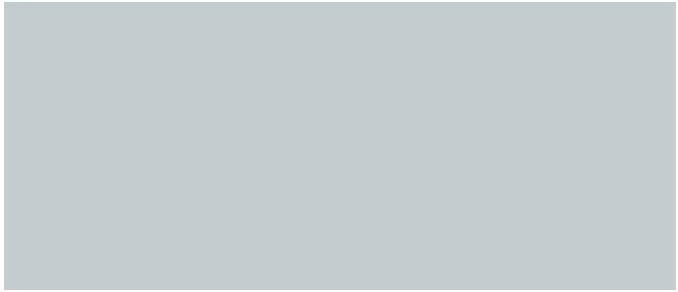


re/view

SPECIAL LOVE &
RELATIONSHIPS ISSUE
VOL. 71, ISSUE 3
FEBRUARY 13, 2020



THE REVIEW
ST. JOHN'S SCHOOL
2401 CLAREMONT LANE
HOUSTON, TX 77019
WWW.SJSREVIEW.COM

Speak About It promotes consent education

As Speak About It educator Megan MacKenzie, right, observes, junior advisories engage in small group discussions about consent following the assembly.



Photo by
Grace Randall



By Julia Smith

As the VST lights dimmed, "I Just Had Sex" by the comedy group The Lonely Island blasted from speakers. Nervous laughter erupted. Stage lights revealed a handful of young adult presenters who began to introduce themselves.

The tension was palpable.

Such was the introduction to consent training on Jan. 15 from Speak About It, a nonprofit organization that partners with high schools and colleges across the United States to educate students about healthy sexual relationships through engaging theatrical performances.

Speak About It first presented at St. John's two years ago when administrators asked Upper School nurse Tessa Stark to encourage greater discussion surrounding consent and sex education.

"I liked that [Speak About It] did not give a message that sex is bad, but more about how [students] go about making a decision based on [their] values," Stark said.

Upperclassmen witnessed an abridged Speak About It performance that was approved by the administration. The surprisingly frank performance elicited many responses, ranging from overwhelmingly positive to extremely uneasy.

"I was uncomfortable with the way it was presented," junior Janie Spedale said. "I thought it wasn't talked about well."

Spedale was not alone. Many other students felt uncomfortable with the upfront way in which the presenters introduced issues related to sex.

"I felt violated," senior Leila Rose Wallace said. "I didn't need all of that on a Monday morning."

Speak About It acknowledges these concerns and provides rationale for every candid portrayal of sex of the performance.

For example, the theatrical rendition of a female orgasm that occurred behind a curtain was, for many, the most uncomfortable moment in the performance. Speak About It gives important reasoning for the showcasing of female pleasure.

Speak About It executive director Olivia Harris cites

prominent sex positivity activist and author Peggy Orenstein to justify the group's demonstration of the orgasm.

"Orenstein found that high school- and college-aged boys tend to code a sexual encounter as good if they have an orgasm," Harris said. "Girls in the same age bracket code an interaction as good if they are not in pain."

The educators realize that since the performance covers sensitive topics, a sense of discomfort is to be expected. But, Speak About It believes that discomfort can manifest into important discussions about consent and healthy relationships.

"It's never too early to start having these conversations," Speak About It educator Megan MacKenzie said. "Yes, it's going to be uncomfortable, but this is information that's important to have so that when you do find yourself in a situation where you need it, it's there."

Meridian Monthly, a junior, greatly appreciated the upfront communication of sensitive information.

"Everything they talked about needs to be talked about," Monthly said. "The way they approached it is important because [everyone] learned something. [Students] were paying attention."

The show's forthright and creative approach ensured that students would talk about it.

"There were a lot of students having conversations about it afterward, especially partners," Upper School Counselor Ashley Le Grange said. "I think that's amazing."

Two days later, junior and senior advisories held group discussions of about 50 students led by senior Peer Leaders and moderated by Speak About It educators. Like the show, Peer Leaders sensed discomfort amongst students during the discussions.

"It was hard to get people to participate," senior Peer Leader Aidan Aguilar said. "We aren't really used to talking about [consent and sex], and there can be a stigma."

While the junior and senior performance was replete with explicit portrayals of sexual relationships and stories, ninth and tenth graders partook in a discussion

about gender and sexual identity, with the focus on consent in the context of the digital era.

