



The Exonian

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Permit Number 78

"The Oldest Continuously Running Preparatory School Newspaper in America"

Vol. CXLI, Number 28

Thursday, November 7, 2019

Phillips Exeter Academy, Exeter, New Hampshire

Exeter's Video Game Culture Examined

By ANNE BRANDES, DANIEL CHEN and TUCKER GIBBS
Staff and Contributing Writers

Whether it's the end of lunch block or an evening break after study hours, students in Ewald are often found flocking to the common room during their spare time, where they commence tournament-style rounds of Super Smash Bros in groups of five or six. Like many other dormitories on campus, Ewald has a social culture that revolves around video gaming.

In the past few months, health professionals across the country have expressed increasing concern about the addictive nature of video games.

According to a *New York Times* article, the World Health Organization (WHO) officially added "gaming disorder" to their list of substance use and addictive behaviors in May in the International Classification of Diseases, describing this disorder as "excessive and irrepensible pre-occupation with video games, resulting in significant personal, social, academic or occupational impairment for at least 12 months."

However, some, including CEO of the Entertainment Software Association (ESA) Stan Pierre-Louis, contested this classification. "Mental health experts ... warn, over and over, that creating some kind of 'video gaming addiction' classification isn't supported by the evidence and that it puts patients at risk," he wrote in an editorial featured on ESA's website. "In fact, the American Medical Association, American Psychiatric Association and the American Psychological Association have each reviewed the evidence and declined to describe any level of video game use as an 'addiction' or as a 'disorder.'"

Meanwhile, video games have garnered significant popularity at the Academy, according to Associate Director of Counseling and Psychology Chris Thurber. "Video games hold a prominent place on the menu of distraction or distractions from which a person can choose if they are wanting to just not think about academics for a little while," Thurber said. "We have many more ways to procrastinate and distract ourselves now, **GAMING, 2**



On Friday Nov. 1, students protested by forming a wall and blocking Grill.

JaQ Lai/The Exonian

Students Protest Latinx Alienation at PEA

By ANNE BRANDES, ERIN CHOI and TUCKER GIBBS
Staff and Contributing Writers

Upon entering the Academy Center to purchase their morning coffee on Friday, Nov. 1, students and faculty were met by a line of student protesters linking arms in front of Grill, calling attention to "the lack of concern for the Latinx community on the Academy's campus," according to a distributed statement. Passersby decided whether to leave the vicinity, engage with protesters, watch from afar, enter Grill through the back entrance or, in some cases, break through the line of protest.

The protest was organized in the aftermath of the annual Halloween costume contest in Grainger Auditorium, hosted by the Student Council (StuCo) Recreation (Rec) Committee during Department Meeting on the previous day. At the end of the contest, three Grill staff members walked on stage, wearing a costume

of a wall with the slogan "Make America Great Again" written across the brick pattern.

Several students in the hall shared pictures or videos of the wall costume on social media accounts.

Later on Thursday, a cardboard poster was posted outside Grill with an apology acknowledging hurt caused by the costume.

In a joint statement to *The Exonian*, La Alianza Latina (LAL)—Exeter's Latinx affinity group—and the Afro-Latinx Exonian Society (ALES) explained the impact of the costume on their community. "On Thursday, an anti-immigrant, anti-Mexican, and anti-Latinx symbol was placed on a public platform. The clear oversight on the day of the costume contest hurt many students and reinforced the alienation Latinx and other students of color feel on campus."

On Thursday evening, members of LAL and ALES met to process the implications of the wall costume. LAL, framing the costume not as a standalone incident, but one conspicu-

ous example of the pervasive marginalization of the Latinx community on campus, decided to organize a protest. That night, members disseminated slogans including "Build movements, not walls" and other calls for collective action on various social media platforms.

Organizers of the protest clarified that the aim of their response was not to condemn individual Grill workers. "This protest was ignited by the costume but is not directed at Grill employees. This protest is about the lack of concern for the Latinx community on campus," read the statement distributed during the protest.

The statement specified four demands: "Transparent, thorough and frequent cultural competency training for all adults on campus; a response from the Academy reinforcing our school values and principles; an explicit policy clarifying the boundaries of political speech by faculty and staff; continued, impactful conversations on our community values and how we can

PROTEST, 2

Faculty Discuss Grade Inequities

By BONA HONG, NEHA NEDUMARAN, CLARK WU and FELIX YEUNG
Staff and Contributing Writers

While Exeter has long been known for its high academic standards, students often raise questions about the consistency and equity of departmental grading practices. To better understand how students are assessed at Exeter, *The Exonian* examined grading practices across departments and trends in grading over time.

The Academy does not have a written philosophy on grading. "I believe this is a worthwhile task and goal. Part of that philosophy should be about equity and communication," Director of Studies Scott Saltman said. "We should also be digging into what we believe to be appropriate and equitable assessment of Harkness—I know that is an area of student concern."

Data on grading is collected for internal use by the Director of Studies Office. "The Academy collects data on grades simply because that is a good record-keeping practice," Saltman said. "We need to anticipate how someone in the future might want to sort and examine that data." Saltman declined to share school-wide grading data with *The Exonian* but noted that a faculty-wide discussion about grade disparity occurred in August.

"This fall, the faculty began a discussion of assessment practices, focusing on how assessments should be used to improve student learning and the benefits of giving feedback to students



Senior Helena Chen plays PUBG, a mobile battle royale shooter game.

JaQ Lai/The Exonian

that is both evaluative and instructive," Saltman said. "We also discussed the importance of maintaining clear expectations for student work, particularly as students move from one teacher to another in sequential courses."

However, standardizing grade distributions across the board is not a goal in this process. "Such a practice can be constraining and can lead to inequity—imagine a teacher being told to give a certain number of [lower grades], even if the students are particularly strong and deserving of [higher grades]," Saltman said.

Though there are collective efforts to improve grading, each department and faculty member has great latitude in grading practices. "There are inherent differences in the types of work that different departments assess," Saltman added. "As a result of this, I don't believe a standard school-wide grading scale

would result in either a more equitable experience for students or more consistency between departments' grade distributions."

While the Science Department has a standardized grading scale, teachers still have a high degree of freedom. "We allow our teachers to determine how they will assess their students: both the quantity and types of assessments," Science Department Chair Alison Hobbie said. "Faculty who teach in the same discipline often have conversations about how they assess student work, to promote conversations about what is important in an assessment and, to some degree, to provide some commonality in grading philosophy."

By contrast, quantitative grading is difficult in humanities disciplines. "The kind of work we do is wonderfully, inherently subjective. I don't know how you measure it—it would be suspicious

GPA, 3

Input Sought for Renovations on Campus

By GIANLUCA AUDIA, DANIEL CHEN, KAYLEE CHEN and JEANNIE EOM
Staff Writers

In Agora, students tack stickers onto poster boards to indicate the changes they desire to see on Exeter's campus. As part of a larger initiative to design a new masterplan—a long-term plan to renovate campus spaces—the administration asked students for feedback on what roles various spaces on Exeter's campus fulfilled, and which spaces were most in need of change.

On Sept. 20, the master plan proposal was initially presented to Dean's Council. After a discussion where student housing and renovation of the Academy Building came at the forefront, members of Dean's Council suggested to open the conversation up to the rest of the student body. Last week, consultants from Beyer Blinder Belle, a well-known architecture firm based in New York City, set up large poster boards in the campus's common spaces for student feedback.

Agora was divided into seven stations: Introduction to the Campus Master Plan, Campus Life (Common Spaces, Day Student Integration and Housing), Dining, Landscape/Sustainability, a Mapping Exercise (for boarding students, day students, faculty and staff), a Polling Station and Adaptive Reuse Spaces.

Beyer Blinder Belle consultants explained that they hoped to ensure that

MASTERPLAN, 3

INSIDE

LIFE

Exeter Association of Rock hosted a concert on Friday, Nov. 1. B1.

Read about Senior of the Week David Kim. B2.

OPINIONS

Upper Stephen McNulty emphasizes the difference between politically- and racially-charged speech. A4.

Upper Emmanuel Tran comments on the nuances of woke culture. A5

SPORTS

Varsity Field Hockey dominates Dexter. B7.

Cross Country sweeps Andover. B8.

WEB



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Staff Halloween Costume Sparks Student Protest at Grill

Continued from PROTEST, 1

maintain them.”

As Grill filled within a few minutes of Assembly Break, chaos and confusion ensued as the line of protesters blurred with others traveling inside and outside of the store. Some, including students and adults, joined the line, or openly voiced opposition to the protest, or attempted to break through the line, or used the back door into Grill to purchase their breakfast items.

At the time of the protest, the administration had not yet issued a statement or clarification on recent events, and many had not read the protesters’ written statement. Hence, some community members still appeared to be confused about the cause of the commotion.

LAL extended an offer to Asian Voices (AV), an affinity group for Asian students, to join the organization effort for the protest. However, AV co-heads and seniors Isabella Ahmad, David Kim and Mia Kuromaru decided at the time not to endorse the protest due to a lack of clarity on the specifics of the protest. “Mia, David and I agreed with the agenda the LAL co-heads put together, but I didn’t know at the time that the four-point call for action they outlined was in response to pervasive xenophobic sentiments on campus, not solely the depiction of Trump’s wall on Halloween. I didn’t know until I went to the ALES discussion the next day,” Ahmad said.

Bystander Perspectives

Some, including senior Noel Gomez, felt that a silent protest was not an effective course of action. “I don’t think the protest did very much about the situation,” he said. “I feel like it would have been way more effective to start a discussion.”

Ahmad shared her first impression of the protest. “My initial reaction to hearing about the costume on Thursday night was wondering what its intent was rather than its impact, but I think that was a product of my privilege as a first generation American—I’m a person of color, but not an immigrant or Latina, so I probably don’t see myself in the victims of the atrocities America commits at the border,” she said. “On the other hand, when anti-immigrant sentiments rise, all people of color are affected. There are undocumented Asians in America, and ICE raids and immigration policy affect Asians, too. While I personally thought the costume was in poor taste but not condemning, I can’t speak for the entire Asian community because there are Asian Exonians harmed by the image of the wall.”

Others described the protest as a disproportionate response to the costume incident, citing the perception that the Grill employees’ intentions did not seem malicious.

“I feel like the staff should have been aware that the costume wasn’t a good idea, but backlashing against the staff, even though they say ‘Have a nice day’ every time you buy something and clearly want the best for you, seems a bit over the top,” upper Adam Tuchler said. “But I also understand that it is important to inform staff of what is appropriate and what isn’t appropriate.”

In an email to *The Exonian*, Principal William Rawson elaborated on the nuance of the situation. “Though apparently not intended in this case, the costume could be predicted, based on other popular usage of wall imagery, to be experienced and understood by many in our community as conveying an exclusionary message and an attack on personhood—contrary to our commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion,” he said.

Faculty Perspectives

Religion Instructor Jennifer Marx Asch expressed disappointment at the apparent lack of compassion among many Exonians in the face of the protest. “I was struck that the overriding

concern was people getting their coffee or hobs and not taking a moment to see and hear what the protesters were upset about,” she said.

Religion Instructor Hannah Hofheinz acknowledged the interference of some students and faculty who made deliberate attempts to break through the protest line. “I was really dismayed and saddened to hear this. I think that physicality speaks a lot... We should pause and think about when it’s okay to bodily interject through other people,” Hofheinz said. “On the other hand, it also matters that some adults,



Student protesters link arms and block entrance to Grill.

Eva Carchidi/*The Exonian*

perhaps by virtue of their authority as adults on campus, made their way past a group of protesting students or said things to protesters—or other students—that felt aggressive.”

Marx Asch noted that empathizing with others’ experiences, especially in moments of hurt and vulnerability, is first and foremost. “As a community, if we don’t pick up on those signals of our peers being in distress or trying to say something, even in a silent or non-verbal way, we’re not seeing and hearing each other,” she said. “And that makes me really concerned.”

On Friday evening, six hours after the protest, Principal William Rawson sent out an email to all Academy employees and students—the first school-wide communication since the Halloween contest. Describing the wall costume as “inappropriate,” “offensive,” and “contrary to our values as a community,” Rawson acknowledged that it left many Exonians “feeling unsafe and unwelcome at a school that professes a commitment to inclusivity.”

