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# Coming of Age in Cultural Toxicity

*By the Tattler Editorial Staff*

This month, The Tattler is highlighting the many “toxicities” that contemporary teens face, ranging from the use of profanity at high school sports games to present-day “hookup” culture. On April 3rd, we explored masculinity and sexual violence, holding discussions with experts and students about the “boys will be boys” mentality, sexual assault and harassment, and gender on a global scale, along with a screening of the film “Roll Red Roll.” On April 6th, we held our CATillion at Lincoln’s cottage, exploring societal norms and the maze of teen culture in the format of a social dance. On April 26, 27, 28, the Coming of Age in Toxicity Museum will take place, encompassing all topics covered in the earlier events of this month and many of the issues described in this edition.

In this issue, we discuss the notorious “List” that ranked 18 IB girls based on their appearance and the steps the girls took to turn a negative situation into an educational opportunity. We examine the rise of “hookup” culture at the expense of relationships, along with the deterioration of romance and intimacy. We explore the important voice that students have in demanding change, whether it is in the name of gun reform, climate change, cancer awareness or humanitarian crises.

The Tattler Editorial Staff delves into these many issues and more as we question the normalcy of the toxicities that contemporary teens face and consider what actions teens are taking to combat them.

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## A Home-Grown Scandal Gets Worldwide Attention

*By Lee Schwartz*

International Women’s Day was last month, but its celebration was unique at B-CC. See how the list scandal became larger than our school.

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## Let’s Be Consistent About “Tolerance” at B-CC

*By Connor Dickinson*

A Tattler columnist discusses the student reaction to “The List” and how it reflects an underlying lack of tolerance for minority opinions at B-CC.

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## Raising Boys Without Lowering Expectations

*By Lilly Behbehani and Emma Volkers*

“Girls go to college to get more knowledge, boys go to Jupiter to get more stupider”. See how our toxic culture impacts girls’ versus boys’ performance in school and at work.

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## Hate and Intolerance in Today’s News

*By Josh Garber, Sasha Frank-Stempel, and Daniel Rosentover*

From anti-Semitism to homophobia, the Tattler explores four instances of intolerance that have plagued the news in recent weeks.

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## Who You Calling Shallow, Matthews?

*By David Lopilato, Tattler supervisor*

The Post’s Jay Matthews claims students can’t handle “depth.” Mr. Lopilato explains how students prove to be anything but shallow in the right environment.

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## Toxic Hookup Culture: Is Modern Romance ‘Canceled’?

*By Lilly Behbehani*

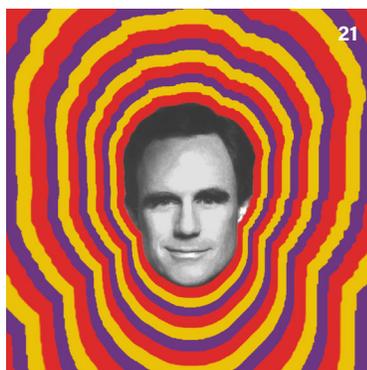
“So, you up?”

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<b>10</b>	<b>Where Does the Wall Stand? A Timeline</b>	<i>By Jason Grayer</i>	Since Donald Trump declared his run for the presidency, a border wall has been his most significant and controversial campaign promise. Here's where it stands today.
<b>11</b>	<b>How Venezuela's Power Struggle Affects B-CC Students</b>	<i>By Ethan Tiao</i>	The humanitarian and political crisis in Venezuela continues as a battle for power erupts between President Nicolas Maduro and Head of National Assembly Juan Guaido.
<b>13</b>	<b>Teenagers: A Force of Nature</b>	<i>By Yael Chiappori</i>	Students around the world have stepped up and become the much needed voices against climate change. See how B-CC students reacted to the Climate Change Walkout on March 15th.
<b>14</b>	<b>For Second Consecutive Year, Charity Month Falls Short</b>	<i>By Josh Garber</i>	Why has the SGA raised so little money for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society in recent years? See what possible roadblocks and challenges came in the way of receiving more donations.
<b>17</b>	<b>The Dark Side of Medieval Reenactment</b>	<i>By Isabel Danzis and Grace Harrington</i>	Is it a love of history or white supremacy that piques the interest of Creative Anachronists? Explore the dark side of Medieval reenactment as they recreate worlds that were once seen as "white utopias."



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<b>20</b>	<b>2018: The Year of Teacher Activism</b>	<i>By Rachel Auerbach and Emma Volkers</i>	Underpaid, undervalued, and fed up. In 2018, teachers took a stand and demanded change, going on strike to call for education reform and better teaching conditions.
<b>22</b>	<b>Deal or No Deal?</b>	<i>By Connor Dickinson and Aidan Smyth</i>	Connor and Aidan are back with another debate, this time discussing Green New Deal. Is it a damaging, socialist dream or a necessary step in combating climate change? Read their arguments below.
<b>26</b>	<b>Malaika's Thoughts</b>	<i>By Malaika Bhayana</i>	Tattler columnist Malaika Bhayana has even MORE opinions. She dares you to read them.
<b>32</b>	<b>You're Auxing Wrong</b>	<i>By Jamie Murray and Daniel Navratil</i>	Having good AUX etiquette is important. Gen-Z needs some help.
<b>35</b>	<b>Burnin' Up for The Jonas Brothers</b>	<i>By Lee Schwartz</i>	The Jonas Brothers are back. Read a review of their new music video, and a first-hand story of a student's experience as a Jonas Brothers fan.

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# The ABCs of the Infamous IB List

Eighteen girls. Eighteen names. Eighteen numerical values. For an entire week, B-CC's IB program came to a standstill after a list ranking girls based on their attractiveness circulated throughout its students. This list, written one year ago by a group of IB students, resurfaced, starting a wave of discussions about sexual harassment and toxic masculinity. The girls on the list, and a number of others, initiated their own process of reeducation and restorative justice. Their efforts caught national media attention, the story circulating throughout some of the U.S.'s largest media outlets. Among B-CC students the list became a debate on what is and is not valid when it comes to sexual harassment. Read on to hear students' thoughts on the controversy.



## A Home-Grown Scandal Gets Worldwide Attention



BY LEE SCHWARTZ

International Women's Day was March 8th. But the celebratory day for women's rights was far from celebratory for the B-CC IB diploma students.

73 seniors sat in a circle in F310 at the beginning of fifth period. For almost two-hours, the students engaged in discussion. If you listened to the rumblings at B-CC at all, you know what the meeting was about.

Almost one month after the list, the problem has become larger than the eighteen girls on that document. The incident has become national and international news, but it is not just about the list anymore. The list points to a larger trend of toxic masculinity in our school environment. Each grade has experienced an action similar or exactly like the list. This is not a stand-alone transgression.

No matter where you stand on the list and what you believe, the incident has sparked a school-wide movement. Like many girls, I am somewhat thankful for the opportunity the list provided to bring this issue into a larger light.

B-CC students, both boys and girls in IB and not in IB, have taken this incident and ran with it, trying to create change in the overall school climate and community. With almost weekly meetings, male and female seniors meet to discuss with administration how to send a larger message to the student body. Teaching the underclassmen about male toxicity, "boys will be boys", and other topics, has become a priority.

In addition to this project, the help of B-CCTV, and Toxicity Month thrown by The Tattler and the creators of MoCAT has been beneficial. March and April have become two months of addressing an entire culture of toxicity and sexism that faces our generation. What happened at B-CC is not unique in any means, but what is unique is that we are unafraid to do something. The incident with the list has triggered that.

For those who did not see a problem with the list, I acknowledge that not recognizing the act as toxic was probably very common. The list is a representation of a culture we are used to and have not been taught to recognize as problematic. I do not blame anyone for this. But you must recognize that if the list has managed to get this much attention, there must be something important about it. That is why something must be done, and we cannot just sweep this under the

rug.

"We are not victims against victimizers." says senior Gabs Capizzi. This isn't a battle of if the list was bad or not. Now it is addressing our school and generational culture as a whole.

Nevertheless, I believe learning and understanding is a process. Punishment for these boys is not necessarily the answer. I want them to know what they did was wrong, but more importantly why it was wrong and why we care so much that they change their behavior. Through what the seniors and the student body are planning, I am hoping this can be a learning moment.

More than anything, I want to be confident in my future. I want to be confident that these smart, accomplished boys will go into the world with the right mindset. When they become the leaders I know they will be, I want them to carry with them an acknowledgment of the toxic and masculine world we live in. All of this seems so far from a little list created in high school. To many, the list really means nothing. But to me it's a sign that the school environment, and our boys, need to change. Luckily, girls and boys alike have come together to implement school-wide action. Through the coming weeks, students can expect to see the product of these plans.

# Five Senior Boys on the Controversy



fter the IB List controversy erupted at B-CC, some boys felt left out of the conversation. We asked a few senior boys for their thoughts. Here's what they said:

"I don't think making the issue regarding the list so national was necessary, although the way it was published and conducted was very well done. A lot of people were trying to seek some kind of vengeance on the culprits, such as getting them rescinded or disciplined by their future colleges. That's too far in my opinion. I think the way the school handled it was decent, although they did deserve to have a harder consequence. I do not believe this is an issue worth overshadowing the very successful achievements that students did connected to the march for gun control. The way the girls conducted themselves in the interviews and how they took hold of the situation inside and outside of school deserve credit."

*Abel Suarez*

"I think what the girls did was incredible. They were able to band together and fight for a solution to this problem which was incredibly mature of them. It would've been very easy to demonize the creator, but it seems they're more focused on changing the climate at hand because they understand this is a bigger issue than just one list. Although the idea of a list doesn't sound too threatening, that isn't for us to determine; we aren't in the girls' position."

*Duncan Patchin*

"I think it's great that the girls have really made their voice heard but I think this level of press is a little much. Who am I to say what is and isn't important enough for the press, but surely there are more pressing issues than this? I am in no way trying to excuse the list, but it just seems to me that it's a little blown out of proportion. Again, I am not a girl so I don't understand and haven't experienced actual sexual harassment. Putting numbers on people is clearly wrong but fundamentally everyone judges each other on appearance and it seems a little puzzling to me that this has blown up the way it did."

*Name withheld*

"Obviously the list was not nice, but it was definitely not criminal. Also, I think people overreacted to it. I don't understand why people care so much what one person thinks about them. Have some self respect. I feel bad for those who had their feelings hurt, but I think they should grow up and stop putting so much emphasis on what one person thinks about them. I also think it's absurd that this is global news. Women are being oppressed and even killed in the Middle East, but instead we focus on a group of girls who got their feelings hurt."

*Nick Bowers*

"I'm happy that the girls spoke out about the list and have been able to bring media attention to the subject. I think that the message that they are trying to give is good and is one that should be talked about. However, I don't think that all of the media attention has been positive and there has been a bit of finger pointing on both sides of the argument."

*Nick Bailey*

## Let's Be Consistent About "Tolerance" at B-CC



BY CONNOR DICKINSON

It's a sad reflection of our school's culture and character of its students when you can be cursed out, dismissed, and judged simply due to your views on government or politics. It's almost as if someone gives you a label or a mark that you will forever wear and be identified as. Stereotypes that come with your viewpoints can often lead to one calling you "stupid," "racist," "close-minded," or, most commonly, "intolerant."

After expressing my opinion on Justice Kavanaugh's appointment, I was dumbfounded at the amount of backlash I received from both students and staff alike. But, then again, I shouldn't have been. B-CC is not a friendly environment to those who have an opinion outside the majority. Students who pride themselves on their liberal and progressive values are often the same ones who will shout you down or cut you off for having a differing opinion; to me, it seems as if their "tolerance" only applies to those whose views they tolerate.

At B-CC, the word "Republican" is so taboo that many students dare not describe themselves as one or they will face the consequences. I know

for certain that hundreds of students who hold conservative values at our school are afraid to voice them in class due to the fact that teachers oftentimes hold hostile views towards students with such viewpoints or because one's peers could forever look at them differently.

Yet none of this seems to matter to the vast majority of our school as it has little to no effect on them or they are simply unaware of how bad the situation has become. B-CC students have now fallen into a self-imposed trap of censorship, with a diminished amount of discourse, freedom of thought and expression. I, for one, will not back down to those who have shown the strongest examples of closed-mindedness and intolerance, those who cannot stand hearing an opposing point of view.

This brings me to "the list." Hundreds of students behind closed doors agree that "the list" surely wasn't a nice thing to do, but it wasn't nearly a big enough deal to receive the backlash and media attention it did. Female and male students alike have told me that many times their friends have given a "rating" to someone on their attractiveness and didn't think twice about it. But these same students were afraid to speak up when "the list" was brought up in front of them; on many occasions, they would say things that countered their actual views to avoid an argu-

ment, conflict, or degradation.

You could go to almost any high school in this country and without a doubt you'd find out the utterly shocking news that boys rate girls and girls rate boys. This isn't a new concept; it has been going on for generations. Is this a nice thing to do? No, but surely it isn't as horrific as it was portrayed to be. The main "perpetrator" of the list was vilified by many in the school community for his actions, but many of those same students that condemned him failed to condemn others when it came to labeling or judging someone based on their political beliefs or for having a differing opinion.

The list made national headlines across the country, but it's confusing to me why it received as much or more attention than a conservative student being punched in the face at UC-Berkeley, speakers with opposing ideologies chased off campus at Middlebury College with violence and intimidation, students giving an N-word pass at Churchill High School, or even the Damascus locker room incident.

Our school and the community around it has condemned those for judging people by the way they look. It's time they do the same when it comes to judging people for their political beliefs or having an opposing opinion.

# Dear Boys: It's Up to You to Change Our School Climate



Dear boys,

I'm disappointed in you. I'm disappointed that you feel entitled to define my worth for me, that you believe you can assign me a numerical value based on your perception of my attractiveness. I'm disappointed that my butt and boobs mean more to you than my personality and my intelligence. But beyond being disappointed, I'm just not surprised. I know you; I know how you act and I know the school climate that allows you to continue to feel this entitlement.

Although in this case the incident happened within the IB program, this is not a uniquely IB issue. Nor is it a uniquely B-CC issue. This type of toxic masculinity is a societal issue, but the difference is that here at B-CC we have both the privilege and the resources to address this head on. We cannot allow boys to believe that these ac-

tions are okay. When you don't face consequences for your actions, you feel no need to stop them.

I wrote this article in response to a specific incident, but the sad truth is that this incident was nothing extraordinary. Sexism, objectification and harassment are commonplace in our society. You saw nothing wrong with your actions because you had no reason to believe otherwise. While finding certain people more attractive than others is natural, you took this practice to a twisted extent. You assigned me a number, pitted me against 17 of my peers and reduced me from a person to an object.

You probably don't know how it feels to know you're being stared at and evaluated each time you get up in class to get a tissue. You probably don't stand in front of your bedroom mirror worried that your shirt is too low-cut and that it might give someone the wrong idea. You've probably never cried while alone on a run because a grown man honked and yelled obscenities at you

from his car, and I sincerely hope that you never have to.

You probably won't ever be able to relate to these feelings, and that's no one's fault. But it is your duty to validate the feelings and the experiences of women and believe them when they tell you how monumental this problem is. When a girl tells you about an experience she has had with sexism, your first response shouldn't be to question her. Call out your friends when they make derogatory comments. Stop enabling those around you. Don't let "boys be boys." Understand that the actions you choose to take have a profound effect, and it's up to you to decide what type of impact you want to have. You may not know what it's like to feel the way that I, and so many other women do, but you have an obligation to make sure that no one else has to.

Sincerely,  
A fed-up girl

## Boys Deflect Blame for 'The List'. Here's What They Get Wrong.



BY ELLA GOLDBLUM

Earlier this month, a list ranking 18 senior girls in the IB diploma program on a scale of 1-10 by their appearances sparked a wide-ranging conversation about objectification, bullying, enabling, and misogyny within the IB program and B-CC. Here are three of the most popular responses to the situation I have heard from parents, teachers, and fellow students—and how I would like to respond.

### GIRLS ALSO RANK BOYS, SO WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

There is so much assumed in this question. First, there is the idea that accountability is a zero-sum game, that somehow if we address objectification of women we will not be able to hold space for concerns about the wellbeing of boys. I believe we can do both, and feminists everywhere agree with me. In fact, in our society at large, feminists have often been the first or even only people to speak up on behalf of men who have been raped or sexually assaulted. It's upsetting that some men only address concerns about their fellow men when they are attempting to detract from grievances about the objectification of women. I hope that if there comes a day when girls at B-CC rank men by their body parts and share the list with each other, it will be quickly condemned by all students, male and female. That said, past incidents of girls ranking boys for their attractiveness at B-CC have simply not been treated the same way as this event. They've dissipated more quickly because they are not as culturally pervasive. Girls are, as a rule, quick to

put this behavior down from their fellow girls because we know how it feels. Objectification is systemic for women in a way that it is not for men. We are taught to value our bodies as reflections of our worth in a way men are not. Thus, this kind of event is inherently more serious for us. And if something truly harmful like this happened to a man in our school, and he was hurt in the way many of us have been, I think we would all know to speak out against it.

### THERE ARE REAL ISSUES IN AMERICA WITH SEXUAL ASSAULT AND HARASSMENT. WHO CARES ABOUT A LITTLE LIST?

It should not be difficult to understand that the casual, everyday sexualization of women escalates to harassment when it is ignored by our institutions, when its perpetrators continue to be socially revered and given positions of political and economic power. And, similarly, harassment gives way to violence. We do not live in a world of isolated events. If your friends are calibrating women's body parts down to the decimal point, if your friends are analyzing the tenor of a gay person's voice to decide if they are "too gay" for your liking, if your friends are deciding on a number of people of color that can be allowed into your friend group, calling it a "minority rule," and you say absolutely nothing, you are enabling worse behavior. It becomes difficult to deny that we live in a culture that does not listen to victims of sexual violence when we have two alleged sexual assaulters and harassers on the highest court in the land. Both of their victims aired their most traumatic stories in front of the whole world and were still disbelieved or dismissed by mainstream political figures on the left and right. Women have to bare themselves to the world for a fraction of

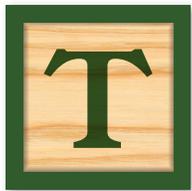
the recognition they deserve. This was evident at the IB meeting, when girls bravely told stories of sexual violation and body image trauma in front of all their classmates and teachers in order to make themselves heard.

### IF I DIDN'T MAKE THE LIST, WHY AM I RESPONSIBLE FOR IT?

Everyone agrees that the men who transcribed, debated about, and circulated rankings for their friends' and classmates' appearances are most guilty for this incident. But it is tiring that the burden always rests on the shoulders of women to explain and end these acts of objectification. Men who were not directly involved should also take this upon themselves because they are the only ones who can be in private spaces with other men and compel them not to partake in this behavior. If it is not your responsibility, whose is it? Is it always the sole task of a victim to speak up and change the culture? It should not be. It is fully possible for men to be allies to women, but it involves more than just saying you support us. It takes some courage and some hard work. And it might mean losing some clout with your friends.

