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Students gather in the Assembly Hall.

Courtesy of @phillipsexeter

Academy Instates New Assembly Attendance Policy

By PHIN GIBBS and FORREST ZENG

was launched as a result of decreasing attendance at assemblies.

On April 14, the Academy began a new pilot program regarding attendance at assembly. The pilot program was originally set to take place over two assemblies, but has since been extended indefinitely. The program requires students to sit with their advisory in assigned seating areas where attendance is taken by individual advisors. The new pilot program

In an email to the student body, Dean of Students Russell Weatherspoon stated, “Assembly is a required appointment. Our role as an audience is to give presenters our attention and, when there’s an opportunity, to ask questions or provide reactions, even challenges.”

Students’ opinions on the new pilot program

Students Attend Asian American Footsteps Conference

By ETHAN DING, AMY LIN and ELAINE QIAO

On Sunday, April 16, 20 Exonians participated in the Asian American Footsteps Conference (AAFC) at St. Paul’s School. Over the course of the conference, participants discussed various issues that Asian-identifying students across New England boarding schools face.

The objective of the conference was to establish a community where Asian students could immerse themselves and gain knowledge about their shared cultures. The yearly event comprised a range of workshops and keynote speeches, many of which were organized and conducted by students. Around 400 students from independent schools across New England came together this year for discussions under the theme of “Building Bridges: Connecting our Heritage and Future.”

Exonians departed early in the morning and arrived at St. Paul’s School at around 9:00 a.m. A detailed itinerary with workshop schedules and classroom assignments was emailed to participants, in addition to QR codes in several buildings allowing access to the schedule. Wi-Fi logins and maps were also offered. “The event began with an opening speech, given by student leaders at St. Paul’s School, since the event was mainly student-organized,” upper Ayaan Akhtar said. “After that, they had a small orchestral performance before we broke off.”

The day consisted mainly of workshops,

with each focusing on a specific, relevant topic for Asian students. “My first workshop focused on Asian art, and I got to practice calligraphy, which was something I hadn’t experimented with a lot before,” upper Coco Kim said. “It was really interesting to interact with that aspect of Asian culture.”

“A workshop I attended was titled ‘Am I good enough?’ and it explored imposter syndrome among Asian students at boarding schools,” prep Allegra Lai said. “It was a heavy topic, but I think it helped a lot of us realize that we were experiencing it. Many

“It was a heavy topic, but I think it helped a lot of us realize that we were experiencing it.”

of us didn’t know that it was imposter syndrome until it was voiced out during the workshop. The workshop brought that to light, and it was very helpful, especially for some other schools who don’t talk about that kind of topic very often.”

“My first workshop focused on the hypersexualization and objectification of Asian Americans in modern media,” lower Ava Helbig said. “It was very informative, and I could feel how the speaker was very confident in the way she spoke and passionate about the topic.”

As a student presenter for one of the workshops, Akhtar noted

CONFERENCE, 3

Seniors Participate in Annual Senior Assassin Game

By PHIN GIBBS and JOONYOUNG HEO

For the past few weeks, the Academy witnessed the annual game of Senior Assassin — a frenzy of seniors armed with water pistols running across the quads, scampering down stairs, and ducking behind trees.

Senior Assassin is a springtime tradition for the senior class that started in 2022. Each player is assigned to tag another player with water, and the pairings are undisclosed. A player is out of the game when they are tagged. Thereafter, the perpetrator is awarded a point and reassigned to a new target. The game will thus continue until one player is left.

Generally, this year’s participant pool has found Senior Assassin greatly enjoyable. “There was so much paranoia, it felt apocalyptic,” senior Angela Zhang said. “First morning I walk across campus and I think I see my assassin, so I hid behind a tree for three minutes. It was the most humiliating moment of my life, because here I am hugging a tree just to avoid getting tagged. I got taken out after scoring two kills, but it was so much fun to watch all the seniors freak out and run across campus.”

“I don’t think I’ve run so much in one week before,” senior Minseo Kim said. “It definitely helps with exercise, for one. The game can get a bit stressful, but it’s really exciting. Tagging Cooper was absolutely insane because I had been strategizing all kinds of ways to try and get him for a while. And I’m thankful to the admin for their hard work on updating the game day to day.”

“I feel like it connects you with the community,” senior Max Chuang said. “You get to talk to a lot of people and try to find out information. It was a lot of fun figuring out unique ways to get around campus.”

Fun was a theme for everyone involved, regardless of how long they lasted. “I had a great experience,” senior Tucker Gibbs said. “I was only in for two days, and that was very, very sad. But it was a lot of fun regardless. I really enjoyed figuring out who had who and tracking down the three people I killed. A fantastic time all around.”

“It was fun while I was in the game,” senior Hannah Rubin said. “I lasted for about half a day, but I enjoyed walking outside between classes and feeling like I always had to watch my back, because someone could come up behind me at any moment. But that excitement was also cut short. I was just about to get my target when someone else got me first. Shame.”

By Instagram poll, some players were even awarded a second chance in the spirit of fun. “I was on the prowl at 7:15 a.m. on the first day when someone dumped a cup of water over my head,” senior Kaitlin Clark said. “I’d never seen that person in my life. Luckily, I got another chance. I spent an entire Sunday doing my homework by the big window on the second floor of the gym, waiting for Will Hackett to show up. I even made a TikTok. In the end, the big man outran me like a primal ape, but I did get him the next day.”

For some, however, playing the game has come at a cost. “People are injuring themselves,”

- 1st Cooper Burn
- 2nd Minseo Kim
- 3rd Maxwell Li

Zhang said. “They go far in their attempts to win the whole thing. People are getting black eyes, and some guy broke his leg. That’s not the game’s or the organizer’s fault — it’s just reflective of the senior class’ drive to win everything.”

Chuang was one of those injured. “I was running from my assassin, Kate Nixon,” he said. “My friends and I were just going to the Assembly Hall when she came running up the stairs. So I jumped off the ledge from the back of the Academy Building near Mr. Ibbotson’s classroom. It was like 9:00 p.m. and there were definitely branches and dirt all over the floor. So, I landed weirdly and broke both my tibia and fibula.”

In light of such injuries and school rules, the Academy administration has taken an active role in moderating the game. In April, many faculty members reported to the Deans’ Office that seniors were creating a mess with water indoors, subsequently detailed as an official rule violation on Instagram. The use of water in general has been made very limited. Furthermore, following concerns from Campus Safety, seniors were barred from using “water guns shaped like actual guns,” as the game organizer announced.

Participants had mixed reactions to the new policy. “I really wish they’d allow us to use water come May,” Gibbs said. “Water makes it fun, and you don’t need to be able to run super fast. You just have to be sneaky. Now that’s going to change, so I hope we can find a better compromise than completely banning water.”

“Instead of banning the water, I wish they would’ve just made sure people are using it in an appropriate way,” Rubin said. “That’s better than getting rid of water guns altogether. Water makes it fun, especially now that it’s so nice outside.”

On the other hand, players understood certain rule changes to the game. “It’s understandable to not want us to use things that look like actual guns,” Zhang said. “We’re privileged enough at Exeter to be able to run around with water guns and have fun, but a lot of people aren’t. I’m thinking about all the police brutality cases and how innocent children have been murdered by police because they were thought to be holding real guns, when really they were just holding toy or water guns. So I do see why we shouldn’t use gun-looking water guns — and it’s an easy fix, since Super Soakers are not technically guns.”

At the end of the day, however, these abrupt rule changes have not detracted from general fun for most participants. “I know some things got rough and some people broke the rules, but it really was fun,” Kim said.

The ultimate winner, announced on April 27 through the @thegameatexeter Instagram account, was senior Cooper Burn with 11 points, six tags, 1 ham. He was the second to last standing. In second place was senior Minseo Kim, and in third place was senior Maxwell Li. All three finalists received various prizes in their mailbox. A second iteration of the game looks to continue in May.

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New Assembly Attendance Policy Cont.

were generally negative. Because the Assembly Hall reached maximum capacity, some students were situated in the Latin Study next door, where they watched the assembly through a projector screen. Lower Jaylen Bennett, who sat with his advisory in the Latin Study, said, "The students that were in there weren't really focused on the assembly. A lot of them were on their phones and doing their homework."

"[Watching assembly in from the Latin Study] would be an unfortunate situation," lower Sarah Huang added. "It is unfair to those students. The quality of the video recording is low and you can't hear what they're saying. It doesn't foster a sense of community if you're not sitting with the rest of the school."

Reflecting on the crowded space, upper Corinne Morrison said, "I really dislike it, and not because I have to

come to assembly, but I think just because of the space. There's no space

"There's no space for anybody and it's really hard to enjoy assembly now."

for anybody and it's really hard to enjoy assembly now."

Students report feeling a decreased sense of freedom in the new pilot program. Morrison said, "There's people keeping tabs on you all the time. It can be a good thing, but I feel like it's a little too much right now. We should be responsible to bring ourselves to assembly without an adult doing it for us."

Lower Anneliese Conine agreed, "I think that the new Assembly policy makes Assembly seem less like something

that we're supposed to enjoy and learn from and more of something that's required, and harsh. It feels almost like a punishment."

Advisors generally felt that the new system is important for encouraging assembly attendance. Instructor in Religion Austin Washington said, "I think the policy is helpful for making sure students are encouraged to participate in the assemblies that Exeter offers. The policy helps us underline the importance and the value, probably

"The policy helps us underline the importance and the value, probably more than anything else, the value of these kinds of gatherings on our student

population."

In regard to the overflow of students in the Assembly Hall, Washington said, "The school recognizes that the Assembly Hall is too small. The Assembly Hall capacity is one of the topics that's brought up most when thinking about school renovations. It's a shame because the students can't fit in the Assembly Hall to listen to the speakers that come in."

However, to Instructor in Music Kristofer Johnson, this system is a way to hold students responsible for their own attendance. "There is more accountability in this new system and students know that they will be accountable for showing up every time," Johnson added. "It is a response to the fact that assembly attendance has been less than stellar."

The pilot program was evaluated after two Assemblies and the

Academy determined that they would be continuing the program.

Some students

"Watching these people discuss real issues with high school students is an incredible kind of privilege. I don't want students to undervalue the significance of this opportunity."

predicted this continuation. "I don't think it'll affect Assembly attendance unless we actually continue doing this." Huang said. "If next year they removed this, in the beginning of the year, all the people are going to go, and then of course towards the end of the year people get more lenient and stop going. Unless they continue enforcing this attendance

policy, I don't think that this policy is going to affect the Assembly."

Conine agreed, mentioning that people might be there just for the attendance mark. "More people will be there because they don't want to get unexcused absences, but you have to think about how many people are actually paying attention," Conine said. "I think that more people will show up but less people will be paying attention."

Washington stressed the scope of learning that comes with assembly and his urge to students to attend. "As someone who was new to the Academy, looking at who came to assembly was kind of mind boggling," Washington said. "Watching these people discuss real issues with high school students is an incredible kind of privilege. I don't want students to undervalue the significance of this opportunity."



Students gather in the Assembly Hall.

Courtesy of @phillipsexeter

Asian American Footsteps Conference Cont.

how the participants of the conference came from many different backgrounds.

"We led our workshop multiple times, and for each run we had a completely different group of students attend," Akhtar said. "I remember having a great discussion with a few Bangladeshi students and Indian students, all from different schools."

While presenting, Akhtar made sure that the presentation would be as inclusive as possible for the attendees and made an effort not to generalize. "A point to consider for our project was that it was important to differentiate between the diverse backgrounds that students come from, for example, Indian students and Pakistani students," Akhtar said. "In spaces on our campus such as

Asian Voices or SubCon club, identities become

"AAFC is an amazing chance for students to share a psychologically safe space with others who can validate and affirm them through lived experiences."

homogenized, so we have to find the cultural differences between us and define them so we don't lose our identities."

The event also centered around having students meet others in order to bond over their experiences. Participants observed that even at lunch, there was continuous interactions

between students.

"Lunch was in a large gymnasium, and we were assigned to sit at the tables with students from the other schools so that we could meet new people," Helbig said.

"I appreciated the way the organizers planned lunch. I was able to get to know some great people and make a few friends," Kim said.

"After a few conferences online due to the pandemic, it was powerful to finally all be back together again. AAFC is an amazing chance for students to share a psychologically safe space with others who can validate and affirm them through lived experiences. Students can see themselves reflected in the program presenters and topics," Director of Counseling and

Psychological Services Szu-Hui Lee said. "While we had over 20 PEA students attend this year, some schools only had one

"...it was critical for them to connect with other students and be part of this larger sphere of support."

or two students attend. For those students, it was critical for them to connect with other students and be part of this larger sphere of support."

Many attendees consider the conference an informative experience. "Looking back, I think the event was successful because it provided a space for people who have

similar experiences to connect, grow, and learn," Helbig said. "I took away that even though we study at different schools and the challenges we face might feel unique, that doesn't mean you don't have people who understand and will support you."

Akhtar shared similar sentiments. "We learned a lot about the depth of the Asian American struggle on boarding school campuses and how nuanced it can be. I don't think this is a conference that is going to lose momentum. Even after the pandemic, it came back strong. We had a really strong conference on that Sunday," Akhtar said.

"Even though there were already so many people this year, I hope that there are more people who are willing to join and share their experiences so

"Everyone had different stories, even though we were all Asians."

we can meet even more people and build more bridges," Lai said. "I realized I wasn't alone, and I felt that it was fantastic that I could interact with so many different people, all with their unique experiences. Everyone had different stories, even though we were all Asians. It was a great experience to meet and talk to so many people that identified like me."

» SOTW

Read about this week's Senior of the Week: Jacqueline Subkhanberdina, 5.

