At CNN] I was an intern on the breaking news desks and in Santa Ana, [and] I was working out of the Hong Kong bureau," Qamar explained. "[At] vice I was in Brooklyn, so that was during the school year. My roles there were very focused on hard breaking news, not necessarily hard hitting news, but...quick facts...that need to be turned out in a couple of hours."

Utilizing her background both in computer science and journalism as a data analyst at the *New York Times*, Qamar works to understand the demographics of their audience and widen viewership. "We are trying to better understand users and give meaning to data. Big data is obviously a huge term and very amorphous. Our job is ultimately to cultivate insights and allow every piece of data that we collect to have meaning, and contextualize who our audiences are, and

what sort of content we can offer that will broaden their scope," Qamar said.

For the industry in which Qamar works, the future is hardly set in stone. "Media and journalism is very fast changing. There are a lot of unanswered questions and unaddressed concerns in terms of how places will fare; you can already see the evaporation of local news and the monopoly that bigger places are starting to hold."

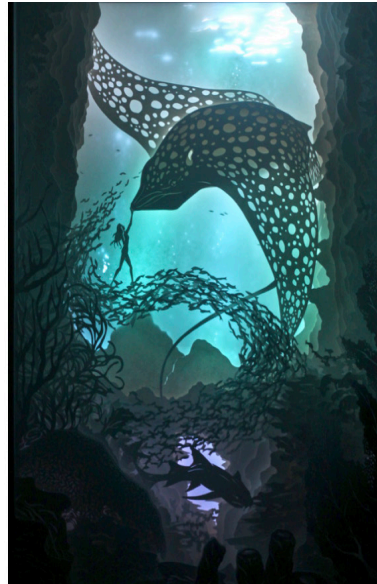
Similarly, Qamar's own future is up in the air, her ambition always leading her to consider interdisciplinary opportunities. "My dream job would just be to write, [but] even though it's my favorite thing to do, I think there would always be a piece missing if I didn't have some integration of technology or science."

Even outside of strictly work-related affairs, Qamar loves to write, especially creative nonfiction based on her own childhood. "A big part of my writing always stemmed from a religious standpoint; there's a lot of gendered religious dynamics that I grew up with," Qamar said.

Qamar further finds that writing allows her to unpack and reflect on such experiences. "I feel like writing is both a product and a means," she related. "In some ways, it's something I can look at and say that this is something that I created, but I also think about how it allows me to think and see the world differently, after writing something I really value."

Qamar advised introspection and self-care as a path towards empathy for others. "If there was one piece of life changing advice, I recommend humanizing yourself to yourself, most importantly to understand [that] everyone is going through some version of [a struggle]," she said. "Your struggles might be your struggles, but you're not the only one hurting or facing a challenge."

"Environment & Emotion": Virtual Artist Talk



From left to right: The cover for Wendi's Amazing Gap Year; *Two Degrees*, 18x24" and 6.5" deep, allowing for 20 layers of paper by Brittany Otto; "Mud" 48 x 48" mixed media on canvas, 2021 by Dustan Knight

By ANDREWYUAN and ELLIE ANA SPERANTSAS

A newsletter, a journey along a muddy trail and a bleached coral reef complex in Roatan, Honduras. Last Thursday, the Lamont Gallery organized a virtual artist panel featuring alumni Dustan Knight '76, Brittany Otto '08 and Wendi Yan '18. Each using different materials and techniques, these artists explored their experience and emotions with the environment.

It was a fresh spring day in March when Knight stepped upon a small mud puddle as she walked out from her house. A snowpile stood before her, silently dripping as it melted under the evasive rays of sunlight amid the sinking mist. Beneath the broken leaves that scattered across the muddied surface, inconspicuous worms, once submerged under the mud, squirmed from the ground and crawled towards the dew-covered grass lawn. But amid the livelihood, the unanimous dwells on. A vague and unspoken eeriness that almost resembles a decaying death, plagues its way over the painting, over the scene, over this very mud puddle.

In the foreground of the painting, Knight experimented with white and wide strokes of paint that resembles the

delicacy of the snow. The sprinkling of the paint across the canvas symbolizes the slow and almost draining process of melting. Observing closely, one could see scraps of cardboard on the painting that subtly blended into the scene.

"There is a certain vitality attached to this painting, there are things growing from the ground but dead things are also scattered here and there," Knight said. "You can feel it in the muddy ground and the heat of the sun is coming down. It's warm enough so that you can put your coat on and walk outside."

With the drips of murky paint across the canvas, Knight perfectly combines the decaying of life concealed by the mud. She demonstrates her control over the paint, constantly lifting up her canvas for the paint to slide down and then tilting it up to prevent the paint from diluting the entire artwork.

In Knight's paintings, you can never detect a certain object, or a definite person. The blurred line between abstraction, the wild mixture of colors in the midground and the thin traces of black paint that eventually leads to nowhere all embody Knight's artistic value.

"For my art, it's not all about representation, it's about just conveying that emotional experience onto your painting

in the way that you put the paint down," Knight said about her artistic style. "The way that you react to the paint and the material recreates the similar experience."

A school of fish gently lifts you up from the ocean floor, forming a stair-like spire that carries you through the lucid ocean. You stand between the giant coral reefs that waved along the ocean current. You gasp with amazement: the seaweed, the fierce whale shark defending her babies, the mountains, stark against the glimmer of sunlight filtering in from high above the surface of the ocean. Below you, sharks and seaweed intermingle on the ocean floor. Using carefully carved layers of white paper as her median, artist Brittany Otto shows a small figure in the mid ground interacting with the huge whale above.

"It is just white paper. And then once you get the backlight on it and you're in the dark, it transforms into something else and you see elements that you didn't see before," Otto explained. "That's what I play a lot with the lighting and with vellum to create these patterns that are cast are creating all these things that you don't necessarily think of."

Growing up on a farm, Otto has been in touch with environmentalism her whole life. Drawing inspiration from that, she uses art as her form

as social commentary. When you turn off the lights, all the elements of the piece are the same color, a purposeful choice made by Otto representative of the coral bleaching marine animals undergo.

"There's like endless limitless things that you could do with any number of materials. And for me, when I realized, paper cutting is something that is detailed and I love detail. I can still do things with color, but within a really interesting boundary," Otto said.

09/09/2020-09/15/2020

Yan breathed in the fresh air of Inner Mongolia, creased the outer fringes of the flour dumpling wrapper and chewed on the crispy sea buckthorns.

12/25/2020-12/31/2020

After roaming the gloomy streets of London delicately cloaked by a thin mist, Yan sat down in her dark room, allowing her thoughts to sink into 80+ pages of journal. Inhaling in peace, she waited for her friends to pop up on the tiny Zoom screen during her last week in London.

2/3/2021-2/16/2021

Deprived of her senses and tumbling through the tank like a silk scarf in a giant washing machine, Yan fell asleep while

resting in her floatation tank at the Float Lab in downtown Los Angeles. In the following week, she meandered with her friends along the Venice Beach at sunset and visited the Hollywood Cemetery on the windy morning of Valentine's Day.

2/17/2021-3/08/2021

Cacti, a wooden hut embedded in valleys of cypress and boundless deserts, and Spanish graffiti spontaneously sprayed across the stained windows and faded beige stucco walls. This was her resort, Yan knew.

Oaxaca, Mexico

While streaming her 3D and 4D VR videos on the Youtube Recommendations, Yan looked out from her window and explored this surrealist retreat—a small Mexican town sitting on top of the lush hills—that became her first artist residency.

Over her past gap year, Yan explored her artistic identities and values during the depressing COVID pandemic. With the opportunity of exploring the destinations she long craved to visit, Yan documented those memories in a weekly newsletter compilation named "Wendi's Amazing Gap Year." In these newsletters, Yan included a short journal section and several photographs, occasionally with her own

artworks, that documented her emotional experiences in the past week(s).

