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Exeter, New Hampshire



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Exonians Share Street Harassment Experiences; Town Relations Examined



An Exonian visits the Water Street Bookstore.

Joy Chi/ *The Exonian*

By ANVI BHATE, RISHI GURUDEVAN, SELIM KIM, and ANDREW YUAN

Content Warning: Harassment of students of color.

To many Exonians, downtown Exeter is a staple location to spend time with friends in its various shops and restaurants. To others, however, downtown is a dangerous place, where the simple fact of identity can provoke an attack on one's personhood. This is the case for many Black, Indigenous, and People of Color, including both faculty and students.

Office of Multicultural Affairs (OMA) Proctor and upper Lydia Osei explained

why she never goes into town alone: "I would like to preface all my comments by saying that I have never—and I mean never—gone into town alone. I have always gone with a friend for the sake of my own safety, and the farthest off campus I have walked by myself was a two minute walk to The Green Bean where I was meeting with others," Osei said. "My experience crossing the streets is always nerve-wracking, considering I have almost been run over a few times, but I always make sure to wait until cars stop for me."

Osei continued, "Although usually the townspeople have been pretty nice to me, there have been a few instances that have made going into town uncomfortable," she

TOWN, 3

Academy Reflects on Front Street Commons Construction

By EMI LEVINE, SOPHIE MA, MAX MANTTEL, and ANDREW YUAN

Jackhammers and beeping vehicles pierce the silent morning on Front Street. Students sleep soundly in their beds as workers get started on the day's construction. Soon, the "Front Street Commons" will be finished, presenting a new way to organize and structure residential life at the Academy. Students and faculty alike are filled with apprehension over the new dorm as it's completion draws near.

The current plans for the Commons includes 60 beds, five faculty apartments, a 2500 sq. ft. common area that would include a game room and kitchen, a day student recreational area, and four Harkness classrooms—an entirely new multipurpose space for the Academy.

The Commons also has an environmental focus; it plans to incorporate geo-thermal walls, a wood frame that reduces carbon usage, and to optimize natural light.

Initially, The Commons will serve as temporary housing for students and faculty while their regular dorms undergo renovations. Langdell members will move into it for the 2022-23 academic year, and Merrill members for 2023-24 while the two dorms are renovated and rebuilt.

Director of Facilities Management Mark Leighton explained the reason for combining the residential and academic aspects of Exeter into one place: "The campus master planning completed in 2021 identified that the health education department needed additional space and specifically a fourth classroom," Leighton said.

Leighton was also hopeful that the Academy might see similar projects underway in the future. "Our focus continues to be on our comprehensive renewal plan and projects identified in the campus master plan. Each project will be slightly different and will be appropriate for that area of campus," he said.

Some students still feel that disruptiveness might come with having classrooms in the same building as your room. Lower Akubah Ndubah echoed that sentiment. "I hope the Harkness classrooms aren't on the same floor as any rooms. [If so,] that would be okay. But if the common room is on the same floor as the classroom, that's also weird. It's nice to have that divide between school and home. And if you enter your dorm and it's a school building, you don't really get that divide."

Some students are looking forward to how the new residential combinations will work. "I can't really imagine what that would be like, but I just really hope that it can still offer the traditional dorm experience," lower Mav Murray said. "I hope there can still be spaces for only dorm students and I hope that the students and faculty who are in the dorm can distance themselves from other students. I think it would be really fun if I ever got to have a class in the classrooms though, because the ability of being able to go from my room to my classroom seems very convenient," they added.

Leighton assured students that the dorm will guarantee the privacy of residents while allowing ample space for study and social engagement. "The dorm spaces and the academic spaces are completely sep-

COMMONS, 2

Concerto Competition Winners Announced

By ASHLEY JIANG, ANNA KIM, CJ SMITH, and SOPHIA TURNER

On Sunday Feb. 6, eleven student soloists—seniors Oscar Page, Sava Thurber, and Alana Reale, uppers Minseo Kim, Jesalina Phan, Hannah Rubin, and Isabella Vesely, as well as lowers Aden Lee, William Lu, Cee McClave, and Jane Park—performed a dazzling array of pieces and displayed their meticulous preparation and virtuosity.

After a brief deliberation of the panel of three outside judges from the New England Conservatory—Gabriela Diaz, Joshua Gordon, and Randall Hodgkinson, Rubin, who enticed the audience with her first movement Allegretto of Ravel's Piano Concerto in G Major, was announced the winner of the 2022 Concerto Competition.

McClave and Park also received honorable mentions for their performances.

Instructor of Music Rohan Smith shared the importance of this competition. "Compared to playing by yourself, for example sonatas and shorter pieces, a concerto is the largest scale performing opportunity that an instrumentalist will often ever have. And the concerto repertoire across the several hundred years that concertos have been written and are still being written is tremendously ambitious musically."

The Concerto Competition has two rounds—the preliminary and the final live performance. "The preliminary round is a screening of the contestants to be sure that they are ready for the exposure of the competition. It's just to be sure that they have got the piece to the level where they can perform and do them-

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NEWS-IN-BRIEF

Kaminski Sentencing Friday

Content Warning: This article involves references to sexual assault and misconduct. If helpful, please seek confidential help at RAINN, the National Sexual Assault Hotline, at +1 (800) 656-4673 or HAVEN 24/7 Hotline at +1 (603) 994-SAFE (7233).

According to *The Portsmouth Herald*, former PEA Mathematics Instructor Szeszney "Jerzy" Kaminski will follow a fully negotiated plea deal to plead guilty to three counts of Class A felonious sexual assault and one count of Class A misdemeanor sexual assault at his sentencing hearing at Rockingham County Superior Court tomorrow, on February 11, 2022. As a result of the plea deal, three other charges will be dismissed. This includes one charge added to the six that the Exeter Police Department initially issued on

August 25, 2020.

After originally being unable to agree upon a settlement, Kaminski's attorneys negotiated the plea deal with the case's prosecutors in November, 2021. Kaminski will receive a 12 to 30 year sentence on two counts of aggravated felonious assault, a 10 to 20 year suspended sentence on the third count of felonious assault, and a concurrent 12-month sentence for the misdemeanor count. As part of the plea deal, Kaminski will also complete the sexual offender training and is barred from contact with persons under 19 years old in school, teaching, and supervising environments.

On the evening of Tuesday, February 8, Dean of Students Russell Weatherspoon shared with students resources available at the Academy for students to

process the results of the sentencing on February 11.

According to the *Herald* article, Kaminski is now the 12th faculty member of the Academy to be publicly identified for sexual misconduct. The Academy had opened the first investigation into Kaminski's relationship with an anonymous student in 2016. The investigation was closed after the student denied all allegations and the student's parents expressed a desire not to have the concerns investigated. Kaminski's employment was not terminated later in 2016, when he violated warnings issued by two unnamed Deans. In March of 2020, the investigation was re-launched after the student's attorney reached out to the Exeter Police Department, and Kaminski was terminated in April, 2020.

Campus Enjoys Winter Activity Offerings



Students skate on the opened ice rink.

Joy Chi/ *The Exonian*

By BEEKE FOCK, LAUREN KIM, SELIM KIM, and EMILIA KNIEST-EDT

After two weeks of quarantine and online classes, the Academy has finally begun to offer in-person student ac-

tivities on campus again. Taking advantage of the chilly weather, many of these activities are winter-themed, including recreational skating nights and indoor game nights in the Goel Theater and Dance Center. These activities were welcomed

by students and faculty alike, especially after social-distancing guidelines were relaxed.

On February 8, Director of Student Activities Joanne Lembo announced that "clubs wishing to

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Winter Activities Cont.



Students play the board game Clue in the lobby of Goel Center for Theater and Dance

Joy Chi/The Exonian

meet in person no longer need specific permission to do so." Clubs may only meet during the same assigned time slot as those in the fall term, and all participants must be masked and stay socially distanced (3 feet apart). If a club is meeting outside of the Academy Center, GOEL, or the Gym Complex, where there is no building monitor, an adviser or other PEA adult must be present. Permission to attend in-person events may be granted by the Student Activities Office.

Some of the on-campus activities offered include "Games in Goel," "Film in the Forum," "Paint in Grainger," and recreational skating. The indoor activities are mainly

on weekends, however recreational ice-skating has been opened on other weekday afternoons as well. Along with these activities, Office of Multicultural Affairs (OMA) clubs hosted a skating night on Jan. 21. However, COVID-19 restrictions remain in place on-campus, causing the highly-anticipated Winter Formal dance to be canceled, announced Jan. 22 via email by Assistant Director of Student Activities Kelly McGahie.

Students have been enjoying the mix of both indoor and outdoor activities. Lower Asena Gursel said, "Games in Goel are my favorite activity because you just get to slow down and spend time with your friends. It feels like a

very normal environment, which we are not getting much of right now."

Lower Solei Silva-Carin agreed, saying, "I usually attend the activities that you can do more with your friends, such as the Games in Goel or Paint in Grainger, but I also don't go to many just because there's either a lot of people there or I just want to do something else."

Senior and Korean Society co-head Allison Kim reflected on the OMA skating event, which Korean Society helped organize: "Skating was just something that the co-heads thought would be fun. Since Korean Society meets only during dinner time, it's been pretty hard for us to meet in-person during COVID-19 restric-

tions. So we thought that would be a fun way for our club members to actually see each other in-person."

In spite of outdoor activities, many students have found that the freezing January weather keeps them socializing indoors. "I prefer to hang out with my friends in EPAC instead. I also wish they brought back indoor skating because it gets so chilly outside, or the D'2 coffee they had at the beginning of the year," lower Avery Selig said.

Students have had mixed reactions in response to the cancellation of Winter Formal. "I came in last year as a prep and I haven't attended any dances at all in my time here. It's also frustrat-

ing that other events are being prioritized over it. It's just sad that after this year, I'm going to be an upper without having really been to a high school dance," Gursel said.

Lower William Simpson empathized with students who were devastated by the WinFo news. "My immediate feeling on the Winter Formal cancellation is that I'm mildly disappointed. It wasn't a huge hit to me, but I definitely feel for the people who were looking for a fun social night, an excuse to dress up, and have some sort of high school normalcy," he said.

Some students expected the cancellation. "I kind of already knew that this would happen, so I wasn't really disappointed...I was excited because all of my experience here at Exeter has surrounded COVID, but...I just hope to see more activities where students can really just have fun and let loose because I feel like a lot of the time, Exeter can be very stressful with the lack of range of activities or capacity limits," Silvia-Carin said.

Though the possibility of a formal dance in the spring cannot be confirmed, McGahie is hopeful that other opportunities for a dance may arise. "If the pandemic response team feels like we're at a place where we can gather, and it may end up needing to be outside, the Recreation Committee, the Executive Board and I have committed to working together. We will do what we can," McGahie said.

McGahie said. "I'm open to whatever kind of dance it would be, but it has to be something that takes into account what the COVID conditions are at that moment. We don't want to have a dance where students cannot be near each other, and we don't want to throw caution to the wind when it's not justified and inadvertently spread COVID."

Despite the cancellation of the winter formal, students remain hopeful for more in-person activities later in the year. "There are events with my clubs that I'm hoping will still go through like the Exeter Association of Rock assembly for the end of winter term. And, there's this GSA (Gender and Sexuality Alliance) dinner that we do that we're hoping to have in spring term. Then, obviously since I'm a senior, I really hope prom will come too," Kim said.

McGahie hopes to resume more in-person activities soon as pandemic guidelines loosen, with students and faculty apprehensive to begin socializing again. "My thoughts are that as soon as we can do it safely, we need to do it...I'm hopeful that while we're sort of in this newish stage of the pandemic...we're able to kind of create more spaces. I just think that the best remedy for being stressed out and depressed and anxious and overwhelmed is to hang out with your friends...it makes Exeter a much more pleasant place to be," McGahie said.

Front Street Commons Cont.

arate and students will not have the ability to go back and forth between the two spaces," Leighton said.

Students also questioned the viability of Front Street Commons' location and whether it would be beneficial to its purpose. Some students felt it would not help what the dorm is trying to accomplish. "I think that's kind of a trek to get there," said lower Merrillite Jenna Wang. "It's just far away from most stuff, except for the music building, the science building, and the health center. If they start holding classes there it might become a more central part of the campus, but as of now, it seems a bit secluded."

When asked if she would want to move into Front Street Commons, Wang replied, "I would rather live in my current dorm. I think I like the idea that my dorm is just a dorm and there's nothing else to it; that there aren't a lot of people going in and out of it."

Prep and fellow Merrill member Advika Verma felt very similarly about the location of the Commons: "I think in terms of a common space, the location will definitely hurt what the dorm is trying to achieve because it's kind of far. One of the best things about being in Merrill is its location. People are always hanging out like in the Weth quad and putting it behind the music building might make some kids not even go there just because it's really far," Verma said.

"There wasn't an option to expand the department in Lamont Health & Wellness Center so as the design of the new dorm developed,

we were able to allocate an ideal space in the lower level that will accommodate their program needs and have a strong connection to the Health Center and Phelps Science Center," Leighton said, explaining the reason for the location.

Some students, on the contrary, felt optimistic about the distance of Front Street Commons from the center of campus. Prep Ben Soriano noted the benefits of Front Street's location. "I don't look out my window and see people walking by all the time, so that's something that I think would make Front Street Commons really strong as a dorm, but I think as a classroom, it would be a little bit lacking because it's gonna take a long time to walk all the way there," he said.

Many Merrill residents, who will move into The Commons in the 2023-2024 academic year, felt apprehensive or unsure about the combination of classrooms and dorm rooms. Upper Ale Murat talked about some discomfort she had with the two. "I don't know. I'm fine with it because I saw the plans and I know that people won't be able to go through the dormitory part. I just don't like the idea of people coming to the dorm when people are possibly changing or showering," Murat said.

Verma also talked about the loss of comfort and familiarity that comes with the Merrill dorm renovations. "I definitely prefer the hominess of Merrill to the new industrial look of the dorms," Verma said. "I [also] think the idea of knowing that there are classrooms, com-

mon areas, or literally anybody from the school right underneath me is really off putting. Your dorm is where you live and you want to feel the most comfortable there and having a bunch of random people going in and out of the same building doesn't seem like it would be the most comfortable."

Some students expressed interest in moving to the new dorms. "I think I would be okay moving in," said Ndubah. "Because it's a newer dorm and that means new facilities. But I love Merrill."

Manager of Sustainability and Natural Resources Warren Biggins detailed his involvement with the Front Street Commons planning process. "I've been involved with this project from the very beginning. In the planning phase, I was able to give my input on the architectural teams that were being considered for the project, and during the design process I advocated for the project to follow green building practices and incorporate energy efficient building systems," Biggins said.

"One feature I'm really excited about is the use of geothermal heat pumps to provide heating and cooling to much of the building. We've used geothermal systems in the Goel Center, Downer Family Fitness Center, Phillips Hall, and a few of our faculty houses, and it's great to add another building to that list," Biggins continued. "Geothermal systems are exceptionally efficient!"

Environmental club co-heads expressed similar excitement about the use of energy-efficient installations in the new dormitory. "I know



Front Street Commons under construction.

Courtesy of PEA Instagram

that the plan is for the dorm's heating and cooling systems to be powered using geothermal energy, which is great! Other than that, I've struggled to find information on sustainability goals for the dorm," lower and co-head of Sunrise Exeter Cee McClave said. "Overall I'm optimistic about the dorm's impact on residential life and the move towards campus-wide sustainability, but we can't get complacent and not also work to upgrade existing spaces."

Senior Emily Wang, another co-head of Sunrise, also hopes that the Academy will continue renovating existing dorms to be more environmentally friendly. "I think [the new dorm] is an important step, but I also think the solution is not building one new green dorm. I hope the Academy renovates all the older dorms, especially the heaters... I read about this on the website... that the intention of Front Street Commons is to move people in

and out of dorms while they continue renovating the old dorms. That would be really great."

Students also seemed excited about the measures implemented to make the new dorm more sustainable. Lower and member of the Environmental Action Committee (EAC) Sonia Soloviova expressed admiration for the design choices. "I believe that ensuring larger windows and their optimal location for abundant natural daylight is a great step to decreasing electricity usage. As someone who struggles with light access and constantly has to rely on the lamps, I was really excited to see these issues being taken care of."

"If there's a garden implemented in the [new dorm], some form of agriculture production, hydroponics, or any source of plants would be great. I would really enjoy using natural materials in the construction. I think it's important that if

we're gonna live in a house, it can be as natural as possible. That means replacing plastic and petroleum based substances," fellow EAC member and lower Will Weber added. "I hope the Academy will salvage things from the unused dorms for the new dorm."

Although students have mixed reactions to moving out of their beloved dorms, the construction of the Front Street Commons marks exciting new beginnings for the Academy's commitment to environmental sustainability. Nevertheless, there remains work to be done on existing dorms and other parts of campus; becoming an environmentally-friendly school does not end at Front Street Commons, but it is a step in the right direction. "As a Dunbar resident," said Soloviova, "I am ready to give away the status of 'the best dorm on campus' if the Front Street Commons will fulfill our expectations."

Concerto Competition Cont.



Performers stand together after the competition.

Joy Chi / *The Exonian*

selves proud,” Smith said. “This year, the screening round brought forward 11 very capable performers who were very well qualified to participate.”

Smith also explained the process of selecting judges for this competition. “We reached out to professional musicians who are established and distinguished performers in their field, and we try to ensure a balanced selection of representatives of the different instrumental groups that are performing in the competition,” Smith said.

Contestants shared their reasons for participating. “It’s a great opportunity to put myself out there, really get myself out of my comfort zone, it’s a good way for me to put some external pressure on myself and That kind of pressure of the competition brings out my best work,” Lu said.

“It’s fun to have a healthy competition with other folks, especially [when] it’s a competition

within the school, because I know all the other competitors, and we are all [somewhat] close, so it can be fun to see who ends up on top,” Thurber said.

Rubin planned to participate in the competition even before attending Exeter. “When I was in 8th grade applying to Exeter, I came to watch the Concerto Competition, in Feb. 2019, and I was really amazed and inspired because I had never seen people only a couple years older, playing such beautiful and difficult repertoire,” Rubin said. “So I promised myself then that if I came to Exeter, I would perform in the Concerto Competition.”