» FOTW

Read about this week's Faculty of the Week: Jason BreMiller, 4.

» TBTN

Read about the Academy's annual Take Back the Night event, 3.

Academy Holds Annual Take Back the Night Event

By ELLE PERRY and ELAINE QIAO

Take Back the Night, a worldwide movement standing in solidarity with survivors of sexual assault and fighting all forms of sexual violence, has become an annual tradition at the Academy. On Saturday, April 15, the third-ever Take Back the Night took place on the Academic Quad.

On the Thursday before, Exonians Against Sexual Assault (EASA) screened a video at assembly which explained Take Back the Night, what the movement meant to students across campus, and also featured numerous musical performances. On the day of the event, clubs and sports teams held booths with activities and information spreading awareness of sexual assault and violence as well as providing support and community for survivors. EASA handed out event pins and wristbands, while HAVEN, New Hampshire's largest sexual and domestic violence prevention and support services agency, held a booth offering resources and support.

Simultaneously, screenings of the 2022 and 2023 Take Back the Night films were held during the event

of Take Back the Night at the Academy. "To me, Take Back the Night was kind of a moment to slow down," Malhotra said. "I think the video reflected a lot of nice ideas about what Take Back the Night is. It is all about the community, which is why we asked the community what Take Back the Night means to them. It's a moment for the whole community to come together, to reflect on ways that they've impacted or they've been impacted, or ways that people they know have been impacted in one way or another."

"This topic is something that everybody should care about," Malhotra continued. "Sexual assault is very real and it affects you whether or not you want to believe that it exists. This is why we have this event — to show everybody on this campus that this topic is real. This issue is real, it exists, you need to face it, you need to come together and build a community that accepts that this is an issue that we need to all work on."

"Take Back the Night is really a great way of showing your support and solidarity for victims and survivors of sexual assault, sexual abuse and sexual violence," upper Lucy Reading



Students look at artwork.

Joy Chi / The Exonian

off to people as you may feel in the moment. Also, I think the event was trying to help prevent people [from] getting into those types of relationships beforehand," Reading continued, referencing the Red Flag Green Flag booth. "Then [there were] just more fun things like the beads in the hair, and also the T-shirts were always [a] really, really amazing part [of Take Back

on campus and showing the interest and effort of a lot of people who care," Murphy said, echoing Reading.

"At Exeter, Take Back the Night is a reminder," upper Aavik Wadivkar said. "It's a reminder to ensure [that] campus is a safe space against sexual assault, a reminder to be aware of the violence that happens in the world and in our community, and it's a reminder to take a stand against all forms of sexual violence by listening to survivors and guaranteeing that their voices are heard and not silenced. [It's] a commitment to a better Exeter and a better world."

Lower Natalie Jebraeli agreed. "Take Back the Night...is a teaching opportunity and a safe space. We need to normalize these conversations to make a more safe environment for survivors to celebrate their strength."

The planning of Take Back the Night took the effort of many faculty and students across campus.

"Planning took a lot of moving parts," upper and EASA and Feminist Union co-head Stacy Chen said. "We host the event annually, so we were anticipating it for a while. But we had a lot to do beforehand. We met to talk about decorations, setup, Clotheslines Project, even little details like music. We also had to reach out to get all the clubs sorted. Logistics were tedious, but didn't take too long thanks to all the help we had from adults," Chen explained.

"I think a month or so ago, we started planning out the event and actually doing all the details," Malhotra added. "We did a lot of work

with Dr. Palmer. She's been super helpful in putting this event together. In terms of the video, which was another big piece of Take Back the Night, a lot of help came from Kevin, Aavik and Carter. They were kind of the production team for that and we did a lot of work with them."

"I worked with Ms. McGahie and Dr. Palmer for the video," upper Kevin Treehan said. "They provided the script and oversight of the production. Lower Ian Kim was my production assistant, so he helped with the cameras and stuff on set. It was a pretty collaborative effort."

"For the video, the primary drivers were Ms. McGahie and Dr. Palmer, who kept us on top of the filming schedule and cast list," Wadivkar explained. "They maintained organization and communication between the filming team and EASA co-heads, as well as ensuring everything was done in time. I understand that Dr. Ullah reviewed and confirmed the scripts, among some planning for cinematography. Additionally, all three along with Dr. Martin Fox were present and aiding with setup and cleanup for the actual event, as well as keeping things running smoothly."

"I hope that we have a chance to recognize and thank everyone involved in the process," Wadivkar continued. "The EASA co-heads, Stacy Chen, Maya Cohen, Riley Jones, and Nupur Malhotra, were all incredible with their work in organizing and leading the event...I only hope next year goes as well as this year

— perhaps even better."

"I think every single year, the Clothesline Project is always probably the most well executed thing," Reading said. "Especially whenever anyone can go up and just write what they want to say on T-shirts. I think that that's just such an impactful part. I really like that they continued to have this from last year."

Students also recounted their favorite parts of the event. "I think my favorite part was whenever I was helping to run the Walk a Mile in Her Shoes booth, and Aavik was wearing the heels for over an hour," Reading continued. "It's not that he was walking a mile per se, but just the fact that he stayed in them. It was such a joyous moment coming from...awareness and empathy. And I thought that that was really funny."

"While I did love the Walk a Mile in Her Shoes booth — quite enlightening for someone who doesn't wear heels — my favorite part would have to be the T-shirts, hung by the trees and illuminated by string lights," Wadivkar said. "These shirts all included intensely powerful messages and illustrations, from past years as well as this year, about raising sexual assault awareness, fighting back against rape and violence, listening to survivors and their stories, among many other equally significant messages."

"Honestly, when I was at Take Back the Night, I think that Saturday was probably one of my favorite days of my life," Malhotra said. "It was just so lovely to see everybody come together. I think within the first 15 minutes I was there, I could already feel tears coming to my eyes, just looking at people setting up their tables and everybody wanted to help...We all worked so hard to put this together, and seeing other people also pitch in and...be so excited about this...was so lovely."

Upper Gigi Lannon agreed. "My favorite part was seeing all the people coming, smiling, and just supporting an important cause together [while] being able to have a good time with it," she said.

When asked about room for improvement, Reading said, "I think it wasn't really announced too far in advance, so I feel like people didn't really have it on their radars. There was already a very large outcome, but I feel like there could have been a larger one if it was announced earlier."

Murphy agreed. "I think



Students design T-shirts.

Joy Chi / The Exonian

in the Forum. Students created T-shirts addressing sexual violence for the Clothesline Project, sending an array of supportive messages to survivors along with shirts from previous years. Gelato was offered in four flavors.

EASA co-head and upper Nupur Malhotra reflected on the significance

said. Reading helped run the Red Flag Green Flag booth, giving participants chances to write what they thought were indications of a healthy versus unhealthy relationship.

"I think by having a whole school-wide event, it really showed that all different types of people are there supporting you and that you don't have to feel as closed

the Night]."

Upper Eden Murphy helped run the Red Flag Green Flag booth as well as Walk a Mile in Her Shoes, an event offering heels for participants to wear as a symbol for empathy and solidarity for survivors. "I think Take Back the Night is a good way of contributing to a supportive community



Some designs of T-shirts.

Joy Chi / The Exonian

Take Back the Night: *A Photo Essay*

Images Courtesy of Joy Chi



Senior of the Week: Jacqueline Subkhanberdina



By BELLA JIN, ROX PARK and HEMANISTALLARD

On a chilly Monday night in Bancroft Hall, every resident is met with a warm smile and a fun check-in question, courtesy of senior and proctor Jacqueline Subkhanberdina. Each one is slightly different. What's your favorite body of water? Are you more of a floor or chair person? Regardless, every answer leaves Bancroft residents feeling warmer and even more at home.

Subkhanberdina's family hails from Kazakhstan, but all four of her older sisters attended boarding high school in the United States. "[My parents] didn't necessarily want us to go to boarding school," Subkhanberdina reminisced. "It was just something that my oldest sister did, and she had a really great experience."

Subkhanberdina followed her sister, Shantelle, to the Academy, and her love for the campus and its atmosphere only grew after she toured the school. "What really drew me to Exeter was also how diverse it was and the kinds of kids from all over the world that it attracts. There's so much that's offered here, and I wanted more," Subkhanberdina said.

Growing up, Subkhanberdina lived in many countries worldwide, including the United Kingdom and France. "In terms of language, media, etcetera, [coming to the United States] wasn't a culture shock, but it was my first time living and spending a long amount of time here," Subkhanberdina said. "It was just little things. I didn't know about sports teams or use Fahrenheit — that was definitely a shift. [But] in general, I also noticed this openness and friendliness that I hadn't experienced as much before."

Being the middle of nine siblings also imbued Sub-

khanberdina with a deep appreciation for family. Her younger brother and prep Janibek Subkhanberdin fondly recalled moments traveling with her. "She keeps everything under control but isn't stressful and is just very fun to be around. [She] jokes and has conversations about really anything," Subkhanberdin said.

Senior Zoë Chang also credited her ability to connect with people of all ages to her many younger siblings. "One thing that I love is how she interacts with kids," Chang said. "She just gets along so well with younger people, but also with older people and everyone in between. Being able to have a genuine conversation with somebody of any age is incredible."

Subkhanberdina's academic pursuits at the Academy have largely been related to the arts, both visual and performing. "I love the art department at Exeter so much," she said. "I just spent a lot of time here painting. I love working with oils and multimedia components."

"Once, I did this portrait and then added tea leaves into the background. My room has this little art nook, so I just like to mess around with watercolor and other mediums. It's definitely like a stress reliever for me," she added.

During break times, Subkhanberdina loves to spend time in peace. She usually frequents the art studio to work on an unfinished project or goes on picnics with her friends during the spring. She also takes regular walks to the farmers market. "There's this really wonderful booth at the farmers market with this Ukrainian woman who sells really good food, which is kind of similar to home food for me just because it's like post-Soviet cuisine," Subkhanberdina said.

Subkhanberdina has also participated in productions by the theater department, including *The Wolves*. "That was just another creative outlet," she said.

Outside the classroom, Subkhanberdina also flourishes. She holds many roles on campus, including being Editor-in-Chief of PEAN, an International Student Alliance (ISA) board member, and Editor-in-Chief of *The Phillips Exeter Asian*. When asked about her role in PEAN, Subkhanberdina said, "I was first an Art Associate. Then I became an Ads Editor, and I'm Editor-in-Chief this year. I love having that creative liberty and being able to create this beautiful book...to hold onto for the rest of your life."

"I was just naturally drawn to a lot of identity-based clubs and groups when I first came," Subkhanberdina continued. "Coming to Exeter was actually really nice because I got to connect with the Asian community here, and through doing that, I found a stronger sense of self."

Upper Nhan Phan has worked with Subkhanberdina frequently in their shared leadership positions in the Office of Multicultural Affairs (OMA) — for example, the Asian Advisory Board (AAB) and ISA, which recently collaborated to organize the AAB x ISA Night Market. "She has been able to realize a vision of whatever she does, and she turns it into reality," Phan said. "She is motivated and still able to have some fun in the process."

Subkhanberdina's friends also emphasized her passionate drive and ability to make ideas come to life. "I admire her creativity and her ability to string words together," Chang said. "Sometimes it's not words that she uses, but art or paint. I always admire

people who are able to use whatever form of expression they can to convey something."

"Jacqueline is a charismatic leader," senior Lara Muyombwe said. "She's humble and honest and kind, and she brings with her an awareness of the beauty and intricacies of life. Every simple thing is a pleasure. Jacqueline is a natural-born leader in the way [that] she compels others to rethink the beauties of life."

When asked to describe her in one word, her friends and family had an array of different ideas — all surrounding her charismatic, bold character.

"Jacqueline is a very whimsical person," upper Amber Zou said. "She's just

"There's no one else I've met that is just so pure. She's down to earth."

so pure-hearted, kind, and hardworking and such a good person. There's no one else I've met that is just so pure. She's down to earth."

Her brother Subkhanberdin shared a similar belief. "I would use the word 'individual,' because she seems very herself. She is very special, as her own unique person that does her own unique things in her own unique way," he said.

Phan echoed Subkhanberdin's sentiment. "She is bold. She knows what she has to do. She's not afraid to be an active team player. She has always exhibited [these qualities], she's continuing to, and since it's her senior year, she's having a lot of fun. We're all here for it."

However, others revealed that Subkhanberdina has

grown and changed in other ways.

"I've seen her become a lot more sure of herself," senior Maya Cohen said. "I've seen her experiment with how she dresses and how she acts and gain a lot of sureness of herself and her place. She's just like, 'I'm here. This is my space.' That's really cool to see."

Subkhanberdina has left a strong impression on the people around her by forming meaningful relationships. "She's done so much, but she's so humble and very compassionate about everyone in every situation," Cohen said. "I've seen her interact with so many different people, and she just knows how to calm people down but also be very open about herself in a way that makes her very welcoming."

"There are lots of situations where there's something's happening, or we need to figure something out," Cohen continued. "It only takes her two seconds before she's snapped in, and she knows what she's doing, what needs to happen. And it gets done. That's a really interesting thing that took me a long time to learn about her — she's so good at dealing with on-the-cuff situations."

"I admire her mindset and ability to forgive or resolve conflicts," Subkhanberdin echoed. "My favorite thing about Jacqueline is how she is never truly judgmental in a way that hurts other people. It lets me and a lot of other people talk to her honestly. She is a really nice, kind, refreshing person to talk to who is there and supports you when you really need it."

For Subkhanberdina, life is best enjoyed through small moments with the people around her. "My most memorable experiences are with people around me...because Exeter is a bit of an isolated campus," Subkhanberdina said. "You are kind of forced to make the most of simple joys to make sense of life."