"They spent a lot of time talking about gender and identity stuff, which I think was good," sophomore Liv Rubenstein said. "Even if a school does have sex ed or talk about consent, generally it's not from a queer point of view."

The Speak About It educators and school administrators strove to create an age-appropriate introduction into the conversation surrounding sex and consent.

"We figured we would start with something that references [drinking and hooking up]," Speak About It program manager Oronde Cruger said. "But it is really a lot about identity formation."

In order to encourage students to answer questions, presenters set up a text line, which allowed freshmen and sophomores to ask questions anonymously.

Underclassmen reactions were similarly mixed.

"Some people thought it was in some ways a little less useful than I perceived it as," sophomore Romit Kundagrami said. "A lot of people thought they were trying to be too [politically correct]."

Speak About It aims to be as inclusive as possible in order to create a safe and considerate environment for all their audiences, even if they use terminology that not all students understand. A similar empathy for others is Speak About It's main message to students about consent and relationships.

"A lot of what we're talking about is just being good to each other," Cruger said. "It's about being respectful and caring."

Many students want to see these conversations continue year-round through basic sex education and forums on consent and relationships. Open conversations about consent at school are often overlooked, and Speak About It was a strong first step in introducing these ideas.

"It was a great experience," junior Mansfield Owsley said. "I thought it was very eye-opening."

LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

Let's talk about relationships

Dear Readers,

With Valentine's Day just around the corner, we figured this was the best time for an issue focused on love and relationships. No matter your opinion on the holiday, it is necessary to discuss relationships — both at St. John's and in a broader context.

In this issue, we address what St. John's is doing to educate us about relationships but also what they could do better. We analyze the dating culture on campus and across the nation in this era of female and LGBTQ+ empowerment, technology and social media.

Relationships have a significant impact on emotional growth and mental health. They teach us what we enjoy and what makes us feel comfortable while also revealing our own flaws, both major and minor. We also learn vital communication skills and how to support others.

Furthermore, it is important that we distinguish healthy relationships from toxic or abusive ones; thus, we must learn how to define our own boundaries.

Living under the St. John's bubble can be a highly judgmental experience. Just read the centerspread and see. Public displays of affection and conversations about sex are mostly taboo in these storied cloisters.

Because everyone knows everyone, we tend to scrutinize other people's relationships — or lack thereof. This hypercritical attitude hinders our understanding of what

awaits us when we leave high school. People love who they love, and they act on it in different ways. We should let them.

Although we focus on romantic relationships in this issue, platonic relationships are just as important, if not more so. Any relationship can be a source of comfort and support. Friends can provide these feelings just as easily as a romantic partner can.

The statement on Community and Inclusion has a goal of making every student feel "known and loved," so we need to create healthy conversation around relationships in order to improve the mental health of all students.

XOXO,

Izzy Andrews

Mia Fares

Sophia Lima

Leila Pulaski

2/news
5/features
10/center
12/culture
15/sports
17/opinions

Iran conflict hits close to home



History teacher Barbara DiPaolo discusses the U.S.-Iran conflict in her Modern Middle East course.

By Noura Jabir

Just hours after President Trump ordered a drone strike on Iran, Rahul Rupani was returning from a family vacation aboard a United Airlines plane — and flying directly over Tehran.

Rupani knew that two days prior, Jan. 1, President Trump had ordered the assassination of Iranian military general Qassim Suleimani. He also read that Iranian air defenses were on high alert.

"I didn't even want to entertain the thought of the plane getting shot down," said Rupani, a junior Review staffer. "But the worry was there the entire flight, in the back of my mind."

Five days later, Rupani's concerns proved to be well-founded when a Ukraine International Airlines flight was shot down by Iranian air forces shortly after takeoff from Tehran.

"When I heard about the Ukrainian plane, I was shocked," Rupani said. "Partially because of how devastating the event was but also because such a similar thought had crossed my mind a few days earlier."

By the time school started on Jan. 7, rumors of war had spread, prompting Generation Z to flood social media with memes about a potential World War III.

"Every single TikTok, everything on Twitter was about World War III," junior Alexandra Gill said. "I really didn't believe the war was going to happen, so I thought most of them were funny."

Some students, including junior Natalie Brown, worried that morbid humor would diminish the implications of a global conflict.

"Young people are spreading a false narrative," Brown said. "In spite of all the memes and all the jokes, people need to realize that so many people would suffer or die in such a large-scale conflict."