McClave agreed. “It’s an opportunity to perform and therefore to learn and grow as a musician. It’s also a great way to get feedback from musicians who aren’t your teachers!” McClave said.

Contestants also addressed the mental obstacles that accompany the

prestigious competition. “The most challenging part of performing, for me, is knowing that I have one chance,” Thurber said. “It can be really frustrating knowing that you put in so much work, and [the piece] didn’t come out the way that you had hoped.”

“[It can be tough] knowing that people are critiquing you actively, and oftentimes the critiques are really good and really helpful, which is why I like competing, but it’s important to know to put them in context,” Thurber continued.

Park agreed. “[The competition] was hard at times cause I felt the pressure and I don’t really perform well under pressure,” she said. “[But] it’ll be fun to play with an orchestra [eventually], especially with my friends.”

“When we think about competition, we think about toxicity sometimes, but ... music is a lot about self improvement, it’s not

about comparison,” Lu added. “[The competition] is a great venue for ‘kiddos’ who are passionate about music to share that passion.”

Rubin expanded on her goals for the competition: “It’s not really about winning. It’s just about having a better relationship with the music that you play in and with the composer and with yourself. And at first that was hard to accept, but I think now I’m content with where I am,” Rubin said.

Preparing for the competition is a long and painstaking process, which involves more than simply playing the piece. Page outlined his preparation process for the competition. “I’ve been working on my performance piece for a couple of months now with help from my teacher in private lessons. I generally try to practice for an hour or two every day and I’ve recently been focusing on refining some of the more

difficult passages and memorizing the music.”

“I started working on my concerto at the beginning of the term. I listened to recordings, practiced with a metronome, all the usual methods for getting familiar with a piece. Once I was comfortable with the notes and rhythms my teacher and I focused on making my playing as expressive as possible,” McClave added.

Other contestants expressed similar sentiments: “It’s a lot of work practicing slowly by yourself, making sure you know every note and thinking very critically about the interpretation, the phrasing, and the sound quality,” Thurber said.

“It’s very important that you know how to perform—not just that you know the notes, but your stage presence—and how to interact with the audience,” Thurber continued. “In my practice, I try to simulate what it’s like to perform, [so] I play through a piece, from start to finish without stopping, which is what I’ll do in a concert.”

Members of the audience were wowed at the artistry of the performers. Prep Henry Xue attended the concert. He said, “Knowing all of the performers put their heart into these pieces, it was amazing to see all the musicians show out,” he continued. “Jane’s performance was out of this world beautiful and Hannah’s touch on the piano was incredibly elegant. As a musician myself, I found inspiration from the performances.”

Prep Catherine Chen explained her reaction to the concert. “I think it was the most exciting concert I’ve gone to yet at the school. And I’ve gone to almost every single one.”

Smith reflected on the competition. “I feel so heartened by the dedication and enthusiasm of these students who are just so

daring and committed to playing music. There was a quite famous quote by the composer Bela Bartok who said that competitions are for horses, not artists. Judging musical performance is a very subjective thing, because it involves so many things that are artistic considerations and can’t be measured,” Smith said. “So, we are looking at the whole person and how they bring their musical and emotional selves to performing on their instruments. I just love hearing the amazing possibility and potential that comes out when we hear these performers.”

The Concerto competition illustrated the extent of passion and dedication students have for music at Exeter. On February 6, Hannah Rubin ’23 was announced as the winner of the competition, with Cee McClave ’24 and Jane Park ’24 as runners up. Ruben described her thoughts and experience of her performance during the competition, “I was trying to get into the music as much as possible and enjoy it. I guess I have a tendency sometimes to overthink things while I’m performing, but I think it’s getting better with each performance. And I think especially towards the end, I was able to enjoy it and I had a lot of fun overall.” She further noted her surprise when she found out she had won stating, “I was happy with my performance and I didn’t really have any expectations, so I was happy that I had won, but I was also really, really surprised.” The winner of the concerto competition gets to play accompanied by the orchestra in a performance in the spring term. Ruben attributed her excitement for this opportunity to “I guess it’s just being part of something larger than yourself. That seems really exciting to me.”

COVID Restrictions Loosened; Students Respond

By ANVI BHATE, ELLIE ANA SPERANTSAS, CATHERINE WU, and LIANNA YANG

After the initial week and a half of serious restrictions, the Academy has gradually loosened these policies to allow community members to spectate at sports games, permit indoor dining, and start in-person classes and Learning Center opportunities. Dean of Students Russell Weatherpoon announced the return of intradorm visitations, followed by the return of interdorm visitations during the week of Jan 25. Additionally, according to a Feb. 4 email, students and faculty are permitted to be unmasked in their dorms, and may eat in common rooms.

However, even with these loosened restrictions, there are still shortened hours and room capacity limits on many areas on campus, including the Goel Center for Theater and Dance, the Athletic Facilities, and the Elizabeth Phillips Academy Center (EPAC)—affecting athletes, day students, dancers, and actors especially. Furthermore, although Elm Street and Wetherell Dining Halls are now open to eat indoors, the ban on eating inside restaurants in town remains.

Many boarding students expressed their thoughts regarding the newly permitted intradorm visitations. “It’s nice to be able to visit your friends’ rooms more because it’s freezing cold

outside. And I think because there aren’t that many new positive cases it should be fine in terms of safety,” upper Vibha Udayakumar said.

“I think that it is acceptable because we haven’t been getting a lot of new positive cases lately, and it’s good to socialize considering that we have had virtual classes for a while,” prep Leonardo Chung said.

Students discussed their experiences with in-person dining as well. “In-person dining is nice because it’s cold outside. It was hard to hang out with people before when you couldn’t eat inside, but now you can spend more time with friends,” Udayakumar shared.

Prep Sarah Huang shared some difficulties around her dinner schedule before and after in-person dining was permitted: “Eating in-person at the dining halls has been good because [before,] after my H format class, it was hard to walk back to Amen just to eat dinner, and then go to orchestra rehearsal right after.”

Chung offered suggestions for restrictions in buildings across campus. “We should be able to eat in EPAC because we are allowed indoor dining. And we should be allowed to have more than two people sitting at that Harkness table in the Music Building, because how are four people allowed to surround a small table [in the dining hall], and yet this isn’t allowed?”

The return to school during the peak of the Omicron COVID-19 variant has restricted day student usage of EPAC, with many expressing concerns regarding the inconveniences in opening hours of buildings on campus. “As a day student who takes the morning Amtrak from Dover to Exeter and reaches campus at around 6:47 [a.m.], EPAC not being open then was very inconvenient,” Lower Advay Nomula said. “This meant that I would have to just walk around in the cold until DHall opened at 7:00, and then, because I couldn’t just stay inside due to grab and go, wait outside until 7:30 when the library opened.”

“However, with some communication, [Day Student Coordinator] Mrs. Reyes got EPAC to open a little early just for us train commuters, so that was a big lifesaver. There were many complications to work around but that’s the price to pay if you’re a day student,” Nomula continued.

Lower Jack Hutchins shared similar difficulties regarding EPAC’s opening hours. “The building opening at 7:30 [a.m.] on Saturdays could be a bit of a problem if you got to campus early and didn’t have somewhere to drop off your stuff.”

During the first two weeks back from winter break, day students were required to work in their library carrels, as EPAC and many other buildings were

closed or restricted. “Working in carrels is definitely a lot more productive than in DSL [Day Student Lounge], however, [not much has changed]. In fall term, when I wanted to have a really productive work session, I would just go to the ground floor of the library and work,” Normula added.

“Working carrels are a great spot to get work done, but it’s not so much for socializing like EPAC,” Hutchins said.

For day students who are also athletes like Nomula, commuting to campus on weekends for required sports practices has been difficult. “I had to go to campus for in-person sports practices as well, so not coming to campus wasn’t really an option. I also couldn’t make trains in the middle of the day because of my parents’ work and inconvenient timings,” Nomula said.

Other athletes also commented on their experiences during sports with COVID-19 restrictions. “During [swim] meets, we are required to wear masks on the pool deck. After we finish swimming and have to put on a mask, it’s hard to breathe especially after a race, and the mask is always wet and uncomfortable,” Huang said.

Lower and track athlete Tenley Nelson shared similar experiences with masks during races, as well as a decreased number of meets due to the pandemic. “We’ve had at least two meets canceled due to

COVID-19 cases, [on either] our [part] or that of the visiting teams,” Nelson said. “We haven’t had a whole-team away meet yet.”

Another track athlete, prep Kayla Hyett, agreed. Hyett elaborated on the effect so few meets had on their season. “The lack of practices and meets has made it difficult for us to continue improving our speeds and skills,” Hyett said. “This has also caused many of us to have our first meet halfway through the season, but we all were very excited to finally race.”

Students have also noticed changes in sports spectatorship, even with the loosened protocols. “We had a swim meet on Wednesday, and there were some people, but the audience size was a lot less than usual,” Huang noted.

“I think in-person audiences for sports games is a nice next step, because without an audience, sports games don’t have that same amount of spirit,” Udayakumar said.

Besides athletics and the arts, COVID-19 restrictions have also affected other extracurricular activities and canceled competitions for many teams that have put months towards preparation. “The biggest effects on us have been having to hold Zoom meetings, as well as not being able to attend conferences,” senior and Model United Nations (MUN) co-head Lekha Masoudi said. Two conferences at Harvard and Boston Universi-

ties have been canceled as a result of COVID-19 restrictions, a fact which has been challenging for many MUN members.

“I understand why the admin wouldn’t let us attend due to them being in a major city as well as the overnight aspect, and potentially tricky contact tracing,” Masoudi added. “However, I do feel like we could have been told a little more in advance. Because of how late we were told and the way conference registration works, we didn’t have the time to potentially sign up for a later conference this term, like late February.”

Many students feel similarly about the restrictions against events they have put so much time and effort into, and while restrictions are loosening, the first couple weeks of January were very tough for a variety of reasons.

Athletes and artists alike hope to see an increase in the number of performances or competitions they are able to host and attend, and student leaders and club coheads are looking forward to the return of more in-person activities as the term goes on. “We hope to meet in person very soon!” Masoudi said.

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Read about senior Kiese Nanor's journey into music and the classical languages, 5.

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Senior of the Week: Kiese Nanor



Senior Kiese Nanor smiles from the music building staircase.

By **ASHLEY JIANG, LAUREN KIM, and ELLIE ANA SPERANTSAS**

Whether in the Latin study, the Bowld, or her dorm Wheelwright Hall, four-year senior Kiese Nanor is a shining beacon of joy and curiosity. “Kiese exemplifies that quality all Exonians have to some degree, which is a passion for what they do, a joy in sharing it with others, and an interest in learning about what her peers find interesting and important,” Chair of the Classics Department Matthew Hartnett said. “Many a time I have seen her engaged in animated, joyful conversation with peers in Wheelwright or the halls of the Academy Building.”

Stepping onto campus as a prep, Nanor began studying Latin with Instructor Nick Unger and soon fell in love with the language. “Mr. Unger was my first Latin teacher at Exeter. He’s the person who made me love Latin as much as I do. I know I can turn to him and it’s just nice to have a support system like that in a subject that I really think is one of my favorite things in the world,” she said.

As a senior, some of Nanor’s favorite classes at the Academy are advanced Latin classes, where students translate various forms of ancient Roman literature. “[One of] my two favorites so far was [LAT521: Virgil-Intensive], which covered the second and some of the fourth book of Virgil’s Aeneid,” Nanor said. “I really like the Aeneid. I just like the way that the story was told and the way things

sort of fit together. I thought that it revealed a lot of cultural nuances that lie in language.”

Unger described Nanor’s skill in the classics. “Last year in my Virgil class, Kiese’s fellow students wrote on the board in bold letters, ‘Kiese has superpowers!’” Unger said. “She can accurately translate Vergil, recognize the Homeric allusions in the text, and explore the complicated nature of Aeneas’s heroism—all in a single bound!”

Unger continued, “Her classmates admire her because they see her contributions not as grandstanding but as generosity. As a colleague of mine put it, she has the patience to listen to others fully and to speak frankly but with a uniquely congenial tone of respect.”

Nanor came to Exeter ready to explore the benefits of Harkness. “I liked the idea that at Exeter, with Harkness, you could sort of just state your opinion and you didn’t have to wait to be heard. I thought that was something that would really help me in terms of my education,” Nanor said.

Nanor has left her mark on the Exeter community both in the classroom and in Kirtland Society. “She will leave a big shadow. I expect that students in coming years will miss her kindness and humor the most,” Hartnett said. “Kiese is one of those people who brings out the best in others, and I imagine that she has inspired others to follow her lead and try to fill that role after she graduates.”

While she will be sorely missed after grad-

uation, Unger is excited to see Nanor’s impact in the future of Classics. “Kiese is constantly using her classical knowledge to illuminate her own life and the lives of others in meaningful ways. When I hear about UVM and other colleges eliminating their Classics programs, I despair, until I think about the ‘superpowers’ of Kiese,” Unger said. “She has already accomplished so much here at Exeter, and I can only imagine how far she will go to make Classics relevant for the new generation.”

Senior Avery Lavine described Nanor’s admirable scholarliness. “She’s just an absolutely remarkable person. She’s fantastic at everything she does. I’m always in awe of the way that she thinks about problems, about English or about History. She just has such a strong way of processing things that you can tell that she’s always putting effort in,” Lavine said.

Senior and co-chair of Kirtland society Cyrus Braden agreed about Kiese’s work ethic and command of Classical language. “She has this control over the Kirtland, which I’ve never seen anyone else have where, when she starts talking, everyone else gets quiet. Everyone else listens to what she has to say because people respect her, especially in the classics community at Exeter. People know that she has this strong command of the class. And so she receives the reverence that she deserves from that.”

“We always joke that she’s the crown jewel of the Classics Department.

I think without her, many of those communities about disciplines sort of, wouldn’t be the same without her leading them and carrying the torch,” Braden continued.

Beyond Latin, Nanor is also an avid actor in DRAMAT productions. “I joined DRAMAT my prep year and I’ve been doing the musical and the plays. That’s something sort of newer that I didn’t necessarily think I’d be into, but I found to really enjoy,” Nanor said.

Demonstrating great aptitude in the performance arts, Nanor is a member of the Chamber Orchestra and a skilled pianist. She has performed in Carnegie Hall and at last year’s student soloist exhibition. “I’ve been lucky enough to see her perform twice this year which is really awesome. She’s very good at piano, and she often spends large chunks of time on the weekends, practicing piano, and it’s always such a gift to be able to hear her play,” senior Kira Ferdyn said.

Not only has Nanor’s powerful mind left an impression on her friends, instructors, and acquaintances, but so has her kindness. As a fellow Wheelwright Hall proctor, Ferdyn attributes Nanor to being a “strong figure in the dorm and our friendship circle. Kiese is a really welcoming presence, and she is also a fantastic listener. She is just so good at including other people into the communities she’s a part of and getting people to try new things.”

Over their four-year friendship, senior and fellow proctor Coco Lipe described Nanor’s qual-

ity of witty humor and making her friends laugh. “She’s very good at delivering humor with a lot of intelligence and wit, and she’s very good at coming up with one-liners on the spot,” Lipe said. “She’s just incredible with her words, which is a strength that is very unique to her. I’ve never met anyone else who is so well-versed.”

In her dorm, Wheelwright Hall, Nanor is a strong leader and proctor. Over her years at the Academy Nanor has formed close bonds and made memories with her dormmates. “When I was a prep and a lower, I used to stay up pretty much every weekend and watch ‘Barbie’ movies with my best friends, which was really nice. I feel like we should bring that back. It was a good tradition and we had a lot of inside jokes from that time, which I really enjoyed.”

Lipe also fondly recalled the tradition. “Kiese, Avery, and I regularly watched our way through the ‘Barbie’ movie series which was kind of an iconic staple of our relationship,” Lipe said. “We bonded over bullying the elephant from ‘Barbie Island Princess,’ which was, I think, very valid of us.”

Twice featured on the @exetershlumped Instagram, a page which posts humorous photos of Exonians asleep, Nanor often finds herself in vivid and bizarre dreamscapes. “In upper year, I was on my Instagram explore page which had Latin memes. I saw the first line of one of Catallus’s most famous poems...right before I fell asleep, because I was exhausted,” Nanor

Joy Chi / *The Exonian*

said, prefacing the story.

“In my dream, I pieced together the rest of the poem. It’s not that impressive because it’s only a two line poem, but it’s still like, ‘Whoa, I pieced together a Latin poem in my sleep and then I translated it in my sleep.’ Then when I woke up, I still had full recollection of the poem and of the translation. I was able to write it on the board and be like, ‘Oh my gosh. I’m like the modern day Catullus. I was born to take the classics.’”

Lavine shared a similar occasion in their math class. “One time we were confused over a math question together, and we decided to take a break. The next morning, she texted me and said she had solved the math problem in her dream!”

Nanor has an important piece of advice for current students, which she received during her prep year. “At Exeter, it becomes really easy to be swept up in the whole rhythm of things like classes, clubs, trying to fit in meal times, and doing homework on top of all that,” Nanor said. “I feel like it’s so easy to just push yourself to the side, and it’s not just necessarily your [physical] well-being. It’s also your emotional well-being.”

“I feel like checking in with yourself is something that has been really helpful for me, and I think there’s value in that for everyone. This time in our lives is really just the time to get to know yourself,” Nanor said.

Faculty of the Week: Khalid Madhi



History Instructor Khalid Madhi, as dapper as ever.

By ANVIBHATE, SELIM KIM, and CHENGYUE ZHANG

On a late Friday night, Dr. Khalid Madhi sits at a table in the Merrill common room. In the center of the room are a group of “Merrillites” laughing as they watch a movie. Another group of students huddle near the front of his table, checking-in with Madhi as he asks them about their day. One more student takes a seat next to Madhi, pulling up their history essay for some of his invaluable feedback.

“Whenever he’s on duty night, we sometimes show movies in the common room and he sits through countless Twilight movies. We like to say he is The Twilight Saga’s number one fan because he sits through them during the night when we watch them together,” senior Sophie Fernandez said.