In addition to her many other positions, Subkhanberdina is a gem to the proctor team in Bancroft Hall. "Bancroft has grown over the past few years to become such a genuine home away from home for me," Subkhanberdina said.

She described how her aspiration to become a proctor came from the previous proctor team. "The proctors last year really helped me in so many ways," Subkhanberdina continued. "They gave me a sense of comfort in a big school, a big country, and a big sort of unfamiliar place. I really wanted to continue that when I applied for proctor, and I just love connecting with my dorm so much."

Instructor in Science Katherine Hernandez, Subkhanberdina's adviser and dorm head of Bancroft Hall, also commented on her role as a leader. "Something I really appreciate about Jacqueline, especially in [faculty-proctor] meetings, is [how she] creat[es] spaces that are affirming and welcoming for others. It's really central to the work that Jacqueline does."

Subkhanberdina recounted her favorite proctor memory. "A couple [of] months ago, we organized this sort of

dorm EP night with the dorm faculty," she said. "Mr. Moriarty bought us treats, tea, and hot chocolate. I reached out to people who would want to perform, play the guitar, or sing on the common room floor."

Lower Aven Burney also remembered the event. "Eventually, we're all sitting on the floor of the common room, both of us are playing the guitar, everyone's singing, and Mr. Moriarty is also playing the guitar and singing. That was just such a wholesome little Bancroft event, and it was great to sing and perform with her."

In her time as a proctor and Bancroft resident, Subkhanberdina has impacted the lives of so many students in her dorm. "She's somebody who models through her own example, not just academically but in terms of community engagement. She's very level-headed, fair, thoughtful, and always, always centering the right thing," Hernandez said.

"When I first came to Bancroft last year as a prep, I was very scared," Burney said. "She made the space very welcoming. She's such a great listener, just one of those types of people where you could tell her whatever, and she'll listen and be very responsive and give good advice."

Hernandez also noted Subkhanberdina's nurturing nature. "She likes to call the dorm kiddos chickies, and she's always very warm. I say this word quite specifically, but she has a very maternal way about her that's deeply caring and protective," Hernandez said.

"She's just very forward and personable," Zou added. "Even people she's just met, like the preps or lowers. She's still able to just be friends with them while also exhibiting leadership when necessary to be a proctor."

Chang expressed agreement with Zou. "Whenever I'm in her room, she always has lower classmen and upperclassmen there. She's able to interact with fluency, and I think other people recognize that and are drawn to her because of it. With each conversation she has with someone, she's leaving some sort of a legacy with them."

That is something that many people agree with. "Jacqueline leaves behind a legacy of maturity and thoughtfulness," Muyombwe said. "She is a leader and an activist and a friend and a kind companion, and it has been very much noticed. She is an integral part of Exeter."

Subkhanberdina's friends have full confidence in her future. "I'm just so proud that she can go out and just be herself," Cohen said. "I know that in college, she's going to just be unequivocally herself, really in every way."

"She's open to just experiencing life and not restraining herself to anything in particular," Chang added. "Just knowing how she's grown these past four years, Jacqueline likes to just let life take her where it goes. She's going to do something amazing for sure."

Take Back the Night Cont.

that everything went pretty well, but maybe for next year, more advertising leading up to the event would get more people to participate. I didn't know much until pretty last minute."

"I think it was nice that it was outside and there was a lot of space for people," Lannon said. "But I feel like the timing [of the event] was a little bit off. It was earlier

in the day...but it was also cool when it was dark out too. I think broadcasting at a time where more people can come would be better for the future."

Wadivkar expressed a desire for Exeter's movement to expand. "I believe that a drawback to the boarding experience is that Exeter tends to be a kind of bubble...While it is import-

ant to emphasize the meaning and relevance of Take Back the Night to our community, I hope that Exeter can collaborate or somehow reach outside the scope of our school to expand [our] movement. This may involve reaching out to the Take Back the Night Foundation to become a chapter, collaborating with other boarding schools, partici-

pating in protests in nearby towns, and raising awareness outside of our bubble," Wadivkar said.

"That being said, this year's event was fantastic, and I understand that reaching out of Exeter also limits us to the whims of other organizations. I hope that regardless of expansion, Exeter's chapter of Take Back the Night remains the in-

credible event it is year after year," Wadivkar added.

EASA also emphasized the need for action. "Take Back the Night is a time for the community to come together, but the community also needs to take action," Malhotra said. "How can we make Exeter a safe space? How can we ensure that people on this campus don't have to be scared walking

into their classrooms? You should be able to feel safe on this campus. That's really what I want in the future — just people working towards making this a safe environment for survivors and to prevent [others] from having to experience sexual assault."

Faculty of the Week: Jason BreMiller



Jason BreMiller smiles with his son in his classroom.

By TEDDY CAPOZZI, PHIN GIBBS, and LILY RAMPE

Known by many for his *ENG572: Literature and the Land* class and his classroom adorned with coyote skins and beaver logs, Instructor in English Jason BreMiller has taught at Exeter for over a decade, helping numerous students along the way. Intertwining his passion with the outdoors and creative writing, students see BreMiller as a co-learner at the Harkness table.

BreMiller's journey into academia is far from what his childhood self may have expected. His father — a wildlife biologist — put a heavy emphasis on nature.

"My father was a wildlife biologist and groomed me to become one as well. We would open the freezer and the birds in plastic bags that he'd stuffed in there would fall out onto the floor when you went to get the ice cream," BreMiller said.

As a freshman at St. Olaf College, BreMiller quickly realized the STEM prerequisites to study biology weren't right for him. While his love for the outdoors persisted, BreMiller had to find another field of study. With an interest in creative writing, he found the perfect intersection in ecocriticism. "In college, I discovered the field of ecocriticism. It took my bent toward the natural world and gave it an outlet in

the humanities," he said.

After receiving his Masters of Arts in English Language and Literature from Middlebury College, BreMiller began his teaching career at the Taft School. After eight years between Taft and his alma mater the Hotchkiss School, BreMiller was feeling fatigued from teaching. "I had been feeling a little burned out and a little disillusioned with traditional teaching," BreMiller said. "I was seriously contemplating a career change toward more experiential education."

However, when an opportunity arose at Exeter, BreMiller took an interest. To him, the Harkness style seemed to provide a more

appropriate balance between teacher and student learning. Giving more autonomy to the students appealed to BreMiller, but the transition was not seamless.

"I think the first year or two, I felt a sense of loss in the classroom — like a loss of identity," BreMiller explained. "This idea of ceding so much space to the students took me a little while to figure out, [and] to figure out where I fit in."

After 11 years at the Academy, BreMiller has found his role in the classroom, "I think for me, it's about establishing my role as a co-learner. Not as the arbiter of knowledge and interpretation," he said.

Hillary Yoon / *The Exonian*

"This is the only place I've worked where teaching feels sustainable," BreMiller added. "I appreciate being present with my students,

"It's nice having this connection with each other, especially when many of us are away from home and our families."

but also feeling like I have the bandwidth to nurture my own passions."

While BreMiller is an avid fan of everything that Harkness is able to offer, he admits that it is not without its flaws, "The greatest tension at

Exeter is the tension between the collective impulse of Harkness and the individual desire for distinction and grades. In my mind, [grades are] the biggest impediment to success at the Harkness table." Students describe BreMiller as awesome, understanding, and overall the "best teacher ever." Senior Jade Pierce said, "I think he's a really good teacher. I think he knows what it's like to be a student, especially at Exeter."

"He's just an outstanding teacher and finds really creative ways to make class fun," senior Rupert Ramsay said in agreement.

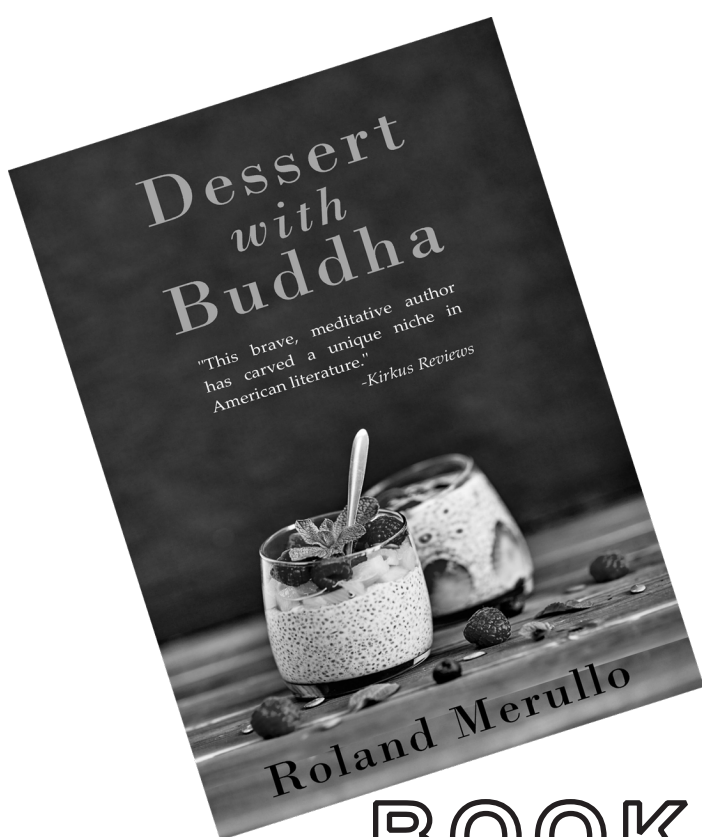
Most students find BreMiller's classes to be engaging in and out of the classroom. "Whether that be with a trip to Swasey, one of his good old BreMiller stories, or a fun challenge at the beginning of class, I always look forward to his class," Ramsay continued.

BreMiller's passion for literature and the environment has greatly influenced his students. When speaking about his class, *Literature and the Land*, Ramsay said, "I knew he would teach the class well because he's so passionate about teaching and the material he is teaching."

Pierce echoed Ramsay's sentiment. "I feel like he's a big storyteller himself, [which] fosters [an] environment in the classroom [that gets] everyone's creative juices flowing."

Most importantly, his character shines through. "BreMiller is for sure one of the kindest teachers at this school," Ramsay said. "At the table, he makes sure everyone's voice is heard and fosters a respectful atmosphere. [*Literature and the Land*] is by far one of the best, most engaging classes I've taken at Exeter."

Exeter Welcomes Back Acclaimed Author Roland Merullo



BOOK LAUNCH

Thursday – May 18th / 7 pm – Water Street Bookstore

Dessert with Buddha

The highly-anticipated 4th and final installment of the beloved *Breakfast with Buddha* series

"In *Breakfast with Buddha*, Merullo writes with grace and intelligence...It's a quiet, meditative, and ultimately joyous trip we're on."—*Boston Globe*

"*Lunch with Buddha* is a beautifully written and compelling story about a man's search for meaning that earnestly and accessibly tackles some well-trodden but universal questions. A quiet meditation on life, death, darkness and spirituality, sprinkled with humor, tenderness and stunning landscapes." —*Kirkus*, starred review / Best of 2013

"Merullo masterfully depicts the struggles of practicing mindfulness moment by moment in *Dinner with Buddha*...and asks readers to be compassionate and conscious in a world of suffering...Full of nuanced, thoughtful prose."—*Publishers Weekly*

"In *Dessert with Buddha*, Rinpoche proves a thoroughly pleasant companion and Otto is engaging...An insightful and playful journey."—*Kirkus*

Roland Merullo is an award-winning author of 27 books including 20 works of fiction. Merullo's essays have appeared in numerous publications and his books have been translated into German, Spanish, Portuguese, Korean, Croatian, Chinese, Turkish, Slovenian, Bulgarian, Czech, and Italian.

Club Spotlight: Engineering Club

By CHENGYUE ZHANG and RYAN MANLEY

The Engineering Club meets Sunday from 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. in Instructor in Science Wendy Stallings's room across from the Design Lab. This year, the club decided to focus on studying electrical components in the fall, 3D Computer-aided design in the winter, and proposing their own project ideas in the spring.

"Engineering Club is focused on getting students into real experience with engineering," upper and co-head Brenda Romero-Torres explained.

"The club provides a[n] environment for designing, building, sourcing materials, and learning how to make projects." As B. Romero-Torres pointed out, the club is also "a community where people can brainstorm together about the silliest or goofiest ideas."

The co-heads encourage people to share their ideas and try to make the club interactive. "If you have something that you wanna make, engineering club is a space where you can do that and propose a project and really make that vision come to life.

It can be something as simple as making a shirt or something that takes several months," upper and co-head Alinne Romero-Torres said.

Participants of the club agree that the club is open to all. "[The co-heads] are really informative with their presentations," lower Masaki Muneyoshi said. "I didn't have any engineering knowledge beforehand, and I could still fit in. At the start of the year, I learnt to make circuits with a breadboard."

"Take a break on Sunday and be creative. Like, get your brain juice

flowing. It's only one hour, but I can promise that it's worth it." B. Romero-Torres said.

One of the common things that the coheads of all three clubs mentioned is that they wish more people would move past the intimidation and come to their meetings. The clubs are open to people to all levels of experiences. Instead of being rigorous, clubs are places meant to help you explore your interests and have fun. If you are interested, go join these three clubs to learn more!



A student works in the design lab.

Courtesy of @peadesignlab

Club Spotlight: Chess Club



Chess Club players gather for a photo.

By ETHAN DING and JOONYOUNG HEO

Every Friday night, the basement of the Elizabeth Phillips Academy Center (EPAC) fills with raucous laughter and the clicks of chess clocks. At long wooden tables furnished with felt boards and plastic pieces, members of Chess Club play from 8 p.m. until the building closes, undisturbed till the speakers blare and the building monitor ushers them out.