While Brown finds the memes about war with Iran insensitive, she understands why young people share them, as Gen Z has never experienced a war within U.S. borders.

"It's hard to envision what war in our cities might even look like," Brown said. "So we joke about it."

Barbara DiPaolo, who teaches the history elective Modern Middle East, said that when students use humor, it reflects a lack of knowledge.

"The average high school student probably hasn't learned about the Iranian Revolution, so it's hard to contextualize the recent events," DiPaolo said.

Louisa Sarofim, whose grandfather is Egyptian, is a Unity Council co-chair who serves as a liaison between the Middle Eastern & North African Affinity Group and Unity Council. As a student in Modern Middle East, she knows education about the region is limited.

"Because the Middle East as a geopolitical region wasn't seen as a distinct culture in the way that Western Europe or East Asia were, it's ignored in classes like AP World History," Sarofim said.

Sarofim also stated that learning about the region can be difficult because of the ambiguity surrounding what exactly qualifies as "the Middle East."

"It's a region unified under one name, but there are so many cultures, ethnicities and races," Sarofim said.

Anne-Charlotte Gillard, a junior, noted that the majority of her peers, even those interested in national and global politics, are largely uninformed about conflict in the Middle East.

"So much history and so many deep-rooted issues are at play," Gillard said. "People read articles that tell them a little bit about the situation, then form an opinion based on fragments of information."

DiPaolo's course aims to remedy some of that miseducation by challenging students to consider the complexities of any conflict.

"It's so important to understand that there are two sides to everything going on in the Middle East," DiPaolo said. "Students need to be aware of both, regardless of whether or not they agree with both."

Early in the semester, DiPaolo's course illuminates gaps in knowledge about Middle Eastern affairs.

"I thought I was relatively informed, until we walked into class on the first day and took a quiz," Sarofim said. "It was simple stuff, names and terms that we hear all the time on the news, but we were all dumbfounded."

DiPaolo adjusted the syllabus this semester in order to begin with issues relating to Iran, diving into the aftermath of Suleimani's death while also studying the legacy of tension between the U.S. and Iran.

"If you only look at the Middle East from a modern-day standpoint without the history behind it, you get a skewed perspective," Sarofim said. "We're fortunate to have a class that delves into the context of what we see in the media."

Eleanor Cannon teaches another history elective, The History, Geopolitics and Economics of Energy, which has been discussing the events in Iran.

Cannon supplemented her curriculum in order to discuss the effects of the conflict with Iran on the oil industry. According to Cannon, such discussions are particularly relevant at St. John's, where many community members are linked to the oil industry.

"Of the 23 seniors I taught last semester, I was struck by how many of their parents work in oil directly, work in oil services or provide legal representation for oil companies," Cannon said. "A major move in oil markets would have a major effect on the people at St. John's, and that's what might happen if we were to go to war."

While Cannon indicated that full-scale war with Iran is unlikely, she worries that if violent conflicts were to ensue, Houston would become a target.

"All you have to do is drive down towards Galveston to realize how much petrochemical and oil infrastructure is in this town," Cannon said. "There are certainly a lot of vulnerabilities."

Photo by Lizzie Mickiewicz

ACT announces section retests, superscoring

By Max Beard

Beginning in September, the ACT will offer students three options that they have long been requesting: section retesting, superscoring and electronic test-taking.

These changes will give students more flexibility in the testing process. For example, a student may choose to retake the Science and English sections but keep scores on the Reading and Math sections from a previous testing date.

According to the ACT website, "section retesting gives students the opportunity to showcase their skills and accomplishments gained over a lifetime and not only their test-taking abilities on one particular day."

Many students are concerned that the new policies will lead to score inflation.

"Now colleges are going to hold students to a higher standard," senior Lawrence Appel said.

For colleges that request all test scores, section retakes will not matter since schools will be able to see how many times a student has tested.

Many colleges already allow for superscoring, which takes a student's best score from each section across all test dates in order to form a composite score, so some students don't consider this new policy a significant change.

Gabby Perkins, a senior, can relate to the frustration of having to retake the entire ACT just to raise the score on one particular section. Perkins once retook the ACT just to raise her math score.

"I bombed three sections out of four but did well on the last one and it raised my score," Perkins said.