Hailing from Morocco, Madhi is an instructor in history who was appointed to the Academy at the beginning of this year. Before Exeter, Madhi taught at Western Reserve Academy, a boarding school located in northeast Ohio. There,

Madhi spearheaded many new initiatives, such as a new course on globalization and media as well as an elective for upperclassmen named Comparative and Urban Politics. Madhi also occasionally taught French. “Sometimes the numbers go up, and they need an extra teacher or volunteers. I always volunteered to teach because I love teaching and learning languages,” Madhi explained.

After six years of Western Reserve Academy being a home for Madhi and his family, an open position at Exeter was hard to turn down. One aspect that drew Madhi to teach at Exeter was its transparent acknowledgment of its history and its commitment to being an anti-racist institution. “I wanted to seek a position with an institution that’s already on board with questions of diversity, race, and that would still be a good place for me to evolve but also contribute,” Madhi said.

These values that drew Madhi to Exeter, are also reflected in Madhi’s clear passion for social sciences. Over the years, Madhi has taught

numerous courses of a wide variety surrounding the social and political courses, but the one that got him hooked was a religion course at a school in Chicago.

“I was invited to teach a course on Islamic tradition at a Jesuit university in Chicago,” Madhi said, explaining his first ever religion course. “At a Jesuit school, it’s required that every student take some training and some courses that have to do with religion.”

Madhi first came to the U.S. majoring in economics, but he changed his area of study to political science. “I thought I would be a successful economist or a banker, [but] it didn’t take long for me to say no, that’s not what I necessarily wanted to do,” Madhi reflected. “In my new environment, as an immigrant, as an international student, and as a minority, those questions of wealth production and wealth distribution were not the most pressing questions in my mind, and I wanted to move to understand my new social and political context more.”

Later, he came across

gender and women’s studies and urban studies. “I dealt with questions of gender that revolve around political economy. In other words, the ways in which capitalism and colonialism subjugates others—women, people of color, and other minorities— and does so in comparable, but not identical ways. So I found those questions of inquiry much more interesting to me than studying diplomacy and international economics,” Madhi said.

Now that Madhi has been at Exeter for nearly two terms, he most enjoys the independent thinking process that Harkness provokes in its students. “I really enjoyed the fact that students are not so much in need of a lecture or a teacher to show them how much they know. I remember a colleague who interviewed me said, ‘[Exeter students] are not really interested in how much you know. If you’re the type that wants to come to class, have your PowerPoints, and lecture, it may not be really appreciated. Our students want to take ownership,’” Madhi said. “There isn’t one source of knowledge and everybody else is a recipient of that

knowledge... I just appreciate this sort of a communal construction of knowledge... [and] the trust that’s given to students in this process.”

When Madhi is at the Harkness table, he implements the aspects he admires most about Harkness in his classroom. Prep Advika Verma said, “He’s really good at having the students lead the conversation. I know he assigned students to lead conversations...but at the end of class, he was also really good at tying everything together, basically summarizing something, or adding on to stuff that we may have missed.”

Madhi also believes it is unavoidable that people bring in their “experiences, upbringings, social, and political experiences” into the classroom. “As scholars or as teachers, we are not just researching something from afar and not affected by it. It’s a social world, not a lab, and we’re part of this social world,” Madhi said.

“I realized it was best for me to say, ‘Here are my biases. Here’s what I bring with me to the study of Africa, for instance,’” Madhi said. “Because I am from Africa, but I’m from a part that was deemed by the colonialist to be ‘European-ish, or white passing,’ my relationship with the continent is also fraught with all kinds of complexities and all kinds of contradictions.”

Madhi continued, “Hopefully [people’s personal experiences] will allow for a deeper understanding between the students and faculty... [and] a deeper understanding to students of the subject matter they’re attempting to study...What we do or teach are values from somewhere [and] not just simply facts. We determine some of it based on our varied and diverse positionalities.”

Upper Griffin Tierny’s experience with Madhi reflected Madhi’s teaching philosophy. “I’ve enjoyed having him as a teacher... Most of the teachers [teaching U.S. History] are primarily white Americans, so [Dr. Madhi] offers a perspective that cannot be duplicated,” Tierny said.

Besides providing insights and unique perspectives in class, Madhi is also

an understanding teacher. “He’s good at understanding the students’ perspective, and he really puts their needs first,” Verma said. “As an advisor, [when] I was having [problems with] my roommate... he would come talk to me about it and be logical, telling me that my feelings were valid. As a teacher, whenever we needed any extensions, he would give it to us.”

“Over the years he has understood students more on what they wanna do.” Madhi’s daughter, lower KENZA Madhi said. “I always find him asking me ‘would you be annoyed if your teacher assigned this’ or ‘do you think that people would be interested in this activity.’ So I feel like he tries to make things interesting for students.”

English Instructor Sahar Ullah noted that Madhi’s kindness has been especially welcoming. “Dr. Madhi and his family kindly invited me to the Muslim faculty affinity group to have a meal with them before classes began. Their kindness and hospitality was uplifting and a wonderful reminder of the possibilities of community again after so much isolation during the pandemic,” Ullah said.

Fernandez is an advisee of Madhi, and to her, Madhi is “probably one of the most supportive faculty” she’s ever met. “He really cares about the students and wants to make sure that they’re okay, and that they feel supported in every way possible,” Fernandez said.

“One time, I forgot to get dinner, and since he was really close to our dorm, he said I could just go over to his house. His wife then made me a peanut butter and jelly sandwich,” Fernandez said.

Outside of the classroom, Madhi enjoys reading, traveling, and biking. He also likes to engage in “random arts projects.”

“I really liked pottery, and ceramics. I wish I could just go back to it without disruptions. I also like Arabic calligraphy... It teaches me patience and to enjoy the process as opposed to rushing to a final thing,” Madhi said.

GSA Perseveres through Pandemic

By BEEKE FOCK, SOPHIE MA, and LEO ZHANG

The pandemic has resulted in a redefinition of what it means to be in a community. Because of this, COVID-19 has greatly impacted affinity groups, one being the Gender and Sexuality Alliance.

With in-person meetings being limited, many affinity clubs have turned to virtual spaces amidst restrictions. Gender and Sexuality Alliance advisor Alex Myers explained some of the options members had. “I think similar to other groups we have tried to offer remote options, like a Discord channel, drop-in hours, and a wider range of interactions than the traditional ‘club meeting,’” Myers said.

Advisor Paul Langford elaborated on the effectiveness of the group’s online meetings. “Virtual meetings may not be as conducive to serious discussions and building

connections, especially for new members of the group, but they do allow for gatherings that provide a relaxing break for those in need of it.”

With the lingering pandemic, virtual meetings often take precedence over in-person ones. This can pose issues, especially for affinity groups where in-person interaction can be greatly beneficial in fostering safe and comfortable spaces. Langford spoke on this, stating, “The opportunity to meet and speak with other queer students in a confidential setting is very important to many, so the various forms of distancing and remote, rather than in person connections may, for some, increase feelings of isolation.”

Senior and co-head Allison Kim agreed, noting that virtual settings can greatly impact the topics of the discussions. “One more negative aspect of having to go online is that it’s a bit hard-

er to have more serious or nuanced discussions through zoom. It’s harder to feel the discussion dynamic and stuff like that. I feel like we’ve had to just stay sort of light-hearted with our meetings when we’re online,” Kim said.

Speaking on the ways COVID has disproportionately impacted LGBTQ+ students, Kim explained, “[During a pandemic,] staying at home can be an added stressor [for LGBTQ+ students]. The term last year in the winter when we were at home was probably hard for people who are not out to their families.”

“At home, people often can’t be as free with their gender expression as they might be able to on campus,” Kim continued. “Because we’re more limited to our specific dorm communities [during COVID], it can be harder to connect with other queer students at Exeter,” Kim continued.

While COVID restric-

tions have hindered club meetings, GSA is still trying to host in-person events. “We really think in-person meetings are important, and it is hard to find time and space to do that within campus restrictions. We’ve managed a couple and have plans for outdoor events, like a skating party,” Myers said.

“Thankfully, we’ve been able to meet in-person most of the time because we’re not too big of a group.” Kim added, “It’s been pretty good overall.”

Some students felt that the pandemic had elements that positively impacted GSA. “The online element of the pandemic is actually something that I think could be helpful,” lower Clara Peng noted. “You can change your name, add pronouns, turn off your camera, or do pretty much whatever you need to do to feel comfortable, instead of leaving the comfort of your room

and putting yourself out there as queer.” Peng explained that COVID itself gives time for students to self-reflect, which leads to gender and sexuality discovery.

“We started using our group chats more actively too,” Kim said. “I think we’re able to keep about the same level of activity and members throughout the pandemic. Another thing with Zoom and having to meet in smaller groups is that we’ve put more focus into [specific] affinity groups. In Zoom, you can do breakout rooms and have multiple affinity groups running at once. Those affinity groups bring in a different audience than the full group meeting sometimes.”

“Ms. Lembo and the co-heads are always here if [students] need help,” continued Kim.

“We try to make sure that people are comfortable reaching out, either in the meeting, after the meetings, or through

email and group chat.”

Despite the hindrance the pandemic has caused, GSA remains a safe space that supports students. Peng continued on the benefits GSA creates. “Even though the pandemic as a whole has been really isolating, spaces like GSA are super helpful in making me feel less alone. When I came out to my mom I actually ended up asking someone from GSA for help and advice. It is in general just comforting to know that you’re not alone in your experiences and to see that there are people that support you.”

Students Reflect on “Exeter Compliments”

By EMILIA KNIESTEDT, EMILY LEVINE, CATHERINE WU, and LIANNA YANG

Every day, the Exeter Compliments Instagram page uploads posts from students’ anonymous submissions with the aim of bringing the Academy community together through the kindness of its members.

The account, @exeter_compliments, was created in 2020. Since then, it has amassed over 800 followers and nearly 6,000 posts. An anonymous Google Form linked on the account page allows people to submit compliments, general advice, questions, and more for posting.

The Exeter Compliments administrators explained the purpose of creating the page. “The single goal of the account was to, while not taking away from other issues, bring more positivity to the Exeter community,” they said. “We had also just finished our first

term of online school, and since a continuation of online school was likely, we had a secondary goal of connecting students together.”

The administrators believe they have made progress in achieving these objectives. McClave added, “We’ve seen tremendous growth in this account since the beginning,” they said. “We’ve shared thousands of compliments and, in terms of Instagram metrics, we’ve grown to consistently reach over 1,500 unique Instagram accounts and approximately half a million impressions on users every month.”

In addition to numbers, the administrators see Exeter Compliments affect on people in the community. “Because Exeter Compliments is fully fueled by students, and sometimes faculty submitted compliments, we think that this account has mainly affected the campus by bringing in-

attention and awareness to complimenting,” they said. “From what we have observed, the rise in compliments has also highlighted the impact small moments of positivity can have on others.”

While the account has brought positivity to the campus, it has faced some challenges. On Dec. 31, 2021, the administrators released a letter to the community outlining some of the difficulties the page experienced as well as addressing complaints.

A main problem for the account was mistakenly posting negative submissions. The letter explained the filtering and posting process of the account, noting that a computer program flags any explicitly material sent through the form, and both administrators read every submission. The letter concluded with the creators promising to do better on their part.

Students had mixed opinions regarding

the account. “I feel like it has integrated itself into Exeter culture very nicely. It’s very consistent,” senior Emma Lyle said. “I think it’s a way to both spread positivity and sometimes have a laugh because we all know it’s no longer just compliments being posted to the account.”

Senior Lekha Masoudi had similar thoughts. “I think it definitely spreads positivity across campus,” she said. “You can compliment not only an individual person, like your friend, but also the service workers, teachers, and health staff.”

“The account is interesting to look at. It can be funny sometimes, and other times the posts are more serious and heartwarming,” upper Vibha Udayakumar said.

However, not all students felt the same way about the account solely spreading positivity.

“I think it’s bullying in disguise,” lower Gunn Sukhum said. “Only 30

percent of the posts are genuine. I’ve been mentioned on the page, but only by my friends, and I think realistically no one is going to go out of their way to compliment others they don’t know on the Instagram page.”

Prep Sarah Huang agreed. “I think it’s just a bunch of kids submitting compliments about their friends. I don’t think any of the compliments are genuine. Some of the posts are boring because they are all submitted by the same friend group about the same people.”

Upper Max Chuang interpreted the account’s several critical posts as opportunities for healthy debate. “I really don’t mind anything that goes on on the account. Even the posts that are a little mean, or a little edgy, at least there’s always meaningful discourse going on.”

Nonetheless, the positive seems to outweigh the negative for Chuang. “Recently there have

been a lot of good posts about not just the students, but also the faculty, and people in general being grateful for those on campus. I do feel like it is spreading positivity,” he said.

Sukhum offered a suggestion on how to make the account sincere. “I think the compliments should be more filtered, and they should post fewer so it actually highlights the genuine compliments that make peoples’ days.”

Even with the discourse about how authentic the posts on Exeter Compliments are, the administrators remind everyone what is at the heart of the account. “We hear the small moments of positivity caused by our platform on campus. Even if one post brings one smile to one student, we’re happy to have played a part.”

TV Show Review: *Euphoria*

By KATE ROSE ‘24

The show *Euphoria* follows a group of students as they navigate high school amidst the dramas of teenage life. The storyline follows a 17-year-old girl named Rue Bennett and her peers Nate, Jules, Maddy, Cassie, McKay, and Kat.

Each character faces a slew of personal and social dilemmas throughout the show. Rue is a recovering addict recently returning from rehab. Jules Vaughn is a trans woman new to the neighborhood and looking to find lasting friendships. Maddy Perez and Nate Jacobs are a couple in a toxic relationship that seems to be on its last legs. Cassie Howard is the “pretty and popular” girl, who struggles with being objectified and used by the men at Euphoria High. Kat Hernandez is a quiet girl looking to find con-

fidence and self-love. Chris McKay is an aspiring football star trying to get off the bench. Other supporting characters such as Lexie, Cal, Fezco, and others help shape the show into the hit it is today.

I find *Euphoria* riveting. The plot’s constant twists and turns have me hooked, and the suspense in each episode makes it hard to press pause. Watching each character work through their personal dilemmas and attempt to find fulfillment is captivating. The complexity of each character was truly amazing, and I love how the show dives into each character’s background.

Euphoria’s soundtrack is perfect for the slightly mysterious and dark vibe of the show, yet perfectly represents the youthful vibe as well. The music is one of my favorite parts of *Euphoria*, with the var-

ious sounds and genres making each scene special. Some of my favorite songs from the show are “Mount Everest” by Labrinth, “Right Down the Line” by Gerry Rafferty, and “Formula,” also by Labrinth.

However, though *Euphoria* is intended to be representative of the high school experience, I find that at times the show can be extremely unrealistic. The sheer amount of sexual encounters between characters is not natural. There is also a lot of focus on these events, which is not such an important aspect of high school. There has been great controversy over these scenes, with several of the *Euphoria* actors and actresses, such as Sydney Sweeney, playing Cassie Howard, speaking up and requesting fewer sexual scenes in the upcoming season. There are quite a few nude scenes

that seem unnecessary towards the plot of the show.

My second critique of the show is its obscene amount of substance abuse. Most of the main characters consume drugs at some point in the show, and several have addiction issues. *Euphoria* glorifies drug use in a society that has already normalized teenage substance abuse. There is also a shocking amount of violence in the show. There are several physical fights throughout *Euphoria* and the presence of guns and gore are common. The characters in the show are also rarely seen in school, in class, or even doing their homework. They seem to be at parties and getting into various kinds of trouble every night.

Although there are quite a few unrealistic aspects of *Euphoria* that can normalize things like

sex, drugs, and violence to viewers, it also has some realistic elements to it. The character development in *Euphoria* reflects the development of teenagers in real life. Each character changes drastically from the first episode to the last. They are all slowly figuring out who they are. From the first day of high school to the last, we become completely different people. This was an aspect of the show that I greatly enjoyed. I also enjoyed the different relationships in *Euphoria*. The constant ups and downs and the toxicity of several of them truly made me think about my own relationships.

In my opinion, this show was a new and fresh idea of what high school looks like in some terms today. The plot was enthralling, and the performances by some of the actors such as Zendaya,

Alexa Demie, and Sydney Sweeney were incredible.

Although the show caused several different controversies, I think that the director, Sam Levinson, deserves exceptional praise. *Euphoria* has become extremely popular, became a hit when released in 2019, and amassed around 3.5 million viewers. It has received nine Emmy award nominations since the first season. The full first season is currently out on HBO Max, and the second season premiered on Jan. 9 and is dropping a new episode weekly. I would highly recommend watching the show if you love themes of suspense, romance, and friendship. However, I would not recommend watching this show around your parents...

TV Show Review: *Inside Job*



Courtesy of Rotten Tomatoes

By CALISTA LEE ‘24

Inside Job is a science fiction comedy series that follows Reagan Ridley, a half-Japanese American engineer who works in the government. It was created by Shion Takeguchi, a writer for *Gravity Falls*.

Inside Job is based on the idea that America is secretly run by a secret government and

pretty much every ridiculous conspiracy theory is real. Influential celebrities are reptile people, the president is actually a robot, the weather is controlled by Gerald from accounting, and so on. Cognito Incorporated, the company where the protagonists work, is considered the Deep State controlling the world. It’s led by a group of shadowy robed figures who are “always

watching” and will appear as holograms throughout the series, but never interfere with much. Under the shadow board is the CEO, a man named J.R., and under him are the six main characters of the show.

This series does a great job of creating likable and relatable characters with depth. Reagan, the main character, is the head robot-

ic engineer of Cognito. She is socially awkward and has difficulty leading her team because of this. Her father, Rand Ridley, worked alongside J.R. before getting fired for almost exposing the Deep State’s secrets. She replaced him, and now he spends his time getting wasted in her apartment.

The second lead, Brett Hand is her best friend and co-worker,

hired in the first episode to help Reagan support the team emotionally. He is in “every single frat” and was only hired because his face is so generic that satellites can’t identify him.