Chess Club is led by upper Eric Wu, upper Achyuta Rajaram, and senior Alexa Wingate. It holds itself to a high standard of consistency. For two hours every Friday, the club offers a warm and relaxed environment where Exonians drop by to unwind before the weekend.

The club's mast-

head is driven by that sense of community. "What I love most about Chess Club is the passion," Wu said. "Coming here on Friday night is completely optional for all the members, and it's not going to help on college applications or anything like that. But people show up. We meet for double the amount of time that most clubs meet for and just play chess and have fun. It's a community I haven't experienced anywhere else on campus."

"We're here to play chess," Wingate said. "But it's also about spending time with some people we wouldn't normally see around campus. That's especially important for me as a senior. I've met a lot of really cool underclassmen in the club, for example, by going to tournaments and having fun with them every week."

Members of the club similarly valued the inclusive community. "There aren't very many girls in the chess community and sometimes it's a bit intimidating," lower Victoria Liu said. "But coming to this club, I realize that's completely not the case, at least here. Players of all levels are welcome. No matter who you are, where you're from, how long you've been playing, how dedicated you are — none of that matters when you walk through the door.

"It's nice having this connection with each other, especially when many of us are away from home and our families."

No one judges you. When

I'm here, I'm just a chess player like everyone else."

"The club has a great community," prep Andrew Su said. "Many people have been joining recently, and that's really expanded our group. It's grown tremendously this year because of the new class. And a lot of them didn't know how to play in the beginning. That's because Eric and some of the others don't just play chess, they spend time teaching kids. For someone who didn't have a real coach when I started playing, that's something I really admire."

For members with extensive experience playing virtually, the club has provided an excellent opportunity to interact with players in person. "The atmosphere is great when you play over the board," prep Joseph Kim said.

"Online, you're playing against someone you don't know or some computer. It's a completely different situation when you can actually see and talk to and have a good time with the person on the other side."

Since the current

"It's nice having this connection with each other, especially when many of us are away from home and our families."

co-heads took over, they worked to expand the club and increase membership. "When I was a prep, we were holding a lot of meetings online," Wu said. "Toward the end of the year, we were actually able to meet in person, but the group was really small because it was recovering from COVID. So a lot of responsibility has been reopening the club and getting more people interested."

"I really think there are benefits to playing the game," Wu continued. "There's a long list that includes academic calculation, perseverance, all that. But confidence is the most important thing. I find that people learn to be confident in what they do by play-

ing the game because they control their own pieces. And when you make those choices, you feel in charge. You take away a sense of self-esteem. So the club helps people even outside the having fun part, and that's been my motivation to boost engagement."

With their work, the club has grown significantly over the past two years. It has also learned how to balance the competitive, team-oriented side of chess and the casual fun on Friday evenings. In the last year, the club has built an impressive record at state and national tournaments.

"Our team has been getting very strong recently, largely thanks to the arrival of new talent in recent years," upper Alan Bu said. "At nationals last month, we placed sixth in the whole country as a high school team, and we're only getting better. I'm hoping these awards will not only inspire our players to keep up the work, but also draw more Exonians into the club. The future is looking very bright."

The team did even better at the New Hampshire Scholastic Chess tournament a few weeks ago, scoring a decisive first place. "The state competition was a relatively small tournament, and we dominated," Wingate said. "But it was really rewarding to see our school take the top three positions. We had three teams and they finished one, two, and three. We held our own at nationals this year, but we didn't get a trophy. That made up for it."

"We treat things fairly seriously on the team," Wingate continued. "If you want to play competitively, you should spend some time studying the game and working to improve so we do well at tournaments. But that's only one part of our club. If you just want to show up on a random Friday, we'd love to see you. We want you to show up. Chess is a lot more fun when everyone interested is involved."

That, more than anything else, is what the club is meant to be. "At the very least, it's worth a try," Wu said. "With the Queen's Gambit and Twitch and whatnot during the pandemic, people are starting to discover the beauty of chess. I love the game, personally, and I think this is a club for everyone. There really are no stakes. Just come on over on Friday nights, EPAC basement, and have some fun. That's what our club is about."





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» SWAN

Read about the Archaeopteryx, 10.

» ART

Read about prep Forrest Zeng's thoughts on art's use, 8.

» MUSIC

Read some song recommendations from Exonians, 9.

What Use is Art?

By FORREST ZENG '25

Apart from the various recreations a ninth grader might participate in while on Spring Break (e.g. eating, sleeping, and playing video games), I found myself visiting a local bookstore, Barnes & Nobles, one too many times. I frequently visited the philosophy and religion sections, and as I browsed, my Amazon wishlist slowly grew. When I was exploring, I came across something beautiful—a small blue book, thin and square. Holding it in my hands, I could feel the blue and white letters sticking out on the cover, spelling “How to Be a Stoic,” along with the names of famous stoic philosophers like Epictetus, Seneca, and Marcus Aurelius. The compact, tactile book seemed to hold so much wisdom before I had even opened it. It emitted a sagacious air. Later I would realize that I had judged the book by its cover.

Why did this happen? Somehow, I felt sure that

“Rhetoric, an art of persuasive writing or speaking, is often designed to evoke emotion or to present credibility.”

this book was full of insight, and that it would certainly provide some enlightenment to me before I had even opened it.

Art is found everywhere in life. In music, on our clothes, in architecture, pop culture, and perhaps, as I

realized later, on the cover of books as well. The way that art is present in our world today is often as a way to express things in an emotional or conceptual way. In this way, art is a vehicle of expression, for what is deeply human and emotional. There is something psychologically “beautiful” about the colors of a painting or the sounds of music. This cannot be denied—the emotional results of art are everywhere around us.

Something deeply human, for example, is rhetoric. Rhetoric, an art of persuasive writing or speaking, is often designed to evoke emotion or to present credibility. The triangle of persuasive rhetoric, ethos (credibility), pathos (emotion), and logos (logic), is in fact more biased towards creating trust and invoking emotions in the audience. Logic, instead, is only used when the speaker understands the audience to be rational and open-minded—yet most audiences are more susceptible to emotional, rousing orations.

Art, in this way, is very important to human life. However, what use is it? Although the book that I found in the bookstore may have been quite beautiful, that certainly doesn't change anything about the content of the book itself. Art isn't philosophically efficient. The expression of emotion or concepts, inherently, doesn't perform logic itself.

Take the poem *A Recollection* by John Peale Bishop, describing a Renaissance painting of a Venetian woman. Praising the work and its attractive detail, he writes in the last three lines:

QUESTION OF THE ISSUE

Is Spring over-rated or justly-rated?

Submit your responses (short or long and may be anonymous) to exonian@gmail.com. Anyone is welcome to submit! Note: answers to this question will be published on the next issue! Faculty and adult members of the community are equally as welcome to submit a response.

All loveliness demands our courtesies.

Since she was dead I praised her as I could

Silently, among the Barberini bees.

In stark contrast, when you spell out the first letters of each line, you are left with an obscene insult. At first, Bishop's hidden message seems artistic. However, he never gives the reason why he hates the painting. The beholder knows that Bishop loathes the painting and

a drone strike on a foreign country, and neither do scientists, when they derive useful formulas to solve extremely important issues such as climate change.

So what use is art? Why is it that, in a world where we want to strive for logical reasoning, that somehow, art is everywhere around us?

The importance of art is that it is inherently psychological, and that everything that humans do is also psychological. While art doesn't perform logic itself, it can express it. In other words, art is used to portray and express logical systems. In this way, art can create a rapid dissemination of ideas. For the vast majority of people, art is persuasive—instead of having to sit down to explicitly detail the logical steps of one's system, one can invoke pathos, communicating ideas through the emotional vehicle of art.

In 1846, Hungarian doctor Ignaz Semmelweis was working as an assistant in the obstetrics department of the University of Vienna. He immediately began to notice the prominence of a certain chilled fever, which

“The importance of art is that it is inherently psychological, and that everything that humans do is also psychological.”

painter, but the beholder knows nothing about why. This is the problem with art—it expresses something emotional, sometimes abstract, but art isn't quite useful when making rational, logical decisions. The President of the United States does not consult The Beatles when he is ordering

RESPONSES FROM LAST ISSUE:

Students and faculty, do you feel like you are listened to at Exeter?

“Sometimes. There are times when I feel absolutely listened to and cared about in the community but when I am sitting in my room at 3 a.m. working on homework, there are times when I do not.” - Phin Gibbs '25

“I am in the jazz ensemble and they get folks from the Riverwood Home for the Elderly and they sit in the audience and we play for them. In those moments, I feel very listened to.” - Joonyoung Heo '25

seemed to be rampant across all maternity wards in Europe. One in six women who gave birth in the hospital would die of the vicious disease, which decomposed flesh and created a horrible smell. Semmelweis came to the realization that the disease was being spread through hand-to-hand direct contact, not through the air, as common medical doctrine stated at the time. He observed a doctor prick himself in the finger while performing an autopsy on the body of one diseased woman, then seeing the doctor die of the same disease a few days later.

Semmelweis had come upon a significant scientific discovery. However, he faced opposition from traditional doctors, who believed in separate theories about the root cause of the fever. Semmelweis decided to approach this problem by arguing incessantly. Against those opposing him he would vituperate, even against his own followers. When he was finally pressured to write a book explaining all his findings in 1860, what would have been a concise volume turned into an anarchical, irate polemic against his opponents. Over time, he lost the trust of all those surrounding him, turning allies into enemies. Virtually destitute, he died in 1865 at the age of 47.

As we reflect on Semmelweis's life, something stands out. Perhaps most important to Semmelweis's life was his genius in discovering the

“Perhaps as a reader, you may have noticed the strange irony of this essay—that I am using art, i.e. written rhetoric, as a medium to express my own reasoning about art itself.”

relationship between disease and physical contagion, but also his inability to express credibility nor to appeal to his peers and allies in an organized, composed, and persuasive way. Semmelweis's lack of rhetoric highlights the usage of art in delivering and portraying useful systems.

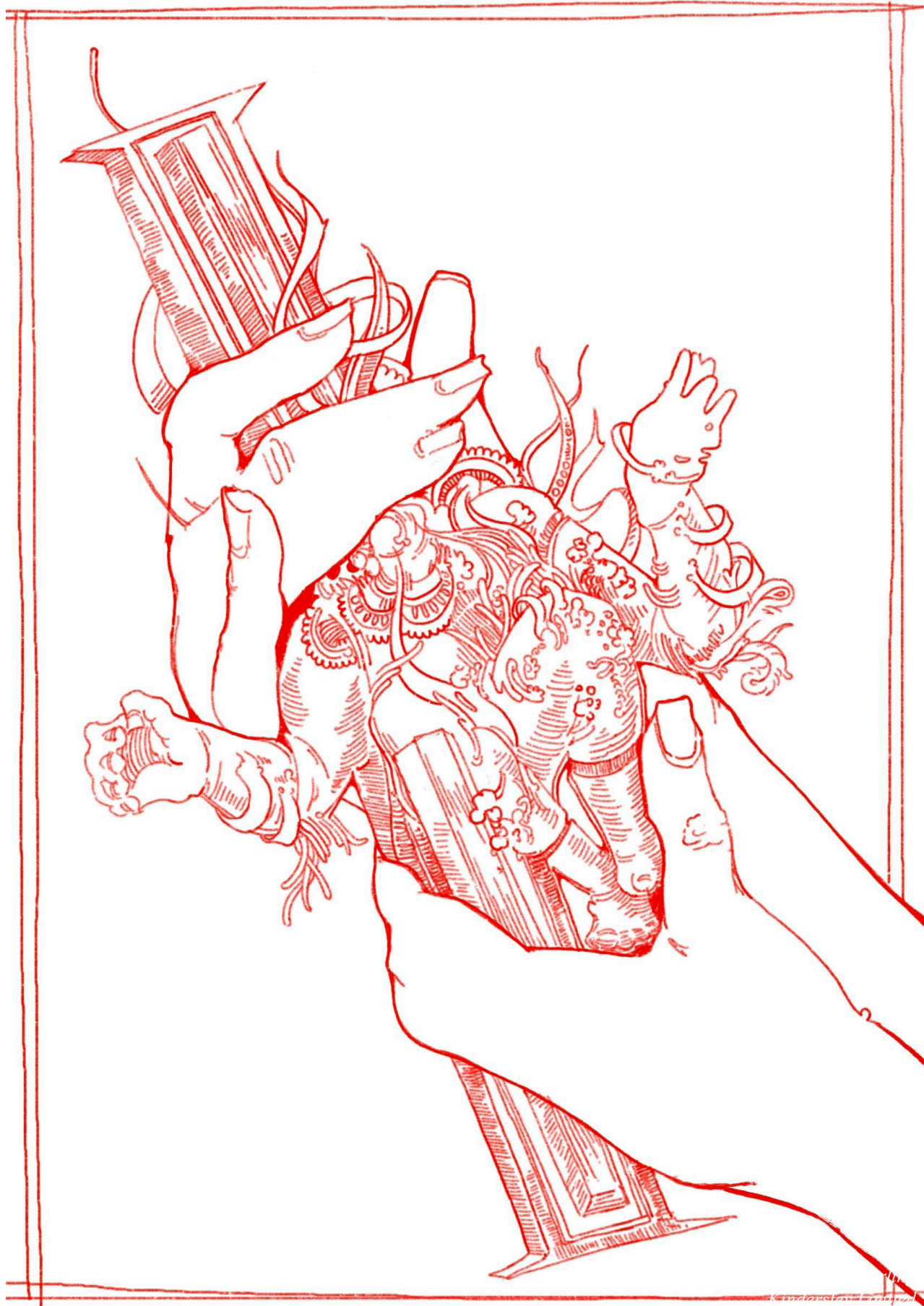
Art is also what makes fictional systems work. Fictional systems are essentially ideas and concepts that are not tangible realities. Creating fictitious imagined orders, countries, religions, and companies, we achieved

mass collaboration. However, these fictions only existed when many people believed that they did. To ensure that these fictions were water-proof, the most efficient way would be art.