In the email, he apologized for the incident, reaffirmed Exeter’s values of inclusion and restated LAL’s four demands articulated at the protest.

Some, like upper Sarah Kennedy, expressed concern for Principal Rawson’s statement, interpreting backlash against the costume as a condemnation of conservative political views. “I was really disturbed by Principal Rawson’s response because the way that email was phrased suggests that supporting Donald Trump was against our community values, which is not something that an administration should be saying because I know there are Trump supporters on campus,” she said.

However, for Physical Education Instructor and Exonian Encounter advisor Toyin Augustus, the wall imagery represents more than a purely political stance. “The wall also symbolizes this level of us-versus-them exclusionary politics that translates into the rhetoric about ‘sh’t’h’le’ countries,” she said. “The suggestion is that it’s only certain kinds of people who are welcome here.”

Augustus continued, “If you support Trump

because you support the exclusion of other countries’ citizens into the U.S., then I think that exclusionary policy is what the school doesn’t condone. Your politics could be in direct conflict with the school’s values. The school doesn’t have to take a political stance to take a value stance.”

Rawson explained to *The Exonian* that the costume was problematic not because of its political affiliation, but because of the targeting of specific demographics associated with its imagery and slogan. “Though apparently not intended in this case, the costume could be predicted,

account and apologized for the pain the costume had caused. “We were very uncomfortable when we saw the costume. For a variety of reasons, we thought that the costume was not a part of the contest and so, though uncomfortable, we refocused on the tasks required to run the event,” Rankin shared at the meeting. “In retrospect, we wish that we had reacted to our discomfort by engaging the people in the costume in a conversation to ask our questions and share our concerns.”

Grill Manager Scott Jeffco similarly expressed regret in a statement to *The Exonian*. “We are deeply sorry for the pain we have caused the students and community. We posted the apology signs after learning about the pain we had caused,” he said. “We believe these events are reflective of the need for further education for our team and our community.”

Going forward, StuCo’s Committee on Community, Equity and Inclusion (CCED) will work with the Rec Committee to monitor standards at future StuCo events, starting with this Friday’s E/a Pep Rally.

Moving Forward—Future Programming

On Wednesday, Nov. 6, Rawson sent a second all-school email divulging steps the administration plans to take. Next week, all community adults will begin discussions clarifying boundaries for political expression among faculty and staff, in addition to reexamining Exeter’s cultural competency training.

Students will also participate in mandatory programming on empathy and listening, starting on Dec. 9. The Office of Multicultural Affairs (OMA) will also offer optional programming centered around diversity, identity, and inclusion.

The last initiative specified in Rawson’s email is a mandatory professional development opportunity on Jan. 6 for all employees. The PEA adult community will gather for several DEI-oriented discussions before that date.

Rawson called for compassion in a statement to *The Exonian*. “Because we come to Exeter with unique backgrounds, identities, and experiences, we do not all experience speech the same way,” he said. “This is where the skills described in our DEI vision statement, of engaging across differences with empathy and respect, become so important.”

Some members of the faculty believe that events such as the protest demonstrate the way the Academy community processes controversial issues. “This incident follows a pattern on campus,” Hofheinz said. “It reveals exactly where we are. We have difficulty talking to one another about politics. We struggle to talk to one another about race. We labor to talk to one another about the depth of our own experiences. Yet we desperately need to do so, and a good number of students are pushing for this hard and important work.”

Republican Club co-head and senior Pepper Pieroni noted the challenge of objective, balanced political discussion in the context of personal experiences and heated emotions. “While there is a connection between person and policy, the conversations are much more difficult to have when there is emotion loaded on both sides,” he said. “The conversation is suddenly tilted—once someone announces they are hurt, it limits the amount of empathetic and constructive conversations that can occur.”

StuCo President and senior Ayush Noori noted that the events of the past week are symptomatic of the broader political divide afoot in the United States and beyond.

“This series of events is a function of the world we live in, which is a world that is contentious, challenging, hurtful, and often lacks respect,” Noori said. “But I would hope that it is not representative of Phillips Exeter and it is certainly not a reflection of the Exeter we strive to be.”

Faculty, Students Discuss Drawbacks of Gaming Culture

Continued from GAMING, 1

especially online.”

Many students believe the stigmas attached to frequent video gaming habits are disproportionate. “If... you say I read for 12 hours this week or sewed for 12 hours this week, then suddenly it’s no longer a big deal, because it’s not video games,” upper Nick Pham said.

Additionally, video games foster lively social activity, upper Charlie Preston noted. “Gaming is not someone sitting in a room alone playing a video game with strangers or just with AI,” Preston said. “It’s a group of people who gather in person and say, ‘let’s get on the same server, let’s get our accounts together and do some sort of virtual activity together.’ It’s very communal—people are talking to each other and celebrating each other.”

Upper Alana Yang agreed, recalling how she bonded with her peers in her lower year math class over Minecraft. “We had one test left and we were joking about making a server. When we finally did, it ended up making math class more fun,” she said.

Others disagree. Mathematics Instructor David Huoppi said, “In one sense, it could be considered a group activity since [students] are in the same room as their friends who are also playing the same game, but there may not be much meaningful conversation going on.”

Upper and Virtual Reality Club co-head Andrew Woo, who is a frequent Minecraft and Super Smash Bros player and has attempted to create his own video games, shared that the

activity can be a venue for extracurricular exploration. “I began playing video games and I thought they were really interesting. I wanted to know how they worked, so I began programming,” Woo said.

Ewald proctor and senior David Gonzalez noted that video games only become a problem when they prevent students from meeting academic expectations or interacting with peers. “I think the concern only comes if there’s prioritization of video games over homework to a large extent, where people are playing video games during lunch and during their free and during study hour breaks and then staying up all night working; that can be a problem,” he said.

Webster proctor and senior Daniel Colón acknowledged that this is the case for certain students. “I’ll use Rocket League, for example. If you lose a game, and you don’t think you should have, you think perhaps you are better than the person you were playing against... the addictive nature of video games will make you say, all right, another game. That cycle continues over and over again,” Colón said.

However, video gaming is not the only mode of distraction for students—other popular platforms include Netflix and Youtube, Religion Instructor and Ewald affiliate Thomas Simpson said. “Video games, YouTube, and Netflix are all designed to be immersive and absorbing. In moderation, they can be wonderful,” Simpson said. “During a given week, I myself use all three as a way to soothe stress and connect with my kids. The potential danger is

that we’ll go down one of these rabbit holes, to the exclusion of other more important commitments and priorities. So in the dorm, we try to foster healthy conversations and practices aimed at moderation and social connection.”

On the other hand, Huoppi suggested that video games are more addictive than alternative distractions. “Generally speaking, I would not say that most TV programs are designed to be addictive—rather they hope to capture an audience that wants to come back for the next episode,” Huoppi said. “The video game designers want the user to not be able to put the game down. That seems like a big distinction to me.”

Several noted a gender imbalance in the gaming community. “I have not encountered any girl who talks about video games, let alone plays in the same magnitude as my friends, who are all boys,” senior Brian Kook said.

Senior Rose Coviello expressed that although she plays Call of Duty on her iPhone, most of her female peers do not play video games. “All the people who play with me are my guy friends,” she said. “I don’t know many girls who really play video games.”

Lower Dawit Ewnetu, on the other hand, believes this is an inaccurate characterization. “I think that we tend to see more gaming boys in ads and whatnot, but realistically, there is an even mixture of both boys and girls in the video gaming life,” he said.

Upper Jackson Carlberg noted that marketing may have an impact on gaming demo-

graphics. “I think video games are marketed more towards males and when you look at the gender of the character in certain story-driven games like Assassin’s Creed, they added a female avatar just this year,” he said. “That could be why more boys tend to play than girls.”

Some believe gaming promotes toxic masculinity. “On a national scale, men who game often tell women ‘you can’t play video games.’ Then some people will actually quit games when girls start beating them,” Pham said.

In a similar vein, certain age demographics are more prone to gaming than others. Senior Orion Bloomfield noted that lowerclassmen tend to spend more time gaming than upperclassmen. “Part of upper year is realizing that the time you had for video games, movies, or other forms of entertainment have seemingly gone away. You need to grow as a person in some ways to get over that hump, and find what truly fuels you from the day to day,” he said.

Math Instructor and Main Street affiliate Tim Whittemore reflected on the evolution of media. “Just a few decades ago, we used to have smoking rooms, [where] you would go and talk about who knows what. Then, cell phones came along and Facebook and texting and Snapchat and so many other ways that have changed how people socialize,” he said.

“Now, right next to the Main Street common room, kids go to a room, game and scream together. It’s not a negative or positive change, it’s just another change in a long history of change.”

News in Brief

Upcoming Assemblies:

- Nov. 8: E/a Pep Rally
- Nov. 12: Dance Clubs

Beyond the Bubble:

- The U.S. House of Representatives voted to formalize the impeachment inquiry against President Donald Trump on Oct. 31.

E/a Schedule for Saturday, Nov. 9:

- Girls Varsity Soccer: 10:30 a.m.
- Girls Varsity Volleyball: 11 a.m.
- Girls Varsity Field Hockey: 12 p.m.
- Boys Varsity Soccer: 12:30 p.m.
- Boys Varsity Football: 3:30 p.m.



Army Veteran Colonel Dallas Brown '74 discusses PEA alumni's involvement in the military and welcomes veterans for the Exeter Salutes assembly on Nov. 5. Eva Carchidi/The Exonian



GO BIG RED!



Students Request More Opportunities to Shape Master Plan

Continued from [MASTER PLAN, 1](#)

the physical campus matched the evolution of the needs of the student body. “The intent [is] establishing a framework for addressing both the short-term and long-term needs and aspirations for the Academy and its physical footprint,” they said. “This framework will allow the campus to continue its evolution in accommodating the changing needs of the 21st century.”

Beyer Blinder Belle consultants added that the student input was necessary to “the campus planning framework through identifying not only critical campus issues and space needs, but also strategic opportunities to align campus and facility decision making with the mission of Phillips Exeter Academy.”

The Campus Master Plan will be separated into three phases. Phase One, the current research phase from July to December 2019, is called “Discovery, Programming, & Analysis.” Phase Two, the drafting of the Campus Master Plan, will include cost-estimates and building scenarios and last from January to May of 2020. Phase Three will finalize documentation and goals under the approval of the Academy from June to October of 2020.

Based on the timeline established for the Master Plan, there was some discussion among the students regarding the application of the results. Upper Carly Mae Buckner said, “I think it was great that they are inviting us as students to participate in the master plan and give feedback, but I do think it’s sad

the master plan won’t be finalized until some of us have already graduated. I think that they could involve us in plans that are more current.”

During the collection of student opinion, the on-site activities prompted students to think of places they enjoyed and used the most on campus. One activity board asked students to mark their favorite common spaces, to which most responded the Elizabeth Phillips Academy Center. Then, students were asked for their favorite and least favorite attributes of their dorm, to which most responded their favorite attribute to be the people inside and their least favorite attributes to be bathrooms, small common rooms and a lack of kitchen access.

Students appreciated the open

discussion from the administration. Lower Jasper Knabe said, “I thought it was great that they were getting feedback from the students.” This sentiment seemed to be echoed through the student body as many participated on the Agora posters.

However, some felt that there was not enough publicity surrounding the polls in agora. Prep Kiara Odums said, “I feel like it wasn’t brought to our attention. I think that the reason many students don’t know about it was because it wasn’t advertised well.”

Collaboration between the Academy, Beyer Blind Belle and student voices will all be conducive towards creating a new Campus Master Plan. Students can expect to see the new vision for their campus by the fall of 2020.

Faculty Members Deliberate Strategies to Curb Grade Inflation

Continued from [GPA, 1](#)

if somebody said you could,” Chair of the Theater Department Rob Richards said. “I think we grade what we teach: In many ways, it has to do with the human experience, participation and transformation.”

In humanities courses, there are ways to create consistency. “We do group grading exercises and talk routinely about the skills we hope to teach and the elements of good writing in every genre we emphasize,” English Department Chair Nathaniel Hawkins said.

Clarity in grading may also be reinforced by clear expectations. “I have a set of technical, organizational and content expectations for writing assignments; I use these to assess,” English Instructor Becky Moore said. “Along with the grade, I make notes and final comments on the assignments.”