I do not mean to suggest that any of us can be perfect human beings. We are not born "woke." It is always hard to do the right thing in the face of events that seem to rip apart our sense of community and our understanding of each other's struggles. But it is imperative that we start with listening. This Women's History Month, men and women, have a lot of work to do in reevaluating ingrained stereotypes. I will be looking to the inspiring women at B-CC who work tirelessly, who remain unsung heroes in this school's activist efforts, and who do not give up on a better world just because it sometimes seems unrealistic.

# 'The List': Not That Bad, but Better Kept Private



BY ANONYMOUS

The list was not bad on its own, but the fact that it was made public was definitely not good. While the argument could be made that it contributes to a societal objectification of women, this is something that I know has been done by both boys and girls for years. The list becoming public was obviously not a good look and hurt the feelings of many of

those on it, but it being made in private was not morally that bad. It was not intended for anyone on it to see, and it is unfortunate that it had to end up this way. Appearance is something that we naturally notice when looking at people, and there is nothing morally wrong with considering one person to be more attractive than someone else because it all comes down to personal preference.

When it comes to media attention, I feel as though the press is not telling the right story. Instead of describing a problematic society that

encourages this behavior, the stories focus all the blame on the perpetrator and making him out to be a monster rather than someone who made a mistake without realizing it. No matter where you stand on the issue, I think that the response from the girls has been really impressive and it's crazy how they have managed to make the whole area aware of a problem that started within a small group of people.

## Raising Boys Without Lowering Expectations



BY LILLY BEHBEHANI  
AND EMMA VOLKERS

Young women have always been taught to strive for excellence, to push themselves to get the highest grade or the extra credit.

You would think that with all the recognition women receive in the classroom, the same would be reflected in the workplace. This being said, in 2018, only 24 of the CEOs recognized on Fortune 500's list were females and a study at Harvard showed that men hold 95% of top positions at large companies.

Junior twins Anna and Nick Roberson spoke about their academic experience growing up alongside each other. "I think it's always been an unspoken standard that I'm supposed to do better than Nick in school, but I think that's very common. Even within society, girls mature faster so they are expected to try harder and do better in school than boys are," said Anna.

Young girls are conditioned to live up to the expectation that they mature faster, and that therefore they should be performing better than their male counterparts. If science says it's the case, then why should girls be performing any other way? Young boys, however, receive a different message. When a girl comes home with a high grade, it is seen as typical behavior expected from her and her female peers. When a boy receives the same grade, he is classically met with more praise and recognized for his efforts. Are we, as a society, training our young girls to have a lack of confidence when met with challenges, while at the same time allowing our young boys to underachieve academically?

In an interview with The Atlantic, WNBA player Monique Currie gave insight into the change in confidence between male and female players. "For guys, I think they have maybe 13- or 15-player rosters, but all the way down to the last player on the bench, who doesn't get to play a single minute, I feel like his confidence is just as big as the superstar of the team. For women, it's not like that." Women have been scientifically proven to only feel confidence when they have received the highest position, grade, or award possible. On the opposite end, similar to passing a test, just

making the team is enough to give males the confidence they need to succeed on the field and in the classroom.

"Boys are generally more lazy and not as willing to do their work to the best of their ability or apply themselves in school as much as a girl would," shared Nick Roberson. That being said, within the same school system, males are still receiving recognition and positions where and when it counts. Since the establishment of the Student Member of the Board role in 1978, there have been 27 male SMOB members and only 12 female SMOB members. In addition, this year is the first time in six years that B-CC has had a female schoolwide president.

Bethesda Top Teens is an annual segment in Bethesda Magazine that was started by Steve and Susan Hull in 2009. After seeing students being recognized frequently for solely athletic achievements, the Hulls "decided to start the Extraordinary Teen Awards which...really focuses on students who are excelling and getting involved in a variety of pursuits: the arts, student activism, whatever it may be, we look for well-rounded students who may be athletes but that is not their primary pursuit." The winners are chosen from a pool of nominations that come from various teachers and leaders in the community.

While previous years have shown an even split between male and female winners, 2019 did not follow the same pattern. Out of 11 winners, only two were male, and both were photographed with sports equipment. But even more interesting than that, only one received recognition solely surrounding his impressive athletic performances. Why then, was the magazine inclined to position both male students holding athletic equipment while their female counterparts were pictured with books, business attire, and physical projects?

The standards that pressure girls to achieve academically also pressure boys, in turn, to perform at the same level of proficiency athletically. "I've always been more academically motivated and focused on my schoolwork and school interests, whereas Nick has been more focused on golf and basketball," said Anna Roberson. Since girls always receive the credit inside the classroom, boys are forced to turn to the field to gain their recognition. This leads to a lack of motivation for

many boys to push themselves as rigorously academically because they are constantly told that their female peers are "just smarter" and boys aren't expected to do well because they aren't "as mature."

When asked about a difference in academic motivation, senior twins Lee and Bennett Schwartz looked at each other and laughed. "My parents tend to pressure me more because I get worse grades than Lee," Bennett commented. When talking about his sister, Nick Roberson also gave a bothered response. "I'm not as smart as her and she is expected to do better [because] I know I'm not gonna get the same grades as her." The same pressure that the female twins conveyed surrounding academic success and performance was not mirrored in their brothers. By allowing boys to feel dissuaded from doing as well as girls, we are in turn stunting their ability to apply themselves fully in the classroom, therefore reducing their ability to succeed.

Why don't we recognize both genders for their achievements, regardless of whether they achieve it on the field or in the classroom? Girls and boys can interchangeably be motivated by athletics and academics. By reducing girls' confidence early on in their lives, belittling them to feel the slightest amount of confidence solely within their academic abilities, they are perceived as weaker in the workplace and their opportunities to gain important leadership positions are reduced. By instating in boys the idea that they are inferior to girls in the classroom, they gain the ability to feel satisfied and competent even when they underachieve.

This confidence allows men to get further in the professional world, thus boosting their confidence and nursing an overbearing attitude. Journalists Katty Kay and Claire Shipman found that "underqualified and underprepared men don't think twice about leaning in. Overqualified and overprepared, too many women still hold back. Women feel confident only when they are perfect."

It is now our job to increase confidence within young boys in the classroom and young girls in the workplace. Only by doing this will we be able to close the gap in recognition between genders and continue to motivate our young minds to be as equally competent and confident.

## CHEVY CHASE CHURCH STANDS UP FOR LGBTQ INCLUSION

BY JOSH GARBER

A Methodist church in Chevy Chase plans to stand against the United Methodist Church (UMC), following the UMC's Special Session of General Conference's recent decision to reaffirm their opposition to same-sex marriage and the ordainment of LGBTQ clergy.

The General Conference is the legislative body of the worldwide UMC, consisting of hundreds of delegates across the globe. The UMC's ratification of the "Traditional Plan," continuing their opposition to same-sex marriage, was made during the most recent conference held in St. Louis in late February.

"The Special Session's purpose," said Pastor Kirkland Reynolds of the Chevy Chase United Methodist Church on Connecticut Avenue, "was to maintain unity in the Church and find a way forward for our ministry with LGBTQIA+ people. Instead of finding a way forward, the Special Session chose a path that strengthens the church's prohibitions against gay ordination and marriage."

Pastor Kirkland was disappointed with the Special Session's recent decision and believes it "has caused harm to LGBTQIA+ people, family members, and allies in addition to hurting the church's witness to the world."

The Chevy Chase United Methodist Church is a "reconciling" church, which in the UMC community means they disagree with the church's theological position that homosexuality is incompatible with Christian teaching.

"Leading up to the Special Session, this congregation has been advocating with other reconciling United Methodists for the Church to remove the 'incompatibility' language and allow all people to receive a blessing through the covenant of marriage and to live out a call to ministry in the church," Pastor Kirkland said.

Before the 2019 Special Session closed, the legislative body passed a motion to request a

decision from the Judicial Council of the UMC on the constitutionality of the Traditional Plan.

"There are several issues with the decision that make it questionable whether or not it's actually constitutional within the rules of the Methodist Church," said Jake Gee, a junior at B-CC who attends the Chevy Chase United Methodist Church.

The Judicial Council will meet in April in Illinois to address these concerns. Anything the Judicial Council upholds will become the new rules for the UMC as of January 1, 2020. Pastor Kirkland hopes for the best, explaining that "all congregations in the UMC are praying and talking with other United Methodists and waiting to see what the Judicial Council will uphold."

The General Conference also passed a disaffiliation plan, commonly referred to as the "exit plan," which provides guidelines for congregations who wish to leave the UMC "for reasons of conscience" regarding issues of human sexuality. If the Judicial Council rules in favor of the Traditional Plan, there is a possibility that the UMC does break apart because of this issue.

Gee believes that "we could see a new branch of Methodism based around inclusion form in the next few years. It is possible that more progressive American Methodist churches simply break off and join other branches of Christianity."



## NEW ZEALAND TERROR ATTACK: SPREAD OF WHITE SUPREMACIST VIOLENCE

BY JOSH GARBER

A day after high school students marched on D.C. requesting strict gun reforms, a 28-year-old Australian man attacked the Muslim community in New Zealand, killing 50 and injuring 50 more.

On March 15, the perpetrator, Brenton Tarrant, described as a white supremacist, attacked the Al Noor Mosque and the Linwood Islamic Centre in the suburban community of Christchurch, New Zealand.

Tarrant authored a 73-page manifesto, titled "The Great Replacement," which contained hate speech and anti-immigrant sentiment. The perpetrator said in his manifesto that he supported President Donald Trump, stating the U.S. president acted as "a symbol of renewed white identity and common purpose."

President Trump condemned the attack and offered thoughts and prayers to the people of

New Zealand. Press Secretary Sarah Sanders added, "we stand in solidarity with the people of New Zealand and their government against this vicious act of hate."

This spread of alt-right extremism and white supremacy has concerned several people around the world. During the Geopolitical Climate Change event at B-CC, Georgetown professor and Brookings Institute senior fellow Daniel Byman, who focuses on counterterrorism, mentioned his uneasiness that such radical movements are spreading around the world. "It shows to me the internationalization of the alt-right movement. Usually, we've seen them as anti-foreign; each one has its own country," Professor Byman said. "But now, they're working together more."

In the days following the attack, the victims and families of those affected received a global outpouring of support. Various politicians and leaders from distinct countries further con-

demned the attacks on the Muslim community and all hate crimes associated with communities of faith. However, one right-wing Australian Senator stirred significant controversy after blaming Muslims and immigration systems for the considerable bloodshed. "The real cause of bloodshed on New Zealand streets today is the immigration program which allowed Muslim fanatics to migrate to New Zealand in the first place," said Senator Frasier Anning of Queensland.

Senator Anning's viral comments were quickly denounced by many in Australia. He was even egged by an Australian teenager on live television — a video which has since gone viral.

Nevertheless, the Muslim community in New Zealand and around the world suffered tragic losses which were caused by a ruthless action from someone who promoted hate and desired devastation.

## REP. OMAR COMMENTS SPARK ANTI-SEMITISM DEBATE IN CONGRESS

BY SASHA FRANK-STEMPEL

Controversial remarks made by a freshman Democratic member of Congress in the past few months have caused outrage on Capitol Hill and across the country. The first set of statements by Representative Ilhan Omar, (D-MN) led on both sides of the aisle, including House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, to call for an apology. However, a few weeks after her apology, she again landed in hot water, and this time her comments were rebuked by a resolution in Congress condemning religious discrimination of all kinds.

Representative Ilhan Omar (D-MN), part of a bloc of young, progressive female candidates who were just elected to Congress, sparked the saga when she tweeted out against AIPAC, the pro-Israel American Israel Political Affairs Committee, in a manner that was seen by many as anti-Semitic.

The tweet in question was Omar's response to a post from Batya Ungar-Sargon, an opinion editor for the Jewish magazine "The Forward." Ungar-Sargon asked the new representative from Minnesota who she thought was paying politicians to be pro-Israel, to which Representative Omar answered "AIPAC!". She also had previously commented that Congressional criticism of her for her own criticism of Israel was "all about the Benjamins," a reference to money being spent by pro-Israel lobbyists.

While some defended her, pointing out how AIPAC does lobby in support of the State of Israel, leaders in Congress condemned what they saw as anti-Semitic tropes embedded in Representative Omar's responses.

In a statement, Speaker Pelosi stated that "Congresswoman Omar's use of anti-Semitic tropes and prejudicial accusations about Israel's supporters is deeply offensive. We condemn these remarks and we call upon Congresswoman Omar to immediately apologize for these hurtful comments."

In early February, Representative Omar initially issued an unequivocal apology in response,

saying she was being helped by Jews who were "educating [her] on the painful history of anti-Semitic tropes."

Several weeks after this apology, Representative Omar made comments that drew further anger from politicians and activists. In a forum, when asked about her previous comments, stated that she "want[ed] to talk about the political influence in this country that says it is okay to push for allegiance to a foreign country."

Representative Jamie Raskin -- who represents B-CC's district -- co-sponsored the official House resolution that was passed in response to the comments, calling out and "condemning anti-Semitism as hateful expressions that are contradictory to the values and aspirations" of the American people." While it had united Democratic support and all but 23 Republicans in the House voted for it, several members weren't fully behind the specific language of the resolution.

Republicans took issue with the Democrats' treatment of Omar, arguing, among other things, that the resolution should have called out Omar by name. Some likened the situation to that of Rep. Steve King (R-IA), who had his committee assignments taken away following his comments questioning why the term "white supremacy" was offensive. Members of the GOP have called for a similar punishment for Omar, but there has been no indication that the Minnesota Democrat will be booted from the Foreign Affairs Committee.

Representative Ted Deutch, (D-FL) was upset at the insinuation that Jews had dual loyalties to both the US and Israel. Speaking on the House floor, he spoke out against discrimination against any members of Congress but thought that the resolution should have only focused on anti-Semitism. Deutch argued that anti-Semitism "is worthy of being taken seriously on its own."

Alana Frankel, a co-founder of B-CC's Jewish Culture Club, thought it was appropriate to include the references to other types of discrimination. She argues that "the condemnation of anti-Semitism is needed," but that the "inclusion of other types of hate and discrimination must be addressed too as Jews are not the only targeted minority group."

## VIRGINIA'S POLITICAL SCANDALS: BLACKFACE AND SEXUAL ASSAULT ALLEGATIONS

BY DANIEL ROSENTOVER

The Virginia executive branch endured numerous scandals related to racism and sexual assault in the month of February. On the very first day of Black History Month, the media discovered a 35-year-old yearbook picture, depicting a man wearing blackface while standing next to someone in Ku Klux Klan robes. The picture did not specify who the two figures were, but the photo was placed in a gallery with other photos under the name, Ralph Shearer Northam, the current Virginia Governor.

Northam initially admitted he was the person in the photograph, though he later reversed his statement, before eventually confessing that he

did wear blackface to dress up as Michael Jackson for Halloween. Soon after the picture was released, Democrats condemned Northam and demanded his resignation, but despite those demands Northam had refused to step down. With Northam in conversation of resignation, the public turned to the next in line for the governorship, Virginia's lieutenant governor, Justin Fairfax. Though Fairfax did not openly call for the governor's resignation, he did say that "at this critical and defining moment in the history of Virginia and this nation, we need leaders with the ability to unite and help us rise to the better angels of our nature."

Nonetheless, allegations of a different nature soon surfaced against Fairfax as well. A woman

accused him of sexually assaulting her back in 2004. Fairfax categorically denied these accusations, saying that their relationship had been entirely consensual.

When it seemed like the endless torrent of news concerning Virginian Democrats would cease, a new revelation came out of nowhere. Mark Herring, Virginia's Attorney General, announced that he too had worn blackface, at a college party in the 1980s.

These scandals have exposed a racist history that most Virginians would rather bury. Many more prominent Virginians have probably entangled with racism at some point.

BY JASON GRAYER

# The Wall: Where Does it Stand?

Since Donald Trump declared his run for the presidency, a border wall has been his most significant and controversial campaign promise. With an issue as contentious as the border wall, it is helpful to take a look back at a timeline of this issue, as well as the policy proposals behind each side of the argument.

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**June 16, 2015**

Donald Trump famously goes down his escalator at Trump Tower, waving and giving a thumbs-up to cheering supporters. He speaks of constructing a great border wall along our southern border, stating that “[immigrants are] bringing drugs, they’re bringing crime, they’re rapists, and some of them, I assume, are good people.”

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**November 6, 2015**

Donald Trump wins the presidency and leads crowds of supporters in many memorable chants, most notably, “Build that wall!”

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**January 20, 2017**

In his inauguration speech, the president says, “We’ve defended other nation’s borders while refusing to defend our own...We must protect our borders from the ravages of other countries making our products, stealing our companies, and destroying our jobs...We will bring back our borders.”

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**January 21, 2017 to  
November 5, 2018**

Donald Trump makes little progress on the construction of a border wall. Estimates are that the wall could cost anywhere from 25 to 35 billion dollars. Senate minority leader, Chuck Schumer, constructs a proposal which included 20 billion dollars for a border wall, in exchange for the citizenship of 2 million DACA recipients and other illegal immigrants. This plan, however, doesn’t succeed. Since these negotiations ended in stalemate, the administration focuses on other policies, including tax cuts, foreign policy, and criminal justice reform. Despite progress in other policy areas, time was running out for Trump to deliver on his promise of a wall, as it seemed more and more likely that Democrats would gain power in Congress as a result of the midterms.

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**November 7, 2018**

Democrats took control of the House, complicating Trump’s plans.

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**December 22, 2018  
to January 25, 2019**

It is over this period of time that the United States underwent its longest government shutdown in history. This shutdown, which lasted 35 days, caused 800,000 federal employees to miss multiple paychecks. This resulted in many protests in Washington D.C. and elsewhere in the country. With no end in sight, it seems that unless one side caves, the shutdown may never end.

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**January 25, 2019**

President Donald Trump announced that he would sign a bill that would reopen the government for three weeks, giving Congressional negotiators additional time to devise a compromise. This bill that he signed did not cover any border security/ wall funding. The president further signed a bill to give federal workers back pay in the coming weeks following the ending of the shutdown. With a Democratic house and a low approval rating, many believe that President Trump’s coveted border wall may never be built.

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**February 15, 2019**

After three weeks of negotiations, Congress created a border deal that would provide 1.4 billion dollars for border security. This amount was significantly less than the 3.7 billion that the Democrats proposed before the shutdown. The president, weary of undergoing a second shutdown, signed the deal. Nevertheless, along with this bill, he took the Executive action of declaring a national emergency, and obtained roughly 8 billion additional dollars to fund the border wall. With the constitutionality of this move being mulled over, as well as Democratic outrage, it seems that this conflict is far from over.

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**February 26, 2019**

After weeks of continued political division and rhetoric, the House voted on a resolution to block the national emergency declaration made by President Trump. This comes as multiple House Republicans sided with the Democrats, despite an overwhelming majority supporting the President.

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**March 11, 2019**

Despite continued attention being drawn on the Congress’ current resolution condemning President Trump’s national emergency, the administration released a budget for the 2020 fiscal year. This budget includes \$8.6 billion for a border wall, as well as billions in cuts to social programs.

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**March 14, 2019**

Following a Senate vote that included twelve Republicans breaking party lines, President Donald Trump was forced to use his first Presidential veto. During the signing of the veto in the Oval Office, the President said, “Congress has the freedom to pass this resolution, and I have the duty to veto it.”