Religions bring comfort and solace to people. Through rituals and beliefs, people can be in states of, for example, “enlightenment” or “satisfaction.” Although perhaps nothing physically beneficial derives from the rituals performed in religious ceremonies, these rituals are inherently artistic. The majority of Renaissance art is concerning some religious matter, often Christian. Scenes depicted in paintings such as *The Dead Christ Mourned* by Annibale Carracci invoke emotions describable in no more than a thousand words. The usage of art as a means to express the ideas and to maintain conceptual orders is undeniable.

In the same sense, nations, such as the United States, are all imagined orders that rely on art to sustain themselves. As we know, fictional orders exist only if many people believe in them, and to sustain this belief, fictions often employ art to express credibility and to invoke passion. For example, most nations, including the United States, have a national anthem which is played daily to celebrate patriotism. As a U.S. citizen, I grew up listening to “The Star-Spangled Banner”: playing while the colors of the bold American flag fluttered above on a massive, silver pole. Even after doing it hundreds of times, every morning, the same pledge, the same poem, with my right hand over my heart, one nation, under God, I must admit that the U.S. anthem simply never gets old. In many ways, fictional orders such as nations fuel patriotism and attachment through art. Through art, nations, just like religions, rouse passion and patriotism, bolstering their own strength.

Perhaps as a reader, you may have noticed the strange irony of this essay—that I am using art, i.e. written rhetoric, as a medium to express my own reasoning about art itself. Art is undeniably omnipresent. As much as we would like, the world perceived and acted upon by humans is never perfectly logical—the glue which holds these human systems together is art, the most ultimate vehicle of human emotion and abstraction.



Courtesy of Katelyn Cui.

Will's Word of the Week: "Quintessential"

By WILL SOH '24

Example sentences:

Glue is quintessential to an arts and craft project.

Being lost in the sauce of life is quintessential to the human experience.

Reading *The Exonian* is quintessential to one's bi-weekly routine.

Moving is quintessential to getting places.

Sitting is quintessential to being in a car.

Water is quintessential to life.

Keys are quintessential to locks.

Thoughts are quintessential to existence.

Using the word quintessential is quintessential to this week's edition of Will's Word of the Week.

Song Recs From Exonians

By AVEENBURNEY '25

From your fellow Exonians, here are some songs you need to listen to!

Stace Chen: "Like Real People Do" by Hozier, "Stubborn Love" by the Lumineers, and "Vienna" by Billy Joel

Lionel Hearon: "I

Love You Jesus" by Trisha Paytas

Cassia Lee: "West Coast" by Lana Del Rey or "Wo Yao Ni De Ai" by Grace Chan

Isa Serna: "'98 Braves" by Morgan Wallen

Chloe Richards: "Waterfalls" by TLC and "Videotape" by Radiohead

Arianna Bocchino: "Blue Light" by Mazzy Star

Izzyb123: "Sure Thing" by Miguel

Teachers Corner Ms. Waterman: "Changes" by David Bowie

Grounding Things in Life: Reflection on *Berserk*

By CHENGYUE ZHANG '24

Less than a year ago, due to its author Kentaro Miura's sudden death, the long-running and highly regarded manga *Berserk* ended abruptly without a proper ending. *Berserk* continues to be published by Studio Gaga and Miura's friend Kouji Mori. However, to most fans, *Berserk* will never be the same ever again.

I first encountered the story of *Berserk* from the 1997 anime series last summer and continued to finish the rest of the manga content not included in the anime. To me, the story of *Berserk* is about finding a reason for living and the strength to carry on despite continuous hardships. Just as everything is turning for the better, and Guts, the main character, is learning to trust his traveling companion again, the story ends.

364 chapters and 8400 plus pages of art. That is all we are left with.

How much did *Berserk* matter to me? Probably not that much. My brain is telling me that I would trade all my memory of *Berserk* with receiving five As for upper spring. Since when did I start measuring the value of everything in

"To really just sit in the moment is something I do not get to do at Exeter a lot. There is always the next appointment and the next assignment to procrastinate on."

my life through grades?

The ending of *Berserk* has been a ticking sadness that I would like to sit with once in a while. It reminds me of *Neon Genesis Evangelion*—another absolute classic in the anime community—which also had a messy ending. From the disturbing, metaphysical ending to the

original 1995 anime and the endless number of remakes released throughout the years, each ending presents some new twists but never a believable resolution. In *Eva's* case, the non-conclusive, unsatisfactory 'ending' actually fits pretty well with the show's theme of depression. Its absence subverts our expectations and definition of a good story. It forces me to sit in a state of dissatisfaction and unsettledness. Thus, one learns slowly to appreciate its strangeness and accept the tragedy and the 'unfinished' story as final.

To really just sit in the moment is something I do not get to do at Exeter a lot. There is always the next appointment and the next assignment to procrastinate on. I seek instant gratification to distract me from stress.

I like math because it is simple and grounding. Compared to chemistry, for which I need to remember arbitrary constants to convert between non-sensible units and refer to

millions of tables, math, as of right now, is intuitive. I try to solve each problem one by one, knowing that everything I need to figure it out is within me.

Thus by the same logic, I hate using my TI-84. Looking for it is always an annoyance, and after I scrambled through my backpack looking for it, plugging in the numbers seems harder than actually solving that integral. I always press the wrong button and am forced to go back. The need for complex calculations distracts me from working with those numbers that I've known for my whole life. I can't keep track of anything but myself nowadays. Small inconveniences, such as having to use a calculator or the three seconds it takes to connect to PEA-secure, turn into unbearable menaces. I don't like how irritable I am nowadays.

American superhero comic series continue running after a particular artist or storyboard director passes away. For manga, on the other hand,

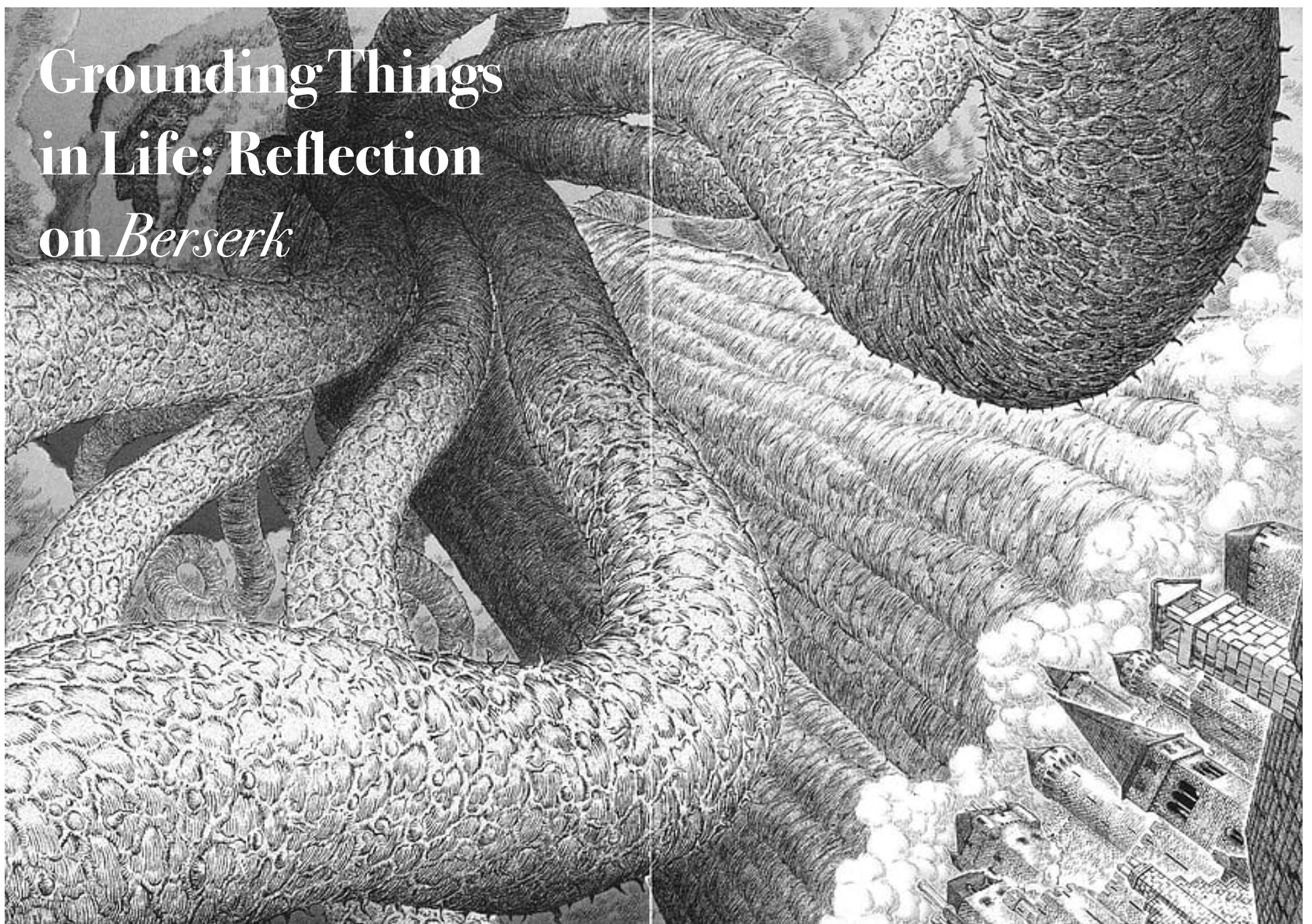
the art, story, and dialogue, with few exceptions, all come from one single person. Manga authors work on one story for years and even for their whole life: Hirohiko Araki's *JoJo's Bizarre Adventure* has been running since 1987, and *One Piece* by Eiichiro Oda has been around since 1997. Artists' names and reputations are heavily associated with their manga titles. With this kind of creation model, manga just feels more personal. The story must resonate with the author in a special way because they commit significant time of their life to it. The readers and the authors all grow as the manga is published chapter by chapter, week by week, month by month, and resumes hiatus after hiatus. Reading manga feels like dialogue. If the author spends their waking hours perfecting every panel, the reader returns that effort through tirelessly waiting for the coming chapter and dwelling in each moment of the story along with the

"Thus, due to its scale and the slow, sometimes irregular publishing schedule, I savor and admire the beauty of each pixel and stroke of the manga panel, never in a rush."

characters.

Thus, due to its scale and the slow, sometimes irregular publishing schedule, I savor and admire the beauty of each pixel and stroke of the manga panel, never in a rush. Besides the adrenaline for a new plot twist or a good fight scene, I also enjoy the story at every second of it even if I know the ending already. I want to experience it all, the excitement and the quieter moments. I want to see how it all happens. As much as reading manga is entertainment, it is also a meditation on life.

Panel from *Berserk*. Courtesy of Kentaro Miura.



Prehistoric Creature of the Week

Archaeopteryx: The Transitioner's Swan Song

By JUNHYEOK JANG '25

Introduction

They say that dinosaurs are extinct. They say that the constitution of some of the most prominent animals to ever walk the Earth has become nothing but fossilized bones. They say that the legacy enshrined by some of the greatest names in history – *Brachiosaurus*, *Spinosaurus*, *Tyrannosaurus*, and much more – met its tragic end 66 million years ago when a massive asteroid happened to fall into what is now the Yucatán Peninsula, obliterating 75% of life from the surface of the Earth, including big names of the era such as *Triceratops* and *Mosasauros*.

In reality, I am confident that everyone reading this article has witnessed a live dinosaur at some point. I, myself, along with broccoli and pasta, eat the breasts of a dinosaur we named *Chicken* for lunch and dinner. Dinosaurs exist around us with much biodiversity, as members of a class of animals we call

“They say that dinosaurs are extinct. They say that the constitution of some of the most prominent animals to ever walk the Earth has become nothing but fossilized bones.”

birds. This connection appears rather bizarre at first – neither *Stegosaurus* nor *Giganotosaurus* resembles anything remotely similar to a pigeon or a canary. Most dinosaurs had indeed been non-avian, and most flying reptiles, such as *Pteranodon*, were not dinosaurs. Yet approximately 150 million years ago, a few dinosaurs acquired the skill of flight and formed a secret society known as the avian dinosaurs, with its descendants developing into the birds we see today after years of tumultuous evolution and



Courtesy of Dorling Kindersley Limited

diversification. A central figure in this revolution was *Archaeopteryx*.

Biography

Archaeopteryx was a genus of early small avian dinosaurs alive during the Late Jurassic (150.8 - 145.8 million years ago, Tithonian age). *Archaeopteryx* was first discovered in the Solnhofen limestone quarries in Bavaria, Germany, in 1861, where more fossils have been yielded since then. Its name is derived from the Greek words ἀρχαῖος and πτέρυξ, respectively meaning “ancient” and “feather”; its name translates to “Ancient Feather.” *Archaeopteryx* is regarded as a transitional species between non-avian dinosaurs and modern birds; although *Archaeopteryx* possessed numerous avian structures, such as feathers, a wishbone, and a keeled sternum. Although not a direct ancestor of modern birds, *Archaeopteryx* has undeniably contributed to the branching of a lineage of avian dinosaurs that would evolve into current birds.

The First Dinosaurs in the Sky

The Late Jurassic was an era when evolution had reached its peak.

The arms race between prey and predatorial species culminated with a dramatic increase in the fauna’s biomass. Titanic sauropods such as *Brachiosaurus* and *Apatosaurus* flourished in this period, while dominant

enabling more efficient air exchange and the anchorage of muscles for flight.

