

NEWS

Read about this year's Experience Exeter, 1.

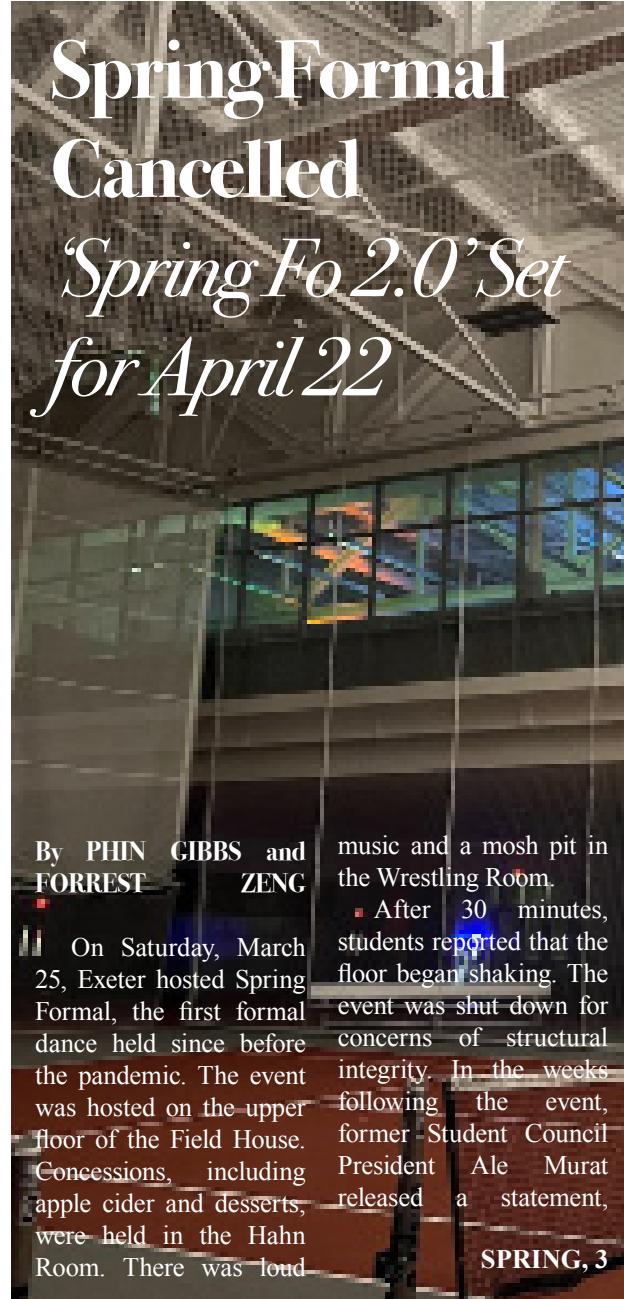
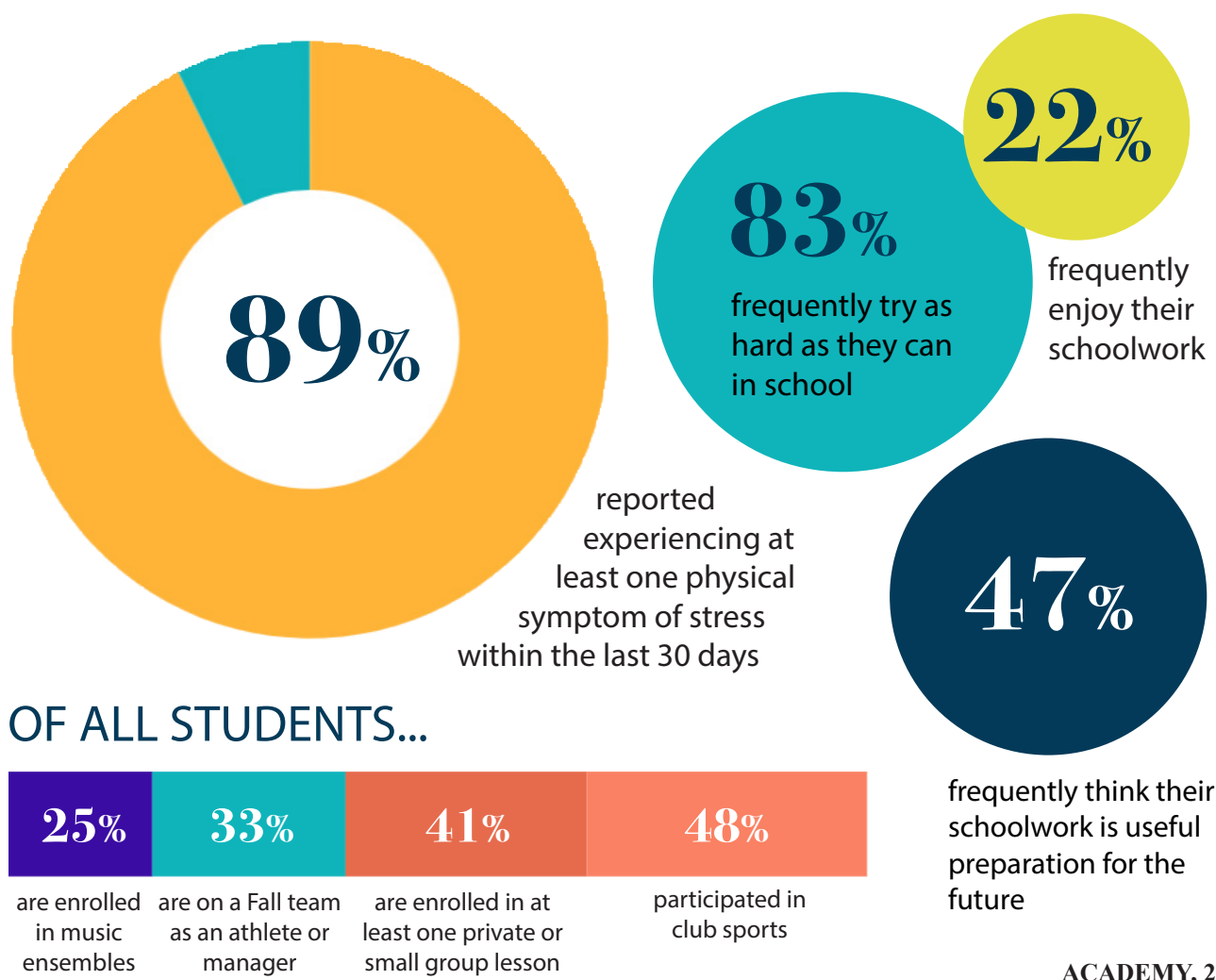
NEWS

Read about the findings of a student time-management study, 2.

OP-ED

Read upper David Goodall's review of the new Lana Del Rey album, 5.

Academy Releases Findings of Student Time Management Study



Prospective Families Visit the Academy for Experience Exeter

By PHIN GIBBS and LEO ZHANG

A myriad of unfamiliar faces took over the paths of Exeter over the course of four days as part of Experience Exeter, which allowed prospective students to get a small taste of what life at Exeter is like. Current students served as tour guides, hosts, and panelists to give prospective students a clear picture of what an Exeter student truly experiences.

Associate Director of Admissions Julia McPhee articulated the main goal behind this event. "Even for the admittees who haven't been to campus, the biggest part is being able to experience a day in the life of being a student here. Being able to go to classes, actually meet current students, meet some of their potential classmates, and go to the dining halls. So I think the biggest thing is just to live out what a typical day would be like."

Senior Associate Director of Admissions Matti Donker also added that fostering community was a major goal. "Finding community and finding a place that [new students] can be included in is a very important part. So as they're following this host around, we make sure that not only is the host going to class, but they're including that admitted student into conversations. We want them to actually introduce them to friends and truly make the experience about what life could truly be like here."

Incoming senior Cherish Amby-Okolo definitely felt this sense of community during her Experience Exeter day.

"[My host] took me to U.S. history; I was at the table and I got to interact and experience Harkness. When I got to my second class, computer science, I definitely tried to interact more, and the students let me interact in class. I felt really good because I actually felt part of the Harkness discussion. Then we went to lunch and I met all her friends, so that was also really nice. She showed me the Phelps Science Center, her dorm, and Grill. She interacted with people and showed me what it was like to be a regular person just walking around Exeter," she said.

To welcome prospective students, head tour guides worked closely with the Admissions Office to set up opportunities. Senior and head tour guide Tucker Gibbs describes his involvement. "I was involved with the Fly-In program, which is where the school brings in a number of first-generation students and minority students to have an extra day on campus. It's the Sunday before the Monday of Experience Exeter, and they get a scavenger hunt. I gave the parents an in-depth tour before they went to dinner and then onto their normal Experience Exeter day."

The immersive aspect of Experience Exeter is something the admissions office works hard to perfect. Donker described the process, "It's a very wonderful and thoughtful process. What we do is look at the classes that the incoming student enjoys, such as if they love Latin or if they love English. We look for that to make sure your schedule aligns that

day as much as possible with their interests. We look at prospective students' interests like



Prospective students attend a panel during Experience Exeter.

classes so we can give people more information about what's going on at Exeter.

Courtesy of @phillipsexeter

if they are into robotics or hockey or whatever it may be and then we try to pair them with a host."

Associate Director of Admissions Kathy Cheng explained why officers spend so much time pairing up students with hosts: "Exeter can feel a little intimidating, so hopefully by getting them connected to the community and getting to sit in during classes, they are hopefully able to say, 'I can picture myself here.'"

In addition to Experience Exeter, prospective students have opportunities to learn more about what it means to be an Exonian. Gibbs explains, "We had a number of online panels about different aspects of student life. During Experience Exeter, we had students do a couple of panels about student life for the parents and students who were there. It's all just different aspects like residential life or athletics or arts or

McPhee commented, "I think that this year we probably hosted 11 virtual events and they focused on different aspects of Exeter, such as residential life, academics, or athletics. We also did a couple of live guided tours where we had tour guides walk around campus, showing the different spots. We did young alumni and an international student chat. We tried to hit multiple different populations that we were speaking to and hopefully answer their questions about experiences."

Overall, prospective students received a good holistic view of Exeter through Experience Exeter. "[The experience] made me feel like a student myself rather than like somebody on a tour. [My host] told me a lot of things that they don't tell you in the book or on the website such as customs, places to study, and the best places to get coffee or to hang out with friends," reflected Amby-Okolo.

Members of the Academy Celebrate Ramadan

By ETHAN DING and ELLE PERRY

Until the holy day of Eid-al-Fitr, Muslims across the world observe Ramadan. In the faith of Islam, Ramadan is considered one of the holiest months of the year. For the duration of the month, Muslims fast each day from dawn until sunset, carry out charitable acts, and read the Quran, as well as many other efforts to become closer to their faiths.

At Exeter, Muslim students and faculty have come together to celebrate with all sorts of activities. On some nights, Muslim Exonians gather for Iftar, the evening meal when Muslims break their fast, sharing culture and good food. Instructor in Mathematics Makhtar Sarr has hosted Quran classes every Sunday and has also been teaching Arabic to members of the Exeter community who are interested in Islam and Islamic culture. And recently, the Muslim Student Association (MSA) hosted an assembly to talk about Ramadan's significance and the different ways it's celebrated.

For upper and MSA co-head Kenza Madhi, Ramadan at Exeter is special because of the unique community. "We actually have a lot of people that participate in the Sunday night and Wednesday night Iftars. We even have some friends of MSA members come in as well. It's really nice to have that kind of gathering, and we always have great conversations," Madhi said. "When I was younger, I didn't know very many people that were Muslim or practiced Ramadan at my school. Having so many people around you here

that are attending the same religious activities is just a huge plus."

Upper and fellow MSA co-head Ayaan Akhtar echoed a similar sentiment about the Exeter community. "It's nice having this connection with each other, especially when many of us are away from home and our families. It's like we have a close-knit family with all the other Muslim students and faculty," Akhtar said. "I've been at Exeter since my prep year, and I'm an upper now, but the Muslim community at Exeter has just grown exponentially. I remember when I was a prep, it was super small. We'd only have like two to three people, but now we have around 20 people who attend the regular Jummah prayers, which is a good amount of people. It's a lot of fun being with each

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

other, especially during this holy month."

When Muslims fast, they pledge not to eat or drink anything for the course of the day. This, in conjunction with the heavy workloads Exonians normally have, presents itself as an additional challenge.

"There are both pluses and minuses when it comes to Ramadan at Exeter," Madhi said. "The schedule itself makes Ramadan really difficult. We're fasting for the whole time that we're in classes, so it's

News

» **EXETER**

Read about this year’s Experience Exeter, 1.

» **RAMADAN**

Read about student’s celebration of Ramadan on campus, 3.

» **TIME**

Read about the findings of the student time-management study, 2.

Findings of Student Time Management Study Cont.

By **JOONYOUNG HEO, MAX MANTEL and ROX PARK**

Following weeks of investigation, the Academy administration released to the community on April 4 the results of a study on student time management. *The Exonian* reached out to several members of the faculty for more details and

reported major sources of stress were academic assessments (88.0 percent), overall academic workload (80.0 percent), and a specific class or classes (72.5 percent).

As part of the study, a number of students took part in a pilot schedule that made for longer class periods meeting fewer times per week. Their reactions varied; one student who

in relation to the Exeter environment. “We wanted to understand better how students spend their time, how much sleep they are getting, how they are experiencing their time here, and other factors bearing on their health and well-being, as part of our ongoing efforts to support student health and well-being,” Principal William Rawson said.

when conducting student research,” Hart said.

Among the student body, the survey results were met with a mix of both surprise and agreement — a testament to the diversity of experiences with workload, engagement, stress, and time management at Exeter.

To senior Jessica Huang, the results were shocking but also enlightening. “It was not so much because of the stress part, but because of the sheer amount of work,” she said. “I was surprised to see the average time that it takes for total homework because I’ve never timed it before.”