Some departments that use written assessments set common goals. “The History Department has repeatedly visited the question of grading both essays and in-class discussion. Each faculty member enjoys some autonomy in their classroom, but the goals of assessment are largely the same: basic grammar and syntax, clear expression of ideas, demonstrated engagement with scholarship and primary materials,” Department Chair Kent McConnell said.

In many subjects, participation also factors heavily. “I determine grades based on class participation and assessments—mostly essays, but occasionally an in-class assessment is part of the calculation. Class participation can be anywhere from 25 to 50 percent of the total grade; it depends on the class,” History Instructor Betty Luther-Hillman said. “I tend to weight class participation more heavily for seniors because I assume they’ve learned ‘how to Harkness’ by the time they get to senior year.”

In some departments, assessments tend to be formative in nature. “Many activities in the Music Department—ensembles and lessons—aren’t graded with letter grades. Lessons and ensembles are feedback-rich environments where formative assessment is happening at almost every meeting,” Chair of the Music Department Kristofer Johnson said. “Those experiences are given a narrative comment at the end of term.”

Most departments use assessments as more than evaluations. “Assessments should help the learning. They should

be crafted in such a way that they themselves are learning activities,” Religion Department Chair Hannah Hofheinz said. “They are not mere judgements.”

Chair of the Modern Languages Department Evelyn Christoph explained that although teachers put in their best effort to grade equitably, there is still room for improvement. “There are still questions being raised on whether there are disparities in how assessments are graded. We are working seriously on questions of grading and equitable grading practices,” she said.

Even within a department, standardized grading scales are not always the best method of creating consistency. “Different types of assignments require different approaches to grading, and different teachers give different types of assignments,” Hofheinz said. “We always talk about best practices.”

However, some students pointed out that some courses tend to be more subjective than others, giving those who excel in some fields an advantage. “For courses like English or Modern Languages, assessments are usually based on writing, which are really subjective,” upper Yulian Ye said. “That’s why I personally feel more challenged in the humanities courses and languages than, say, math or science.”

Still, discrepancies in grading can be attributed to the type of student each department draws. “One reason for discrepancies is that ... the English Department are required to teach all students in the school—whether the students see English as a particular strength or not,” Moore said. “In contrast, some other departments suggest that since they teach only those students for whom the subject is a particular passion or strength, that the performance and following assessment will skew to the excellent, rather than the good or average.”

Some instructors felt that students could learn from the variations in grading style. “I think students have a lot to learn from different teachers’ approaches to writing. There’s no one ‘correct’ writing style for historical analysis, so students need to learn what style is most successful for them,” Luther-Hillman said. “But, at a fundamental level, all history teachers want students to engage with texts, use factual evidence to support their points, and show an understanding of the history topics they’re

learning.”

Despite the variation in grading style, students felt that, due to the term system, average grades would even out. “If you have a teacher that’s considered ‘hard’ by many students, it’s hard in that moment, obviously,” senior Smayl Makyshov said. “And it may be a tough time. But it is what it is.”

Other students felt that their peers tended to blame teachers for poor grades. “For the most part, I think teachers are fair ... It’s really easy to blame your own failures on the teacher,” lower Juliette Ortiz said. “When you’re learning something new and learning how to learn, it’s hard. If you’re not getting it right away, that’s normal.”

In addition to questions on consistency, concerns on grade inflation have been raised on campus. “In certain circles, it’s recognized that grade inflation is a thing. We’ve fallen out of the ‘learn or get out’ model that was started by Principal Amen, that endured until the seventies or eighties,” upper Charlie Preston said. “When we talk about early cum [laude], we talk about the cutoff—we say that it’s going to be higher for our grade than others. More and more people are getting grades that are above a 10.”

Moore similarly felt that a shift had occurred. “The faculty receives a summary of all the grades given for any term by individual teacher and department; when I began here, the English Department Chair wanted a term department average of 8.5. These days, it has begun to approach 9.0,” she said. “One concern is that some students and families have much less ability to hear that their performance earns any assessment in English below a B+. Too many of them—parents and students—can only seem to equate academic identity with one letter: A.”

Moore felt that this cultural shift has changed her approach to grading. “Instead of arguing with students and families over a grade, I would rather spend my time helping a student learn the material,” she said. “Teachers have little incentive besides their own integrity to affirm that grades of C-, C, C+, B- and B indicate good, creditable work done, and more skill and material to learn.”

McConnell characterized grade inflation as a present and concerning trend. “My evidence is anecdotal, but over the twenty-plus years of my teaching at both [the Academy] and the collegiate level,

grades have been inflated for all sorts of reasons,” he said. “There are other factors beyond epistemological considerations that play into grading and grade inflation that are not good for students and their educational pursuits. This is not a student problem, but an institutional one and one of our culture in America as a whole.”

McConnell stressed that his stance was not a blanket endorsement of previous grading methods, given studies on knowledge acquisition that should be taken into account during grading.

Hofheinz noted that grade inflation—or grade condensing, as they put it—may actually cause greater stress for students. “The counterintuitive part is that when we lose real differentiation in grades ... when grades get condensed, when it feels like everyone needs to get an A- or B+, student anxiety goes up, learning outcomes go down. It ends up being a much harder situation for everyone,” they said.

Hofheinz felt that grades may even hinder learning. “Grades take too much attention. Students invest grades with so much emotion and so much personal identification—as if it’s who you are as an identity,” they said. “In our department, we are far more interested in the learning, in the questions and in facilitating classroom experience as students move toward the goal of better understanding themselves and the world. That often is not the same matter as grade.”

Similarly, Richards noted that learning to stumble is a key part of growing up. “Somebody said, ‘As a parent, if you don’t teach your kids disappointment, you’re doing them a disservice,’” he said. “I had to learn that the hard way, but I am a believer in that.”

While grading should not be a determinant in student perception of the themselves, they are key parts of the academic process. Thus, the faculty have made meaningful strides towards consistency and equity. “It’s part of our ongoing conversations—we talk about grading in a variety of ways, as a whole department and as individuals,” Hofheinz said.

Saltman echoed Hofheinz’s thoughts. “We have asked the faculty and departments to consider and discuss their values and their expectations,” Saltman said. “We believe that by starting the conversation in that area, we will develop more consistency in grading practices.”

A Response to the Silent Protest

Felix Yeung '21

Columnist

Like many, I was stunned to hear of the incident that occurred at the annual Halloween Costume Contest. The costume, depicting a “wall” with a “Make America Great Again” slogan on it, was offensive and degrading—deeply so—to many. I recognize this anguish and affirm the people who suffered it. The choice to present this costume was not well thought-out, nor was it empathetic to members of the Academy community. Yet, I have some qualms about the way that members of this community have chosen to respond—both those who felt this hurt and those who did not.

What follows is not an evaluation of the intentions of the staff members. On that, I have nothing to offer—I have not spoken to the staffers in question, nor have I attempted to. Equally, this is not an evaluation of the pain that was caused. I cannot speak to that, being an outsider to the groups that were hurt. On that hurt, all I can do is listen. Instead, the words that follow are my thoughts on the events that unfolded after this incident occurred. It is my analysis of how people responded to the impact that this incident had on our community.

I will begin with the actions of those whom this incident did not affect. I have heard several of my peers question whether the event was problematic at all. By and large, these individuals are not members of the communities that spoke out against the costume.

To them, I have only one question: how can you, as an outsider to these communities, comment on whether this incident was hurtful or not? The short answer is: you can't. Rather than minimizing the experiences of those who felt their identities demeaned by what happened, these individuals should try to listen and engage. Then, they should try to empathize.

Instead, several of these students, as well as adults, were callous at the silent protest that occurred on Friday. They pushed through the human chain that

some students formed, purposefully disrupting the protest.

All the while, there were alternate entryways to the Grill area that students and adults could have used. If these students had thoughts about the protest, they could also have steered clear of Grill and aired them at a later time. Students who felt hurt should have had a forum to air their pain, unbothered by others who disagreed with their methods. Certainly, disagreement is healthy. But so is giving people the space to heal—and people did need to heal.

Now, I turn to the response of those who did take offense to the costume. The evening of the contest, word of a protest during Assembly Break disseminated on social media. Later on, another statement was released, indicating that the protest was not targeted towards specific employees of Grill.

The timing of these statements left room for confusion. The organizers of the event should have clarified from the very beginning that the protest was not against specific employees. They should have announced with the protest that its purpose was to bring to light an endemic issue at the Academy: “a lack of concern for the Latinx community on campus.” They should also have list their four demands before the protest itself.

Moreover, the organizers should also have clarified that they notified the Grill workers of the planning of the protest. Without this information, they implied to the student body, again, that the protests were about those specific staff members. While the staffers themselves knew that this protest was not against them, the community did not. Thus, the protest could have sent the message that the Grill workers were being effectively condemned, without any chance at reconciliation.

The organizers should also have provided more context for the protest itself. As several people have relayed to me, the issues surrounding identity and marginalization are ones that have existed at Exeter for a long time—we see that in what happened with the Afro-Latinx Exonian Society's proposal several years ago and numerous other events that illustrate how discussions on race have been and continue to be fraught. At the

time, a number of proposals on diversity sat on then-Principal MacFarlane's desk for a hundred days with no updates on its progress. As a result, the club's Arts Committee produced a video, highlighting stories of racial atrocities. The administration's resultant all-school assembly was met with a sit-in in the Principal's Office. The majority of students at Exeter were not present for these incidents; yet, it is vital that what happened continues to be told. Thus, context is vital to ensuring that the intentions of the protest are clear and the ends necessary.

Due to the content and timing of the announcements, I feel that this protest caused additional divisiveness in our community. It could have been perceived as a protest against specific individuals—which it was not—rather than a protest against a general problem. Frankly, this undermined the very mission that the organizers were trying to achieve. They would have likely been better served by more clarity in their communications.

But my questions extend beyond the lead-up to the protest; they concern the execution itself too. I'd like to begin with when the protest took place. Assembly Break is a twenty-minute period. This incident, I feel, requires more time to unpack than that. Last year, the sexual assault sit-in lasted over two hours, and public discussion about it with Principal Rawson extended into Assembly next day. To truly allow students to stand as one, the organizers should have set a time that would allow for an extended protest or discussion.

I also wonder if the mode of protest was the most conducive to the organizers' intentions. According to the document released, the organizers hoped to initiate discussion with their actions. They wanted to create solidarity and build a movement.

To that end, was a silent protest the best way to do this? Should the protesters have tried to start a discourse? Should they have tried to pose questions to the administration about how this incident happened and the steps we can take as a community to heal? Certainly, silent protests have historical meaning and can be effective tools to send a message. Still, I question the extent to which we can spark a discourse by beginning with silence.

After all, this is a community, one that must be willing to engage about its faults to advance as a whole.

Lastly, I wonder why the protesters decided to form a human wall. One of the mantras shared on social media was as follows: “Build movements, not walls.” Why, then, was a wall built in Grill? The manner in which the protest played out did not seem, to me, to be encouraging of dialogue later on. I understand that the human chain may have been a sign of solidarity—or something else entirely. But to wall off Grill seemed to imply a desire for separation instead of connection and communal reflection. At the very least, the organizers should have explained the purpose or meaning behind this wall.

In my view, these issues would not have arisen had there been more time between the initial incident and the protest itself. I wholly affirm the desire and need to protest. I believe that when students see injustice, they should stand up united. At the same time, I believe that protest needs to happen after much conscious thought and meticulous planning. I believe that, in this case, the organizers would have benefited from more of the latter.

Now, some may wonder if the onus for such clarity in communication falls on the organizers of the protest. In my view, it does. To have an effective movement for change, the intentionality behind the protest must be clear. To rally others behind a cause, the context around the protest must be clear. Without clarity, there is room for conscious misconstruction and unconscious misinterpretation.