The exact process by which transitional avian dinosaurs acquired flight is still debated among scientists. Nonetheless, several popular theories attempt to explain this

Archaeopteryx was one of the earliest and most prominent avian dinosaurs of all time, it was not the only transitional species that emerged in this era; some of its notable colleagues include *Jeholornis*, *Anchiornis*, and

date. 66 million years ago, when the asteroid crashed into the Yucatán peninsula and formed what is now the Chicxulub Crater, all non-avian dinosaurs perished. Although there are diverse opinions regarding the factors that

theropods including *Allosaurus* also emerged.

Yet the most pivotal evolution of all, surpassing the significance of the others by far, was exhibited by a small group of theropods that would evolve to be the earliest avian dinosaurs. In addition to their reptilian features, these dinosaurs grew to develop numerous aerodynamic anatomical structures. One of the most important of such was the emergence of feathers, providing aerial thrust and coordination in flight. Another significant adaptation was the

“In reality, I am confident that everyone reading this article has witnessed a live dinosaur at some point.”

development of flight-specialized respiratory systems and skeletal systems, respectively



Xiaotingia.

The Savior of a Lineage

Sadly, *Archaeopteryx* never made it to the Cretaceous period, where birds began to significantly diversify. Being a transitional species, although a close relative of birds that flourish in

“Yet the avian lineage that Archaeopteryx had founded with other primordial avian dinosaurs lives on to this date.”

phenomenon. The first is the arboreal theory, asserting that the early avian dinosaurs glided from tree to tree and that their feathered wings were instrumental in steering their flight, resulting in natural selection favoring longer and more aerodynamic feathers. Another is the cursorial theory, projecting that avian dinosaurs evolved from bipedal terrestrial theropods that flapped their limbs for acceleration, which would eventually become powered flight. A third theory, known as the wing-assisted incline running (WAIR) theory, hypothesizes that avian dinosaurs, just as modern birds do, flapped their wings to assist in running up inclined surfaces, which later developed into powered flight.

Although

the modern world, none of its direct descendants remain. Like any other organism, *Archaeopteryx* was not immune to a changing environment and interspecies competition, and, as in the case of species with specialized niches and living conditions, *Archaeopteryx* had been especially vulnerable.

Yet the avian lineage that *Archaeopteryx* had founded with other primordial avian dinosaurs lives on to this

enabled avian dinosaurs to persist, most scientists agree that the effective metabolism and air exchange were

immensely beneficial for their sustenance amidst hostile conditions. Their small size and capability for flight also proved instrumental, respectively allowing them to consume energy efficiently and disperse across the world.

While it is true that birds had already evolved at standards far more complex than that of *Archaeopteryx*, had it not sung its swan song 150 million years ago, it is possible that the fate of the birds would have been in jeopardy as well. Had not avian species had the ample time of around 84 million years to diversify and disperse across the planet, their safety, too, would not have been guaranteed.

The Golden Age of the dinosaurs died with the Chicxulub asteroid 66 years ago. Yet its swan song continues to echo as birds. And that song was first sung by *Archaeopteryx* and its primordial avian colleagues.

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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Harkness: The Death of Structuralism

By JINMIN LEE '26

“We shouldn’t be questioning what the author actually meant or intended. Rather, we should focus on what effect the writing has on us because it is impossible to verify the author’s true ideas,” said my English 220 teacher. At first glance, this idea seemed to make sense; if we cannot really understand the author’s purpose in adding certain details or writing the story, why should we waste time questioning it? This idea was perpetuated throughout Exeter English; my English 220 syllabus stated that “researching the author is recognized as academic dishonesty.” When thinking about it further, I realized that Exeter English was actively shunning the use of structuralism: the idea that readers should understand authors’ intentions for their writing and are capable of comprehending the author’s original message through the research of the authors’ private lives and their writing’s historical contexts. The curriculum at Exeter rejected structuralism because it assumed that the author was irrelevant in understanding literature. I disagreed and believed that structuralism was perhaps the best and only way to fully understand literature. The rejection of structuralism is problematic because many works of literature were reactions to specific historical contexts or other preceding ideas and the purpose of writing was defeated once the original meaning became no longer important. Exeter’s

English program ultimately made it difficult to not only fully understand each piece of writing and its relevance, but also removed the importance of concise literature, thus leading to a school that no longer valued the proper conveyance of ideas.

Structuralism in More Detail

Structuralism is a way to analyze literature, where the reader actively researches the author and the historical context that surrounds the work. Structuralists believe that the main reason why people write is to disseminate their ideas. This ideology gave birth to the structuralist lens, which encourages people to actually understand why authors would write and what their message is. For instance, when reading George Orwell’s 1984, I applied the structuralist lens of searching Orwell’s personal life and the context of his time. Orwell wrote post-World War II in a society with the growing consensus that democracy was threatened by many other ideologies, such as fascism or communism. This analysis allowed me to understand Orwell’s purpose in writing 1984: defending democracy and freedom of thought. If I did not comprehend this context, I wouldn’t have been able to fully comprehend his work.

Issues With Exeter’s Rejection of Structuralism

Structuralism stresses the historical context of each piece of work, which enables the reader to comprehend the work by understanding the circumstances which prompted the author to create the work. These factors are mainly previous ideas and historical events that the authors are responding to or the authors’ private lives that contribute to the ideas behind the writing, which become precursors to the examined literature. In fact, it is nearly impossible to understand many works without these precursors. For instance, how could people understand Victor Frankl’s *Man’s Search for Meaning*, a book that elaborates on finding purpose and hope, even in Auschwitz, without researching Frankl’s life and understanding the Holocaust? Or how could one ever fathom Dante’s *Divine Comedy*, a story about a man’s journey to heaven with the help of an angel, without researching and understanding the Bible? How could one understand the Communist Manifesto by Marx and Engels without researching the working conditions of the working class in the 19th century? How could one possibly understand any literature, without knowing its historical context and the ideas that led to its inception in the first place? The authors’ private lives also contribute immensely to how their pieces are written. For instance, in *Ecce Homo*, Nietzsche argues that, in life, one must accept the problems and hardships and actually grow to not resent them by

overcoming them. This idea originated from his growing mental illness he says that he has grown to not hate, but thank others for being the fodder that allowed his character and philosophy to grow. It would be difficult to fully grasp the author’s true intentions and reasoning when the readers are completely blind to their private lives. Another example can be Van Gogh’s famous *Starry Night* painting, where the supernatural effect of showing the paintbrush’s every line is known to be a reflection of Gogh’s mental state, which made him see the world like his paintings. Without knowing this fact about the author, it would be very difficult to grasp the true reason why art is the way it is. At Exeter, students are encouraged to ignore such important indicators that actually allow them to understand literature.

Not only does rejecting structuralism make it impossible to properly grasp literature, but it also makes it difficult for students to create proper literature; removing the importance of an author’s original intentions annihilates meritocracy and the very purpose of writing. There are two purposes of writing: to convey meaning and impact the reader using style and aesthetics. Exeter English disapproves of the former and focuses too heavily on simply appreciating the writing, thus allowing writers to get away without a real ideology behind their literature. The aesthetics and stylizations should only improve and help understand the main content better, not replace the content. What is the purpose of having a rhyme scheme if it does not

contribute to the main message of the poem? Meritocracy is lost because, under the English department’s philosophy, it should be completely valid to pepper stylizations without proper reason. In fact, I have written a poem to help visualize this issue:

Oranges are purple
They are sweeter than whirlpools
Water is like sugar
It is healthier than a cigar
A computer has many parts
They all work together
This is the spirit
Of truly egregious writing

This poem took me 1 minute and 27 seconds to write (I timed it). It does not have meaning because I assigned no meaning to it. However, if I gave this poem to any English class, ranging from ENGI10 to ENG550, the class would easily spend hours “appreciating” its aesthetics and slant rhymes. This phenomenon destroys meritocracy because the quality and message of

“it leads to the possibility of blindly accepting the content by not knowing—or caring—what it means.”

the writing do not matter in Exeter English. The purpose of writing is also lost because the original meaning is not important anymore. Although perhaps extreme, it is not impossible to think that Exeter students could read excerpts from books with pernicious meaning, such as Hitler’s autobiography, *Mein Kampf*, and start lauding it for its “stylistic choices” because they don’t bother researching the historical context. Because Exeter’s literature program does not encourage students to question the true intentions of authors, it leads to the possibility of blindly accepting the content by not knowing—or caring—what it means.

This idea of rejecting the actual meaning of literature is especially poor given that Exeter’s writing rubrics promote “clear writing with concise details,” which contradicts its philosophy for analyzing literature. If we are encouraged to make our message clear and concise when writing our own narratives, why

shouldn’t we have the same expectations for other authors’ writing? The English department should quickly fix this logical inconsistency in its approach to analyzing literature and embrace structuralism in discussions to avoid the problems mentioned above.

Understanding Exeter English’s Perspective?

The main argument that Exeter’s English Department makes with its non-structuralist approach to Harkness is that students are able to personally connect more with the writing and come up with their own creative theories or understanding of the piece. Also, Exeter’s philosophy on literature implies that there is no real way to confirm what authors truly intended as they are often deceased or difficult to contact and ask.

However, the English Department makes the assumption that it is impossible to come up with personal interpretations if students already understand what the author meant. This premise is fallacious because it is not only still possible to come up with personal understandings of the text after knowing what the author really intended, but it makes it substantially easier to do so because students would be able to pinpoint exactly when they are going off the original message versus covering new ground. To make the analogy: a farmer is on the highway when he sees that he could take another road on the dirt, which could be faster. When the farmer goes on the dirt, he knows that he is no longer on the highway, but can use the highway as a reference to where he is going. However, imagine if the highway itself never existed. There is no reference: in fact, it is impossible to know if you’re on the official path or not. This idea is parallel to Exeter English because there is no way for students to know if they are on the author’s path or creating their own interpretations. Of course, it might be true that it is difficult to confirm the author’s true message for each book or poem. Nevertheless, people should still strive to understand the message because they would never remotely comprehend the literature and the essential purpose of writing would be lost if we continue Exeter’s English program in this way.

What the Pentagon Leaks Say About Ukraine

By LEOZHANG '25

Surrounded by FBI agents with weapons drawn, Jack Teixeira backed up to the armored vehicle with his hands on his head. The airman, an IT specialist for the Massachusetts Air National Guard, was charged with illegally removing classified national defense information on April 14. A low-ranking member having access to sensitive documents and posting them on Discord, an online messaging platform, marked a national embarrassment for the United States.

The U.S. intelligence on the Russia-Ukraine War was the most notable among the leaked information. The documents detailed the involvement of Western nations in Ukraine. According to the BBC,

Western special forces have been conducting special operations in Ukraine. Special forces are military units that carry out special operations, which NATO defines as “military activities conducted by specially designated, organized, selected, trained, and equipped forces using unconventional techniques and modes of employment.” The United Kingdom had the most special forces in Ukraine with 50 personnel, followed by France with 15 and the United States with 14. The BBC also reports a counter offensive by Ukrainian forces aided by Western countries. “Other documents say when a dozen new Ukrainian brigades – being prepared for an offensive that could begin within weeks – will be ready. They list, in great detail, the tanks, armored vehicles, and artillery pieces

that are being provided by Ukraine’s Western allies.”

Despite Western support and engagement in Ukraine, the documents assess that Russia currently has the upper hand. CBS writes, “Another document estimates that while Russia’s ground capability is at 63%, its air capability stands at 92%. In contrast, Ukraine’s ground capability is estimated to be at 83%, while its air capability stands at 68%. This imbalance in fighter jets and other aircraft puts the Ukrainian army at a disadvantage.” The Washington Post reported, “Ukraine’s challenges, in massing troops, ammunition, and equipment could cause its military to fall ‘well short’ of Kyiv’s original goals for an anticipated counteroffensive aimed at retaking Russian-occupied areas this spring.”

Ukrainian officials have dismissed the intelligence and remained optimistic about launching its counteroffensive planned to retake the 18% of the country occupied by Russia.

