

### ECO-PLAN

Read about the Academy's new environmental action plan, 1.

### SOTW

Read about this week's Senior of the Week: Holden Quaresma, 8.

### 333

Read about lower Phin Gibbs' thoughts on the 333, 4.

## Students Participate in Relay for Life



By **ETHAN DING** and **LILIA FECTEAU**

On Saturday, May 16, the Academy hosted Relay for Life, an annual fundraiser event dedicated to raising awareness for cancer research and money for the American Cancer Society. Various clubs, dorms, and sports teams created booths and games which students could take part in for a certain number of tickets. The event also included a notable "Luminaria," a moment of solace honouring victims of cancer.

In addition to **ACADEMY, 2**



Students make bracelets at a Relay for Life booth.

Hillary Yoon / The Exonian

## Academy Holds ISA x AAB International Night Market

By **BELLA JIN, AMY LIN,** and **ROXANE PARK**

On April 29, Exonians gathered in Rink A of the George H. Love Gymnasium for the International Student Alliance (ISA) x Asian Advisory Board (AAB) Night Market. The event melded two annual

Exeter traditions — Soul Fest hosted by the ISA and Asian Night Market hosted by the AAB — and kicked off Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) Heritage Month.

Underneath string lights and lanterns, Korean Society, Chinese

**MARKET, 2**

## Academy Reveals New Environmental Action Plan

By **PHIN GIBBS, JOONYOUNG HEO** and **LILY RAMPE**

At the start of the Climate Action Day assembly on April 30, Principal William Rawson presented a new sustainability plan that outlined the Academy's commitment to combating climate change and supporting environmental conservation.

The plan itself was published on the Academy's website in late April. Outlined into three different sections, it signifies a major first step toward a greener future for the campus. The first section ensures that every Exonian, by graduation, is aware of the importance of sustainability and the looming threat of climate change; the second identifies tangible goals of limiting carbon emissions by 75 percent by 2031 and going zero-carbon by 2051; and the third looks to integrating eco-friendly principles to life on campus.

The Academy's administration had several goals in creating this plan. "The purpose was threefold: develop an updated environmental mission statement, define our overarching goals for sustainability and climate action, and provide a road map for a community-wide commitment to action," Rawson said. "More fundamentally, I hope we will foster a strong culture of sustainability in our school community and live up to our environmental mission statement."

"It compiles a list of what the school has done to date in terms of improving its efforts around sustainability," Sustainability Coordinator and Instructor in Science Andrew McTammany said. "That allows us to go check, check, check, and okay, this is what we've done and this is what



Courtesy of exeter.edu

we need to do. It tells us where we need to be in the future if we're going to be committed as a school to sustainability. It's written down in the plan, so now we have to hold ourselves

*"The plan was meant to inspire our faculty, our alumni, and our students to challenge us to be better."*

to it." Other members of the community certainly recognized the significance of the plan. "This is PEA's first sustainability and climate action plan," Manager of Sustainability and Natural Resources Warren Biggins said. "By adopting this plan and formalizing our commitment to sustainability, we're doubling down on our progress to date with a map for a community-wide commitment to action."

"It's a major step forward for the Academy," Instructor in Science Elizabeth Stevens said. "It means that when important decisions are being made that will impact the future of PEA, this document will be brought out and

referred to. It means that with every new project on campus, we will need to revisit the climate action plan. It means that in new curricula we will need to consider whether the educational goals are being met."

In terms of executing the plan itself, the administration has set goals in the short term. "Responsibility for implementing the plan will be widely distributed among faculty for educational initiatives and Facilities Management, and other non-academic departments for initiatives pertaining to operations and infrastructure," Rawson said. "Leadership certainly will be provided by Mr. Biggins as our Manager of Sustainability and Natural Resources, and by Mr. Kelly as our new Sustainability Education Coordinator. Many others will contribute or play leadership roles in their respective areas of responsibility. I expect students to be engaged and play leadership roles as well."

"Of immediate interest, we will integrate geothermal heating and cooling in our new dining hall construction and renovations of Davis Building and the Academy Building," Rawson

continued. "New global studies programs with a sustainability theme are already being developed. Many other ideas, actions, and potential strategies are outlined in the 'Way Forward' portions of the plan."

Some folks emphasized the importance of community engagement in implementing this plan. "I think our bigger task as a community is thinking about how to shift the focus from individual success to collective and community success," Sustainability Education Coordinator and Instructor in English Jason BreMiller said. "We're a school that thrives on the individual trajectory of each of our students. That's a big part of the culture and value system here. And there's a lot about the climate conversation that shifts that focus to the collective. I think that's a challenge — how do we start to shift culture to get students to slow down enough to think about their individual actions?"

As with my ambitious projects, of course, the administration expects a few challenges ahead. "I think the most difficult goal to achieve will be reducing PEA's emissions by 75% by 2031 and reaching zero emissions by 2050," Biggins said. "In order to

reach both goals, we'll have to address our central heating plant, which currently burns natural gas and occasionally #2 fuel oil to generate steam for heat and hot water in our campus buildings."

"To reach the 2031 goal, we'll most likely have to identify an alternative, low-carbon fuel source, or pursue carbon capture technologies," Biggins continued. "Both strategies may require large upfront costs, as well as retrofits to our plant. While we don't know exactly how we'll reach the 2050 goal yet, we do know that there will be significant costs involved and that decarbonizing the campus will be a lengthy process."

Many components of the plan were also left largely open-ended, with the intention to allow future students and faculty to adapt the plan to fit their circumstances. "The plan doesn't lay out an intricate map that tells you exactly how to get from point A to point B," McTammany said. "We couldn't do that because we don't know how technology will evolve. So we deliberately left it up to future actors enacting the plan — future students, faculty, trustees. This process is going to take a lot of time, and we

tried to account for that. It may seem a little vague, but we're really leaving room for imagination and potential growth in the future."

Albeit in a relatively limited capacity, student voices had a hand in making the plan. "I met with student leaders of the Environmental Action Committee several times, as did Mr. McTammany, and their perspective certainly influenced my thinking, especially regarding the educational components," Rawson said.

"The administration consulted us," senior and former co-head of the Environmental Action Committee Alysha Lai said. "We were invited to some of the board meetings with the teachers and trustees, and they asked us for suggestions on what to include in the plan. I do wish we could have played a bigger role in making it, but I understand that, as students, it's a bit hard for us to have that kind of job. I'm glad we were able to contribute regardless."

In conjunction with the administration and sustainability-driven committees on campus, such input has created a plan that affirms in writing the Academy's commitment to taking real environmental action in the future, and one that the community can be proud of.

"If I were to say one thing, it would be that the plan was meant to inspire our faculty, our alumni, and our students to challenge us to be better," McTammany said. "And I really hope, as people read the plan, that they know how they want to contribute and how to make Exeter stay committed to the goals outlined here. The plan inspires the entire campus to think about environmental action on a day-to-day basis."

# News

## » ECO-PLAN

Read about the Academy's new environmental action plan, 1.

## » MARKET

Read about the ISA x AAB Night Market, 2.

## » RELAY

Read about the Academy's annual Relay for Life, 1.

## Relay for Life Cont.

being a significant event with a noble cause, Relay for Life was also a night of snacks, art, and overall enjoyment. Some of the most popular attractions of the event included a "high-heels-race" by Hoyt Hall, a gladiatorial combat arena by the Kirtland Society, a D Squared Java gift card Kahoot Championship by the International Student Alliance, and a "jail" that students could imprison their friends in. Altogether, the different attractions at Relay for Life raised more than \$5,600 for cancer research.

The event was

the screens ourselves, order the posters, and order WPEA stickers."

Senior Gwen Serrano commented on the preparation of the musicians during the event. "I really appreciate the dedication of the [Exeter Association of Rock] performers," Serrano said. "They had to set up, get all the equipment together, and then organize all the performers and the performance schedule. They had to start setting up a long time before the event started, and they performed throughout the entire night. It was really wonderful to hear

aspects of the event," Basur said. "Each member had a specific role, such as logistics, fundraising, Luminaria, and entertainment. As one of the people in charge of Public Relations, my role was to promote the event and create awareness within the community. This involved designing flyers and posters, managing social media accounts, and decorating the venue."

"I think we've been doing it for so long that the student organizers follow a system of what we had in the past," Day Student Coordinator and



Hillary Yoon / The Exonian

**A student draws the portrait of another student at Relay for Life.**

who are affected.

event. Senior Gbemiga Salu recounted his favourite booth. "The cross-country team had a crêpe stand, and they were excellent," Salu said. "I could see how they brought passion and excitement to the crêpe-making, and I was really glad that they were there."

"My favourite part of Relay for Life was probably the waffle-making stand that Dunbar did," lower Aymeric Dauge-Roth said. "In general, many of my friends were running the stands, and the atmosphere was very lively. Everything, the booths, the people, and especially the music contributed to a great

Senior Alexa Wingate, a co-head of Chess Club, ran a stand and talked about her experience as a facilitator. "At Relay for Life, we were trying to create an attraction with an aspect of our club, so we decided to give people the opportunity to challenge our players over the board. Everyone that came by had a good time, and I loved how we were raising money for a great cause while having a great time playing chess."

Senior Holden Quaresma, a co-head of Kirtland Society, was present at the event, armed with gladius and scutum, available to be challenged in gladiatorial combat. "Kirtland has done it every year, so people expected us to be there," Quaresma said. "This year, we were considering not participating, but members of the club urged us against it. I was really happy that we were able to put it together, even if it was last minute. I was glad that people were really enjoying it, and it was great to help out in raising money."

During Luminaria, Kellogg passionately delivered a poetry reading, focusing on the impact that a close friend or family member having cancer has on someone. "Relay For Life is important to me because it spreads awareness to the 'cancer community' not only just at Exeter but beyond. It's a night each spring where we get to pick our heads up from our own lives and think big picture about our loved ones and those we know

especially important to me these past two years since my own father was diagnosed with Multiple Myeloma," Kellogg said. "My goal was to make a meaningful event where people were having fun but also remembering the importance of why we were there. The event absolutely lived up to my expectations; you could really feel the fun atmosphere in the rink as well as the seriousness during Luminaria."

For everyone involved in the planning and execution of Relay for Life this year, the event was a definite success, having accomplished the planning committee's goals of raising a significant sum of money and creating an enjoyable night for the Academy community. "By coming together and raising awareness for cancer research, we were able to create a positive impact in our community and demonstrate the power of collective action," Basur said.

"Relay for Life is very important. It's certainly personal for a lot of people, and it is to me as well," Quaresma said. "First of all, it promotes cancer awareness, raises money for the fight against cancer, and brings attention to people affected by cancer, but it is also a time when the community gets together and enjoys a night of fun. It's really a win from every perspective."



Students smile at the Student Council booth.

Hillary Yoon / The Exonian

overwhelmingly student-run and planned, from the overall organization of the event to the specific activities and stands. When planning the event, the organizers worked diligently to make sure that every detail was up to the mark. For upper Avery Selig, upper Ellie Ana Sperantas, senior Nina Kellogg, upper Rex Bedwick, upper Angel Guo, upper Nikki Basur, and upper Ugo Barrah.

the product of all their hard work."

The planning process for this year's Relay for Life involved a dedicated committee that consisted of senior Zach Quitkin, upper Avery Selig, upper Ellie Ana Sperantas, senior Nina Kellogg, upper Rex Bedwick, upper Angel Guo, upper Nikki Basur, and upper Ugo Barrah.

"We usually met every other week during lunch to discuss and plan various

Director of Student Learning Elizabeth Reyes said. "The students are the ones coming up with the theme, Luminaria is left up to them, and even the booths. This year we had some new creative booths that we hadn't had in the past. Last year, Ms. Lembo, Ms. Costello and I had to do a lot of work. This year, however, the students took to their jobs well, and they ran with it."

Relay for Life attendees only had good things to say about their experiences at the

environment."

"I felt that all of the booths were really creative, and I had a lot of fun," lower Davido Zhang said. "An important factor in that is how the tickets are so cheap. With each ticket being fifty cents, it's not as if people are feeling any financial burden. Also, a lot of people running the stands were giving people tickets to spend if they didn't have any, which meant that everyone was able to participate."

only had good things to say about their experiences at the

## ISA x AAB Night Market Cont.

Student Organization (CSO), Vietnamese Society, Hong Kong Society, Asian Voices, The Phillips Exeter Asian, Subcontinent Society, Middle Eastern and North African Society, and the ISA set up individual booths with traditional food and activities. A part of the night consisted of performances by the Academy Belly Dancing Society (ABS) as well as seniors Ale Murat, Minseo Kim, Bai Xue, and upper Eric Wu. The Night Market was an opportunity for students to immerse themselves in Asian culture and cuisine.

Each cultural club's booth served traditional food or offered games for attendees to enjoy. "Korean Society made bingsoo out of shaved ice, condensed milk, sweet red bean, and mochi," upper and Korean Society co-head Will Soh said. "It's a really popular dessert back in Korea."

Upper and co-head of Middle Eastern and North African Society Sarah Soufny shared: "We had a bunch of different Middle Eastern foods, like falafel and hummus. We also set up a bunch of pictures from many different Middle Eastern and North African countries."

"The CSO booth had a lot of different things going on," upper and co-head of Chinese Student Organization Eric Wu said.

"We had a ton of deserts, some Chinese crackers, some Chinese candy, and we also had an interactive game where we challenged people to pick up marbles with metal chopsticks and to move as many as they could."

Senior and co-head of CSO Bai Xue added, "We had a sweet rice and ube dessert, which was our most popular dish. We also served spring rolls and dumplings."

Upper Tanya Syed represented the Subcontinent Society booth. "At our stall, we had henna or mehndi, as it is called in India, and we also had two Indian dishes, mattar and samosas," Syed shared. "We chose to do mehndi because we've noticed that it's really popular [with Exonians], and it's a really important part of Indian culture. [Mehndi] transcends boundaries and is a tradition that I strongly believe in."