"It was a natural thing that as I started out the gap year, I wanted to share my experience online. I was also driven by pure laziness with updating my life with other people. I just didn't want to repeat the same experience to different people every single time. Then maybe when people ask me about my gap year, I share my experience online and accessible to people. That's how it started," Yan explained.

As a new media artist, Yan loved experimenting with new, bold mediums of art, such as VR, game design and architecture. In her past few years' experience as an artist, Yan's creativity had always been embodied in her artwork, including this gap year collection.

"I posted on Facebook and announced that I'm starting a gap year newsletter where I'll email my updates weekly. I told my friends to subscribe if they want to. All of a sudden, there were approximately 70 people who commented or just messaged me. I was stunned. What the heck is going on?" Yan continued. "Now the newsletter has exactly 200 subscribers, which is crazy to me. I just wanted to share these resources, explore my thinking and experiment with my voice."

» DEAR EXETER

Read about Hannah Henris' '22 experiences as a Ghanaian American at Exeter, 10.

» QUARANTINE

Read about Anvi Bhat's '24 reflection on her time in on-campus quarantine, 8.

» INCOMING STUDENTS

Read about Nicholas Rose's '23 letter of advice to newly-admitted Exonians, 9.

Exeter Needs to Give Us Mental Health Days



Joy Chi/*The Exonian*

By ANNA KIM '24

I've seen the reviews on Niche: "Exeter ruins their students' mental health." "Depression and anxiety are bred here." I blindly ignored these warning signs when I came to Exeter. It couldn't be that hard, right? I mean, if it ever got that hard, the school would help, right?

I was wrong.

"Seven out of ten teens in the US have named anxiety or depression as a major problem among their

peers in the community. On a 10-point scale, where normal values for adults are 3.8, American teens rated their stress rate at an average score of 5.8. Three quarters of American high schoolers and half of middle schoolers described themselves as "often or always feeling stressed" by schoolwork," a Guide2Research article published in Oct. 2020 states.

A Washington Post article published in Sept. 2019 reports on Suniya Luthar, a professor of psychology at Arizona State University.

They "have shown that adolescents in high-achieving schools can suffer significantly higher rates of anxiety, depression, substance abuse and delinquent behaviors, at least two to three times the national average."

Schools like Exeter fit into this category. We're lauded for excelling, for winning—but when we sit at our desks, late at night, trying to perfect our history essays, trying to ace math tests, we are forgotten. While I haven't had a real Exeter experience yet due to the

pandemic, I've developed a warped sense of comfort in stress. I know that struggling mentally does not alienate me here—I've heard and seen stories of students and their complicated relationship with their mental health, and of the school community in general.

Exonians are perpetually stressed: we are always looking to meet the deadline, and if we hit the deadline early, we turn to our growing list of tasks we have on the backburner, or we try to get ahead. When was the last

time any of us had nothing to do? Nothing, as in no sports and instruments to practice, no club commitments to finish, no studying for another test—quite literally nothing. Often, I hear refrains of "only a few days left until Friday!" throughout the day during sports, in the dorm, in my classes. We have developed an attitude where we're just trying to make it to the weekend.

How is this sustainable? How is it healthy for us, week by week for four years, to long for the "week-end," only for it to start all over again in 48 hours? In both long-term and short-term energy levels, Exeter students are burning out, and the school can alleviate this by letting us take mental health days.

Exeter should give students the responsibility and trust and allow us to take mental health days. On these days, students would be able to take their health into consideration and truly take time to recuperate. If a student decided to take a mental health day, they would not be obligated to complete any assignments during that day or attend any required meetings or classes. Rather, we should be able to work in tandem with their teachers and another trusted adult, whether that be a counselor, advisor, or trusted faculty member, to create a course of action after these 24 hours.

This is different from the off-day Wednesdays, or other avenues where students can ask for extensions individually with their teachers. The off-day Wednesdays are just another opportunity for more work to be assigned, and many students actually

end up spending the majority of their Wednesday doing schoolwork and catching up on other academic or extracurricular commitments. That is the opposite of "wellness days" that Exeter claimed to be giving us. These mental health day options are for when we really just need to take a complete stop, and hopefully seek some rest. I understand that mental health days would be a great privilege, but allowing students to call a day of rest for themselves would really help us. We are surrounded by due dates and check-boxes. Why can't we be given a check-box for rest? For focusing on ourselves, and our mental health?

What if people use these opportunities to their advantage? Derek Evans, a student activist in Oregon who helped establish legislation allowing mental health days in 2019, recognized, "There will be students that will abuse the system, but there will be students that this will save." Yes, some may misuse this privilege, but this has the opportunity to truly help students, and even save lives.

Exeter, and the administration, has said before that it is here for the best interest for us. Are they really? We can take "sick days" without anyone casting a doubtful glance, but why is it so different when it comes to mental health? Let us take more control over our own mental health. Let us know when we need a break, a real and needed opportunity to make a step towards recovery by entrusting us to use these mental health days for us to heal.

Is Money the Answer? On OMA Student Leader Compensation

By RUPERT RAMSAY '23

I believe that the Student Council should pass motions to fund stipends for Office of Multicultural Affairs (OMA) clubs and events. However, I think that creating paid positions for OMA club leaders would not be productive. Monetary compensation does not sufficiently address the emotional labor that these leaders endure. In addition, monetary compensation can easily transform into monetary incentive, and I think that students would be drawn to OMA leadership positions for the money rather than the mission of the club itself.

First, we must acknowledge that the students leading OMA clubs are doing much more than the average teenager and perhaps even more than the average Exonian. Leaders of OMA clubs like La Alianza Latina (LAL), the Afro-Latino Exonian Society (ALES), Asian Advisory Board (AAB), International Student Alliance (ISA) and International Student Alliance Board (ISAB) are responsible for organizing meetings, reaching out to various administrative members to promote awareness of cultural issues on campus, and even handling issues of racial insensitivity and harassment.

These students handle these responsibilities along with school work, sports, and other clubs.

The students in OMA clubs challenge the beliefs of their peers and faculty, foster discussion on campus, and inspire positive change. Remuneration would hinder both the quantity and the quality of the work they accomplish. While the OMA club leaders endure strenuous work and deserve to be compensated in some form, I strongly believe that paid positions would change the leader's incentive without alleviating the emotional labor they experience. By offering paid positions, we

will inevitably transform the pure motivation for leaders to create and inspire change on campus.

Instead, StuCo should focus on compensating OMA student leaders through events such as special off-campus reservations at a venue of their choosing, open mic events, and dances.

Additionally, StuCo could assist with the creation of more OMA club leader positions and meeting spaces. By expanding the OMA student leadership team, the emotional burden of OMA's work will no longer fall upon such a small number of students. By opening up more spaces

for OMA club meetings and collaboration, it may become easier for students to address sensitive issues with the support of a group.

Spaces where students of color can gather are so important. It gives those students the chance to voice their opinions and talk about their life experiences with individuals that often understand those experiences. A larger meeting place would give students the resources and materials they need to create constructive change on campus. On February 24, Principal Rawson sent an update on the Academy's justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion (JEDI) work to the Exeter community. He wrote, "We have developed a vision for an expanded Office of Multicultural Affairs on the ground floor of Jeremiah Smith Hall... we will not be able to execute the project earlier than the summer of

2022." Why must we wait until the summer of 2022? I believe that this initiative should be prioritized, as the physical space to discuss such important issues is essential for us to become an anti-racist institution.