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**April 7, 2019**

Kirstjen Nielsen, Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security Secretary is relieved of duties. Nielsen was the center of multiple controversy as the head of the DHS, including incidents involving ICE’s treatment of illegal immigrants, as well as the Border Patrol holding children in cages. While initial reports said that Nielson resigned, it is now reported that it was a “forced resignation”. With this additional news, it seems that the political contention involving immigration and border security is far from over.

# How Venezuela's Power Struggle Affects B-CC Students

BY ETHAN TIAO

An unrelenting power struggle between socialist President Nicolas Maduro and Head of the National Assembly, Juan Guaido, has led to substantial political disorder and inflamed Venezuela's wide-spread humanitarian and economic crisis.

Maduro was first elected into office in April of 2013 after his socialist predecessor, Hugo Chavez, passed away. The administration's reliance on oil, drastic increases of the minimum wage, nationalization of private industries, and reduction of consumer prices has seen Venezuela's economy severely decline and has placed them in the midst of a daunting humanitarian crisis.

Around 2.3 million Venezuelan citizens, seven percent of the population, have fled Venezuela due to food shortages, poor living conditions, and lack of political stability. According to statistics provided by the Washington Post, the crisis, largely attributed to Venezuela's reliance on oil exports and recent political turmoil, has seen the value of Venezuelan petroleum exports plummet from over \$75 billion in 2013 to \$31.4 billion in 2018. The country's crude oil exports and production have been in a constant decline and hyperinflation has risen to a record 1.37 million percent. Despite overwhelming criticism and a lack of economic and humanitarian progress, Maduro has refused to concede power in Venezuela.

In Venezuela's 2018 presidential election, Nicolas Maduro, notwithstanding international condemnation and allegations of electoral fraud, claimed his second term as President of Venezuela. His opposition, led by President of the National Assembly Juan Guaido, accused him of breaching constitutional law, effectively making him illegitimate and a "usurper." Guaido's claim to the presidency relies on the fact that Maduro's electoral victory was fraudulent, triggering a rule that allows for Guaido, as head of the National Assembly, to be sworn in as interim leader.

Venezuelan roots spread far across the globe and students in our B-CC community with ties to Venezuela suffer through their family members who are living in the tumultuous region. Amanda Roche, a senior at B-CC, touched on the struggles her Venezuelan grandparents have been subjected to while living there, stating, "my grandfather has a lot of health issues and he's found that trying to seek medical attention in Venezuela is becoming increasingly harder because of how expensive [medical care] has become."

The burden on Venezuelan citizens not only stems from medical costs but can be attributed to an overall rise in prices for basic goods. In Venezuela, the prices of basic goods vary from day to



day as a result of the volatile economic situation. Roche stated that due to the staggering inflation rate, "food is getting so expensive that people are turning to begging in the streets." Jade Rivas, a junior from B-CC who immigrated from Venezuela in 2017, talked about her visit to Venezuela over Christmas, saying, "I went to buy strawberry juice and that day it was one dollar and then the next day we went and again and [the price] rose to three dollars." Due to the continuous rise in prices, Rivas said, "people are not able to afford anything."

Rivas mentioned that the main reason she moved here was "not only because of the economic crisis, but [also] because of the social crisis. It's very insecure and very dangerous to basically do anything... It's just really hard to live there." She also talked about watching "little kids like the age of my brother, like 4 and 6-year olds eating from the trash." Rivas' first-person account is a testament to the unfavorable conditions Venezuelan citizens are living through and the ordeals families have to endure day in and day out.

Recently, President Maduro blocked \$80 million in humanitarian aid offered by the US and other foreign entities in order to protect his interests and stand against the countries that have recognized Juan Guaido as the legitimate president. Roche referred to Maduro in dismay, emphatically claiming "Maduro is a dictator. I think he needs to get out of office as soon as he can. The only reason he is in office is to deepen his pockets. He just wants more money." Rivas echoed those sentiments, saying, "I'm definitely against him... [he's] ruined the country in every possible

way. He doesn't understand what power is and doesn't understand how to manage it."

Despite the criticism directed towards Nicolas Maduro, people aren't completely invested in Guaido. He is a relatively inexperienced leader who, according to Rivas, "kinda came out of nowhere which was very weird." Despite Rivas' initial hesitations, she believes that "[Guaido] seems like he wants to help the country... he seems like he actually wants to change [Venezuela] and make it better. He needs to prove himself more, but he seems committed." When asked about whether Guaido could bring the country out of its crisis, Roche candidly responded, "he will start something, but what's happening with Venezuela will take years to repair." Guaido's claim to the presidency has come under further attack recently, when a state comptroller appointed by Maduro announced that, due to problems with Guaido's financial disclosures, has been banned from running for any public office for 15 years. Maduro's political rival is accused of accepting gifts from foreign countries, but Guaido has called the charges illegitimate and continues to hold rallies to gather further support.

The crisis in Venezuela, as Roche mentioned, will not end anytime soon. The country is fighting an uphill battle, weighed down by political turmoil, to pull themselves out of their current economic and humanitarian crisis. Political stability is the first step towards a long road of reform, but that stability can only be achieved once one leader is recognized by the vast majority of Venezuela. Who will carry Venezuela out of its crisis? Only time will tell.

# A Movement, Not A Moment

BY ETHAN TIAO

On March 14th, 2019, around five hundred B-CC students, along with hundreds of students from other schools across the region, walked out of school at 8:30 am and came together at the White House to pay their respects to the seventeen victims of the Parkland shooting with 17 minutes of silence. The crowd of students then proceeded to march down Pennsylvania Avenue towards the Capitol -- making their voices heard as they chanted in unison. Isaiah Sullivan, a junior at B-CC touched on his experience at the walkout, saying, “being part of a crowd of students that large is awe-inducing. It’s inspiring to know that so many students are willing to fight for the same cause as you.”

The main goal of the walkout was to advocate for the ratification of Senate Bill 42 -- which would mandate universal background checks on all gun sales. The House version of the bill was recently approved, and if it passes the Senate, it would be the first piece of national gun legislation signed into law since the Parkland shooting.

The hundreds of signs held up in the air encapsulated the emotions and demands of the students. They ranged from calls for Congress to pass stricter gun control legislation, attacks directed towards the National Rifle Association, creative alterations of memes regarding government inaction, and messages revealing the students’ personal connections to the gun violence epidemic. Arjun Akwei, a junior at B-CC, held a sign reading “Books, not Bullets.” Akwei remarked that “in today’s society, we have an obligation to advocate and rally for our own safety. That isn’t the role we should have, but unfortunately, it’s the one we’ve been forced into.”

This year’s walkout marked the one-year anniversary of the 2018 nationwide student walkouts -- also held on March 14th, one month after the Parkland shooting. Similar to last year, MoCo for Change (formerly MoCo for Gun Control), a prominent student-led social justice organization was the driving force behind this powerful demonstration. The speaker series in front of the Capitol, headlined by several members of Congress, helped put a face to those affected by the proliferation of gun violence and student leaders who have inspired our region and nation to rally for what they believe in. US Congressman Ted Deutch, whose district includes Parkland, Florida, commended the student marchers for their resilience, while Senator Chris Murphy of Connecticut encouraged students to build on their efforts by making their presence known at the ballot box. Giselle Morch, a mother whose son, Jaycee, fell victim to the cold-blooded hand of gun violence delivered a heart-wrenching testimonial to the crowd about how gun violence has affected her life. MoCo for Change leaders Dani Miller, Karena Nambiar, and B-CC’s very own Emily Schrader delivered compelling speeches calling the students to further action. Schrader, in the walkout’s final speech, drove in the key message to our elected officials: “Keep playing with our lives, and we’ll make you pay at the ballot box.”

The March 14th student walkout brings light to a new era of student activism and social justice efforts. Ella Trevelyan, a sophomore at B-CC, claimed that she “felt empowered that day marching with students from around the county to advocate for such an important issue.” Walkouts like these help empower students and make their voices heard on issues that garner national attention. They can serve as a platform for student-driven advocacy and policy change. Sullivan said the walkout, “felt like something I could read about in an NSL book. I felt like it could really lead to change.”

Young people, throughout history, have been the catalysts for social change. Just like the students in Greensboro, North Carolina who sat down at lunch counters in protest of segregation, B-CC students and youth across the nation are writing their own chapter in American history—one that will ensure the safety and prosperity of our children and the future generations to come.



# Teenagers: A Force of Nature

BY Yael Chiappori

Every Thursday since January 17th, Belgian students have skipped school, making noise and playing music, and braving the cold and rain to have their voices heard. Their chant: “The youth are rising, we’re not compromising.” This is part of a wave of climate marches and protests taking over both Europe and Australia. The momentum isn’t stopping with over 35,000 students taking to the streets in Brussels.

Sixteen year old environmental activist Greta Thunberg from Sweden became the face of the youth uprising after planning a strike at her school. Her status only grew after she addressed representatives of the United Nations at the Climate Summit COP24, in Poland on December 5, 2018. There, she scolded representatives.

“You are not mature enough to tell it like it is,” Thunberg told them. “Even that burden you leave to us children. But I don’t care about being popular. I care about climate justice and the living planet.”

Thunberg is only one of many young adults that addressed the panel. Her Ted Talk lecture that called for immediate action for the planet blew up and even further solidified her abilities to lead a movement for today.

Simply turning off lights and using less plastic aren’t going to change the state of warming and the environment. According to the EPA there has been a 90 percent increase in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions since 1970, the large majority of which were due to industrial processes and fossil fuel combustion.

“These emissions cannot be reduced by the everyday actions of citizens in residential areas; they must be combated by mandatory policy that requires efficiency and pollution standards be met. Laissez-faire policies that promote corporate excess and the increased hoarding of wealth by the rich are the main culprit in both the sustained poverty and environmental degradation present in under regulated economies,” said Lucas Frye, a representative of the American Chemical Society delegation and a University of Virginia student.

Reducing these emissions comes with a short-term financial cost that the population isn’t willing to take on. Yellow jacket protesters demonstrated in France after the government put a tax on fuel which affected those who drive to work. The French government’s fuel tax put the burden of sustainability on the average citizen, who just wasn’t willing to easily take on the financial cost.

Both in the U.S. and in Europe climate change is rising to the top of priority lists, especially with the majority democratic in Congress. The “Green New Deal” calls for change in the government’s treatment of climate change and a “10 year national mobilization” with goals to bring greenhouse gas emissions to zero in ten years.

“I think The Green New Deal—a lot of people are opposed to it because it seems very extreme and the calls for action don’t really seem reachable, but I think that’s why it makes it really ef-

fective. We need to start somewhere and if we set the bar really high then if we get less we’re still getting ahead,” said Junior Maya Kagan.

In a video that went viral Friday February 22nd, a group of children confronted Senator Diane Feinstein a Democrat from California about the issue telling her to vote in favor of the bill. In her response, she expressed her dislike for the deal.

“That resolution will not pass the Senate, and you can take that back to whoever sent you here and tell them,” she said in a statement on...

The video was cut to reflect badly on Feinstein who later that Friday tweeted: “I have been and remain committed to doing everything I can to enact real, meaningful climate change legislation.”

The teenage protesters have been gathering

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**“It was obvious for us to go protest. It’s very important to use our voice now that we’ve got the chance to prove how much we care about the climate.”**

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in both Europe and Australia at a constant speed with support from environmental activists such as Thunberg. Students in Europe and Australia see the protests as a display of genuine care for the environment rather than an excuse to miss school.

“It was obvious for us to go protest. It’s very important to use our voice now that we’ve got the chance to prove how much we care about the climate,” said Axelle Kiambi, a Belgian student and protester.

Ruthie Hitzhusen, a student from the Netherlands who recently protested in Den Hague with her peers, expressed the same sense of motivation.

“The grown ups aren’t doing anything so now it’s time for the younger people to step up. It shouldn’t be necessary but apparently we have to. We’re the ones that have to live with it after they die,” she said.

The students have pushed their representatives for legislation that regulates CO<sub>2</sub> and greenhouse gas emissions, and their effect on the planet. The payoff from the protests isn’t clear yet, but the media and governments around the world are aware of the movement and its growth. Though the protests are common in Europe and Australia, the U.S. hasn’t followed as closely. With past marches taking place in D.C. in 2016 and 2017—one of which pushed for action against global warming—the climate change

battle has not managed to gain a lot of traction among students yet.

Kiambi feels like Americans should be doing more.

“I really think they should be [walking out]. Not only are you standing up for something that you think is right, you’re also showing unity to everyone out there who doesn’t think that what we do matters,” she said.

In the U.S., feelings surrounding the climate battle differs.

“I think the protests are of sufficient scale that state actors are taking notice, and I hope that citizens here and abroad are able to install governments that take this existential threat seriously. I cannot say whether they will work to convince anybody today, but they sure will change the calculus of delay and denial tomorrow,” Frye said.

Within B-CC, the lack of government action when it comes to global warming is felt by the student body.

“The government isn’t taking a big enough stand on it and they’re disregarding the issue, there are a lot more policies that could be out in place to improve climate change... Since climate change is an issue that is disregarded a lot of the time, there haven’t been many walkouts about it in America,” junior Sarah Williams said.

The area’s students have shown initiative in the past when they walked out to protest the Trump Presidency and again to protest gun violence on March 14th 2018 and 2019. On Friday March 15th of this year a global walk out for the climate was planned, only one day after the gun violence walk out. Students were divided on the issue of whether they should attend, considering many of them had already gotten an unexcused absence the day before while walking out for gun control.

“Since the walkout on thursday for gun violence is such a prevalent hot topic issue, it really hits close to home here at B-CC. I don’t think people were as pressed to go to the other one. They didn’t see it as a big deal to go,” said Kagan, who attended both protests.

Activism for other issues can alter the type of action taken against climate change.

“When I think of walkouts I equate that with gun control, but it doesn’t have to be that way... Us as students we’ve thought to prioritize gun control, but climate change is definitely an issue that affects us too,” sophomore Devlin Orlin said.

Some students are less aware of the consequences of climate change.

“I think we know that it’s an issue, but it’s so global and we don’t really see its effect on us directly. In Bethesda we live in such a bubble and if it isn’t affecting us, we’re not going to change that much,” Junior Raquel Feldman said.

The world’s youth is at the center of the climate change battle, the marches and student led walkouts are occurring constantly, and the climate is still warming.

# For Second Consecutive Year, Charity Month Falls Short

BY JOSH GARBER

Generally occurring in February of every year, charity month is a month filled with schoolwide Student Government Association (SGA) organized fundraising events in an attempt to raise money for a charitable organization. The charity that receives B-CC's donations is typically the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society (LLS) through the Pennies for Patients program.

The schoolwide SGA maintains various responsibilities over the course of the year, but raising money for charity month has transformed into one of its primary functions.

In 2016 (the current senior class' freshman year), schoolwide SGA President Jacob Rains managed to raise the most in school history, collecting over \$20,000 to donate to LLS. The following year, the school wasn't able to match the previous year total, but nonetheless brought in more than \$6,000.

According to Mr. Gilmore, an NSL and Economics teacher and the SGA coordinator during these years, one catalyst for these impressive charitable fundraising numbers was the direct assistance from the Pennies for Patients program. "Pennies for Patients was a program that came and helped you out," Mr. Gilmore said. In past years, Pennies for Patients was very helpful in providing boxes to facilitate the high volume of donations.

This year, however, the SGA did not use Pennies for Patients. According to Gabriella Capizzi, the current president of the schoolwide SGA, they attempted to collaborate with Pennies for Patients but, "it was too late in the process when they responded back to us to actually implement it."

Instead, the SGA and other students organized programs like Mr. B-CC and the T-shirt sales. Mr. Gilmore believes fundraising may be a struggle now because "[the SGA] is making it up on their own."

Capizzi also mentioned that implementing the method of students collecting donations for Pennies for Patients is further complicated by the school's policies. "[Pennies for Patients] would be more difficult this year because we would be following regulations more strictly, whereas in the past, like with Jacob Rains, [students] would go around holding buckets of money or collect boxes: you're not actually allowed to do that. You have to have a teacher or other adults to supervise that activity," said Capizzi.

But other students have given different reasons for why the SGA was unable to raise as much money. A current classwide SGA member who preferred to remain anonymous claims the schoolwide SGA lacked the organizational requirements necessary to raise a lot of money.

"They typically have a detailed calendar that outlines all events and roles for participat-

ing groups for charity month. This is usually shared and discussed with the other SGAs and administration so that everyone is on the same page and can successfully coordinate events." The SGA member says that this is no longer the case. "Detailed plans were not shared at the General Assembly (entire SGA meeting), there was confusion as to what each SGA is meant to plan, Dr. Jones had not received a calendar on time, and no one is entirely sure of what to do."

Capizzi disagreed that the schoolwide SGA is at fault for the poor organization, saying "There was a lack of organization but I don't think you can pinpoint anyone or blame anyone for that."

Another classwide SGA member who also preferred to remain anonymous was concerned that there was a lack of communication within the SGA. "We got the occasional GroupMe message or we are called to a general assembly meeting, but generally, I think communication could be stronger," they said.

Capizzi challenges the claim that communication between SGAs (schoolwide and classwide) has been imperfect. "I think that the schoolwide SGA has been super communicative with the classwide SGAs and very straightforward with what our plans are and what we've been trying to do," she said. Capizzi believes the problem was with misinterpretation of their ideas, not miscommunication.

Nevertheless, it would be unfair to direct all blame on the current SGA, Pennies for Patients, or the SGA advisor for the staggering reduction of money raised for charity month this year. In contrast to the significant amount of money raised in 2016, last year's class of 2018 raised less than \$2,000.

Before 2018, the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society was the sole recipient of charity month donations from the school, but last year's student leadership decided to reevaluate this approach. They designed a survey that was shared throughout the school to determine which charity the students wanted. With the results that they received, the SGA interpreted that people wanted to donate to a diverse set of charities. So instead of donating to one group, B-CC donated to several charities.

Mr. Gilmore believes that this produced the unsatisfactory results last year. "Charity month gave us something to focus on, but we lost our way when we looked at multiple different groups there," Mr. Gilmore said. "We had done it for years and years, and people coming in were less inclined to give. The programs themselves were not as designed to make it work."

In light of last year's historically weak totals, the SGA hoped to return to years of success for the fundraising drive. However, one of the anonymous gradwide SGA representatives has pointed out the opposite, that "they haven't really been engaged with class SGAs or the student body."

## LLS Month Profits Over the Years

2013:	<b>\$6,595</b>
2014:	<b>\$6,489</b>
2015:	<b>\$14,628</b>
2016:	<b>\$20,755</b>
2017:	<b>\$6,062</b>
2018:	<b>\$1,766</b>
2019:	<b>\$2,268</b>

# Battling Barons Crush Cancer

BY RACHEL AUERBACH

While balancing academics and athletics during their first semester of high school, B-CC freshmen Jessie Weiner and Eli Holder worked tirelessly to raise thousands of dollars to help cure cancer. The hard-working philanthropic duo saw their efforts pay off after raising an incredible \$97,000 for the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society (LLS).