Lower Claire Han, on the other hand, found the results to be very relatable. “I honestly wasn’t at all surprised by the results and was anticipating many of the answers to be what they were. For the most part, I thought they accurately represented my own schedule and workload.”

Others discussed feeling overwhelmed by the study. “The results were a bit short on the hours I spend studying every day, especially on the weekends,” lower Nicholas Li said. “However, I think it’s a consensus that students our age need to be getting more sleep and time away from the computer or desk.”

“The results may also show a discrepancy between the ideal amount of sleep and the amount of sleep we get, but it didn’t fully reflect to the administration what the student body thought about it,” Li continued.

Despite mixed opinions about the personal applicability of the results, it was generally agreed that the workload and subsequent lack of sleep indicated were frustrating. “I know we enrolled in this school to be academically challenged,” upper Indigo Ogiste said, “but at the same time, we are 15 to 17-year-old children, and the amount of sleep we get is quite literally not healthy. I feel like the school doesn’t really take into account how we don’t get time to rest, in the sense of sleep, but also to take a break.”

“I think the Academy should start to realize that although we are ‘Exonians,’

expectations of teachers. We are not machines that don’t need sleep to work hours on end.”

“Unfortunately, I feel like Exeter has a culture where it makes you feel like it’s not okay to not be doing

“*I think the Academy should start to realize that although we are ‘Exonians,’ we are still teenagers.*”

work,” Huang said. “You feel you have to keep doing work.”

Prep Tiffany Sun credited this mindset to a combination of mounting teacher expectations and the high-achieving nature of Exeter students. “As for time spent on homework,” she said, “teachers should adhere to the homework time limit policies for each class. For example, even if a teacher says a student can stop doing their homework after 50 minutes, students at PEA all want to perform well in classes, making it

examined, and I know Dr. Hart only recently shared results with students and faculty to hear feedback. It is important to understand the limitations of studies like this, as well what they do tell us. It is premature to say how the results might affect decisions about schedule, but we do continue to look for ways our schedule might be improved to support teaching and learning at Exeter,” he said.

This sentiment was echoed by other faculty. “The first step was to gather the information and understand the findings,” Assistant Principal Karen Lassey said. “As is usually the case in researching a question, we often uncover more questions that prompt us to dig deeper to gather more information. We are in that important process now.”

While potential changes to the schedule are still under consideration, the faculty expressed that they are open to having similar studies in the near future. “Without a doubt, more could be learned about how students spend their time and how they feel about



- Take pride in the quality of their work
- Complete their school assignments
- Think their schoolwork helps improve their academic skills

future plans.

The study drew largely from the student survey conducted this past fall and was supplemented by Shadow Day, when volunteers from the faculty were selected to “shadow” Exonians through a normal school day. The findings were published online and shared during advisory.

Among other data points, 69 percent of students reported dropping an activity or hobby because of schoolwork; 61.8 percent reported their workload “frequently” or “almost always” kept them from time with family and friends; and 71 percent reported “frequently” or “almost always” being stressed about their academic experience. Further, students spent an average of 3.9 hours on

preferred the pilot schedule said that “meeting three times a week helped the class be more energetic and not burnt out,” while another preferred the conventional Exeter schedule “because it felt more consistent, and classes aren’t as long.”

The Academy administration initiated the study to discover how Exonians grapple with the current schedule. “For many years there has been uncertainty about how Exonians use their time and what drives the pace of life here,” Director of Studies Scott Saltman said. “We know that there is no easy answer, as every student is different and things evolve year by year. But we wanted to look for major patterns. Additionally, knowing that class time

Director of Institutional Research Kari Hart mentioned similar motivations. “The study sought to provide greater perspective about the daily experiences and time usage of students at the Academy,” she said, “and to inform ongoing community conversations about the daily schedule, academic calendar, and student well-being.”

Members of the administration were open about their reactions to the findings. “I think the results overall were informative and helpful — I would not necessarily say they were surprising,” Rawson said. “I think there is more to be learned, such as how elective student activities contribute to students’ joy and sense of belonging at

More than **70%** of students reported that:

- their instructors and the content of their courses encourage them to think critically and problem-solve “quite a bit” or “a tremendous amount”
- their courses are “quite” or “extremely” challenging
- their teachers have “quite” or “extremely” high expectations for the quality of their work

Average Hours of Sleep



a typical weekday doing homework and a 5.7-hour average on weekends. In terms of sleep, Exonians averaged just under 7.0 hours on nights prior to a first format class, 7.6 hours when they did not, and 9.1 hours when there were no classes at all the next day. The most frequently

and homework time are major time commitments for all students, we wanted to better understand student perception of how those are part of the learning process.”

Their interest also extended to understanding students’ mental health

Exeter, and the impact of these elective activities on student pace, sleep, and total workload.”

For her part, Hart approached the study with an open mind and let the data tell the story: “It’s important to avoid relying on preconceptions

we are still teenagers,” Han said. “Even though we made it to this school and endure higher academic pressure than most students, we are still the same as any other adolescents and have lives outside Exeter. The label ‘Exonian’ shouldn’t be used to justify the high

hard to simply ‘stop’ after the allotted time.”

Yet even here, there was some disagreement from students. “I think it’s just the price you pay for going to Exeter,” senior Enzo Nakornsri said. “What separates Exeter from a normal high school is you work that much harder, and you reap the rewards. I feel that’s how things are supposed to be here.”

In terms of future surveys, students had a few suggestions. “We should have surveys for teachers and more specific questions, such as exactly which subjects take up the most time,” lower Byran Huang said. “I think it accurately depicted our schedule and workload, but I feel like the different years could have also been more distinguished.”

Others agreed. “They could have been more specific,” Nakornsri said. “They took everything else into account, but they could’ve given us the entire report so we have a better idea of the breakdown. Who’s struggling — is it the preps? The uppers? It would be helpful to know.”

For the time being, Rawson was unable to offer specific details as to how this survey will affect the Academy schedule. “I think the results are still being

their experiences here, and I suspect further studies will be undertaken,” Rawson said. “Our experience with this study also might help inform our approach to surveys in the future and lead to refinements in the questions we ask and improvements in the information we gain.”

“There are many areas in which we would like to gather student input, in addition to time use,” Saltman said. “We are also trying to avoid ‘survey fatigue,’ so we have to prioritize what we do and when.”

“The Academy will continue to use research to make informed decisions in support of institutional priorities,” Hart said. “For example, an all-student survey focused on health behaviors and well-being will be administered during Advising on April 26. The survey will be administered with an external partner, Authentic Connections, to ensure anonymity and allow for comparisons with peer institutions.”

Change is not set in stone, and much is still up in the air, but the broader study into student life and its ties to the Exeter schedule will certainly continue.

Ramadan Cont.

difficult to be as attentive as you normally would. You get very tired very easily. One potentially good thing about having such a large schedule is that you're staying busy. Sometimes it makes the time go by faster as well. It really just depends on the day."

"I think the nature of Exeter's schedule makes it so that fasting is a lot harder because you have five classes a day, then sports, and only after the whole day can you fully relax," upper Tanya Syed said. "A lot of teachers have been very understanding and accommodating to people that might be fasting. Ramadan here doesn't really compare to what it's like back home, but the fact that there are so many people that support us here makes it better."

For non-Muslims, Ramadan can be a topic that many people aren't familiar with or have questions about. The MSA planned an assembly with the goal of showing the wider Exeter community the many ways Ramadan is special and clearing up some common misconceptions that people had.

"The assembly schedule was tight, but luckily Mr. Miller was able to provide us a slot in March, which worked out really nicely because it was near the start of the term and near the start of Ramadan," Akhtar said. "We wanted to highlight that Ramadan is celebrated in many different



Members of the Muslim Student Association celebrate Ramadan together.

Courtesy of Muslim Student Association

ways since Muslims are very diverse. No two places celebrate Ramadan the same way because Muslims are from all over the world. We wanted to especially focus on how we have Muslims from all over the world within our community here at Exeter."

A defining feature of the Assembly was the video made of how different Muslims at Exeter celebrate Ramadan.

"In our brainstorming for the assembly, we thought of a video since we were inspired by the Black History Month video during an assembly in February. We thought it was a good way to do something fun that also has some important elements to it," Madhi said.

"The video was a lot of fun. We got Muslim members of our community, students and faculty alike,

to answer the question, 'What do you love about Ramadan?' I threw a video together and tried to make it fun and engaging. Ramadan really is about

"Ramadan is all about improving yourself, getting closer to your faith, and making your community a better place for everyone."

celebrating and being with the community," Akhtar said.

The MSA co-heads also put together a presentation on how Ramadan is celebrated in different cultures around the world.

"In addition to the video, we also thought it was important to have a presentation for the factual aspect of Ramadan, just so that people could become more informed about our traditions and Islam in general," Madhi said. "We thought it was important to stress how different Muslims practice Ramadan in different ways."

"A lot of people think that Ramadan is like a diet. It's not a diet," Syed said. "People are not fasting for aesthetic reasons. It's about being grateful and appreciating life. In addition to fasting, Ramadan is also a time for self-reflection and giving back to your community through service. Many people don't know this but community service is one of the pillars of Ramadan. I feel that the presentation cleared a lot of

this up, and people are much more well-informed now than they were before."

The assembly finished off with a dance performance. Syed and Upper Ayman Naseer were the performers.

"Ayman and I, we're both South Asian. I'm Indian and Ayman is Pakistani, so we decided to put together a dance based on various Hindi songs," Syed said. "It was really nice to wear my cultural clothes and share that part of my culture and identity with the rest of the school."

"The purpose of the dance was just to show, furthermore, the celebration associated with Ramadan and particularly Eid," Akhtar said. "Tanya and Ayman danced through Bollywood songs, and that was just one more of the many aspects of how culture is celebrated during Ramadan."

During Ramadan, Muslims strive to purify their hearts and minds, focusing on acts of kindness, generosity, and compassion toward others. It is a time to deepen one's understanding of the Quran and to strengthen one's connection to the community through acts of charity and prayer.

"Ramadan is a time to speak kindly to people. All the things that people should do any time of the year, but they're stressed more in Ramadan," Madhi said. "There are a lot of things in Islam that are considered good deeds that you probably wouldn't normally think of. Even smiling is considered a good deed. Ramadan is all about improving yourself, getting closer to your faith, and making your community a better place for everyone."

Spring Formal Cancelled Cont.

formally addressing the incident. She apologized for the cancellation of the dance and promised a second formal dance before the school year ended. The second dance, titled "Spring Formal 2.0" is set for Saturday, April 22. It will take place from 8:30 p.m. to 10:45 p.m. in Thompson Gym.

The event preceded much anticipation. Prep Olivia Pierre said, "I was pretty excited. I was planning on going with some of my friends and I was excited to finally have something just to have an excuse to dress up."

"Everyone was having a good time," prep Anna Taormina said. "Seeing everybody dressed up was really fun."

The dress of the dance was formal. Some students found the theme conflicting with the music. "I felt like the choice of EDM wasn't quite fitting with everyone wearing formal clothes," lower Niko Todorov said.

A few minutes after the dance started, the ground began to pulsate noticeably. The shaking was most pronounced within the Wrestling Room and could be sensed within the Hahn Room.

"The floor started wobbling," Olasore said. "I was like, 'these people are crazy.' I thought they were making the floor wobble by bouncing too hard." The shaking originated from students in one singular spot, concentrating the pressure on a small area of the floor.

"It was the unison of the jumping. They were all jumping on beat and it was not good," Olasore added.

Students described the dense crowd of dancing students as a mosh pit.

"After the mosh pit started the room began shaking. It was terrifying," Taormina said.

Prep Samuel Scheffler outlined his experience at the dance up until it was shut down. "When I entered the Wrestling Room, I noticed the shaking immediately and was concerned about structural damage. I also noticed a safety officer and manager surveying the room. The safety officer thought the vibrating was from the bass in the music. After I moved around, I noticed that some parts of the room were moving more than others, and I concluded that the floor

"It was the unison of the jumping. They were all jumping on beat and it was not good."

was shaking because of all the people dancing."

"I had a creeping suspicion that something was going to happen," prep Janibek Subkhanberdin said. "There was a campus safety car outside, and it was alarming."

The Wrestling Room is reportedly attached to the roof of the field house, which is in turn attached to a series of beams and pipes which the nets surrounding the tennis courts hang on. When the Wrestling Room began to shake, it likely transferred energy into the surrounding ceiling area, the walls, and the nets. Although the energy was dispersed throughout the large structure, the force was seemingly great enough that it caused significant movement within the field house itself. Scheffler and

another student decided to investigate the shaking through the fieldhouse.

Scheffler continued, "I moved downstairs to the track, and immediately noticed a banging noise from the opposite side of the track. I began walking closer and turned around to see what it was. I observed that the Wrestling Room was shaking severely, as well as the nets and fans of the entire field house. I could hear the sound of people jumping on the Wrestling Room floor."

The other noise Scheffler and the other student noticed turned out to be a garage door on the opposite side of the building shaking loudly due to the vibrations.

"The door was banging at the same time as the shaking of the Wrestling Room. Shortly thereafter, campus safety came and investigated what was going on. Once I reached them, we evacuated the area immediately and the dance was then shortly canceled," Scheffler said.

In a statement to parents, Dean of Students Russell Weatherspoon stated, "Ms. McGahie, Assistant Director of Student Activities, quickly conferred with Campus Safety officers and other adults present about their observations. Ms. McGahie ended the dance around 9:15 p.m. and asked the students to leave, which, though disappointed, they did."

After the decision to end the dance was made, the Wrestling Room was cleared quickly.

Taormina said, "They started flashing the lights on and off, and people were like, 'are we actually gonna fall through?' They said that everybody had to exit,

and that the floor was going to break and fall. Then they turned on the track lights."