Ultimately, financial compensation is not a long-term solution to the emotional labor OMA student leaders must face. It does not change the critical discussion that must take place to make Exeter an anti-racist institution, and it runs the risk of creating an artificial monetary incentive to become a student cultural leader on campus. We should invest in expanding the OMA space and creating events for OMA club leaders to advance their dedication to the OMA mission. By doing so, we foster discussion and more effectively support our school's efforts to become an anti-racist institution.

The Exonian

We would like to acknowledge the Squamscott/Penacook peoples who were the first peoples of this land. We would like to honor their ancestors, descendants and future generations for caring for this area and allowing us to be here today.

DANIEL ZHANG
Editor-in-Chief

LINA HUANG
Managing Editor

MOKSHA AKIL
ANYA TANG
Directors of Writing

NEWS EDITORS
Andrea Luo
Amy Lum
Tina Huang
Hansi Zhu

LIFE EDITORS
Indrani Basu
Jeannie Eom
Taraz Lincoln

OPINIONS EDITORS
Evan Gonzalez
Manan Mendiratta
Max Park

SPORTS EDITORS
Toby Chan
Sydney Kang
Ginny Vazquez-Azpiri
Georgie Venci

HEAD LAYOUT EDITOR
William Park

HEAD DESIGNER
William Lu

LAYOUT EDITORS
Joy Chi
Max Chuang
Anna Kim
Avery Lavine
Arhon Strauss

HUMOR EDITORS
Jack Archer
Dorothy Baker
Chieko Imamura
Blake Simpson

HEAD PHOTO EDITOR
Teja Vankireddy

PHOTO EDITORS
Ethan-Judd Barthelemy
Joy Chi

HEAD ART EDITOR
Sabrina Kearney

FACULTY ADVISORS
Ellee Dean
Erica Lazure
Avery Reavill
Chelsea Woodard

BUSINESS CO-CHAIRS
James Urquhart
Emily Wang

ACCOUNTING
David Kim

ADVERTISING
Anderson Lynch

OPERATIONS
James Broderick

SUBSCRIPTIONS
Claire Fu

OUTREACH
Alysha Lai

The Web Board staff members are listed on *The Exonian's* website: www.theexonian.com.

To subscribe to or advertise on *The Exonian*, contact exonian@gmail.com or call 603-777-4100. A subscription to the paper costs \$90 off campus and \$150 overseas.

The Exonian welcomes Letters to the Editor sent to the care of dzhang@exeter.edu.

The Exonian reserves the right to print Letters to the Editor in a timely fashion and to edit them for content and clarity.

The Academy's Sugarcoat



By JANE PARK '24

The Academy wants everyone to “say yes to Exeter,” and so the four weeks leading up to the acceptance deadline is spent making Exeter appear as satisfactory as possible. The way society operates is all about the exterior appearance: the facade instead of the internal appearance. But does this defective precept that has been instilled into everyone seriously apply to whether or not one “says yes to Exeter?”

The Academy is eager to look “diverse,” yet the number of Black @ Exeter posts steadily increases by the day. The Academy is

eager to foster an anti-racist community, yet victims of racism continue to speak up anonymously on social media. The Academy is eager to show they denounce sexual misconduct, even as anonymous reports from sexual assault survivors trickle in by the day. The Academy is eager to look as though they foster inclusivity, yet inter-dorm relationships are banned. It's not condemnation if the only Academy emails sent to the school body are due to coercion by apprehensive students. It's not denouncement if sexual assault cases continue to increase. It's not “fixing a mistake” if there is nothing that's been changed. We continue to let the

Academy get away with hypocrisy. Students should not be the ones to call administration out. Yet, we must, for no one else will.

In November of last year, we celebrated Diwali with traditional Indian cuisine and decorations. It was only last week when I discovered that this entire celebration was hosted by the Sub-Continent Society, a student-led affinity group. The school continuously takes credit, as an administration, for the independent actions of its student body. The school claims to celebrate and foster diversity, but the administration does not go the required lengths to make this a truth. Is it really celebrating diversity

Leandra Sze/*The Exonian*

when the entirety of the administration-organized celebration of the Lunar New Year was the presence of chocolate coins and red banners in the dining halls? Are we truly celebrating diversity when we fail to commemorate any traditional Korean holidays, let alone acknowledge the March 1 Sam-Il Korean independence movement? Are we really celebrating diversity when the entire dining hall changes their menu to accommodate Passover, yet fail to even acknowledge the existence of Ramadan? It angers me that future students will continue to live under Exeter's web of lies. The root of these issues lie in plain sight.

Let us contextualize: on St. Patrick's day this year, Exeter changed their profile picture to one of a clover, which we all know is symbolic of the holiday. Though they quickly reverted back to the conventional big E, the fact that they had the idea to change their entire profile picture to celebrate and commemorate a predominately white holiday while failing to even acknowledge the existence of holidays celebrated by other non-white non-American groups is appalling.

A few weeks ago, at the student-led vigil, Exeter uploaded an image of the students sitting in solidarity of the eight killed in the horrific Atlanta shooting, in which they captioned, “The Exeter community gathered Monday night on the Academy Building lawn to remember the victims of the March 16 shootings in Atlanta and denounce hate and violence against Asians across the nation.” Nobody external to the Exeter community would be able to know this event was conceptualized, organized and run entirely by students. Why did they feel the need to omit that these actions were “student-led?” It's evident that the school's very own students are faster to condemn acts of bigotry than the organization itself. The students are more actionable than the Academy, who are present with the sole intention of helping us. The school will not acknowledge this.

This is only the beginning of the performative activism the school perpetuates. The school allowed five different cameramen to walk around during the eight minutes of silence, instead of having them pay respects. The institution prioritized the capturing of pictures of students grieving rather than grieving alongside them. On social

media, the school actively depicts an environment that's nearly perfect when on the screens. What happened to authenticity and genuine action? We as students cannot merely sit and watch. We are all oblivious to the truth. We are all victims of the Academy's umbrella of lies.

I wish to avoid the word brainwashing, but there is precisely no better word to use. When I was a recently-admitted eighth grader back in March, I was dazzled by the number of fascinating and diverse posts that were being shared on social media. I was delighted to attend a school which supposedly cared for their BIPOC students. But when June rolled around and the tragic death of George Floyd began to take the headlines of newspapers, I was distraught at the Academy's lack of response and condemnation. As a naive eighth grader, I let it slide. But even since then, there have been too many occasions where the Academy has failed to properly condemn racism. The Academy continues to show its roots as a proponent of white supremacy.

At this point, it is up to the students to revert this. The news I hear about schools all across the United States admit to damning things, all pertaining to racism and inadequate effort towards achieving true diversity. If we don't act now, it's going to be too late. What has happened cannot be reverted, but we can avert future consequences if we stand in use of our voice. Call the school out, email the administration, do whatever it takes. Let them know of their mistakes and errors. At an institution like Exeter, we have been given the ability to change our society, and it is our duty to use it wisely.

A Reflection on Quarantine

By ANVI BHATE '24

When your friend tells you they have COVID, it's hard to figure out what to say back. “Are you okay?” or “I'm so sorry” don't seem to say nearly enough. It's hard to hide the hundreds of emotions running through your mind reflected in your eyes. Fear for them and yourself, stress because you have no idea what's going to happen next, shock because it was out of the blue, and a bucketful of “why me?”s. It's hard to comfort them and keep your calm all at once. But what's even harder is figuring out how to react when a text from Dr. Lily tells you that you're going to have to quarantine alone in a metal box for 14 days.

I remember that windy Wednesday morning clearer than ever. First, the emergency phone call from “PHILIPS EXETER ACADEMY” that threw me off my chair. Then, the 50 calls with the nurses where I told them exactly how close of a contact I was, and figuring out if we would need to isolate. I remember pleading and hoping that I wouldn't have to go to the trailer, and the audible drop in my voice when the nurse finally called and told me to go to the health center as soon as possible with bags packed. Distressed, I sloppily stuffed all my clothes into a suitcase and zipped up another one with bathroom essentials and snacks. Making a ruckus as I dragged it hurriedly down three flights of stairs, I almost tripped while running to Lamont in

the pouring rain.