Vietnamese Society tackled both savory and sweet dishes. "We served banh mi, which is a traditional Vietnamese sandwich made with French bread, pork belly, veggies, and sauces," prep and co-head Annie Vo said. "In the later half, we [served a dessert] with jammed fruits, seltzer water, and rose and pandan jelly."

"For me, food is such a big part of my cultural identity, and one of the best parts of vacation is being home and eating good food.

So [being able to] just [share] that little piece of home here has been really nice and refreshing," Vo continued.

"We chose to serve egg waffles," lower and co-head of Hong Kong Society Ava Helbig said. "They're a popular street food in Hong Kong, and it was a fun experience to share them with other Exonians."

Asian Student Coordinator Kerrie Tinsley shared the preparation that went into ISA x AAB Night Market. "[First,] Asian Advisory Board and I sent out surveys to each of the AAPI-identifying cultural clubs to get a sense of which clubs wanted to participate in the event. For my part, I supported the clubs' efforts by getting supplies," Tinsley said. "I also worked closely with International Student Coordinator Silvia Gerard to really try to get each club what they wanted in terms of food ingredients and supplies for activities."

"AAB and ISA co-heads worked on the layout of Rink A and took charge of organizing the schedule to ensure there was time for the performances and karaoke," continued Tinsley.

Other key helpers in preparing for the event were the catering and dining services staff, who played an essential role. A stellar cast of faculty coordinators aided students in making the night

possible, including Director of Student Activities Joanne Lembo, Assistant Director of Student Activities Kelly McGahie, and Assistant to the Principal Leigh Drapeau.

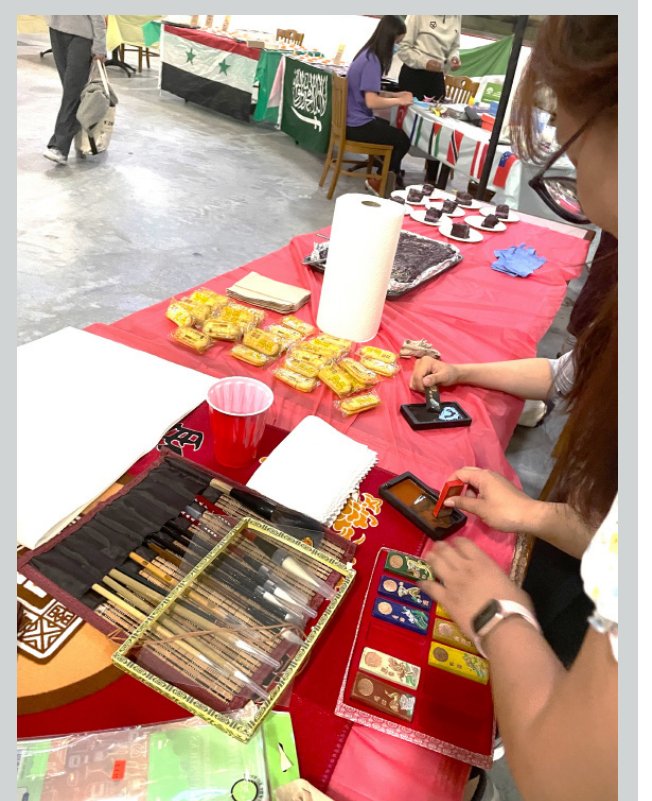
From food to performances, students and faculty shared their favorite memories from the Night Market.

"I loved interacting with people and showcasing

*"The crowd felt like a unified group of people who were just there to try new things, see new things, and experience new things."*

what we came up with and made. It was a great experience explaining to them all the little details about what's going on, what they're eating, what they're experiencing, and everybody coming back because we sold out so quickly," Vo said. "It was so great to see [so many] different Asian [regions] represented, from southwest countries to northeast countries," upper Safa Alwakya shared. "The middle-eastern booth brought my culture to Exeter, and I was so glad to see everyone enjoying the food."

For Wu, the student performances were a



Students participated in many activities at the market.

Ava Zhao / The Exonian

and personal at the same time," Wu said. "I think it was a really big success."

"It was great [how Night Market] brought people together to celebrate the diversity in our school community," Soufny agreed.

Wu concluded: "I really liked the energy and the positivity. The crowd felt like a unified group of people who were just there to try new things, see new things, and experience new things. I found that really, really warm and welcoming."

highlight of the night. "I thought it was an awesome opportunity for international and Asian students to show off a little bit of their skills and culture. I also [enjoyed] performing myself," Wu said.

"One of my favorite parts of Night Market was performing with ABS for the first time," prep Mansa Awuah said.

Wu commented on the success of the event. "The organizers did a great job of setting the mood, providing intimate decorations, and including so many different Asian cultures and international cultures. The space felt really comfortable



# The ‘333’ Essay: A Right of Passage or a One-Way Ticket to Insanity?

By PHINGIBBS ‘25

Ever since I began applying to Exeter, daunting stories of the notorious ‘333’ began to arise, students going weeks on end without sleep, delving into the most niche aspects of

United States history; the final research project appears to be an incredulous mountain that once scaled, makes Exeter look a lot easier. For many students, the ‘333’ essay can be scary, but the benefits are numerous, as it helps students develop crucial skills that are useful throughout their academic and

professional lives.

One of the primary benefits of the ‘333’ essay is that it allows students to engage with primary sources. For example, a student writing a paper on the American Revolution may be able to analyze firsthand accounts of battles, such as the letters of soldiers or the reports of generals. By analyzing these sources, students can gain a deeper understanding of the events, ideas, and people that have shaped U.S. History.

Moreover, the ‘333’ essay helps students develop their writing and analytical skills. Writing a research paper requires students to think carefully about how to structure their argument, use evidence effectively, and cite sources

correctly. These skills are not only crucial for success in college but are also valuable in many professions.

For instance, a friend writing his ‘333’ essay on the Civil Rights Movement spent weeks reviewing primary sources, including speeches, court transcripts, and newspaper articles. As he analyzed the authorities, he began to see patterns and connections that he had not seen before. He developed a deeper understanding of the civil rights movement and its impact on U.S. History. Similarly, another friend struggled with the writing process for her ‘333’ essay. She sought feedback from her teacher and peers, and together they identified areas where she could improve her writing. Through this process, she was able to develop her writing skills and produce a well-crafted research paper.

However, the ‘333’ essay has some potential

drawbacks. One issue is that many students may find the assignment overwhelming, particularly if they have little experience in researching and writing an utterly free-range paper. Additionally, the emphasis on the ‘333’ essay may mean that other important aspects of the U.S. History sequence, such as class discussion and debate, are sacrificed to give ample time for preparing and writing this essay.

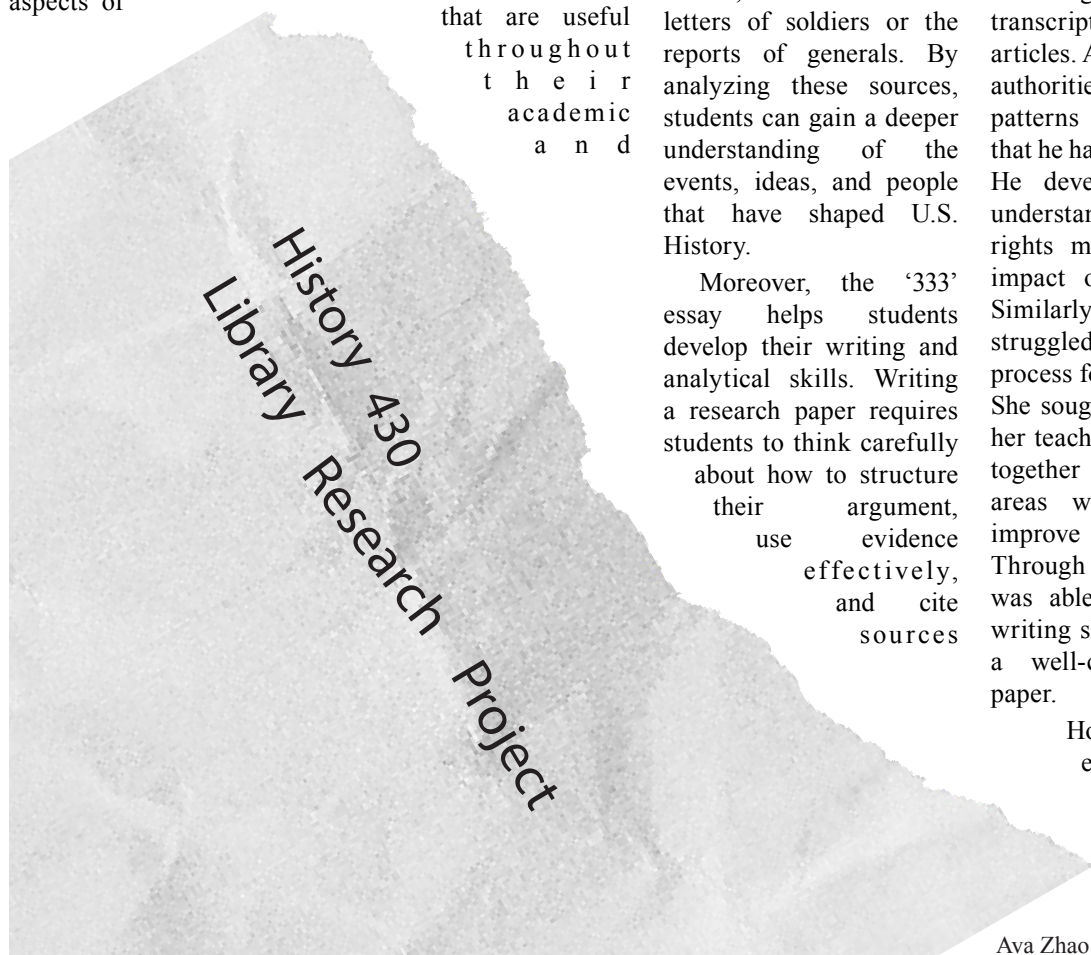
Despite the benefits of the ‘333’ essay, some may argue that it places too much emphasis on individual research rather than collaborative learning. In a time where group work and discussion-based classes are gaining popularity, the ‘333’ essay remains an individual and isolated assignment. While it’s true that individual research allows for deep engagement with a topic, some may argue that it isolates students from one another and discourages the development of teamwork skills.

Another potential criticism of the ‘333’ essay is that it reinforces a Eurocentric perspective on U.S. History. Students

are encouraged to research topics that are deemed ‘important’ or ‘relevant,’ which often means focusing on events that involve white, male, and Western perspectives.

As I look toward my upper year and begin to embark on the United States History sequence, I imagine that the final ‘333’ will be an incredibly stress-induced process, with being in-season for lacrosse and studying for AP exams, all while having to focus on four other classes. Spending over 30 hours in the library to research a passion project would be great in a setting that is not as strenuous as Exeter’s, but given that it is, the ‘333’ creates a hell on earth for those that participate.

In conclusion, while the ‘333’ essay provides students with valuable skills and insights into U.S. History, it may also have some limitations. It is essential to acknowledge these limitations and strive for a balance between individual research and collaborative learning, as well as diverse perspectives and experiences in the topics students explore. Ultimately, the ‘333’ essay is a challenging but rewarding assignment that can help students develop essential skills and a deeper appreciation for the complexities of U.S. History.



Ava Zhao / The Exonian

## Editorial: Upper Year: Grief, Loss, Reconciliation, and Hope

By NHAN PHAN ‘24

I joke with my friends that probably up until this point in time, the class of 2024 has seen it all. Entering an eerie, socially-distanced campus during the height of a global pandemic, we have witnessed in several ways the falling apart of America: a political turmoil resultant of a belligerent outgoing president refusing to accept a peaceful transition of power, a national reckoning with race as a result of the killing of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, and countless other people of color, a deadly insurrection which has placed the fragility of American democracy in the spotlight, the overturning of Roe v. Wade and the battle to protect abortions, as well as instances of the more severe implications of climate change on American cities and towns. On a more global scale, we are living through a period of intense international conflict: from the Taliban’s rapid claim over Afghanistan to the Russia-Ukraine War. Yet on a more local scale, our time at Exeter has witnessed high ups and low downs of our own: our own grappling with a Vanity Fair article that highlighted the Academy’s mishandling of the sexual assault investigation process, the trial of a disgraced former teacher, and the passing away of a beloved member of the community. And as I look back on an unforgettable

upper year in my Exeter career, I offer a hopeful reflection.

I want to start off with grief and loss. I have had a painful experience with grief this year as I not only lost a dorm mate and a dear friend, but also my family members and childhood companions. When I decided to come to Exeter, I acknowledged that there will be times when I will feel alone, isolated, and helpless. I just did not expect these feelings to come so soon,

*“I learned that grief is a powerful expression of love. Grief is a sign that you are still keeping those that you have lost in mind, and in heart.”*

and so intensely. But through this journey, I have learned a lot of things about myself and about those around me. Through my journey with constant compounded loss, I learned that grief is a powerful expression of love. Grief is a sign that you are still keeping those that you have lost in mind, and in heart. And in my grieving process, I have learned to be more appreciative of how fragile the status quo can be. All grief has done is inspire me to love more fiercely than I ever have before. But this is not without saying that I have reached points where I was emotionally burnt out. A shortcoming that I have noticed with myself was that I didn’t take care of myself

enough when I needed to. In those moments, I had told myself to give myself grace but ultimately pressed on with life as usual anyway thinking that I was able to cope with the pain. And in those moments, I learned something about the people around me. It is at Exeter that I found my second family: a group of people that are positive, raucous, and helpful in their own ways. And in moments of need, I was touched by how willing they were to listen. Perhaps, that is what we all have been trained to do: to listen actively, and carefully. I was touched by the care that Exonians have demonstrated for one another: a kind of non-sibi that is not material in nature but instead instinctual. It goes to show that there is still a lot of compassion in all of us, and that is a much-needed reminder in the middle of a world where kindness may not be as nearly as abundant. We need to live with kindness in our hearts, and gratefulness for the expended time and vivid memories that those around us have made with us. We need to lead our lives with love.