The remaining four of the group consist of various humans and human-adjacents who don’t take their jobs as seriously as Reagan. Gigi, the head of Media Manipulation and Subliminal Messages, controls the news and social media. Glenn Dolphman is a very conservative half-man and half-dolphin with lingering feelings for his ex-wife. He takes care of Cognito’s weapons arsenal. Dr. Andre Lee is a biochemist who is addicted to the substances he creates, and Magic Myc is a brightly-colored mushroom-shaped organism that has the ability to read peoples’ minds.

I would say that the show has a very interesting combination of dry humor and surrealism. Having been built on this premise that all

the conspiracy theories are true, the show’s writers are not afraid of getting too ridiculous. Furthermore, some of the show’s funniest moments are slight nods to this premise. In this world Tupac is still alive, Oprah runs the Illuminati, and the sea monsters from maps of old live inside the hollow earth.

These characters all bond together through the trials and tribulations that the show puts them through. They all have developed personalities and connections, and watching that is especially entertaining. This is the most enjoyable part of the series.

I did not find much to criticize while watching this. The only thing I would say is that it can be a little stressful seeing the strange situations Reagan gets herself into. But overall, the “found family” dynamic in this show is its strongest attribute. I give it eight out of ten stars and urge you to give it a watch!

An Interview with Anna Gifty Opoku-Agyeman

By BEVERLY OLEKA '25

*Anna Gifty Opoku-Agyeman was the Academy's keynote speaker for the 32nd MLK Day celebration. She is a Ghanaian-born American racial justice activist and currently a doctoral student in Public Policy and Economics at Harvard University. In an exclusive interview with staff writer Beverly Oleka, she discussed her book *The Black Agenda*, released on February 10, as well as her personal experiences.*

You grew up as a child of African immigrants, and in a previous podcast you brought up this important point on the myth of missing Black talent. How should we advocate for people to see Africa and other marginalized continents as more than just imperial relationships?

I think it boils down to the question, "Are people treating Africans as humans?" If you are, then you're not going to just bulldoze your way into a country and then expect people to fall in line. You're going to have some level of relationship with the people who are already living there so that it's a mutually agreeable relationship and partnership. But again, like a lot of these organizations, and a lot of these countries and imperial powers, I think their prior priority is profit. How much money can I make? How much power can I retain? How do I maximize those two things to my benefit? And so again, I don't know, it's a huge question. I hope that someone in your generation can also help us find out a couple more answers around it, but those are my initial thoughts on the matter.

You stated once that you're able to promote diversity because you're uniquely equipped with the right tools based on your life experiences. As you put it, you speak the truth because you have lived that truth. What are those tools and what experiences brought them about?

I think I mentioned this during my keynote at Phillips Exeter about a week or so ago, and I talked a little bit about how I attended a PWI and the story behind that is that I was part of the head start program when I was a very, very young child. I was five years old. And so for those who don't know, Head Start is a government program for low income working families. And depending on where you are in terms of your income, essentially what happens is you are eligible for this government program, which then takes care of your kids while you're at work. So that's kind of the situation there. So I graduated from Head Start, and right before I graduated from Head Start, my family informed me that I was being selected to be part of the inaugural class at a small private school. And so essentially I ended up basically in a PWI environment from age six, so you can imagine how that would shape one's experience.

So at the age of seven or so, I was very acute of my racial identity. I knew I was Black and I knew that that was very different from people. And at times I thought that was very bad, right. And so I remember one distinct experience coming home and asking my mom, "Why can't I be white?" because at the time I was the only Black girl in

my entire class— there was one other Black student in the class. I felt very othered. Right. And so that being said, a lot of times people say, "Anna, how are you so good at going into these corporate spaces, going to these academic spaces, and cutting through the noise?"

The truth is, the tool that I acquired from a very, very young age was how to navigate white spaces when you're the only one in the room. I had to get very good at understanding how to communicate, how I was feeling, and also talk about my racial identity, which didn't come until much later in my academics.

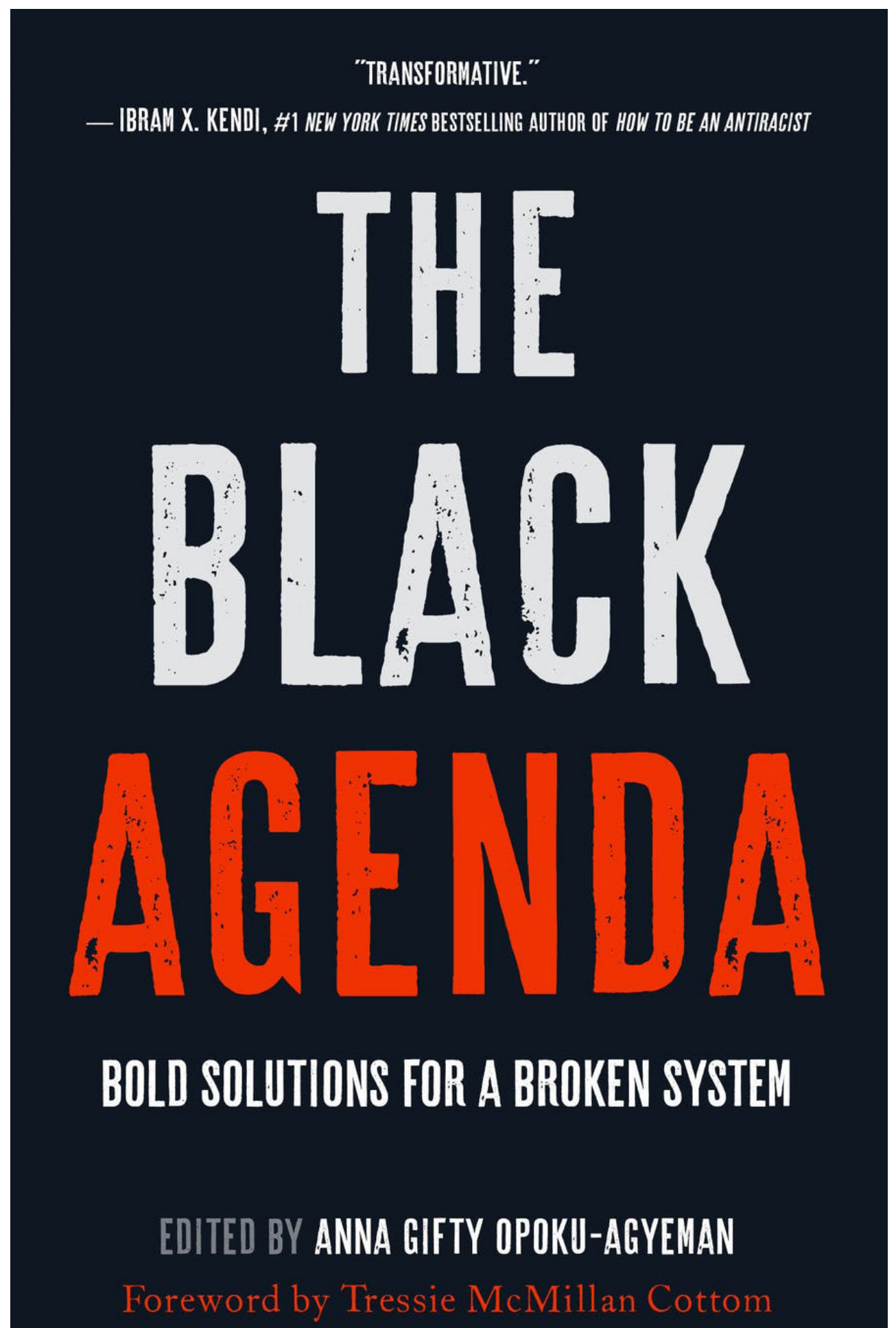
The tools that I picked up from was, one, it's really important to be very honest about your boundaries. So letting people know what they can and cannot do around you. And that's not something I picked up until I would say my junior or senior year of high school, back in the day, I would let people touch my hair. I thought at first it was some sort of endearment, but then I later learned that I was actually more so out of being othered. It was another way of othering me. I think the other thing that I learned is that it's important to voice any concerns you have. And sometimes it's important to be creative about the way that you voice that.

For example, when I was in elementary school, I was very interested in centering perspectives from students. This is me as a fifth grader. And so I decided to start a newspaper in my fifth grade class. And now it's turned into the student newsletter at my school that I've long left, but essentially that came out of wanting to make a change. And so that means that, you're looking to your left ear, right, and seeing what peers align with, what you want to do. That's something that I learned and took with me. And now I've gotten decently good at it. Now I can bring together voices that are from different parts of the country and still manage to get one idea across, or one overall ethos across.

And so those are some of the tools that have picked up that help me navigate those spaces. But most importantly, I just think about finding my authentic self and being unapologetic about that, and this is definitely for my Black and brown girls. A lot of times we are always kind of chastised for doing that. Please stand in your truth. Please stand in who you are, the amazingness that you are.

A lot of times, people are very much threatened by us showing up and being ourselves because they don't expect us to do that. I have an obligation to folks who came before me to be unapologetic about who I am, and doing it in a way that can bring and bridge much more communities around me, but also bring in an entirely new generation that will just do it automatically. And so, again, I always see this work as iterative, meaning that I'm part of a long lineage of folks who are pushing the boundary.

What you just said resonated with me, because growing up, I lived in the south side and in a low income family. And then, during elementary years I got put into a private school of basically all white girls. I've always had such a hard time navigating the space because it's overwhelming at that age to know what "Black" is. Here at Exeter, I'm try-



"The Black Agenda," edited by Anna Gifty

Courtesy of Goodreads

ing to find my own identity. How can you take time to learn more about your racial identity when the world wants Black girls to move at such a fast pace?

Let me address what you first said. I am exactly the same way. Let me give you some context, so I started out at this private school. I was on full scholarship. When the principal, who awarded me the full scholarship, the same principal who selected me for the school itself left, he ensured that I had full scholarship until I graduated. So the interesting thing was, you know, at the age of like six, seven, eight, nine, 10, I was going to this prestigious school and then I would go back home to my low income neighborhood where it was mostly Black, mostly brown. It was a nice neighborhood, but people didn't have money and I didn't come for money.

When I graduated, I went to another private school, and this was from middle school through high school graduation. That was another level of wealth that I didn't even know existed, and that was also jarring. So you would notice, when you go to school, you'd see people rocking Coach and Gucci. Like that's just what they have in their closet. And I'd be like, "I'm just getting my coat from the Burlington Co. factory." I didn't know what Canada Goose jackets were until I came to Harvard for the first time. I came for a fellowship earlier, and I was like, "Why is that he wearing that jacket?" Someone told me that that's like one of the nicest jackets you could possibly get. And I was like, "Oh, I thought he got nice

jackets from Burlington or something." I didn't know the tier of jackets that you could get.

That being said, I think to your point about finding your identity, especially in these spaces, I didn't realize how critical this was. But surrounding yourself with other Black and brown people who are in these spaces is really, really important. Like it's of utmost importance. And I realized this when I was getting ready to graduate from high school. Right? Very late. But also when I was in college, when I was in the Myra stars program at UBC, it's just really critical to be in community with other people who are from a marginalized identity and they don't necessarily need to be Black, but bonus points if they're Black. Right. Cause I think there's a unique understanding of how you navigate the space, based on your race, and your gender identity.

Then, when you add the element of immigrant status, right, it complicates things because not all Black people in America experience racial identity the same way. And this is something I've been asked about, you know, you're a Ghanaian-American, How do you sort of grapple with that in light of being Black in America? And I say, 'well, you know, I'm African American meaning that I don't have descendants who were formerly enslaved.' Right? But I identify with the plight of Black folks in America, and I empathize deeply with Black Americans, because I think a lot of times what ends up happening is, you'll see this a lot in some immigrant communities among the Black diaspora,

folks will diminish the value that Black Americans have added to the diaspora by saying things like, "oh yeah." You know, like kind of flattening them to their stereotypes, right?

But I think it's really critical to recognize that each of us have a part to play in the diaspora. For me, Black Americans have played such a significant part. The only reason that we are able to talk today is because Black Americans have fought the good fight in civil rights and have actually made room for us to even exist in this country. I think that recognizing that racial identity is not a monolith, it's gonna be an ever evolving thing. For me, I've become more aware of my racial identity over time, but it definitely started with some pivotal moments. I would say reading books like *The Other Wes Moore*, or there's a lot of recommended books that I have at the end of *The Black Agenda*.

Things like the "1619 Project," things like *How the Word is Passed* by Clint Smith. These are books that really help give you a sense of context and how you operate within that context. I think for me, I'm not at the point where everything's political and everything's laced with racial identity, whether people like it or not. And when I operate from that angle, it now colors everything I do. Every question that I ask, every type of research idea that I wanna put out there, it's almost always involved in bias discrimination.

As a major in economics and math, what are some common problems you encountered in the field around the assump-

tions people have about financial literacy in people of color?

The reason why I didn't major in math initially was because I had a teacher in high school tell me that he thought I couldn't major in math because I asked too many questions. Who's laughing now? I realized that I really enjoyed numbers. I liked the way they can be constructed and manipulated to really tell a story about what's going on. And I had an opportunity as an undergrad when I was a biology major to do some data work at a lab at the University of Maryland school of medicine. And that's what led me into data numbers, the reemergence of my interest in math. And so bringing it back to your question, it's funny when someone first saw me, they said I didn't look like a math major. Take that as you will. The biggest thing around economics is that it combines math and social science. It really provides people a very unique toolkit to understand the world through an empirical lens.

What I mean by that is that we could put data to a social problem and extrapolate some sort of outcome that has a meaningful impact on a community. And I take this work very, very seriously. Meaning that I'm not gonna be out here willy-nilly asking questions just for the sake of it. And there's people who do that. They'll be like, are our jails beneficial? Let's find out. And let's say you do find jails are beneficial. What communities is that going to disproportionately impact? You gotta think about the context in which your question is operating in before you ask that ques-

tion. Is it gonna perpetuate harm or is it gonna put us in a better position with respect to what society is going through?

I think a lot of times people assume that Black and brown folks are not financially literate. I don't know where this came from because we make do with what we have all the time. This idea of, "We have to tell 'em how to invest in the stock market." Sure. You can tell us that, but investing in the stock market predicates, are you having an existing amount of wealth? And being able to do that, regularly to make a buck. Perhaps instead of telling us, or putting us in financial literacy sessions, you should really be addressing the systemic reasons as to why financial literacy is even necessary in the first place. And one thing I always tell people too, is that it's not enough to just be financially literate, to understand how to put your taxes down or navigate financial aid. Those things are very important, but it's also important to recognize economic literacy, meaning that you need to understand how the economy works, to really understand how these different mechanisms come into play in the first place.

What's usually happening in Black and brown communities economically is a precursor to what happens in the national economy. And this is what Black and brown economists have been talking about for quite some time, so it's really important to listen to those individuals and essential those individuals, which is why they're in the book in the first place, right. I intentionally chose Black economists for this reason because people don't listen to them and oftentimes their analyses and sort of their, um, pre-analysis about what's going on in the economy kind of gives us the insight into what's going to happen next. And so that's kind of my huge feel into why economic is important and sort of how it plays a role into my own journey

In terms of economics, what do you personally like about doing the ops that you do? Like economics and math related? Do you have any fond memories?

I would say the most exciting thing about economics is the impact that you can have on public discourse. For me, that's really, really awesome.

I think that at the end of the day, I really wanna be an economist of the people, meaning that I wanna be somebody who translates the data in such a way that people can just pick it up and say, okay, here's what I think is important and here's what I disagree with. But they're able to get the highlights and the big points right out of the article [or paper] I write. And that's also the ethos of The Black Agenda book as well.

For some people that was more challenging than for others, but ultimately, that was essentially what I ended up doing. For me, that's been the biggest thing; getting excited about articles, about discourse over Twitter, and a number of different areas as well. I think also just meeting people who are as excited about these policy issues as I am is very edifying too. So that's a little bit about me.

I read pieces from The Black Agenda, and I just love the fact that the language isn't using too much jargon, because I feel like when it comes

to books that try to focus on social solutions to problems, it's often very complicated. I remember reading the book, and especially regarding the title, I was wondering what it means and what some of your inspirations were for writing this book?

Honestly, if I could rename the book, I would say A Black Agenda because the original title does not encompass all the different perspectives that I really wanted to include. I wanted to include K-12 teachers, custodians, and just ordinary citizens. I think when we talk about The Black Agenda, we're really talking about items that need to be accomplished and different big topics we need to check off and get through. So I do think the book does actually do a pretty good job of getting at that, meaning that we have a wide array of topics that are being addressed here and many of them are intertwined and interlinked.

If you read each section, it flows very seamlessly. It seems like they're having a conversation. It's like you're sitting at a round table, hearing people riff off each other. I think that's just a testament to the fact that Black experts often are operating from this overall understanding that racial identity is intersecting with a lot of these systemic problems that we're experiencing. It's imperative that we address that as quickly and effectively as possible. So I'm just really happy that the book exists. It's a bit nerve wracking.

I really hope that other young people have just as many opportunities to do the same. I think it's really important for us to have our voices out there and to usher in voices as well because we have something to say and we have ways to say it. I would say to your point about this being readable that that was intentional. I did not want this book to be hard to understand. And so I take critiques very seriously that say this was a little bit difficult to understand. I wish I could have made that more easier to understand, but ultimately I think that's been the goal.

How do we write these policy topics in a way that laymen can understand and even advocate for in their own local communities? This is also something I didn't realize an international audience would be interested in. Folks in the UK are also very interested in this and I thought to myself that that made sense.

If you're a Black person in Western society, you're gonna have an invested interest in this book.

With respect to the title itself, I wanted something catchy. The Black Agenda is pretty catchy. The other thing is that I wanted something that encompassed a wide variety of topics and that wasn't targeting one particular niche.

The other thing I wanted to mention is that there's not only Black Americans that are featured in the book. Though the majority of experts featured are Black Americans, it's actually many different people from across the Black diaspora within America. But what I love about each of their essays is that they center on the edifying of their nation of Black Americans. They're looking at Black Americans as a proxy for progress and ensuring that Black Americans are central to any solutions that we're making moving forward. That's the biggest thing that I'm focused on right now. How do we construct solutions and the ways that we're thinking about moving

forward from the perspective of starting with Black America. So it was intentional to have Black Americans, it was intentional to have Black women. It was intentional to have Black folks who identified with other genders as part of this conversation because we're all human and that was ultimately the ethos of the book. We're all human. Therefore we should be seen as such.