We each dropped off our luggage and took a COVID-19 test. As soon as we got the negative, they walked us over to a parking garage a block down from the edge of campus. Towards the back of the lot, surrounded by muddy ice, was a long, grey trailer, like those that you would take on a camping vacation in the mountains. The bent steel in the stairs creaked as I pulled my suitcases up to a corridor surrounded by iron walls and a door labelled with my name on a piece of torn paper. I opened the door to a slightly dark, almost closet-sized room with a small bed, a desk around a foot away, a tiny closet-like cabinet, and a sink with a bathroom attached. I thanked the nurses with the most joyful smile I could muster, and then slammed the door shut and yelled into my pillow at the top of my voice.

I laid down on the bed and stared at the ceiling, one I would stare at every night for the next two weeks. My legs shook from the strong winds outside, and I reached over to grab a rough blanket that felt more like cardboard than cloth. I turned to look at my photo wall for comfort, but then realized it wasn't there. Because I wasn't in my room. I was in a strange cell in a strange metal vehicle. Alone.

I couldn't leave my room. I couldn't see my friends. I couldn't go on runs. It all hit me at once, and I found myself crying. Tears kept sliding down one by one and I couldn't stop it. I called my

best friend back home and ranted to her at the top of my voice for over an hour, although I doubt she could even make out what I was saying between all the sniffing. I hated this place. How cramped the room was, how claustrophobic and musty it felt. I just wanted to go back.

That night, I barely left my room amidst all the wailing and whining. The nurses brought some dinner up to our rooms, and although I didn't eat, I tried to accept it and greeted them with a warmish smile. We went down to one of the check-in rooms later to do vitals and get our temperatures and blood pressure taken to make sure we didn't have the virus. Later, I took a warm shower and blasted music, thriving with my own personal bathroom. I shabbily finished up my homework for the night, and laid down in my bed for hours, trying desperately to fall asleep.

The days after that sort of blurred into one, because we had nearly the same schedule each day. Wake up, attend online classes (which were even worse now that most other people were in-person), eat lunch they deliver to your door, get vitals done, sleep, repeat. The highlight of my day was probably the hour-long walks, either through campus or to the field house and back. It was refreshing to be outside and feel the wind in my hair, and see human life other than the 20 people at the unit. Sometimes we got to exercise, and without being able to run, I took every opportunity I got. Other times, we would

see people hanging out in large groups and laughing with each other, and I could feel myself unable to resist the urge to go join the fun. I counted down the days till I was out, and I knew every day was closer, but it still wasn't exactly exciting that I had to spend over 300 more hours in that prison.

Eventually, I began to get used to it. It wasn't ideal, but the people that had COVID couldn't leave their room at all for two weeks, and I was grateful for every little thing I was able to do. Some of my closest friends were in the unit with me, and between midnight homework study sessions in the hallways, doing tarot card readings and trying to climb the electrical poles outside, we only got closer. I got to really know people that I had just vaguely known of before, and I became great friends with people I had never spoken to before. Turns out, 14 days of complete isolation with no human interaction but one another is a wonderful bonding experience.

Another thing I cherished about my time there was the unlimited supply of food we got from the kitchen and fridge. We had boxes and boxes of chewy granola bars, could ask for Capri Sun and ginger ale at demand, and had access to whatever fresh fruit we wanted. I lived off the chips and SkinnyPop Popcorn, and pretzels and hummus were my favorite thing to snack on while grinding homework. I specifically remember one day when my friend and I were feeling especially adventur-

ous, and we tried to have a picnic in the lot outside despite the furious winds. We took out a few blankets and tried to balance them with some hefty chairs stacked one on top of the other. We wanted to make it aesthetic, but all we could end up getting as food were two bags of popcorn, two ginger ales, and some milano cookies I had brought from my dorm. A few chairs flew off, so we experimented using soaked bags full of rocks, our computers, and our pillows. In the end, we had to chase the blankets as they blew away with a gigantic gust of wind, but it was a memorable experience nevertheless.

As the days went by, the trailer got more and more homely. I got used to hearing my friends' yell on the phone with their parents from the room beside me, or walking out in just my pajamas to steal a bunch of midnight snacks from the kitchen. I thoroughly enjoyed warming my hands to the bonfire outside while we gorged on some Stillwells and petrified each other with horror stories. The space between us and the rest of the students gave me some essential alone time, and I took care of myself and began to appreciate the little things: the way I woke up to the soft birds chirping every morning, the happiness in the voices of children outside my window as they giggled in a playground across the road and how considerate all my teachers were about my mental health. I began to look forward to the daily visits from the nurses asking how I was doing and their stories about their elementary-school kids and their amusing lives. It made

me realize how selfless they were and how much they were sacrificing for us, leaving their kids home alone, being in an enclosed box when they could have been watching a movie with their family. “It could have been much worse,” I reminded myself every day.

The last night was full of heavily mixed feelings. Obviously, I was ecstatic to finally be free and be able to see my other friends. But there were definitely things I was going to miss. The nurses, the friends, the food and the individual bathrooms. Quarantine had been only two weeks long, but it had affected me in a way I would never expect. It made me realize how grateful we should all be for every slight liberty we had, and made me realize how important it is for us to actually strictly follow COVID guidelines. Many times, we think the restrictions the Academy gives us are an exaggeration or that teachers are being too harsh on us for making us social distance, but in reality, it's all for our safety. Isolation might not have been the worst experience, but it certainly isn't a party either, and you might end up there when you least expect it. And trust me, that is not somewhere you want to be.

Quarantine was mentally taxing, lonely, and infuriating, but it was also an opportunity to make new friends and start to appreciate myself and the world around me. It was definitely a once-in-a-lifetime experience, and I bet I'll be talking about it to the end of my high school years. Sure, it might have been hell, but at least now I'll have stories to tell.

The Irony of Non Sibi

By HANNAH PARK '24

Non sibi, Latin for “not for oneself,” is a phrase Exonians are very familiar with. It’s inscribed with two other mottos on the Academy’s seal, and on the front page of the official website. About a week ago, the motto was mentioned on the Academy’s Instagram page in a post about the Exonian Student Service Organization (ESSO). Described as “the philosophy that wisdom gained here should be used for others as well as for oneself” on The Academy’s “Mission and Values” page, it’s used by faculty members by habit and is a motto that has been firmly established in students’ minds.

However, non sibi does not correlate with the Academy’s highly competitive and rigorous environment. Personal success is celebrated, and every aspect of the Academy is a breeding ground for jealousy as students strive to out-perform their dorm mates, teammates and classmates. Though some competitiveness is beneficial to self-growth, the tension between students and stress that is fostered from this unhealthy drive to rise above others will only take away from the focus that students need to improve themselves. Even simply

helping others takes away precious time from their busy days and only raises the bar that they must surpass to shine.

The Academy needs to back up their proudly long-held motto with real examples of non sibi. False examples, such as ESSO, is not enough: oftentimes, students attend ESSO clubs for another line they can write in their college applications. Personal goal defeats the non sibi element of the volunteer work. I am not asking for a new motto—that is unrealistic. I am simply asking for a change that will allow non sibi to become a sincere motto of the Academy.