I then want to turn to work. It was during this year that work had a new meaning for me: a coping mechanism. Like many other Exonians, I derive some satisfaction from knowing that I have gotten things done. But at this time in my life, work felt more like a mechanism to tell myself that my life is still intact. Though this may sound reasonable,

it represents something far more unhealthy about Exeter culture than previously thought. It did not surprise me that the Academy’s response to the resumption of classes was out of an abundance of caution to provide “structure” to the student body. Work is seen as “structure” when the situation at hand has disrupted all kinds of structures in students’ lives. I would have hoped that work occupied a different role in my life, but I have grown to accept its influence. In the results of Dr. Kari Hart’s survey, about 71 percent of respondents reported that they frequently feel stressed about their schoolwork or academic experience. I believe that some level of stress is healthy as it keeps you accountable for your obligations; however, to have to perpetually be in a constant cycle of worrying about your school work when there are other things to worry about is concerning. It is often that I see students who are more worried about their homework than calling home to their parents, or those that have to prioritize homework over visiting their sick friend in the hospital. To place homework so far up the priority scale that it trumps friends and family is indicative of how work has become more than just what it is: it has been ingrained into Exeter culture as a key indicator of what stability looks like. We have to do work to feel stable; this cannot continue.

Lastly, I want to talk about time. Before I came

to Exeter, I was told that four years were going to fly by. I didn’t believe those who said that to me, but now I do. So much of my time has been taken up by my work that during this year, I had an honest re-evaluation of my work obligations. I had reconciled with obligations that I could no longer hold or that I do not have as enough energy to hold as I had before; I was being honest with myself. And I have reaped the benefits of doing so. I now feel like I have time. I feel like I have time to do the things that I love and spend time with the people that I love. I have called my parents more often and had more time to get to know the adult faculty that I work so closely with

*“I am hopeful for a fun year when all of our work pays off. I hope all of our time here at Exeter culminates on a high note.”*

on a more interpersonal level. But as senior year approaches, the question for me that I am answering now is how do I spend that time? One of my friends once told me to live more in the present and to appreciate taking things day by day. I came to learn the importance of taking things day by day as I grappled with hard emotions after the compounded loss of my friends and family. And what I realized throughout this year was

that the ‘present’ here at Exeter matters. You can make only so many plans for the future, but many of those plans are impacted by the choices you make today, this morning, and tonight. And I used to think a lot about what the future looks like for me (in a way, I still do). But what my friends have allowed me to do is to take my mind off of things and be with them right then and there. I will choose to spend my time compassionately, loving those I love as if I have everything to give. I will choose to spend my time productively, embarking on work and projects that I enjoy doing. My Senior Project, a month-long travel opportunity in Hoi An, Vietnam, is an opportunity for me to blur the lines between art and academia: a project that I have planned for several years and I am grateful that Exeter has provided me with the opportunity to share my work with the world. And most importantly, I will choose to spend my time creating memories.

Rising seniors, as we all navigate senior year, very real-world things will happen and we may not see each other as often after we graduate. Spend this time taking photos, going out, and doing things that you love with those who you love most. Please lead with kindness and carry the hope that good things will happen. I am hopeful for a fun year when all of our work pays off. I hope all of our time here at Exeter culminates on a high note.

# Why South Korea is Unfit for Freedom

By JINMIN LEE '26

On Friday, April 28, South Korea's President Yoon Suk Yeol gave a speech at the Harvard John F. Kennedy School of Government after his visit to the White House a few days prior. There, Yoon and President Biden discussed plans for improving South Korea-U.S. relations; most importantly, they agreed that both countries would become stronger allies in their joint quest

South Korean society would actually work. South Korea's radically meritocratic system and seemingly perpetually stressed citizens are both not indicators of strong liberty. In order to embrace freedom, both issues need to be addressed first.

If quasi-idealistic meritocracy could ever be portrayed by one single nation, South Korea would easily come to people's minds. Although this radical form of meritocracy has driven Korea's economy in the last 70 years, it will not

## QUESTION OF THE ISSUE

Share with us a favorite moment with a graduating senior!

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

students can be found going to extracurricular academies, Hakwons, to study until 10 p.m.. One could argue that this system is not a "true meritocracy" because certain students

perfect meritocracy is that there is one standardized test that everyone takes for college at the end of high school. In South Korea, students are not necessarily evaluated by colleges for their "character" or "activities" but more on this score alone. The reason why this toxic culture of education exists, however, is not because students want to study and change the world. It is because they want to land a "good job" at a big corporation and the only way to do so is by attending a good college. In such a culture, liberty cannot thrive because people are implicitly bound to competition. Attaining "free will" to pursue personal wills and whims will ultimately achieve nothing because one who rejects meritocracy will be seen as "incompetent" or "lazy" and completely shunned from society. This radical form of meritocracy punishes individuals who do not comply with starvation and public shaming, under the illusion that they are working for themselves. In order for South Korean citizens to experience and embrace actual liberty, they must first be unbridled from this culture.

Coming from this exhaustive version of capitalism, people are perennially stressed from work. The anger generated by this stress leads many to opt for lives of hedonism, irrationality, and depression: all of which clash with freedom. From severe work hours for adults to the pressures of getting good grades for students, the population of

## RESPONSES FROM LAST ISSUE:

### Is Spring over-rated or justly rated?

**Phin Gibbs '25** - "Spring would be the best season of the year if it were not for allergies. Being on the precipitous of Summer, Spring is given boisterous commendations for being nothing but disappointingly bad weather, unbearably itchy eyes, runny noses, and burnt-out teachers, Overrated."

**Joonyoung Heo '25** - "We here highly resolve that spring is a time of revival. It is a celebration of life and I for one believe that life has its merits. Spring is justly rated."

**Chat GPT** - "Whether spring is overrated or underrated is a subjective viewpoint that can vary from person to person. Some might argue that spring is overrated because it often receives excessive praise for its association with new beginnings and pleasant weather, overshadowing the unique qualities of other seasons."



Courtesy of Katelyn Cui

to solve the North Korean denuclearization issue. In his speech at Harvard, which I was very lucky to attend, President Yoon declared the importance of liberty in modern society. He stated that freedom must be protected and stressed its global importance. Yoon also discussed how the U.S. was the trailblazer in establishing and protecting freedom and strongly implied that other countries should emulate its emphasis on free will. However, as a South Korean, I found myself questioning whether imposing more freedom in

permit the spread of liberty. South Korea's meritocracy lies in many of its systems, but most notably in its education. In South Korea, most children have the exact same objective: get good grades on tests and thus go to one of its top three colleges: Seoul National University, Yonsei University, or Korea University. Each university accepts around 4000 students, and competition thus inflames. So, with the same goal, almost every single student studies for hours and hours a day. The "official school day" ends around 1 p.m., but

from wealthier families can afford better Hakwons and be more successful in their studies. However, I would argue that Korea is close to a perfect meritocracy because most students attend the few famous Hakwons, no matter the monetary burden. In fact, most middle-class families are known to use "debt accounts" in their bank accounts to count the amount of money they are indebted to because of the exorbitant spending on Hakwons. Another reason why this system portrays

Korea is deeply wounded from within. However, interestingly, perfect social order is maintained: theft rates are near zero percent and people leave their mobile phones to reserve seats at restaurants without any worry that they will get stolen. Criminal activity is so low, in fact, that police officers do not possess guns. This peacefulness is sharply contrasted, nevertheless, by how Koreans act in private. When Koreans know that they are concealed from everyone else in society, they find ways to unleash their stress. Many people opt for blatant hedonism or escapism, often drinking in their free time. Schools also have a major issue with smoking and drinking. Other ways that this stress manifests is through school bullying, sexual assault, and domestic violence. Once most Koreans realize that their crimes may go unnoticed, they have no qualms about committing them. This is why South Korea is notorious for having a cyberbullying issue too. For instance, the flooding of hate comments prompts many celebrities to commit suicide every year. The only thing that prevents Koreans from committing such actions in public is the implicit social order that is firmly established in Korean culture. There is a strong emphasis on "not bothering others" or "being

loud and disruptive in public." My concern about granting powerful liberty to Korean citizens in the status quo is that it might undo the social order and allow people to easily bring their trapped anger into the public; crime rates and even worse forms of hedonism could exponentially rise. Of course, this does not mean that the current issues happening in private should not be ignored, but I believe that current society is prepared to embrace a culture of freedom as social order prevents egregious actions.

I agree with President Yoon that we must approach liberty; people who are free are often happier and more ambitious, by their own will, to make positive changes in society. Liberty is often credited to have brought such success to the United States. However, liberty itself has its own precursors that must be fulfilled before it can be obtained. In Korea, the culture of radical meritocracy circumscribes the benefits of liberty. As for the ubiquitous stress of the individuals, liberty might actually undo the social order that currently protects individuals from the wrath of others. In order for liberty to be attained in Korea, these two issues must be addressed first.

# Murdochs Oust Carlson

By TEDDY CAPOZZI '24

Amid the firing of news goliath Tucker Carlson, viewers should give time to reflect on their media consumption and challenge the value mainstream news networks are able to bring them.

As certain news anchors deviate from their journalistic duties to provide people with untampered facts and raw news, the rise of misinformation increases, potentially putting the cable news model in peril.

The departure of Carlson provides a great example of the foolish practice cable news is becoming, as Carlson's weekday program veered away from reporting and presenting unbiased information. In a transition between reporting and journalism, Carlson's show started to resemble something closer to reality TV. Chasing and creating

storylines that excited but also incited controversy amongst his audience seemed to take precedence over reporting news.

In multiple episodes Carlson would bring light to, and at times entertain, certain conspiracy theories. These included 2020 presidential election fraud, the 'great replacement theory,' and during an August 2019 airing calling white supremacy a "hoax." Carlson had a certain amount of autonomy at Fox which allowed him to bring these far-right ideas into his traditionally right-leaning audience. This was shown through bringing in guests such as Alex Jones (a right wing conspiracy theorist). While pushing these ideas on audiences was harmful, there is no evidence of Fox executives patrolling this type of behavior.

His demise would ultimately come due to his infatuation with conspiracies regarding fraudulent voting in the 2020 election.

In a recent lawsuit between Dominion Voting Systems and Fox News, the network was charged for defamation of Dominion, alleging that their voting machines assisted in casting more votes towards President Joe Biden. One of the culprits, Carlson claimed that "it is clear the 2020 election was a grave betrayal of American democracy" and later claimed that the supposed fraud of Dominion removed "confidence in democracy."

During the investigation, Carlson's text messages were leaked. He was promptly fired from Fox. Amongst deprecating messages about colleagues and his growing ego within the network, the slew of racist texts found in Carlson's phone would ultimately end his tenure at Fox.

The implications for Fox will be large. Carlson frequently pulled in over three million viewers per night and was their most watched prime time host.

Heads of Fox father-son duo Rupert and Lachlan Murdoch had to make a difficult decision in releasing Carlson. In advertising revenue alone, Carlson's show brought in \$77.5 million last year. Since Carlson left, the audience from his 8-9 p.m. time slot has decreased by almost 50 percent.

Carlson currently stands out because of recent news surrounding him. However, he should serve as an example for other media members we can follow. The antics provided on his show reflect a wider problem for the partisan unrest American politics is currently subject to. In the case of Carlson's involvement in the Dominion lawsuit and allegations of 2020 election fraud, his only objective was to put down and furthermore, defraud the opposing party. This inability to provide actual news and replace it with misinformation, defrauding the opposing side not only

creates distance from parties but perpetuates such behavior. These efforts are frequently overlooked because media outlets are becoming more and more polarized. As a result, the audience of popular news networks become blind to fallacies they may be present with. Additionally the euphemism "political commentary" easily justifies and overlooks attempts to disparage the opposing side. While political commentary should be a description of current political events, baseless opinions often take the place of this.

This raises the questions of whether certain forms of media coverage have become too dramatized. Other anchors such as Anderson Cooper, George Stephanopoulos and Sean Hannity all surpass salaries of eight figures per year. They are treated more like athletes with large contracts than the informers carrying out journalistic duties who they should be. There seems to be a conflict of interest; the now glamorous and grandiose lifestyle that comes with being a news anchor seems to add an

element of entertainment in reporting that provides no extra substance for the audience.

On the other hand, other forms of news such as social media provide their own challenges. The accessibility within apps like Instagram, Twitter and Facebook make the spread of information incredibly efficient, something large cable networks, for example, cannot provide. However this works as a double-edged sword— the ease of access could potentially grant the wrong people a stage to present misinformation.

The recent news involving Tucker Carlson highlights many of the issues and controversies involved in his show. During this period it is easy to examine his wrongdoings. However, observant media consumers should use this time to examine what is wrong with mainstream media. The many issues it presents seem to have no clear-cut resolution. It is now up to consumers to interpret and curate their own information.

# Why I Am a Conservative

By COLIN JUNG '24

It is a proud and shallow man who refuses the counsel of others, thinking himself to be wiser than the world. Likewise, it is a proud and shallow age which thinks itself too good for the wisdom of every other age before it. We live in such an age. Conservatives are simply those who regret that we do.

I write this piece because I do not believe that a serious intellectual defense of robust conservatism is often given. Too often, the “conservatism” that is represented by the media, educational institutions or even politicians in high office is merely a half-measure of liberalism, defined more by the ideals it is in opposition to than ideals that it supports.