Weiner and Holder were part of the annual LLS Student of the Year campaign, which

**"The best part was that every week we would get a video or a card from a family thanking us for what we were doing"**

involves a seven-week fundraising competition between 38 public and private high school teams across Maryland, D.C. and Virginia. The candidates, who are entered in the competition through nomination or application, use their own creative integrity and entrepreneurial ideas to raise as much money as possible for the organization. All funds raised through the competition are used to fund research for blood cancer cures and help ensure access to treatment for patients.

Holder was asked to participate in the competition after he raised \$25,000 for blood cancer as part of his Bar Mitzvah project in 2018. He then invited Weiner to join him as his co-candidate, and they quickly began working towards their goal.

Before the seven week fundraising period began, the candidates had a few weeks to find businesses to sponsor them, collecting commitment forms from all their sponsors for certain amounts of money. Weiner and Holder earned about \$45,000 through these sponsorships, and then spent the next seven weeks raising money through private donations and fundraising projects.

"One thing we did with the school was creating and selling the Barons Crush Cancer T-Shirts," Holder said. "We worked with the SGA during charity month and they helped us make the shirts."

Weiner and Holder ended up with a sixth-place finish in the Student of the Year competition, an extremely impressive feat considering they were the youngest team participating. The winning candidates were cousins Samir Shaah and Saar Shah from Huntington and Lexington Park High School, respectively. They organized a kite festival called Fly4ACure in their community and ended up raising over \$100,000.

"The best part was that every week we would get a video or a card from a family thanking us for what we were doing," Weiner said. "Being part of the LLS Student of the Year campaign was such a valuable experience for me because during the campaign, I realized how many lives cancer has touched and how everybody is affected by this disease."

# No Suck F\*ck or D\*llshit

BY ISABEL DANZIS AND  
GRACE HARRINGTON

Recently, B-CC has been at the center of many controversies surrounding chants. At school sporting events, the chants of some B-CC students have caused offense with referees and school administrators, with many B-CC students using vulgar words or targeting one specific person in their chants. At the boys' basketball game at Gaithersburg High School, issues were raised when some students chanted "Ref you suck!" and at other games, some students have said things like "f\*\*k Whitman".

While no chants are specifically banned at B-CC, students aren't allowed to use profane or vulgar language or target people. "It's not like the chants are banned, it's just that we can't say curse words like bulls\*\*t, or f\*\*k Whitman, [and] those are the types of things that people have been saying," said Dr. Jones. While this problem seems to have been resurfacing this winter, mostly at boys' basketball games, it has been a problem in years past. "It seems like when we've had successful years and a lot of fans have come out, some of the chants have been [vulgar]," said the varsity boys' basketball coach, Sean Tracy.

Although the rules on chants have been more enforced recently, they have always been in ef-

fect. "Nothing's changed about what's acceptable. If someone's misbehaving, I'm going to put them out of the game," said athletic director at B-CC, Dr. Considine. The code of conduct in the student handbook states that "Barons are expected to cheer for our players and encourage our teams. Students are not permitted to curse at referees,

**"IF SOMEONE'S  
MISBEHAVING, I'M  
GOING TO PUT THEM OUT  
OF THE GAME"**

yell chants containing profanity or display signs with profanity. Students cannot target cheerleaders with derogatory remarks. Students who fail to meet the expectations for sportsmanship will face consequences including but not limited to losing the privilege to attend games and school-sponsored events. "If they can't act and follow the Baron code of conduct, which Dr. Considine has

made very clear what the expectations are, they should be removed from the game," said Tracy.

Administrators have described the recent unsportsmanlike behavior as unusual, given how much improvement B-CC has had in the past few years. "I thought that [the unsportsmanlike behavior] had kinda tapped down. Like over the course of the 4 years, I thought it had gotten better and I was like, 'oh good'. Because I don't want to keep getting on the announcements if people are doing the right thing. But then this year we just had some incidents like this," said Dr. Jones. Dr. Considine also noted improvement with individual students. "Some of the [past] main offenders say [about fans from other schools], 'They were so horrible, they were so negative,' and I say, 'That's who you used to be,'" she said.

After the Gaithersburg game, Dr. Jones called together a meeting with students to brainstorm some ideas for appropriate chants. "I actually had the coaches talk with students about [chants] in a focus group format and then generated some ideas of like what could we say, things that are kinda cute and clever but not disrespectful," said Dr. Jones.



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# The Dark Side of Medieval Reenactment

Racism, sexism, and anti-Semitism plague the Society for Creative Anachronism.

BY ISABEL DANZIS AND GRACE HARRINGTON

The Society for Creative Anachronism (SCA) is an organization aimed at promoting study and recreation in pre-17th century societies. In simpler terms, the SCA is a historical reenactment group, similar to those at Renaissance festivals. But unlike traditional Renaissance festivals, the SCA is composed entirely of unpaid volunteers who participate in private events during their free time. At events, members dress up in the traditional clothes of the time period and participate in activities such as armored combat, feasts, dances, and art exhibitions. Members also have the opportunity to come up with an entirely different name and background, called their persona, that fits the time period. While some may write the SCA off as a hobby group, many members are deeply embroiled in the intricacies of life in the SCA.

As participating in the Society isn't a job, members find time away from their "mundane" life to "play" in the SCA. Therefore the SCA attracts people from all walks of life, tied together by their love of European Medieval and Renaissance history. "Mostly it's people who are really passionate about a particular topic. It's the nerds, that's the stereotype," said Michael Arden, a teacher at B-CC and a participating SCA member.

In the SCA there is the "Knowne World" which is divided into several kingdoms, each ruled by a king and queen. The Knowne World covers part of the globe, but it is centrally focused

in the United States and Canada. The US and Canada have several kingdoms each, while one kingdom covers select parts of Europe, Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. Within the kingdom, there are smaller regions called principalities, baronies, or shires.

In each kingdom, there is a strict hierarchy that dictates power within the organization. Kings must win the crown for themselves and their pre-selected queen in a combat tournament. The royalty can bestow peerage orders, or awards, onto SCA members. There are also princes and princesses, barons and baronesses, dukes and duchesses, vicecountes and vicecountesses, among other positions. However, the awards and high ranking positions can cause problems in the Society. "We're all playing a game together, we're all reenacting together. But in the context of the reenactment they have a certain level of authority that they might not otherwise and those things can sometimes be abused," said Arden.

Recently, the SCA has been embroiled in controversy because of several incidents of white supremacy within the organization. Hobby groups for Medieval and Renaissance reenactment have long attracted white supremacists, who are often drawn to the idea that Europe during the Medieval and Renaissance periods were white utopias. They tend to romanticize groups such as the Vikings as examples of successful all-white societies. "Medievalism and a certain idea of the Middle Ages appeals to white supremacists because of our popular image of the Middle Ages,"

said Cord Whitaker, an associate professor at Wellesley College, to the Daily Beast. "It's one of a Europe that was quintessentially white, in which people of color were either not present at all, or such an aberration that they might have well have not been present." The idea that Europe during the Medieval or Renaissance periods or the Vikings were all white is incorrect. Europe was historically more diverse than it is perceived today. Still, this false notion has caused white supremacists to join the SCA and promote their ideology.

There are many historically Medieval symbols that have since been reappropriated to mean something different. For instance, the swastika once was a Medieval sun symbol from northern Europe. In the SCA, the line between historical accuracy and offensive behavior has been blurred. Members of the SCA have used symbols such as the swastika, which is now considered anti-Semitic, for historical purposes. This past year in the Kingdom of Caid, (which encompasses California, Arizona, Nevada and Hawaii) the king and queen wore costumes that had a trim emblazoned with a pattern of swastikas and the letters HH ("Heil Hitler") at their coronation. The king and queen, called Athanaric and Sigríör within the Society, chose to have this trim made because it recreated the art of 5th century Norway. While both the swastikas and the letters HH do indeed originate from 5th century Norway, these symbols were appropriated by the Nazis. "The problem is that we have people in the SCA

who want to use those historical symbols and generally try to claim them back and take them back for history,” said Arden. This has sparked a debate both within the SCA and outside of it. While some members of the Society believe that using symbols such as the swastika and HH is acceptable for the sake of historical accuracy, others think that the present day context is inescapable. “We are creative anachronists. We can’t avoid that we’re in the modern day,” said Arden. After a picture of Athanaric and Sigríðr was published online where the swastika and HH trim were clearly visible, the king and queen faced backlash and were forced to step down. “We got very excited about a piece of very complex historical art and making an extremely accurate presentation and felt the differences to modern interpretations would be sufficient and that everyone would agree with us,” the king and queen wrote in a joint statement before abdicating the throne. “We were wrong. For this we apologize. Know that no offense was intended, no hidden message to interpret, and no hate to be displayed.” According to the Public Medievalist, Sigríðr had allegedly worn swastikas five years prior to her coronation, but denied the allegations at the time. “[The swastika trim at the coronation] definitely raised some questions in people’s minds as to whether or not it was a deliberate signal to white supremacists,” said Paul Matisz, known as Lord Fulk Beauxarmes within the Society and who runs a popular blog that highlights many of the issues of the SCA.

The SCA is run by a board of volunteer directors at their headquarters in California. They make decisions on certain matters that affect all of the Known World. After the issue in Caid, the Board of Directors (BoD) issued a statement concerning the matter. In fact the issue occurred right before a meeting of the directors. “The week before [the incident in Caid] the Board had a quarterly meeting, they received the news about what had happened in Caid. At that meeting the Board released a statement saying that hate symbols and speech were not tolerated. The Board also assigned my office to investigate the issue. The following week the then Crown of Caid resigned. Since that time the Board added the following change to Corpora which addresses the issues that arose,” said John Fulton, the President of the Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc. The change to the Corpora, or Code of Conduct, stated, “Hate speech is not tolerated in the Society. Hate speech is speech or symbols that offend, threaten, or insult individuals or groups, based on race, color, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability or other traits. Such symbols and speech have no essential part of any discussion of ideas and are of so little value to the Society that any benefit that may be derived from them is clearly outweighed by the harm caused. The use by any participant in the Society may result in possible sanctions up to and including revocation of membership and denial of participation.”

In addition to the event in Caid, the question was also raised about whether white supremacists were a part of the SCA in the Kingdom of Trimaris, which encompasses Florida. In August 2018, the king of Trimaris, an accused bigot, appointed his allegedly bigoted friend to be a peer on the Order of Defence. Peerage on the Order of Defense is considered to be a high ranking and honorable post within the Society. Both the king and the candidate for the Order of Defense,

called Blackmoor, had many public Facebook posts that led people to question whether or not they were racist and anti-semitic. Many people took offense with a series of posts the king made about a black mannequin he called Cletus. Cletus was the “Mannequin of Defense”, seemingly a reference to the Order of Defense. In the posts, the king dresses up the mannequin in suits of armor and comments on his bumbling incompetence. In one post, the king writes “[Cletus] knows all the poses, but is actually lousy at fighting”. In another, “Alas! Cletus’s weak attacks are easily parried”. The king also posted a suggestive cartoon of a black man drugging and raping a white man with the caption, “okay, i shot coffee out my nose!” The post that prompted the most backlash against the king was a convoluted joke

## “Are there white supremacists among us? Yes, I think there are.”

about gas chambers he made in the comment section of a Star Trek post. The original post was about the fictional Borgs, which are characters of the Star Trek universe that belong to a hive mind called “The Collective”. In the comment chain, a man named Sam commented, “This is why Star Trek sucks. [The Borgs] are gullible. Borgs don’t change their ways, and neither do smarmy little crypto-Nazis.” In response, the king commented, “Sam, maybe gas chambers are the solution.... the final one maybe?”

Blackmoor’s posts also raised concerns in the Kingdom of Trimaris. On August 3rd, Blackmoor posted a link to an article from the History Collective with the description “Hamburg after four Allied fire-bombing raids in July 1943, which killed an estimated 50,000 people”. The link also had an image of several city blocks in Hamburg with hollowed out buildings. In response to this article, Blackmoor wrote, “This is how a Superpower should fight a war. Civilians are part of the industrial production base. Take note, that the US has not won a war and the subsequent occupation since WWII, when we had no Rules of Engagement.” Blackmoor also posted a link to a Fox New article titled “Student Suspended for Trump Border Wall Shirt to Get \$25G and Formal Apology” and replied “Because there is the First Amendment and something called the Law. We are a Nation of Laws, not triggered autistic like screaming gags and soy milk drinking Beta boys.”

The king allegedly confirmed Blackmoor’s appointment away from the other peers because he knew that they were planning to stage a protest against it. Davius St. Jacques, a black man and member of the Order of Defense resigned in protest of Blackmoor’s appointment. In a statement on Facebook, St. Jacques said, “A person can be given the right to wear the items of an order but it doesn’t make one worthy of the order .... and neither does NOT wearing the trappings keep one from proving they ARE worthy... I plan to put all my effort into proving this”. St. Jacques continued to claim that “I can not serve a Crown that has broken its oaths to me. I WILL not bring glory to a Throne that openly mocks my Order and denigrates my service.” However, whether or not the peer in question was an actual white supremacist or a racist troll is contested. “The Tri-

maris situation is a bit different – there’s not a lot of question that [Blackmoor] was acting in bad faith, but there is a question whether [he was] doing it as a white supremacist or just to be a troll,” said Matisz. Despite the uncertainty of Blackmoor’s intentions behind the posts, it caused an upset within the SCA. The hashtag #IStandWithDavius attracted attention on Twitter and Reddit, causing many people to share their opinions and support for St. Jacques. While the SCA has a visible history of members trying to reclaim offensive symbols, whether or not there are actual white supremacists within the SCA is less clear. “Are there white supremacists among us? Yes, I think there are. But they’re a very small minority, and the vast majority our membership is horrified by the idea that there might be some kind of infiltration going on,” said Matisz.

The SCA has also faced allegations of sexual assault. In one public post on Facebook that garnered lots of attention within the Society, a woman accused the King of Trimaris of rape. The post was written in April 2018, seemingly when the king was still a duke. In the post, the woman wrote, “Re Trimaris & Duke [Name Redacted] He is more than just a bigot. I was 17. He was at an event in Savannah. For some reason, he wanted my company. He sang to me. Asked for my favour to wear in battle. Asked me to go with him to a Royals & Peers-only party. I had nothing to wear. Duchess [Name Redacted] gave me one of her gowns. I still have it- because I can’t wear it and I can’t give it away because I was wearing it. Late that night he walked me to his car to play Vivat Trimaris II for me. Then he asked what I was going to do to repay his generosity, told me he was sexually frustrated and it was my fault for being so hot. He pulled out his d\*ck and put my hand on it, and using both mild force and coercion, had sex with me in the back seat of his car. If he did it to me he has done it to others. He deserves to lose his Crown, his reputation, and his SCA livelihood.” The woman who spoke about her sexual assault on Facebook also spoke about it on the podcast Whores to Culture. However, the woman declined to comment for this article.

In that same public Facebook post, many SCA members claim that they know people who have been assaulted in the Society either by the king or by someone else. One comment on the post claims that sexual assault is widespread across all areas of the SCA. “I do not know you, but I believe you. I know a number of people who have been sexually assaulted or raped, in the SCA, by other SCA members, often at events. Most of whom have never formally reported to the [Board of Directors] or police, for all of the reasons that victims of sexual violence don’t, because of all the things that make that such a harrowing, destructive process, with such a low chance of resolution. Some of whom did report to their local SCA authorities, and got no support,” said one commenter. Ten people were contacted for this article to corroborate these allegations of widespread sexual assault, as well as the allegations against the king, but all either declined to comment or did not respond.

Although sexual assault is an issue in the SCA, many feel that it is merely a reflection of society as a whole. “It’s not that sexual assault is a bigger problem in the SCA than other areas. It’s just that this little microcosm is having an identity crisis, just like the whole country his having an identity

crisis,” said Arden. Just recently has the issue of sexual assault within the SCA been discussed on a public platform. “One of the serious shortfalls in the SCA as an organization is the lack of accountability for problem behavior, including -- and perhaps especially -- sexual assault. Because there are very few methods by which a problem player can be banned from the organization, and because those methods move very slowly, the SCA has what we call a ‘missing stair’ problem. That is, everyone is aware that there’s a problem, but rather than fixing it newcomers are simply given a quiet warning about the problem,” said Matisz.

Perhaps the most pervasive issue in the SCA is the reluctance to discuss problems such as racism, anti-semitism or sexual assault. Many members of the SCA are unwilling to admit these issues to any outside or “mundane” people out of fear that the issues that dog the SCA will become its brand. “This issue ties in with the lack of accountability and the failures of justice in the SCA, including a culture that is willing to tolerate bad behavior simply to preserve our hobby,” said Matisz. Many members seem to be happier participating in the SCA even with all of the problems rather than admit that there are underlying issues in the organization and possibly tarnish the reputation of the Society. Members will defend the organization to a fault, even if they have already admitted of being sexually assaulted or discriminated against within the Society. Of the twenty-four people that were contacted for this article, only eight agreed to be interviewed. Three replied with hostile comments, one politely declined. Fourteen people never responded to a request for comment.

The reluctance to discuss issues within the SCA is prevalent not just in talking to outsiders, but also talking about it within the SCA. In the kingdom of Caid, members were removed from a closed Facebook group, which served as a Jewish SCA forum, for talking about anti-semitism within the SCA. “We were asked to stop talking about [anti-semitism], to which I queried as to why, being that I and others thought it was a quite relevant topic to discuss in a Jewish SCA forum. We were removed within an hour of that legitimate query. The warning was quite vague and action was swift,” said William Wall, one of the members who was removed. Other members of the SCA who wish to remain anonymous agreed that they were removed from the Facebook group for talking about anti-semitism. The lack of communication that the society has is due to many different factors, mainly being that most members of the SCA don’t want to have their “game” changed.

Despite the general reluctance to acknowledge these issues, there have been steps taken within the SCA to counter them. In terms of the sexual assault there have been many changes to counter the “missing stair” or the warning people of a certain “problem person” and not doing anything to stop said person. The SCA itself is going through changes, just as the rest of the world has been too. “The #MeToo moment is happening in reenactment communities the same way it’s happening everywhere else,” said Matisz.

The SCA has also made efforts to become more inclusive. In August of 2018, the mission statement for the SCA described the society as “an international non-profit volunteer educational organization.... SCA is devoted to the research and re-creation of pre-seventeenth century skills,

arts, combat, and culture, focused on Western Europe and its cultural contacts, and employing knowledge of history to enrich the lives of participants through events, demonstrations, and other educational presentations and activities.” Later in the month, the mission statement was changed to remove the phrase “Western Europe and its cultural contacts” after backlash that it would force the SCA to be too focused on western culture. “[The Board of Directors] also adopted a new mission statement, and that was a little more problematic because the wording specifically limited the official focus of the Society to western Europe. Whether this was intentional or accidental has been the subject of much debate but there was an immediate and very vocal backlash from the membership about that limitation which was seen as arbitrary and unnecessary. To their credit the Board of Directors realized that this was an unwelcome change and in August they issued a revised mission statement that removed the wording which focused on Western European culture,” said Matisz. The aim of the mission statement is to create a more inclusive environment for all. The SCA although tends to focus their reenactment on western European history, members are not required to do so. “All kinds of minorities would join the game [in the past] and realize that well, for a long time [they] couldn’t learn and play in this society as an African persona. I couldn’t learn about African history or African empires, because it wasn’t included. We are western Europe. So I think that we’re going to start to see that change now that we’ve opened the society to all kinds of cultures,” said Arden. The changes to the mission statement have helped broaden the scope of the SCA’s hemisphere, however the type of people that the society attracts hasn’t had time to see any kind of change yet. “The SCA is still overwhelmingly white,” said Arden.