The track lights turning on was directly followed by the cancellation of the dance. Scheffler reported that he encountered Ms. McGahie as well as a Campus Safety officer entering the fieldhouse to examine the shaking, and that they seemed to have turned on the lights after entering the fieldhouse.

After leaving the building, Scheffler noticed a second garage door, directly underneath the first garage door and to the right of the fieldhouse entrance, vibrating similarly to the one on the opposite side of the building. He observed that the shaking was rhythmic, before ceasing when the dance was shut down.

Students report mixed emotions about the early ending of the event. Prep Maya Ilangovan noted, "They ended very early, and Saturday check-in was at 11. Nobody really had any plans."

"I feel like 'better safe than sorry' is the right sense. Especially when it's such a big dance with such a large amount of the student population," Subkhanberdin said.

Olasore said, "In the moment, I was really annoyed. But after that I calmed down and realized that it was very dangerous. And they should have known beforehand."

Reportedly, small movements of the Wrestling Room, of lesser scale than that experienced during the dance, are common.

"Some people have told me that they felt the floor move before," Olasore said. "I just think that they [the organizers] should've

known beforehand."

The choice of the Wrestling Room was unique, particularly considering alternatives to the location such as Thompson or Love Gym.

Student Council President and Former Co-Secretary upper Kevin Treehan said of the decision, "The Wrestling Room seemed like an ideal location because the Hahn room has the big glass windows. It's perfect for food and a sort of reception area. The Wrestling Room, we thought, was perfectly set up for lighting and acoustics. We didn't anticipate it being shut

"I feel like 'better safe than sorry' is the right sense. Especially when it's such a big dance with such a large amount of the student population."

down. It was very necessary because the floor was going up and down."

The upcoming Spring Formal 2.0 will be hosted in Thompson Gym, which is likely to support the student population much better. The gym is situated above Downer Fitness Center, which has a multitude of concrete pillars within it.

Treehan said of the planning, "We had a pretty quick turnaround in planning the second dance. Our new Recreation Committee Co-Heads, Gigi and Anna, worked closely with student activities to find the closest possible date to do it. We've chosen the Thompson Gym so we won't face the same issues we did with the Wrestling Room."

Some students are hesitant to attend the second event. "After it got

shut down at one point, I think not a lot of people are going. We were all hyped up and it was so disappointing," Taormina said.

Most students, however, are looking forward to the event as a fair replacement for the first short-lived dance.

"I believe that because the old one was messed up, they're going to try harder to redeem themselves, so it might be a better than a normal dance," Olasore said.

Pierre added, "I think it's gonna be great."

The new location, Thompson Gym, provides a slightly larger space. "Thompson is a lot bigger. I'm just looking forward to it because I had a fun time while the first one lasted," Subkhanberdin said.

Scheffler gave his thoughts on the Academy's response to the incident: "I feel that it was an inappropriate and insufficient response and the planning of the event should have been taken more seriously. I've lost my trust in the school's ability to protect my safety as well as the safety of my fellow students."

"The fact that two ordinary students were able to notice the issue before campus safety was just frankly embarrassing on the part of the school, especially considering their vast campus safety program and the responsibilities it carries," he added.

No official comments were offered by the administration on the incident to the students. Proceeding the event, parents were assured via email that the event had been completely safe. When asked, faculty, administration, organizers, and campus safety all declined to comment on the event as a whole.

Life

» FOTW

Read about the faculty of the week, Anne Rankin, 4.

» MED

Read about senior Dan Han's meditation, 5.

» CLUBS

Read about GameDev Club and Exeter Off-Planet Society, 6.

Faculty of the Week: Anne Rankin



Instructor in Science Anne Rankin smiles with some of her students during lunch.

Owen Dudley / *The Exonian*

By IZYAAN BURNEY and HEMANI STELLARD

A gem in the Academy's biology department and broader Exeter community, Instructor in Science and Student Council adviser Anne Rankin can always be seen in the Phelps Science Building's fourth-floor science labs with her genetics class students. From meiosis to pedigrees, gene regulation to inverse PCR, and target sequences to *Drosophila* lines, each of Rankin's classes is conducted with nothing short of immense enthusiasm and passion for her subject.

Rankin, from the class of 1992 at Exeter, graduated with a master's degree in ecology from University of California Irvine and has been a member of the faculty since 1999.

"When I think back on the happiest moments in my life, I think about being in an Exeter biology classroom, figuring something out for myself, and feeling so excited and proud," Rankin said. "I thought to myself, 'What did it feel like to be on the other side of that? To not be the kid in that situation, but the adult? Was there [just] as much joy in that?' So I left graduate school, came here for a year to see what it felt like, and I'm still here."

When asked about her favorite part about teaching at Exeter, Rankin said, "I love sitting with the kids who think they can't do it and then helping them realize that they actually can. I love when kids come into a bio[logy] class thinking they really hate bio[logy] and leave thinking that they might have a passion for it."

At the Academy, Rankin teaches the *BIO486: Introduction to Genetics* course and *BIO586: Molecular Genetics* course with fellow Instructor in Science, Summer Morrill. "We work together on designing different projects and different assessments and I feel like we got to know each other really well that way," Morrill said.

"She is creative and loves biology," Morrill said of Rankin. "I've never met someone who stays so up to date on all the latest technologies and

she tries to bring all those things into her courses and to her students."

Rankin has also worked with Instructor in Science Townley Chisholm, a long-time faculty member of the biology department, who has shaped many generations of students at Exeter. "Ms. Rankin finds delight in spending time with students and cooking up elegant genetics questions that will stretch the minds of students and colleagues equally,"

"No one is as passionate in the science department as Ms. Rankin is about genetics. The genetics sequence is one of the best-taught courses at Exeter, and it is because of Ms. Rankin."

Chisholm said.

Currently, Rankin and Chisholm co-teach the *BIO670: Biology Research* course at the Academy. "Ms. Rankin and I have taught the fly course together for about 11 years and have spent countless quality hours sorting flies together and washing gross fly vials — real bonding moments," Chisholm continued.

Another colleague, Instructor in Science Tanea Hibler, noted the importance of Rankin's coursework. "She teaches a lot of innovative research based classes, and she helps provide opportunities to get real life experiences outside the school."

Her students, too, recall moments with Rankin as valuable and nothing short of dynamic. "No one is as passionate in the science department as Ms. Rankin is about genetics. The genetics sequence is one of the best-taught courses at Exeter, and it is because of Ms. Rankin," senior Ella Kim said.

Upper Valentina Zhang and Charles Potjer both agreed that "Ms. Rankin fosters students' curiosity in the classroom. Rather than sticking to the curriculum, she encourages students to pursue aspects of biology and genetics that they are interested in."

Senior Riley Jones

described similar experiences in the classroom. "It was really, really hard, but she was one of the best teachers I've ever had, and I really liked getting to know her," Jones said. "Even if my work wasn't completely accurate, she found what was good in it and she pulled that out. She showed me that there are different ways to learn material, there are different ways to be a scientist, and that everyone can do it."

"She's very approachable, [so] it's very easy to go up and ask for help or just to go and talk with her," upper Alexander Luna said, echoing other students' sentiment. "I've gotten to meet with her several times before to ask questions, and I've come out of each of those meetings understanding the topic so much better."

Describing a touching moment of encouragement, Luna said, "She told me to figure out the things that you love, and keep on loving them without losing sight of what made you love them in the first place."

In terms of an ideal classroom for her students, Rankin described how she hopes to "have created something, whether that's a lab or set of questions or an activity, that actually encourages [students] to talk to each other a lot."

"In a perfect world, I would say very little," Rankin said.

"I love being in the classroom with kids," Rankin added. "I think there's this idea that kids that understand [the] material. Actually, I really love the kids who have to work at it. Then I'm super happy weirdly when they grasp [the] material."

Outside of teaching, Rankin is also the advisor to the Student Council. "I love Student Council, which is another big part of my job, which sounds kind of weird, but I love being in a really casual space with kids that kids are in charge of," Rankin said. "I love listening to them talk about things at the school. Often their conversations really impress me. They're thinking carefully about their experience here."

"She's really, really dedicated to learning more, figuring out what's

going on, and just being available to students," senior and former

"She really does look out for everybody that she knows...[she's] genuinely, a great person."

Elections Committee co-chair Tucker Gibbs noted.

"The advisors have a very important role," Gibbs continued. "They're the only institutional members of the Student Council because there are turnovers every year. They are there to remember, 'Oh, 10 years ago, there was this exact same situation... Here's what we did.' That sort of knowledge is really, really crucial in the operation of any sort of governmental system."

Upper and current Student Council President Kevin Treehan remarked similarly on Rankin's presence in the council. "She really does look out for everybody that she knows...[she's] genuinely, a great person," Treehan said.

Discussing his most memorable experience with Rankin, Gibbs said, "I've been rewriting the [Student Council] constitution, and that really came to a head this winter...Ms. Rankin was really passionate about understanding what each bit of the constitution was going to do. I was just amazed by how willing she was to learn and ask questions and how passionate she was about Student Council... She's changed a lot of things for the better."

Additionally, Rankin is also involved in many student initiative programs. Rankin has led the Bates-Russell Fellowship for two years now, a program that creates internships for rising seniors through a network of alumni and Exeter parents. "We've worked closely together this year on her Bates-Russell Fellowship project," Director of Global Initiatives Patricia Burke-Hickey said. "She's always so excited when she talks about this growing pool of internships, and

[she's] very thorough and thoughtful of how to create equitable opportunities for students."

When asked about this program, Rankin said, "It's a way for a student to have real life work experience with a mentor that's really passionate about whatever it is they're doing. I think some kids learn better by doing rather than talking, therefore I think it's a way that we can expand what an Exeter education means, to take passion outside of the Harkness classroom and put it in a real life experience."

Rankin's caring and kind nature is evident to her students and advisees. "She is so personable and caring, and she truly has every student's best interest in mind," advisee and lower Chloe Richards said.

"Ms. Rankin is perhaps one of the most understanding and non-judgmental faculty here at Exeter."

Advisee and senior Aruli Pillai described Rankin as "formidably smart, deeply invested, very intentional with her words."

"Her handwriting is unnervingly teacher-y," Pillai added. "[She's] very consistent, rational, [and] gentle even when she might not see things the same way at all."

"Ms. Rankin is perhaps one of the most understanding and non-judgmental faculty here at Exeter," advisee and senior Aiden Sanchez echoed in agreement. "She listens without immediately trying to resolve your issues. Having someone that allowed me to just vent has truly made me feel heard."

Richards offered similar experiences. "She's never too busy to help you with homework or listen if you need a friend to talk to. I'm so grateful for her and the relationship she builds with every student."

Rankin's advisees expressed overwhelming appreciation for her. "She's really awesome, really sweet. She's like a second mother," advisee and

lower Rayna Nakadi said. "Ms. Rankin has given me a lot of confidence in my abilities, especially academically, and she has been a very supportive figure. I appreciate her so much."

"Ms. Rankin has been a huge role model for me throughout my time here, and I've never hesitated to ask her for help," advisee and upper Audrey Zhang said. "I admire her ability to make everyone around her feel seen through her gentle demeanor and support. She is a person who exhibits genuine kindness and compassionately handles every situation she comes across. She accepts me for who I am in all stages of my growth, and I am a better person because of her."

Pillai offered similar insights on their advisor. "I think I can be an emotional person sometimes, and Ms. Rankin always manages to respect that while being calm, cool, and collected herself. She somehow asks the right questions to help me feel sure of what I want to do in tricky situations, and once I've decided, she has my back one-hundred-percent," Pillai said.

"She accepts me for who I am in all stages of my growth, and I am a better person because of her."

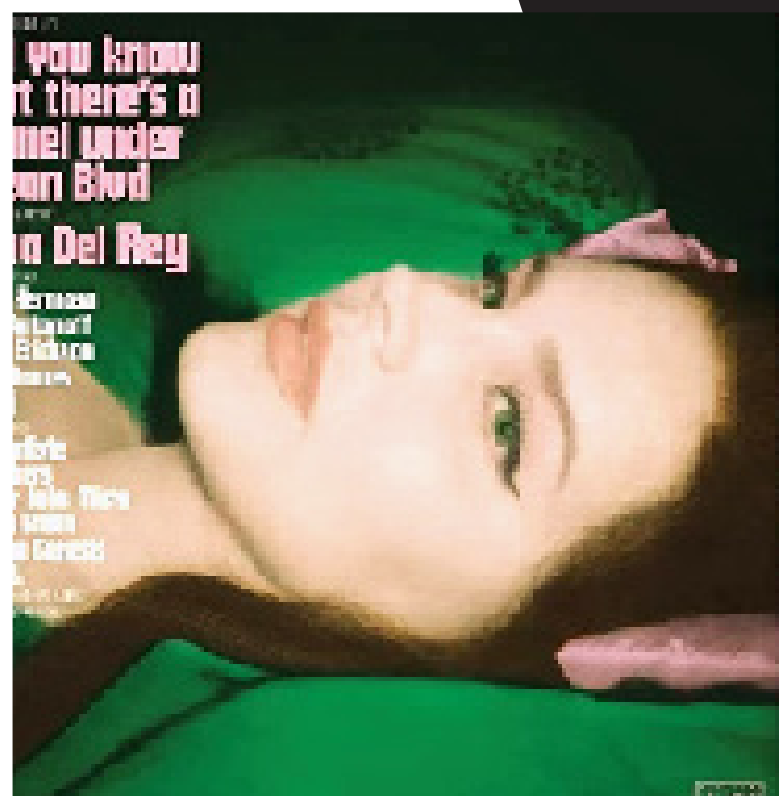
In terms of life at the Academy, Rankin offered her words of wisdom for students: "Try to slow down and ask yourself the right questions about what is making you happy with what makes you feel joy and what things you choose to do."

"One thing that's confusing for kids at Exeter is sometimes you're good at a lot of different things and being good at something and having a passion that actually makes you happy are not always the same. Slow down and allow yourself to course correct if you're on a path that is not making you happy," Rankin concluded.