I air my thoughts because I believe this is a time when we can make genuine change. This is a time when we can come together as a community and talk about what happened, when we can talk about what continues to happen to students of various backgrounds and creeds. This is a time when we can forge a stronger whole. I am committed to the intentions of the organizers—to spark a dialogue, to begin a difficult conversation that needs to be had. That is why I feel the need to offer my perspective. I hope these efforts affect the greatest degree of change. Because change needs to happen. And I believe it can—if only we learn from each other with honesty, courage and a shared commitment to the core values of

In Defense of Free Speech for Exeter

Stephen McNulty '21

Columnist

Last Friday, Principal Rawson sent out an email to the school community outlining the Academy's response to the incident at this Halloween's costume contest. In it, he expressed the Academy's willingness to meet all four demands made by La Alianza Latina (LAL): (1) “transparent, thorough, and frequent cultural competency training for all adults on campus,” (2) “a response from the Academy reinforcing our school values and principles,” (3) “an explicit policy clarifying boundaries of political speech by faculty and staff,” and (4) “continued, impactful conversations on our community values and how we can maintain them.”

Firstly, I ought to say that I find these goals quite laudable, and am frankly amazed at the student body's effectiveness in pushing for change; within a day, LAL, ALES and others reached an agreement with school administration. It is a powerful display of our student body's strength, and one that ought not be derided.

Having said this, I am interested in seeing how school administration will go about implementing the third demand, “an explicit policy clarifying boundaries of political speech by faculty and staff.” On face value, I am not necessarily opposed to

such a policy. After all, the excessive politicization of the classroom by teachers risks stifling dissenting opinions, isolating students with divergent thought and stepping over emotional landmines. In an academic setting, there absolutely could be a reason to limit, at least to a degree, political speech. And I should further note that the school, as a private institution, is absolutely in its right to do so.

Now, of course, the question turns to where these “boundaries of political speech” are drawn. For instance, I don't think anyone would object to faculty and staff members facilitating political discussions, even to the point of acknowledging the merits of certain opinions. I also think it would be farcical to deny faculty or staff members the ability to express their own political opinions; some of my most insightful and respectful political discussions on this campus have happened with my teachers. The school has even taken stances on certain political issues, or at the very least implied as much. So, I think a vast majority are in agreement that faculty members should retain freedom to express at least some opinions.

Then what is the nature of these boundaries? If we're not comfortable with a fascist or a Stalinist faculty or staff member expressing their political views, but are comfortable with moderate conservatives, at least, where do Trump supporters fall?

From those who I've talked to, it seems that many wish to draw a distinction between Trump supporters and conservatives more generally; they see every right to restrict the former, but do not intend to quiet the Never Trumpers in quite the same way.

This raises immediate problems, in my estimation. Firstly, I do not believe that one needs to be racist to vote for Donald Trump, and I am not willing to write off half of the country as racist. And I think most of the campus would agree on this point. As much as Trump himself makes racially-charged statements, some of which have provided cover and legitimacy to racists, and as much as I oppose Donald Trump, there are reasons people have to support him.

Many Americans felt left behind by the political status quo, for a variety of reasons, and saw Trump as an outsider, ready to bang the keyboard until he hit upon the change they needed. Others supported his economic policies, and still others supported his stances on social issues for non-racist reasons: opposition to abortion is not a racist stance, for instance.

Sure, you may decide that these are bad reasons to support Trump, and frankly, I agree, but that is a terrible way to go about constructing a policy about free speech. Given the demographics of Exeter's campus, which *The Exonian* found to be the most liberal of the Eight Schools Association per its yearly survey, and given that I

have not heard one Assembly delivered from a conservative point of view at this Academy, I have reason to doubt that such a policy would be implemented fairly or with respect for diversity of opinion. It could very easily slide into a gag rule against conservatives and those with other divergent opinions.

If your intent is to limit political speech that invokes racist rhetoric about issues like the Wall or the Muslim ban, then the school should tackle racially charged speech or attacks on personhood. Such speech has different defining characteristics, though there may be some overlap—political speech relates to any topic at play in the modern political arena, whereas racially-charged speech refers to any sort of speech, political or not, that invokes racially-charged language. Is some racially-charged speech political? Yes. But we ought to draw a distinction between the two.

The issue in this case seemed to be that the message the costume sent was perceived as an attack on personhood. Then address the issue at hand, I say, which is not per se political speech by faculty and staff members, but rather, racially-charged speech. Thus, to limit political speech would not be particularly relevant to the case and would misconstrue the problem at hand. Impose explicit regulation on speech that invokes racial stereotypes or tropes. It is far more potent and meaningful for our community.

The Exonian

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Compromising on Woke Culture

Emmanuel Tran '21

Columnist

To many of his longtime fans, President Obama's criticism of "call-out culture" and the idea of "wokeness" was confusing, if not frustrating. President Obama's words seemed to echo the criticism of social conservatives who had long attacked "woke culture," which was particularly surprising given that Obama is seen by many as a hero for "woke" culture activism.

President Obama's words seemed to echo the criticism of social conservatives who had long attacked "woke culture," which was particularly surprising given that Obama is seen by many as a hero for "woke" culture activism.

Before people leap to conclusions over Obama's words, it's best to understand what he actually said. The former president was in no way attacking movements which are often associated with "wokeness," such as #MeToo or Black Lives Matter. Instead he was critiquing movements online which seek to discredit or "cancel" organizations, celebrities or even ordinary people for words or actions deemed "un-progressive."

President Obama's criticisms are important for all of us, especially young people, to hear. The culture of "wokeness" on social media has unfortunately

turned into a form of public religion that is not supported by real activism or a desire for social change. Take the recent blue profile photos that many people displayed on their Instagram accounts in an attempt to raise awareness about Sudan, or the various Instagram posts by accounts falsely claiming to provide food to people in need if they received a certain number of likes or reposts. While changing the color of one's profile picture or posting something might feel good, those internet campaigns do little to alleviate the suffering of oppressed people.

Some might argue that the "woke" culture of the internet serves to educate people about new topics that will then inspire them to participate in real activism. That is perhaps true in some cases. But from my own personal experience I have observed how commenting and posting on social networks has become

When two people are communicating through a screen, often without even knowing each other, it is easy for them to dehumanize the person on the other side. The format of platforms like Twitter, Instagram or Facebook also encourage short, comment-like responses rather than well thought out or long points.

a safe and comfortable way for many people to express their political ideas without engaging in real activism. What's more, the internet unfortunately breeds polarization, miscommunication and disinformation. When

two people are communicating through a screen, often without even knowing each other, it is easy for them to dehumanize the person on the other side. The format of platforms like Twitter, Instagram or Facebook also encourage short, comment-like responses rather

President Obama's other criticisms of woke culture revolved around the fact that he considers it often too "purist." I personally do not share the president's aversion to ideological purity—some people have very strong beliefs about issues which they think are clear-cut.

than well thought out or long points. Finally, it is hard to verify which sites provide "real" information instead of falsehoods.

President Obama's other criticisms of woke culture revolved around the fact that he considers it often too "purist." I personally do not share the president's aversion to ideological purity—some people have very strong beliefs about issues which they think are clear-cut, and they should not renounce those beliefs for the sake of compromise. This is the case with moral and cultural issues in particular. However, he does have somewhat of a point. A whole host of political issues have been placed into the category of moral or philosophical issues and are presented as simple black and white debates. Polarizing and complex foreign and national policy issues, such as the withdrawal of U.S. military forces from Syria, have been turned into simple tweet-able ideas that everyone seems to have an opinion on, including

people with absolutely no knowledge of the issue.

President Obama also made the wise point that political criticisms have turned nastily personal. People often no longer assume that the intentions of their political opponents are inherently positive. Instead their opponents have turned into "bad people," instead of decent people with bad ideas. That is a very worrisome trend in that it puts our national unity in question.

We should also point out that ideas which President Obama raised are not only applicable to "woke progressives." In all sectors of American life, our culture has turned into a polarized mess, a nation divided by race, socio-economic status and political identity. Allegiance to certain political ideologies has replaced other markers of identity in the overall American consciousness. That outsized importance is a very worrisome trend that it could lead to the destruction of that national unity that

In all sectors of American life, our culture has turned into a polarized mess, a nation divided by race, socio-economic status and political identity. Allegiance to certain political ideologies has replaced other markers of identity in the overall American consciousness.

so many generations of people sought to maintain. It's also worrying, in that it harms debate and open conversations within our country. All of us, no matter our political orientation, should therefore listen to what President Obama has to say if we wish to reunite our divided political landscape.

Hypocrisy in Protest and Poetry

Dennis Kostakaglu-Aydin '21

Columnist

Following the controversial costume of Trump's wall containing the slogan "Make America Great Again" at the annual Halloween costume contest, La Alianza Latina held a protest in Grill after Friday's assembly. A summary of the statement LAL distributed at the protests claimed that the costume presented a threat to the Latinx identity on campus because the concept of the wall represents the systematic arrest, incarceration and deportation of Latinx people from the United States.

After all, nobody should feel like their identity is being threatened. Nobody should feel that they are being denied basic freedoms that exist for all human beings. But I feel it is equally important to talk about the assembly that occurred before the protest.

Thus the protest became necessary. After all, nobody should feel like their identity is being threatened. Nobody should feel that they are being denied basic freedoms that exist for all human beings. But I feel it is equally important to talk about the assembly that occurred before the protest. At one point, poet José Olivarez, the speaker, joked that "there are no white people in Heaven" in his poem "Mexican Heaven." These words, coupled with the protest, show that we have a long way to go if we want to achieve real equality between all people.

First, let me talk about the protest. I thought it was valuable, because as I mentioned, nobody should ever feel excluded from our community. The costume worn by the adults was interpreted as an attack on personhood to many, and as a result, made those people feel as though their freedom was being limited. Exeter is supposed

to be a place where everyone can meet on equal terms. For someone to feel that they aren't equal to another is a wrong that needs to be righted.

However, I don't blame the Grill employees who dressed up as the wall. Not because I believe they were joking or having fun, but because I haven't yet heard their part of the story. The only times I heard anything from those employees was through Principal Rawson's email to the school the next day and through the apology Grill issued in a sign on Monday.

Of course, it's a separate problem that the email condemning the costume was sent out a day after the incident. If an email had been sent the day of the incident explaining exactly what happened, then maybe more people would have approved of and joined the protest. But even when I did hear something, I only heard that the employees were remorseful about their actions. I didn't hear any reasons for wearing the costume.

Do I have my own opinions about what transpired? Yes. I think that the employees were incredibly foolish to think that they should wear or show off this costume. But we shouldn't rush to judgment so quickly.

This is not to say that the protest was a judgment upon these workers. From my understanding, the protest was simply to stand in solidarity with Latinx people on campus, which is the main reason why I think it was necessary.

This is not to say that the protest was a judgment upon these workers. From my understanding, the protest was simply to stand in solidarity with Latinx people on campus, which is the main reason why I think it was necessary.

Regardless, there was a lot of erroneous or omitted information surrounding the protest in the community.

Besides the lack of communication from the Grill employees themselves, I thought that, based upon the information I had received about the protest beforehand, that it would be a peaceful protest in Agora. I didn't think that the protestors would block the entrance to Grill.

The misinformation I received was confusing. It was especially frustrating because, due to the location and the nature of the protest, it made it seem as though the demonstration was directed at the Grill employees—something that the LAL statement denied. This contradiction baffled me. Why else would the protestors block the entrance to Grill, I wondered, other than to take a stance against those who work there?

Another question I had was, why say that the protest wasn't directed at the employees? If LAL had sent out an email, written an op-ed, put up posters, or took any other action

Another question I had was, why say that the protest wasn't directed at the employees? If LAL had sent out an email, written an op-ed, put up posters, or took any other action that affirmed the presence of Latinx people on campus, it would have gotten the same message across.

that affirmed the presence of Latinx people on campus, it would have gotten the same message across. Staging a protest inherently requires something or someone to protest against, and it very obviously seemed as though the protest was against the Grill employees. LAL could have sent out an email, written an opinion piece, or put up posters. All of these would have affirmed the presence of Latinx people on campus, and it would have gotten the same message across. Staging a protest inherently requires something or someone to protest against, and it very obviously seemed as though the protest was against the Grill employees.

The other side of the coin on this issue is the assembly which occurred directly before the protest. A Latino poet, José Olivarez, read from his newest poetry book, the overarching theme of which is Latinx identity. For the most part, they were really good poems. However, Olivarez also read a poem in which he joked that "there are no white people in Heaven." I don't identify as white, but I still cringed at that. Why are we allowed to joke about white people if Exeter is a safe space for all?

Why are we allowed to joke about white people if Exeter is a safe space for all?