In your book, you write pieces about solutions that Black experts have developed to aid with climate change, healthcare wellness, and a variety of other issues. In those essays, you bring up an amazing point about critical race theory and looking at diversity in schools. What do you think the pros and cons are of teaching critical race theory in schools?

Thinking about how racial identity is seen as the overall theme throughout the entire book, I would say that the way educators can teach this book is to integrate this into their syllabi. There's a lot of different experts that folks can cite moving forward. That means that if you wanna teach about climate, consider looking at the climate chapter and picking a couple of those essays, then looking at their sources. Many of the sources that folks cited were other Black and brown folks as well.

It's important then to populate your syllabi with information that is authored by Black and brown people. I think when talking about critical race theory in the educational setting a lot of times, they get confused with it a little bit. People who push back against [teaching critical race theory] often are really afraid of being reflected poorly upon through any sort of teaching that talks about the realities and the brutalities [of their history]. This book is present-focused, but it's also future-focused.

For folks who are struggling to grapple with American history with respect to what's going on with the 1619 project and that sort of thing, I would say maybe you might want to start here first and then see how you feel about it. This book actually does a really great job of contextualizing things within the history of America and within the realities that Black Americans faced. But it also houses what we're looking forward to. You might be able to see the connection between the 1619 projects and what's happening in the current day, then also see where things could go. What I love about this book is that it bridges those three strands together in a way that allows us to operate on the spectrum of "how do we look at racial progress?" even beyond this moment.

So, I want to see that people have this book on their syllabus and that folks are reading essays from it. But more importantly, I think teachers and educators themselves need to prioritize work like this because these individuals are their colleagues. People will say that [they] don't know who's doing work on racial identity and climate. Are you looking at Black faculty members? Are you looking at Black teachers? Are you looking at Black folks? Who are you in the space? The hope is that this [collection] will propel you to choose others and look for others as well.

Are there ways that we can identify barriers and then intervene and eliminate those barriers?

Your racial identity is a big, big thing. It's gonna take an entire lifetime to really feel secure in that. But my hope is that y'all will get there sooner than I did.

In high school, in ninth grade, I wasn't fully aware of who I was as a Black woman in that space. And a lot of times I would put on sort of like a caricature of myself to navigate the space. You don't have to pretend to be a version of yourself. You can just be you. And if people have a problem with that, you can ask them why it impacts them. Why do you have a problem with that? And automatically that disarms their entire reasoning. So that would be what I would say about that, that you don't have to figure it out right now. But again, look to folks that are doing this kind of work that are visible to you, but also look to books and other mediums to educate you in the context in which you're living in.

Do you believe that having just one person of color in the room truly shows that we are generating diversity in progress or that we are lacking diverse voices at the table?

No, obviously. I always think it's funny when people say, "Oh, well, you know, I hired a Black person," and I'm like, "Good for you." I think the biggest thing here, and this is kinda what I talked about in my speech as well, is it's not enough to just treat diversity as a thing that you have to handle on the side. It's very, very incumbent on those who are in the organization, or in the entity, or in the institution to integrate diversity into the culture. It should be the fabric in which your institution is operating under, right? It should be the context. It should be the air you breathe.

So I think a lot of times when people say, "I can't find Black talent, I don't know if there are any Black people who wanna do this." I can't help but think that they're clearly bird boxing this, right? I think that for your generation, what I would challenge y'all to do is to ask individuals and organizations and institutions, "Why do you have blinders on?" That's what I'm doing right now, but I'm hoping that y'all will get more answers. It gives us more innovative solutions, more bold solutions. I would say it leads to more beneficial, effective, and efficient solutions. That makes a lot of sense, right? If you are dealing with a problem, you want to make sure that you're dealing with the problem from all sides. If you're only dealing from one side, well, then you're gonna have one solution to one side of the problem. You're not gonna have a solution that encompasses all the different sides of a problem. So that's kind of what we get at when we say it's not enough to have one or two or a few Black and brown faces in the room.

And I think the other question that people don't like to ask is why is that space white to begin with right? Like, why is it so white? I don't know, that's a question because there's a little bit of an assumption there. People say that the only people who are qualified to do this work or to offer these perspectives or to give us some sort of leadership or guidance can only be from this group. And oftentimes that group is singular in that it's white, it's male, it's wealthy. Why? I don't think only white male wealthy guys have good ideas, definitely as history shows, right? Societies

that have existed and been built out and have flourished without any intervention from a white wealthy guy. So I think that's also another question to ask. And that's a question that I hope that my generation alongside your generation, right? We will be able to answer in a way that allows the next generation to be completely freed of having these conversations about why a group may want another Black person here? Well, it's because Black people are actually a substantial part of the population and you can't just ignore them. Then also recognizing too, that diversity exists even within the marginalized groups. So it's not enough just to have one east Asian person. You might want to have someone from Southeast Asia, right? This idea, again, of attacking a problem from all sides and making sure that we're the most all-encompassing solution that we can possibly have, so that our solution is actually fitting the communities that absolutely need it.

Another thing that caught my eye was in the foreword. Written by Dr. Tracy McMillan, she starts with a very powerful and important statement, "no matter where you show up on the spectrum of Blackness, the United States owes you something." It's an intriguing statement, because for decades, it's always been the opposite, with white Europeans believing we owed them something then enslaving us. In your book, you and other Black experts discuss ways to create solutions and involve people in these diverse dialogues. How can we consistently make sure that we're moving forward in a way that we also acknowledge what's been lost?

At the end of the day, we move forward by centering Black expertise and Black voices beyond Black History month and diversity, equity and inclusion. It's not enough to invite Black people when it's convenient for you. There needs to be a little bit of discomfort. I think that people are uncomfortable with hearing what Black people have to say, because they know that Black people have a deep understanding of how the system works because we navigate it every day. But more importantly, we also have a deeper understanding of the flaws of the system because we are harmed by them every day. If we are actually bringing Black people into the conversation, squarely at the center, they're the ones driving the narrative.

Someone said to me once, we'll know that we've achieved racial equity when Black people can just be average and it won't harm us. It's a very poignant statement. And I think that it is also the root of the problem. If we have to work twice as hard just to be seen as human, we have an issue. If we can show people that we can be on the same level playing field in the mainstream and public discourse, perhaps that makes an even more compelling case for why our humanity is of the utmost importance. And so for me, that's been the biggest thing — that we have to push forward with respect to accelerating Black voices. Our humanity is absolutely undeniable.

No one is talking about the continent of Africa, for example, which currently has the youngest population in the entire world. We have to talk about it because they're humans, they have lives and families

and experiences that absolutely need to be honored. They cannot be a footnote. I think a lot of times, history has treated Black people as a footnote. That's why people have been able to walk all over us, because they have used the footnote mentality to justify atrocities and harms that have harmed us for generations. We're at a point now where a lot of us are saying we're done, and now there's other people who are also seeing these harms done to Black people. This book is an iteration of the many that have come before it, but it's also the beginning of many more works that will come after it. I'm very, very excited for what this is going to bring.

How do you feel that your book is being published? What are you anticipating? What are you looking forward to?

I'm nervous, to be frank with you. It's a politically charged book. Anything with Black people as the focus is going to be contentious in public discourse because people have different views on Black people. But I'm also excited, because one, the book is not about me. I'm the face of the book, but really, I hope to be the face only for the next few weeks. Then I want people to invite all the different contributors who are featured in the book to their podcasts and to their TV shows and all that stuff. I really hope that people see these voices for what they are.

They're not unique in that they're Black experts. They're unique because they've been featured in this particular publication, but there's many more Black experts, activists, advocates, teachers, and professionals out there that are doing the hard work.

I'm looking forward to seeing students like yourselves reading this, I'll be Frank with you. I had no idea that there would be an entire market of high school students who would be interested in this for me, that is incredibly affirming at a time. I'm just so excited that y'all are excited about that.

I really want a lot of young people to get their hands on this book, to see that there's other voices that are part of the Black and brown communities that they're a part of, but also to see that there are solutions being put forth that hopefully your generation will carry out to fruition. I'm humbled ultimately, and grateful for this opportunity to just talk with you and also just have this book out there so people can learn more from these Black experts and the work that they're doing.



Imani Winds in Photos



Bassoonist Monica Ellis and clarinetist Mark Dover flow in their harmonies



Flutist Brandon Patrick George and oboist Toyin Spellman-Diaz performs their original repertoire.



French hornist Kevin Newton speaks on Imani Winds's founder and flutist Valerie Coleman's legacy.



Ellis engrossed in her bassoon-playing.



The Imani Winds plays traditional and contemporary chamber music repertoire together.



George speaks on Imani Winds' vision of supporting music from new voices.



The audience applauds as the Imani Winds bow after their evening performance.

Valentine Messages

Emmie is so cool and the funniest person I know! Have a great day!



Nick Riccardi <3



I love you Jess happy Valentine's Day???? You may not have a boyfriend but you have me so don't worry we can be alone together??

I love you so much????

- Willa Bazos '24



Jack Gordon Mad Cute!



Happy birthday!!! Lots of love hugs and happiness is due for you today and forevermore! You're very spoon:)



Hey! Good luck on your MGP!
Also you're a great Squash player.



To my fav couple: Lacombe and Grewal!

- Audrey Sim '24

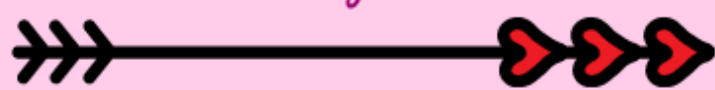


Drew McClutchy has the complete package :)



Love you princess

- Ifeoma Ajufu '22



Wheelwright uppers have my whole heart

Happy Valentine's Day Alia x You are the most swag person ever and pretty funny too I guess. You make me so happy and sometimes don't know why you're with me. Just kidding I'm also super swag.

I love you xoxo

- Stellan Aalto '23



Grewal needs someone. 5'4 or above.



Claire Fu is the best roommate in the world I love her so much!

- Sofia Morais '23



Happy Valentine's Day Emmie!
#biggestMML and also so gorgeous <3

- Natalie Welling '24



Hi Lyvia thank u for being the best roomie ily a lot ai ni?

- Amber Zou '24



Esme S is too fine



#jointheexeterreview



Shoutout Christine!



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Andrew J. Andrew <3

Op-Ed

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What Ukraine Says About Us

By CJSMITH '25

August 8, 2008: The headline of Slate cries, "Russia invades Georgia while the West Watches," and asks, "How did it come to this?"

March 31, 2014: The Daily Mail article reads, "Russian freight trains full of tanks roll into Crimea."

It's now January of 2022, and here we are again. Russian aggression threatens the balance of power in Europe as President Vladimir Putin has moved nearly 100,000 troops to its border with Ukraine. Unlike Russia's past two invasions, however, this likely upcoming assault of Ukraine has far greater geopolitical consequences. The Russian attack, along with the US and NATO response, could determine the fate of key alliances in Europe, as well as influence China's increasingly hostile policies toward Taiwan and Southeast Asia. Ukraine serves as an omen and a prediction to several other global conflicts, bolstering the argument that Exeter should educate its students on current events.

Russia has long worked to destabilize countries beyond its borders without ever firing a gun. The Center for Strategic and International Studies writes, "Russian disinformation operations are currently a

cornerstone of the country's efforts to wield influence worldwide. Whether trying to weaken the European Union, NATO, individual countries, or other groups, Russian operations . . . have fostered much anxiety, fear, and division throughout the world." Ukraine in particular provides Russia the opportunity to sow ethnic nationalism among Russian ethnic groups in the country, creating discord and distrust against the Ukrainian government and the West in general. Disinformation has also spread in Russia's own borders. After the repressive crackdown of Russian protests in early 2021 demanding justice for the jailing of Alexi Navalny, Putin had to scramble for public approval in a country where many have likened his regime to Stalin; then-Moscow bureau chief Anton Troianoviski of the New York Times reported that "more than 5,000 people had been detained in at least 85 cities across Russia." Unfortunately, Putin uses Russian invasions as a means to boost his popularity, with reporter Adam Taylor of the Washington Post stating that the annexation of Crimea "coincided with a 20 percentage point jump in Putin's personal approval ratings." With political unrest in the country, Putin has used disinformation in

his country to create a false narrative against the West in preparation for invasion.

So what are the consequences of this Ukrainian invasion? For one, it's an opportunity for Putin to show Russia's strength, which if not countered by the US, could prove tempting for some of our allies. Take Germany, whose energy sector has become increasingly reliant on Russia. The Wall Street Journal asserts that "Germany has made itself even more dependent on Russian gas by shutting down nuclear plants." The Biden Administration's soft policy on German-Russian relations has also allowed the Nord Stream 2 Pipeline, a natural gas pipeline from Russia to Germany, to be built. This further gives Russia control over German energy, which has allowed Russia to leverage the country against the US. A Russian show of aggression with a weak US response is likely to pull some of our allies towards Russia's direction, especially as their economies become increasingly reliant on Russia. Furthermore, the global food economy is in jeopardy. Journalist Rob Picheta of CNN reports, "Ukraine is expected to account for around a sixth of the world's corn imports in the next five years . . . a direct hit to its production and output could

impact the supply of certain foodstuffs." Russia could easily leverage Ukraine's food supply with a quick invasion, which could prove disastrous for the US.

More importantly, the Biden Administration's actions to shut down pipelines and other non-renewable energy operations in the US have increased our reliance on global oil markets. Undoubtedly, Russian invading Ukraine will trigger the US to enact sanctions on the country, but these sanctions could prove disastrous to the global oil market. As Thomas Dusterberg of Forbes writes, "Russian President Vladimir Putin had refused to cut back oil production in the face of depressed prices caused by an unprecedented 3.5 million barrels per day (b/d) fall in demand occasioned by the coronavirus crisis . . . This price shock threatens serious damage to the overleveraged U.S. oil and gas sector already weakened by depressed demand and prices." Russia has already used its global oil monopoly to harm the U.S., whose economic sanctions over Ukraine will surely cause a reaction damaging the global oil market. Overall, increasing our reliance on foreign oil and energy has made our market vulnerable to our enemies; there is no doubt that Russia will ex-

plot this to further its global ambitions.

The Ukrainian crisis, I believe, also foreshadows China's ambition when it comes to Taiwan. The Chinese Communist Party has already cracked down on dissent throughout the country, and it has rapidly increased its sphere of influence in Taiwan and the South China Sea. Danny Russel, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs under President Barack Obama, said, "Russia's confrontation with Ukraine and its international response is an invaluable real-time lesson on the cost-benefit of possible future military action to reclaim Taiwan. If Putin should invade and refuse to withdraw from Ukraine, the failure of the US to deter him followed by the failure to expel him would vastly strengthen Beijing's campaign to convince people in Taiwan . . . that 'resistance is futile' because the U.S. security pledges are no longer credible." Starting with the Belt and Road Initiative to gain political and economic control over developing countries in the Middle East, Africa, and Central and Southeast Asia, China now sees a possibility in retaking Taiwan and reducing the U.S.'s role in international affairs. Additionally, after the Biden

Administration's debacle in Afghanistan, China sees the U.S. as vulnerable — the Administration's response to Ukraine will confirm or deny its suspicions.

Why should Exonians care about this conflict? While this op-ed may inform you about the precarious situation in Eastern Europe and the dire consequences that potentially follow, it's hard to truly understand the ramifications of a conflict when it's occurring 4,640 miles away. Unfortunately, the consequences of the Russian invasion will spill over to the U.S. Higher gas prices from a disrupted oil market. Potential corn and other agriculture disturbances. Losing our key allies in Southeast Asia, which could have frightful ramifications in the future. That's why it is vital that Exeter institute some form of current events education, particularly on events outside of the U.S. This education should focus not only on the details of the current events but also their impacts. Students need to be aware of how something happening not necessarily near them could still affect them and the world at large. For the sake of its students, The Academy should take the first step and institute current event education.

Ukraine - Russia Tensions

By COLIN JUNG '24

Russia has moved hundreds of thousands of troops to the Ukrainian border, and many Western experts believe an invasion is imminent. This would not be the first time Russia encroached into Ukrainian territory: Ukraine was conquered by the Russian Empire and later, was part of the Soviet Union. More recently, in 2014, Russia occupied and annexed the southern Crimean peninsula, which was previously a part of Ukraine.

Before I begin, I think I ought to make a few stipulations. I am writing about what the United States should do. Thus, I will be focusing on what is in the best interest of the United States. Further, I am assuming there is a legitimate threat of invasion from Russia. I am, unfortunately, not privy to the intelligence that would confirm or deny this, but, as I argue, even if Russia is not planning an immediate invasion, it would be reasonable for them to attempt one in the near future. And lastly, my opinion is heavily inspired by Profes-

or John J. Mearsheimer's offensive realist theory. I borrow from it liberally.

First, I would like to reject the popular notion that Russia is acting irrationally, and is principally to blame for the crisis. This is not the case. I adore the United States and stand by it, right or wrong. But in this case, we are in the wrong. The United States has frequently announced its encouragement of Ukraine's integration into Western institutions (NATO, the EU, etc.), and Russia has made no secret of the fact that they see this as a threat to its national security. Russia is not irrational in believing this. A Ukraine that is friendly to the West is an actual threat to Russia's national security.

The United States stands by the Monroe Doctrine, which states that the U.S. would not tolerate colonization or puppet monarchies. We do not need to imagine what happens when a nation even attempts to violate this doctrine. Dozens of Latin American leaders sympathetic to the Soviet Union were historically assassinated, and Cuba, which actually dared to form such an

alliance, is still treated by the United States as a hostile nation sixty years later.

Why do we care if the Soviets ally with Cuba? Why does Russia care if Ukraine allies with the West? Two reasons: the world is anarchic and the intentions of nations are unknowable.

A system is anarchic if there is no higher authority to check the actions of individual members. The relations between persons in the United States are not anarchic, because the police will show up and throw criminals in jail. On the contrary, the relations between nations in the international order are anarchic. Nations can do what they want without being checked by a higher power. The United States can invade any country in the world, justly or unjustly. No world policemen will show up to stop us.