Did You Know That There's a Tunnel Under Ocean Blvd:

Lana Del Rey's New Magnum Opus

By DAVID GOODALL '24



16 new songs and too many complexities to count — in less than 24 hours will be difficult, I will certainly attempt to do so here.

Prior to releasing the full

“The songs mix together both stylistically and lyrically to tell a complete story: one of loss, rebirth, life, and memory.”

Did You Know That There's a Tunnel Under Ocean Blvd?

Assuredly, most of us did not. Not until Lana Del Rey released her outselling album of that name on March 24, that is. In her perhaps most existential release to date, Del Rey becomes both intro and outro-spective in her ninth official studio album. While slightly affected by my health-center-prescribed steroids (and some antibiotics, too!), I have been tasked with reviewing *Did You Know That There's a Tunnel Under Ocean Blvd?* by the lovely Editor-in-Chief of *The Exonian*, Emi Levine. While I anticipate that summarizing such a masterpiece — with

album, Del Rey released three singles from the album: a track with the same title as the album (too long to keep repeating), “A&W,” and “The Grants.” These three songs alone offer a diverse taste of what the album has to offer. Firstly, “Ocean Blvd” — the track — opens up in the form of a beautiful ballad, culminating in warbling vocals and an intensified instrumental. I immediately sent the song to my good friend, Emilia, who was suffering from COVID-19 in the health center and deserved a nice pick-me-up. It definitely

worked. While I may never get to see this so-called tunnel, the song transports you to the California Coast, on a lazy day where you have too much to think about. As the song climaxes, she requests, or perhaps orders, “Don't forget me.” With releases like this one, how could we ever?

The next release was “A&W.” I may or may not have snuck out of my English class to listen to it in the Academy Building second-floor bathroom. If this truly did happen, it would certainly have been the correct choice. It was Valentine's Day, and “A&W” added to the excitement of the day, with — excuse the terminology — a sultry beat drop and unforgettable lyrics. I adore listening to Lana Del Rey's songs on blast with my speakers (apologies to the people in my hall!), and this song may have been played more than any on repeat. It would not surprise me to learn that my next-door neighbor knew all the lyrics due to my incessant playing alone.

The third and final pre-release, “The Grants,” offers a transition from Del Rey's prior album, *Blue Banisters*, and introduces the theme of family, which Del Rey reflects upon several times throughout the album. Offering the memories Del Rey will “take with [her],” she brings in the imagery of her “sister's first-born child” and her “grandmother's last smile.”

When Del Rey's album dropped, I was overwhelmed. There were 13 new songs along the three pre-released selections and only so much time in a day. As the days unfolded, and time spent awake increased due to

the daunting Exeter homework load, I was able to listen to the whole album.

Del Rey's latest album is full of connections, concoctions, and collaborations. The songs mix together both stylistically and lyrically to tell a complete story: one of loss, rebirth, life, and memory. Del Rey beautifully tells stories through song, as depicted through selections such as “Sweet” and “Fingertips,” combined with gritty imagery and recording such as in “Peppers” or

“Del Rey pays homage to her past self and leaves us wondering where her songwriting journey will go next.”

“A&W.” Her lyricism repeats itself, emphasizing her message and demanding a response.

Del Rey pays homage to her past self and leaves us wondering where her songwriting journey will go next. In “Fingertips,” she references “being a serene queen,” and “The Grants” had more hardcore listeners questioning if it referenced her unreleased Tik Tok classic, “Yes to Heaven.” Regardless, the references to her past self culminate in her final track, “Taco Truck x VB,” which samples “Venice B*tch,” a song from her Grammy-nominated album, *Norman F*cking Rockwell*. Like other tracks from the album, Taco Truck takes a trap-influenced feel, giving a new life to the original classic. Does this song represent a new direction for Del Rey? Or is it epitomizing all she has become until now? Regardless, I sure will have this entire album on repeat for several weeks to come and would recommend anyone to give a listen. She offers a taste of everything and leaves you with just enough want of more.

Meditation of the Week: Dan Han

By AYAAN AKHTAR AND CATHERINE WU

Q: What was the main focus of your meditation, and what inspired you?

A: The main idea of the meditation was a comparative analysis between *The Giving Tree*, the Bible, and the *Aeneid*. I essentially talked about these different books I read as I grew older and what they meant to me. It was all a way for me to talk about how the books I read are a reflection of the change in my life. I...saw all my older brothers leave home when I was very young, and I left home when I was very young as well... to come to Exeter. [My meditation talked about] how my relationship with my family has changed because of that and how at this point now, I feel like the primary and perhaps the only strong connection I have to my family is my heritage [and] growing up in church religiously. So even though I have struggled with my own faith, I'm putting in the effort to try to believe because it allows me to feel that connection to my family, whereas there would be none otherwise at this moment in my life at 18 years old.

Q: What is your relationship with literature, the Bible, and religion, and how did it play a role in the development of your meditation?

A: I grew up very Christian in a home — I thought the word “secular” was a bad word. My dad and my grandfather are pastors as well. My mother met my father as they served in missions overseas, then they ended up spending the last 20 years raising me and my two brothers in America, planting Korean churches all across the American heartland. So, [it was] a very, very religious home. Clearly, you gotta have a lot of faith to commit to that kind of life and travel to all sorts of countries to do that kind of thing and

“My first superheroes were not Batman — it was Gideon, Jonah, Joshua, or Moses. Those guys were my Superman.”

come to America.

The first worldly concept that I was introduced to and had most accessible was the Bible.

My first superheroes were not Batman — it was Gideon, Jonah, Joshua, or Moses. Those guys were my Superman (then I realized they couldn't fly, and it was kind of lame). My parents also believe — as many immigrants do, especially coming from a background that they were in — that education is the route to success or at least some sort of uprooting of the system. Not only was I introduced mostly to biblical literature, but also to literature in general.

And so I obviously tended towards the Christian themes and allegories that I could understand. Those have always been present, even at Exeter. Like you wouldn't believe it, but having this background knowledge, I will tell you: reading Tony Morrison — there's so much biblical knowledge that's in there. I truly believe that the Bible is probably the only book that you ever read in your life until the 1800s, maybe — that's the only thing accessible. I suppose all Western literature stems from the Bible, that's why I was able to tie readings into my meditation.

Q: Tell me about the refrain [from your meditation] — “Bad things don't exist” — and

how it relates to your life and your mother.

A: So that's a proverb in the Bible, and it was something my brother would always tell me. I've always had a lot of self-aggrandizement and romanticization of my struggle and, as a result, my ignorance. In that adolescence of ignorance, I harbored a lot of hate and resentment for my childhood and how I grew up in perhaps such a religious home and under such difficult circumstances, especially with my parents and their generational trauma and their backgrounds, which certainly flowed into the way I was raised in my childhood. I harbored a lot of resentment for that fact and the other fact that I was 14 years old and I got dropped off at Phillips Exeter Academy, even though it's something that I wanted to do. I guess I didn't really know what I was doing.

I have always felt like my life was full of these “bad” things, and then there are good things. I was always judging my life in a very mathematical sense: bad things plus good things equals... whatever. As I've grown older and started to see new understandings, and then the evolution of literature, I've noticed my

longing for forgiveness and the beginning of me trying to comprehend the enormity of everything around me rather than just my own circumstance. Instead of resenting my life or bringing shame into that “equation,” I'd rather bring joy. This life is too short for us to be weighing things as good or bad —

“Instead of resenting my life or bringing shame into that “equation,” I'd rather bring joy. This life is too short for us to be weighing things as good or bad — things just happen. We just bring joy.”

things just happen. We just bring joy.

Q: How has your experience at Exeter shaped this meditation?

A: My experience at Exeter has been one of feeling very alone and feeling like I wasn't supposed to be here, especially when I don't feel like the circumstances of my childhood prepared me to thrive at Exeter. I don't believe that I was set up for success here. I do think that's the case for a lot of the kids that don't do well here — it's not that they're

not smart, it might take them longer than others, but they end up finding ways to do well and thrive. Coming to Exeter was really lonely in that sense because I had to navigate all that without my parents. I was going through a lot of this emotional turmoil in my relationship with my parents because I was just young and had a lot of ignorance. In my Meditation, I talk a lot about the distance and the loneliness, and the kind of insecurity that was harbored there in that sense. Coming to Exeter is pretty integral for the changes I talked about in my life in my meditation.

Q: What do you want people to learn or take away from you after listening to your meditation?

A: I actually don't care what you think of me about me from the mediation. You can think I'm a crazy radical Christian, [and that's fair. But I mean, it was really just for me when I wrote it, so I can't really tell what you would take away from it. For me, though, it was such a cathartic process to be able to document and dissect what I was learning and the kind of man I was beginning to become.

Club Feature: GameDev Club and Off-Planet Society

By RYAN MANLEY and CHENGYUEZHANG

Spring is the season for exploring new clubs! Although they might not be the most well-known or popular clubs on campus, GameDev Club and Exeter Off-Planet Society (EOPS) are both very fun, interactive, and unique in their own ways. Definitely check out these two clubs!

GameDev Club

GameDev club seeks to bring people of different skills and interests together under the combined goal of creating a unique video game. They currently meet on Sundays from 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. in room 319 in EPAC. Since the beginning of this school year, the club has been building a game with an origami-inspired platform, and they plan to finish the demo of the game by this school year. The club roughly has three teams: coding, art, and music. During each meeting, members can choose and work on one of the sections.

Although the GameDev club



Concept art for a GameDev Club project.

Courtesy of GameDev

“Game development is more like a medium for storytelling. I find that to be the reason why I like making games so much. It is a creative medium.”

qualifies as a STEM club, there are a lot of different elements to it. “There’s so much in it for so many different people. If you like composing music, you can join GameDev



Exeter Off Planet Society launching their rocket on the athletic field.

Courtesy of Avik Wadivkar

game. If you like art, you can make art for the game,” co-head and senior Delaney Schlegel said. “If you like coding, you can write code for the game. If you’re just into video games, you can join [to meet] other people who are also interested in video games. The club built up so many different parts, and there are so many different things to do.”

Passion is what drives a lot of people into the space. “Game development sounds very serious. But to be honest, we’re just a group of people who enjoy games,” co-head and senior Kevin Wei said. “None of us are really experienced in game development. We are all just passionate and are trying to explore this mysterious realm of game dev.”

Like many others, upper Nicholas Lin joined for the aforementioned reason. “I’ve always been playing video games, and I’ve always wanted to see how they were made,” Lin said. “Game development is more like a medium for storytelling. I find that to be the reason why I like making games so much. It is a creative medium,” upper Ethan Cheng added.

The club is a great

learn from each other. Programmers in the club read through each other’s code and collaborate constantly. “Usually when you program, you don’t work with other people that closely, but in GameDev, sitting beside each other and working on the same computer is pretty fun,” Cheng said.

The club also helps its members build on their

“Passion is what drives a lot of people into the space. Game development sounds very serious. But to be honest, we’re just a group of people who enjoy games.”

technical skills. “[Game development club] develops the members’ skills and programming, especially using tools like Visual Studio Code and the Unity Engine, getting them familiar with GitHub and working with version control along with others remotely,” lower King Diorr explained.

In the beginning of the school year, the club spent lots of meetings discussing what their game project was going to be. “[Brainstorming] was one of the most enjoyable moments. [Each of us] had this fledgling idea of a game building in all of our minds, and all our ideas clashed with each other,” Wei said.

After a long period of debating through their wild ideas to reach a consensus, GameDev club has set their

“[We’ve made] a surprising amount of progress. I come

“I love our rocket launches. We countdown and watch something we built fly over 850 feet into the air.”

in, [work] on the demo, and then [when] I leave, I’m like, ‘How did we get that far in an hour?’ We’re making good progress for the demo being done for sure,” Schlegel said.

Exeter Off-Planet Society

Exeter Off-Planet Society, abbreviated to EOPS, meets Sunday from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. in the Design Lab, and, according to upper and co-head Will Soh, “do things [that are] space related.” The club debates space-related issues, sometimes invites guest speakers, builds rockets, and more.

One time, for example, the club went on the gym roof and looked for micrometeorites. The club used neodymium magnets to collect whatever’s magnetic, examined all the collected pieces under the microscope, and identified the micrometeorites which were almost perfectly spherical and shiny. “[This activity] is not super technical or anything, but it’s fun to see that we have things from space that are right in our backyards or right on the roofs of our buildings,” Soh said.

also focused on the American Rocketry challenge in order to provide a little more structure to their meetings. “[It is] fun, engaging, [and] consistent week after week, and really relevant to what the club’s all about,” Soh explained.

“I love our rocket launches. We countdown and watch something we built fly over 850 feet into the air,” senior Matilda Damon said. “After is fun as well when we have to go rummage through the woods to find them. It’s a blast — no pun intended.”

However, in early spring term, when the club launched their rocket, one of the parts of the rocket, unfortunately, flew away. “The accident sadly happened because of a wind gust,” lower Peter Morand explained. “On our final launch opportunity for the

“[This activity] is not super technical or anything, but it’s fun to see that we have things from space that are right in our backyards or right on the roofs of our buildings.”

competition, we launched with nearly no wind, but the rocket separated, and the two parachutes came out, the top segment of the rocket, which we had to recover to submit to the competition, got lost. It got blown way past, far beyond our vision to an area of faculty housing.” The team

contacted Campus Safety but found nothing.

“It wasn’t our brightest moment,” Soh commented on the accident.

Maybe members of the

“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.”

club did not know much about building rockets and launching rockets before joining EOPS. In EOPS, they learned to use 3D printers, laser cutting, and all sorts of tools in the design lab. “The club is open to all. Always,” Soh emphasized. “Zero experience necessary.”

The club also welcomes people to come and spectate their rocket launches. “You can see the fire coming out of the bottom of the rocket, and it is a hundred percent legal. We always take proper safety measures to minimize the impact of, uh, potential failures,” Morand 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 clubs to learn more!