The answer, of course, is that historically, white people have held significantly more power than any other race, class, or creed of human. They still do. But I don't think that that excuses the joke. If we truly want Exeter to be an equal community, we have to try to not make jokes about white people, just as much as we already try to not make jokes about minorities.

I don't care how much power anyone has held in the past or present, if the end goal of a community is to achieve, or get as close as is possible, to total equality, then jokes about white people should be just as reviled as jokes about minority groups.

I think that because of this hypocrisy, while the protest had good intentions, due to the assembly the protest occurred after, its message ultimately came off wrong. After all, if we desire complete equality, how can we affirm the validity of the presence of Latinx students if we're not going to do the same for white students?

Despite how you may feel about it, it is important to keep in mind that the protest was necessary in order to show that there is still a level of equality on campus. Nobody should experience attacks on personhood, and nobody, whether Grill employee or poet, should take that freedom away from them.

How to Truly Recognize Elizabeth Phillips

Chieko Imamura '22

Guest Contributor

On Oct. 25, students and faculty gathered in the Assembly Hall to observe the recipient of the annual John Phillips Award. That morning, however, we all found out that it had been renamed the John and Elizabeth Phillips award to acknowledge the fact that Elizabeth Phillips was a co-founder of the school. Many students applauded the news and were excited about what the change represented. I and a few others, however, were conflicted with what this change in name was really expressing.

The school could be doing a lot more to let Elizabeth Phillips leave a lasting impact on the school.

Now don't get me wrong, I am all for giving credit where credit is due. I think that it is great that we, as a school, are finally recognizing Elizabeth Phillips as a co-founder of this institution. This is reflected in the name change of this prestigious award and the name change from the Phillips Academy Center to the Elizabeth Phillips Academy Center. The source of my confusion, however, is that the school could be doing a lot more to let Elizabeth Phillips leave a lasting impact on the school. Why are we not doing so?

Though changing the name of this historical award is a big deal, it feels a little like an afterthought of the admin-

istration rather than a planned event. The fact that they only had to add "and Elizabeth" implies that the Academy was trying to encourage more equality without actually changing anything. And even if changing the award's name was completely deliberate in its decision, the

The fact that they only had to add "and Elizabeth" implies that the Academy was trying to encourage more equality without actually changing anything.

fact that the award has decades of history only known as the John Phillips Award will make it hard for current students and faculty as well as alumni to think of it as an award also commemorating Elizabeth Phillips.

Something else about the changing of names for both the award and building that irks me is that the Academy just slaps on "Elizabeth" to the names of these titles that have been John Phillips-centered for so long, instead of building something new dedicated solely to Elizabeth Phillips.

If the Academy were to dedicate a brand-new building to Elizabeth Phillips, then it would make much more of an impact on the feminist movement, since she wouldn't have to "share" her name with her husband. With something dedicated to her memory from the very start, people will always know it as something for Elizabeth Phillips—it would be her building or her award.

Ultimately, I think if the Academy wants to improve on gender equality, it has to do so more actively. Instead of simply changing the name of these awards, award more strong women and create space for their accomplishments in the first place.

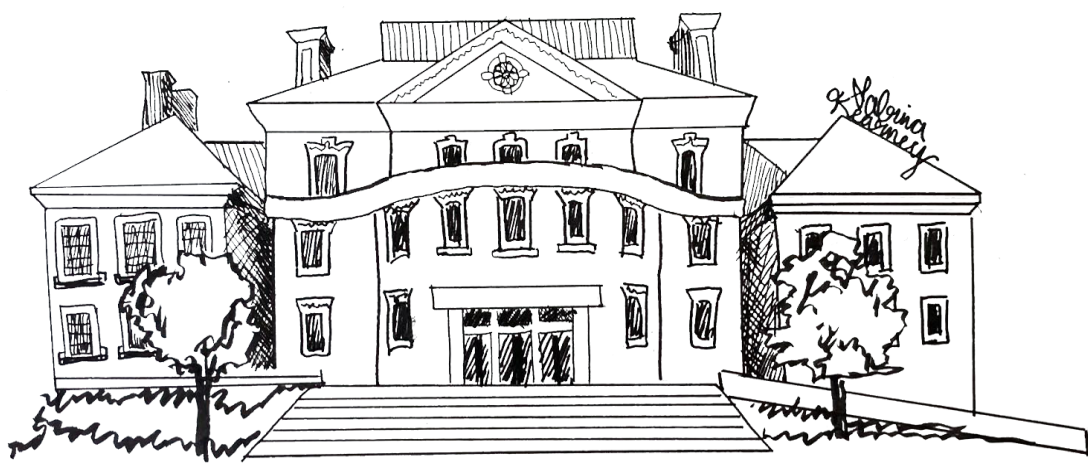
When Kathy Nekton was honored with the Founders' Day award last year,

her story of being the first female coach had much more of a lasting impact on me that the changing of the name of any award. That's because when we dedicate time and space to strong women, we don't just get their title—we learn about their complex, intriguing stories and what they

Ultimately, I think if the Academy wants to improve on gender equality, it has to do so more actively.

did to become the women that they are.

With Elizabeth Phillips, we receive a lot of information about how she co-founded the school but so far, I have heard nothing about the specifics of her achievements. If we were to learn more about her, then students would also have a better understanding of her achievements, and therefore have a fuller appreciation of her name and her pres-



Behavioral Economics and Liberal Paternalism

Ryan Xie '20

Humor Editor

Note: This article isn't really meant to be political; I just thought this was an interesting topic. I used Nudge by Richard Thaler as a source of inspiration for my opinion on this.

Before I delve into this article, please answer the following question.

Choose a newspaper subscription model:

- A. Print only: 65 dollars
- B. Electronic only: 95 dollars
- C. Print and electronic: 95 dollars

First, an introduction. Behavioral Economics is the study of decision making, using the intersection of economics and psychology. In traditional economics, humans are considered to be rational decision makers, meaning that their decisions are consistent and are based on logic and reasoning. In behavioral economics, using psychology, humans are better understood to be a mix of rationality and irrationality—humans often don't make decisions in the best interest of themselves, and often decide both intuitively and emotionally.

In the first question, you probably choose C. It's the best choice, right? Why would anyone pick B when you can get C with print for free?

Wrong, lmao. Bamboozled. The problem is an illustration of the decoy effect in behavioral economics. Option B is just a decoy to make option C seem enticing. In

fact, when this question was presented to students with only options A and C, most people pick A. Why do people change then?

It's because B and C are very easy to

In behavioral economics, using psychology, humans are better understood to be a mix of rationality and irrationality—humans often don't make decisions in the best interest of themselves, and often decide both intuitively and emotionally.

compare. Humans like to make decisions when they are easy, and find things that are easy to compare (such as price.) As a result, B is just a decoy to make B and C easy to compare.

This decoy is an example of a "nudge" in choice architecture. A nudge is a change in the way choices are presented to influence decision making. Choice architecture is the way choices are presented. Nudges take advantage of human irrationality in behavioral economics because people are easily susceptible to psychological blunders.

These nudges in choice architecture extend beyond multiple-choice questions and into our daily lives. Every decision we make is influenced by choice architecture.

But to what extent is it okay to manipulate choice architecture, and to what extent is it okay to nudge someone? On

one hand, the libertarian viewpoint claims that people should have complete freedom to choose without influence. On the other hand, the paternalism viewpoint claims that it is okay for policy to limit autonomy with the aim of helping people make better decisions.

I think a healthy balance between the two is the best option, though at first glance this seems to not make sense because the two concepts conflict. When it comes to choice architecture, it is nearly impossible to adhere to libertarianism. No matter what, one option has to be presented first, one option has to be presented second and one option has to be presented last. For example, in ballots, one name always has to go first, and this name tends to get a 3% boost in selection.

Why do you think Weth always puts the salad first? People might not realize it, but putting salad first encourages people to

Choice architecture is the way choices are presented. Nudges take advantage of human irrationality in behavioral economics because people are easily susceptible to psychological blunders.

fill up their plate with healthier food first so that they have less space for "Red's Best Haddock." (This isn't actually unhealthy, but it's not as healthy as a salad. You get my point.)

Similarly, paternalism isn't quite the way to go as well. Who is to determine what is best for people? Freedom is a fundamental right.

I believe gentle nudges in choice

I believe gentle nudges in choice architecture are the key. They combine libertarian and paternalistic perspectives to achieve a healthy balance to encourage better decision making.

architecture are the key. They combine libertarian and paternalistic perspectives to achieve a healthy balance to encourage better decision making. In fact, these gentle nudges already exist everywhere in our lives and are quite effective in helping people without restricting their liberty. Stop signs are a nudge to be careful. "Employees must wash hands" signs are nudges, too. Door locks are nudges to tell people like robbers that it is morally wrong to steal. When choosing A, B, C, or D on a multiple-choice exam, the order of the questions influences decision-making. Many, many things around you are examples of nudges and choice architecture.

Anyways, next time you make a purchase or make a decision, think about what factors are influencing you and if you are really choosing best, and how certain things might be nudging you.



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Student musicians perform in Phelps Commons.

Maegan Paul/The Exonian

EAR Hosts Coffee House Concert

By MAEGAN PAUL, TINA HUANG
and AMY LUM
Staff Writers

The rhythmic sounds of cymbals and guitar strings echoed throughout the packed Phelps Commons on Friday Nov. 1. Students surrounded the performers, leaning forward in their seats to watch their fellow classmates in the Exeter Association of Rock (EAR) Coffeehouse Concert.

In contrast to previous years, EAR hosted the coffeehouse in the Commons, more commonly known as Agora, instead of a large E/a concert after the fall Pep Rally. Lower Trevor Chun stayed optimistic about the change. “We at least have something during this term...there won’t be any EAR concert after the Pep Rally, which kind of sucks, but that’s why we have this,” he said.

Although different, the Coffeehouse is not a new concept for the club. Senior and EAR cohead Jack Liu attributed the idea to a memory from earlier in his Exeter career. “The inspiration for a concert was, well, we haven’t had one of these since my prep year, actu-

ally. It seemed really cool to have that in Agora,” he said. “It’s really laid back. We just try to connect other musicians together.”

Many students enjoyed the more laidback experience of the concert. “It’s really good informal capacity for people to play music if they are associated with EAR,” upper and performer Chloe Minnicucci said. “Playing on stage at Assembly is a big thing. You know, you’re doing it for the whole school. But the great thing about the coffeehouse is it’s in Agora, so people will cycle through.”

This year, EAR began to form bands by shared musical interests. “They sent out a music interest form and then people typed in like what music they like,” lower and performer Allison Kim said. “This year, it’s more organized.”

For many performers in the concert, music was a large part of their life growing up. “Since I was three or five, my parents would put on CDs in their minivan and I would play it on my boombox,” upper Chloe Minnicucci said. “I’ve been a fan of music pretty much since I was born.”

EAR gave many of the performers

an opportunity to share their passions in rock and pop music. “I think at Exeter there’s a lot of music-related opportunities for classical music but not that much [for] popular music,” Kim said. “For people who play instruments but also want to do like indie or pop or rock, then I think EAR is the best ... opportunity to do that.”

Joining EAR has introduced lower Alana Reale to new interests. “EAR is new for me because I played in music ensembles before, but it was typically like more classical music. It’s interesting to be able to play with other people and music that I listened to on a daily basis.”

Many EAR members find the club’s welcoming environment as a change in their busy Exeter lives. “I think that practicing with your band isn’t a chore,” lower Zander Chearavanont said. “[It’s] less like a music lesson and more ... like a nice time to hang out with your friends and play music.”

Chun agreed with Chearavanont and talked about the relaxing atmosphere of EAR. “My favorite part about being in EAR is you can get together

with whoever you want and play [together] pretty much wherever you want as long as you all agree on it.”

Lower Tasmiah Akter enjoyed the atmosphere of the new coffeehouse. “It was just really nice to be there, and just gather with people and drink cider and eat donuts,” she said. “It was actually inspiring. I’m learning to play bass, so seeing Allison up there, playing her electric guitar, made me want to practice more and become better at my instrument.”

Liu further commented on his own experiences in planning for the concert. “This has been a month into making,” he explained. “People have time to put things together and we had some food. I hope people enjoyed the whole atmosphere of it.”

In closing remarks, he finished with his hopes for the future. “I just hope that people come out to more EAR stuff. It’s a really low pressure thing. You know, there’s no judgment involved,” he concluded. “If you like music, [performing with EAR] is a way you can enjoy it without having a lot of stress.”