“Harkness Warrior” is an expression that my friends and I learned the first week of prep fall. It describes a student who is very aggressive in discussions and doesn’t give others a chance to speak. Usually, a student who starts to become a Harkness Warrior stops when they notice the exasperated looks of their classmates or receives a note from their teacher kindly asking them to allow other students to speak. This was not the case as I neared the end of winter term. My friends and I would constantly complain about how our classes were filled with Harkness Warriors and how discussions felt more like wars. Students would

eagerly wait for a classmate to finish talking and jump in right after their last word, stealing the chances of those who were shy or simply slower in bringing up their point. Discussions would be fast-paced but long pauses would be common, especially after a certain point brought up by another student, as classmates would be less inclined to be as supportive of others. I have never seen or heard of teachers openly discussing this phenomenon within classes. Simply having a protocol that requires teachers to mention Harkness Warriors with the class at the start of every term in prep year would be enough to remind students that being aggressive in discussions does not equal a good grade.

The end of finals did not bring relief for most. There was now the awful waiting game of checking Outlook constantly for the email announcing that grades were out. On March 23, the email was sent. My friends and I immediately whipped out our phones and into LionLinks. Seeing my grade was a relief. I had done better than I had expected, and the first thing I wanted to do was tell everyone else. I’m ashamed to say that as others told me of their grades, I was happy to hear that they received a lower grade than me or immediately jealous

when I heard of those who did better. I noticed false enthusiasm and sympathy from others as well.

The heavy pressure of earning As and having an above-average GPA is a prime example of personal achievement. Grades will always be a part of academia and is a great motivator for students. However, it should not be a source of resentment against other students. There must be increased attention to the learning experience in classes as opposed to the grade. More emphasis on improvement rather than a “final” grading would be an effective step. This could be implemented by clear, simple expectations of what the teacher’s goal is in the class and multiple chances to retake assessments. The continuous use of rubrics is also helpful, as they allow students to receive a grade that they expect, and puts less pressure on waiting for them.

Grades are only a fraction of the stress that an Exonian experiences at their time at the Academy. Leadership roles are present in almost every aspect of the Academy, and there is a well-known understanding that leadership enhances college applications. During the past election process in choosing class representatives, I had multiple concerning conversations with candidates who confessed to me that they did not really want the responsibility of becoming

a lower rep. Though this may be obvious, representative candidates should hold a genuine desire to serve their class. To assure this, there should be rules that require them to follow-up on their campaigns or chances for the student body to re-elect a representative if they don’t seem to do their job properly.

Along with Student Council elections, there are chances to vote for dorm proctors, club co-heads, sport captains, and more. Track and Field elections for captains happened around a week ago. It was the rare occasion in that I could see many candidates becoming a genuine leader of the team. Still, my friends and I would be skeptical as upperclassmen would suddenly be more outgoing to the underclassmen. We become naturally doubtful of those who run for a leadership role as we all understand the label’s charm. The fact that it has been so normalized to believe that someone who runs for a leadership role has ulterior motives is a problem. “Winning” the title of a leader in any environment should only be one percent of the role. Similarly to my student council election proposal before, the leaders should be held accountable for who they represent and responsibility should be a large factor of their role.

On May 5, 2020, there was a post on the Academy’s website called “How

a non sibi network delivered 80,000 face masks.” It described how Exeter alum Lisa Cloitre and other fellow alumni delivered face masks to many hospitals in New York City. Though this is a great example of an act of selflessness, it doesn’t explain how Cloitre’s years at the Academy contributed to her generosity. It is not an example of non sibi on campus, but one years after an Exonian graduated from the Academy.

One may argue that the Harkness method allows students to learn to collaborate and build a non sibi mindset for the future. If so, why is “Harkness Warrior” such a common term? Only rarely do I see students with a genuine non sibi mindset—oftentimes, every extracurricular, collaboration, and work they do is for their own self-interest, and not with the intent of helping others.

I am not ignoring the fact that the Academy prepares us well for the real world. The average senior is comparably more wise and mentally stronger than the average prep. Exonians are oftentimes welcoming, and acceptance of others is highly valued. However, non sibi is not the correct descriptor of the current environment that the Academy holds. It is an admirable philosophy, and I hope to see changes that will allow it to become a more accurate mindset amongst Exonians.

A Letter to Incoming Students

By NICHOLAS ROSE '23

Dear Incoming Students,

I’m going to be completely honest with you. Having just been accepted into Exeter around this time last year, I had no idea what to think. On one hand, I was thrilled with the exciting opportunities laid out before me for the next three years, especially the academic rigor and potential clubs to join. But on the other hand, I was happy with my current life and hesitant to completely change it, especially amid a global pandemic.

I had attended the same school from first to tenth grade and had forged extremely close relationships with my community there. I hadn’t told anyone I applied

to Exeter; it was simply expected I would continue at my old school until graduation. Out of curiosity, I visited in the fall and quickly fell in love with the beautiful campus, the welcoming students and teachers, and the overall energetic sense of community that I witnessed.

However, I was terrified at the prospect of leaving all of my relationships back home while attempting to make friends in a completely virtual setting. I had avoided thinking about Exeter since applying in December, in order to avoid any accompanying stress. As my impending decisions stared me in the face, I opened the acceptance letter.

Despite my hesitation, I went for it. I embraced the change. When I broke the news to my people back

home, I felt guilty for leaving my friends and teachers with no warning, especially right before the start of my junior year.

The sadness and apprehension which occupied my spring and summer faded when I arrived on campus in October. I was soon swept up by everything going on, and I’ve thrown myself into every opportunity since. Academics, athletics, clubs, the arts. As I’ve deepened my pre-existing interests, I’ve also tried new things and discovered passions within myself I never knew existed.

However, transitioning was difficult. Making friends at the beginning of this year wasn’t easy. I remember feeling anxious and overwhelmed my first weekend on campus as I wondered who I would

spend time with. But now, in only March of my first year, I’ve made relationships with so many fascinating people in less than a year. I’ve been able to try my hand at the pottery wheel, ice skate for the first time in years and spend late nights jamming on my guitar in the music center with an impromptu band. These are opportunities which I didn’t even imagine I’d be able to experience.

I can vividly remember the first time I sat down for an in-person Harkness class. Although it was 8:00 p.m., after a long day of classes on a Monday, I was excited to finally experience the real thing. Even separated from my classmates by plexi-glass dividers, I could still feel a powerful sense of connection through our discussion of the novel *Homegoing*. With the

possibility of a fully in-person schedule in the future, I cannot wait to continue to build and experience this kind of atmosphere.

The academic rigor at Exeter is real. Very real. I’ve spent many nights stressing about the things I need to get done before next day or cramming in extra studying before a test. But since coming here, I’ve been able to manage my time better, allowing me to join new clubs and organizations. With the constant support of my teachers, I have learned much more than I ever could have imagined.

Looking back one whole year later, it’s hard to believe time has moved so quickly. I’m always surprised by the naivety of my past thoughts. How did I almost pass up the greatest opportunity afforded

to me so far?

Many of you are probably scared, just as I was. I want you to know that you don’t need to think twice about coming to Exeter. I’m sure you’ve heard it before, but Exeter is truly a magical place. I encourage you to take full advantage of this coming change and enter Exeter with an open mind. Branch out and explore other interests, discovering aspects of yourself which were previously hidden. If you give this school a chance, I promise it will revolutionize the way you see yourself and the outside world. Get excited for your arrival in September. I’m looking forward to meeting all of you in the fall!

Sincerely,
Nicholas Rose

Four bedroom house for rent in Exeter!

Located at the end of a cul de sac in a quiet, wooded neighborhood less than 3 miles from PEA campus.

- * Fully furnished, 2700+ sq. ft.
- * King, queen, double and twin beds
- * 2.5 baths
- * 2 car garage
- * Deck overlooks fenced in backyard
- * Dog friendly

Looking for long-term lease, but flexible for the right tenants. If interested, call or text Lee at 603-498-8536 or email leedyoung20@gmail.com.