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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Op-Ed

» POLITICS

Read about lower Joonyoung Heo's thoughts on Trump's indictment, 7.

» CULTURE

Read about lower Phin Gibb's thoughts on Exeter's culture of competition, 8.

» RANKING

Read lower Aveen Burney's ranking of Bob Dylan's albums, 9.

A Trumped-up Charge?

By JOONYOUNGHEO '25

For the first time in American history, a former President was indicted earlier this month by a grand jury in New York. Donald Trump, in a flurry of media coverage, flew to New York on April 3 to face 34 felony charges. He has since denied all charges — and, as with many political controversies of late, it has left the country sorely divided. Whether the Democrats will come to regret this indictment remains the big question.

To say the least, the nature of these charges is unusual. All 34 criminal counts concern “falsifying business records” in the

have questionable motives. Bragg was sworn into office on Jan. 1, 2022, and he has since built a reputation for being soft-handed. In just his first week, he asked prosecutors to reserve jail or

themselves with. In this narrative, Manhattan's District Attorney is a staunch anti-Republican to the core and only

have taken a similar approach by emphasizing Bragg's political leanings. He likely disagrees with much of Trump's politics, and he could be looking to harm the former president's bid in the upcoming 2024 election. The hope would be that a formal indictment will alienate a large chunk of his supporter base,

probably be disappointed. First, a clean record is far from a prerequisite for running for president in the U.S. Constitution. Socialist Party candidate Eugene Debs, for instance, went for the nation's highest position for the fifth time while imprisoned in 1920. Moreover, states cannot enforce their own restrictions on presidential

crowd just after the indictment was announced, “The only crime that I have committed is to fearlessly defend our nation from those who seek to destroy it.” He has been successful in his efforts, claiming to have received millions of dollars in donations following New York.

There is still another option, though the



“But even Democrats would have to admit — at least in prosecuting such a public figure as Donald Trump — that seven years seems a bit of a stretch.”

first degree, and they stem from a hush-money payment (amounting to \$130,000) from former Trump attorney Michael Cohen to Stormy Daniels, the notorious pornographic film actress. Cohen's money itself is not the issue; Trump is accused of paying him back and recording it as reimbursement for his legal counsel, violating tax and election laws.

The average Trump critic may find it difficult

prison time for “only the most serious offenses” unless explicitly outlined in the legal code. That memo, which followed a significant boost in murders and shootings in New York, drew harsh criticism from both sides of the political aisle. Since then, Bragg has devoted himself to taking Trump to court. As critics

the latest mouthpiece of the vicious liberal agenda to unseat another right-leaning politician. By the time this trial ends, in this version of Bragg's perfect world, Trump would be in handcuffs and an orange jumpsuit.

obstructing Trump's shot at winning the Republican nomination and facilitating a win for blue in a year. That seems logical enough; if a politician is hauled to the courtroom, the public will be much less inclined

candidates. Directly barring Trump is off the table completely.

Second, this incident is more likely to help his candidacy than to hurt it. This is not Trump's first altercation with the law, of course. Granted,

Ava Zhao / The Exonian

probability is low. Bragg's long-term plan could be to help Trump in the 2024 election. He wouldn't want to see Trump back in the White House, so this is where things get complex. It is said that President Joe Biden, who will likely run for a second term, believes Trump is the easier Republican to defeat in a general election than Florida Governor Ron DeSantis. Under this theory, Bragg is prosecuting Trump to indirectly boost his support base, with which he might beat out DeSantis in the Republican primaries and subsequently hand Biden his second electoral win. It's a convoluted train of thought, but the game of politics often calls for extreme measures.

These are all possibilities. Trump is not due in court again until December, so very little is set in stone. Even setting aside the 2024 election and Bragg's motivations, it cannot be disputed that this indictment will have far-reaching implications for the future of politics. Whatever the outcome, the next few years are far from decided.

QUESTION OF THE ISSUE

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

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.

RESPONSES FROM LAST ISSUE:

In what way has the Exeter experience changed your life?

Exeter has both introduced to me so many wonderful opportunities and various perspectives through the amazing people here.

— Michael Yang '25

I'm never buying cookies for more than two dollars again.

— Anonymous

to believe that, out of everything on the former president's track record, this is what Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg decided to chase. Yet the timeframe is even stranger. The Stormy Daniels hush-money incident transpired during the 2016 election. On principle, of course, justice served later is far better than justice never served, and the statute of limitations, making criminal charges irrelevant after a while, technically does not apply because Trump has been living out of state. But even Democrats would have to admit — at least in prosecuting such a public figure as Donald Trump — that seven years seems a bit of a stretch.

Further, the man leading the investigation might

put it, he placed so much of his attention on one man that he forgot to crack down on state criminals, revealing a miserly hand in the number of his prosecutions. It is impossible to see this indictment as entirely free of political design.

Then, Trump's indictment is not a purely judicial move uninformed by the game of politics, no matter how many times Bragg publicly states that “everyone stands equal under the law.” This has little to do with whether or not Trump is guilty — he certainly could be — but more with analyzing the right motivations behind these charges. So what might they be?

The easiest answer is to attack Bragg as a Trump hater. This is what some conservative media outlets have been busying

This may be an extreme explanation, but we cannot rule out possibilities.

More moderate voices

to support him at the polls.

Yet, if Bragg has been working toward this second explanation, he will

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Culture of Competition at Exeter

By PHIN GIBBS '25

As Harper Lee once said, "You rarely win, but sometimes you do." This quote speaks to the reality of competition and the unpredictability of success at Exeter and in life. "Winning" is far from a guarantee and often requires hard work, dedication, and a bit of luck. The classical definition of "winning" is when one achieves success by defeating another person. Getting a better grade on a math test, starting for a varsity team, winning the lead part in the musical, and being awarded a club co-head position, this "winning" is a driving force at Exeter and facilitates a toxic culture: all students share a common warrior mentality. Everyone for themselves, and if you stop to help someone else, another overtakes you.

The problem with the traditional winning culture is that it can lead to a toxic and hyper-competitive environment that is detrimental to students' mental health and well-being. It can create a sense of pressure to perform constantly at a high level, leading to stress, anxiety, and burnout. This culture can also breed a sense of isolation and individualism, as students feel that they must prioritize their success over the needs and goals of their peers.

Moreover, the traditional winning culture often promotes a narrow and limiting definition of success that fails to recognize students' diverse talents, passions, and aspirations. This definition of success entails getting good grades, starting a

varsity sport, and being named a leader for one of the major clubs. This can create a sense of hierarchy and exclusivity that marginalizes individuals who do not fit into the traditional mold of success. Additionally, the focus

"The problem with the traditional winning culture is that it can lead to a toxic and hyper-competitive environment that is detrimental to students' mental health and well-being."

on winning can lead to a fear of failure that prevents students from taking risks and pursuing their passions. This fear of failure can inhibit creativity and prevent students from exploring their full potential.

Furthermore, the traditional winning culture can create a sense of entitlement and arrogance among those deemed successful, leading to a lack of empathy and compassion for others. This can also promote a sense of superiority over one's peers and a disregard for the needs and goals of others.

Overall, the problem with the traditional winning culture is that it fails to promote personal growth, resilience, and community and instead prioritizes external validation and recognition at any cost. To create a healthier and more supportive environment, we must challenge this culture and redefine winning to include personal

growth, inclusivity, and community.

To create a healthy culture of competition at Exeter, we must first recognize that success and winning come in many different forms and that each student's journey is unique. Success can be defined as achieving personal goals, learning from mistakes, and developing resilience in the face of adversity.

A healthy culture of competition should prioritize personal growth and community over external validation and recognition. It should celebrate not just the achievements of individuals but also the collective accomplishments of groups and teams. By focusing on teamwork and collaboration, students can learn to value and respect the diverse talents and perspectives of their peers. They can learn to work together towards a common goal, building lasting relationships and a sense of community in the process.

One way to promote a healthy culture of competition is to provide opportunities for students to engage in activities outside their comfort zones. By challenging themselves and trying new things, students can develop new skills and broaden their horizons. They can learn to embrace failure as a natural part of the learning process and develop the resilience and grit necessary to overcome obstacles.

Another way to foster a healthy culture of competition is to encourage students to support and uplift one another. We must recognize that success is not a zero-sum game and that one person's achievement does not diminish the accomplishments of others.

Additionally, we must promote a culture of empathy and understanding, recognizing that each student faces unique challenges and struggles. By cultivating a sense of compassion and empathy for one another, students can learn to value each other as individuals and create a more inclusive and supportive community.

To create a healthy culture of competition, we must also acknowledge and address the issues of

privilege and inequality that exist within our community. We must work to create a more equitable and just environment where everyone has access to the resources and opportunities necessary

health and well-being of students, recognizing that success and achievement can come at a cost. We must provide resources and support for students who are struggling with mental health issues and promote a culture of self-care and balance.

"I am excited for the day that a culture of winning at Exeter is focused on self-improvement and celebration of others' successes."

to succeed. This requires examining our own biases and privileges and actively working to dismantle systems of oppression and inequality.

Furthermore, we must prioritize the mental

I am excited for the day that a culture of winning at Exeter is focused on self-improvement and celebration of others' successes, and we are proud when one of our own Exonians gets into a prestigious college. To end with a quote from the famous Dr. Seuss children's book, *Oh the places you'll Go*, "Fame you'll be famous, as famous as can be, with everyone watching you win on TV, Except when they don't because sometimes they won't." This quote epitomizes the current culture of success at Exeter and urges the change that must occur.



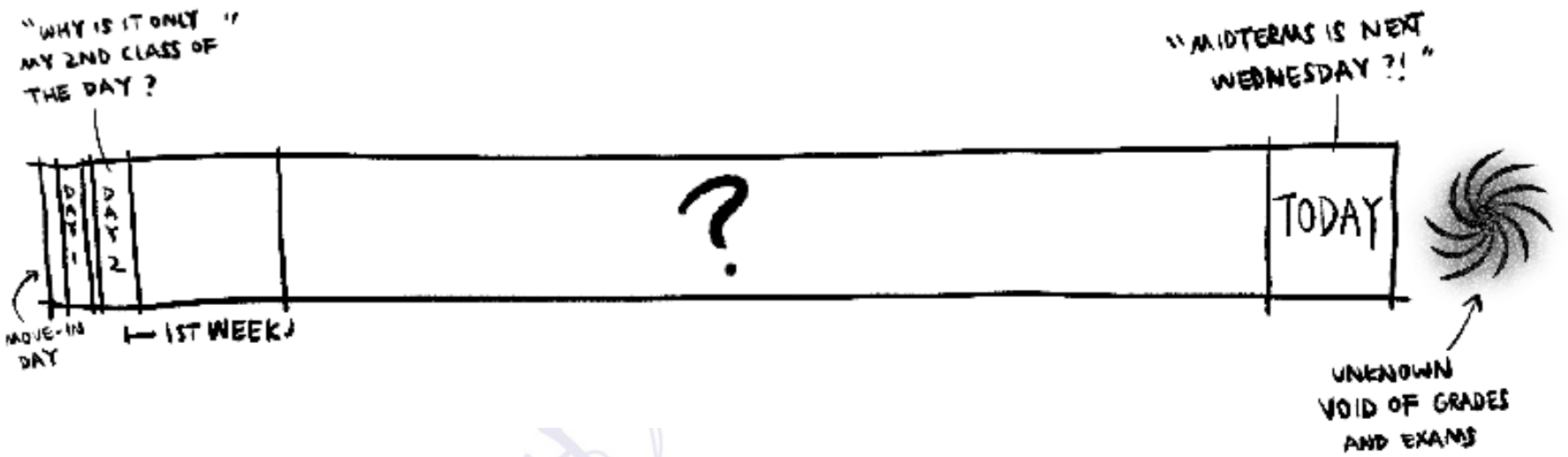
Ava Zhao / *The Exonian* via Midjourney

The Cartoon Corner

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

The Time Travel Paradox

By AVA ZHAO '24



Do You Know Who I Am

By KATELYN CUI '24



But I don't wanna read the E book!



I will read it to you

By ENYA YU '26

Bob Dylan Albums: Ranked and Graded

By AVEEN BURNEY '25

I'm back at it again... but this time with Bob Dylan! Like Hillbilly Shakespeare Hank Williams, Dylan is seen as the Shakespeare of his generation. The lines between poetry and song start to blur. He was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 2016, but he considers himself neither a singer nor a poet; instead a song and dance man. I could go on about his incalculable lyrical impact, his guitar skills, and his engrossing voice, but I shall not for the sake of your sanity. Although I'm only including the 60s to 70s Dylan, there are a lot of gems in his later works and collaborations with The Band, which would be for another time. Give him a listen, you will be transformed.

17. SELF PORTRAIT (1970): E

Take a look in the mirror, Bob.

16. DYLAN (1962): F

"Battle of Ira Hayes" is good.

15. PAT GARRETT & BILLY THE KID (1973): D+

It's a movie soundtrack, but "Knockin' On Heaven's Door" is amazing.

14. BOB DYLAN (1962): C

His first album — there is a new kid on the block, and you can hear the potential. He did not write "House of the Risin' Sun," just so everyone knows! Solid covers and two original songs.