ALBUM REVIEW:

AMERICAN UTOPIA

By BLAKE SIMPSON
Contributing Writer

On December 11, 2018, David Byrne — former lead singer of the Talking Heads — released his album *American Utopia*. After a pre-Broadway engagement at the Emerson Colonial Theatre in Boston, he brought the show to the Hudson Theatre on Broadway and released a live album.

Right off the bat, one might find it interesting that a singer from a cult favorite indie band is on Broadway — and their curiosity is valid. That is not to say, however, that he is not welcome there. If you look back to Jonathan Demme’s *Stop Making Sense* the Talking Heads concert film, or just about any of Byrne’s performances, you will notice that he has a quite theatrical stage presence. I would dare to say David Byrne’s work is musical theater in its truest sense.

I am not suggesting that every Broadway show has been made a fool of by *American Utopia*, or that traditional musical theater is a sham. What I am trying to do is make the point that much of musical theater is just theater set to music; *American Utopia* is musical theater. Including Byrne, the cast is composed of 12 musicians — all wearing gray suits — similar to the color scheme from *Stop Making Sense* (save for Chris’s turquoise shirt, which does not make a reprise on any *American Utopia* cast members). This is an ensemble larger than that of *Stop Making Sense*.

I have not seen the show in person yet, so that review will come later on, but as a fan of Byrne and the Talking Heads, I feel somewhat qualified to carry on the review, focusing on the music in the show. If you scan the album you might notice three Talking Heads classics, “This Must Be the Place (Naïve Melody),” “Burning Down the House” and “Once in a Lifetime.” These songs hold up well, especially “This Must Be the Place.” The song retains its charm almost 40 years after its original release because it is timeless. The timelessness of the song is due, in part, to the fact

that David Byrne does little to change what makes the song great. It remains similar in every performance and yet always feels fresh, and even when Byrne did a bit of experimentation on 2007’s *Live from Austin, TX*, it was done masterfully.

Despite my confidence in Byrne’s ability, I am pleased with the delightful familiarity of this track on *American Utopia*. “Burning Down the House,” is certainly interesting. At first, I was a bit bothered by the intro of the song. If you listen to the original and then this version, you will hear the difference. But after that section, the song proves itself. Throughout the song, you get the sense that this song was built for a large ensemble. The sheer energy is invigorating and Bobby Wooten’s pervasive bass lurking in the back of my earbuds was a delightful sensation.

The classics clearly hold their own, in my opinion, but it is absolutely worth giving credit to the newer tracks as well. “Everybody’s Coming to My House” is a well-crafted song that blends all of the instruments in this large ensemble very well. “Here” is a great song with which to open the album. It sets the stage for the rest of the album and fits well with the order of the songs.

Overall, I would give this album a 4.8/5. Over the course of David Byrne’s career, he has made a lot of creative and innovative music and keeping it as fresh and as exciting as when it first came out is a difficult task; a task that David Byrne met head-on in a way that only David Byrne could, and that made for a great show. The 0.2 points that I dropped are only due to small things I might change to make it perfect, but Byrne’s sense of confidence in his work and ability to keep the same song feeling new every time he performs it. It is a great album for die-hard fans, Broadway fans and new fans of Byrne alike. *American Utopia* is a promising album for Byrne’s late career and for whatever he may come up with next.

MUSIC REVIEW:

“I WANNA BE YOURS” BY PINK SWEAT\$

By EMILY KANG
Staff Writer

Last Wednesday, Pink Sweat\$ released the single “I Wanna Be Yours,” a collaboration with Korean RnB singer Crush. I have loved listening to Pink Sweat\$’s music after hearing his soft, soulful voice in his “Honesty” music video last year, so when I heard about his feature with Crush, one of my favorite K-music artists, I knew I had to listen to the song.

Pink Sweat\$ starts off the first verse of “I Wanna Be Yours” with his signature acoustic guitar. The melody is simple, but the driving beat from the drum loop adds a faster tempo than Sweat\$’s normal style, offering a fresh sound in contrast with the slower-paced music of his Volume 1 and Volume 2 albums. Sweat\$ continues to sing through the pre-chorus and chorus, where the drums speed up for a short time, before handing the second verse to Crush. Crush takes over the second and third verses, singing in English. The two artists harmonized at the end of the song, highlighting their unique voices.

What struck me most about this song was the distinct tones of each artist’s voice. Pink Sweat\$’s smooth, full voice is a bit deeper than Crush’s, and it shines in the first verse. Conversely, Crush’s lighter voice adds a twist to the same melody in the second and third verses. This variation gives

a refreshing appeal to what could have been a repetitive refrain. Both of the artists easily carry out the falsettos in the chorus and their steady control with the changing tones demonstrated their vocal talents.

One of the only things I would critique is the song’s lyrics. While the lyrics might be special to Sweat\$ or Crush in some way, I feel like their words about wanting to be with someone who isn’t theirs just follows the mainstream, surface-level themes of love.

Apart from the musical elements, I love the fact that Pink Sweat\$ collaborated with Crush, a Korean artist. Both are singer-songwriters with similar ballad styles of RnB that focus on vocals rather than intricate instrumentals. Crush, being a South Korean artist, hasn’t always been able to reach audiences beyond Korea. His appearance on the Colors Show earlier this year with his single “None” created some buzz; with this collaboration, however, I can definitely see more people appreciating and enjoying his music.

Overall, “I Wanna Be Yours” is not a song that I particularly love, but it is a great addition to my “chill” playlist. The lyrics could use some improvement, but the pairing of Pink Sweat\$ and Crush’s voices is definitely worth listening to.

SeniorSpotlight

DAVID KIM

By ANNE BRANDES,
DANIEL CHEN and TINA LI

Staff Writers

Wearing a bright red polo, David Kim walked onto campus as a prep confident that he “was the sh*t.” He’d attended Exeter Summer just a few months before, and since the red brick buildings were all familiar to him, he was sure he’d fit in seamlessly. It took some time, and an attitude change from prep year, but he was right.

As a senior, D. Kim moves with ease from Club Room A where he leads discussions on Asian identity, to Elm Street to plan the next senior class event as the class vice president, to the Wentworth common room greeting preps as they check in. In all of these spaces, D. Kim is known as a welcoming presence on campus—a solid rock and shoulder to lean on.

D. Kim still doesn’t know if he was actually accepted into the Academy. He was initially waitlisted, and on the day where he found out whether or not he would be accepted he “got an email saying [he] didn’t get off the waitlist and was rejected from the school [Exeter],” he said. “But then my dad got a call from somebody in admissions, or a dean—I’m not sure—and they said, your son is actually in, congratulations. So I was like, what? Because it was like hours after that email.”

But D. Kim is undeniably an Exonian now—he sees it as an “act of fate.” “I’m so glad that they called and they said I was accepted,” he said. Kim joked that the possibility of a David Kim mixup was very possible, especially given the plethora of David Kims at the Academy now.

After a hectic admissions process, D. Kim moved in to Wentworth Hall ready to meet his classmates. He vividly remembers his first day in the dorm: a line of proctors by the glass bubble, offering to lift his suitcases. “They all said, ‘We’ll help you move your stuff and then Liam Oakley—a proctor [standing] next to me said, ‘What room are you in?’ And I told him,” D. Kim said. “I thought that was like the nicest thing ever.”

D. Kim now recognizes that the small efforts proctors make are essential in building relationships and community.



Thomas Wang/The Exonian

“I try to do check in as long as I can, because I honestly like saying ‘hi’ to everybody and showing them that I know their name,” he said. “It’s really tough for a lot of people to know everybody’s name in the dorm, and I try to make an effort to know everybody’s name because it’s...the worst feeling if somebody doesn’t know your name. If [anyone] has anything to talk about, [they] can come in and we can talk about it.”

As a member of the football team and both winter and spring track teams, D. Kim hopes to be an inspiration to younger athletes in addition to his dormmates—especially representing Asians, who are commonly stereotyped as being unathletic. “When you think of a football player, you don’t think of an Asian because you don’t see Asians in the NFL. And I love sports, like a lot of Asians,” he said. “Seeing Jeremy Lin or Yao Ming in the NBA—that’s crazy. And it makes me feel so happy...I wanted to

show how Asians aren’t unathletic [when I came to Exeter]. I always wanted other people to be surprised—like, ‘Wow, this Asian is good at sports.’ That sentence doesn’t make sense in a lot of people’s minds, and that was one of my biggest motivations during sports.”

D. Kim has engaged in many other clubs during his time at the Academy, most of which share a common thread: serving those around him. “I think he really strives to be a valuable member of the community,” sister and lower Allison Kim said. “And that might be a part of why he’s in such clubs that help a lot of people—that’s what’s important to him and a big part of his values.”

D. Kim brings his enthusiasm for his work with children to ESSO clubs, according to ESSO Basketball co-head and senior Katya Davis. “This year we both became co-heads and it’s been a lot of fun just running the club with him,” she said. “I know the kids really love him

and they and they’ll try to steal the ball from him and things like that. He’s just vibrant, and he shares that energy with everyone.”

One of Kim’s most important commitments at Exeter is Student Council. Ela Ferhangil ‘19 first met Kim through Student Council’s Recreation Committee as co-heads. “He was very nice and had a lot of energy,” she said. “I instantly knew he was going to be a great addition to the rec committee team.”

Over the time Ferhangil and Kim spent on the committee, they devoted time to creating new events. “I had so much fun planning and organizing the first Beach Ball dance with David in 2018,” Ferhangil said. “He had so many great ideas and made the set up, clean up, and actual event so fun; I could really tell that he wanted the students to have fun, and it showed in his enthusiasm. Even after he became a senior class representative, he continued to be very hands on with the rec committee which was great.”

Ferhangil reflected on Kim’s impact at the Academy, much of which is due to his infectious personality. “David has had a huge impact on the Exeter community,” she said. “I think his impact stems from his genuine love for Exeter and the students on campus. He is there for people in his dorm, in student council, in classes, and has been a great friend of mine for the few years I have known him. His positivity and enthusiasm are contagious, and I know he is going to continue to do great things in the future.”

Across all areas of Exeter life, D. Kim set out to become a great leader to the next generation of younger students, just like his proctors were to him. “I want to give inspiration to those underclassmen now as an upperclassman, um, to show how comfortable I am and how to lead other people. I want to instill that inspiration in them to be like, ‘Oh, when I’m an upperclassman, I want to act like David Kim,’” he said. “I want to be the nicest and most empathetic I can be to show that nobody should be discounted for. I want everybody to pursue anything they can or like anything they want and not be discouraged because they think, ‘Oh, because I’m this, I can’t do that.’ I don’t want that saying to exist.”

GRENOBLE WRITES IN

By TINA FERNANDEZ
Contributing Writer

If you had asked me last year what I would be doing during my senior fall, I, like many others, would have said something about college apps, a fall sport, clubs and classes. In short, I thought that I would still be on the “Exeter grind.” I would have never responded that I’d be in Grenoble, France. But, as it turns out, sometimes what is not planned ends up working in your favor. I write this as I sit on my couch, next to my host brothers, eating a Tarte à la Tomate and watching “Marseillais contre le reste du monde,” arguably both the best and worst reality show I have ever watched.

What I am doing right now, I think, sums up my experience here. Why? Well, when I think about a host family, a French reality TV show and a Swiss recipe, the only word that comes to mind to describe all three is unknown. Just eight weeks ago, my host family was only a group of strangers, a Tarte à la Tomate was nothing more than something similar to pizza and “Marseillais contre le reste du monde” was just a show I could not understand without subtitles.

It was this combination of unknowns that propelled me out of a comfort zone



Courtesy of Facebook

I thought I had already surpassed. In just eight weeks, my host family became one of the nicest people I have ever met, la Tarte à la Tomate became my favorite dish and “Marseillais contre le reste du monde” became a weekly activity that allowed me to bond with my host sister.

I came to Grenoble ready to learn something new every day. Whether that was slang, French songs or authors

I had not yet heard of, I was ready to take in information from those around me. I was ready to observe, participate and grasp as much as I could. I wasn’t expecting that my time in Grenoble would be such a period of self-discovery. I ended up learning a lot more about myself—from food preferences to the way I approach difficult situations—and the reflection allowed me to embrace a

slower-paced lifestyle and appreciate the details I used to overlook.