In addition to the the new mission statements, the SCA has recently taken other steps to

**“One of the serious shortfalls in the SCA as an organization is the lack of accountability for problem behavior, including—and perhaps especially—sexual assault.”**

make itself more inclusive of people of all backgrounds. They created the Interim SCA Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer, early in 2019. “The mission of my office is basically to cultivate an environment where all of all our members can experience the SCA and thrive in it no matter their background or no matter what their identity is,” said Interim SCA Diversity, Equity and Inclusion officer, Gigi Coulson. The main job of the SCA Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer is being a resource for SCA members to field their questions and concerns about equality within the organization. “I promote inclusion by awareness education so our membership that are interested in these concepts, but don’t really understand them, will have me as a sounding board and me as a resource to ask questions and learn,” Coulson said. In addition, the SCA Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer will serve as an advisor

to the Board of Directors. “I’ll also be advising the BoD on Equity and Inclusion issues, I’ll be suggesting practices to highlight what we’ve already built as the foundation of equity in the SCA, and then just increase the atmosphere of inclusion,” Coulson said. As only an interim officer, Coulson is currently working on creating a foundation that the permanent director can take over. “I think I’m just really setting up the basis of the office right now. I’m developing training, I’m writing a handbook, I’m reaching out to do a demographic survey of our populous, I’m getting qualitative information about things that are going on in our kingdoms to kinda inform those documents,” Coulson said.

Although the Interim SCA Diversity, Equity and Inclusion officer does help with inclusion, they aren’t the person responsible for investigating claims of discrimination or sexual assault. “I’m not the investigator and I’m not the person who decides about sanctions [removing someone from the society] but if an incident is reported to me, I would report it to the proper people to have it investigated. Then I would provide support to the person who is reporting the incident or complaining because a lot of times people—when something happens they don’t feel heard, and if they’re told ‘Hey it’s just gonna get taken care of’ and they don’t know what happens after that, they feel kinda left out,” Coulson said. Instead of conducting actual investigations into allegations of any unethical conduct in the SCA, which is the job of the administrative officers, the SCA Interim Officer of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion focuses on creating a safe environment for all members to state their experiences with unfair treatment, without being afraid of repercussions. This is especially relevant to sexual assault where many people are hesitant to report instances when it’s happened. “I have also read things online about incidents that happened years ago that weren’t reported. So I think part of my role will be to really promote a feeling of security and if something happens, you can talk about it right now. Like there’s no stigma involved, you don’t have to go to the police if you don’t want to, we would probably suggest that you do just because that’s kinda the chain of command that our investigators would suggest, but also if you wanna stay in our organization we’re gonna support and protect you,” Coulson said.

On a broad scale, the SCA is trying to change. “The vast majority of people who participate in the SCA are well-intentioned and don’t want these [issues] to be in our community. This isn’t a new attitude, but I think people are more inclined to push back against the problems than they have been in the past, partly as a reflection of the larger changes in our culture,” said Matisz. Despite this attitude shift, creating that change can be difficult. “Changes in attitude are important. But I also think that changes in the rules are important too. Of course, the SCA is a volunteer organization run by a volunteer Board of Directors, which can limit the speed at which changes occur to the rules. The BoD is definitely trying to bring the SCA forward to reflect these cultural changes; people like me are pushing them to move faster,” said Matisz.

# 2018

## The Year of Teacher Activism

BY RACHEL AUERBACH AND EMMA VOLKERS

The first of the notorious education worker strikes began in West Virginia in February of 2018, as school staff across the state refused to work in hopes of negotiating higher wages and other employee benefits. The strike ended relatively successfully, with a statewide 5% increase in salary for school workers. This event inspired other teachers to stand up against unfair wages, as numerous strikes in states including Arizona, North Carolina, Oklahoma and Georgia were instigated over the past year.

Most recently, 32,000 educators in Los Angeles walked out of schools to demand smaller class sizes, bigger teacher salaries, and more nurses and counselors in LA schools. They remained on strike for six days, with heated negotiations between the Los Angeles Unified School District and United Teachers Los Angeles union. Eventually, teachers returned to school on January 23rd, as the union and school district settled an agreement involving a cap on class sizes, a 6% pay raise for teachers and a plan to hire full-time nurses and librarians in every school.

This being said, these raises sound much more influential than the reality. Even with the 6% raise, teachers in Los Angeles will on average make less money each week than a skilled plumber. In fact, the median annual salary across all teaching professions in nearly 15 thousand dollars below the median annual salary across workers with a Masters degree, even though 56% of teachers have a masters degree. This leads to a false assumption that teachers are less qualified professionals. "When you're asked what you do for a living, you say 'I'm a doctor' (Oh, wow that's great!) 'I'm a lawyer' (Oh, wow, that's impressive!) but then 'I'm a teacher (Oh. That's cool)." said Guillermo Melendez. In addition, with the rising price of living in places like LA or Bethesda, it is becoming increasingly challenging for some teachers to live comfortably with their salary. B-CC teacher Dylan Antonucci says that not only do teachers need money to live in these expensive regions, but also compensate for the fact that "they are taking care of 100+ kids every day, using parts of their paychecks to support their students that maybe are coming to school without a lunch, or without the right supplies."

This issue is not solely an economic one; the underpayment of teachers partially stems from the general underappreciation of the work they do on a regular basis. "You look at teachers in America, and you look how we're viewed. Arguably we have one of the most important jobs in the world, we are molding the future of America. We're tasked with this job and we're asked to

do so much and yet when you look from state to state, the pay isn't equal to what is being asked of us." Antonucci said.

Working from sunrise to sundown to try and educate the minds of hundreds of students is a task generally deemed as far less important than those of doctors, lawyers, or politicians. The intensity of the teaching profession is generally underestimated in terms of workload, as many falsely believe the workday ends at 3:00 P.M and the work year ends in June. "I know that some of my own friends work significantly less and get paid much more than I do, and that's when it gets a bit frustrating. My argument isn't so much how much I get paid, but the amount of work I have to do to earn that money." said B-CC biology teacher Kelly Cunningham.

The United States is surprisingly unique in its treatment of teachers. In Finland, teachers are paid almost the equivalent as doctors and lawyers. Melendez has witnessed this difference

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*"When teachers strike, then you begin to see the power that they really have in society."*

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firsthand. "I'm from El Salvador, and I went to school in El Salvador until I was in sixth grade," he shared. "Where I come from, and in a lot of Latin American, African, and European countries, if you are a teacher you are regarded at the same level of profession as a doctor or a lawyer." This title not only comes with a higher pay, but also a higher level of respect and esteem.

Although the strikes in the majority of these regions ended with relatively positive results, the morality of educators refusing to work and thus leaving students without teachers has stirred controversy across the country. Endless questions have arisen due to this complex situation: Is it fair to compromise students' education to negotiate benefits? Is there a more effective and efficient way to demand change besides refusing to work? Or, does striking give teachers' a voice that is usually silenced? And will the changes enacted from the strike benefit students more than the temporary absence from school will harm them?

Boiling it down to its' core, this is an issue of whether the end justifies the means. Critics of these education workers denounce the strikes as harmful to students' education and list countless reasons why the strikes are more disruptive than beneficial. Education Secretary Betsy DeVos condemned the Oklahoma labor strikes in an interview with The Dallas Morning News, saying "I think we need to focus on what's right for the kids. I hope that adults would keep adult disagreements and disputes in a separate place and serve students that are there to be served." Mitch Carmichael, a Republican member of the Senate, shared similar views as DeVos on education worker strikes, calling the striking teachers "disrespectful" to students, parents and the legislative process. "Do I agree with the strikes? It depends," says Melendez. "Sometimes there is only so much a state or a county can do, for example if I as a teacher ask for better buildings, that takes time, and lots of money, a strike is not going to be beneficial. However if the strike is for better work conditions, for heating and air conditioning that functions, or for cleaner buildings, then the ends surely justify the means."

When listening to the mission of teachers protesting, it seems difficult to argue that their actions are conducted without consideration and concern for the wellbeing of every student in the school system. The demands of teacher strikes go far beyond wanting to earn more money; teachers are walking out of school to benefit students who are being taught in overcrowded, understaffed classrooms with sparse and overused materials. "The fact of the matter is, I work so hard and I do it because of the passion and the love of the kids, for wanting you all to be successful humans, but there is a thought that goes through my mind at times- is this what I am going to do forever? Is this going to be sustainable for me as a person forever?" said Antonucci.

Although nobody can deny taking students out of school is unideal, contentment with the status quo in these schools will not provide students with the education they need to be successful. "When teachers strike, then you begin to see the power that they really have in society." Says Melendez.

Whether or not education worker strikes will continue to pop up in 2019, the value teachers hold will undoubtedly continue to present itself inside and outside the classroom. As Melendez says, "The best surgeon in the world had to learn how to read, the best engineer in the world had to be taught math by a multitude of teachers, any professional had to be educated by a teacher. If we don't have teachers, we don't have anything."

# Who You Calling Shallow, Matthews?

BY DAVID LOPILATO, THE TATTLER SPONSOR

I have disagreed with The Washington Post's Jay Matthews before. After all, Matthews created the Challenge Index—that extremely influential, extremely flawed formula that ranked high schools for more than a decade before, unceremoniously, disappearing after 2017.

This time, I take issue with Matthew's surprisingly low expectation of high school students. In his March 15th Washington Post article, "Is it possible to go deep in high school?" Matthews writes, "I remain skeptical that high school students can handle much depth."

How can the most influential education journalist of our time say that high school students are not capable of depth? He needs to get out more often, spend more time with...you know... actual high school students.

I see depth daily. And, no, I don't make a habit of staring into the abyss. I'm talking about the depth I see in students like Aidan Smyth and Josh Garber who started and nurtured a healthier conversation about free speech and criticism of Israel and anti-Semitism than any we are hearing from the halls of congress. I am talking about students in Leadership Class who bravely initiated an assembly about sexual violence. I'm talking about the students whom Marc Groman and David Reitman (the hosts of the popular podcast "Their Own Devices") invited to discuss their research about the nuanced reality of contemporary teen communication.

And these are only the students I see daily. Then, I hear about our county-champion debate team and amazing Mock Trial team and award-winning Physics team.

Mr. Matthews, high school students go deep when they are given the opportunity and the right environment. That is made clear in Jal Mehta and Sarah Fine's new book *In Search of Deeper Learning: The Quest to Remake the American High School*.

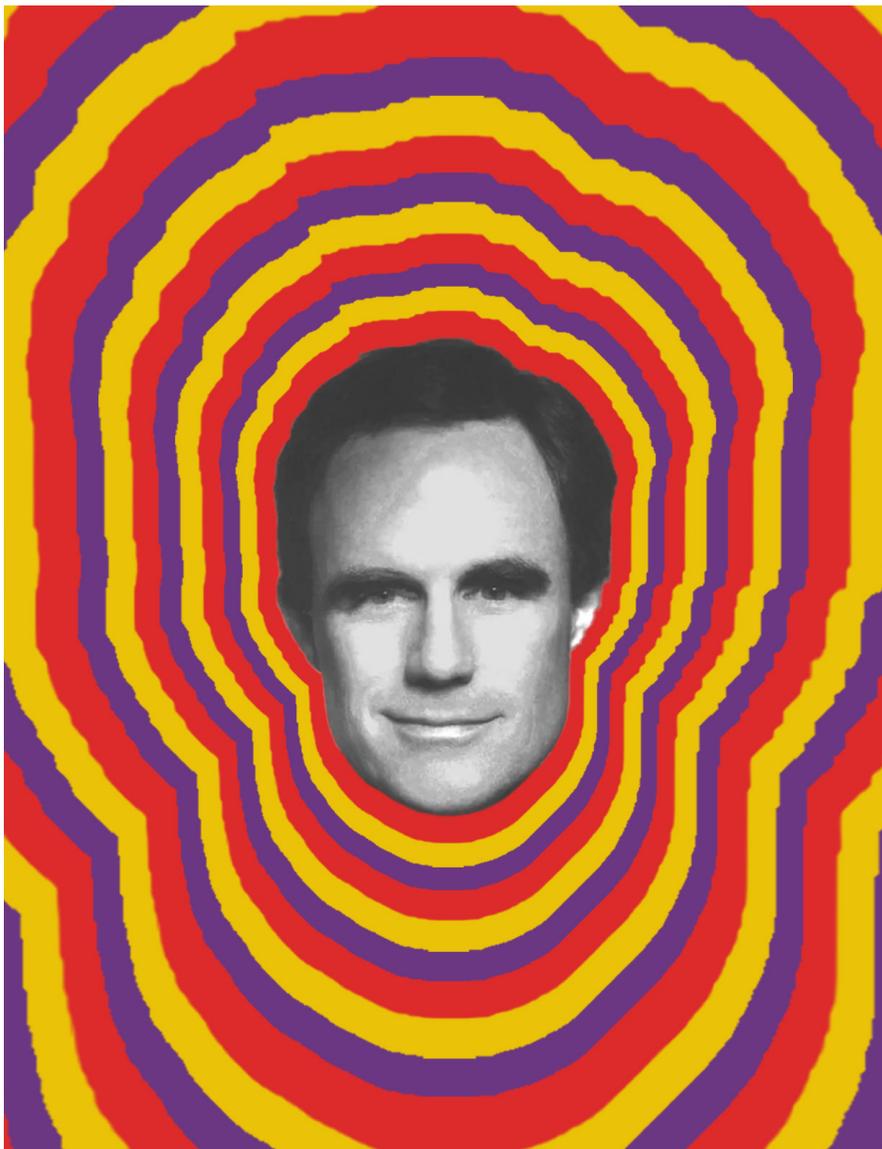
The value of *In Search of Deeper Learning* is the true nub of Matthews's article even if Matthews remains a bit skeptical of the book's optimism.

Matthews writes:

1. "If a school is going to educate everyone, it needs to treat students as if they have something to contribute. As Mehta and Fine note, the best teachers see teenagers 'as purposeful, curious, capable beings who have interests that can be developed and who value being treated as responsible people.'"

2. "Here is the book's most important sentence: 'We cannot lose sight of the fact that adolescents fundamentally are seeking community, people with whom they can both learn and relate.'"

The first idea is music to my ears. Students at B-CC thrive when treated as individuals with something to contribute. Consider the students who organized the t-shirts in response to gun violence or the young women appearing on news show after news show about the infamous IB list.



I give the second idea a big "amen" as well. However, it's this second idea that B-CC, in my estimation, needs to work on more. In other words, when it comes to community, let's be honest, we lack depth.

It could be argued that I have officially ventured into hopey-changey, touchy-feely territory that ultimately has nothing to do with the classroom or learning. But, I wholeheartedly do not see it that way. Neither do Mehta and Fine.

I know smarter people than I have racked brains and wrung hands over fostering school spirit at B-CC. I'm not wading into those depths. I simply want to talk about what I see as an early, easy, and often overlooked first step to community: good old-fashioned appreciation. We will never create a community unless we do a much better job of appreciating just what we have and who makes what we have possible.

In the last edition of *The Tattler*, Jamie Murray wrote about the unfair imbalance in the college-application process. Private school students, Murray argued, get way more personal attention than public school students. Her article was accurate. Maybe we do not have a college counselor and life coach for every five students at B-CC, but we have counselors who works tirelessly, helping

students find the right college, get into college, and afford college. Just last week, two Tattler staff members were filling out applications for scholarships they would have known nothing about if the incomparable Mrs. Parmelee had not encouraged them to apply.

There is a trendy topic among moral philosophers and religious leaders called "Radical Gratitude." Many see it as the only way out of our national divide. I'm not going there here. I'm talking about simple appreciation. We don't have to wait for a nationally designated week, for example, to appreciate how Mr. Engler stepped up (yet again) in the immediate wake of the IB list story or appreciate how a group of English teachers decided they needed to do more than just flip through slides during the suicide prevention sessions or appreciate how our short-staffed building-service and security teams keep this building safe and clean even with an expansive new addition or appreciate the parents who did the literal heavy-lifting for this year's book sale that raised more than \$60,000 for our community.

If we can only appreciate the value of community when a new book says it's important, then so be it. Let's do it already- *In Search of Deeper Learning*.

# Deal or No Deal?

Connor and Aidan are back with another debate, this time discussing whether the Green New Deal, a proposed stimulus program that aims to address climate change, is a damaging, socialist dream or a necessary step in combatting climate change. Read their arguments below.

## AOC a Little Green Around the Ears

BY CONNOR DICKINSON

It seems as if the Democrats of today have lost the ability to think logically, or at least the congressional freshman class with the likes of Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Ilhan Omar leading the pack. Progressives across the nation applaud them for their “revolutionary” and “ground-breaking” ideas and proposals that are downright impossible. Policies like Medicare for all and the Green New Deal will not work in this country and its simply a matter of economics, numbers, and politics. America cannot and will not become a socialist nation, and the Green New Deal is nothing but a disaster and tremendous waste of money and time for our country.

The United States population is projected be at roughly 400 million people in the year 2050, and from 2020 to 2050 the economy is expected to expand by nearly 75 percent according to McKinsey and Company. This growth will result in an increase of apartments, homes, cars, and offices to sustain our growth; all of which will require vast amounts of energy. Despite this significant increase in the size of the US economy and population, the EIA (Energy Information Administration) projects that the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions will decrease in that same period of time from 5.15 billion metric tons to 5.00 billion metric tons. As a reader you may ask how that is possible; it is simply due to drastic improvements in technology and infrastructure that is more energy efficient. With time, gas mileage will improve greatly in part due to pressure from regulations as well as increased innovation. The United States has also reduced the amount of coal used drastically and replaced it with natural gas which is far

cleaner and significantly more efficient.

Regardless of the facts that our emissions are projected to be lower even with a significantly higher population, progressives demand the abolishment of the use of fossil fuels. This is simply unrealistic and inefficient as approximately 80% of US energy comes from fossil fuels and that is not going to change for many reasons. The first issue with the abolishment of fossil fuels is that the industry provide the United States with roughly 4 million jobs, or about 4 percent of all employment in the country. To completely destroy this industry would not only be disastrous for the economy but for our national security, in recent times with increased discoveries of shale oil and natural gas America has become energy secure and independent. To lose this luxury would be disastrous for our country. I also counter the argument that the jobs lost in the fossil fuel sector would be replaced in the renewable energy sector as today in the free market economy the largest job growth in energy last year was in shale and natural gas according to the Department of Energy. We could not afford a costly transition towards a 100% renewable energy economy without destroying industries, cutting job growth, and paying exponentially more for energy.