13. NEW MORNING (1970): C

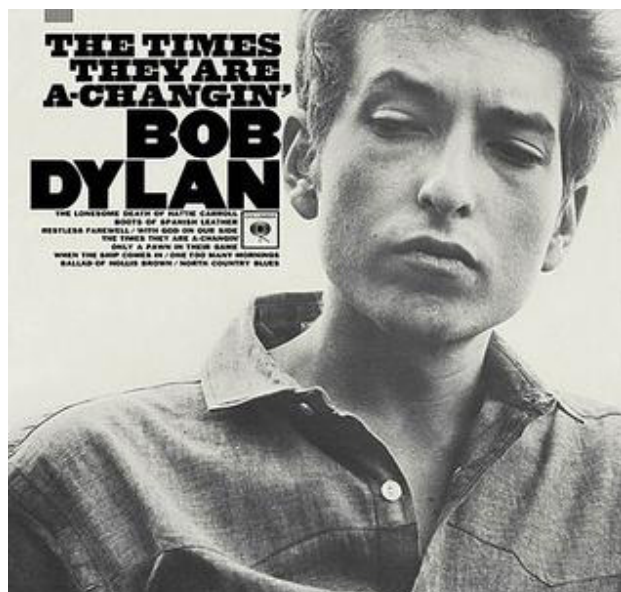
Please give "If Not for You" and "The Man in Me" a listen. He does a really nice version of "If Not for You" with George Harrison during the rehearsal for the Concert for Bangladesh. They look like twins wearing blue jeans and jean jackets!

12. PLANET WAVES (1974): C

"Forever Young" is iconic, and "Tough Mama" is so funky. I love everything about this song, which is why I rate the album higher, how impartial. It is a great song to walk to if you want a pep in your step.

11. THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN' (1964): B+

This album is what got me into Bob Dylan. The song "The Times They Are A-Changin'" is truly a wake-up call that still resonates today. "Only a Pawn in Their Game" is very nice. This is really his "protest" album. Take a look at "The Lonesome Death of Hattie Carroll" and "With God on Our Side." Joan Baez, as always, does a fantastic duet with Dylan for "When the Ship Comes In," which was inspired by a silly little hotel clerk not giving Dylan a room because of his disheveled state. How oppressed!



10. THE BASEMENT TAPES (1975): B+

Funky album cover. Some really funny and good songs, but the recording quality is not the best. This is because a lot of these songs were recorded at Big Pink, which was a house that Bob Dylan and The Band lived in. After his "motorcycle accident," Dylan could not go anywhere so he wrote, "You Ain't Going Nowhere." Shout out to Mr. Moriarty for doing a killer version of this song, his harmonica skills are absolutely wild. The chorus is so fun, and the lyrics really make no sense to us mortals. Good old Woodstock, NY.



9. DESIRE (1976): A-

The most vulnerable we have ever seen Dylan, which can be seen in his song "Sara," is about the tumultuous relationship with his wife. A great album if you love The Rolling Thunder Revue documentary on Netflix. "Hurricane" is so powerful. It echoes some of his former "protest" songs. "Isis" and "One More Cup of Coffee" are also very delicious.

8. ANOTHER SIDE OF BOB DYLAN (1964): A-

This is the most underrated album by Dylan. It really just hits differently from the rest of them: he is starting to write his own songs and becomes more personal. He has left the protest crowd and is charting his territory. This album influenced many artists, from the Lumineers, James Taylor, to Bruce Springsteen. "All I Really Want to Do" is so pure and relatable. The lyrics of "My Back Pages" are so

flowery, rich, and poetic — "I was so much older then, I'm younger than that now." My favorite song on the album and one of my favorite Dylan songs is "It Ain't Me Babe." No better way to reject someone. Johnny Cash and June Carter Cash do a great rendition.

7. NASHVILLE SKYLINE (1969): A-

Suddenly he has a new voice, and I love it. Maybe it's because he quit smoking or maybe this is his real voice. Who knows? Bob Dylan goes country, singing a forlorn version of "Girl from the North Country" with Johnny Cash. It is a really underrated album, and one I often find myself coming back to. The sudden change of pace makes this album very refreshing every time you give it a listen.



6. JOHN WESLEY HARDING (1967): A-

While the Beatles were going crazy with Sgt. Pepper's, and the 60s were roaring with psychedelics like LSD (hehe) and bright colors, in comes this album that goes against the grain. The mood is somber, and the music is simple, with songs like "All Along the Watchtower" being some of his best poetry that won him the Nobel Literature Prize. Jimi Hendrix does an incredible version of the song.

5. THE FREEWHEELIN' BOB DYLAN (1963): A

This album is smokin' good. Iconic album cover and absolute bangers like "Blowin' in the Wind" and "Girl from the North Country." John Lennon was inspired by "Masters of War" so he used the same melody in his song "Working Class Hero." You can see his Cold War and nuclear war fears in "Masters of War" and the song "A Hard Rain's A-Gonna Fall," which was inspired by the ballad "Lord Randall." He changed how we write about love and



BOB DYLAN HIGHWAY 61 REVISITED



Images Courtesy of Wikipedia

changed our minds about his guitar skills in his beautiful song "Don't Think Twice, It's All Alright." An underrated song would be "Corrina, Corrina," something about this version is so enticing to me.

4. BLOOD ON THE TRACKS (1975): A

Greatest comeback album of all freaking time. The top three songs would be "Tangled up in Blue," "Simple Twist of Fate," and "Shelter from the Storm." "Idiot Wind" is a great song to listen to when angry at everything. According to Mr. Holcomb, Dylan was constantly listening to Joni Mitchell's album "Blue," which explains why he was tangled up in blue. Mr. Holcomb is a very reliable source!!! Either way, such a solid album.

3. BRINGING IT ALL BACK HOME (1965): A+

Dylan goes electric! The album cover just draws me in. Must listen or else. The poetry of "Mr. Tambourine Man" will send you on a trip, and it reminds me of the third stanza of a Dylan Thomas poem called "The Force That Through The Green Fuse Drives The Flower." I will not list every song because they are all amazing.

2. BLONDE ON BLONDE (1966): A+

"It's that thin, that wild mercury sound. It's metallic



and bright gold." No better words to describe the album than from Dylan himself. Rock's first double album is loaded with amazing songs, uproarious harmonica solos, and the most "from the gut" Dylan vocals ever. This album literally transforms you into a different state of mind and you can never go back again. It's so pumped up and a mix of everything Dylan acquired. Try to go through this whole album in one sitting. For the sake of these songs, I'll mention one. There is a funny little reference in "Stuck Inside of Mobile with the Memphis Blues Again" to a song called "I Wish I Was in a Mole in the Ground." Try and find. If you do, I'll get you a Grill cookie. Just kidding. Dylan really does love the "Anthology of American Folk Music," and the titles on some of these songs are so great.

1. HIGHWAY 61 REVISITED (1965): A+



It's not humanly possible to describe this album in words. Pinnacle of Humanity type of album. Drop whatever you are doing and listen to this right now... and forever.

Agere Philosophiam

By FORREST ZENG '26

The following Op-Ed imitates a Socratic Dialogue, a writing style commonly used by the Greek philosopher Plato.

Two students in formal clothing walk along a path, heading to EPAC. Their heads hang low, dejectedly.

Student 1: A trampoline floor, how disappointing.

Student 2: It seemed to me that there was a real safety concern, though.

Student 1: Perhaps. We have perhaps an hour left before check-in. What do you say we go to the basement and play a game of Risk?

Student 2: A sufficient replacement — Oh, but I just remembered. There was an audio recording that my friend, Sam, had me listen to. Supposedly, he was recording an interview for an article we were working on. Still, the interview strayed a bit off the path.

Student 1: Irresponsible.

Student 2: Perhaps at first, yes, but it captured a magical interaction.

The students arrive in the basement and begin to set up the game of Risk.

Student 1: Perhaps you could play this file for me?

Student 2: I wish, yet it has been buried under hundreds of other files. I couldn't possibly find it. I will try my best to describe what I heard to you.

The article was for a "CVP of the week" section

in the paper. The CVP of that week was one called "Question Everything." We found out that the CVP was deeply philosophical. Sam was interviewing one of the facilitators, Andrew. The interview eventually turned into a meta-discussion on philosophy itself. It went a bit like this:

Sam asked Andrew, "You say that in your CVP, you will be trying to listen to as many perspectives as possible on certain philosophical topics, such as epistemology or politics, while also maintaining a sense of 'reason' and 'logic.'"

"Right," Andrew

"Let me ask you this: when we say we are reasonable, do we mean the same thing as being logical? If a person has reason, is that necessarily the same as a person that has logic?"

responded.

"From my understanding, logic, reason, and rationality don't necessarily result in 'different interpretations.' In mathematics, the ultimate answer to a question is always the same as long as the mathematical operations are done correctly. Likewise, in logic, if each logical operation is correct, then the result

must always be the same. How do you reconcile a philosophically logical approach to questions with the diversity of opinions in your CVP?"

"Sam, you have asked me a trick question."

From the recording, I could tell Sam was confused. "What do you mean?"

"Well, then, let me ask you this. When we say something is logical, what do we refer to? Do we refer to the products or the processes of deriving the products? Is logic a result or a process?"

Sam paused, then responded, "I suppose the process."

"This is why we use the phrase 'logical step.'"

"It seems to be."

"As humans, did we decide one day to create logic?"

"Well, I suppose not. Most logic seems quite natural."

"Logic is something in nature, then. It simply exists in this universe for us humans to discover. Logic is the natural procession from one idea to another by the laws of the universe. For instance, let us say that:

If a chemical allows itself to duplicate well, there will be more of that chemical.

Chemicals have variations in how well they can duplicate."

"Yes."

"Then, using 'logic,' we can derive the result: This chemical becomes better

and better at duplicating itself."

"Interesting, yes."

"As humans, we never invented logic. Instead, we found logic in nature, hence the Latin verb 'invenio' meaning 'to find.' We eventually identified this 'duplicating chemical' as DNA, and the logical process that it is involved in is 'natural selection.' Ironically, we can say that logic created humans in this way."

Sam thought about this momentarily, then added, "By that definition, logic is quite elegant. Yet certainly, logic is much more complex. I can intuitively understand logic but can't quite explain it in words."

"Logic is very complicated in the sheer number of conditions we might find in nature," Andrew responded. "However, the simple steps between conditions are what we describe as logic. There is nothing more to it."

"I see now. But how does this connect to our discussion about the CVP? This definition of logic, in fact, only supports the idea that only one possible conclusion can be reached through logic."

"I am getting there. Earlier, I said, Sam, and you mentioned that in our CVP, we would attempt to question things through a reasoned and logical mindset. Let me ask you this: when we say we are reasonable, do we mean the same thing as being logical? If a person has reason, is that necessarily the same as a person that has logic?"

"By the definition of these words, it seems like

they would be the same."

"Let us take this example then: I am hungry. There is a sandwich sitting in front of me, which is edible. Logic tells me, then, that I should eat it. This is logical."

"Yes, it is."

"Right. But it is also logical if I say this: I am hungry. There is a human in front of me called Sam, and he is edible. Logic tells me that I should commit cannibalism. Surely we don't want this?"

"Absolutely not."

"But you can see that this is still 'logical,' yes?"

"It is logical, but it is missing many other things."

"Would you call it reasonable?"

"No, and I would consider eating a sandwich to be much more reasonable."

"So we have shown, then, that reason is much different from logic. Reason includes logic, but

"Philosophers are masters of logic. Oftentimes, however, philosophers are illuded by the tantalizing fruit of ignoring reason and only using logic. Logic can create political and economic utopias, which work very well to achieve a single end."

it also includes so many other conditions. In our example, reason includes societal values, laws, and other things which we adapt as humans."

Sam added, "Then, although it is logical, it wouldn't be reasonable to consider crime as a method to gain profit."

"Precisely. Perhaps another example would help to strengthen this comparison."

"Please proceed."

"Alright. Plato makes the famous analogy of 'the Ring of Gyges.' In this analogy, a shepherd named Gyges is given a ring that makes him not only physically invisible but also completely exempt from punishments by society. Plato goes on to describe how Gyges immediately kills the king of Lydia, seduces his wife, and then takes over the kingdom."

"Yes, I remember this," Sam said. "If I recall, Plato wrote, 'A man is just, not willingly or because he thinks that justice is any good to him individually, but of necessity...for all men believe in their hearts that injustice is far more profitable to the individual than justice,'"

Andrew continued. "In other words, every logical man would immediately commit as many profitable crimes as possible after gaining the Ring of Gyges, as it would logically be more beneficial to them. However, a fundamental flaw changes the picture—man is not a logician but a reasoner. A perfectly 'reasonable' man would have refrained from committing crimes for a short time, for they are still motivated by some sense of 'human morality.' They are logical, but they would still be human. Only after a long period, would their moral values fade, and their logic would lead them to begin committing crimes."

"Absolutely."

Student 1: Sorry to

interrupt, but we have set up the game board and are ready to play.

Student 2: Ah, yes, I apologize.

Student 1: Please don't be sorry—finish your story while you place your pieces.

Student 2: Actually, the audio recording ended around here, as they both decided to head to class. But Sam later recounted their continued conversation. He said something like this:

Almost immediately after sitting down outside of their Latin classroom, they continued. At this point, Forrest, who was also in the same class as them, entered the hallway, panting. After asking him, Forrest said that he had raced from Phelps to the Academy Building to not be late, before realizing that his teacher had not used the long block. Andrew filled him up on the conversation.

Sam asked, "You make this differentiation between logic and reason. Certainly, as philosophers, we want to try and focus on being both logical and reasonable?"

Forrest said. "Philosophers are masters of logic. Oftentimes, however, philosophers are illuded by the tantalizing fruit of ignoring reason and only using logic. Logic can create political and economic utopias, which work very well to achieve a single end. However, these structures would be unacceptable to most 'reasonable' humans because utopias do not consider many 'human' values. In this way, the usefulness of logic is limited by the human condition."

"That seems unfortunate."

"On the surface, it does seem unfortunate. At this point, philosophers might feel stuck. They come upon systems that are created with logic, but these systems have no use. Perhaps this is why very few philosophers truly follow the 'perfect' systems they have themselves developed. One rare example might be the French philosopher Simone Weil.