I do not pretend that this piece is a comprehensive, logical proof of the conservative worldview, nor such a proof against the liberal one. I merely wish to point to the worldview that drove the men who built our civilization and all her luxuries, which we enjoy, and encourage the reader to reflect upon it.

A few disclaimers. The “conservatism” I outline is a “Burkean” or “Classical” conservatism, and the “liberalism” describes “classical” liberalism and its progeny. This means that those who consider themselves “conservatives” or especially “libertarians” will find themselves the subject of my criticism as much as those who consider themselves “liberals.”

\*\*\*

The late Queen Elizabeth II famously gave her first Christmas address to a television audience in 1957. In it, she mentioned, “the speed at which things are changing all around us.” But she did not lament this change at all. Instead, she said simply:

“The trouble is caused by unthinking people who carelessly throw away ageless ideals as if they were old and outworn machinery, [who] would have religion thrown aside, morality in personal and public life made meaningless, honesty counted as foolishness and self-interest set up in place of self-restraint.”

Before I delve into conservatism, I must first address the dominant ideology in modern western society: liberalism. I aim to show that the principles of liberalism cause people to think in the unthinking manner that the great Queen described. I aim furthermore to show an alternative to this worldview, conservatism, and show why it is superior to liberalism.

I outline liberalism in the following manner. I will be unfazed by those critics who claim that I “misrepresent” liberalism, for the ideology I lay out governs the way many prominent individuals in the modern West think. If it soothes the reader’s sensibilities to call this ideology something other than “liberalism,” he may certainly do so.

Liberalism’s first principle is individualism, namely, the idea that the principal political unit is the individual. This is exemplified by the idea of the “social contract,” wherein “free,” “pre-

political” individuals enter into society, and cede certain “rights” to society for the mutual benefit of all involved. Therefore, liberalism abhors the idea that an individual has responsibilities which he does not enter into freely. Our modern political discussion’s endless focus on rights, the “live and let live” attitude that pervades the West, especially the United States, is a result of individualism.

Liberalism’s second principle flows from its first. It is rationalism — the idea that unfettered reason is the best guide for political organization and the ascertainment of truth more generally. It is easy to see how this is derived from individualism — unlike other forms of decision-making (deference to tradition, organized religion, loyalty to nation and family etc.) a disconnected individual can indeed engage in pure reason alone. From Karl Marx’s calling for the “ruthless critique of everything that exists” to the 1960s hippie calling himself a “free thinker,” rationalism, too, has firmly entrenched itself into Western society.

The next principles are usually associated with “post-liberalisms” of one sort or another. I am sympathetic on a theoretical level to the idea that these ideas are not liberal ideas simpliciter. But being a conservative, I believe that ideas, like men, are responsible for their progeny and therefore believe these principles can justly be attributed to liberalism.

These are tolerance and relativism, the former being a softer (and less consistent) version of the latter. I define tolerance here, not as epistemic tolerance (i.e. tolerance of reasonable beliefs on the basis that the truth can often be uncertain), but the tolerance that some have for clearly incorrect ideas (e.g. that Holocaust Deniers have “free speech” rights). In other words, the “tolerance” that is

*“Likewise, it is a proud and shallow age which thinks itself too good for the wisdom of every other age before it. We live in such an age. Conservatives are simply those who regret that we do.”*

unique to liberalism is the “tolerance” that says that “one has the ‘right’ to be/do wrong.”

Relativism takes tolerance to the next level. It is all too common to hear the self-contradictory phrase “your truth” or “my truth” uttered, especially by the modern cognoscenti. This is a symptom of late-stage relativism. After all, the relativist goes further than merely tolerating — he says that “one has the ‘right’ to be right,” even if one is, in fact, wrong. Of course, a relativist would never phrase it in that manner, as he believes there is no such thing as universal “right” or “wrong,” and that “right” or “wrong” depends upon the individual person.

I posit that ultimately, that these four values ultimately emerge from a view of human nature. Namely, liberalism’s anthropology is fundamentally optimistic

about human nature. The liberal follows Rousseau when he says that “man is born free, but everywhere he is in chains.” Under this view, impositions made against the individual by communities are necessarily detrimental to his personality.

On the contrary, the conservative believes that man is born fundamentally unfree. Conservatism holds, as St. Thomas famously wrote, that “[sun]t duplices, in quibus natus sum[us], ... tenebras, peccatum ... et ignorantiam” (we are born into the twofold darkness of sin and ignorance). In other words, man, left to his own devices, is misguided both in what to do and what to think, and thus becomes a slave to his own ignorance and base desires. He must therefore be “educated” (literally “led out” in the Latin (of himself)) by society in order to be truly free. Freedom under the conservative view, further, is not merely the right to follow one’s whim. Rather, it is the right to do what is good for oneself. Governor Ron DeSantis recently put this view well when he remarked that “[one] do[esn’t] have the right to do wrong.”

The liberal and conservative views on drugs and education both show the differences between the liberal and Conservative anthropologies and between the two worldviews’ ideas of freedom.

While the liberal believes that unlimited access to drugs increases the individual’s “freedom,” as he is able to do whatever he would like, the Conservative would say that the use of drugs actually diminishes man’s freedom. After all, he who indulges in drugs becomes a slave to them. After all, the formation of a habit of drug use clouds a man’s judgment by perverting his sensibilities. Specifically, pleasure, which is meant to be a sign directing man to his good, is perverted when it directs, as in the drug user, the individual to his detriment. Likewise, pain, which is meant to be a sign directing man away from his detriment, is perverted when it directs, as in the drug user, the individual away from the healthy state of not using drugs. These perversions therefore make it more difficult for him to pursue what is truly good for him, making him unfree.

On parenting and education, a similar divide can be seen. Liberals believe “all ideas” should be let into the classroom, and that books ought not to be “banned,” so that the child may “find the truth” himself. Conservatives, on the contrary, are aware that children, without the guiding hand of educators, are full of misguided ideas and would more likely be led astray by attractive but foolish ideas than be led to the truth. Indeed, all good educators know this intuitively — few would say that the best way for a child to learn mathematics, for instance, is to “figure it out himself,” but rather, to be guided by someone more learned in the field. Conservatives, understanding this, are rightly careful about which ideas are exposed to children’s impressionable minds so that not only their intellectual understanding of the truth, but also their sensibilities — such as of justice, disgust and beauty are not perverted (i.e.

that they are indignant at injustice, are disgusted by the disgusting and take pleasure in the beautiful.) Liberals likewise often exhort parents not to discipline their children with harshness, on the argument that it prevents him from freely developing into “himself.” On the contrary, the conservative believes that life is like swimming — the man who, by difficult discipline, is trained from an early age, can move freely about the water, while the man who swims “his own way” appears to be free, but in actuality is only free to drown.

This anthropology leads to a humble worldview, in which the individual does not presume to know all there is to know regarding truth and goodness, nor does it presumptuously declare that there is nothing to know. Rather, the conservative worldview defers to society, culture and tradition.

At the same, conservatism, unlike liberalism, is a worldview based not principally upon experience nor ideas (it is no wonder indeed, therefore, that it appeals less to those who think themselves men of ideas). Because of this, conservatism’s principal values are prudence and moderation. Conservatism holds few abstract principles deontologically inviolable, understanding that “There are more things in Heaven and Earth... than are dreamt of in [our] philosoph[ies].”

In contrast to individualism, Conservatism holds, as Aristotle did, that “man is a political animal.” It holds that “pre-political man” is a contradiction, as man is born into countless political societies, from his family to his city to

*“The conservative seeks to conform himself to the wisdom of the ages and to his community.”*

his nation. Conservatism, along with every serious anthropologist in the modern day, wholeheartedly rejects the ahistorical notion of a “social contract,” instead believing that there was never a time when human beings did not live in communities.

For the skeptical, experience, too, confirms that we are not primarily individuals, but members of communities. Simply imagine one was asked “Who are you?” Most everyone would respond by naming their relationships to other persons — “I am my parents’ son or daughter, sibling’s brother or sister, my friend’s friend” — or their membership in a community — “I’m a student at Phillips Exeter Academy, I’m from this locale, or this nation.”

Liberals often downplay this, responding that the “social contract” is not meant to represent an actual event in which actual, “pre-political” people ceded their “pre-political” “rights” to form a society. But if this event did not actually happen, then it makes no sense to think of man primarily as an individual. It makes no sense for example, as liberalism does, to presume that communities

have no right to impose standards upon individuals. On the contrary, because persons are principally members of society, and secondarily individuals, a person ought to conform his individuality around the norms of the society as opposed to demanding that societies conform themselves to his caprices. Further, the virtues of loyalty to country, family and community, far from being indefensible or arbitrary (as it is under the liberal worldview), are self-evident to the Conservative. A man who betrays his community, after all, betrays something more fundamental than himself.

But the fundamentally social nature of man only empirically confirms the conservative principle that man ought to submit himself to society. Indeed, the conservative anthropology cannot cohere with the principle of individualism. After all, if the individual is naturally misguided without education and correction by society, it would be nothing short of foolish to put society at the mercy of his whim.

The critic may respond that because society, traditions and culture too, are constructed by individuals, they ought be considered as untrustworthy as the individual himself, even under the conservative worldview. Although I would resist this characterization — societies build men more than vice versa, even under this framing, the argument is invalid. Culture and traditions are the sum of the beliefs of millions of individuals across the ages. This means that culture and tradition represent the points of overlap shared by countless disparate individuals. Two things make it less likely that tradition will aggregate virtues than vices. First, individuals tend to have a sense of shame for their vices, and therefore are unlikely to show them publicly. Second, because vices are infinitely more diverse than virtues (the honest observer will see what Tolstoy saw when he said that “happy families are alike, but every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way”), the principles which aggregate into tradition are more likely to be virtuous than vicious.

The Conservative response to rationalism is similar. Just as the shadow of sin makes the individual an unreliable judge of goodness, the shadow of ignorance makes the individual an unreliable judge of truth.

Because few liberals today (save for some naive Marxists) continue to hold to rationalism, I will not beat a dead horse. History, after all, has already beaten the dead horse of rationalism. From France to Russia, China to Cuba, bloody graves testify that in every instance in which hubristic men dared to follow liberalism’s dictate to “solve” the problem of politics by unfettered reason, society collapses and the vulnerable suffer.

Rationalism failed precisely according to the warnings of Conservatives in every age. The human intellect is flawed, far too flawed to account for everything that could go wrong. It is best, therefore, not to entrust such an important and complex thing as government or economy to that flawed intellect, but rather to follow traditions that have been tested and perfected by time.

I will address tolerance

and relativism together. In contrast to these twin principles, Conservatism asserts that “error non ius habet” (error has no right). I will first explain what this does not mean. That error has no right does not mean that no disagreement or discourse is to be tolerated. Nor does it mean that the viewpoint of whoever is in charge is imposed upon everyone. What it does mean is that those viewpoints which are clearly incorrect need not be tolerated. Nazis need not be given free speech rights. At the same time, it means that the debate over “free speech” must be substantive and not merely procedural. It is not enough to assert that one has an opinion and therefore the right to voice that opinion. Under a conservative worldview, a viewpoint must be tolerated if and only if it contributes to the common goods that come from the determination of truth.

Critics may accuse a few things to this point. First, some may say that this principle is contrary to the conservative value of epistemic humility. On the contrary, suppose there was a difficult math problem which has baffled generations of mathematicians. While the rationalist attempts to piece together a solution himself, and the relativist declares there can be no solution because he could not find it himself, the conservative understands that although the answer to the problem exists, it cannot be ascertained fully by the individual’s capacity to reason, and thus attempts to piece together a partial solution considering the input of the generations of thinkers before them. I admit the analogy is incomplete, but it shows that relativism is, contrary to appearances, far from true humility and that the conservative worldview is much closer. Secondly, critics may repeat the tired cliché that “if you restrict harmful and deleterious speech, the ‘other side’ may restrict good speech, so we ought not restrict speech at all!” This argument is as foolhardy as the anarchist who says “if you arrest criminals, then the ‘other side’ might arrest non-criminals, so we ought arrest no one at all!” In other contexts, we are perfectly able to make substantive distinctions in normative policy making. That is, the conservative’s entire argument is that reasonable people can sensibly reason about the good, and therefore, reasonable governments may sensibly refer to the good in a policymaking context. For those still unconvinced, the argument is at best obsolete. It is clear that the modern left has no principled objection to the restriction of opposing speech in the status quo, so the threat is moot.

In summation, the conservative worldview is based upon humility and deference. It understands that the individual’s conscience and reason are dulled by concupiscence and ignorance, and are therefore untrustworthy guides to the flourishing of society. On the contrary, the conservative seeks to conform himself to the wisdom of the ages and to his community, which are more likely to be true guides to flourishing. In this proud age, where it is popular to mention the present year in order to dismiss supposedly antiquated views, conservatism calls us to raise our eyes and seek the eternal truths, which do neither fade nor falter.

## Life

## » SOTW

Read about this week's Senior of the Week: Holden Quaresma, 8.

## » FOTW

Read about this week's Faculty of the Week: Sahar Ullah, 7.

## » WINGS

Read about the second ever affinity Hot Wings Challenge, 8.

# Faculty of the Week: Sahar Ullah

By TEDDY CAPOZZI, ELLEN JIN, and SOPHIE MA

Bearing a strong aptitude for theater and literature, Instructor in English Sahar Ullah graces the Academy with a wide range of teaching experiences at various places, from Columbia University to Rikers Island. Despite the brevity of her tenure at the Academy, Ullah has quickly become an integral part of the Exeter community, hosting Iftar dinner for students and faculty, leading workshops for Martin Luther King Jr. (MLK) Day, directing plays such as Open the Gate, and more.