According to the newest report released by the Congressional Budget Office, the cost of the Green New Deal would be roughly \$93 trillion. This alone should be reason enough to scrap the idea of a Green New Deal, yet Democrats tirelessly push forward ideas without any means to pay for it. In the 10 year period to pay for a full transition away from fossil fuels to full renewable energy, each household would have to pay roughly \$500,000 in taxes to cover the enormous cost of

the Green New Deal according to the researchers from the Heritage Foundation. Costs aside, Cortez and the supporters run into another serious logistical issue. There are millions of buildings spread across America be it schools, homes, or office buildings that are designed to be powered by fossil fuels. How would we as a nation be able to efficiently reconfigure almost every building in our country to run simply on renewable energy? We as a nation already face extreme dilemmas with fixing “simple” infrastructure problems with roads, bridges, and airports. To me redesigning the entire nation’s infrastructure seems like an incredibly stupid idea.

I wholeheartedly believe that climate change is a real and serious problem, but by no means is it a “top national security threat” that many progressives portray it to be. I believe that with time the free market will put forth a multitude of advancements in energy efficiency that will result in cheaper and cleaner energy for the world. If you look at how much more efficient we are today when compared to 30 years ago it is astonishing, and without any doubt I believe that trend will continue. With time, renewable energy will become cheaper and significantly more practical. Yet today that is not the case, and until then America will rely on fossil fuels as its main source of energy. The day that renewable energy becomes a cheaper and superior alternative to fossil fuels is when we will transition to a renewable energy powered economy. A government intervention in the economy to create a “Green New Deal” would be nothing more than a costly failure.

# The Green New Deal: There Is No Other Way

BY AIDAN SMYTH

The imminent dangers posed by drastic climate change across the globe are undeniable. A 2019 study found that the Earth's oceans are experiencing unprecedented warming; indeed, the "rate of warming for the upper 2,000 meters of ocean has increased by more than 50 percent since 1991." Meanwhile, a report from the U.S. government released over Thanksgiving weekend asserts that the rapid rise in average global temperatures can only be explained by human activity.

The warming of the Earth has led to increases in extreme weather events that threaten the lives of millions of people around world. Hurricanes Harvey and Florence, both of which caused billions of dollars in damage in the U.S., developed in some of the warmest areas of the Atlantic.

By the end of the century, the American economy could lose hundreds of billions of dollars due to the effects of climate change. Dairy production, as well as farmers' crop production, will decline in the face of rising global temperatures, costing the economy even more.

While there is no question of the dangers of climate change, the question of what to do about it remains. Some economists argue for a carbon tax, an incentive for corporations to cut down on carbon emissions. The degree to which corporations would be able to change their habits and ameliorate their effects on the climate is dubious at best. One need only to recall the 2008 financial crisis as a reminder that markets and corporations are not the most trustworthy means of allocating resources in productive ways. And considering that global capitalism is a significant cause of climate change, it makes even less sense to trust the markets to correct themselves.

Capitalism seeks to maximize profits, and to do this, resources must be used to produce the desired profit. But as finite resources are exploited to the point of exhaustion, our environment suffers the consequences. Short term profits have routinely been prioritized over the long term wellbeing of our planet - 71% of global emissions are produced by just 100 companies - and the capitalist system bears the majority of the blame for this.

The carbon tax would not nearly have the impact needed to solve the global climate crisis. The United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has given the world 12 years to make drastic cuts to greenhouse gas emissions if we are to avoid severe effects on the climate. A larger solution is necessary.

At the time of this writing, the Green New Deal (GND) is little more than a rough framework for action. Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-NY) and Senator Ed Markey (D-MA) aim to direct Congress to spend the next few years developing, through various committees, policies that will make up the GND.

Critics may rail against Ocasio-Cortez and Markey, saying that they lack a clear vision. However, as a GND would be an incredibly complex and far-reaching plan, it is imperative that Ocasio-Cortez and Markey enlist many different experts and congresspeople to aid in the development of legislation in the coming years.

Indeed, it is also the lack of concrete proposals at this moment that allows for the ability of the GND to adapt to the changing circumstances of our climate, both political and environmental. As award-winning journalist Naomi Klein reminds us, the wildly successful and popular New Deal from FDR "was a process as much as a project, one that was constantly changing and expanding in response to social pressure from both the right and the left."

The transformation of our economy is necessary to curb the effects of climate change outlined above. If we do not take up the process of developing the GND as a legislative project, we will destroy our planet and our economy. Claiming that because the GND is not fully developed yet we should not support it is a cheap, cop-out critique that only accelerates our decline into apocalyptic environmental conditions.

Aspects of the GND include upgrading the infrastructure of our country to cut carbon emissions and become more energy efficient. The GND will touch all sectors of the economy en route to achieving its ambitious goals, and make special effort to accommodate the needs of marginalized communities across the U.S..

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**Claiming that because the GND is not fully developed yet we should not support it is a cheap, cop-out critique that only accelerates our decline into apocalyptic environmental conditions.**

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sio-Cortez has called for the country to be carbon neutral by the year 2030. While her goal may be too optimistic, that is not necessarily a bad thing. We need an ambitious and optimistic vision for our future to rally support and increase urgency for significant change. Under the GND, buildings will be upgraded to increase energy efficiency, as will transportation systems. High-speed rail and electric car manufacturing will both be expanded.

Included as well within the GND are other elements of a progressive policy platform, including Medicare For All and a jobs guarantee. They are part of a transition from a capitalist economy that is hell-bent on the destruction and over-exploitation of all of our natural resources towards a more democratically-run, socialist economy.

Further, the inclusion of popular policies such as Medicare For All is necessary to amass electoral support. Tying the GND to free, high-quality health care will give citizens more of a stake in a plan that will likely include many technocratic aspects that will be hard for the public to understand, making it harder for future Congresses or administrations to roll back any of the provisions.

Cries over the expense of a GND are misguided for a number of reasons, the first of which being that the cost of inaction will be vastly higher

than any potential costs of the plan. Continuing business as usual under our current system will lead to a less and less hospitable planet, rendering any argument that a Green New Deal is too expensive entirely impotent. If we don't have a planet to live on, it won't matter how much money we spent on a policy proposal.

Another reason is that government spending has historically proven itself to stimulate productivity, job growth, and consumer spending, helping the economy. Indeed, according to Modern Monetary Theory, the U.S. government can spend as much money as it wants, so long as it does not spend beyond the full productive capacity of the economy. It is a common misconception that inflation happens immediately as the government begins to print more money. The reality is that inflation is triggered when government spending goes beyond the productive capacity of the economy, when the country runs out of resources that money is used to purchase - land, trees, human labour, etc. If there is more money in circulation than resources to buy, inflation occurs. But the GND will ensure that the money is spent on jobs programs and other resources that are available, offsetting the potential for inflation.

The U.S. debt has been rising in recent years, but massive inflation has not been the case. Japan is another example of a country in which high government debt - its debt is about 250% of its GDP - has proven not to lead to out of control inflation and interest rates. The real danger, perhaps, of causing robust inflation, is with keeping a capitalist system that overuses and destroys natural resources, limiting the productive capabilities of economies.

Data for Progress, a progressive think tank, has stated that the Green New Deal would create 10 million jobs over the next 10 years, a major boost for a country that has seen millions of jobs outsourced under the past few presidents. More workers also means more consumer spending; as workers increase their incomes or get back into the workforce, they will spend the money they earn and fuel the economy.

The GND may not be a fully fleshed out plan at this point. But that is no reason not to support the development of the plan. The same criticisms that are being levied against the GND were levied against Roosevelt's New Deal 80 years ago. History looks favorably not on those who whined about the federal deficit, or the complexity of the plan, or those who babbled about "socialism," but on the planners and administrators of the New Deal. It is an investment into the future of our country and our world, one that will bring incredibly high returns in the form of economic and social benefits. Development of new green technologies will bring the U.S. back to the forefront of global manufacturing. Other countries will copy us when they see the positive returns on our investments.

The U.S. is in dire need of the GND. 80% of the country, including 64% of Republicans, is in favor of it. Not to act would not only be another dagger in the heart of our dying democracy, but a dagger in the heart of every person around the globe who will see the planet's destruction unfold before their eyes.

# Toxic Hookup Culture: Is Modern Romance 'Canceled'?

"So, you up?"

BY LILLY BEHBEHANI

Over the years, it has become apparent that high school relationships and emotional connections are on the decline in favor of random hookups. A modern romance, one might say, lies within the liberty of a hookup.

Maybe it's just a sign of the times. With the breakout of new technology and social media apps like Tinder (which is supposed to be for adults only), Snapchat, and Instagram, connections between two strangers can be made within seconds. Teens nowadays seem to think that late night Snapchat exchanges are romantic, whereas in reality, they are pathetic attempts at establishing the bare minimum relationship between two people without facing reality. It is no secret that we hide ourselves behind a screen, forming relationships digitally rather than face to face, messaging and texting things we would never actually say in real life.

In the midst of "modern romance," of course, there's the exception of a few couples. But out of these few couples, the chance of the relationship coming from a series of dates rather than a series of hookups is slim. Now, it's almost a surprise to hear about people dating. "Hooking up is more common than having a relationship nowadays. You don't have to deal with the baggage of dating someone," explained junior Rebecca Schiffman. "People are scared of commitment."

The want for a "no strings attached" relationship has become more popular as the commitment factor scares more teens away. The appeal of hooking up comes with freedom that some teenagers seem to think they will lose if they get strapped into a relationship.

As teens depend on the hookup culture to gain experience, they don't get the right experience while they are in their formative years. Learning how to form healthy relationships during a period of self-development and personal growth is imperative to having mature, stable, and healthy relationships later on during the transition to adulthood.

However, the trend toward hooking up can also reflect a demeaning attitude towards females. A sophomore at B-CC, who asked to be unnamed, said, "Some of my friends have power rankings - it's a joke, but it's kind of serious." These power rankings are determined based on the duration of the hook up to how often the male does it. The pressure from friends to get with more people results in them gaining "street cred" or popularity within the group. When hooking up with a girl results in a higher amount of recognition, the boys ranking goes up, while the girls "ranking" (or reputation) changes for the worse.

"If a boy has more hookups then he is considered like experienced, matured and he knows what he is doing. More girls may want him because of that," senior Cyrus Nemazee said, "It's different for girls."

Though hooking up may seem to be mutually beneficial, in the long run, women benefit less than men. The more hookups a guy has is equivalent to how experienced he is, adding to their status. The more experience a boy has, the more appealing he appears, while on the other hand, the more experience a girl has, the less appealing they appear.

The toxicity of the hookup culture is hidden behind the temporary higher stature you receive, or you may feel, from the hookup. Yes, you may feel the rush of adrenaline and endorphins after. Yes, you may feel carefree, like you have

## HOOKUP LEADERBOARD

RANK	NAME	BODY COUNT
1	JAKE	11
2	EVAN	10
3	MICHAEL	10
4	CHADLEY	9
5	BRANDON	8
6	BRADLEY	8
7	CHANDLER	7
8	BROCKLER	6
9	BRODIE	5
10	CHESLEY	5

done something that doesn't result in any more thought. Yes, it didn't mean anything. But is this is really something that would make you feel better in the long term or are you being reassured that this is healthy through actions of others?

The liberty of a hookup, however, may seem like a liberating decision that asserts dominance over one's self and choices. "A lot of girls in your generation must view it, from what I hear, the hookup culture of most being an empowerment our bodies our decisions," says Ms. Kontos, a teacher at B-CC.

"Yet I often wonder if it's the same male dominated perspective or objectification that is still influencing but in a different way. And I wonder if 10, 20 years from now you're going to look back and say 'Gosh actually that hookup culture was still perpetuated by the same male dominated

# “Virginity” Is Outdated. Let’s Ditch the Double Standard.

BY ALEX WATERMAN

In today’s society virginity is valued for women, but not for men. If you’re a virgin as a woman, you’re seen as pure and wholesome, but not if you’re a man. If you’re a man being a virgin, it can often look down upon.

The first condom was invented in 1839, and patented in 1844. At that time, it was important for young women to remain virgins in order to ensure the purity of her future husband’s bloodline. But now it’s the 21st century, contraceptives are a thing, and so are female rights.

In high school the idea of virginity also invites the idea of slut-shaming towards girls. A girl may be judged by others on her ‘body count,’ or she may judge herself. Either way, this concept continuously brings harm to one’s self esteem. The opposite could be said for boys. Often the idea of ‘making love’ is erased from their mind, and is replaced with a more debauching act. Sex being seen as intimate is not as common for boys as it is for girls. Many times, boys have sex at a young age just to get it over with or boast to their friends, and the B-CC community seem to accept this reaction: the sexual double standard.

One male student at B-CC, whom I will refer to as “Sean,” told me that guys don’t care who they are having sex with, “as long as they are somewhat attractive, it doesn’t matter if they’re annoying...” He also added that the pressure among from his friends to have sex was so great that he made up the story of him losing his virginity with his then girlfriend who he did not feel comfortable losing it with. “Six months later,” (after the relationship ended) “I was at a New Years party, and my friends asked if I was a virgin, and I had the opportunity to make it up, so I said no, and told them the ‘story,’ just so that I could say it happened before it happened to them, and I could say she was a ‘dub.’ I don’t want it to happen the way it happened with my friends. I don’t want to remember it that way. If there’s a girl I really care, about I don’t want to have to tell her that I lost my virginity just to do it, I want it to be with someone I care about. Even girls look down on guys for being virgins, and that’s why I had to keep this secret to myself.”

After talking with him, this is what I got, if you’re a guy, you are expected to be promiscuous. Sean continued with, “That’s why a lot of guys want to get it over with; they don’t want to get it over with for themselves, they want to get it because of pressure from their friends.”

Girls can also add to the stigma that can surround virginity. Sean also told me about a time when he was hanging out with a group of girls. He said, “they wanted me to hook up with one of their friends and I wasn’t into it, which showed me that even girls could put pressure on guys to be sexually active.”

According to the Oxford Pocket Dictionary, the definition of sex is “sexual activity,

including specifically sexual intercourse,” what does this mean? Those who identify within the LGBTQ+ community do not necessarily believe in that standard. Sex involves many different actions, this causes our society to question whether some have “truly lost” their virginity, because while they may have participated in many sexual activities, they may not have experienced what is considered traditional sexual intercourse.

An 11th grade girl in the Bethesda area told me, “Similar to how the definition of hooking up is so vague, virginity ranges like a lot of things, on a spectrum of experience, and it isn’t just black and white. I think especially with being a part of the LGBT community, it’s made me realize how irrelevant it is.”

Is it right to tell someone else that they are not having sex, when to their principle, they are?

Another gay girl in a relationship said, “I’ve questioned what it [virginity] means. Especially being in different queer relationships, we both had different definitions of what virginity meant, so different steps meant different things to both of us. It made taking the steps harder for me, especially because I over-thought the concept of virginity.”

Another male student at B-CC recalls the time his mom walked in on him losing his virginity, and her initial reaction was “you shouldn’t be doing this in here,” and walked out. There are even some stories of fathers finding out that their sons were no longer virgins, and reacting by giving them high fives or fist bumps. This reaction was completely different for a female B-CC student whose mom after finding out about her daughter losing her virginity, stopped talking to her for days. Because of this, the girl says that their relationship has never been the same. Although not all parents are alike, it’s obvious to me after hearing these stories that when a daughter has lost her virginity, many parents are less supportive and more judgmental.

The stigma surrounding the loss of virginity doesn’t stop there. People tend to find blame from what they see and so when someone sees a pregnant girl it’s obvious to them that the girl has had sex, but a boy shows no physical evidence of it. According to ReCAPP (Resource Center for Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention) 41% of high school students are having sex, yet when a girl gets pregnant, she’s seen by many as doing something taboo. From what I can tell, most high school pregnancies are not planned, and in reality, it takes two to tango.

The old fashioned concept of the importance of virginity in our society simply no longer works for today’s young men and women. The negative or positive association that comes with being a virgin seems unnecessary and avoidable.

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norms as it was earlier on. But somehow, we were tricked into thinking that we were making decisions for ourselves.”

The negative influence of the hookup culture not only extends to females but also to males. “Friends of mine told another friend of mine to break up with his girlfriend so that he could get with other women rather than stay with his current girlfriend.” A B-CC junior recalls.

Pressure to appear more masculine and emotionless may result in boys prioritizing casual hookups to boost their status instead of making efforts to develop emotionally complex and meaningful relationships.

While hooking up may seem fun and appealing, it results in no substantial benefits for either party. Reflect on what is better for your wellbeing: hooking up, or becoming emotionally stable.

# Malaika's Thoughts

Tattler columnist Malaika Bhayana has even MORE opinions.  
(She dares you to read them).

## CULTURAL APPROPRIATION? ...MAYBE NOT.

What is cultural appropriation? Definitions vary depending on the person that you ask. Some believe that it is a group of individuals from one culture financially profiting off of designs or ideas prominent in another culture. Especially in the Fashion industry, this is common.

By that definition it's typically industries that hold the blame. However, others believe that individuals can culturally appropriate. One prominent controversy was when a teenage girl wore a Chinese-style dress to her high school prom in Utah. Critics of this teen claimed that she was ignorant to the Chinese culture and therefore should not have been allowed to wear the dress. It's also worth noting that many of these critics were second or third generation Asian Americans. In fact, when the controversy reached Asia many were proud to see the influence that their culture had had. So, what's the difference between appropriation and a fluid cultural exchange? No item fully belongs to one group or another. At some point in history each design and idea has had influence from another culture or idea. Personally, I would be glad to see a widespread adoption of bindis and saris. Saris are everyday wear in India, not something that has cultural significance. In fact, most Indian-Americans couldn't tell you the "history" behind the adoption of the sari.

Now, there are nuances to this situation. All clothing is not created equal and there is a difference between trying something on as a Hal-

loween costume and wearing clothing from a different culture. Take Native American Headdresses for instance. This item of clothing has deep spiritual meaning to the Native American people and therefore wearing it as a costume is deeply offensive. But the term cultural appropriation makes the issue seem less significant than it is. Now, the phrase is thrown around to describe everything from blackface to Selena Gomez's decision to wear a bindi. Labelling those two things under the same umbrella does all of us a disservice. So let's stop labelling everything "cultural appropriation" and instead look at individual situations with a critical lens. Let's examine who the situation is hurting and the reasons behind the decisions being made. We need to stop getting indignant and speaking on behalf of others because a lot of the time, the people whose culture we believe we are "appropriating," are actually happy to see a wider adoption of their culture.

## WE NEED A BETTER WORD FOR BULLYING.

I've always held an issue with the term bullying. Two teenage girls coaxing their classmate to commit suicide and boasting about sending someone to their death is labeled the same as teasing. These events are labeled as bullying, a term that has the connotation of a child overreacting to act of teasing or some nerd giving up their lunch money to popular jock. Let's stop using the term bullying. Let's call events that merit it harassment, a term that in the adult world has real legal and moral implications. Just because

we aren't yet adults doesn't mean that some of these events of "bullying" aren't just as malicious and awful. Let's stop making things seem less important than they are just because we are young.