Throughout her life, Weil was an avid political activist, examining industrial society, totalitarianism, and religion, all during wartime. Interestingly, she followed her philosophy to the letter without lapse. At age five, she refused to eat sugar because the French troops on the front lines did not have any. Throughout her life, she never ate any more than relief rations and took a job in an automobile factory for a year in order to understand the psychological effects of heavy labor. At the end of her life, Weil died from starvation, refusing to eat food in solidarity with poor country citizens in occupied lands. Her

"It would be essentially impossible to quickly impose a utopia on a people, without changing the people's values, and thus their reasoning."

fanatical activism was unparalleled, and in fact, stands out as a great exception among almost all philosophers."

"Well, this is certainly laudable."

"It can be seen as so, but



Ava Zhao / *The Exonian* via Midjourney

Prehistoric Creature of the Week

Anomalocaris: The Primordial Apex Predator

By JUNHYEOK JANG '25

Healthy competition is immensely beneficial for one's life. Whether your opponent is yourself or someone else, it sets a target that you ambitiously strive to overcome. In most contexts in the human world, we usually employ competition to surpass personal limitations. However, in nature, it is a dictatorial force for survival and evolution.

Throughout history, evolution has been an interspecies arms race. Prey species equip themselves with the most

impenetrable defenses, while predators evolve to embody the deadliest artillery to penetrate such protective structures. As in the case of the ceratopsians against theropods, culminating in the emergence of the legendary *Triceratops* and *Tyrannosaurus*, the interspecies competition gives birth to a diversity of complex life well-suited for survival in their respective means.

Let us travel approximately half a billion years ago to the flora of the Cambrian seabed. Strange-looking creatures harmoniously swimming

to “abnormal shrimp” in Greek. *Anomalocaris* was a member of the order Radiodonta, a small group of arthropods distantly related to modern crustaceans that flourished during the Cambrian Period. Most species

predators in their respective fauna on account of their size far

exceeding that of others in the era, and possessed an iconic set of raptorial frontal appendages likely used for snatching prey, a conical oral structure composed of ringed tooth plates, and a multi-lensed eye enabling acute vision in all directions. Radiodonts subdivide into three families: the *Tasmioscarididae*, the

common era. In the geological time scale, an event that scientists

Courtesy of Jun (@ni075), image retrieved from Wikipedia

“Throughout history, evolution has been an interspecies arms race. Prey species equip themselves with the most impenetrable defenses, while predators

commonly refer to as the Cambrian Explosion is what divides the Phanerozoic Eon from Precambrian times. The dominant species before the Cambrian Explosion comprised what is known as the Ediacaran biota, renowned as one of the earliest forms of complex life. Notable species include the bilaterian slug-like *Kimberella* and the frond-like *Charnia*. Then,

a phase where interspecies competition and evolution occurred at unprecedented

Most of the phyla that currently exist had evolved then, replacing the Ediacaran biota that previously thrived. This period had witnessed the emergence of various iconic and legendary prehistoric species, including *Opabinia*, a most enigmatic arthropod with five eyes, or *Hallucigenia*, a spiky animal whose reconstruction remained veiled for a century. The emergence of such species has provided insights into the environmental conditions and evolutionary mechanisms of life back then.

There is little disagreement that *Anomalocaris* and other radiodonts have made immense contributions to accelerating evolution among the Cambrian biota. Primarily, *Anomalocaris* revolutionized the development of an anatomy integral and strategic for predation.

increase in dissolved oxygen enabled high rates of exergonic reactions resulting in species being

able to develop and diversify at much more complex standards. Others believe the Cambrian race for arms was also synonymous with a race for eyes - to perceive better than to be perceived. The multi-paneled eyes of *Anomalocaris* were transcendent even by

“There is little disagreement that *Anomalocaris* and other radiodonts have made immense contributions to accelerating evolution among the Cambrian biota.”

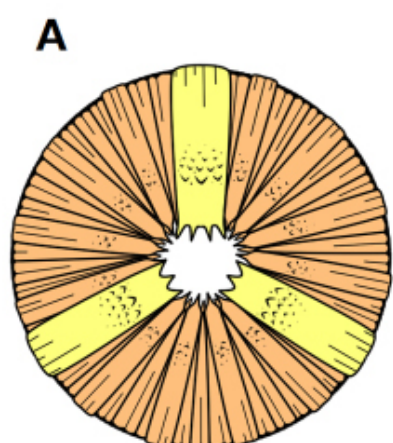
they were seen, other animals had no choice but to cultivate their own esoteric, voracious, eventually ending in their own right.

Despite being an apex predator of the Cambrian oceans, the oral cone of *Anomalocaris* lacked the strength to crush callous exoskeletons. Although previous hypotheses believed *Anomalocaris* to be the natural enemy of numerous trilobite species and the owner of coprolites containing their remnants, this fact has led to their rejection in modern days; many now regard that niche to have been occupied by *Redlichia*, a genus of predatory trilobites found in places such as Taebaek, South Korea, who likely had sufficient strength for penetrating the exoskeleton. As such, hard-shelled organisms such as *Wiwaxia* thrived alongside brachiopods and mollusks, in contrast to the soft-bodied prey of *Anomalocaris*.

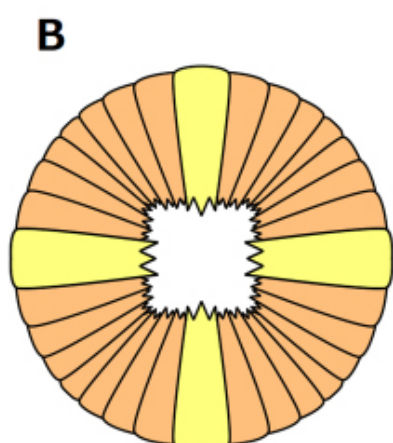
The Legacy of Sight

However, as all dynasties and empires eventually do, *Anomalocaris*'s reign of dominance waned during the middle Cambrian. Many of its radiodont relatives perished during the Cambrian extinction, the first mass catastrophe of the Phanerozoic Eon that paved way for the upcoming Ordovician Period. The last radiodonts faded into history during the Devonian; its closest living relatives are arthropods such as shrimps and lobsters.

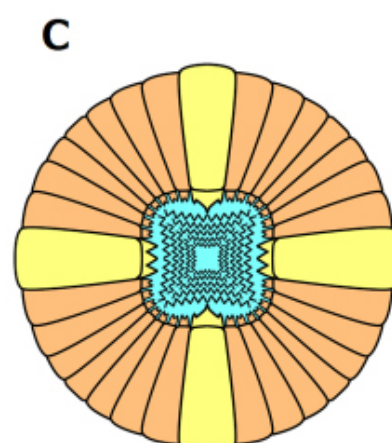
Even so, the legacy that *Anomalocaris* had left for life lives on in all of us. Thanks to *Anomalocaris*, we are able to see the quarterback's pass in the air, read the passages assigned by our English



Anomalocaris



Peytoia



Hurdia

Reconstructions of several radiodont oral cones.

Art courtesy of Junnn11. Image retrieved from Wikipedia.

around suddenly scatter as a menacing shadow looms. The owner of this shadow is an animal resembling a colossal shrimp around three feet in length. Its name is *Anomalocaris*.

Anomalocaris was a genus of radiodonts that flourished during the early-mid Cambrian Period (520 - 499 million years ago, corresponding to Stage 3 - Guzhangian stages). Its name translates

Anomalocarididae (of which *Anomalocaris* is a member), and the Hurididae. The closest Cambrian relatives of Radiodonta were the Opabiniidae and the Euarthropoda.

Earth's Anno Domini

In the Gregorian Calendar, Jesus is the factor that separates *Anno Domini* from before

around 540 million years ago, the world underwent

“Life is a gift that has been exclusively reserved for this planet. A major reason why it was able to thrive was due to the competition fostered by the emergence of *Anomalocaris*.”

Because it was a species engineered for hunting and killing; it naturally triggered immense urges for defensive evolution.

Yet the ultimate weapon that *Anomalocaris* possessed in its formidable arsenal was not its physique: its eyes. Most scientists support one of two theories when discussing the trigger of the Cambrian explosion. Some believe that a sudden

today's standards, enabling high-quality vision in all directions and perceiving lights far beyond our visible range. In an era where well-defined vision was scarce, *Anomalocaris* was a predator that could identify and pinpoint its target with its acute vision, wasting no time chasing them down and overpowering them with its gifted athleticism. To see *Anomalocaris* before

Agere Philosophiam Cont.

was it really a reasonable thing to do?”

“I suppose not.”

“This shows that most philosophers are humans, who have human limits.”

Sam thought for a little bit, then responded, “Right, but this does not indicate to us that we shouldn't at least think about theoretical systems. At least we may strive towards it.”

Forrest responded, “Let me ask you then: is it easy to follow a system that has different values than our

own?”

“It is uncomfortable because our values are not congruent with it.”

“In this sense, if we have a perfectly logical society with no extra conditions, and try to impose it on a reasonable society based on extremely human principles, surely it would be uncomfortable for the human society?”

“I suppose so.”

“So, it would be essentially impossible to quickly impose a utopia on a people, without changing

the people's values, and thus their reasoning.”

“I see now. It would be impossible to do that.”

“To make the most fruit

“To drive philosophy to be productive, we need to understand the human values which form the field upon which philosophical systems shall play out.”

of our efforts, we must consider human things. Not understanding the real, human part of things is essentially useless.”

“I agree, but surely there must be some way of achieving utopia without compromising the concept itself. We have concluded that a perfect utopia system is useless unless it makes some sort of concessions to human values. But surely there must be a way to preserve this utopian core while not making concessions to

human values?”

At this moment, Forrest's eyes opened wide. “You are right. Suppose we want to preserve the elegant, perfect models that we create. In that case, we should not remove things from them but transform them and add things that can circumvent or perhaps even manipulate human values. To drive philosophy to be productive, we need to understand the human values which form the field upon which philosophical

systems shall play out.”

And this is where they had to end, for they began Latin class.

Student 1 places a piece on the board confidently.

Student 1: A fascinating discourse. In addition, I have surrounded your land. Perhaps you shall find it appropriate to broker a compromise with me now or even resign.

Student 2: I see no use in giving up or conceding.

Humor

Hallucinating Exonian Spotted a Donut?!

By CHENGYUE ZHANG '24

On a very typical Friday, a very average student of Exeter attended Assembly. This student had a 8:55 a.m. class, so they did not have time to eat breakfast. This very average student was starving by the time of Assembly. How they wished they could be enjoying a bowl of Lucky Charms with oat milk in Grainger right then!

Due to hunger, this average student didn't register much from the Assembly. Accidentally, they glanced to their left and saw a pink circular-looking

thing at the bottom of a painting. Is it a raspberry donut with strawberry frosting and red sprinkles? The average student, almost consumed by hunger, could hardly fight off their urge to jump out of their seat and rip the donut out of the painting.

Can you help an extremely average and confused and angry Exonian identify what the donut-looking object is? Write your answer in the space below:



Chengyue Zhang / The Exonian

Ranking Milk.

By NATALY DELCID '24

1. Soy milk
2. Almond Milk (tentative)
3. Oatmilk
4. Goat Milk
5. 2% Milk
6. Whole Milk
- 6.69999. Skim Milk (derogatory)
7. 1% Milk

Note: A version of this was initially published in *The Milking Cat*



Ava Zhao / The Exonian

Leaked Documents Indicate No Problems with Spring Formal

By FORRESTZENG '26

Yesterday, I found this report among my stash of classified documents in my dorm room. I realized how beneficial it would be for the public to be able to read these highly secretive, undistributed, confidential reports. For the benefit of the Exeter community, and for the sake of pure transparency, here is the report, in its entirety.

FBI CLASSIFIED/OFFICIAL: Rapid Decommission of Spring Formal Dance

The FBI (Forrest Brings Intelligence) is a threat-focused organization with both intelligence and law enforcement responsibilities. It is the principal investigative arm of the Cilley Department of Justice as well as a full member of the South Side Dorm Intelligence Community. It works in cooperation with

the CIA, the Cilley Investigative Agency. The leadership of the FBI includes the Director, Forrest Zeng. At the moment, there are no other members, but we are hiring.

This is the official report from the FBI in joint collaboration with Campus Safety, concerning the "fiasco" of Spring Formal.

The event occurred on March 25 inside the Hahn Room and the Wrestling Room. Undercover operatives were positioned in dispersed locations throughout the building. As intelligence reports, one cycle-mounted operative Avery Baker was found zooming around the outside of the event.

2030 hours: Prior to and during the event, a great number of dangerous chemicals were released into the upper stratosphere from an unidentified source. Intelligence indicates that this chemical was dihydro-

gen monoxide, which is a substance commonly found in cancerous tumors and infectious diseases. The chemical severely damaged the "clothes" of multiple students. Minor injuries resulted from the inhalation of this chemical. Students were forced by these extraneous circumstances to use personal protection equipment (PPE) that intelligence labels an "umbrella."

2031 hours: Intelligence indicates that upon entry to the lower level, most students found their way upward to participate in the recreation, while some, quote, "chickened out," leaving their dance partner alone.

2034 hours: Intelligence indicates that students were reportedly elated upon discovering that drinks were being served. The drink in question was sparking apple cider, which is heavily detrimental to one's health. Previous stud-

ies conducted by the FBI indicate that after drinking the cider, 100 percent of humans report "extremely undesirable bowel movements." We recommend making this severely dangerous liquid illegal to consume, sell, or buy for all members of Exeter under the age of 21.

Intelligence reports that a secretive "photo booth" was present at the event. After further examination, it appeared that the booth was a furtive operation by Phillips Andover Academy to collect facial information on Exeter students. The operation appeared to be an elaborate social engineering scheme, attracting a substantial line of students. At the moment, the FBI is not aware of how Andover will use the collected information.

2042 hours: After participation in the various commodities in the Hahn room, students shuffled into the wrestling room to par-

ticipate in the dance. All reports indicate that at around that time, the floor was absolutely steady. When the approximately 500 students began to jump synchronously upon the fragile floor hanging over the open track area, the floor decided to join in as well. Students praised the floor's dancing skills. "It freaked me out, and I got out of there fearing for my life," an anonymous PG said.