Here, I have become much more interested in art. Now, I find museum visits—something I dreaded before—rather pleasant. In class, I finally understood how to analyze a work of art by putting all the pieces of the puzzle together to truly understand a painting. And, of course, I was able to see the works of art I had only ever heard about in stories and articles—La Joconde, La Venise de Milo, La Coronation de Napoléon and Les Noces de Cana. I discovered a new way to learn about history through the values that historical events embody, rather than through the figures and dates that represent them. Finally, I learned how much I dislike French literature. No offense, Voltaire.

When I go back to campus, I hope to see things in the same way I have in Grenoble. I encourage anyone who is considering going abroad to take advantage of the opportunity. In the end, not many high schoolers are fortunate enough to partake in this type of activity. It will be, for sure, an experience that you will cherish forever.

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FacultySpotlight

LAUREN JOSEF

By DANIEL CHEN

Staff Writer

If you've seen a pregnant woman with blonde-black hair hurrying across campus from Front Street House to the Goel Center for Theater and Dance, chances are you've seen Director of Costumes Lauren Josef. Josef creates costumes for all the productions of the Academy—from dance recitals to mainstage productions. She balances it all with an excellent intuition for design and theme.

Josef began her exploration of drama at just five years old. She played the youngest Billy Goats Gruff in a community production of Three Billy Goats Gruff. It wasn't the role, however, that inspired her to continue—rather the community. "I was maybe three feet tall max, but the whole cast treated me so well and I felt welcome," she said. She recalled thinking afterwards: "I'd like to be a part of this [community] for the rest of my life."

Josef's interests, initially, were not behind the scenes, but on the stage. She attended James Madison University in Virginia originally to act in musical theater, although she always had a knack for craft. "I've made a lot of costumes throughout my life, whether it be Halloween or for friends. I've always been sort of crafty. The costuming part didn't become a part of my life until my sophomore year of college. I took a basic sewing class. My friend convinced me to sign up for it because otherwise, it wasn't going to run," she said. "And so I signed up for it and the teacher encouraged me to continue and I loved the class."

Josef was able to pursue more electives regarding the behind-the-scenes of drama as well as design. After college, she moved to Chicago, acting in productions sporadically. But she was confronted with a decision: between theater and her personal life, between acting and design.

She ultimately decided on costume design. "A performing career had too many sacrifices for the life that I wanted. It would have been really hard for me to start a family. I was missing out on a lot of things that were important to me, like friends' weddings or family events—things that I love to do that were a part of me," she said. "So



JaQ Lai/The Exonian

it stopped being so much fun because I also had to work a full time job at the same time. So the costuming part felt like it was still fulfilling one of my deepest passions and that the performing part could always be a part of my life. It just wasn't what I wanted to do for the rest of my life, all day, every day."

Costume design has enabled her creativity and unique perspective to come to life. "I love looking at plays from different directions. If I can approach it in a way that's not as obvious as the first answer, that's really fulfilling for me," she said. "It always starts off with analyzing a play and analyzing really the characters or even in a dance like in Nutcracker—they're more whimsical characters." The Nutcracker, which will feature the unique twist of being set in Candyland, will show this Saturday, November 9 and Sunday, November 10.

Being a part of the Academy's Theater Department has fueled her vision as well. "I love the part of collaboration with all of the

other designers who are on the show, like the set designer and lighting designer," she said. "because we can feed off of each other and then we get these great ideas that we never would've thought of on our own—that's really fun."

Chair of the Theater Department Robert Richards agreed, voicing how Josef brightened each day of work. "Mrs. Josef is the twinkle in the stars, the first rays at sunrise," he declared. "Her spirit and talents are such gifts to the department and community. I love her sense of humor and her keen, artistic eye. You just feel good being around her."

Even beyond the theater, Josef's welcoming presence has been noted by colleagues. "Ms. Josef's enthusiasm for theater, her enthusiasm for teaching and her enthusiasm for life make her an amazing educator. Her curiosity, her sense of humor and her attention to detail make her a fabulous storyteller," Instructor in English Tyler Caldwell said. "I remember the first time I officially met Ms. Josef, I felt as if I had known

her for years. She engages in a conversation so fully that the rest of the world seems to disappear. She has an amazing way of making those around her feel comfortable and valued."

Beyond designing costumes, Josef also teaches courses in the theater department. "Right now, I'm teaching technical theater and design, which is a challenge for me at times because it covers all of the technical theater elements, not only costuming," she said. "And what I love about that class is a lot of times we get students who have never really been exposed to theater. So it's really fun to see the progression when they come in at the beginning to the end when they're like theater experts when they leave," she said.

Senior Josh Riddick was one of those students who had not been previously exposed to the arts. "Ms. Josef has introduced me to the arts, which I did not have much experience or skill before the course started," he said. "I now have a greater interest for arts and theater and a greater appreciation for them."

This spring, Josef will premiere a new course: THR300: Costume Design and Construction. "I cannot wait for that class. It's really my expertise. It's only costumes. There's a big design portion. There's also a construction portion where people are learning to sew and they'll be building their own garments," she said. "It's also got a very artistic piece to it where I want to encourage students to find who they are as designers, which is really rewarding for me because I've started to find myself and my style. So I'm really excited to see students finding their style."

Josef's baby is due anytime in the next few weeks, but right now she will continue to be an active member of campus life. "It's really important to live in the present when you can, because I feel like life is short—and people say that all the time, but I think that if you're living in the future or the past, then you're doing yourself a disservice because all we have is what we have right now," she said.

She concluded with a musing of her future here: "I'm loving my adventure here. I think I can see myself being here as far forward as I can think, which is not that far forward—but I love being here. I'd like to be a big part of growing the department and eventually raising a new baby."

EXONIANS PERFORM AT KARAOKE NIGHT

By FELIX YEUNG

Staff Writer

A rendition of "Country Roads" capped three hours of singing that oscillated from half-screaming to three-part harmonies. On Saturday, Nov. 2, the Office of Student Activities hosted a spirited night of karaoke featuring songs such as "Don't Stop Believing," "Toxic" and "Piano Man." The event was organized by Assistant Director of Student Activities Kelly McGahie and had significant student turnout.

The event planning began when McGahie noticed a Saturday night with no activities in her calendar. "There was nothing to do that night...I wanted something for the students who weren't overwhelmed—or were completely overwhelmed," she said. "I wanted something that would let students come for the whole night or just for half an hour." McGahie had a hunch that students would show, and they did in droves.

For this event, McGahie brought in a professional disc jockey. "The guy comes in with the lights, the sound system, all the songs [and] the video monitor," she said. "It was just, 'Click, click, click.' Then, he sent me a contract. I hire a professional so I don't have to worry about all that drama...Just like the kids, I just need something fun."

To many students, this event was an opportunity to unwind. "Before, I was not going to do anything. It's nice to be able to go from working really hard to just relaxing with your friends, hanging out," prep Ming Thompson said. "Even if you don't sing, you can still be present. It's a social thing—a good alternative to work."

While many in the crowd did not consider themselves singers, they found the courage to get up and perform. "I think it's being with your friends that lets you get up there and be yourself," lower Josh Morissette said. "You don't have to be perfect. You can be bad, even. It's just about having a lot of fun." In the course of the evening, Morissette lent his voice to several group numbers.

Prep Charlie Holtz felt that the communal lack of skill allowed students to be more free with their singing. "I know that everyone else will be worse, which gives me the confidence to get up there," he said. "It will be hilarious. I'll make fun of myself, but it will be a blast."

Even those who did not sing found a way to engage. "It's more fun to be

part of the atmosphere, enjoying other people having whatever this all is," prep Asa Campbell said. "A lot of my friends are here, and I don't enjoy a lot of attention on myself, which lets me just be here without singing and still enjoy myself."

McGahie noted that students tended to pick a diversity of songs, rather than just new songs. "If we have a dance and a song is more than three weeks old, everybody's like, 'It's so old! Who would listen to this?'" she said. "But I'm up there, and I know that someone is going to do 'Sweet Caroline' from Neil Diamond. All this stuff predates when I was in high school, and I love it."

Lower Kate Mautz echoed McGahie's thoughts. "I love singing older music—this is a great time to throw it back a little bit," she said. "I know the words to older songs better, from a few years ago. I purposefully pick older songs to sing."

Students attributed song choices to ones that would energize the crowd. "I want people to get hyped. That's my main goal. That's why I sang 'I Want It That Way,'" lower Eric Obukhanich said. "It's something that's really exciting—songs that everybody knows."

At first, this audience consisted predominantly of preps. "The crowd is overwhelmingly from the prep class," prep Hannah Vogel said. "It's very high energy. I think I saw someone dab—preps are going to be preps. But it's all good."

However, as the night went on, more and more upperclassmen began to appear. "I'm here because I was walking by and saw how much fun the preps were having," senior Audrey Vanderslice said. "The energy makes me feel nostalgic. Throwback to prep year! It's lit."

The night soon became an opportunity for students of various grade levels to interact. "There are older people—it's really great for inclusion. We're preps, it feels good to be included with the uppers," prep Jade Pierce said. "We feel accepted. People [joke about] the preps all the time. Now, they're having fun with them, and it's almost a relief—maybe if I see them, we can say hello."

At the end of the day, McGahie organized the activity to offer students a break. "It's nothing but silliness, which is exactly what this place needs more of right now," she said.

MATTER MAGAZINE: AI & CLIMATE CHANGE

By MINSEO KIM

Contributing Writer

Independent research institution Rhodium Group released a report this year stating that carbon dioxide emissions in the U.S rose by 3.4 percent from 2017 to 2018—the largest increase in the last two decades.

For the past few years, global warming and climate change issues have been at the forefront of various discussions. The Rhodium Group's report, along with other climate change studies, reveal the long-term impacts increased carbon emissions will cause.

An article written by Kelly Levin and Denis Tirpak (both from the World Resources Institution) reviewed the major events of climate extremes that occurred in 2018. It particularly noted the global increase of temperatures: "In June, Oman saw its highest minimum temperature at 108.7°F, a new Asian record ... Meanwhile, Japan's summer heat wave resulted in 22,000 people hospitalized with heat stroke."

Other negative effects of climate change listed in the article include changes in precipitation patterns, greater intensity of natural disasters and storms and the decreasing volume of polar ice caps.

In order to combat global warming and prevent further environmental damage, some communities are instituting "green" initiatives by refining composting methods and changing minor aspects of daily lifestyles, such as choice of transportation. For example, Project Drawdown, a global research organization which reviews viable solutions to climate change, and Paul Hawken partnered to organize a list of eco-friendly solutions for citizens that can be used to bolster awareness for the environment.

Are there other more technological or productive ways to tackle such climate problems? In the past decade, many researchers have started looking into machine learning for further solutions. To understand machine learning, though, one must first learn about the development of artificial intelligence (AI).

AI can be categorized into four large classification groups: supervised learning, in which the program model receives a substantial dataset containing pre-classified input-output data pairs to train and notice patterns; unsupervised

learning; semi-supervised learning and reinforcement learning. Coding languages like TensorFlow and PyTorch are all used to create machine learning models, and platforms such as Google Classroom are widely used for small-scale projects requiring low inference time as well. As the understanding of AI and its techniques develop rapidly, it is becoming implemented in various fields.

Scientists use AI in a variety of fields. DXplain, developed at the Laboratory of Computer Science at the Massachusetts General Hospital, is a decision support system which assesses a set of symptoms and produces treatment suggestions for the clients. AI is also used in computer science, where it constitutes the framework and inner workings of competitive gaming programs. Often times, different areas of AI intersect to create scientific breakthroughs like AlphaZero, a high-skill trained machine learning model. The program is a hybrid of reinforcement learning, unsupervised learning and decision-tree processes that can intelligently play chess, shogi and Go.

Machine learning plays a crucial role in the battle against climate change. It can make more accurate climate predictions so governments can set climate policies or goals accordingly based on relatively accurate projections. AI is the mark of a new age of human innovation, and it may be part of the key to resolving the environmental problem, or at least take a part in mitigating the effects of climate change.

Examples include:

1. SilviaTerra: This program uses AI and satellite imagery to observe and report the size, species and health of trees and has greatly increased the demand for manual searches through forests.