## THE HYPOCRISY OF STANDING FOR THE PLEDGE

I've never understood the idea of standing for the pledge. Does every person who stands for the pledge think of the implications of what they're doing? Growing up, we were never even thought why we say the pledge. We weren't taught that it was a sign of respect. Rather we were expected to repeat a mantra that became a mindless daily act rather than something of significance. Reciting the pledge was very much like brushing my teeth, I don't think about WHY I'm brushing my teeth every morning, just like I didn't think about what I was saying every morning. After Colin Kaepernick, I started thinking more critically about why we stand for the pledge. I never made a conscious decision to stop standing. At some point, when my teachers no longer yelled at the kids who didn't stand. I sat, out of sheer laziness. But, why should I stand? The kids who are standing aren't paying tribute to anyone- because 9 times out of 10, people stand out of habit. Why does not standing for the pledge have to mean an act of protest, rather than believing that there are more deliberate ways to show that you have respect for something.

# Jussie Smollett's Lies Give Arms to Hate

BY MONIQUE BOATENG  
AND SEMHAL NEGUSSIE

A proclaimed hate crime against black openly gay "Empire" actor Jussie Smollett made headlines on January 29th, 2019. More than two months later, his attack still remains a hot topic due to the spiraling turn it took.

According to Smollett, he was attacked by two white men while returning to his Chicago home at two in the morning. The "Empire" star was allegedly beaten, had a rope tied around his neck, and had bleach poured on him. Additionally, he claimed racist and homophobic slurs were used by the perpetrators, who chanted: "This is MAGA country!" Once the attack made the news, Smollett received an outpouring support from many. At the same time, though, others remained doubtful of the validity the attack.

Since then, the Chicago Police Department arrested Smollett with felony disorderly conduct for the potentially false report he made in January. The CPD has found and released evidence

showing two black men who appear to be related to the attack. The two men had been identified as Nigerian brothers Ola and Abel Osundario. The surveillance video shows the two buying ski masks, red hats, and gloves the day prior to the "attack." It is believed that Smollett paid the brothers—one which was on extra on Empire—to help stage the attack. Fast forward to February 21st, Smollett turns himself in to the police.

Apparently, Smollett staged the attack because of the desire for a higher salary. But because of the lengths he went to to stage the attack, many believe there's more to the story. No matter what his motives were, Smollett succeeded at something much darker. He managed to further marginalize and discredit the experiences of minorities. Being black and gay in America is like walking on eggshells. Strong prejudices exist against both their race and their sexuality, giving close minded bigots even more of a reason to act.

Because of the uncertain and vulnerable environment the black and gay communities live in, Smollett's story had believable elements. While

Smollett faces consequences for his lies, those who already did not have a voice feel the impact of his actions. These minorities will now seem even less credible when coming forward about their experiences. Real victims of hate crimes will have a much harder time being believed or validated when they report to the police. Acts of racism and homophobia currently are not taken as seriously as they should be, made only worse the actions of Jussie Smollett.

As of March 26th, charges were dropped against Smollett. He was initially facing sixteen felony counts of lying to police in a staged racial and homophobic attack. While dropped charges do not confirm that the crime was never committed, the impact of his actions still stands. Smollett painted minorities in an extremely negative light and gave disbelievers only more reason to try and discredit them when an actual hate crime occurs. The case ends when Smollett surrenders his \$10,000 bond. Though the entire case lasted only three months, the implications of the issue are long lasting.

# B-CC Reacts to College Admissions Scandal

BY AARON KNISHKOWY AND JASON GRAYER

On March 12th, Andrew Lelling, the US Attorney currently serving in Massachusetts, announced charges against fifty parents, college coaches, and test prep employees in what has been described as the largest college admissions case ever prosecuted in this country. The investigation, nicknamed “Operation Varsity Blues” spanned from 2011-2019 and implicated several A-list celebrities including actresses Lori Loughlin and Felicity Huffman. Overall, fifty parents,

test, the parents and Singer would come to an agreed price for a certain score, and Singer would convey the information to the proctor where the student would be testing.

In addition to cheating on tests, Singer helped students get into college on supposed athletic merit. One such way was by bribing college athletic team coaches. Upon being paid, the coaches at schools such as Georgetown, USC, and Wake Forest would designate certain students as athletic recruits which would help during the admissions process.

everyone was very angry.”

This new scandal, however, has not necessarily led to a large reaction from all students at B-CC. “I didn’t really have much of a reaction honestly,” said Liam Tsang, a senior. “I already had sort of assumed that rich families could buy their children into college. I’m more annoyed by things like legacy status in admissions since it’s much more common.”

Jeremy Neff, a local standardized test tutor who works for Private Prep in Bethesda, was also not surprised by the charges. “Rich families

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**“There’s a unanimous opinion that it’s really not fair. We’re all very hard working at B-CC... Everyone was very angry.”**

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college coaches, and test prep workers were charged.

The scam, carried out by William Rick Singer, was enacted in two main ways: cheating on standardized tests and through bogus athletic scholarships or recruitment spots.

In order to boost student’s test scores, Singer paid multiple test proctors in Houston and parts of California to change SAT or ACT test answers for students whose parents had in some cases paid amounts exceeding \$6 million. Prior to the

As of now, no students have been charged.

Many students from B-CC were infuriated by this scandal. In their podcast, juniors, Grace Carter, Anna Hirst, Olivia Moffitt, and Natalie Schwartz interviewed several B-CC students to survey their reactions, as well as determine whether scandalous practices occurred at B-CC.

When working on the latest episode of the B-CC Podcast, Moffitt discovered that “there’s a unanimous opinion that it’s really not fair” because “we’re all very hard working at B-CC...ev-

have been paying to admit their kids for years, whether through big donations or simply the fact that [they] can pay full sticker price.” However, like Tsang, Neff is not nearly as concerned with this latest scandal as he is with the entire college admissions process. “The real scandal is that our society hasn’t prioritized giving equal opportunities to people” due to differences with property taxes, the ability to pay for test prep, or other reasons.

## Opinion: Working Hard or Hardly Working?

BY VANESSA PONTACHACK

Every year, millions of students all over the world work endless nights to get the grades and scores they desire. We get up early in the morning, sit through seven classes a day, go to sports practices, and some even go straight to work, making the day extremely long. Once we started high school, college became a hot topic for ALL adults to bother us about. We constantly have college on our minds, with “what’s your top choice?”, “what did you get on your ACT/SAT?”, “where did you get accepted into?”, and it just goes on and on forever. We all know, especially in the most recent years, just how competitive the college admissions have become.

Recently, the scandal of the federal case “Varsity Blues” was unveiled, where thirty-three wealthy parents allegedly thought it was an amazing idea to risk commit fraud in order for their children to be admitted into the “top schools” such as Stanford, University of Southern California, Yale, and many more. The Key Worldwide Foundation was a secret way for wealthy families such as Felicity Huffman from the *Desperate Housewives*, to pay around \$15,000 for a protector to correct her eldest child, Sofia’s test scores.

While Lori Loughlin, also known as “Aunt Becky” from *Full House* and her husband Massimo Giannulli, a designer who worked with Target paid about \$500,000 to falsely list her two

daughters, Bella and Olivia as athletic recruits for the crew team with the coaches knowledge. These families are pretending to be someone they’re not, just to go to a certain university. Getting into college is one of the greatest accomplishment someone can have in their lifetime, something that no one can take away from you. But yet, they got it all just by signing a check.

Once this news broke out, it frustrated everyone, including myself. I have had a job since my sophomore year, while attending school everyday, working hard to keep up with my classes all while the accused got it handed over to them. I know that high school students work too incredibly hard in order to get to where they want to be in the future. There are students who come from less fortunate families and are stuck with a burden of trying to pay off their education, that they actually worked for. These “students” should get the REAL college experience of crying in the bathroom at your minimum wage job because you’re tired and hungry, since you stayed up for hours working and studying while barley even having the time and money to eat.

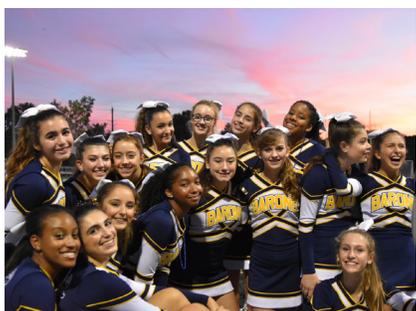
Because these students needed bribery from their parents, shows that they were clearly below the universities requirements. Meaning, not only had they taken a recruiting spot from a potential prospective athlete, but they also took a spot from an athlete who had no way of getting into their dream college other than playing a sport.

To fake it, push past it, and to think of all the hard work that normal students have to put in to get into, while thinking they can bypass all of this with money highlights a deeper issues of the wealthy taking advantage.

In Montgomery County, we are fortunate enough to have the support of MCPS to give all students one free SAT waiver to those who can only afford to take it once. Students also have access to CollegeTracks, which is a program that helps you figure out which colleges are a good fit, how to apply for them, and how to pay for it all (which can be overwhelming). We also have the College and Career Center, available to give students information on all colleges, scholarships, and answering questions you may have about the college process. Thankfully, we live in a community where we get a significant amount of support to assist us through an important period of time.

The expense of hardworking students are at risk. This is a rigged system of robbing students all over the country of our rights of a fair shot of getting into elite universities. Students who were trying to get into these schools, the right way, through community service and hard work didn’t know that the odds had already been setback against them. But, at least us dedicated students can keep our dignity knowing that we did it all on our own.

# Winter Sports Recaps



## Wrestling

BY GRETA FARKAS

The Bethesda-Chevy Chase high school wrestling team qualified for states. This was the first time the team has qualified for states in Coach Arnonnes coaching history. The team had an amazing season, taking few losses to Damascus, Springbrook, and Sherwood on a tiebreaker. Af-

ter a strong season, the team headed into playoffs quite confidently.

On February 6th, the boys headed into regionals against Churchill.

"I was very confident in our team, we had beat Churchill early in the season and I knew we would be them again" junior Noah Bowers said, who has been on the team since he was a freshman. After several hours spent in the B-CC gym and several wrestling matches, B-CC came out victorious and beat Churchill 39-27.

All of the work and effort put into the season all paid off for states. At states, B-CC faced Springbrook, whom they had lost to during the season, South River, and Roosevelt. B-CC came in 3rd place, behind Springbrook in first and South River in second.

"States was really exciting, but we'll be back next year. Our team is basically all juniors" Bowers said. Wrestling closed the season with an incredible record and with most of the team returning, they will be even better next year.

## Swim and Dive

BY WILL TENPAS

This year's Baron's swim program was characterized by constant improvement as the season progressed. The girls suffered their first and only loss of the season in one of the early weeks

before dominating for the rest of the season. Led by a star-studded sophomore class and incredible depth throughout, the girls managed to place first out of all public schools at the Metro Championships, win the Division 1 title and the Regional Championship, and earn second place at States. This is the highest team finish of any team at the school this year.

On the men's side, the dual meet season had

five tough battles against the best teams in the state. They never managed to come out on top in the regular season, but come postseason began to notch some more impressive finishes. Led by a strong set of divers and a deep senior class, they qualified several athletes to states and had multiple top-10 finishes at Divisionals, Regionals, and States. The team is young and looks to keep building as the years go on.

## Poms

BY DAVID SHUSTERMAN

The entire Poms team and the Barons faithful in the stands erupted into cheers in front of a raucous crowd at Counties. After placing third at the Northwest invitational and second at the Damascus invitational, the team knew they were ready for Counties.

"We practiced so hard for counties... we knew we only had to do one thing: be positive about the outcome," Senior Maja Wright said.

The Barons came into Counties with newfound grit and energy, and it showed. A tremendous performance from the team earned the Barons second place overall, first in spirit, and third for the captains competition. It was a bittersweet moment for Captain Tina Siyoom, who placed third in the captains competition in her last high school competition performance ever.

The B-CC Poms showed promise and poise throughout the season and their second place performance at Counties capped off an incredible year for the team.

"It was an amazing rush to be able to perform in front of large crowds at B-CC sporting events... that's definitely what I'm going to miss most," said Wright.

With only three seniors on the team, much of the team will be back with next year with one collective goal: winning first place at Counties.

# Indoor Track

BY WILL BIRKS

This winter, the indoor track team had a number of dominant runners. The pack is led by senior Aidan Smyth, who won the 4A West Region in the 800 meter run.

However, Smyth is not the only runner who had an outstanding season. Teammate and classmate Nick Bailey qualified for states by a few hundredths of a second in the 800 meter run. Junior Fiona Kelleher was another state qualifier in the 800 meter run. Senior Emerson Hemley qualified for states as well, running the 3200 meter run in under 10 minutes. The next group

to qualify for states was the 4x200m relay with Soren Abnet Holden, Zachary Walker-Liang, Robbie Cooper, and Peter Lally. Off the track, Elena Grant in the shot put and James McGrievy in the high jump both qualified for states.

The team featured many other top performers throughout the season who didn't qualify for states. After a successful cross country season in the fall, Rosalind Van der Does de Willebois was incredible for the indoor track team this year. Finishing sixth in the 1600 meter run at Regionals, Rosalind capped off another successful season. In the Montgomery County Championships, Rosalind had also finished in sixth place. Emma Humphreys has been another top performer throughout the season in the 3200 meter run. In the Montgomery County Championships, Hum-

phreys placed second, and then at the regional meet finished in second again.

Although no member of the indoor track team was able to win states, a lot of the people who had the opportunity to compete did a great job. James McGrievy finished fourth in the state in the high jump, completing a jump of six feet, which was the same height that he did at Regionals. Aidan Smyth had a solid performance as well, finishing in sixth in the 800 meter run.

Overall, it was a great season for the indoor track team. The team had incredible performances by many of their runners, who are now working hard in their outdoor season.

# Girls Basketball

BY CHARLIE KANNAPELL

In the B-CC Women's Basketball team's 2017-2018 season, the Barons put together an unforgettable season of 15 wins, 3 losses, a division title, and a playoff run to the state semifinals. A year later, the success of that season remains both an inspiration and a high standard to follow for this year's Barons. Even more, according to the Montgomery County Women's Basketball Coaches Association (WBCA), the Barons face the toughest schedule this season out of all women's basketball teams in the county. Nonetheless, our Barons have proven time and time again this season that they were up for the challenge.

As the regular season came to a close in the middle of February, Coach Ingalls and the Barons had won 13 out of their 20 games, with their most notable wins including a crushing 62-33 victory over Northwood, a big conference win over Einstein, and a defeat over Northwest by 30 points.

"Every grade is able to bring something different," said junior guard Jessica Katz, commenting on the team's dynamic age range. "Because the upperclassmen have lots of experience and know

how everything works in terms of traditions and practices, they are able to bring a higher level of sophistication when it comes to the game." Katz also gives much of the team's credit to the underclassmen, who she says "bring so much energy and excellent talent, which are great for the team dynamic."

Heading into playoffs on a winning streak, the Barons remained a large threat in Montgomery County Women's Basketball, as a WBCA poll gave B-CC a top-10 rank in the county. Katz believes that, to maintain a dangerous force in the county and strong threat in the playoffs, "we must play together and work on our team chemistry, learning to trust one another on and off the court."

Last season, the top-seeded B-CC Women's Basketball team left the playoffs as state semifinalists, as well as season, section, and region champions—a feat that this season's team wanted to meet and surpass. "There's unfinished business from last year," says senior captain Merete Cowles. "The plan is to come out strong and keep playing our game. If we bring our intensity, dominate the boards and play together offensively, no team can stop us."

And indeed, it seemed that nobody could. The Barons flew into the 2019 playoffs, bulldozing over Kennedy with a 56-21 win, then stunning

two-seed Whitman with a 56-35 victory and one-seed Churchill in the section championships with an overtime victory by a margin of one point. In the Regional Championship, the Barons continued their success with a win over another one-seed in the Clarksburg Coyotes. Cowles says that her three-seeded team has "had what it takes takes all season, and playoffs have just given us the opportunity to show everyone else."

"When you're the underdog," she says, "every win is more exciting. It's the all-in mentality, and it's electric."

Just like that, Cowles and the Barons were back at the SECU Arena at Towson University, but this time they were the underdogs facing the dominant one-seed—Old Mill. The Barons kept a steady lead over the Old Mill Patriots for most of the game, but ultimately lost in the fourth quarter by two points.

Despite the unfortunate loss, the Barons Women's Basketball team showed determination and grit this season as they slowly rose from the bottom to the top and shocked the county with another extremely successful season.

# Boys Basketball

BY DAN SHAPIRO

The boys' basketball season has come to a close after a hard fought loss against Walter Johnson in the section semifinals of playoffs. Although the season ended earlier than the team and the fans had hoped, the team overcame a lot of adversity and had some great moments during the season. They have much to be proud of.

After starting off the season with a 1-6 record, the Barons drastically adjusted and went 8-4 for the next portion of the season. The winning spree was highlighted by a buzzer beater win over our rival, Whitman. Following their success, they unfortunately lost three of the last four games of the regular season.

B-CC was overlooked by other schools heading into the playoffs, including Einstein, their first-round matchup, because of B-CC's perfor-

mance in the regular season. Nevertheless, the team believed in themselves and did not care about what everyone else was saying. They defeated Einstein by a small margin of three points in the first round.

Next up was WJ, and the team and the fans could not have been more excited to play one of our neighboring schools in such a high stakes game. The team gave it their all but came just short of the win, losing by three in overtime.

Despite the season's struggles, the team had lots of exciting news with college commitments. Senior guards Kevin McAuliffe and Tyler Groom will be furthering their athletic and academic careers next year at Vassar College and Lebanon Valley College respectively, both of which are well-regarded Division III programs.

In addition, junior captain Elijah Wood, who had previously committed to Tulane University, decided to decommit from the program. Wood, who had verbally committed to the program a few short weeks ago, came to his decision because the head coach, Mike Dunleavy, was fired after lead-

ing the team to a 0-18 conference record. Since resuming his recruiting process, Wood has already received offers from major programs such as Xavier, UNLV, and Florida.

Even though the season has barely even ended, the team is already looking forward to next year. Seven seniors are graduating, but the team will have three starters returning next year. Junior guard Nick Roberson said that while the team had a great group of guys this year, "we'll be back stronger than everyone is expecting next year." The rising seniors have built strong chemistry over the years, as many of them have been playing together since middle school. Junior forward Eli Davis believes that "everyone is determined to work for a state title."

It seems that the Barons have the talent and the work ethic to succeed next year, and the fans will be cheering the team on as they work to achieve their goals.

# 2kForbes: Starting New Mcps Rivalries With Just A Camera

BY TOM MERRITT

The DMV area has always been a breeding ground for up and coming entrepreneurs, but it's not often we see their popularity rise so quickly. 2kForbes, a filmmaker from Maryland, films DMV-area basketball games and makes highlight videos for players, then posts them on social media. His popularity at B-CC was catalysed from making videos of Barons' basketball star Elijah Wood. Since then, his county-wide popularity has exploded. The most interesting impact of his videos, however, is the disputes it has caused between some schools.

2kForbes usually makes player-specific videos, so he does not support certain teams, rather just the player he creates a video for. His account does offer a vast array of highlight videos, but

these cover numerous MCPS schools without much bias towards one school or the other.