2100 hours: Operatives Forrest Zeng and Samuel Scheffler decided to have a closer look at the talented dancing floor by entering the Track area.

Upon entering, they realized that the structures above, the curtains, as well as a garage door on the opposite side of the field house were also bobbing intensely to the music. The entirety of the floor was visibly shifting up and down.

Pleased with this result, Operative Zeng and Scheffler both waved happily to the students looking through the windows of the dance room. Some students reported, "They both seemed to be really

worried. They were pointing at us to get out of the room. We waved back and smiled."

2120 hours: At this point, Campus Safety had arrived on site, and ordered the event to be shut down on account of "safety issues." Operatives Zeng and Scheffler vehemently denied that any "safety issues" were present. Zeng said, "The whole Field House was shaking severely. We had to get everyone out."

In summary, the ending of the dance was entirely unjustified. The bulging of the wrestling room and the shaking of the Field House's internal structures were not enough cause to shut down the dance. Intelligence estimates that if the dance continued, the floor would not have collapsed for a long time, as much as 5 minutes later—enough time for two more "cringe" KPOP songs.

2300 hours: After the decommissioning of the dance, operatives then reportedly returned to their dorms to play Call of Duty: Modern Warfare II to "make up for lost adrenaline."

The Crossword Corner

By Finn Tronnes
and Nola Weeder



ACROSS

- 1 A bug drawn to flames
- 5 Scoop
- 9 Silva-Carin, upper who does the puzzle every week
- 14 Where music and passion are always in fashion, North of Havana
- 15 Red planet
- 16 Sherlock's sister
- 17 DJ Steve
- 18 Club for multi-racial students
- 19 "I'm ___ and I didn't even know it!"
- 20 Big ole bike race
- 23 "___ expert, but..."
- 24 With P, retirement org.

- 25 U.K. medal accepted and then returned by John Lennon, abbr.
- 28 Unfortunate haircut
- 31 Parked oneself
- 34 "___ nothing"
- 36 Big inits. in trucks
- 37 Poker payment
- 38 Pretended not to see
- 42 Cleveland's lake
- 43 Acct. earnings, often calculated in MAT400 problems
- 44 Apply to
- 45 Bear
- 46 Milk with a bunny mascot
- 49 Moscow's

- home: Abbr.
- 50 Sack
- 51 Tire, in Marseilles
- 53 Super old Christian political entity in Europe
- 61 Like E.T. in hit feature film E.T.
- 62 Antiquing agent
- 63 Grime
- 64 ___-grain breakfast bars
- 65 What's written
- 66 State of France
- 67 ___ 180: turns around
- 68 Guesses, abbr.
- 69 Sch. with the largest student body in Texas

DOWN

- 1 Test for future Drs.
- 2 Fireworks reaction
- 3 Hwy. with tolls
- 4 Port-au-Prince's nation
- 5 Prefix with -compromised or -therapy
- 6 Not wide
- 7 Blond boy in Scooby Doo
- 8 Bone: Prefix
- 9 Wet mouse, or a term for pirate
- 10 Average
- 11 Bird on a Canadian coin
- 12 Utility abbr.
- 13 I served
- 21 Gradient
- 22 White House medical adviser Anthony
- 25 Connelly and Bango
- 26 UFOs in

- photos, often
- 27 The river, in Juárez
- 29 Gay etc.
- 30 XXXVIII x XXV
- 31 Vile smile
- 32 "Right back ___!"
- 33 Exeter students, mostly
- 35 How many fatigues I have left
- 37 Show stoppers?
- 39 Dora's cousin
- 40 Ques. response
- 41 Duke ___: 90s/00s video game hero
- 46 Aslan's land
- 47 Scheduled after this
- 48 Nonreactive gases
- 50 Will, Nancy, and Joyce of

- Stranger Things
- 52 Having a cow
- 53 Aslan's land
- 54 "So You Want to Talk About Race" author Ijeoma
- 55 Worse version
- 56 Australian bud
- 57 Many moons
- 58 Smidgen
- 59 Wander
- 60 Caesar's words to Brutus

The Cartoon Corner

is on page 8!

Sports

» COTW Read about the baseball and softball captains, 14.

Captains of the Week: Baseball and Softball



Softball captains: from left, uppers Haley Alden and Caroline Ciaschini and seniors Claire McConnell and Kaitlin Clark pose for a photo.

Owen Dudley / *The Exonian*

By EMI LEVINE and LEO ZHANG

As spring arrives, the baseball and softball teams hit the season running, already capturing impressive wins. Baseball captains Andrew Houghton and Gabriel Marcoux and softball captains Kaitlin Clark, Claire McConnell, Caroline Ciaschini, and Haley Alden have led both teams to impressive victories throughout the first couple weeks of the season.

The varsity baseball team has had a near-perfect season so far, playing six games and winning five of them. They first traveled to Tabor Academy and won 11-10. Then they crushed Kimball Union Academy on their home turf 13-0. Next, they earned the 2-0 and 12-10 victories against Dexter School and Berwick Academy, respectively. Despite their massive winning streak, the baseball team suffered their first loss against Austin Prep with a final score of 4-2. However, they quickly bounced back

“Each day, we’re connecting a little bit better, trusting each other a little bit more, and having a lot more fun.”

when they played New Hampton School, beating them 7-6.

The varsity softball team has also had an amazing run in the first couple of games of the season. They have won two out of three games so far. Their first game of the season was at home against Tilton School, where they lost 5-1. Despite this, they found their rhythm and won their next two games against Pingree School and New Hampton School, with final scores of 6-1 and 7-1, respectively.

Senior and captain Kaitlin Clark explained why she wanted to become captain. “I love softball. I

love playing it, watching it, and teaching it, but most of all, I love the girls on the team. I’ve never claimed to be the best player on the field, but I am always having the most fun, and I want to ensure that my teammates feel the enjoyment of the sport, at least as much, if not more, than their desire to win games, though I do

“I mean, they’re both really great guys outside of the team, and I’m sure plenty of people will attest to that. They reflect that in their conduct during practices and during games.”

also love winning games,” she said.

Upper and captain Caroline Ciaschini also shared her favorite part of being captain. “My favorite thing so far has been watching our improvement. We have a pretty young team, so it’s been great to see everyone find their place on the team and figure out how we work together well. We have come a long way from our first game during the preseason trip,” she said.

Clark also touched on the young aspect of the team. “We have a whole lot of young talent on this team, and I can’t wait to see them conquer in a few years. We have a couple of strong upperclassmen as well in captains Caroline, Claire, and Haley who are leading our pitching with ferocity,” she said.

Reflecting on their first couple of games, Ciaschini felt optimistic about the rest of the season. “We’ve only had three games, but we’re looking pretty good so far. We’ve been able to string together hits for rallies, late in games, and have had overall great energy for these first few weeks. We ended .500 for the season last year, so we’re

hoping to finish higher than that this year and be a competitive team in the Big East tournament,” she said.

“Our first two wins have definitely been highlights this season. In our most recent game against New Hampton, we were tied late into the game, but managed to put up a 6-run 6th inning. Natalie started the inning off by reaching first on a walk, and Paige kept it going with a hit up the middle. We were able to keep that rally going with two outs late in the game, stringing together hits to put six runs up. It was a great win,” Ciaschini added.

Clark also spoke on the team’s sense of community and trust. “We had the opportunity to travel to Florida for preseason training, and I think that was a super important bonding experience for so many people who had never played together before. Each day, we’re connecting a little bit better, trusting each other a little bit more, and having a lot more fun,” she said.

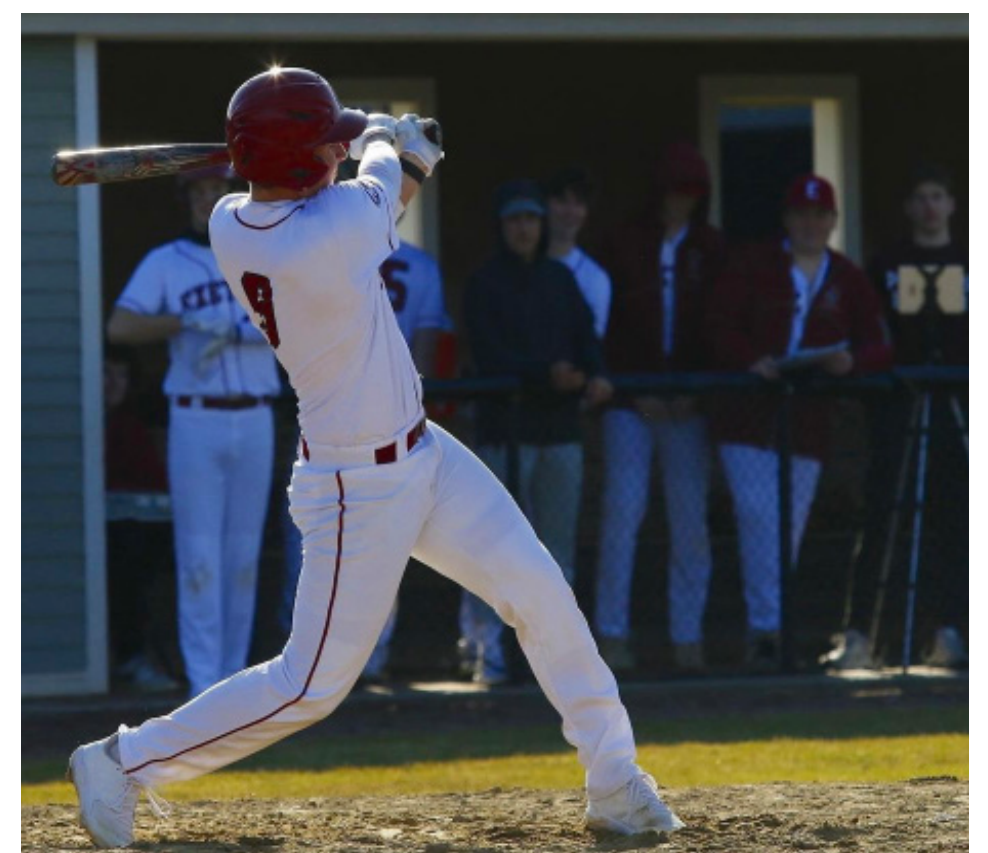
“There has been more energy in the dugout this year, in just the two games we’ve played in the regular season, than I have ever witnessed playing at Exeter. I want to keep this rolling throughout the season,” Clark added.

This sense of leadership on the softball team also extends to the baseball team. Lower Casper Bailey shared his thoughts on the baseball captains this year: “They’re leaders. Every day they’re leading stretches, they’re rallying the team, and they create a fun and easygoing environment on a team. So I really enjoy that.”

Bailey explained why the captains are so effective in their roles. “I’d say experience and, you know, just natural possession of leadership roles. I mean, they’re both really great guys outside of the team, and I’m sure

plenty of people will attest to that. They reflect that in their conduct during practices and during games. I mean, they’re great guys on and off the field and that’s all you really need to be able to fill the role effectively,” he said.

Lower Jack Doherty further explained the captains’ leadership. “I feel like they take charge in practices. Usually, Andrew leads the stretches, and that’s a leadership role he takes off on. Gabe is the catcher, so he has a leadership role of directing, where things have to go, talking to the players, and having to have



Boys baseball in action.

Courtesy of @exeterathletics

good communication with everyone else. So I feel like communication is part of why Gabe and Andrew are

“They always are doing their part. It’s not like they’re making the freshmen go do something. They’re always helping you like that. So they really are members of the team.”

good leaders.”

He continued with an anecdote about Andrew’s exceptional leadership. “I knew this one kid who was pitching and after Andrew gave him a few tips, he started to throw a little bit faster even. Overall they’re both great players. I feel like their roles as a captain have definitely been earned, and they definitely shoot for being a captain.”

Ben Martin shared similar notions on the captains. “They’re both really good guys. They’re really good about being players, being leaders, and they’re really

“I want everyone to enjoy what they’re doing and not take themselves or this sport too seriously, as well as supporting each other and supporting other teams on campus whenever possible.”

good about knowing what the team needs. They’re always there on the field, giving high fives after every inning. They really are a good semblance of the team and they really represent the team well,” he said.

While being capable leaders, something that makes the baseball captains so great is that they also feel like regular members of the team. Martin touched on this, saying, “I just think that they act well. Their leadership is through acting like members of the team. They always are doing their part. It’s not like they’re making the freshmen go do something. They’re always grabbing the balls. They’re always helping you like that. So they really are members of the team.”

According to Bailey, another thing that makes the captains so great is their

team, right? So you get all sorts of moments. It’s a small team, so every moment on the field is fun. It’s really a fun sport. The captains are always there and we’re always having a good time,” he said.

Looking at the team overall, Bailey had high hopes for the season. “The team’s looking good. As of right now, I believe we are five and one.”

Doherty believes that the team looks sharp for the season. “We have plenty of other pitching, so our bullpens very much stretch everything. Our hitting is good too, like we can hit the ball and get around the bases. So I feel like this year is gonna be a good year and it’s gonna be looking good for the rest of the season.”

Martin also outlined the team’s goals for the rest of the season. “As of right now, we’re doing well. We just came off of two rough games against Worcester, but we have very good pitching. Beau and Andrew are both very good pitchers and our hitting looks good. We want to make it pretty deep in the playoffs at the end of the year and obviously, we want to beat Andover. Overall I think we’re looking good as a team and I think we’re on the right track,” he said.

Bailey also spoke of a particular moment from one of the games that represent the team environment well. “So one of the guys on the team, Harry Walker, he’s a swing player and he came up, about a week ago, to the varsity roster. The captains immediately put him in and this guy comes out and he pitches effectively. I think that just speaks to the team environment this year in the sense that it’s the next man up. Everyone’s ready to play. Everyone’s excited about the opportunity