2. Green Horizon Project: Run by IBM, this program creates pollution forecasts. It proved helpful as it led Beijing to decrease average smog by 35 percent (2012-2017).

3. CycleGans: "GAN," or Generative Adversarial Network, is a network that generates statistics, personas or information without a need for other additional inputs. This is advantageous for collecting greater amounts of data for the data graphs.



ExonianHumor



Best Joke Yet

By JASPER YU & BENJAMIN GORMAN
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TFW Andover Actually Thinks They Stand a Chance

By BENJAMIN GORMAN
I don't like Andover



E/a is cool but Exeter Humor is even cooler.

Please submit.

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Maybe join an improv class or something.

exonianhumor@gmail.com

It's been an honor humoring you this year. - 141

Barbarian Club Storms Andover

By BENJAMIN GORMAN
Barbarian Club or Bust

It looks like students at Andover will actually have something to be excited about this week, compared to their mind-numbingly boring day to days. On Thursday, Exeter's Barbarian Club plans to embark on a 25-mile march to Andover. Students in the club have not been authorized to do this yet, but plan to wrestle with the deans over the matter, literally. Co-head Koroggvulr Johnson said, "[they've] already set out the mud pit and everything. [The deans] haven't agreed to wear the customary loin-cloths yet, which is a bit of a setback since it's not legally binding if they don't, but [he] thinks [the deans] will come around."

Barbarian Club has actually put in a surprising amount of planning, according to member Hrat Smith. "We usually spend meetings spit roasting whole cows and seeing who can get punched in the face the most without passing out," Smith said, "but these past few weeks the chieftain's actually laid down a lot of the groundwork for our raid on Andover."

After bringing the chieftain, senior Orleg Williams, a full bear hide and three alligator steaks to prove my worth, I was able to get some of the nitty gritty on the assault on Andover out of her. "We're bringing about 400 feral hogs on our march with us," Williams revealed, "which we plan to

release on Andover's campus once we arrive. If I could have my way, I would've picked something like rams or lions, but beggars can't be choosers. It doesn't really matter, though; boars are a vicious species and I admire their tenacity." Williams did not reveal much else, as she was concerned Andover would read this article and prepare counter measures. Fortunately, after I assured her nobody at Andover could read, she shared with me that they plan to throw the opposing football team into the nearest volcano. While some might believe this to be a violation of fair play, I say the game's already begun.

Quotes of the Week

"I've got a countdown going until I can drop out."

-Some kid in Grill

"I mean it sucks knowing we're gonna lose, but at least it'll be fun."

-Every Andover Student

"Anne, can you pop off?"

-Caroline Fleming '20

"I will pop off at 3, after I finish incorporating Principal Rawson's quotes."

-Anne Brandes '21

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coming soon

Boys' Water Polo Edges Out Andover

Bear Polo Downs the Smurfs In Triple Overtime



Senior Andrew Sun pump fakes the defense.

Eva Carchidi/The Exonian

By CHARLOTTE LISA
Staff Writer

Water polo's second face off against Andover this season did not disappoint. The team fought until the final seconds of a game extended into three overtimes. After a hard-fought battle, Big Red once again snatched the victory with a final score of 10-9. The boys began the game with what teammates called a slow start, but Exeter was able to stay determined and focused, allowing them to build the momentum needed to persevere through the long game and finish on top.

It was a similar story when Boys' Water Polo traveled to Andover a couple weeks ago. After five overtimes, Big Red pulled out a win and set a record for the longest match in program history. Exeter now had home-pool advantage and knew

what to expect of both their opponent and themselves.

Upper Adam Tuchler summarized the team's outlook, saying, "Going into this game we had the mindset of winners." Upper David Mancini elaborated that "the team desired to improve upon our first win against Andover earlier this year by getting on the fast breaks quickly and having a harder press defense."

However, it took some time for Big Red to build momentum. "At the beginning of the game," Mancini said, "it seemed that the home crowd was intimidating, which resulted in a slow start to our offensive game." He continued to describe that as "the game neared the end, something clicked within all of us and we began to play as we wished. The crowd added us during the overtime periods, driving us to score."

"Although the first half didn't go

as well as we would have liked it to, we really picked it up in the second half," Tuchler agreed.

Lower Hayden Giles echoed such statements as well, saying, "We were sleeping most of the game, woke up when they were up with 30 seconds left." Indeed, it was quite a wake up call. According to Giles, as the final seconds of the game ticked away on the clock, upper Cooper Walshe bulleted a quick pass to senior Michael Carbone, who buried the ball in the back of the net, sending the game into overtime. Not only was this play itself immensely invigorating, but according to Tuchler, only moments after "an Andover kid began to gloat about winning. All of a sudden we scored a goal and brought the game into overtime."

In the end, it was senior captain Charlie Venci who put the matter to

rest, scoring the winning goal for Exeter. "Charlie's last goal, sealing the deal, pumped us like never before," Mancini said. As put by Giles, the team simply "went back to basics, beating the Smurfs in the third OT."

Having conquered Andover twice, the team will now turn their focus to interschols, bearing down on the competition there. "During interschols," Mancini said, "we desire to play as well as we did during overtime against Andover from the start of the game, with the expectation of taking Loomis and Brunswick down!" Having come close to the title of champion but not all the way at the past few interschols, Exeter hopes to take it this year. When discussing such, Giles recalled the words of wisdom from Water Polo alum Jamie Cassidy, class of 2018. "Don't call it a comeback, we've been here for years."

Girls' Field Hockey Dominates Dexter



Lower Victoria Quinn carries the ball upfield.

Eva Carchidi/The Exonian

By FELIX YEUNG
Staff Writer

After finishing the first half 1-0, Girls' Field Hockey rocketed to win the game with a score of 5-3, taking down Dexter Southfield last Friday. This brings the team's record to 7-7 before E/a Weekend.

Upper Ellie Griffin noted that the team had a spectacular start. "We started off with a lot of intensity so we made great passes up the field and scored early," she said. "We got ahead and were up 4-0 near the middle of the second half."

Feeling confident, the team decided to experiment with positions. "We got into a pretty bad slump in the second half, so, in a few minutes, they had brought the score to 4-3," senior Rianna Parla said.

"This was primarily because most of the team had been put in positions they did not normally play." However, the team was able to regroup and put the players back in their usual positions.

During the game, the team focused on "give and go" plays. "[It] worked pretty well because our passes were fast, and the other team couldn't keep up," Parla said. "We were able to keep the ball on their side with this method for most of the game because we didn't give them much of a chance to defend."

However, this was not their only tactic. "[One] of our strategies were to move the ball down the sides," lower Victoria Quinn said. "Jill Cloonan and Molly Longfield always do a really good job with that, and especially in this game. They provided a lot of really good crosses to get

it into the circle and spark opportunities."

Parla noticed that, during the game, the team had improved drastically on passing. "[It's] why the ['give and go'] method worked. Usually, as a team we tend to do more dribbling than passing, which is why we sometimes have trouble getting the ball up the field," she said, "but everyone was pretty unselfish in this game. In general, we outpaced the other team."

Quinn had some more shout-outs for team members. "Some strengths in the game were that we had a lot of really good transitions down the field, and also re-defending and stopping their hits. Sophia Rosati and Ellie Griffin did a really good job stepping to ball making defensive stops," she said. "Also, [goalies] Ursie Wise and Annie Smaldone both had

great saves in net."

The team continues to work on improving communication, though group bonds are strong. "Our strategies were largely focused on the improvement of our communication with one another. Right now, I think we're all just working up for this weekend," upper Ursie Wise said. "The field hockey team has such great energy. Love my ladies."

Prep Eden Welch felt that the game gave the team a good morale boost. "I am really proud of our grit and determination, which allowed us to bring back the intensity in those last few minutes of the game," she said. "This was a very good win for our team, and we will carry this momentum into E/a week!"

Catch the Big Red field hockey team this Saturday on Hatch Field at 12:00 p.m.



ExonianSports



BIG RED XC ANNIHILATES ANDOVER

Exeter Cross Country Sweeps Andover's Course



Lower Kaitlyn Flowers finishes out the course. Senior Will Coogan and upper Varun Oberai lead the pack to glory.

Eva Carchidi/The Exonian

By ANNE BRANDES
Staff Writer

After emerging from the woods, neck and neck with an Andover runner, upper Varun Oberai overtook his competitor in the final stretch of the race. Oberai's performance reflected Exeter's performance as a whole—both Junior Varsity (JV) and Varsity on the girls' and boys' teams beat Andover and many members of each team reached new personal records.

Senior and captain Maddie Machado elaborated on the girls' JV performance. "Our JV team raced first, and we were a little nervous watching them start the race because there were three or four Andover runners that took the lead right away," she said. "By the time the racers came back to the final 500 meters, we had two really surprising personal bests from Emma Chen and Claire Fu. They are both new runners this year, and they both ran over 30 seconds faster than they had at any other race this season to come in third and fourth."

Senior and co-captain Lucy Gilchrist noted JV's consistent performance over the course of the meet. "JV's entire last mile made

the difference between winning and losing," Gilchrist said. "Awesome perseverance."

A highlight of the JV race was senior Madeline Huh's performance, noted upper Caroline Luff. "Madeline Huh [won] the race for us," she said. "Exeter and Andover were tied, and the scoring went to the 6th running on each team and Madeline beat the Andover #6 runner."

Varsity runners achieved new times as well, Machado added. "For Varsity, I want to highlight Sophie Cohen and Kaitlyn Flowers, who both broke the 20:00 barrier for the first time this season to come in first and third, respectively," Machado said. "Andover's course is on the challenging side because it's isolated in the woods for the majority of the time, and there are a couple really tough hills, so it's really incredible that they were able to pull off such fast times."

For the Varsity runners, upper Gia Pisano's performance especially stood out during the race, Luff said. "In the varsity race a highlight was seeing Gia Pisano's kick across the final 1k of the course—it was awesome," she said.

The success of the team, according to Luff, can be attributed to preparation outside of the meet. "We owe our success to our hard

training and close team dynamic," Luff said. "We work so hard on each workout and make sure to push each other to our limits. Whether that is running 7.5 miles at 6:15 a.m. or an easy run during GH, we give it our all. But we also have so much fun, and our team is extremely close this year, which helps us lift each other up and pack up more in races."

Luff noted the personal records broken by the team. "There were over 19 season and lifetime personal records set in both races, which is really amazing considering Andover has an extremely hilly and difficult course," she said.

The boys' team also had many successes. According to lower Tommy Seidel, highlights of the team included the performances by Oberai, senior Lenny Chen and preps Mateo Connelly and Oliver Brandes. "Lots of people went out really strong and stayed very strong," Seidel said.

The team's improvement, Seidel explained, is due to the dynamic between runners. "We have an epic team culture," Seidel said. "We're really tight-knit team and everyone supports each other."

Chen elaborated on his new record during this race. "That was probably the best race I've ran my whole life," he said. "I've been running for seven years, so that is saying

something. I kind of fed off the team and the hype going into the race and then I think that allowed me to have a really good race."

After a week of less intense practices, "tapering," the runners were primed to perform well in the meet. "Training-wise we're in our taper period right now, which means running less miles," Chen said. "All in all, I think as a team we felt rested and ready to run."

For Brandes, the motivating team culture helped him succeed in the race. "I packed up with other people in the JV roster," he said. "That really helped me throughout the race because I got a big cramp in the middle. Seeing my friends around my fellow teammates around me helped me keep going."

Chen is excited to perform well as a team in the rest of the season. "Before this race, a bunch of seniors helped me prepare and bounce back from the prior race," he said. "Definitely my hope going into the end of the season is success for the team, as a whole."

Reflecting upon the team wide success, Machado is fired up for their last meet of the season. "We're looking forward to racing at NMH for interschols next weekend, which is also a notoriously hilly course," she said. "It was good to race at Andover to gauge how our team's doing with hill work"

Exeter/Andover Game Schedule On Saturday

Girls' Varsity Soccer in Phelps Stadium: 10:30 a.m.

Girls' Varsity Volleyball in Love Gym: 11:00 a.m.

Girls' Varsity Field Hockey on Hatch Field: 12:00 p.m.

Boys' Varsity Soccer at the Outdoor Track: 12:30 p.m.

Varsity Football at Phelps Stadium: 3:30 p.m.



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