Introducing “Dear Exeter”

By MAXINE PARK, EVAN GONZALEZ AND MANAN MENDIRATTA '22
The 143rd Opinions Editors

Dear Exeter,

We are very excited to introduce Dear Exeter, a series created by The Exonian's Opinion Editors and inspired by previous research conducted by Exeter's Sheth Participatory Action Research Collaborative (SPARC). In this weekly series, students from all backgrounds in our community will share personal reflections on how their com-

plex identities inform their experience at the Academy.

SPARC is a research consortium organized by the University of Pennsylvania's Graduate School of Education in collaboration with independent schools across the US, which seeks to inspire cultural and policy change through research-based student action. The past few years, the Exeter SPARC teams have chosen to study the presence, impact, and causes of the burden of representation at the Academy.

The burden of representation, as defined by the

2018-2019 SPARC team, “is a pressure one feels to represent a whole group simply because they share an identity.” Analysis of the 2018-2019 data reveals that the burden of representation, while it manifests differently across different disciplines, is a deeply-ingrained aspect of Exeter Harkness culture. The research suggests that this burden is not only a source of stress to students, but also forces students to feel the need to “cover” their identities, or “tone down a disfavored identity to fit into the mainstream.” This cultural issue was found to

be further exacerbated by the fact that “boundaries are porous between in-class and out-of-class spaces and relationships.”

Through Dear Exeter, we seek to address the cultural origins of the burden of representation outside the classroom. We believe that the burden of representation can only begin to diminish once our community acknowledges its raw, unfiltered reality. Critically, this acknowledgment must extend beyond the classroom with the recognition that our community is both academic and residential.

Each week, we will elevate student perspectives that will illuminate critical issues of identity at the Academy. They will share reflections on their identity and how this identity has affected and shaped their Exeter experience. Through their pieces, these writers seek to alleviate the burden of representation by speaking about it directly and indirectly, sharing their perspective and experiences to help the community become more proximate with different identities. As the research suggests, this proximity may help dismantle the cultural stereotypes outside of the classroom from which the burden of representation emerges in the classroom.

It is critical to recognize, however, that these students do not represent the groups of which they are a part. Each shared identity is colored by the unique experiences of each individual; this series seeks to shed light on this color by elevating individual experiences with the recognition that each identity is complex, multi-faceted and evolving.

We appreciate these students' courage to speak authentically and vulnerably about their identity and experiences. We hope their reflections will inspire introspection, curiosity and compassion. Ultimately, our community must learn to embrace its differences without allowing those differences to divide us.

Dear Exeter: The African Students' Association

By HANNAH HENRIS '22

Boujee. This was one of my first impressions of Exeter. Maybe it was the doormen. Maybe it was the fountains as we were walking through the building courtyard on the way to the entrance. Maybe it was the expensive carpets and old-fashioned elevator. My mother and I had travelled from our neighborhood Bronx train station to attend this reception for the recently admitted Exeter students in New York City. I was nervous. The other school trips I had attended were through the Prep for Prep program. The Prep staff always told us to always wear formal clothing, to watch what we said, when we said it, and what we did so as not to disappoint our families, our schools, and the Prep program. So I went with a skirt, stockings, and a purse. When we got there, the other parents had already crowded together, some eating from the cheese and cracker platter. My mother seemed to be the only one who didn't really speak English fluently and I was scared that she would be caught clueless in the crowd of parents or that I'd end up having to translate for her. Speaking to the students, most of whom were white, I realized that most came from Manhattan private schools and were confident in their ability to do well at Exeter.

As for me, I had first heard about boarding schools little more than a year before when my 7th grade home-room teacher had nominated

me for the Prep for Prep program. The program was meant to prepare New York's “top” middle school students of color but the admissions process was very elusive to me. I remember filling out a long online application, doing some IQ tests in a dark room, an interview, rounds of standardized testing and essays. Even then, I felt that the admissions process was unfair. The long application didn't consider the 7th graders who didn't have others to help them because no one else at home could speak English. The IQ tests didn't consider the kids whose intelligence wasn't captured well in the strange, timed tasks. The standardized testing and essays assumed a strong background in writing and math that some kids did not have access to.

However, in Prep for Prep, I was happy to be surrounded by students of color who wanted to go beyond the New York education system and go to boarding school. I tried hard in each class, to avoid the mandatory after-school detentions for those that didn't finish homework on time, and to avoid upsetting the staff who created an unhealthy and competitive environment among the students. But it was also not as diverse as I had expected. The Ghanaian Americans Prep had accepted were all like me. None of them spoke Twi fluently or completely associated with the culture. I briefly began to wonder why I saw so few Ghanaian Americans that acted like native

Ghanaians and spoke Twi. Especially after seeing other Ghanaian American students, who I knew were talented but less structured in their writing styles, get rejected from the program, I began wondering if Prep didn't think that Ghanaian Americans that wrote like Ghanaians and spoke like Ghanaians would be able to assimilate into the boarding school environment. In Prep for Prep, I began to think that at boarding school, I would have to suppress my identity to do well.

Contrary to what I had thought, I found a lot of classmates and teachers on Exeter's campus were willing to help me and learn about who I was. But at the Harkness table, it was harder for me not to notice the difference between my educational background and other's educational backgrounds. While I struggled with Exeter math, my classmates caught on to the math textbook almost immediately, even going back and forth with each other at the table. Especially since very few people looked like me on campus, I constantly felt responsible for maintaining a positive image of Black people in my classmates' minds. I began to lose confidence in my math background and had a harder time contributing in class, talking to my teachers outside of class, and performing well on tests. Each term, I felt like a burden on my math class and I didn't know who I could look to for help. I felt confused and frustrated that despite Exeter's long history

of accepting Prep for Prep students and inner city kids, the math curriculum ignored the needs of those students. I began to think of how I didn't really deserve to be at the table. That there were other black students who would do a better job with Exeter math classes. I began to think about how I represented myself outside of class, about how I didn't really fit into Black American or Ghanaian culture. I began to think about how unworthy I was to represent Ghanaians at Exeter. Besides feeling uncomfortable labelling myself as “Ghanaian,” I had never visited the country and I didn't act like a Ghanaian. And worst of all, I didn't even speak the Ghanaian language fluently. When I went home on break, I asked my mother about why I really only spoke English despite hearing Twi at home. She told me that it started when I entered elementary school. She clearly remembered the day I came home from school and told her that I wouldn't speak Twi at home again. At the time, none of my classmates spoke Twi and I didn't want to stand out. Looking back, I wondered about a couple of things: How could that have been prevented? What could I do now to maintain the language and culture?

Before Exeter, I never worried that I may not be able to pass on my ethnic language—Twi. In middle school, there were several other Ghanaian American kids, so I didn't feel pressured to represent Ghana. The student body was

only black and brown kids so I blended in. Even among the Ghanaian-American kids, there wasn't pressure to be more Ghanaian because we all knew the most any of us accessed Ghanaian culture was through our homes and our churches. Instead, I focused on school. I enjoyed English class more than any other class: I loved the assigned readings, the vocabulary quizzes, writing essays. I used all my free time to read the books at my local library. I felt more comfortable with English than Twi but I never questioned it.

Searching for a way to relearn the language, I turned to articles on bilingualism and language acquisition. However, these articles didn't really explain how kids that did grow up in bilingual households that weren't able to speak both languages perfectly could improve. It was assumed that all bilingual kids absorbed the home language well and were able to switch seamlessly between two languages. There was no talk about kids like the ones I knew in my middle school, at Prep, and even on Exeter's campus. Eventually, I stumbled upon an article on heritage language speakers that described my situation perfectly. Reading about that, I felt relieved that the understanding of bilingual or even first generation kids was expanding.