Going into college, Ullah was uncertain yet eager to see what her future would entail. After receiving her Bachelors at the University of Miami, where she completed three majors, she returned to school, this time at the University of Chicago, where she earned her Master of Arts. Next, she received her Masters in Philosophy at Columbia University. Ullah then returned to Columbia, where she earned her Ph.D.

"As a kid, every year I wanted to be something else," Ullah said. "I wanted to be an astronaut. I wanted to be a Broadway actor. I wanted to be a lawyer. I wanted to be a doctor. I wanted to save people. I wanted to be Batman."

"When I got to college, [I had] an undecided major when I went in and then did a triple major because I couldn't decide," Ullah

continued. "Then I kept going to school, trying to figure out what I wanna be."

After her time in school, Ullah decided to stay at Columbia, where she taught a seminar-style literature class for their core curriculum. Although Ullah enjoyed her time teaching at the University, the impact of COVID-19 on New York City prompted her to leave.

Ullah had previously never heard of Exeter. After a conversation with a friend, however, Ullah quickly became intrigued. The similarities between Harkness and seminar classes made the transition to teaching here easy for her. Additionally, Exeter was appealing in that it provided a space for Ullah to intersect both her interests in English and theater. "I found in higher education and the academic spaces I occupied, I had to keep [theater-making and literary scholarship] separate," Ullah explained. "The big draw for me here was that the school said, 'We want you to bring it all.'"

Chair of the Department of English Barbara Desmond voiced her appreciation for Ullah. "My classroom is right next to Dr. Ullah's. She always brightens my day with her wonderful laugh and funny videos. She is constantly innovating — proposing new classes, suggesting new texts (especially plays) and new assignments," Desmond said. "She is so generous with her knowledge and

attention, whether she is talking to her students or her colleagues. We are so lucky to have her here!"

Fellow Instructor in English Matthew Miller echoed Desmond's sentiment. "She is a brilliant mind and generous with that brilliance. You know that thing when you talk to someone so smart that you start feeling stupid, even getting dumber, diminished? It's just the opposite when you talk to Dr. Ullah," Miller said. "When you talk with her you feel yourself getting smarter, larger, feel the universe widening in a wonderful way. I imagine that is what her students feel everyday in her class."

Many of her advisees talked about Ullah's warmth and how easy-going she is. Prep Ava Nwaochei mentioned she mistook Dr. Ullah for a therapist at first. "I thought she was a therapist or psychologist because I thought her demeanor was so kind and positive and uplifting. It's exactly what I would look for in a therapist. Her energy and her vibe are just so entrusting and calming and soothing."

Ullah's warm and hospitable nature stems from her childhood, during which she grew up in southern Florida. With her father as a professor, growing up in a dormitory study gave Ullah exposure to various cultures. "I grew up with a lot of different cultures because there were a lot of international students [in



Sahar Ullah smiles for the camera.

Hillary Yoon / *The Exonian*

our dorm building]," Ullah said. "I had my Malaysian aunts, Indonesian aunts, Nigerian, Iranian, Egyptian, Filipino, and Thai aunts."

This cultural immersion left a strong impression on Ullah. "That was a very

*"I learned through my interactions with the students that what we think of intelligence and brilliance is often [really] about people who have had access and people who haven't."*

formative experience for me because since then I cannot remember when we didn't have people from different communities in our home," she said.

Colleague Stephanie Bramlett was able to experience this hospitality firsthand during the Iftar dinner Ullah hosted at her home. "The [Iftar dinner] was such a beautiful event! I loved seeing Dr. Ullah totally in her element, buzzing around her house and making sure everyone was fed, comfortable, and happy."

Fellow advisee Claire Fu agreed, speaking from experiences of spending time with Ullah when she's on duty in Lamont. "She makes you feel very at home, almost like a family. When she's on duty, she'll bring us snacks, and then we just like to chat a little bit, check in

with everyone."

Advisee and senior Yasmin Salerno appreciated how Ullah has helped her through her time at Exeter. "She is a great person to talk to when it comes to navigating marginalized identities at Exeter," Salerno said. "She is dependable, compassionate, and friendly. Dr. Ullah is quite caring and has never turned me down when I needed her help on anything."

Talking about marginalized identities has been a focus for Ullah. During her time in New York, she was able to teach literature and creative writing at Rikers Island, New York City's largest jail. This experience showed Ullah how skewed our perception of intelligence can be.

"The United States currently has more people incarcerated than they had enslaved, and people who are incarcerated are disproportionately from poor communities [where] people who don't have the money to be represented," Ullah said. "It was a powerful teaching experience. I learned through my interactions with the students that what we think of intelligence and brilliance is often [really] about people who have had access and people who haven't."

"I had...one of the best writers I've ever had in my class [at Rikers]," Ullah continued.

Like period. I've taught at Columbia, [and] I'm teaching here. He was one of the best writers. He'd write beautiful essays and...you could tell he loved literature

by the way that he would write about any book that we read."

This student's story still lingers with Ullah to this day. "I learned later that he had been paralyzed cuz he was shot, and he was in prison indefinitely. He didn't have representation. [His tale] opens up another window into American education that we as a society really ignore. [There's] this entire group of people [whose] talents are wasting away," Ullah concluded.

Ullah's passion for teaching, her commitment to fostering inclusivity, and her genuine care for her students make her an exceptional and cherished member of the Exeter community. Her ability to seamlessly merge different disciplines, create a warm and welcoming environment, and support students' personal growth highlight the invaluable contributions she makes to the Academy. Ullah's presence will undoubtedly leave a lasting impact on the lives of those she interacts with and continue to inspire a love for learning and inclusivity for years to come.

"She is at once a consummate professional while also possessing a puckish irreverence, especially for the status quo and institutional torpor," Miller said. "She will not back down when it comes to defending what is right, especially for the students. And she carries with her such joy and laughter, such ebullience, even getting an old cynic like me to smile."

FOTW, 8

## Subscribe to The Exonian!



## 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.

EMI LEVINE  
*Editor-in-Chief*

MICHAEL YANG  
*Managing Editor*

SOPHIE MA  
*Director of Writing*

AVA ZHAO  
*Director of Design*

BUSINESS CO-CHAIRS  
Vir Shrestha  
Lianna Yang

NEWS EDITORS  
Nataly Delcid  
Ashley Jane  
Lauren Kim  
Selim Kim

LIFE EDITORS  
Anvi Bhate  
Andrea Nystedt  
Catherine Wu  
Alaysha Zhang

OPINIONS EDITORS  
Anna Kim  
Nhan Phan  
Ariana Thornton  
Chengyue Zhang

HUMOR EDITORS  
Esme Eberstadt  
Calista Lee

SPORTS EDITORS  
Kate Rose  
Chelsea Zhao

ART EDITOR  
Elaine Qiao

HEAD COPY EDITOR  
Jett Goetz

CRUCIVERBALIST  
Finn Tronnes

SENIOR PHOTO/  
SOCIAL MEDIA  
EDITORS  
Owen Dudley with  
Solei Silva-Carin  
Hillary Yoon  
Anushka Noori  
Lauren Kim

ASSOCIATE  
LAYOUT EDITORS  
Beeke Fock  
Lucy Jung  
Sarah Soufny

ASSOCIATE  
COPY EDITORS  
Ethan Ding

BUSINESS BOARD

CHIEF ACCOUNTANT  
Pippa Pflaum

ADVERTISING  
Cam Khater

OPERATIONS  
Audrey Sim

WEB BOARD

TECHNICAL  
DIRECTORS  
Byran Huang  
Eric Li

OUTREACH  
Angel Guo

MARKETING  
Raghav Sharma

SUBSCRIPTIONS  
Will Grewal

HEAD DEVELOPER  
AND DESIGNER  
Ugo Barrah

HEAD SECTION  
EDITOR  
Chengyue Zhang

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

*The Exonian* welcomes Letters to the Editor sent to the care of [ellevine@exeter.edu](mailto:ellevine@exeter.edu).

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

# Senior of the Week: Holden Quaresma



Senior Holden Quaresma against the backdrop of a window. Forrest Zeng / *The Exonian*

By HEMANI STALLARD, FORREST ZENG, and LEO ZHANG

A group of eight boisterous “Certaminators” enjoy a victory dinner at Szechuan Taste after sweeping multiple categories at the New Hampshire Junior Classical League State Forum Certamen Competition. As the students share laughs and look through pictures of the day on their phones, they draw looks from the diners around them. Senior Holden Xavier Quaresma, who sits at the head of the table, stands up and makes a finger coyote, putting it above his head. “Let’s remember our core values! Quiet coyote!” There is a wave of laughter along the table while Quaresma continues to make various animals sarcastically with his hands—the “Thankful Thrush” spreading his hands out like feathers or the

“Fairness Ferret,” pinching his fingers in to resemble the nose of the animal.

As the night goes on, through Quaresma’s snarking comments and playful interludes about his fellow Kirtland co-heads, he drops bits of golden wisdom, vulnerable moments about his experience at Exeter, and developing a personal philosophy closely influenced by the ancient philosophy of Stoicism.

A senior living in Main Street, Quaresma is a proctor in his dorm, a co-head of Smash Club, Linguistics Society, Stoic Society, Kirtland Society, History Club, and former co-head of Daniel Webster Debate Society (DWDS). This year, Quaresma will be graduating with a Classical Diploma in Latin Concentration, an award handed out to a select few students who achieved a certain level in both Latin and Greek studies. In addition

to this, he participates in Advanced Certamen and organizes Certamen training and events. A huge hockey fan, he supports the Knights of his hometown, Las Vegas, Nevada.

When describing his growth at Exeter, Quaresma spoke of his early days on campus. “I think that there’s a lot of times where people feel a need and I definitely felt the need early on to look for other people’s approval. There’s definitely a strong culture of that, whether it be academically or personally. Seeing that is pretty disappointing because it’s one of those self-fulfilling things and I think the more you worry about how other people see you, the less people will like you to sort. I’ve been able to find a very strong community, partly due to the seniors when I was an underclassmen, so I try to do the same for the young students now. And I don’t think

I do anywhere near as good as they did, but they really helped me realize it doesn’t matter and they helped me find a lot of value in myself,” Quaresma said.

“Especially in my prep fall right, I think I’ve caved a lot of the pressure of what other people wanted. And I think a lot of my time here was finding and refining my love for learning itself with philosophy, trying to have a good life and not worrying so much about traditional modes of success,” Quaresma added.

Explaining his love for philosophy, Quaresma said, “I think it’s one of those things that I’ve just grown to love. I think I read a lot more now than I did even before I came here. And a lot of people have that opposite experience. And I think the Exeter population, they’re so intelligent and they’re really able to engage with all this. I enjoy talking about existential concepts, because really they’re pretty simple ideas if you think about it. Engaging with philosophy is such a public thing to engage with, but that’s what I love about it.”

Lower Karsten Vun describes how he met

Classics Club. “I met him at Kirtland Society’s first meeting last year. He’s always been a great guy, and he took a lot of the youngsters under his wing. As a prep, I looked up to him, and I still do. He’s a very skilled classist, well-versed in philosophy and literature, and very well-read.”

The club’s dynamic heavily depends on Quaresma, said prep Olivia Pierre. “He’s a fun presence to have around. Every time we have a conversation, my day gets better.”

Gurudevan continued, “Holden brings the club to life week upon week. He was in Rome for the winter, but when he came back, you could immediately feel the difference in the club. I’d say he always brings a lot of energy and positivity to a room.”

In his classics study, Quaresma shows a high level of proficiency but also a passion to always learn something new. Senior Gianluca Audia explained, “I think what first struck me is he would always come to class with this little vocab book with all the words in Latin. He was such a presence in class that the teacher would look to him when there was a question on vocabulary. Holden has been a figurehead in the classics community for a couple of years, but I think what separates Holden is his passion and his determination to excel.”

*“Throughout the last three years, I’ve seen Holden go through so many struggles, but he’s always had a smile on his face. He has such a love for the people around him and the great communities that he’s built that nothing seems to get him down.”*

Quaresma. “He was one of the first people I met on campus. I came here a little bit earlier for the International Student Orientation. He was a Student Listener and was on campus that night. We played Ultimate Frisbee, and that’s how I got to know him at first. I take Latin, so he then introduced me to Kirtland Society.”

Lower Rishi Gurudevan detailed Quaresma’s role in Kirtland Society, Exeter’s

Instructor in Mathematics

and advisor Tim Whittemore applauded Quaresma’s involvement in his dorm and in providing support to other students. “He was a consistent member and always offered humor and support as needed. Last year, he served as a Student Listener in Main Street and his dorm room was a landing pad for any new students who needed a friendly smile or a supportive friend. In January, as the campus was reeling from the tragedy, Holden was at an off-campus program in Rome. Despite the distance, he still made himself available for any members of the dorm who needed someone to chat with as we tried to move forward from the loss we were feeling.”

Ahmed described Quaresma’s ability to spread joy to the people around him. “Throughout the last three years, I’ve seen Holden go through so many struggles, but he’s always had a smile on his face. He has such a love for the people around him and the great communities that he’s built that nothing seems to get him down. Whenever I ask how he manages to take such hard courses, lead so many clubs, spend so much time in the dorm and still spend time for himself, he just shrugs and claims to be in a state of ‘perpetual eudaimonia,’” Ahmed said.

“I have to say that by now I’ve become convinced. It’s impossible to see Holden go about his life and frown. He’s always so content and that lifts up everyone around him. As a dorm or club, the best we can do is try and fill that gap that’ll be left when he leaves campus, to try and have the same love of life that filled his every step,” Ahmed added.

Throughout his time at Exeter, Quaresma realized the importance of staying true to himself. “I felt a need early on to look for other people’s approval,” he said. “The more you worry about how other people are, the less people will like you. I’ve become more interested in learning and less worried about other people’s opinions.”