The second factor is self-explanatory. Putin cannot read President Biden's mind, let alone the mind of the future president in the year 2050. He has no way of knowing whether we have friendly or hostile intentions towards his country.

Therefore, Russia is reasonable to want to keep the West out of Ukraine. He can appeal to no higher authority if the West invades, and has no way of being sure that the West will not invade. The best solution for him is to keep the West far away from Russia, so they can't invade even if they want to. Ukraine, with a long border with easy access to the Russian heartland, is too close for comfort.

But the United States obstinately persists in bringing Ukraine into the Western sphere of influence. Russia would be wise to take the part of Ukraine East of the Dnieper river, (the population of which is largely friendly to Russia) and install a friendly ruler so that the river and Eastern Ukraine serve as a natural barrier to any Western invasion.

This is not to say that this invasion would be good or acceptable. Only that Russia is perfectly reasonable in wanting to carry it out. If I were a Ukrainian national, I would be rightly outraged by the violation of my country's sovereignty.

From an American per-

spective, however, Ukraine, and Europe more broadly, is of virtually no strategic value. There are neither important resources (minerals, oil) nor potential countries that could dominate the region and become peer competitors (Russia is a declining power with serious economic and demographic problems and poses no threat to dominate Europe.)

America's sons and daughters have no business fighting and dying to protect the sovereignty of a nation in which we have no strategic interest. Likewise, the funds of our already-strapped treasury should go to uses that better further the national interest.

Further, Russia is a crucial potential ally in our fight against China, which is a legitimate threat to our interests. China, unlike Russia, is seeing rapid economic and military growth and has a population four times larger than ours. To drive Russia into the arms of the Chinese over Ukraine would be an unbelievably foolish move.

I would urge that the United States stay out of Ukraine, forswear NATO ex-

pansion into the country, and allow it to make a fair deal with Russia that keeps it a neutral buffer state. I would also urge the forming of further economic and military ties between the United States and Russia to counter the threat of a rising China.

Will this occur? Eventually, but not anytime soon. Any amicable relations between us and Russia are anathema to the boneheaded-ly Russophobic foreign policy elites, who are still firmly located in the Cold War or the failed neoconservative effort to form democracies at gunpoint. But assuming China does rise and become the kind of threat that Germany or Japan was, then the United States will be driven by geopolitical necessity to partner with Russia. Nations whose security interests are immediately threatened tend to act highly rationally. I fear, though, that it may be too late, and the Russian public will become unamenable to any kind of cooperation with the United States.

Don't Stand in the Doorway, Don't Block Up Hall

By AVEEN BURNEY '25

During times of political gridlock, whenever an opaque black fog of partisanship settles over Washington, I often comfort myself by watching the show *The West Wing*. I immerse myself in a world where there is a solution to every problem. That is not the case right now.

A filibuster is a procedure where one or more members of a legislative body prolong debate to delay or entirely prevent a decision. If you have been reading the news, the filibuster has come up as a topic of controversy. Currently, Democrats want to abolish the filibuster, while the Republicans do not. Democratic Senator Kyrsten Sinema was even censured by the Arizona Democratic Party "as a result of her failure to do whatever it takes

to ensure the health of our democracy." The announcement came after Sinema opposed a change to the filibuster that would move Democratic-backed voting rights legislation forward.

I think it's hypocritical that the Democrats want to abolish the filibuster and the Republicans do not. President Biden originally supported the filibuster. Back when former President Obama was a senator in 2005, he said, "If the majority chooses to end the filibuster if they choose to change the rules and put an end to Democratic debate, then the fighting and the bitterness and the gridlock will only get worse." Biden once remarked, "Without the filibuster, more than 40 Senators would lack the means by which to encourage compromise..." Now, however, the Republicans are

using the exact rhetoric. In Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell's threat, he indicated that the filibuster silenced the minority: "If my colleague tries to break the Senate to silence those millions of Americans, we will make their voices heard in this chamber in ways that are more inconvenient for the majority and this White House than what anybody has seen in living memory." It is hard to be one-sided with the filibuster because both parties have been for and against it.

Does having the filibuster mean that we are protecting the minority or does it mean constant gridlock with no progress? Does it mean that a procedural tool has now become a political one? Does it mean compromise is a good thing when voting rights are at peril?

The filibuster is a critical

tool for the minority to protect itself from the tyranny of the majority. By empowering the minority, the Senate maintains checks and balances, an integral part of the Constitution and legislative process. However, giving the minority excessive power makes the Senate ineffective. One person can change the course of a bill passing, which has a direct impact on the American people. I do not think that the filibuster is democracy at work because no real work is being done.

Looking at today's political back and forth on the filibuster is not enough. Historically, the filibuster has been used to block progress on racial justice and one could say that is the case today with voting rights since strict voter ID laws disproportionately impact voters of color. In 1964, there was a filibuster that almost killed

the Civil Rights Act. It lasted 60 working days in the Senate thanks to a committed group of senators. If history repeats itself today, I think it would be detrimental and delay a meaningful cause.

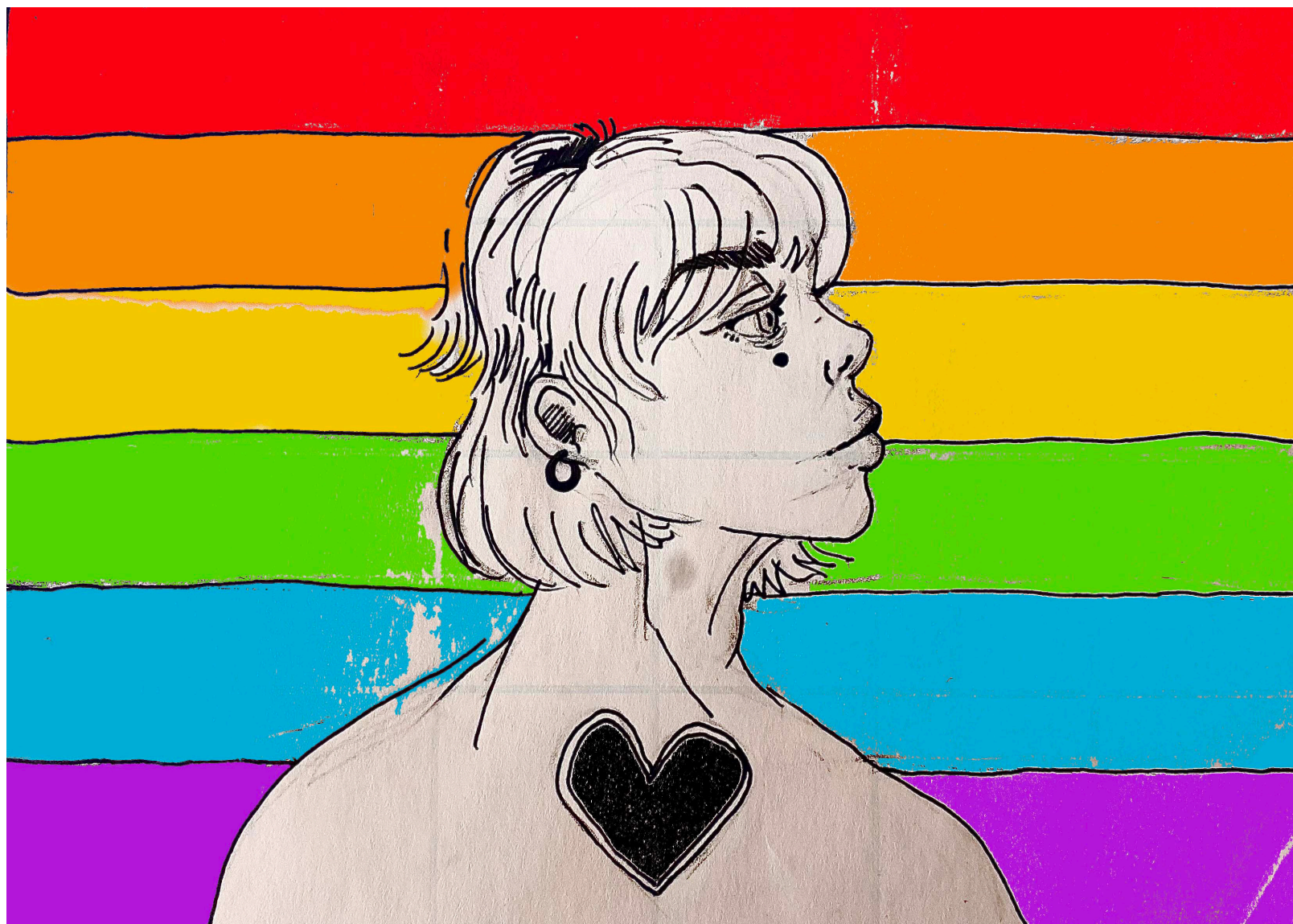
I do not believe that the framers envisioned that the filibuster would become a tool to essentially turn an otherwise simple majority of 51 into a cloture majority of 60. And neither do I believe that the framers anticipated such division in this nation. In his Farewell Address, George Washington even warned against these political factions saying that it would create "a spirit of revenge," where people would "usurp for themselves the reins of government; destroying afterward the very engines, which have lifted them to unjust dominion."

Do senators Sinema and

Joe Manchin have that spirit of revenge? Or are they holding onto history to look after the future? There is a good chance that after this year's election, Democrats will be the minority. Having the filibuster will allow Democrats to have some power.

I don't fully know where I stand on the filibuster yet, and that is alright. There are so many days when the future of the country seems bleak, but as C.J. Cregg from *The West Wing* says, "If politics brings out the worst in people, maybe people bring out the best." What will Congress do, as a body of legislature and as people, to bring out the best during these times?

On Queer Representation in Anime



Minseo Kim/*The Exonian*

By AN ANONYMOUS
STUDENT '24

Content warning: This article mentions queerphobia, and fetishization. Phillips Exeter has a number of resources for survivors in the Exeter community. To access these resources, please refer to the Exeter website's "Contacts and Resources" page. Additionally, if you find yourself distressed by any details, please seek confidential help at the National Sexual Assault Hotline: (800) 656-4673.

Dedication: I dedicate this article to my friends Katelyn, Jade, Alinne and Gamze who helped me flesh out my ideas, and to Nico, Ly, Astrid, Luke, and Diana for making me fall in love with anime.

With its extravagant colors and styles, anime/manga have shifted cultures across the world and defined identities and relationships. With such stark influence, many have come to criticize themes within popular anime/manga concerning gender and sexuality. This article hopes to shed light on queer representation in anime and its effects on western and eastern cultures.

First off, let's make it super straightforward: there are canon, relatively unproblematic queer characters and relationships in anime, and anyone who tells you otherwise is an ignorant moron. Do note that I used the phrase "relatively unproblematic" because there is no perfect representation of queer communities. Just like in U.S. media, queer characters in anime sometimes fall into the problematic tropes of the queer-coded villain or an "alien" non-binary identity. Since the beginning of anime history in the mid-twentieth century, anime has played around with fluid gender expressions and queer relationships. Princess Knight (1967), for example, depicts a princess who possesses two hearts, one of a boy and one of a girl, and disguises herself as a prince who goes on adventures. Some American queer-friendly cartoons like Steven Universe and She-Ra: Princess of Power were heavily influenced by the Japanese shōjo, or more specifically the magical girl genre, such as Sailor Moon (1992) and Revolutionary Girl Utena.

However, when adapted for U.S. audiences,

LGBTQ+ relationships in anime have been straight-washed. In Sailor Moon, dubbing company Optimum Productions censored the lesbian couple Neptune and Uranus and turned into cousins in the original English audio translations (dubs) and subtitles (subs). Zoisite, another character from Sailor Moon, was changed to be female in order to heterosexualize his relationship with Kunzite. In Cardcaptor Sakura (1999), Nelvana Enterprises, the company that produced the first English adaptation, removed entire scenes from the show to disguise Tomoyo's feelings towards Sakura and a romantic subplot between Yukito and Toya.

In recent years, things have been getting better. In 2014, when Sailor Moon was re-dubbed, the translation team corrected and acknowledged the previous censorship. But in 2019, Netflix received backlash for its re-translation of Neon Genesis Evangelion (1995) that erased potential romantic feelings between Shinji and Kaworu. Since I have always considered the United States to be one of the most liberal and LGBTQ+ friendly countries in the world, these facts are quite ironic.

Though there have been fewer cases of queer relationship censoring, pronoun usage has become the new battlefield. Until the early 2010s, it was the default to assign a binary gender to characters whose genders were ambiguous, a tradition now overcome. In Attack on Titan (2013), Hange was assigned she/her pronouns in the first season, but that translation was revoked after creator Hajime Isayama made it clear that Hange's did not have a canon gender. More recently, when creating the English subtitles for Land of the Lustrous (2017), the translation team in Crunchyroll consulted the original manga author Haruko Ichikawa and decided to use they/them pronouns for the whole cast of genderless gem people. Similarly, Nanachi from Made in Abyss (2017) also used they/them pronouns. However, Funimation, another major anime streaming service continues to use gendered pronouns for non-binary characters in English dub and sub.

Despite the queer themes in anime, Japan is still a very conservative country especially with regards to the LGBTQ+ community. There is a great divide between

what is acceptable in anime and what is acceptable in real life. This divide traces back to the history of homosexuality in Japan. Unlike the west, where homosexuality was once forbidden and considered a sin due to the prevalence of Abrahamic religions, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. In ancient Japan and many other Asian countries, intimate, same-sex relationships had their discreet place in society. People involved in such relationships entered something akin to an unspoken social contract. Though not encouraged, it was accepted and acknowledged. In many Asian cultures, there is a strong emphasis on family and the continuation of family lineage. Thus, it is generally established that as long as men (because of the patriarchal society, there are few records of queer or lesbian relationships) fulfill their duty of marrying a woman, starting a family, and continuing the family line, no one really cared whether men were having sex with other men. This situation changed after colonization where western homophobia was brought to Asia along with Christianity and anti-sodomy laws. In Japan, the shift came with the Meiji Restoration in 1868, when Japan began its assimilation into the western world in an effort to preserve sovereignty. After that time, queer activities existed in dissonance: so long as they did not disturb societal traditions and values. Due to a synthesis of these factors, queer acceptance remains a fantasy in anime while reality is still rooted in staunch bigotry.

To tackle the problem of queer representation in anime, one must also explore the topic of yaoi (a similar idea to boys love) and yuri (that of girls love). Yaoi and yuri are genres of manga/anime that depict same-sex relationships, and they have existed as real genres in the Japanese manga market for years.

Yaoi manga, featuring male-male relationships, originated in the 1970s as a subgenre of shōjo, and it was generally created by female-identifying artists for female-identifying consumers. Though there is a rare instance of good yaoi manga like Banana Fish, the majority of yaoi manga depict gay relationships in an entirely unrealistic, oversexualized manner. Some are straight-up fetish pornography. The name "yaoi" is said to be an

abbreviation of "yama nashi, ochi nashi, imi nashi" which means "no climax, no point, no meaning." Similarly in China, a genre called "danmei" (basically the Chinese version of yaoi) has entered Chinese mainstream media in recent years. Most danmei are problematic for the same reasons as yaoi, and they even share a similar consumer demographic with the anime community. That being said, some research has suggested that danmei and other boys love content are forms of feminism as it is a media created for the female gaze by female authors, and it removes the baggage of gender dynamics and rather focuses on the pureness of a relationship. Personally, I am still processing the many layers of yaoi history and will leave it for the readers to decide how they want to interact with the genre.

Yuri, on the other hand, has a more diverse audience than just the straight men fetishizing lesbian relationships. In a survey conducted by Verena Maser in 2015 about Japanese yuri readership, among 1,352 respondents, 52.4 percent identified as female, 46.1 percent identified male, and 1.6 percent identified as neither. The first manga that depicts intense emotional attraction between girls and is therefore often considered the first yuri was Yaneura no Nishojo (Two Virgins in the Attic) written by lesbian Yoshiya Nobuko in 1919. Similar tropes about non-sexual love between girls have been popular in shōjo markets throughout history. It was not until the 1970s that manga with yuri elements entered into shōnen, the market for young boy readers. Erotic yuri, as its yaoi counterpart, emerged not until the 1990s following the popularity of lesbian couple Neptune and Uranus in Sailor Moon. Nowadays, yuri continues to appeal to a diverse demographic.

After examining the history of yaoi and yuri in Japan, let's now turn to anime's American audience. The most popular animes in America are usually shōnen action that do not have canon queer representation. However, if one goes on a fanfic site like AO3 or fanfiction.com, one will find that a majority of fans consider male-male (M/M) relationships as "head-canon." Among all the 218055 fanfics about My Hero Academia on AO3, 53.6 percent of the entries are labeled as "M/M." The five most pop-

ular ships (head-canon romantic relationships) are all M/M, although there are no official queer relationships in My Hero Academia. A similar situation exists in most other popular anime/manga fandoms such as Haikyuu!!, Naruto, and Attack on Titan. Naturally, I ask why these queer ships are all male-male? Where are the lesbians and queer ships? The fact is, in shōnen anime, there are more well-developed male characters than female characters, and even less so non-binary characters. The female characters simply exist as a pretty romantic interest without ample character development. There is little meaningful interaction between the male character and his supposed "love interests." Thus, it is literally impossible to buy into the official hetero ships.

First getting into anime, I was perplexed by the amount of gay ships in American fandoms. I soon realized that this does not make the American fandom LGBTQ+ inclusive. A total of 8.6 percent of the ones labeled "M/M" has the label "Underage" or "Rape/Non-Con," and that is not to count the 35.8 percent of works for which the author chose not to include any content warnings. That is not to say shipping as a whole is bad. There are, of course, fanfics written by queer folks with head-canon, queer-ships or queer characters that are wonderful queer representation, but unfortunately they consist a relative small proportion of the fandom. It took me a long time to be able to fully acknowledge the different layers and complexity of the issue. My friend offered an interesting perspective: "There are three types of people who ship: queer-identifying people, straight people being horny and fetishizing queer relationship, and people who enjoy the dynamic between characters and simply ignore gender when shipping." There are queer ships that I adore, such as Hashirama and Madara from Naruto (2002), Lelouch and Suzaku from Code Geass (2006), Phos and Antarc from Land of the Lustrous, and Nanachi and Mitty from Made in Abyss. It is completely fine to ship, but be cautious not to get caught within the toxic culture of shipping.