But, MCPS students from around the county have been using 2kForbes' videos as a platform for debate. B-CC, Walter Johnson, and Richard Montgomery are at the center of the main feuds. On one of 2kForbes' videos of a WJ player, over 580 comments were posted surrounding the B-CC vs WJ rivalry and the newly founded WJ and RM rivalry (which was somewhat sparked from the competition between the two schools' basketball teams). The video has become a place for heated debate.

"It's just people repping their set, as long as it's not OC you gotta respect it" vocalized 2kForbes about the tension in his comment section. The most popular debacle discusses the narrow 53-51 loss that B-CC took to WJ in early

January, and the 86-54 shellacking that RM gave to WJ in early December. 2kForbes' highlight video caused WJ students to take to the comment section in order to express their views about the recent success of their basketball team.

The videos have also given some schools a false sense of achievement, and schools such as Churchill and WJ now think that they have the hyped student sections in the county after videos that 2kForbes created gained popularity among MCPS schools.

"It's rough to see other schools such as WJ thinking that they're tough just because of one highlight video," agreed Seniors Jack Loughlin and Travis Cann. But, all that hype and debate can be attributed to the magic of the one man behind the camera: 2kForbes.

## SPORTS RECRUITMENT

BY KEVIN MCAULIFFE

Three more of our fellow Barons have committed to play college sports at the Division 3 level, which is the most underrated division in college sports. Division 3 does not offer athletic scholarships, so they do not get as much of the hype as D1 or D2 get, but the athletes that play at these schools are still extremely talented. These three athletes have put in a lot of work in their respective sports during their high school careers and they are excited to continue competing in college.

### Virginia Brown

The freshman phenom Virginia Brown will be continuing her running career at Emory University. After bursting onto the Montgomery County running scene in 2015, Virginia has had an up and down career in high school, breaking many B-CC records but also struggling with many different injuries. Emory University is a D3 school located near Atlanta, Georgia. The Emory Eagles compete in the UAA conference, one of the most competitive D3 conferences in the country. Virginia will be running cross country and track and field, as she continues to excel at the long distance events. Virginia chose Emory for "the academics, the location and the team." After visiting the school she said she "felt at home with the team and can't wait for the next four years."



### Kyle Ramos

Joining fellow B-CC Lacrosse commit Leo Cowie at the D3 level is Kyle Ramos, who is committing to play for coach Brian Kelly at Goucher College. Goucher is a liberal arts college, located in lacrosse-hotbed Baltimore, MD and is a part of the NCAA Division 3 Landmark Conference. After playing football his entire life, Kyle, a natural athlete, made the switch from football to lacrosse during his freshman year of high school. Kyle decided on Goucher because of "small class sizes, its proximity to his parents at home and his brother at Towson University, and the opportunity to earn a starting spot as an underclassman." While at Goucher, Kyle hopes to "become a team leader, and hopefully study abroad."



### Tyler Groom

Star point guard Tyler Groom has committed to Lebanon Valley College to continue his basketball career. Tyler has had a successful career at B-CC since transferring here from St. John's High School at the beginning of his junior year. Tyler played a key role in the Barons 17-game win streak in 2018 and eventually earned a starting role to help lead B-CC to the regional championship. This year, Tyler has been a key piece of the Barons lineup all season, with his most famous moment being his game winning three-point buzzer beater at Walt Whitman. After generating interest from quite a few schools, Tyler settled on Lebanon Valley College, which had been the most persistent in its recruiting efforts. Tyler chose Lebanon Valley because "everyone was so nice and friendly and it felt like a place he could call his second home."





## “SORRY, I HAVE PRACTICE”

BY CAT DESOUZA AND CAMILLE HALL

“I’ve been on the rowing team for all four years of high school,” said Danielle Rockman, a senior at Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School. “The season I’m in is currently my 12th and final season with the team. Rowing has a special place in my heart and I know it holds a place in everyone else’s hearts as well [on the team].”

Rockman is one of the two senior co-captains of the Girls’ Varsity Crew team, and she is also one of nine dedicated senior girls who have been on the team since they were freshmen. Each of the girls has had both their setbacks and successes when it comes to being on the team, but if there is one thing that everyone knows about the crew at B-CC, it’s that the teammates are all very strong and hardworking individuals.

“I won’t lie, the sport is really hard, but joining was the best decision I have ever made,” said senior Tessa Adler. “I have made my best friends on the team and the good times have always outweighed the bad times. If you are lazy, the sport may not be for you, but if you are thinking about it I would definitely give it a chance.”

The rowing team exudes a hard core image, and if you know anyone on the team, it’s easy to understand why that’s the case.

Right after school, the girls drive down to the boathouse, and arrive around three o’ clock. After changing for practice, the girls bring the oars to the dock, and load the launches (the motorboats the coaches drive) with life jackets and other various safety equipments. After the first round of boathouse chores, there’s some downtime where the athletes can work on schoolwork or spend

time socializing. The girls start their warm up pilates around 4:10, and by 4:30, the coaches will have given the girls their lineups, which specify which athlete sits in what seat of the boat. The girls then carry their boats down to the water and start their daily hour and 45 minute row. The girls first engage in drills given by their coaches to perfect the technical aspect of the stroke, focusing on rhythm, blade placement, and timing. Then, the girls then rip into the bulk of practice, the workout. The first half of the week is focused on endurance, and the rowing sequences are higher in volume but lower in intensity. As the week progresses, the girls engage in higher intensity workouts, building up their strength and cardio.

“It’s really cool because we get to row past the monuments almost every day and some days we row down to the airport and get to watch the planes take off as they fly over us,” said Rockman.

After a long day of training, the boats are docked and carried back to their racks around 6:30. The girls then start their last round of boathouse chores, and put the oars back in the racks and store the safety equipment back in the shed. The girls are on their way home by 7:00, and start homework around 8:00/8:30.

While this may seem like a rigorous and exhausting routine to perform everyday, the girls assert that crew is well worth it.

“The most rewarding thing for me personally was the body positivity that rowing helped foster,” said senior Jamie Murray. “Before joining the crew team I was insecure about my build and my height, but rowing taught me to see my body as a tool instead of a presentation. Row-

ing taught me to be proud of my body, because regardless of physical appearance, it’s capable of incredible things.”

The team practices every weekday and on Saturdays unless they have a race that day. Rowing at B-CC is a three-season sport, with a few weeks of break between the fall and winter seasons. However, the girls are expected to stay in shape during that time on their own.

Upon recalling positive events from each of their challenging seasons, the senior girls spoke of many fond memories throughout their four years.

“During spring break, we have two practices a day, and on one particularly well-weathered day, we decided to stay around Georgetown in between the two practice times,” said Julia Suomela, a senior co-captain of the varsity girls on the team. “We ended up settling underneath the cherry blossoms in the Tidal Basin and just fell asleep in a pile. That was a very good nap. We got to wake up to the pink petals and warm sunlight.”

Like all B-CC athletes, the girls are no strangers to fun and light hearted team experiences. However, the senior girls on the crew team have certainly demonstrated their passion and dedication when it comes to rowing.

“Seniority plays a pretty significant role on the crew team,” said Madeline May. “Experience is really what makes someone a good rower. Rowers who have made it through all four years have gained mental, physical, and technical experience that really allows us to support the team and the newer members of varsity. I remember how cool I thought the seniors were my freshman year, and it’s really weird that that’s me now.”



# You're AUXing Wrong.

Having good AUX etiquette is important. Gen-Z needs some help.

BY JAMIE MURRAY AND DANIEL NAVRATIL

Imagine — you and your friends are on the way to the beach for a weekend getaway, vibing to the lul of Rex Orange County. Suddenly, your friend Andrew, who's sitting in the front seat, takes his AirPods out, fumbles for the AUX, and blasts Sicko Mode. Or, you're at a party, throwing down to a banger and right before your favorite part, you hear the electronic boop on Spotify that signals the next song. You turn to see that there are five people crowded around a phone, arguing about what clapper to play next.

At first, these situations may seem like minor annoyances, but they reflect a pervasive problem in Gen-Z culture: the need to be constantly stimulated.

Our attention spans are diminishing. Twitter threads get boring. ELO days make us anxious. This article? You probably won't make it to the end.

Our need for instant gratification is even affecting our personal relationships. Countless studies show that kids today are less likely to put

in work for a steady relationship, instead choosing quick, no-strings-attached hookups.

Sorry, I got distracted (my girlfriend just broke up with me). Back to music.

This need for immediate stimulation is shifting the entire music industry. Streaming services like Spotify and Apple Music have taken over in part because in our culture music has, in a way, become disposable.

Image paying \$0.99 for a song like we did in middle school. What were we thinking? I play a song 30 times a day for a week and then never listen to it again. (RIP Mo Bamba, thank u, next, Thotiana, and, yes, Old Town Road, already.)

Today, music is made to be listened to quickly. Over the past five years, the average length of a Billboard Top 100 song has decreased by 20 seconds, now coming in at 3 minutes 30 seconds. But that's including songs engineered for radio, which requires a duration of three to four minutes. When you look at the music that better represents teens, songs are even shorter. Soundcloud graduates Lil Pump and the late XXXTentacion release remarkably short projects. The

majority of songs off "?", X's first number-one album, are less than two minutes long. The songs off "Harverd Dropout," Lil Pump's latest album, are longer, but still average a quick 2 minutes and 31 seconds.

Songs don't fade out anymore either. All ten Top 10 songs from 1985 faded out. In 2018, there were only three.

So what does all this mean? In short, our behavior around music is changing, which means that the situations in which we listen to music are also changing. And not for the better.

At a party, if the song isn't going hard enough, we'll change it to one that slaps. This might seem like a logical decision, but having some down time at a party can be beneficial. Withholding the urge to play non stop bangers may be difficult, but doing so allows you to recharge for when a clapper does come on, making the experience all the better. Additionally, letting the playlist run creates a more comfortable experience for the person on the AUX. Too often the person AUXing is treated like a DJ, berated with countless song requests that lack any thematic cohesion. Parties



# Here's how to do it better:

## 1. Let one person AUX.

People shouldn't be fighting for the AUX. Skipping songs and changing playlists is unsettling and ruins the vibe. Leave it to one person.

## 2. Keep song recs to a minimum.

Let the playlist run! Whoever was picked to AUX probably has some good stuff on there. If not, you got next time.

## 3. A good party playlist has variety.

Whoever is on the AUX should include all types of bops: today's trap, pop, (some) throwbacks, rap, reggaeton, a few country bangers, and, of course, Party in U.S.A.

## 4. Let songs fade out.

The outro of a song, even if it's only 20 seconds, allows for people to decompress before the next slapper. Skipping the last part of a song is unsettling, especially when people are enjoying the music.

## 5. Put the phone away!

Your friends miss you.

are for having fun and connecting with one another. It ruins the vibe when everyone is crowded around a phone clamoring to put in a request.

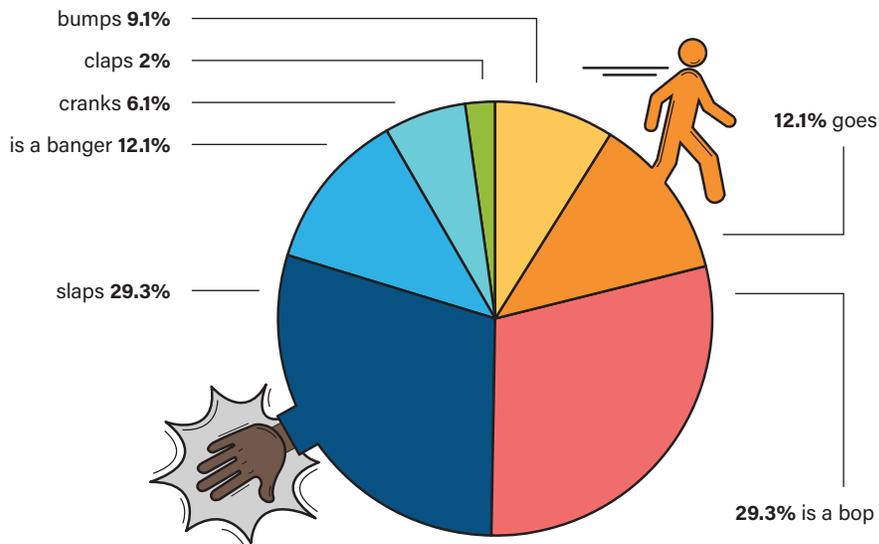
What happened to music being a backdrop? Although having music at parties is non negotiable, it seems that the primary focus is listening to music rather than actually socializing with one another. We're too quick to lapse into the familiar melody of a 2000s throwback song than make conversation with another person. Striking up a conversation and learning about someone's life is hard. Reminiscing about your childhood over Down by Jay Sean is a lot easier.

Speaking of 2000s bops... Although everyone likes them and it's tempting to play nonstop crowd pleasers, resorting to this dampens the experience. The appeal of a 2000s bop is the pleasant surprise of hearing something you haven't heard in a while. That charm evaporates when they're overplayed.

We're tired of working on this article. That's the end. Go Barons.

# This song...

We asked 99 students what words they used to describe a good song. Here's what they said:



# Ardyn Kesterman

BY TINA SIYOU

AP Ceramics, a course offered at B-CC, gives students the opportunity to thrive as artists by allowing them to grow in the field they are most interested in. Ardyn Kesterman, a senior at B-CC, took advantage of this opportunity by enrolling in AP Ceramics during her sophomore year of high school.

"I started taking ceramics because I was curious about what it was like and it seemed like a fun class to take," Kesterman said.

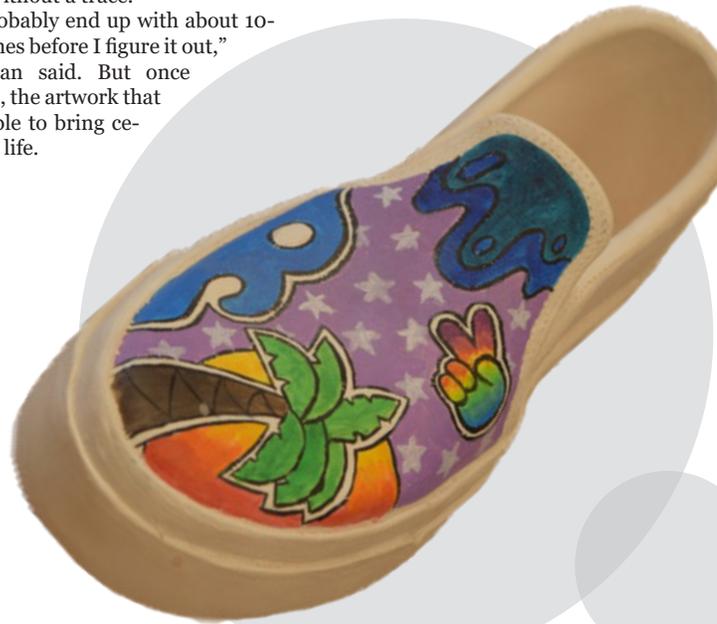
Ardyn's favorite part of AP Ceramics is the freedom the class gives her to create whatever she wants. But, her creative process takes time. After perfecting multiple sketches, Ardyn settles with one that best distinguishes her artistic vision. Then, she turns her concept into something concrete.

"With AP Ceramics," Kesterman said, "you can really choose anything that comes to mind and bring it to life."

While partaking in such a prestigious level of art, hardships are bound to come into play. Creating art is not always a linear process, and sometimes things go wrong. She explains: "My least favorite part is when something I spend a ton of time on breaks in the kiln; it's really unpredictable sometimes."

The biggest obstacle Kesterman faces during her AP Ceramics course is the dreaded creative block that causes the plethora of ideas once clouding her brain to vanish without a trace.

"I probably end up with about 10-15 sketches before I figure it out," Kesterman said. But once she does, the artwork that she is able to bring ceramic to life.



Photos of Ardyn's work  
by Thea Hegwood

# Burnin' Up for The Jonas Brothers

BY LEE SCHWARTZ

Between the years of seeing the Cheetah Girls in concert, and Miley Cyrus, I had the pleasure of seeing the Jonas Brothers live. For an eight year-old, I was extremely passionate about music, and followed this passion to the lawn of the White House to watch the Jonas Brothers perform at the Easter Egg Roll.

Somehow, I remember the performance vividly: the sweater I was wearing, the sweater vest Joe Jonas was wearing, and how he flipped his side bangs once and I was done for. Mind you, this was also the year Camp Rock came out, so I was pretty deep in.

As I grew older, the Jonas Brothers' music continued to be an anthem to my tween years. There were definitely a few nights I danced alone in my room to "S.O.S".

But as we all know, the Jonas Brothers released their last full album in 2010, and their dynasty came to an end in 2013 when they split up. October 29, 2013 was a hard day for all of us. It was sad to see them stop making music, but for the six years following I would continue to occasionally listen to their songs, their lyrics becoming more and more nostalgic as I grew up.

Ten years after I saw the Jonas Brothers live, I turned eighteen, and immediately after I wit-

nessed the trio release a new single. On March 1st, 2019, the Jonas Brothers released the song "Sucker" without any warning. A birthday present for me? Maybe. Groundbreaking? Most definitely.

I promptly watched the music video, and was not disappointed. Honestly, the first nine seconds gave me goosebumps. Initial thoughts: the setting is awesome. Great quality and cinematography. And Joe Jonas should always wear black turtle-necks.

Throughout the video, I got more excited for the return of the brothers. They still retained the same dynamic I had been deprived of for six years. I immediately recognized their voices, and felt a burst of joy. The aesthetic is different, and

their clothes and the way they style their hair, but I think the iconic boy band aged nicely. They're modern, classy, and grown up.

The music video features a huge castle with crazy extravagances and luxuries. All three of the brothers' wives are in the video, participating in "royal" activities and wearing flashy avant garde outfits. There was an extreme amount of attention to detail and thought put into every scene. The video is also full of references to the movie *The Favorite*, which happens to be a movie I love. The brothers definitely read my mind with this one. (I also noticed references to Marie Antoinette, and Queen Elizabeth.)

The music video was as much fun to watch as listening to the actual song. Obviously, others felt the same way. In just 13 hours the video had almost seven million views. By April 5th, there were over ninety five million.

Also on April 5th, The Jonas Brothers dropped another song without any warning: "Cool". Obviously, I immediately got the notification and was kind of distressed I had to review another music video.

Overall, I thought "Cool" was slightly less impressive than "Sucker", but that was to be expected. They set the bar really high. The whole video kind of looked like it had an Instagram filter on it, and there were a few obvious, cringey sponsorships. But, the video screamed "Summer bop". The beach/workout aesthetic fit perfectly, as did Joe Jonas' mustache. I also appreciated the effort put into burying Nick neck-deep into the beach. The song is modern, but somehow the video reminds me more of their older work than "Sucker" did. The video also features a lot of senior citizens. Is this possibly a reference to The Jonas Brothers' original fans being old now? Only God (Joe Jonas) knows.

It makes me want to listen to their old music even more, and also makes me excited for the future. What does the future hold for the Jonas Brothers? Will things be different in the year 3000? If these past two months have proven anything, it's that the trio will be continuously dropping absolute slappers without warning. Be prepared.



Me, circa 2008, pictured at the White House Easter Egg Roll watching the Jonas Brothers perform. Pictured the background are seniors Lindsey Archer and Lola Epstein.

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