## Affinity Groups Face Off in Hot Wings Challenge



Photo courtesy of Rina Fuji

Students line up to compete in the Hot Wings Challenge.

By LUCY JUNG and ELAINE QIAO

On Friday, May 4, affinity clubs Asian Voices (AV), Black Students of Excellence (BSE), and La Alianza Latina (LAL) hosted the second-ever annual Hot Wings Challenge. The event saw exactly 60 students participating and vying to win.

The three-way competition between the clubs involves 20 representatives from each group — 15 chosen by raffle and five chosen based on nominations from other students — going through rounds eating pieces of chicken or tofu with progressively spicier sauces. One cup of milk was allowed at any point during the competition, and water was unlimited for safety. This year, there were five rounds in the challenge. Representatives who made it to the end of the challenge were survivors,

and the club with the most survivors won the challenge.

Students shared their thoughts going into the challenge. “I am most excited to see the Black, Latiné and Asian Exeter community come together in an event where all our members can have fun and destress from academic work,” senior and LAL co-head Ale Murat said. “Most of all, I look forward to LAL winning the challenge!”

“I genuinely just looked forward to spicy wings. It’s hard to find good spicy food here at Exeter,” upper Bai Xue said.

Going into the challenge, upper Catherine Zehner had one goal in mind. “I’m one of three AV co-heads for next year, and I am by far the one with the lowest spice tolerance. I did not want to be the person that dropped out immediately,” Zehner said.

Xue shared similar pre-competition goals. “I knew

I wanted to finish. I finished last year’s challenge,” Xue said. Xue also added her personal opinion regarding the spice levels, saying that they were easier this year than the last.

The common sentiment was that round four had the spiciest wings. When asked which was the toughest round, Xue said, “Probably number four. Or I just had burned my taste buds off by level five.”

Zehner agreed. “Level four? I didn’t drink any water. But level four got really tough. And then the second I finished the fifth wing, I just finished off my milk. I couldn’t do it. So I got really scared when, for a moment, they were like, ‘We’re gonna have a sixth level.’ I was like,

‘I’m out of milk and I can’t do it.’ But they didn’t end up doing that, so I’m really relieved. But the fourth level was definitely the hottest.”

Still, students found the challenge to be fun. “I really

enjoyed the event, honestly,” senior Keanen Andrews said. “I think the thing I enjoyed the most was seeing everybody pop out from all the different clubs. BSE did end up winning because we had [only] one person drop out. That was a highlight, but it was just nice event overall.”

Club coheads reflected on the planning process for the challenge. Senior and AV co-head Sage Murthy said, “[Planning] was really hard because there were so many co-heads of all the three affinity groups, so it was really difficult to get times when everybody could meet together,” Murthy said. “At the beginning, we disagreed on how it should be run, but I think it ended up going well.”

“We changed the amount of sauces used, we changed the level of spiciness within the sauces, [and] it was a little bit more organized this year,” upper and LAL co-head Sofia Contreras added. “We had people helping out on deck, serving the food, so [it] ran smoothly.”

Murthy spoke on the outcome of the event. “I think the energy was really high. People were excited, which made me happy. I was also lowkey worried people wouldn’t sign up to participate. But many people did, so I was happy about that.”

Murthy also shared her sentiments regarding the future of affinity events like the Hot Wings Challenge. “There aren’t that many affinity events that include all three groups. There are a lot of affinity

events for BSE and LAL, but this is one of the few events that include AV. I think that’s something that should come in future years. Hopefully, the co-heads in the future will try to work to make more events like this. I think it’s really fun and I think having all the affinity groups together is really a good experience.”

Contreras echoed Murthy’s sentiment. “I feel like there should be more [affinity collaboration events], because right now it’s only the Hot Wings Challenge,” she said. “There’s a lot of crossover for LAL [and] BSE, but for the next year, so like the 2023-2024 board, I would love to see more AV, LAL, and BSE crossovers.”

“I loved collaborating with the BSE, LAL, and AV co-heads, and most of all, seeing people come and support our clubs,” Murat agreed. Speaking specifically on the Hot Wings Challenge, Murat added, “I think one thing we could improve for the future is having more rounds and maybe lowering the number of competitors so we could have a more focused competition.”

“Shout out to OMA, Dean Hernandez, [and] Dean Camilus for helping us make this happen. Shout out to our club advisors for helping us organize. And shout out to the 2021-2022 board for making this in the first place and starting this really cool annual tradition that I think will be lasting,” Contreras added.

Xue wished for a bigger challenge. “The only thing to improve is to make the wings

hotter,” Xue said. “Too many people survived until the end.”

Zehner, AV cohead for the coming 2023-2024 academic year, also expressed a desire for more competitiveness between the clubs. “I just want to give the three different clubs more chance to talk with each other throughout the event. A little bit more friendly smack talk would fire people up more. I think this year’s challenge was super fun, so I’d want to amplify that next year, especially for the participants,” Zehner concluded.

Murthy agreed. “People survived [for a] long [time]. Out of 60 participants, we had maybe five people drop out, which was unexpected. We thought more people would drop out. We were kind of worried we wouldn’t have a winner.”

In the end, BSE won by a one person margin. “It was really close,” Contreras said. “LAL had two people [drop out]. AV had like two people, and then BSE had one. If one other person [from BSE] dropped, like it would’ve been a tie.”

“I’m proud of us,” Andrews said, celebrating BSE’s win. “There are a few people I definitely expected to drop one along way, but they surprised me. Especially the underclassmen.”

“I think next year is not promised for BSE and they should watch their back whenever they’re posting about it,” Contreras said jokingly. “No hate, no shade, love BSE.”



# Humor

## Morning Has Broken

By CALISTALEE '24

It was a perfect spring day. The grass was glittering from last night's dewy drizzle, sunlight gleaming off every delicate blade like streams of gold. The bushes quivered gently in the comfortable breeze. A perched sparrow sang a sweet melody in the distance, soon joined by another. There wasn't a cloud in sight.

A scream ripped from my throat. Oh my God. Oh my God. I was going to die. I was about to die. My legs propelled me forward, faster than my body could keep up with. That... *thing* trailed after me, and I could hear its feet squelching against the damp ground nearly two feet away. I panted and let out a dry sob, dashing across the field. Long grass whipped against my legs. I knew I should've worn pants when I left that godforsaken house.

I was running so fast, too fast, I was going to fall. Luckily, instead of tumbling to the ground like a newborn deer, I caught myself and stumbled instead. Still.

It laughed. I risked a glance over my shoulder.

Good Lord.

I screamed as a knife clipped my upper arm, blood

beading at the incision. No time to think about that, no time, I had to run.

An unfortunately placed branch caught around my shoe and I crashed to the ground. Jerking my leg up upwards, I tried to get loose, but that tangled me even further.

"Oh God, oh God, save me, oh my God," I prayed. "I'm sorry, I'm so sorry, I-I-I'll floss next time, ok, I'll leave cookies, please, *please*, just *let me go*." It hovered above me, oversized blue eyes staring into my soul.

"No... forgiveness..." The thing kindly informed me, reaching behind its back. It had a *gun*? Wasn't a knife enough!

Instead, it pulled out a blue-pink-yellow oversized painted egg.

What. I laughed out of shock. It raised the egg over me with massive paws before it crashed onto my head, yolk spilling all over. It hurt a little bit, but confusion outweighed any bruises I might've gotten. Um.

"Wait, really? Are you kidding me? Is this a prank? Do you actually think an *egg* is going to kill me?" I passed out.

...

...um

...

...ummmm...

Um.

Dude, that was the weirdest dream I've ever had. I'm never eating Trix cereal again, they were right, Trix are for kids.

That weirdass rabbit was even in my dream. Was this some sort of sick product advertising? I grunted and pushed myself up in the dark, bringing out an arm to steady myself.

But I didn't. Couldn't, actually. A strip of leather was wrapped around my arm, legs, and torso. Ok. Yup. Not a dream. The Trix bunny had come to life and was evil.

Wait, no, today was Easter. It was the Easter Bunny, not the Trix rabbit. Oh my God, I'm such an idiot. How could I mix the two up? The Trix rabbit was extremely underweight. The average Easter Bunny had a BMI of over double his. If I could shake my head, I would.

*Click.* A bright lamp flicked on above me, my vision solely white until it cleared. There was... a lamp on me. My eyes felt grainy and started to hurt from the sudden change in light. Multiple bodies were crowded around me. I looked around, trying to identify the figures.

Santa Claus, Cupid... my sleep paralysis demon, Sam. Wonder what he was doing here, we always get along.



We even binged *Keeping Up with the Kardashians* last week. The Easter Bunny was there, of course. The Tooth Fairy stood to the right of me, wearing a necklace with somebody's teeth on it. I recognized the Haribo bear standing next to Sam, drenched in honey.

"Where am I?" I asked, panicked. I tossed my head left to right, trying to meet eyes with the strange mammals surrounding me. They weren't looking at me, and instead were gazing lifelessly at nothing.

A grumble erupted from Cupid's throat. It sounded like... Italian?

Oh wait. No. No. That was Latin.

"Sum. Es. Est. Sumus. Estis. Sunt."

I was part of an Illuminati meeting. This was my worst nightmare. Sam had totally told them, he was always such a prankster.

The rest of the figures joined Cupid, repeating the same foreign words.

"Help me! Let me out!" I shouted, squirming in my restraints. "Help me! Fire! Fire!" My calls for help were muffled by a fluffy white paw being placed on my face. It was very soft. Like velvet.

I made the executive decision to lick it. It tasted like cotton candy. I licked it again,

feeling the rabbit shiver. It was trying to resist the urge to flinch.

I gave it a nice, long, slurp. It jerked back suddenly.

"Hey dude, can you stop? We're literally in the middle of something," it reprimanded me. He sounded like a mixture between a surfer dude and a middle aged man going through a crisis. Totally my type.

Scoffing, I rolled my eyes. I was literally the worst sacrifice ever, I had no substantial meat on my body, no connection to the gods, and, uh... Oh. It was because I wouldn't be missed, of course.

Thanks for that.

They stopped the chanting and the Easter Bunny grunted, squatting down and disappearing from my sight. It grunted again and... something thudded onto the ground. It was... um... in front of everyone?

It popped back up with some jelly beans. I then realized that the Haribo Bear was holding some gummy bears (not even going to think about the cannibalistic implications of that), the Tooth Fairy had some teeth, Cupid with some beating hearts. And Santa was holding... a Bang Energy drink?

Realization shook me like

a moderately chubby baby elephant being bodyslammed by a bodybuilder.

"No. No, no, no, no, please. Please, I'm begging you, *anything* but the Bang Energy, please, I'll do anything, oh my God." Tears started streaming down my face. They were... they were... turning me into the next biggest YouTuber! My life was over. Whatever took over my body wouldn't be the real me.

Santa pulled a long sharpened candy cane from his beard, inching it closer to my torso. Sobs racked through my body, I knew what was happening. A pain shot from my stomach to my toes and then up to my forehead, then I fell back asleep.

Worst. Day. Ever.

Um...

...

...

Ummmm...

...

Actually, this is quite nice. No complaints here.

...

...

I looked at the camera, smiling like a madman.

"MAKE SURE TO COMMENT, SUBSCRIBE, AND SMASH YOUR \*\*\*\* ONTO THAT LIKE BUTTON!"

## Clandestine Interview with Member of Secret Society Revealed

By FORRESTZENG '26

Another day, another shaky, low-quality photo of a leaked, top-secret FBI (Forrest Bring's Intelligence) document sent in a random

discord channel. This time, it's a leaked transcript of an interrogation of a defective member of a "secret society" at Phillips Exeter. The society

in question is not named.

[TOP SECRET, NOFORN, HUMINT]

PARTIES INVOLVED:  
OPERATOR 1

-NAMEWITHHELD  
OPERATOR 2 -  
NAMEWITHHELD  
JOE - DEFECTED  
"SECRET SOCIETY"  
MEMBER

*Operator 1:* What was your involvement with this group?

*Joe:* A random guy went up to me one day and was like, "Bro, do you wanna join this thing?" And I was like, "What are you saying?" And then he brings me to this random wall in the basement of Webster and literally phases through it like Harry Potter.

*Operator 1:* What did you do next?

*Joe:* Obviously I followed him, since nothing about it seemed that suspicious. I just walked into the brick wall, and it wasn't solid at all. When I got to the other side I saw a bunch of dudes chilling in this tunnel.

*Operator 2:* Where was this tunnel? Did it seem like it led anywhere?

*Joe:* It led to Dunbar. Kinda creepy honestly.

*Operator 1:* Weird.

*Operator 2:* What happened next?

*Joe:* Everyone in the tunnel was dripped out in goofy prep suits and stuff, and there were candles everywhere. It was some sick lighting, honestly. It was also pretty funny, since they were all speaking some Walmart version of Latin, mispronouncing every word and making tons of grammar mistakes.

*Operator 1:* That makes sense.

*Joe:* They were talking about who they were going to take to their dorm teas. It gave off a "closed-off-friend-group" kind of vibe. Like they were trying to be cool and secret, but it wasn't really working.

*Operator 2:* We also have evidence that you are involved with a secret cult that uses a school club as its facade.

*Operator 1:* This club has been involved in multiple incidents, such as their cult tradition of singing Holiday songs in an archaic dead language every time the third planet from the sun supposedly makes one orbit

around a large hovering mass of burning hydrogen and helium at the center of the solar system, which they worship as the Roman god "Apollo."

*Joe (hesitant):* Are you talking about Kirtland Society?

*Operator 2:* Yes. We have satellite imagery that indicates your periodic meetings with this society, and also audio evidence of cult chants through operators that infiltrated the society's ranks.

*Joe (more hesitant):* What cult chants?