Further, despite anime's seemingly problematic surface, the anime community is nonetheless attractive for queer audiences as it creates a space where social expect-

tations can be challenged. I wonder if the idea that anime is a "lesser" genre contributes to the freedom that queer communities find in anime. And this "lesser" impression often derives from the mere fact that the visual graphics of anime do not conform to expectations of realism. Anime characters have extravagant hairstyles, big expressive eyes, and fancy clothes that do not exist in real life. Even the line between gender is blurred. Take the famous example of JoJo's Bizarre Adventure (especially my favorite season, Golden Wind). The clothing and hairstyles of the characters challenge men's fashion. All of them can walk on in the Emmy-winning series RuPaul's Drag Race and not look out of place. It is the rejection of realism, however, that gives anime character. The anime fantasy is imaginative and dynamic. It is a place where one can simply disregard the confines of the real world and experiment with self-expression and relationships. Additionally, anime often explores themes of isolation, coming of age, chosen family, and transformation that resonate with queer people.

Finally I'd like to recognize that non-explicit queer content steps into the realm of queerbaiting. It is difficult to define what really counts as a queer relationship. Nowadays, especially in the west, in order for media to offer good queer representation, the two characters must be involved in a defined romantic or sexual relationship. Sometimes even saying "I love you" is not enough for a relationship to be defined as queer. This restrictive definition of queer representation can be a very straight concept, as a large part of the queer experience is found in not fitting into labels and categories. Additionally, when talking about anime, it is important to keep in mind that its intended audience is generally not people from the west. Given Japan's relatively conservative culture, queer-coded subtext is valuable because it serves as an outlet for queer people to express themselves without being outed. This article is published anonymously because I am not out to my family. As a Chinese who identifies as queer, I also find the queer-coded characters in the anime extremely comforting because they provide me with Asian queer representation that American media lacks. In Puella Magi Madoka Magica (2011), none of the girls in it are explicitly queer, but they are queer icons from my point of view. There should be space left for pure celebration of seeing oneself in a character, no matter whether it is head-canon or real canon. In recent years, anime is attracting a larger and larger queer audience in the west. Thus, it should absolutely be held accountable for profiting from queer-coded stories and characters without acknowledging their queerness, whether the creator intended it or not.

Queer representation has many dimensions. I hope I've shed light on what exists under the surface. As anime rises in popularity, queer representation becomes a more and more pertinent subject. Media is a way for people to explore the world and learn more about themselves. Anime has long been telling stories of self-discovery and characters' reckoning with the pressures of society. As an Asian media that explores queer topics, anime is a unique lens through which one can reflect on the progress of queerness.

Why I'm Voting For Ale Murat

By ANDREWYUAN '24

Note: This piece is written before presidential primaries and though it's meant to be an endorsement of Ale Murat '23, I hope that the next Executive Board, regardless of who they may be, will seek to work towards policies and models of leadership embodied by Ale. Ultimately, readers can interpret this piece as an encouragement of positive, recurring conversation and civil discourse on Student Council leadership.

As our mental health reaches a new low after Winter Formal cancellation and failure of Visitations policy changes, don't you hope for a change? A change that the current Student Council has yet to deliver? A change candidate with a vision beyond the current Student Council Executive Board?

Ale Murat will bring that change. I am not discrediting other presidential candidates' pol-

icies as unbold or cliché because trust me, I have read them all and they are inspirational. Yet, the change that Ale has already brought and will bring is the change we all need.

Understanding a candidate's leadership goes beyond the public persona that they have built. Policies matter:

One, Ale listens.

In the past school year, a few upperclassmen lobbied Executive Board candidates to include StepNPull installations on campus bathroom doors as a part of their campaign platform. Ale listened. These are the minor changes in our student life that other candidates have failed to notice. Following the incorporation of StepNPull as a means to reduce sanitary COVID risks in municipal governments and workplaces, Ale moved fast to include these otherwise overlooked policies in her campaign.

When J. Smith has failed to listen to student petitions and outcries in

the past year, the Student Council must deliver students' wishes and bridge the widening division between student body and the administration. Ale's timely replies to suggestions on Instagram comments and live Q&A session evidenced her willingness to effectively incorporate student needs in her tenure as Student Council President.

Two, Ale reaches out.

Ale shows her connection to the student life at Exeter on her campaign. When I was counting Executive Candidates' signatures with the Elections Committee a week ago, Ale's outreach to fellow students surprised me: from student athletes to bookworms like me, Ale gathered signatures beyond just a few friend groups, dorms or impatient students waiting in D-Hall lines.

When I read some candidates' statements, I was left in genuine confusion as to how connected they are to our student life. Candidates should

not run when they broadcast a lack of understanding of the multifaceted intricacies of life at the Academy. Such campaign proposals discredit pre-existing policies and organizations that are currently working to achieve or have achieved these promises. Candidates who campaign on falsified information of "status quo" simply do not meet the bare minimum needed to represent us as a student body.

Three, Ale commits.

Under the leadership of the current Executive Board, our Student Council has seen major steps taken to increase transparency: making the agenda of the Executive Board available to all students, updating the student body on its progress in The Exonian and frequent posts on its Instagram account to promote school wide policy changes. Ale wants to take a step further.

To remove the bureaucratic processes in the Student Council, Ale promises to work with

the Elections Committee to pass the newest Student Council Constitution. Under the newly proposed Constitution, students who have continuously worked with Student Council committees may be nominated by Committee heads to become Select Representatives. Upon approval by a simple majority of the Council, students may share an equal voice with other elected representatives as a voting member on the Council.

Furthermore, Ale's proposal of open forums between administration and Student Council would ensure unprecedented insight into policies proposed by the Academy. As some of you might have recalled from earlier this term, the Open Forum hosted between student leaders and the administration provided some clarity to the Academy's otherwise cloudy progress on its sexual misconduct reporting policies. Students were able to critically interrogate and di-

rectly contribute to the Academy's reform.

On a final note, we must not let our Exeter community fall under the influence of systems that reward toxic masculinity. This election, we must take the necessary audacity to stand up against certain pipelines in our Student Council that empower candidates to assume offices on the Executive Board due to certain past office experiences they had. All candidates should avoid practicing performative activism over effective changes to the Academy's anti-racist policies for the sake of election. At the end of the day, regardless of who wins in the upcoming election, it is our obligation to hold Executive Board candidates accountable for their delivering on promises and representing us as a student body.

So this election season, vote Ale Murat for President.

From a STEM Student: Course Selections at Exeter

By CATHERINE WU '24

Waiting for the admissions lady to finish speaking with my mother during my interview were the longest minutes of my life. During those twenty-something minutes, I got up and drank three cups of water from the small dispenser, made an effort to greet the two other students also waiting for their interview, and even made a trip to the restroom to check myself out. Then, I finally noticed the Courses of Instructions booklets on the sofa tables. I picked one up from the large stack, curious to see what the booklet had to offer. As an eager eighth-grader longing to attend boarding school, I flipped through the pages to pass time, enthralled by all of the intriguing classes offered:

- BIO485: Marine Biology
- BIO586: Molecular Genetics
- CHE455: Building the Modern World: Chemistry of Smart Materials and Devices
- PHY640: Quantum Mechanics

I was in awe as I read about these sophisticated courses, especially since my local high school only

had maybe one-third of the number of courses offered here. But when I browsed that same booklet during our one-week add-drop period, I felt as if I'd hit a roadblock. The realization that students are only allowed to take five academic classes per term breaks me.

For most lowers, this translates to English, Math, Language, Science, and elective. Yet regarding this elective, a majority of us take a 300s history, a religion course, an arts elective, or a computer science credit. Yet as a STEM student, many of the Academy's course and graduation requirements provide difficulty when selecting courses of interest.

Math placement is a hassle for students who planned out our math journeys early on. Many students took Algebra and Geometry in their middle school years, only to be placed in a "Transition 2 Mathematics" course because of vectors during the placement test. Furthermore, the vague course titles such as "Integrated Mathematics," "Introduction to Calculus," and "Calculus - Enriched," are challenging for new students to navigate since the topics covered are often unspecified. And students who should have already fin-

ished Calculus BC by the tenth grade, instead have to go through the Exeter curriculum term by term and relearning concepts. In hopes of acceleration, they are left to fight the Academy's math department, communicating with administrators in hopes of acceleration, without success because of one placement test and the rigidity in the Academy's policies to accelerate mathematics.

Regarding sciences, it is challenging to examine the entire course catalog, planning out courses and electives for our four years at Exeter. It is a hassle knowing that we need to fit in a 200s, 300s, and another history requirement somewhere during our prep, lower, and senior years, taking away space from a year-long science course. It annoys me to be unable to drop language classes, like so many other students do after one term or one year, as language is another three-term course that counts as an elective. And for those who take one science prep and lower year respectively, we face a dilemma when working to figure out where to take Death Chem, the genetics sequence, and AP biology, when we simply don't have space in our schedules.

But aside from the standard year-long biology, chemistry, and physics courses including introductory and AP courses, our Academy stands out in our electives in the science curriculum. We have 13 biology electives, 3 chemistry electives, 8 physics electives, as well as an Earth and Planetary Science elective, and the BIO/CHE/PHY590 select topics elective. These electives all go in-depth in very specific areas of science, and some of them are courses that are not offered at any other schools anywhere else in the country. These courses are taught by faculty at the Academy with extensive knowledge in the sciences, and many of our science instructors have master's and bachelor's degrees from prestigious universities around the world. As students at the Academy, we gain comprehensive knowledge in these fields by learning from these teachers, and I truly admire our science department's range of courses offered to its students.

However, we just don't have space in our schedules to fit any of these electives until upper year. Yet upper year also includes English, Math, Language, US History, leaving us with

only one open format for an elective. Further, if we decide to take a "standard" year-long introductory or AP course, we virtually have no way of taking these science electives, perhaps until senior year, when many of us would much rather take an introductory ceramics course on top of college applications as opposed to a 500s biology elective.

Overall, I think the Academy has a wonderful array of courses and electives offered to its students. Students across the country who attend public schools wouldn't even dream of taking some of them until college. For so many prospective students, Exeter's extensive offerings and incredible faculty drew many of us to the Academy in the first place.

However, after attending the Academy for nearly 17 months now, I've come to realize that there is no way for any student to possibly take all of the courses they may be interested in from the course catalog. We are shouldered with too many classes to fulfill our diploma requirement for us to graduate, and too many advanced classes and AP courses to take for college sake, with only five allotted

classes per term.

In all, I hope that Phillips Exeter Academy could realize how unreasonable it is to allow its students only five courses per term. The Academy could loosen diploma requirements, so students have more freedom in selecting classes of actual interest to them instead of worrying about fulfilling a graduation credit. Or, perhaps revising the wording regarding class prerequisites and grade requirements written in the course catalog, and making it well known to students that these all can be easily overridden by an email to the department head if needed. Lastly, I would suggest making add-drop a longer period of time and announcing sooner notice, so (especially new) students can more thoroughly consider courses they would like to change and have more time to discuss with peers or advisors.

Looking back at the courses I noted down that day in the Admission office, with their fascinating course titles and descriptions, there are, unfortunately, barely any that I will be able to take and still successfully graduate with the Academy's numerous diploma requirements.

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.

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Haikus as a Storytelling Avenue

By NHAN PHAN '24

When talking about types of writing, many would think of narratives, sonnets, screenplays, or lyric writing. Few would put haikus into that list, but it is important that we recognize the power of haikus as an avenue of storytelling.

Traditionally a lens through which poets discuss and explore earth's natural bounties, haikus are unrhyming poems with 3 lines arranged in a 5-7-5 syllable structure (note that this rule doesn't have to be strictly followed). This short poetry form originated from Japan; it was originally the opening part of a larger Japanese poem called renga (which was a collaborative poem in which alternate stanzas were written by multiple poets in sequence). Haiku poetry often depicts specific, direct experiences in or of the natural world, and engagement of one's senses with the world. But what is it that makes haikus so powerful as a storytelling tool?

Haikus are able to paint a vivid picture in very few words. You might have heard your English teacher say that revision is the process that allows your piece to express more with fewer words. Haikus take that principle to heart. Japanese poets needed to distill complex scenes in nature to just the bare essential: focused elements that they want to highlight.

Here's an example of a scene that inspired my own haiku. I want you to close your eyes and experience this with me as I go through this moment with you, dear reader. Imagine you are hiking through the lush bamboo forests of Southeast Asia on a straight path. The skyline above you is a straight, vertical strait of sky outlined by lined-up bamboo on two sides. Rays of sunlight protrude through the bamboo columns; the forest is a giant, gorgeous green filter. Looking down, you see a small shoot protruding from the ground; the surrounding bamboo tower over it. Over time, the shoot reaches higher and higher, one sheath at a time, grows and joins its relatives in this forest. You take a moment to stop and close your eyes. You take in the world around you; you can smell the dewdrops trickling down bamboo leaves, the green



Courtesy of Wikipedia

moss, the forest's fresh, earthy scent. It is silent all around you. You are alone, in the middle of a bamboo path experiencing the quiet, serene nature that is so precious, so rare. Now open your eyes.

Now that you have the scene to work with, you may be tempted to include all of the imagery into as complex a haiku as you possibly can. However, remember that haiku is all about simplicity, minimalism, and making sure that every syllable counts. This is where the revision process kicks in. The process I personally use to write haiku is to re-write time and time again. Perhaps, if you highlight all of the imagery used in the previous paragraph and put them in a list, you will be able to narrow down the imagery you think is most vivid that speaks to the atmosphere of the

bamboo forest. What all haiku poets utilize is the value of action. In this case, I am specifically referring to verbs. What verbs can you choose to signify the growth of the bamboo shoot? The flowing of dewdrops? Note that it is also worth asking: what descriptions are essential to set the scene? All of those questions will help you narrow down on the scene you are describing and thus, create a significant haiku. Here's my example:

*a bamboo shoot sprouts
vivid green sunlight of
day
dewdrops trickle.*

Another famous example! Matsuo Bashō, born in 1694, was the most famous haiku poet during the Edo period in Japan. He was accredited with the creation of several types of poems and

gave rise to the popularity of haikus in the modern creative world. This is one of his most famous haikus, "old pond":

古池や蛙飛び込む水の音
ふるいけやかわずとびこむみずのおと

furu ike ya kawazu tobikomu mizu no oto

Or

old pond
frog leaps in
water's sound

This haiku poem illustrated clearly the power of storytelling, both literally and symbolically, that haikus innately have. Close your eyes and imagine the image that Bashō painted. "Old pond" – a static image. Visualize a clear, pristine pond without deformation

to the linear, reflective surface. Symbolically, the 'pond' also represents the subconscious mind, a subtle, gentle, undisturbed Eden that everyone holds within themselves. Bashō personified the 'pond' as 'old' to show the subconscious connection that existed within all of us long ago; humans share the intrinsic subconscious mind. Perhaps, it might be an homage to the notion of the hive mind, where a group of people become aware of the commonality and think and act as a community. The pond is made up of billions of droplets of water, which represents each human being; the bounds of the pond that keeps us all together may be a symbolic representation of the collective consciousness. "Frog leaps in" – a dynamic movement that disturbs the pond. The previously-linear surface

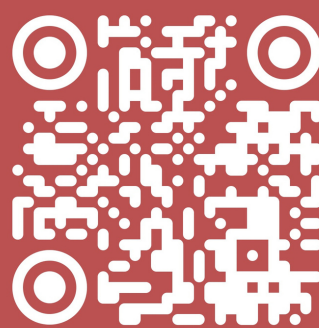
ripples as the frog dives head-first into the pond; ripple waves dissipate harmoniously across the pond surface. The 'frog' is the stimulus to the subconscious mind: the interaction between the conscious and the subconscious. It engages the 'pond,' or the subconscious mind, and engages us, you and I, to think about the connection we share as human beings. This connection, related to the aforementioned hive mind, being how you are reading my article in this particular moment, or how I am thinking of you when writing this article; perhaps, everything happens in sequence like the uniform ripple of the pond's surface. Lastly, "water's sound" presents an auditory image that describes the motion and the impact of the frog as it leaps. Imagine the ripples spreading across our subconscious connections; the 'water's sound' is a symbolic representation of that! These are specific sensory details that, if you were to actually imagine the scene, would enhance the experience. One has to truly immerse themselves into the reading in order to fully get the picture the author was striving to convey; and it is difficult because we, as readers, are preoccupied with our preconceived notions of how the world works (or how it should work). This is a prime example of how haikus can enable you to tell any story using nature imagery.

The process of writing a haiku can be satisfying. Writing haikus allows you to practice the discipline of imagination, scene-setting, and revision. Writing haikus will require you to recapture your experiences and recall and relive your sensory interactions with the world. Most often, storytelling haikus are small segments of your recalled experiences that tie in together to create the bigger picture of the world you saw from your eyes and how you perceived that version of reality. Haikus are a deeply personal sensory and descriptive adventure; above all, it is your engagement with the ripples of your subconscious 'pond.'



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Sports

Captains of the Week: Boys Varsity Swimming



Captains (from left to right) Hayden Giles, Ethan Van de Water, and Georgie Venci, assemble in front of the pool.

Joy Chi/The Exonian

By JOONYOUNG HEO and CJ SMITH

Boys' varsity swimming senior captains Ethan Van de Water, Georgie Venci, and Hayden Giles exhibit leadership and tenacity both in and out of the pool. Their work together has allowed them to guide the team to an undefeated season thus far.

Walking into a swim team practice, it's impossible to miss the atmosphere of energy that surrounds the pool. Swimmers moving up and down the lanes, giving each other high-fives, sharing smiles—the team never fails to exude positivity during their tough sets.

"Swimming is one of those things—it can be really hard if you're trying to do it all by yourself," E. Van de Water said. "So being able to work hard with a bunch of your friends in the pool every day is probably a highlight of the swim team for me."