I started looking to create more spaces for African students on campus to learn more about our cultures, languages, and talk about our experienc-

es. At Exeter's African Student Association, I was able to find those spaces. As a group, our goal isn't to force ourselves to be perfect stereotypical Africans, but it is about getting rid of the stigma surrounding asking questions about our family's cultures and languages. It is about encouraging students to be proud of where their families are from. It's about taking the time to learn a couple of new phrases in our parent's languages and asking our parents difficult questions about how they grew up. It's about seeing where we relate to them and the culture, but also realizing when we choose to distance ourselves from it.

As for Exeter culture, as a prep coming into the school I would have appreciated having more African staff among the faculty to lessen the culture shock and help me understand my identity as a first generation African American. I would have also appreciated more advertising and recognition for Exeter's African Student Association on campus. If possible, incorporating more African languages into the language department and curriculum would allow African students to feel more represented and important in the school. Including more books and works of art from African writers and artists into the curriculum would help broaden the community's understanding of Africans in America and abroad. In addition, many students would learn a lot from hearing African professionals speak at assembly.

BOONE'S THAI KITCHEN

AVAILABLE FOR DELIVERY AT TAKEOUTGUYS.COM

AVAILABLE FOR TAKEOUT AT BOONESTHAIKITCHEN.COM

www.boonesthaikitchen.com T 603.734.4466

Humor

The Fire Alarm

By BLAKE SIMPSON

Deep in the punishing Wisconsin winter, I'm at the end of my wits (see Wisconsin) waiting for some sign that warmth will soon return. I, an only child, not more than one-and-a-half years of age, anxiously await a younger brother, but for now I am in Wisconsin. I violently hack up both lungs like an old man who's just drank coffee without blowing on it. I search the living room for some small source of entertainment, and like a climber who climbs, I begin to climb. I swing from couch to unbelievably crusty coffee table to a proposition; the silent pleading of a red handle. Before I know what I'm doing, my stubby fin-

Each time I shift one of my blocks in a vain effort to make fun with fingers no longer than my patience, a piece of me dies, like an old man who's just drank coffee without blowing on it. I search the living room for some small source of entertainment, and like a climber who climbs, I begin to climb. I swing from couch to unbelievably crusty coffee table to a proposition; the silent pleading of a red handle. Before I know what I'm doing, my stubby fin-

gers have grasped the plastic bar, and when my mind catches up, I pull.

My grumbling cohabitants seem to be angrier than I, but frankly, the cold isn't that bad unless you're an old man in nothing more than a bathrobe and the one-and-a-half-year old who forced you out here is right in your sight-line. I shoot the old man a look, inviting him to find out what would happen if he came over. After quite the wait (as if the fire department has anything else to do!), a fire truck arrives and the faceless oxygen tanks dispels any fear that for once there might be heat. We proceed back into the apartment, but we're being followed. Through our door walks a man from the fire department, which I quickly deduced from the big white letters on his shirt that spelled "FIRE," though I did make the risky assumption that he, himself, was not the flame. He sat me down.

"Kid, I know what it's like."

"Like hell you know what

it's like!" I fire back.

"Don't tell me what I don't know! I've seen horrors you could never imagine."

"I know all too well the horror of never seeing anything, I know it better than you know yourself!"

"You can't pull a fire alarm if there's no fire," the fireman says, grim and defeated.

"I'm aware," I reply, swirling a cigarette in my left hand. "The novelty's worn off anyway, but what would I know about repetition?"

"Hey, you're a little young for smoking, aren't you?"

"With any luck it'll make me stronger before it kills me."

He puts a yellow cage over the fire alarm, smoke billowing from what's left of my Marlboro as I glare longingly into the window pane, into a night so dark I can imagine whatever I please. I place a neighborhood just outside, with lights dim enough that I can fit them in my head, and Christmas decorations rotting from the spirit's flight. I take one last drag and wait for something better to come to mind.

x. [ELECTIVE]

If you haven't taken [ELECTIVE], you're seriously missing out. [ELECTIVE] will open your eyes and change your life, and if it doesn't I will forever bathe in the dense heat of shame as I am naught but a LIAR, naught but a FOOL, naughty but a FRAUD IN ALL SENSES OF THE WORD.*

0. English

Who doesn't love English class? There's English! There's class! What's not to like? Prose, poetry, chalk, and much much more await on the wait, this can't be right. OLS must be wrong. No this is right. Dear God-fifth floor of Phillips Hall!

*Disclaimer: The author of this article has not taken [ELECTIVE].

Top 5 Subjects (In No Particular Order)

By BLAKE SIMPSON

5. [SCIENCE]

Ah [SCIENCE] we can all agree that [SCIENCE] is easily one of the best subjects, what with the equations and concepts (those darned concepts!). [CONCEPT] really caught me off guard at first, but I think the challenge made the experience that much richer.

4. [LANGUAGE]

[LANGUAGE] is hands-down one of this editor's favorite subjects. Some say that [LANGUAGE] is owed credit for all modern romance languages and that it's NOT dead and that it is

NOT a useless class that pretentious people take to act better than everyone else.

3. Math

If you had told me in kindergarten that one day math would have more letters than numbers, and that sometimes those letters would be Greek, and that most of those letters mean nothing, but the Greek letters mean very specific things, and that you absolutely CANNOT use those letters to mean anything other than the things they mean, I would have been in utter shock and disbelief. Unfortunately, no one told me until now. I am in utter shock and disbelief.

TFW you're in Bancroft microwaving ramen at 1 a.m. and the fire alarm starts beeping



Strange Things I've Seen Seniors do This Week

By JACK ARCHER

1. Pace their rooms until a small indent traces the border of their room.
2. Get wasted (in Grand Theft Auto).
3. Become religious.
4. Increase their intake of caffeine by mixing Monster energy and Diet Pepsi.
5. Actually do homework (to take their mind off other things).
6. Respect underclassmen.
7. Think about the future.
8. Care.



My One Direction Love

By CHIEKO IMAMURA

Dear Niall,

My first love. My star crossed love. My rock. My love for you is "Better than words/More than a feeling/Crazy in love/Dancing on the ceiling" kind of love." Your boyish grin and silly faces swept me off my metaphorical feet at just 10 years old while watching Youtube edits of fan interviews. But just as fast as I fell for you, I was picking up the pieces of my shattered heart on that fateful day in 2015 when you announced your band

break-up.

Why didn't you tell me? I know that Harry and I were spending a lot of time together, but I promise that my love for you had never faltered.

Distance has only made the heart grow fonder. When you released "This Town" after two years of silence and your album Flicker right after, I fell once again. But this time it was different. The relationship felt one sided and superficial.

And then Heartbreak Weather came out. I ask you the same question I get asked when I wear your sweater around

campus. Are you the heartbreaker or the heartbroken? If I am the heartbroken, does that make you the heartbreaker? Are you both?

You say that all of your life has been heartbreak weather. You think to yourself that it won't get better. I will tell you. It gets better.

Your Supporter Always,

Shmieko Shmimamura (cousin of Chieko Imamura of Dinosaur fame)

P.S. I'm so into the radio pop. Keep it up!

Uppers after getting assigned their 333 proposal and four major assignments when it's only week three



Senior Participates in Electronic Detox, has No Idea if he got into College

By JACK ARCHER

Senior Ivy Schmivy has no idea whether he got into any college. Not because he hasn't heard back from any, but because he hasn't checked.

What seems like extreme ambivalence from the outside is actually the result of a long hiatus from technology of any sort. Sometime last year, Schmivy found herself in a very dark place.

"I couldn't see anything," Schmivy said in an exclusive interview with the Humor section. "Literally. My power went out for like a day last year and it was pitch black."

However, at this dark point in his life, he found a brilliant light within.

"A few days prior to the outage, I actually swallowed a 100-watt flashlight, so during the blackout I made myself throw it up. Somehow the batteries in it still worked," Schmivy said. "Oh, and also I realized I cared too much about what other people think of me and decided to change that, but that was kind of a side thing to be honest. The biggest epiphany was remembering that I had swallowed a flashlight."