*Operator 2:* After we ran the cult chants through an extremely advanced, novel audio analysis system developed by the CIA (Cilley Intelligence Agency) called "Shazam," we have discerned that the background music seemed to be to the tune of Hamilton's "Say No To This."

*Operator 1 (angrily):* This unequivocally demonstrates your involvement with this secret cult!

*Joe:* Alright, you got me. However, it really isn't all that secret—the club isn't a cover-up for a cult, the club is the cult itself.

*Operator 2:* What are you saying?

*Joe:* Just come to a meeting, you'll see.



## Who Let The Dogs Out?

By MANSAAWAH '26

That's right folks, the dogs are coming out! Their lengthy hibernation may be the one good result of winter! But it's Spring (we made it!) and so they're making their first red carpet appearances! Flashy and impossible to ignore. Wondering why you've been seeing weirdly long, gangly, hairy toes in class? Even worse, been absent-minded in math class, taken an innocent glance at the table, and seen BARE TOES rubbing the carpet? Well, I'm here to tell you why. People's feet feel cooped up in close-toed shoes; the dogs need to be let out, after all! Here are some excellent footwear choices for these exact purposes.

Shower shoes can be worn as a double agent for flip-flops

Birkenstocks

Good ol' slippers

Crocs (with the athletic heel on, of course, don't we all run around barefoot?)



Courtesy of Katelyn Cui

# The Crossword Corner

By Finn Tronnes '24



- DOWN**
- 1 Pet adoption org.
  - 2 Secular
  - 3 What was under the princess's 20 mattresses in one story
  - 4 Exeter gave us green ones as mental health awareness
  - 5 Iron deficiency
  - 6 Some TVs and speakers
  - 7 The \_\_\_\_ (area outside a city)
  - 8 Without \_\_\_\_ (broke)
  - 9 Bar at Elm with banana peppers
  - 10 Hill \_\_\_\_\_, jumping off of it was a senior tradition
  - 11 WPEA platform
  - 12 By means of
  - 13 What busy people are on?
  - 21 Sexy, beautiful, humble Exonian EIC
  - 22 D^2 order
  - 25 Parts of mins.
  - 26 Schlep
  - 27 Pretentiously showy
  - 28 Back muscles, for short
  - 29 Pokemon protagonist
  - 31 Spot between shows
  - 32 Computer reseller (abbr.)
  - 33 Dining hall closed until 2024
  - 34 Come \_\_\_\_ surprise
  - 35 "Now!"
  - 37 No-frills
  - 38 Poetic tribute
  - 39 Relatively low-temperature star
  - 43 \_\_\_\_ & World Report
  - 44 What good students do with their notes
  - 45 The girl from Ipanema?
  - 46 Decorating with toilet tissue, for short
  - 47 Came up
  - 48 Provoked
  - 49 Receives an "E"
  - 50 Words before "darned"
  - 52 Shakespeare's foot
  - 53 Tire, à Bruxelles
  - 54 Plumlike fruit
  - 55 Doesn't do sports for a term, for short
  - 56 Loch \_\_\_\_\_ monster

**ACROSS**

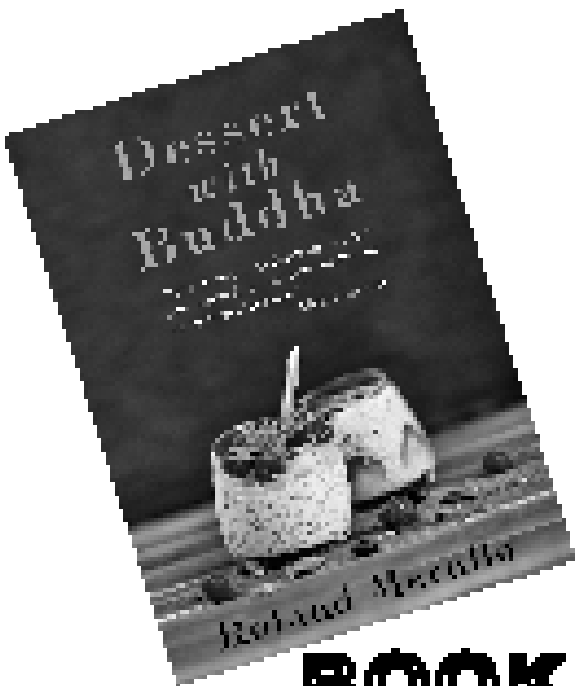
- 1 Hunk
- 5 Equally yucky
- 10 Old Spice cologne alternative
- 14 Stranger Things evil guy
- 15 "Don't even bother"
- 16 Poison ivy symptom
- 17 Diez squared
- 18 Register
- 19 "Thus with a kiss

- 20 Where to avoid when skipping assembly
- 23 A little wonky
- 24 Disco term meaning "galore"
- 25 Twain of country music
- 28 Leaving the dorm as the bell's ringing
- 30 Work hard for
- 31 Health center meal
- 33 Used to be

- 36 Better than others, with "a"
- 40 Sneaky
- 41 Second or sixth president
- 42 Sicilian volcano
- 43 Like clothes at the Exeter Exchange
- 44 Chant for Amen Hall
- 46 Ankle bones
- 49 What's across 10-Down
- 51 Top dog at Exeter

- 57 Princess loved by Heracles
- 58 Old-womanish
- 59 Mont Blanc, par exemple
- 60 Compass letters
- 61 \_\_\_\_ toast (Austrian carb)
- 62 Goes bad
- 63 What H.S. drop-outs may earn
- 64 Took a Greyhound
- 65 Come clean, with "up"

## Exeter Welcomes Back Acclaimed Author Roland Merullo



### BOOK LAUNCH

Thursday – May 18<sup>th</sup> / 7 pm – Water Street Bookstore

**Dessert with Buddha**

The highly anticipated #1 best-selling author of the national bestseller *Dessert with Buddha* returns

"In *Dessert with Buddha*, Merullo writes with grace and intelligence... It's a quiet, meditative, and ultimately joyful experience on." —*Booklist* 4/2023

"*Dessert with Buddha* is a beautifully written and compelling story about a man's search for meaning that curiously and unobtrusively tackles some well-trodden but universal questions. A quiet meditation on life, death, darkness and spirituality, sprinkled with humor, tenderness and stunning landscapes." —*Kirkus*, starred review! (level of 2023)

"Merullo masterfully depicts the struggle of practicing mindfulness moment by moment in *Dessert with Buddha*... and asks readers to be compassionate and open to a world of waiting... Full of wisdom, thoughtful prose." —*Publishers Weekly*

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

Roland Merullo is an award-winning author of 27 books including 24 works of fiction. Merullo's essays have appeared in numerous publications and his books have been translated into German, Spanish, Portuguese, Korean, Croatian, Chinese, Turkish, Slovenian, Bulgarian, Czech, and Italian.

# Google Maps Page on Dunkin' Donuts in Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport, Terminal B

By JOONYOUNG HEO '25

Dunkin'  
2.3 ★★★★★ (76) · \$  
Coffee shop  
Long-running chain serving signature breakfast items & a variety of coffee drinks.  
Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport, 1 Aviation Cir, Arlington, VA 22202

✓ Takeout · ✗ Dine-in · ✗ Delivery

**Questions and Answers**  
Others are asking

Gerry Stecca · a year ago  
Why are you not open if you are 24/7?

**Answer this question**

**Reviews**

★★★★★  
Bharathi Tallury · 4 years ago  
Very disappointed. The menu says \$1.75 for a bagel. Cashier asked what kind of cheese I want. I said garden veggie. She said she doesn't have it and asked if I want plain cream cheese and I said ok. Then she charged me \$3.36. I was really surprised. Doesn't bagel come with cheese? How many people really eat bagel with no cheese? I felt I was cheated. Why can't Dunkin Donut put the real price which includes bagel and cream cheese. And also put the price of a bagel without cheese. So people know what they are buying at what price.

★★★★★  
Wally Watkins · 5 months ago

I needed hot water to warm up a bottle for my 6 month. I was told very bluntly that would cost \$3 in addition to my purchase. Do not patronize this Dunkin.

★★★★★  
Christopher Ellis (local guide) · 3 years ago  
This store participates in false advertising and is committing a federal crime. The do not honor prices listed on their menu board. Offering 2 for \$4 specials on their menu and told me that is only outside the airport. Get your coffee and sweet fix somewhere else.

★★★★★  
Geminye DC · 2 months ago  
The service was impeccable, and the young man I believe his name was Darius was very polite as well as efficient with my order. Ive never had such a well knowledged and courteous experience in an airport, I just had to write a review but if there was someone working above him around I would've definitely commended this young man.

★★★★★  
Quality Squawk · 6 months ago  
How could you mess up Dunkin' Donuts? By serving stale days old donuts + for an added bonus poor customer service. Please do better.

guatemalteco en usa · 2 months ago  
Customer service is not really good...I dont if they ignored me or racist.

★★★★★  
588 x 1Peace · 2 months ago  
I came here for something small but after the welcoming service by Darius I felt welcomed and ordered a bit more. I couldn't have asked for better customer service he had a great attitude and made sure my order was followed thoroughly.

★★★★★  
Marta Epstein · 2 years ago  
To the girl working the Dunkin Donuts this morning 4/26 and told me "We open at 5:10" and then proceeded to just walk off at that time without saying anything a GIANT F U!!!!!! I was waiting since 4:30 to grab a coffee and bagel before my flight. Just because you have no work ethic, doesn't mean you have to screw people over, who are just trying to grab a coffee.

★★★★★  
Tynasha Jackson · 2 months ago  
I was really in a hurry and Darrius was very nice and got me in and out quickly. Thank you so much ! I was running late, thanks to him I was able to catch my flight and was able to get my coffee and donuts as well

Jazzy C · 5 years ago  
I informed the cashier that I had the precise change as she entered the amount into the register, she ignored what I told her, closed the register and told me that she couldn't help me. So, I was stuck with a ton of change. Dunkin Donuts needs to hire staff to do basic arithmetic. There will be times when the calculator in the register will not be available, that's all I'm saying

★★★★★  
Jennifer McKeithan · 3 years ago  
It's 4:07am on 7/22 outside gate 32. I see 2 ladies setting up and the airport is empty. I say "hi what time do you open?" The lady rudely says "soon" and walks away. I say "excuse me, is there a time?" The lady ignores me. The younger lady says" we can open as soon as we get ready, we will open". At least she looked at me, her mannerism wasn't rude, she was just making a statement. The actions like that of the older lady is the reason this location had such low ratings. I will now sit here and wait for another location regardless if I have to wait longer.

★★★★★  
Kenny Robertson · 2 months ago  
I had a wonderful experience the cashier Darius was nice and he was very fast with my coffee and donuts and was very funny the best customer service I've had from Dunkin yet

★★★★★  
Maurice Gambie · 4 years ago  
I work at the airport and every time I've ordered food or a beverage from DD inside the airport it tasted nothing like DD outside of the airport. The last straw was last week when I ordered a Big & Toasty breakfast sandwich, to my surprise there was only 1 strip of bacon on the sandwich. After eating only half of the sandwich I vowed never again to visit DD at Washington National Airport.

★★★★★  
S Stroud · 6 years ago  
Cashier was eating behind the counter Then she gave me cold coffee  
3 airport workers were eating and drinking off the clock -who refused the give me the manager's name  
When I requested a receipt the cashier pretended not to know how to run the register

★★★★★  
Luis Ortiz · 2 years ago  
A bad experience, I was at gate 40 with my little babies and I went to buy a coffee, when I tried to pay with a 100 bill the cashier and manager told me no, so I told him that it's okay, don't bother, I'll pay with card and he yells at me, I tell him to calm down and he keeps yelling at me, he didn't want to attend me and he wanted to call the police !!! He had a fit of anger and did not want

to attend to me ... until now I do not know what happened to him but I have not forgotten the bad time.

★★★★★  
Kitty Kat · 2 months ago  
When I decided to go to Dunkin Donuts it was my first time and I thought it was going to be an unforgettable experience being as though it's in an airport. That wasn't the case I don't know if this young man was the manager or not but his knowledge and professionalism was outstanding. There wasn't one question he couldn't answer I am so glad he was there I believe he name was Darius. Thank you Young man for helping me navigate through the menu I say he deserves a raise or bonus.

★★★★★  
S Y · 3 years ago  
I asked if I could get my croissant warmed up and the cashier deadass said no

★★★★★  
Grant Wernick · 4 years ago  
Go here if you want to miss your flight. The service was lethargic, and they also messed up my order. It gets 2 stars (instead of 1) because the service wasn't rude.