Upper Andrew Van de Water agreed, highlighting the unique energy of the team. "I'd say the team's just really supportive," he said. "You know, sports can get very competitive, like you're fighting for the top

spots and you're trying to beat each other. But on our team, we're only focused on being the best team that we can. Because you can't win a meet by yourself—it's your entire team that can. So when somebody drops time or if they beat some record, we're all very supportive."

"Recently, it was one of my teammates' birthdays, and our coach has this tradition where if he could beat a certain time, we all get the day off," prep Rudd Day said. "So, someone pulled out an old suit and he got in the water. As soon as he dove off the blocks, we were all screaming our heads off, and banging kickboards against the blocks. He was able to beat the time, and it was probably the coolest thing that's happened at practice so far this year."

The team credited the captains for fostering an environment that encourages hard work, perseverance, and a willingness to swim as a team. "Our dual meet against St. John's Prep really showed how everyone is willing to put it on the line for the team. The captains lead the charge," boys' varsity swimming head coach Don Mills said.

Prep Ethan Guo de-

scribed the captains as cornerstones to the team itself. "The captains are like your go-to hype man," Guo said. "They're always there for everybody making sure everybody is doing their best, making sure everybody is okay. They're just really great role models for everybody on the team."

"The fact that they're in the pool with us, doing the training with us, is really the main difference between the captains and the coaches," A. Van de Water said. "Coach Mills is essentially trying to do all the same things that the captains are, but the captains are also experiencing what we're experiencing and they're giving feedback to the coaches. That makes the player-captain and player-coach dynamics different, in a good way."

The player-captain dynamic is also different in that the captains are with them outside the pool, maintaining the team spirit every day. "We all have a group chat that we share and Hayden, Georgie, and Ethan are constantly organizing stuff to do as a team," prep Henry Fipp said. "They'll be like, hey, let's go down to Las Olas guys, or let's

meet outside Elm. They're always hyping us up as a team, making sure we all know where to go."

Lower Charlie Gao elaborated on the captains' responsibilities to the team as well as their unique leadership styles. "The most important thing a captain can do is to make sure the team develops a sense of community. The captains do that really well... they create that camaraderie in the team."

The captains have done a great job of keeping the team together, in spite of some challenges. "During COVID, we couldn't swim in the pool, so our coach told us to go on a walk as a team, and we ended up going down to the Exeter River, which at the time was frozen over. And I just remember, the captains made the walk really nice. We had hot chocolate, and we were tossing these big chunks of ice onto the river to see how far they would go. That was an incredible bonding moment for the team," Fipp said.

In each of their practices, the dedication of the captains have shone through. "The captains help a lot with technique and sometimes give small pointers after

practices," Day said. "Hayden has a shoulder injury right now, so he's been having to sit out on some practices, but he always stays on the pool deck. Even when he can't swim, he is doing his part to make the team the best we can be."

"The other two captains, Ethan and Georgie, are always in the water. When we are in the middle of a tough set, they are always trying to motivate the younger guys, making sure we are giving it our best effort throughout the whole practice. It keeps me wanting to come back to the pool every day, ready to improve," Day said.

"I also work hard to advocate on behalf of the swimmers to coaches, if everyone is super exhausted, or getting tired during a practice," Venci said.

The captains have learned to model their leadership after past swim team captains. "I was a member of my swim team at my old high school, before coming to Exeter," E. Van de Water said. "I basically strive to be just like them. They were people who I could always ask a question to and I was never uncomfortable talking to them. So that's the role I'm trying to fill on our

swim team as well."

Giles reflected on how his role as a captain has affected his life outside of the pool. "I think it's made me be a little bit more aware of what's around me and of reaching out to kids that I wouldn't necessarily be inclined to reach out to otherwise... And I think that discipline comes along with being a captain, like showing up every single day with a smile on your face and just giving it your all leading through example like that I think has just added some discipline in my life," Giles said.

Venci concluded with a hopeful outlook on the rest of the season. "I hope to continue the positive attitude the team has right now facing homework, training, uncertainty and make the best of the rest of the season. Of course, being a team means staying connected beyond our designated term, so maintaining that sense of sportsmanship and support as we go into Spring Term and eventually the summer," Venci said.

Choate Bests Exeter Girls' Varsity Basketball

By MAGGIE CHANG and BEVERLY OLEKA

On Jan. 22, the girls' varsity basketball team played their first away game against Choate Rosemary Hall. Unfortunately, despite the team's thorough preparation and incredible enthusiasm, Exeter lost the game 31-57.

Girls' varsity basketball captain Ana Casey described the team's built-up energy after watching the junior varsity (JV) game. "Going into the game, we had a lot of energy. We were very ready because we watched the JV team beforehand and cheered on Anna, who was playing with JV but is also a part of our team. It was defi-

nately cool to have that bonding time as a team before the game because we usually just get off the bus and start playing immediately," she said.

Girls' varsity basketball head coach Katie Brule agreed. "The cheering brought us a lot of energy, which we channeled into a strong start against Choate in our game."

"Throughout the game, I felt as though we started with good, strong energy which began with our win at the tip-off," upper Bridgette Martin added.

"We knew that the game against Choate would be good and that they had beat Loomis Chaffee School, who we lost to at the beginning of the season - quite a big loss honestly," Casey

said. "With that in mind, we knew that it was gonna be a tough game, but we also knew that we are a different team now than we were when we played Loomis. We were all feeling ready to not only win, but also have a good game."

"[That said] I was really excited and proud of my friends on the court for trying really hard and playing their best. I think I got more excited throughout the game because of the energy that other people on the bench were bringing," prep Anna Holtz said. "By the end of the game, people were getting super excited, and even though we were losing, it was still really fun to watch."

But it's more than just

the energy that leads to an amazing game. The girls' varsity basketball team has been working hard both on and off the court to enhance not only their energy but also their offensive and defensive game play as well.

Casey commented on how she specifically saw the most improvement in the team's communication: "We were talking more [though there is] still space for improvement." In addition, "Our press break was really good. We've gotten flustered in other games...[but] in this game, we were able to break it pretty consistently and quickly, and we got a couple fast breaks off of it too, so overall our defense was really good," Casey said.

Casey's thoughts also echo those of Martin's. "On defense, our rotations were much more effective. However, many of our shots were not falling," Martin said.

"Personally, I realized that scoring must be made a priority because if we don't score we are unlikely to win," Martin continues.

Casey strongly agreed. "We [struggled] with scoring, and figuring out what our team flow is on offense...The team needs to rely less heavily on Jac, for scoring and we need to have other people step up [more] and be consistent in our shots to win games. Scoring - having consistent shots - is key," she said.

"If we could've made

around half our shots, we would've been in the running for a win. Honestly, if our team continues to play like how we did against Choate, we will be winning most/if not all our future games," Martin concluded.

Overall, the girls' varsity basketball team is growing stronger by the day. The team is eager to pull off some wins in their next games. "Our team is very much ready for our second win [against St. Paul's]" Casey announced.

"Go into each game believing we can win," Brule assured the girls. "I'm so proud of this team."

Athlete of the Week: Dominick Campbell

By LAURENKIM and STELLA SONG

Standing at six feet and nine inches tall, senior Dominick Campbell is hard to miss on the basketball court. Known amongst his teammates for his in-game versatility, Campbell also possesses an admirable work ethic. Pushing towards excellence on and off the court each practice, Campbell is an inspiration to his teammates and coaches.

Coming in as a new upper, Campbell quickly became an indispensable member of the boys' varsity basketball team. On the court, Campbell is a leader and a force to be reckoned with for the opposing team. "He can't be guarded down low and if he's on fire from three it'll be a long day," senior, close friend, and fellow teammate Chandler Pigge said.

Campbell started to play basketball in preschool, following in his parents' footsteps. "My parents played basketball in college, so I've always been around it," Campbell said. "I love everything about basketball. I love the lifelong friendships that I have made over the years. I love playing in front of crowds of people."

Sheer height and skill soon made Campbell a pivotal part of the varsity team. Pigge shares a funny story about meeting Campbell. "On Zoom, Dom was sitting down and I thought he was six feet, maybe 6 feet two inches at most, a guard in basketball. Then, I looked on social media and he is six feet nine inches and 250 pounds."

Campbell takes full advantage of his height when playing basketball. "Dom is a nightmare to so many people. He's got the size where he can go post someone up and score

down low, but he has got this skill where he can take someone off the dribble or knock down a shot. He is someone you want on your team and not to play against because he can do it all," boys' varsity basketball captain Josh Morissette said.

Upper teammate Paolo Belfiore concurred. "He is the anchor of the team, playing great defense and being a menace on the offensive side," Belfiore said.

Boys' varsity basketball coach Jay Tilton witnessed Campbell's growth over the last two years. "Dom's commitment to his physical development and ownership of his progress has been remarkable. He has played with a higher level of intensity on the defensive end and committed to working on the things that will make him a good college player," Tilton said.

When asked about what

he learned from playing basketball, Campbell put patience at the forefront. "With basketball, patience is key and I've put that concept into multiple aspects of my life."

Not only an outstanding player, Campbell also demonstrates great leadership abilities. "Dom is a quiet leader, but his steady presence, selflessness and ability to handle coaching shows true leadership," Tilton said.

"Dom has really helped me keep the team in line with our ultimate goal of hanging a banner. He's got an incredible work ethic, and he holds people accountable. He is able to use his presence to help our team towards our goal and help others remember our goal," Morissette added.

Senior and teammate Fawaz Omidia agreed. "He leads on the court. He is just really really positive but knows when to be serious and when to push each other.

We go at it and we compete a lot but then afterward we are still brothers and we are still teammates after and everything is fine so that is something I really enjoy about him," Omidia said.

Many also mentioned that Campbell contributes to the supportive team spirit. "He is so selfless. With what he has accomplished and where he is going, he could easily be selfish but every day in practice and in games he brings an energy that is sometimes scary but more so encouraging," Pigge said.

"I think a lot of people see him as a basketball player but he is a lot more than that," Omidia said. "On the way to practice or on the way to games, he's a lot of fun. He's great to talk to as well, we have a lot of really, really deep talks."

"Dom has a great sense of humor and can really dance,"

Tilton said.

Campbell's funny personality also makes him a loyal friend. "Dom is one of the best kids you will meet. He is funny, he is easy to talk to, and he is just someone that is going to have a smile and have a good time. He is someone who has been able to help me when I have struggled and someone to whom I have been able to open up. He is going to be in my life for the rest of my life, and I am grateful for that," Morissette said.

Campbell concluded by expressing his optimism about this season. "This year we have a really promising group and we have big goals ahead of us," he said. "Long way to go, but I am very optimistic."

Winter Track Dominates NHIAA Meet

By VIRSHRESTHA and LIANNAYANG

On Jan. 21, Exeter's boys' track team hosted their annual NHIAA home meet, the first meet back from winter break. The atmosphere was electric, helping propel many Exonians towards stellar performances.

Many runners and throwers expressed their excitement of competing after a long hiatus due to COVID-19 restrictions. "I haven't competed since last spring, so the contest was great for my development as an athlete and as my last year on the team,"

senior Sava Thurber said. "Of course, for this first meet, there was a mask mandate, but getting several schools in the field house was a nice taste of normalcy."

Lower Tanner Boulden agreed "This was my first real winter term meet ever, so the pressure and excitement for my shotput was at an all time high."

Runners discussed the effervescent environment within the field house. "This meet brought seven or eight schools from the area so it was packed. When people were cheering for someone, they were really cheering, and it was a great environ-

ment," lower Advay Nomula said.

Post-grad Kamran Murray agreed. "It gave a lot of people a glimpse of what this sport is like and how electric an atmosphere these track meets can have. Everyone was supporting each other and I hope the younger athletes felt this and are hungry for more."

In anticipation of the upcoming track meets, runners had been training hard in practices for weeks. "We had a hard interval workout the Saturday before which helped us prepare for the racing at the meet. I know for me, it was going to be my first

meet of the season, so I was looking forward to it a lot." Nomula shared.

Thurber additionally noted "a strong sense of leadership from the upperclassmen and several instances of mentorship directed toward the first-year teammates."

The practices paid off specifically within distance events, as Big Red dominated the boys' 1k, mile, and two-mile. Murray set a record in the boys two-mile with a time of 9 minutes and 37 seconds.

Many runners achieved a personal record (PR) during their meet. "My highlight of the meet was certainly the mile, in which I achieved

a seven-second PR," lower Michael Zhu said. "Bradley's dominance in that race was inspiring and the other Exonians participating in that race demonstrated great teamwork."

Nomula also shouted out his fellow teammates. "Byron had an amazing kick in the 1K and beat Tyler Sheedy, a fast guy from Dover. That 1K was a very good race to watch," Nomula said.

Runners are hopeful to continue improving throughout the season as well as continue to foster a deeper communal connection within the team. "I hope the rest of the season pans out like we have

planned and we start to have our peak performances in the coming weeks and show up at Andover and the postseason," Murray said.

The team is looking forward to developing further with the momentum from this meet. Thurber speaks of "hop[ing] to continue helping the underclassmen get acquainted with the Track culture and customs in order to foster a helpful environment." The future looks bright for Big Red track.



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Humor

Exeter Covid Variant

By CHENGYUEZHANG '24

A new COVID-19 variant has been discovered at Phillips Exeter Academy. This is a passionate and hard-working strain, yet it has not been recognized as a “variant of concern” by the World Health Organization.

The source of the variant still remains unknown. Students and faculty note the toxic fairy-

powder emitting from the walls (especially in the buildings since 1999) or a lethal and unidentified milky green chemical mixing into Exeter’s water source, but there are no conclusive answers yet.

The virus is known to weaken one’s immune system and very slowly (and unsurely) turn victims into a mix of robot, zombie, mermaid, and vampire.

The medical term is Rhombus Rombaidire. As of now, there aren’t any confirmed cases at the Academy due to the new variant’s long incubation period that can last anywhere from one month to four years. During the incubation period, symptoms differ from person to person, varying from an inability to finish homework, constantly losing one’s water bottle, drowsiness during tests, and/or forgetfulness towards club meeting times, etc. Once

symptoms begin to show, they are irreversible, unless one is lucky enough to find a yellow mechanic pencil buried under the layers of snow and ice (as the days grow longer, the cold grows stronger). In roughly three to four years, those who have contracted the virus (though there is no proof) will no longer look human.

If you are experiencing any of the symptoms listed above, you

have, without a doubt, contracted the virus. But fret not. Everyone around you has most definitely been infected with this pseudo/psycho-virus too (for months)! They survived until now, so you can do it too!

Best,
A forgetful person, who just lost their third water bottle in the year 2022.

Mad-Lib

By STELLASONG '25

Play with your friends! From Mad Libs Live: One player acts as the “reader” and asks the other players, who haven’t seen the story, to fill in the blanks with adjectives, nouns, exclamations, colors, adjectives, and more. These words are inserted into the blanks and then the story is read aloud to hilarious results. There are no winners or losers, only laughter.

Start Your Own Club

Want to learn more about (1) _____? Come join (2) _____ club! This is the perfect place for (3) _____ with fellow Exonians who share the same interest. We welcome students of all (4) _____. (5) _____ club meets every (6) _____ in (7) _____. See you there!
Prerequisite: (8) _____.

- | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. noun | 5. subject |
| 2. subject | 6. day and time |
| 3. present participle verb | 7. place |
| 4. plural noun | 8. noun phrase |

Best Dorm on Campus

(1) _____ is the best dorm on campus. It is across the street from (2) _____. With (3) _____ being its dorm shout, (4) _____ residents give off (5) _____ energy and positivity. There are a lot of (6) _____ in (7) _____, from (8) _____ to (9) _____ to (10) _____, you name it. This makes its proximity to (11) _____ particularly convenient. (12) _____ is also a huge part of its culture. Each term in particular, (13) _____ participates in (14) _____.

- | | |
|------------------|--------------------|
| 1. subject | 9. example of #6 |
| 2. place | 10. example of #6 |
| 3. dorm shout | 11. same as #2 |
| 4. subject | 12. noun |
| 5. adjective | 13. subject |
| 6. noun | 14. event |
| 7. subject | 15. a school event |
| 8. example of #6 | |

Andy’s Big Brain Campaign

The Crossword Corner: Mild Minis

By GBEMIGA SALU

	1	2	3	
4				5
6				
7				
	8			

- ACROSS**
 1 Dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane (abr.)
 4 Birthday units
 6 Louisiana wetland
 7 Defeats the dragon
 8 WWII Polish tankette
- DOWN**
 1 Handed out the cards
 2 Indigenous people of Borneo
 3 Helen, Bolton
 4 PEA affinity space for Black/Latinx guy
 5 Iffy

	1	2	3	
4	5			
6				
7				
8				

- ACROSS**
 1 U.K. Lawmakers
 4 Fast
 6 Barbershop quartet harmonizer
 7 *Wicked Game* singer Chris
 8 Rap duo of El-P and Killer Mike
- DOWN**
 1 Last name of the barely-disputed Queen of Rap’s stage name
 2 Perfluorooctanoic acid (abr.)
 3 Iron Man, Tony ___a___
 4 One way to cool coffee
 5 Kanye ___

	1	2	3	
4	5			
6				
7				
8				

- ACROSS**
 1 2012 Super Bowl MVP Manning
 4 ___ History Month
 6 Slightly misspelled *Melodrama* singer
 7 Extremely light wood
 8 Vague quantity
- DOWN**
 1 On time
 2 TV screen options
 3 Where I might go for furniture...and meatballs!
 4 Bounty hunter Fett, or chewy tapioca balls
 5 Money lent

1	2	3
4		
5		
6		

- ACROSS**
 1 6 try guessing game, ___dle
 4 Email address ender
 5 Young chap
 6 Stain with color
- DOWN**
 1 Join metal to metal
 2 Anita of jazz
 3 Ill-mannered

1	2	3
4		
5		
6		

- ACROSS**
 1 *Euphoria* narrator
 4 VA county ___ington
 5 NAACP co-founder Du Bois
 6 LA baseball team, not the Dodgers
- DOWN**
 1 A baby might start to c___
 2 Common fertilizer compound
 3 British actor Idris