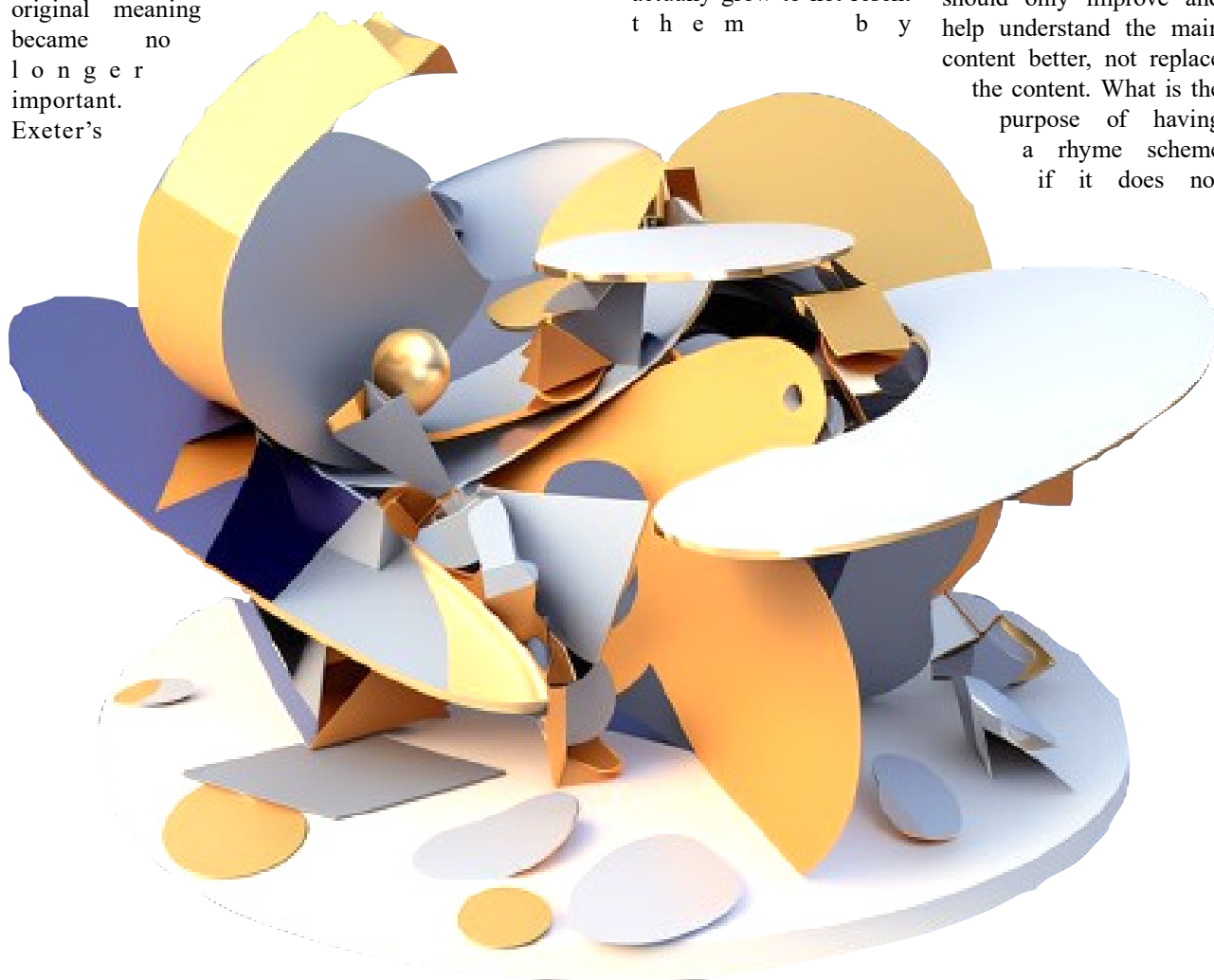
Given that their perception accurately describes the state of the war, U.S. officials have to decide how much aid to keep giving to Ukraine. With no end in sight, how much money would be considered too much? If the U.S. continues to give, that would only prolong the conflict. More weapons and money that get sent to Ukraine means that they would have more time and effort to keep fighting back against Russia. If Putin sees that Ukraine is not going to back down, he will escalate his attacks, which would make Ukraine suffer from heavier casualties and infrastructure damage.

After the war ends, Ukraine would need a lot of time and money to rebuild.

On the other hand, the U.S. could start giving less, but that also comes with consequences. President Biden has vowed to stand with Ukraine, already giving 75 billion dollars and weapons. To pull out after a commitment would tarnish the U.S.’s reputation as a superpower and ally. Afghanistan was already a prime example of how the U.S. pulled out despite investing more than two trillion dollars, only for the Taliban to gain control after 20 years. The U.S. is in the midst of another similar situation; officials need to decide whether to continue sending money in the hope of a Ukrainian victory or ease off the gas to avoid a major loss. A Russian victory would be another step in challenging the

Western-led world order.

The U.S. government should take the first option of cutting aid, which would be best. A surrender or treaty that gives up Ukrainian soil will give Russia and China a confidence boost to defy the West, but Ukraine must rebuild. Together, the U.S. and Ukraine should push toward a quicker end to the war to minimize damage. During the period of a ceasefire, they should also plan a thorough strategy to retake the lost territory, something that wasn’t possible when Russia suddenly decided to step foot in Ukraine. The documents suggest that despite Western aid, Russia will win the war over time, so why pour more resources into a losing battle when Ukraine can push toward peace to rebuild and eventually retake its land?



Humor

New England Weather from the Perspective of a Californian

By MANSAAWAH and FORREST ZENG

Coming to Exeter as someone accustomed to the sunniness of Los Angeles, California, there is much I can say about New England weather. Not surprisingly, the most shocking season is winter, that time when all the brain cells of west-coasters are jolted and filled with one thought and one thought only: "I should have worn another jacket." Meanwhile, New Englanders lace up their snow boots, comfortably toss on

their winter-worn, ratty hoodies and North Face puffers, and go traipsing into mounds of snow like I would the ocean. And don't even get me started on the spring term apparel. Apparently, 60 degrees is hot? (Personally, in 60-degree weather I'd still wear a jacket.) But the worst part...is that I've been converted! Now, anything below 40 degrees is cold and 60-degree days are my long-awaited opportunity to wear shorts.

How unfortunate. **WHAT HAS THE WORLD COME TO?**

A Night at Swasey Park

By PHIN GIBBS '25

The commonly known spot where lovers and enjoyers of nature alike venture to catch a glimpse of the river's scenery, or simply a quiet spot to...

Swasey Park, less than a minute's walk away from campus, is one of the strangest places to go during the night. I have partaken in various late-night walks and can personally vouch for its abnormalities. I will describe one of these walks:

As I stroll through Swasey Park, I can't help but feel like I'm walking through a different world. The usual hustle and bustle of boarding school life has faded away, replaced by a calm quiet. It's as if the park is a secret haven, hidden away from the chaos of campus life.

Walking along the riverbank, I notice the faint chatter coming from the direction of campus.

Normally, I would be tempted to go check it out, but tonight, I'm on a mission to escape the noise—to unwind. I pop in my earbuds, hit play on my playlist, and take in the soothing sounds of The Weeknd's soulful voice.

But as I walk further into the park, I quickly realize that I am not the only one seeking solace in the peaceful river walkway. I soon come across a seal lounging on the dock, enjoying a Stillwell's ice cream cone. It's an absurd sight, and I can't help but wonder what the seal is thinking as it gazes out into the river, its cone rapidly melting in the warm night air.

But the surprises don't stop there. As I continue my walk, I notice a group of guys from the crew team hauling ergs and setting them down along the riverbank. It's already 10:30 pm, and I can't help but wonder what they're up to. Are they training

for an upcoming race? Did they talk to some girls saying that they come to the river to watch crew guys work out? Who knows.

I can't help but overhear their conversation. They're discussing the possibility of doing a fifth 2k of the night, and I can't believe my ears. Who does five 2k races in one night? These guys are either incredibly dedicated or completely insane, and I can't decide which. It's completely insane.

More strange sightings interrupted my peaceful walk. As I continue down the path, I stumble upon a group of students practicing tai chi by the river. They move with fluid grace, their movements slow and deliberate as if they are in their own little world, high up in the clouds. It's a beautiful sight, and it makes me realize there is so much more to Swasey Park than I have ever imagined.

As I head back to campus, I can't help but feel like I have discovered a secret world hidden in plain sight. Swasey at night is a strange and wonderful place, full of surprises and unexpected encounters. Who knows what other strange and unusual things I'll come across on my next late-night stroll?

Possibly the strangest thing I have encountered on one of my walks was when I ran into one Townley Chisolm. Feeling unmotivated to grade Biology Lab reports, he had decided to bring his pet fruit flies on a walk, just quietly strolling down the river bank, not a worry in the world.

I hope we all take a step off campus and take a moment to appreciate nature, or at least the strangeness of the world around us.

Courtesy of PortsmouthNH.com

DUMB WAYS to DIE at Exeter



By LUCY JUNG and HEMANI STELLARD

Courtesy of IMDb

1. Getting busted by Ms. Geer for taking a shower after your allocated "tuck-in time."

2. To whoever keeps opening the Dunbar fire exit door, please read the posted signs on the crash bar, the alarm next to the door, and the wall. The alarm will in fact go off.

3. Craving ice cream and sneaking out to Stillwell's past check-in. Coming back to the dorm to realize that your dorm parent's doorway in the stairwell is open. Getting stricts.

4. Skipping assembly, getting a call from a friend that your dorm was called, rushing out of your dorm at 110 mph to the Academy Building only to find Chisolm staring into your soul, trembling with fury.

5. Taking the elevator in the science building with a friend, getting off on the second floor to be confronted by Chisolm questioning you. Proceed to tell him you have shin splints, then him asking you if he can check your medical records.

6. Setting your hair on fire at 1 a.m. with a hair straightener, setting the fire alarms off, and forcing a grumpy dorm population to be evacuated in panic.

7. Holding the door open for your fellow dormmate past check-in. While she goes to get her DoorDash, you accidentally let the door slip from behind you. Thus you bang on the door to have your dorm fac let you back in, and you are further reprimanded by

said dorm faculty for the major rule violation you have committed. This act of villainy is recorded in the duty notes, available to all dorm faculty including yours truly Carol Cahalane. Hence, you are served with three weeks of stricts.

8. The day after this occurs, you get a call from your parents, obviously upset at the fact you have three weeks of stricts. While you are walking across the street, reading an angry text sent by your mother to the family group chat, you incidentally forget to wave to the car waiting on the front street crosswalk, resulting in an angry teacher demanding your name and advisor to report your nefarious deed.

AVA'S CARTOON CORNER

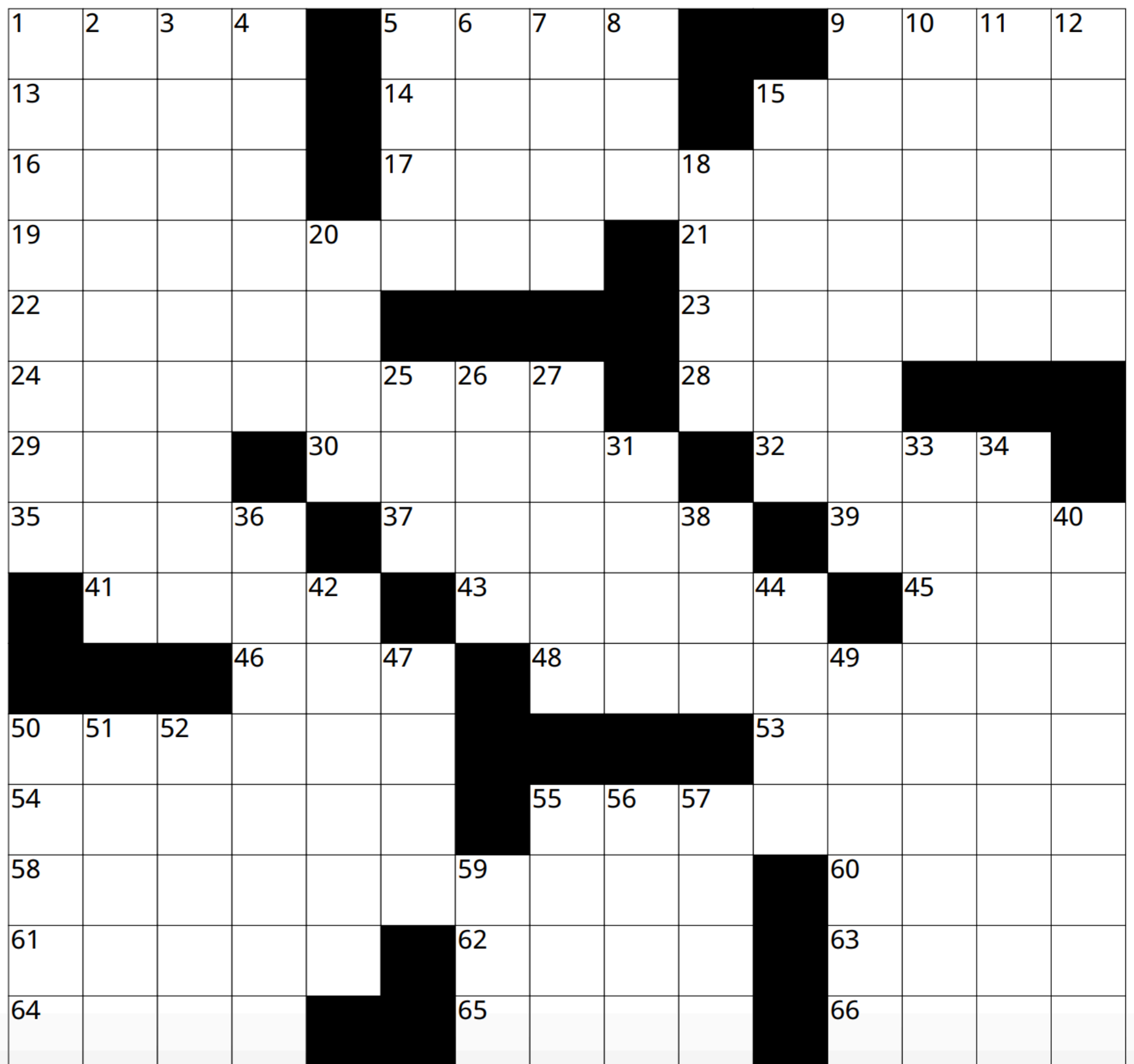
If you'd like to draw for *The Exonian* or simply have a piece featured, email Ava Zhao at yzhao4@exeter.edu!