When the lights in his home flickered on a few

hours later, Schmivy began to act upon his revelations. "The first thing I did was swallow the flashlight again," Schmivy reminisced, cherishing a significant turning point in his surprisingly long life, given the fact that he'd once had a flashlight in his stomach for a week. "Secondly, I also stuffed all my electronics down my throat so I'd stop obsessively browsing social media and caring so much about my image."

Albeit with an eccentric method, Schmivy seemed to have made a change for the better. He noticed his mood improving as well as his self-esteem. He felt like he had more time. He started reading real books again. "Starting to read again was the craziest part," hereflected. "I had no idea that I could still read."

However, disaster struck ot long later. As colleges began to release decisions to their early applicants, the hopeful Senior realized he needed the internet back. "I was dying to know whether I was going to college or not," Schmivy said. "So I set out to retrieve my stuff."

He tried everything to get his electronics out of his stomach, but sadly a 13" laptop is a little harder to regurgitate than a laptop. "I

was about to try swallowing a member of the IT department to see if they could get my laptop out, but then I remembered a warning as old as time: The Old Lady Who Swallowed a Fly," Schmivy said. Schmivy recalled an old nursery rhyme about an old lady who swallowed a fly, and considered it a warning of bad things to come if he tried to solve a problem caused by swallowing things by swallowing more things.

"So instead, I just... stopped caring," Schmivy said. "I left my electronics in my stomach and went about my life. Sometimes my phone buzzes and gives me a tummyache, but for the most part, it's been great!"

As other seniors fretted and stressed about college admissions and SAT scores, Schmivy just lived. He had no idea whether he'd been accepted or rejected anywhere, and he might never know. "I feel...at peace," Schmivy said with a smile.

Schmivy's friends, jealous of his recent enlightenment, demanded what he would do in the fall. Schmivy merely smiled at them. "Go to any college I want," Schmivy said. "What are they gonna do, decline? I'll literally just swallow them."

Sports

Girls' Varsity Lacrosse Demolishes The Hill School *12-3 Win in Big Red's First Game in 388 Days*



Girls Varsity Lacrosse defeats The Hill School 12-3.

Ethan-Judd Barthelemy/*The Exonian*

By MICHAEL YANG

Last Saturday, the girls' varsity lacrosse team went head-to-head against the Hill School. At the conclusion of the game, Big Red won a triumphant 12 to 3. The game marked the first interscholastic game for Big Red in 388 days, and 673 days since the girls' varsity lacrosse team last stepped onto the field.

Senior co-captain Marymegan Wright discussed her experience with the game. "This team works so hard, plays

so well together, and always brings an amazing attitude to practices and games. Between the amount of people who came to our game, all the work our team has been putting in, and the opportunity to finally play after losing last season, we couldn't have asked for a better game."

Lower Sami Smith remarked on the energy at the game. "The lacrosse game looked like any other game except for the masks and the immense amount of energy from not only the team but the fans."

Head coach Christina Breen added to Sami's words about the thrill of being back on the field. "It was a beautiful afternoon, with many fellow student athletes in the stands to support GVLAX. It was a glorious day!"

During the game, "we worked well as a team in transition and our speed definitely helped with our attack. Our defense was solid and had really strong communication that shut out the hill for most of the game," senior Savita Keidel said.

Senior Margaret Nor-

sworthy-Edghill added, "Our team's speed, quickness, stick skills, and overall athleticism were on full display. We're certainly a team full of talent, but the work we put in during the fall, winter preseason, and first week of practice were evident in the way that we truly played as a team no matter the combination of players on the field."

Senior teammate Molly Theobald added to the enthusiasm of her teammates, "I am currently injured so I cannot play,

but you could just see from the sidelines that everyone was locked in and focused!"

Lower Emilie Dubiel remarked on the first interscholastic game in over a year at Exeter. "It was really exciting to have the first interscholastic game in over a year. Everyone was super excited, and it was amazing that all the hard work we have been putting in during the offseason and practices could pay off."

Wright exclaimed, "It was super exciting! I think honestly we were less concerned with being the first game back and more excited to have any chance to play at all!"

Norsworthy-Edghill added, "It was incredibly special and definitely contributed to a sense of team pride and unity as well as excitement among ourselves and the campus, which undoubtedly led to the size of the crowd we saw on Saturday. I can't fully express how proud I am of how each member of our team continued with their dedication and diligence in training starting from the beginning of spring break last year, and seeing all of that pay off was so vindicating as well as inspiring for the rest of the season."

Theobald praised Breen's dedication and leadership. "Coach did a great job of making sure

that everyone played and I think that it was a great first game that helped boost our team's confidence."

The practices leading up to the game included "lots of fitness and skill work as we work to find out mojo together," according to Breen.

"We spent time on defensive movement drills to help the defense practice their directive communication, slides, and double teams," Keidel added.

Norsworthy-Edghill noted the high team morale both before and after the win. "Our practices in and out of season have remained the same in terms of intensity, communication, and expectations," she said. "We're a team that puts a huge emphasis on playing and working hard as well as on team comradery as evidenced by the buddy system implemented throughout both the off-season and spring, our weekly fire pits that are still running, and the high likelihood that at any given moment you might see a girl's lacrosse player doing wall-ball in or next to the field house."

Breen described coaching the team as a joy. "This is an incredibly hard working and connected group of players. Each day is a gift to me!"

Athletes of the Week: Boys' Varsity Tennis



Boys Varsity Tennis Captains Tony Xiao '21, Jacob Feigenberg '21 and James Manderlink '21 pose for a photo.

Teja Vankireddy/*The Exonian*

By MICHAEL YANG

Boys' tennis, like many other teams this spring, is back and ready for interscholastic games and matches. The vision for a competitive season started early this fall with off-season practices making up for the time lost last spring. This year, the team is led by senior captains Jacob Feigenberg, James Manderlink and Tony Xiao and head coach Will Abisalih.

Xiao started playing the

sport at a young age. "I started playing tennis in elementary school. At the most basic level, at first tennis was just about hitting a ball and trying to get it in, but as I got better, it became so much more than that."

Feigenberg was introduced to the sport by his mother. "I was introduced to tennis around 10 years ago by my mom. She was playing at the time and signed me up for my first lesson and that was that. 10 years later and I'm still playing and loving the game more

than ever."

Feigenberg continued about his passion for tennis. "Sports and competition have always been a really big part of my life. Ever since I can remember I've played as a part of a team whether it was soccer, baseball, squash or tennis. One of the reasons I have stuck with tennis so long is it's variability. It's a sport anyone can play at anytime in their life and I think that's special."

Xiao reflected on what the sport is about specific to

his experiences. "Tennis is about grit, footwork, skills, athleticism, strategy, and teamwork (when you're playing a doubles match), and all of a sudden it was very hard work, and during every practice I would sweat like crazy," he said. "There are so many variations in the game, so many creative shots that I can make, and that makes each match very exciting and very unique. There is also a simple pleasure in just running around the court chasing after a ball, trying to outsmart your

opponent. All of this made me continue playing tennis ever since."

Feigenberg talked about his experience playing with the team at Exeter. "While going to boarding school such as Exeter, the ability to continue playing a sport outside of school is pretty difficult. It has definitely been something that has confined me to playing in season or over the summer, but some of my favorite memories come from my time here over the last few years."

Xiao added to Feigenberg's words about playing with the school team. "Exeter is the place where I played in a team for the first time, and I absolutely loved it. As I mentioned before, some of my closest friends are on the tennis team. I think there is a very natural, very genuine bond that forms when people play tennis together, and that connection is something that I greatly value out of my experience in Exeter tennis."