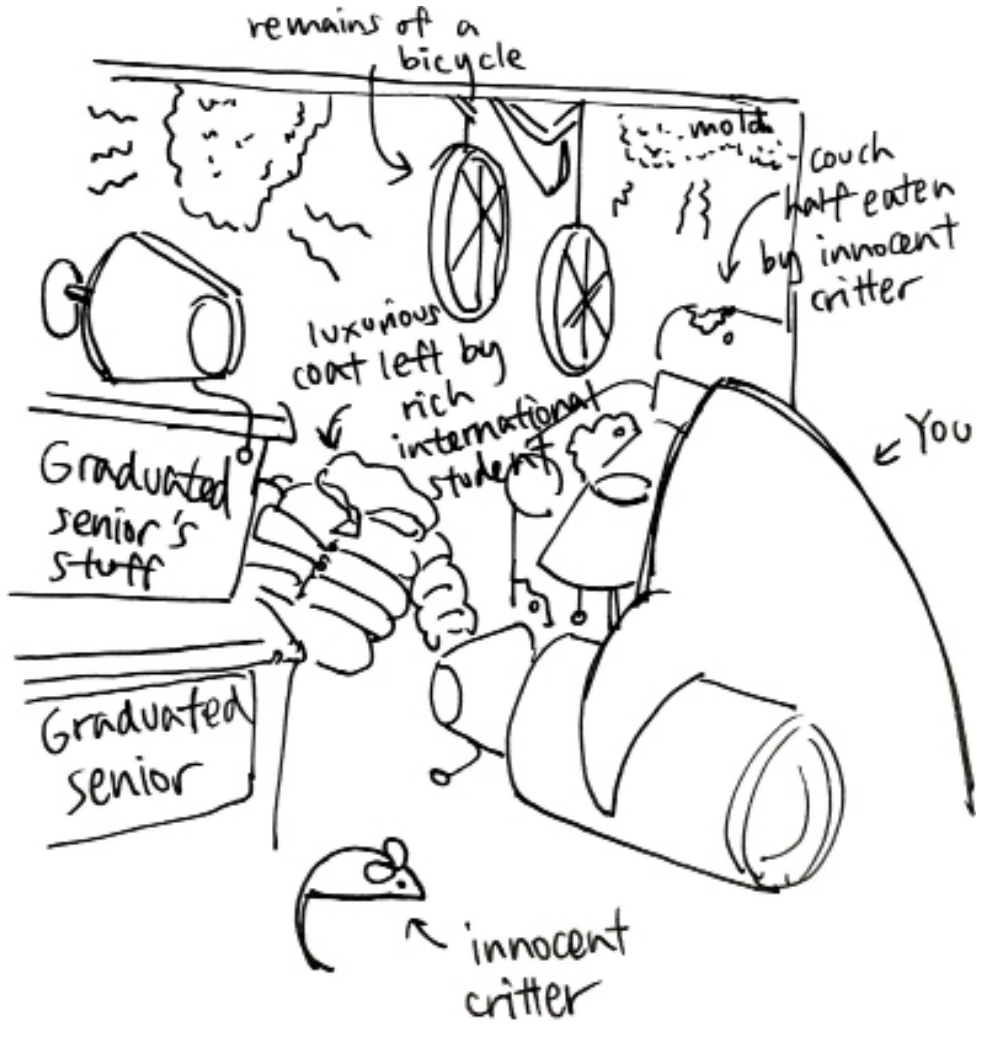
Reply · Tank Barnett (local guide) · 2 months ago  
That was probably Darius

# AVA's Cartoon Corner

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

## When You Try to Put Your Stuff in the Dorm Storage at the End of the Term

By AVA ZHAO '24



# Sports

» **WATER**

Read about the girls water polo team captains, 12.

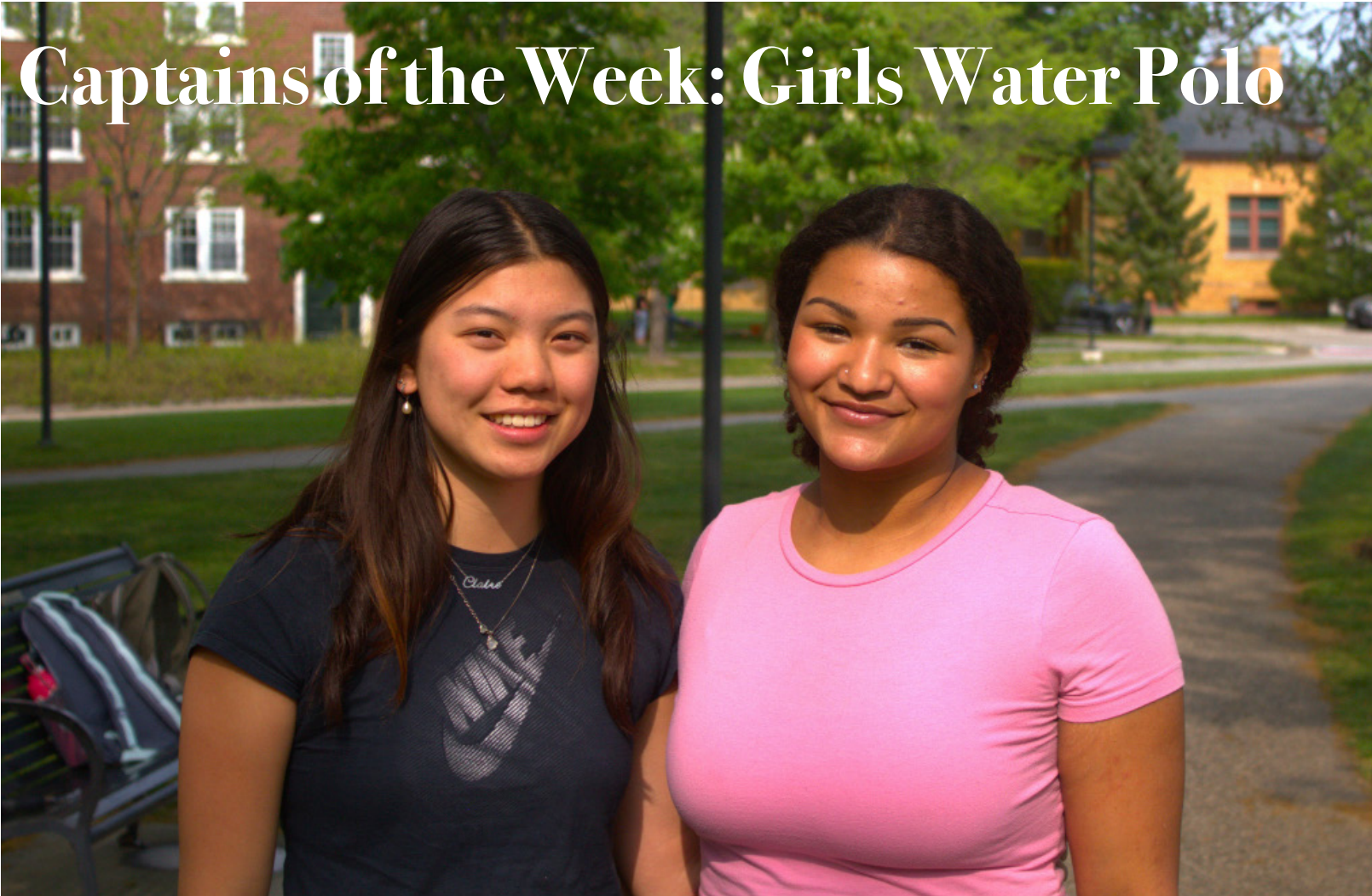
» **GOLF**

Read about the cycling teams circuit race, 12.

» **LACROSSE**

Read about the girls lacrosse tournament against Holderness School, 12.

## Captains of the Week: Girls Water Polo



Girls water polo captains smile outside of the Academy Building.

Owen Dudley / *The Exonian*

By **JACK CASSIDY** and **LANG GOU**

With the weather getting increasingly warmer, most Exonians want to jump in the pool to cool down. However, the pool is the place where the girls varsity water polo team gets heated. At the core of this team are senior captains Jade Pierce and Claire Fu.

Coming to Exeter, both Pierce and Fu were new to the

sport. Pierce, who came from a competitive swimming background, discussed her journey joining the water polo team. “I’ve swum my whole life and didn’t even know water polo existed. My prep year I met fellow prep, Matt Dame, who was on the boys water polo team.” Pierce continued, “When he found out I swam he convinced me to try out for the team. At first, I didn’t want to, but spring rolled around, and I found

myself trying out anyway.” Since then, Pierce said she has experienced extraordinary growth as an athlete. Coach Blitzshaw commented on her improvement. “Jade elected to try playing goalie this season and has dramatically improved in a position that was new to her in the last several games.” Blitzshaw said Fu has also shown significant growth as a player, becoming a team player and a flexible

player able to fit in any role. “Claire has moved into more of a utility role this season and we’ve appreciated her calm demeanor particularly in the offensive set while maintaining a strong perimeter shot and key to our 6-on-5 where she is our primary I position player.” Blitzshaw also commented on the overall growth of the team. “It has been a season of

tremendous growth. We are a young and novice team with heaps of potential and it is exciting to see the vast improvement every single player is making.” She continued, “Even with our inexperience, we’ve dominated the sprints winning over 90% of them over the course of the season so far and we’ve capitalized on many of our 6-on-5 opportunities.” The impact by the

captains has been tremendous — alongside coach Blitzshaw, they’ve managed to forge a team of solid polo players from a fairly new group. We can expect girls polo to thrive moving forward in the season, and in coming years.

These captains aren’t only great athletes, but also strong leaders. Blitzshaw commented on the leadership of these two captains. “Claire and Jade have been excellent leaders for girls polo.” She continued, “They not only lead by example with their strong work ethic in the pool but also by spearheading team bonding activities, like our weekly Secret Psychs.”

The captains support their teammates in and out of the pool and are loved by the team. Prep Shawna Jiang said that her captains are “always there for me on and off deck.” She continued, “Everyone is really supportive and will cheer for you whenever you’re in the water no matter if you score or not.”

With Pierce and Fu as captains, the outlook for the remainder of the season is positive. Blitzshaw said the quality they best exhibit is “leading by example to put in their best efforts at practices and games.”

The team is preparing for their final game against Andover. Prep Mena Boardman summarized the team’s attitude. “Andover’s gonna be really good. It’s our last game, so we have to win.”

## Girls Lacrosse Crushes Holderness School



Girls varsity lacrosse players in action.

Courtesy of @exeterathletics

By **ERIN HAN** and **JOONYOUNG HEO**

The girls lacrosse team secured a crushing 14-3 victory over the Holderness School on April 29, both a crowning achievement of hard work and team spirit and one more bright spot in an exceptional record this season.

The game was a great experience for the lacrosse team all around. “It was awesome,” upper Willa Bazos said. “Exeter came out ready to play. Our attack shared the ball between a lot of us, which allowed us to go into running time because we were over 10 goals ahead of Holderness. Our goalie, Allie Bell, kept them from scoring hardly any goals.”

Once Exeter put enough distance from the other team on the scoreboard, the team had breathing room to include as many of their players as

possible. “It was an especially fun game,” senior and team captain Nina Kellogg said. “Holderness wasn’t a very strong opponent and we got to put more of our players on the field. I think we had goals from at least 10 different people.”

“We were able to get an early lead,” lower Grace Benson said. “That let us rotate a lot of our players in different positions on the field, so it was a good experiment for the team. The whole game was really fun as well.”

The team’s success against Holderness was reflective of their entire season, boasting an undefeated streak thus far. Effective teamwork, as showcased on April 29, was a key factor. “Our team has exceptionally strong individual players, so our biggest hurdle in the beginning was working together as a team,” Kellogg said. “But

we’ve grown tremendously since the start of the season. When we have each other’s backs and work to create opportunities for each other, we’re unstoppable. And we’ve absolutely seen that in the latter half of this season.”

“This year, we started a new initiative to call ourselves bees,” upper Gigi Lannon said. “It was created by the captains to promote the idea of working and playing together more effectively, like in a beehive. It’s helped us play as a team and flow on the field. Because we have so many strong players, cooperation has made for great offense and defense. That was apparent in the Holderness game, where we won by more than 10 points.”

“We’ve definitely improved a lot over the past few months,” Benson said. “We have a lot of players with

different responsibilities, and I think we’ve grown to really acknowledge each other’s strengths in the best way possible.”

The team looks to finish the rest of the season with the same consistency. “We had a pretty packed schedule with many away games and three-game weeks, which was especially challenging during midterms,” lower Sophie Rose Riopel said. “But the team did a really good job of staying focused on one game at a time. I’m looking forward to finishing strong. There’s a game this Wednesday, the SEAL Cup this weekend, and E/a.”

“I’m excited for the rest of the season as a whole,” Benson said. “Our record and poise as a team through a lot of difficult games gave our team a lot of internal support for each other. I think it’ll

## Varsity Cycling Competes in Circuit Race

By **LILY RAMPE** and **PHIN GIBBS**

Big Red Cycling has a history of winning New England Road Cycle titles. This season, they are just as distinguished. On May 3, the cycling team competed in the Circuit Race. The boys team came in fourth overall and the girls came in first, continuing their great seasons.

Upper William Lu came in fourth in Boys A with a time of 44:58.8. Senior Duke Garschina and Upper Avery Baker followed with times of 48:11.4 and 44:27.3 respectively. In Girls A, Big Red took home second, fourth, and fifth place. Upper Nat Welling came in second with a time of 50:09.5. Senior Ale Murat raced a 50:13.3, and lower Leta Griffith with 50:31.0.

These races came after Big Red’s spectacular races previously in this season. On April 19, Big Red cycling earned first place in both the Boys A and Girls A races in their season-opening race at the New Hampshire Motor Speedway. On April 26, Lu placed second overall to help lead Big Red to a team victory at today’s Circuit Race at the

New Hampshire Motor Speedway. Griffith placed second overall in the Girls A race.

In other divisions, our Exeter teams did fantastic as well. Prep Jesse Ball praised the team. “The Cycling Circuit Race went well. Exeter dominated! In my division (Boys C), Charlie Gao finished first, I finished second (milliseconds behind), and Jack Cassidy finished fourth. Will Lu and Leta Griffith finished second in their respective divisions. Not a bad race all around!”

Ball talked about the training and practices. “I am absolutely enjoying it so far. Our practices are great. For the most part, I’m really building up stamina and strength, I think. I’ve gotten way faster than I ever have.”

When asked about the team environment and members, Ball said, “The team is kind and helpful and are very encouraging and enthusiastic about cycling.”

Coming up are the NERC championships that Exeter previously won three titles in. Ball said, “I am always nervous about the races that we have coming up, but I think we can handle them well.”

propel us through to the end of spring.”

“We only have a few big games left in the season,” Kellogg said. “There’s the Prep Invitational tournament hosted at Dexter School, where we’ll play the number-

one team, Sacred Heart. And, of course, we play Andover at home on Friday, May 26. But either way, we really have the best time together. I’m just excited to keep playing with this group of girls that I love so much.”