Just Save It



The Crossword Corner

By Finn Tronnes '24



ACROSS

- 1 "I Spy" co-star Robert
 5 Harry Styles era
 9 Exams for uppers and seniors, mostly
 13 Latin oils
 14 What Niall Horan might call a lake
 15 "It's ____ point"
 16 Boardroom events like in the "Best Song Ever" video: Abbr.
 17 "We'll throw the ____" (1D lyric)
 19 Unlike 1D's impact
 21 Like a virgin?
 22 Dwarf who traveled with Bilbo
 23 What Louis Tomlinson does after he inhales
 24 Song with 17A
 28 "Zip-a-Dee-Doo-____"
 29 Nola Weeder's

- brother's name (rhymes with show, like a 1D concert)
 30 Feeling when 1D announced their hiatus
 32 Mineral whose name is Latin for "crumb"
 35 Riddle in Zen Buddhism
 37 John, older musician who collaborated recently with Rina Sawayama and Dua Lipa
 39 Scale button
 41 LOL XD!
 43 Catherine O'Hara's "Beetlejuice" role
 45 Baseball hitter's stat
 46 NYC arena where 1D played in 2012
 48 Luau entree
 50 With 55 Down, 1D's second album

- 53 What you clean with your 1D toothbrush, singular
 54 Developer's unit
 55 Where 1D catches their helicopter
 58 What Harry Styles does after a breakup
 60 Latin wings (what's with all the latin!?!?!?)
 61 Licorice-flavored seed
 62 Has credits like "Dunkirk" and "Don't Worry Darling" on Harry Styles' page
 63 Bundle of nerves
 64 What Louis Tomlinson and Liam Payne have
 65 Exam
 66 Mode of transportación

DOWN

- 1 1D will do it any day now
 2 Describes every 1D fan
 3 Handled 1D's name lawsuit
 4 Here and there (Latin)
 5 Blubber
 6 Alternative to 41 Across
 7 Part of un opéra
 8 1D album, "Made in ____ A.M."
 9 What Makes You Beautiful, for example
 10 Half a Heart?
 11 ____ Eclipse of the Heart (song covered by 1D)
 12 Harry, singular
 15 Tests going on this week
 18 Camped in a trailer, for short
 20 Taylor-Joy, who said Harry

- Styles dropped out of a movie she was in
 25 Zayn's is currently 30
 26 Fool's ____
 27 Opposite of what Zayn did in 1D
 31 The moral of "Live While We're Young"
 33 Harry Styles when in a car with James Corden
 34 Judge
 36 Unlike the girls in "Best Song Ever," "Olivia," and "Diana"
 38 Name hidden in "macaroni and cheese"
 40 Louis Tomlinson's age when 1D was formed
 42 Be absorbed gradually
 44 Wine-producing region

- of Italy
 47 "But the whole world's tryna ____ piece of you" (1D lyric)
 49 To do what Zayn did to 1D
 50 Spanish inquisitor ____ de Torquemada
 51 "That's ____!" ("Don't do it!")
 52 Louis Tomlinson's pigeon
 55 End of 50 Across album title
 56 "My heart, your heart/Sit tight like book ____" (1D lyric)
 57 Most 1D fans
 59 Like a 1D concert

Best Sitting Spots on Campus

By CHENGYUEZHANG '24

- Outdoor Harkness tables (always cool on a hot day)
- Academy steps (tall people put their feet three steps down, medium-height people take two, and short people take one, and if you are like L, put your feet on the same step as your butt)
- Red chairs (it is best to sit on them with a backpack on)
- Little black chairs outside the Art building (but

- sometimes they get too warm from the sunlight)
- In a tree
- On a dock by Exeter River
- On the grass (it's advised to bring a blanket)
- In a classroom (... climb in through a window)
- On someone else's lap (no matter where you are, someone else's lap is always comfortable, but always get consent first!)
- On your dirty laundry (if you can ignore the

- smell, it is soft)
- Chairs with wheels (how many of them can you find on campus?)
- The heater in the basement of the Academy Building (very comfortable in the winter)
- Cycling machine on the ground floor of the library (who uses those?)
- Your friend's gamer chair

Sports

» TENNIS

Read about the boys and girls tennis teams captains, 14.

» GOLF

Read about the golf teams match against Belmont Hill, 14.

» VOLLEYBALL

Read about the boys volleyball game against Choate Rosemary Hall, 14.

Captains of the Week: Lally Lavin, Clark Pearson and Jayson Tung



Tennis captains smile for a photo after practice.

By MAX MANTEL and LILY RAMPE

As the weather slowly starts to warm up, the boys and girls tennis teams are just getting their season started. The leadership and encouragement of senior captains Lally Lavin, Clark Pearson, and Jayson Tung have helped both teams create a strong season. The girls team started off with

a terrific start, defeating The Governor's Academy, Middlesex School, St. Paul's School, and Northfield Mount Hermon School. Although the boys team faced difficulty at the beginning of their season with The Groton School and Loomis Chaffee School, they picked up momentum and secured strong wins over St. Paul's School and Choate Rosemary Hall.

When talking about the atmosphere of the girls team, Lavin highlighted the supportive environment, "We always have music playing and have a routine going at the start. The team has a perfect combination of having fun while working hard."

Lower Brianna Cong further elaborated on the atmosphere of the girls team. "We share each other's triumphs and blunders,

Vir Shrestha / *The Exonian*

laughing together at our dumb mistakes and cheering loudly for our great points. There are often times when you can hear us screaming out of fear when playing at the net or collapsing into fits of laughter after a particularly wild point."

Lower Steven Chen agreed that the boys' team fosters a similar environment. "Due to our coaches and captains, our team members are a lot more motivated to

improve and truly enjoy the game of tennis."

Cong expressed admiration for Lavin's sportsmanship. "Even when she is facing challenges in her own matches (which is rare), she never fails to cheer for her teammates, shouting out 'Go big red' or 'Go [person's name]' to encourage them on the court."

Lavin, the captain of the girls varsity tennis team, is said to be loud, enthusiastic, and a great team leader. "She is like our team's big sister," Cong said. "She brings unparalleled energy and enthusiasm to the team, and her cheers can be heard from miles away. One of the running jokes on our team is that Lally accounts for 95% of our volume when we cheer. She is undoubtedly the loudest and best cheerer on our team."

Lavin elaborated on her growth throughout her time on the team. "Since coming to Exeter, I've focused much more on my doubles playing," Lavin said. "In high school matches, both doubles and singles matches count equally towards the overall score. There is a very different strategy to doubles play than to singles play, and since I had always focused more on singles, I had to learn many new skills to grow as a doubles player. Right now, my doubles partner, Lucy Will, and I have a 4-1 record, evidence of both of our hard work."

Pearson and Tung are both the captains of the boys tennis team who are always there to help out their teammates and keep a positive atmosphere on the team. Chen said, "I think both of our captains do an excellent job of acting as role models and supporting especially younger players on our team to be the best they can be. They do an amazing

job at fostering team spirit and sportsmanship."

Mitchell Tam echoed a similar sentiment, "Tennis is a mental sport, and a lot of us on the team are able to hit great shots but can't get past that mental barrier. When they get the chance, Clark and Jayson do their best to help us get past that barrier and just play the best we can."

Chen continued, "I think both captains this year are amazing examples of what a great captain ought to be, and our team would definitely not be what it is without either of them."

As captains, Lavin, Pearson, and Tung all serve as role models for their teammates. Cong said, "Lally embodies every aspect of a leader and sets the tone for the team with her lively energy, positive attitude, and resilience even in the face of challenge."

Tam elaborated on the team's bond fostered by the captains, "The team has a chill and fun vibe, all of us know each other pretty well, and we joke around a lot as a team and get dinner together most of the time."

Lower Lexi Meyer continued to talk about the environment on the team, "The team is energetic and motivated, although we do also have fun with practices. Everyone is very friendly and welcoming. Especially on Varsity B, I would say the team is very close-knit," Meyer said.

Lavin was optimistic about the future of the team. "I'm very optimistic about our team. Our lineup is very different from last year, but we have a lot of depth and a variety of playing styles... It's been off to a great start, with our first four matches giving us four consecutive wins! We're really finding our groove, and I'm loving it."

Big Red Golf Takes on Belmont Hill

By JACK CASSIDY AND LAUREN LEE

As spring arrives, the golf team hits the green running with a hopeful start to their season. Senior Jack Fallon and lower Angelina Gong lead the team. Their first match of the season was against Belmont Hill, and they lost 4-3.

Second-year captain, lower Angelina Gong explained the importance of this match. "It's the first match that we play every single year. Belmont Hill, an all-boys school, is notoriously known to be probably the best team."

Coach Bob Bailey commented, "In the past, Belmont Hill had whooped us," Coming into Exeter's first match-up, Belmont Hill had already played a couple of matches. They had a winning streak, having beaten the team six-to-

two at last year's match. "We were coming in a little cold," remarked upper Michael Nardone.

Many members noted the intense effort the team put into the match. "They were determined to play better this year," said Bailey. This determination and grit showed in the results: Angelina Gong, Michael Nardone, and Paco Sze each won two points for Exeter. "We lost by one," Gong continued. "Which is still a loss, but we improved a lot."

"We definitely have a strong team this year," reflected Nardone. "But the best part about us is that we all get along really well and work well together on and off the course." Lower Charles Dobbins expressed a similar sentiment, "We all just have a really good time. We're fo-

cused on getting better and being prepared, but we also make sure we're having fun and supporting each other."

This sense of support and community is evident through how the team talks about each other.

The team is full of role models that push each to perform better and practice harder. "I definitely admire Paco Sze," said Nardone. "He's a super dedicated golfer and is always willing to help anyone with their swing."

"I really admire Michael Nardone," said Dobbins. "He's a really, really, great golfer and he truly puts in the work."

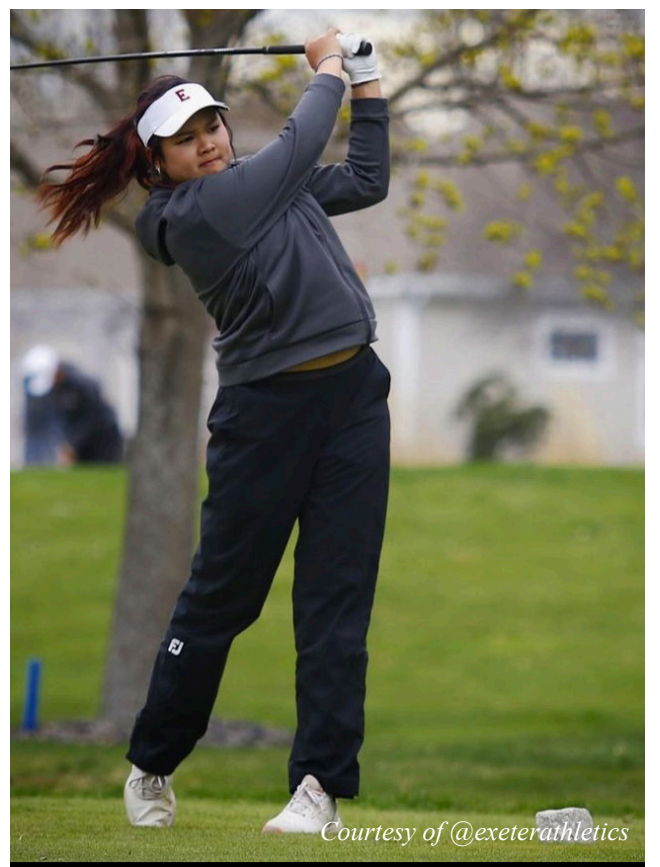
"I admire Dobbins very much. I'll go to the golf room after practice, and four hours later, he's still in there grinding," said Gong. "Even though he's a beginner and

he's never played on a golf team before, he's gotten so much better. He puts in the effort."

In the future, the team hopes to build on this momentum and find success in their future matches. This will come hand in hand with the continuation of the development of a supportive and exciting team culture.

"I think my time on the golf team – when I look back later on in life – is gonna be one of the most cherished times. Even though the team has people from all different places, we somehow come together, and we work really well together," Gong remarked.

Nardone concluded with words of guidance for all golfers, "Be the ball."



Lower Angelina Gong in action.

Boys Volleyball Crushes Choate Rosemary Hall

By TEDDY CAPOZZI, LANG GOU and ERIN HAN

On Saturday, April 22, the boys varsity volleyball team swept Choate 3 to 0, an overwhelming victory at home. Contributing to their 3-1 record, with their only loss to Andover.

Despite this win, senior captain Rodrigo Spinola e Castro believes the win was a poor reflection of the team. "Choate is a team that we

know we can beat pretty easily, to the point where the fact that they almost got sets on us because we almost lost to ourselves."

The team looks ahead for injured players, captain Andy Horrigan and Upper Olisa Nwogugu, to return to play. "Andy is the soul of the team. He keeps us up during games. He keeps our spirit up. He's always having fun, making us have fun. He makes volleyball somewhere people want to go," said Spinola e Castro.

Upper Gunn Sukhum spoke on the impact each captain has had this year. "The captains, Andy and Rodrigo, have been the most important part of volleyball for me... they keep the energy high both in matches and in practice and always cheer us up when we make a mistake. I'm very thankful to have Andy and Rodrigo lead our team this year."

Upper Nicholas Lin added, "Both our captains never disappoint. They stay vocal

and pick everyone on the team up when they make a mistake. But what they did best was lead by example. When put in a bad spot, they would always somehow keep the ball in play, and when they get their chances, they kill it."

Despite this unsatisfactory performance, Spinola e Castro still has a few highlights. He described the performance of senior Ty Dieberg, a new member of the volleyball team, as a "big

highlight." He believed that players like Dieberg stepping up to fill in the roles of Horrigan and Nwogugu contributed in a significant way to the success of the team. That is not always easy, however. "Filling in the shoes of two of our best players is one of the toughest challenges for the team," said Sukhum.

As for the future of the team, things are looking very bright. The team is working hard, and Horrigan and Nwogugu are working with

the trainers to make speedy recoveries and return to the court. The next big event for the team is EA, which will be a home game this year. The whole team is excited about it, but Sukhum summarizes the team's feelings well. "We are hoping for a healthy and exciting EA match at home this year on May 3rd. We appreciate everyone watching our games, and the cheer energy does radiate into the court."