CollegeVine, a college prep blog, noted, "one of the major complaints about the ACT change is it exacerbates exactly what it's seeking to remedy: test anxiety. Because students can retake just one section, they're more encouraged to retest. With the pressure of college admissions looming, some high-achieving students will retest and retest in an effort to achieve a better score."

College pressure might be felt even more acutely among St. John's students, who, according to the School website, average among the 98th percentile of test takers. The median ACT score for the Class of 2019 was a 34.

Kenley Turville, Associate Director of College Counseling, doubts that students will fall into a cycle of constant retesting.

"St. John's is a competitive environment," Turville said. "Our students want to be their very best, and there's a lot of good that can come from that, although I sometimes worry about the wellness side."

High-stakes standardized testing has come under scrutiny for penalizing economically disadvantaged students. Taking a single ACT can cost up to \$90, so students of higher-income families are able to retake tests without worrying about cost. Students of low-income families, who are already at a competitive disadvantage when compared to peers who can afford expensive test preparation, are further handicapped if they cannot utilize multiple testing opportunities and superscoring.

Critics of retesting claim that it continues to benefit the wealthy. And with the scores expected to rise, taking the test multiple times may be even more necessary than ever.

According to CollegeVine, some students "might not even have an advisor to tell them they can retest, much less counsel them to retake an individual section."

Turville says that part of the motivation for the new policy is economic.

"At the end of the day, the SAT and ACT are businesses," Turville said. "They both want students to take their tests, and this creates an incentive for students to take the ACT over the SAT."

The SAT currently does not offer students the ability to retake individual sections, but they have long allowed for superscoring, which they call Score Choice.

Many college admissions officers realize that standardized tests are not necessarily accurate predictors of student success. Colleges including the University of Chicago and Wake Forest are test-optional.

"I find some comfort in that one factor doesn't necessarily determine everything," Turville said.

Which of the following are true about the ACT?

A. The section retake policy will not go into effect until September 2020

B. Students may take up to 3 section retests on any one test date

C. There is no limit to the number of times a student may retake an individual section

D. Section retesting will be offered on the 7 national ACT dates

☒ All of the above

Rent increase closes the book on Rice Village institution

By Abigail Poag

Back in the 1980s, when Rice Village still had a five-and-dime, a Kosher deli and an adult movie theater, then-teenager Josh Pesikoff ('87) would ride his bike to Half Price Books on the corner of Kirby and University.

"When I was in high school, I wasn't super organized — in fact, I was super disorganized, and it was not uncommon for me to find myself with a reading assignment and no book," said Pesikoff, the father of Jonah ('19) and sophomore Lily.

Longtime patrons like Pesikoff were shocked and dismayed to learn that the Rice Village bookstore is slated to close in March. The culprit: increasing rent prices.

Before there was next-day delivery on Amazon, Half Price Books customers would comb through the store's assortment of new and secondhand books, CDs, movies and knickknacks, often leaving with something they did not know they needed.

The store's five remaining Houston-area stores, including the Montrose location, will remain open. There are no plans to have a going-out-of-business sale before the store's official closing on Sunday, March 8, and all inventory will be redistributed to the other area locations.

Based in Dallas, the chain's Rice Village location opened in 1981. Assistant manager Bronwyn Mouton has only been working at that location for two years, but she said that former employees talk about how celebrities like Michael Jackson and ZZ Top's Billy Gibbons have visited the store, and every Houston mayor has also allegedly stopped in at some point since it opened.

The store even caters to four-legged visitors.

"Our employees love it when customers bring in their dogs," Mouton said. "People out walking their pups often end up being treated like celebrities when they stop by."

Besides the lively atmosphere at the store and the eclectic mix of products, Mouton pointed to the store's convenient location as a reason for its continued popularity.

When she was little, Ananya Agrawal frequently walked from her West University home to the bookstore with her family, where her parents would let her and her siblings pick out a book before getting ice cream.

As a second grader, Agrawal was obsessed with the Goddess Girls series — she owned all but the fifth book in the 25-volume series. When she finally found the last book to complete her collection, she was "ridiculously excited."

Now a sophomore, she is still an avid reader but recognizes that not everyone her age is. Her eleven-year-old



Half Price Books alerts patrons of its March closure at the corner of Kirby and University Blvd.



Photo by Lizzie Mickiewicz

brother could fully operate their mother's phone before he could even read. According to Agrawal, a reasonably priced bookstore is vital to encourage people to read more.

A New Chapter for Rice Village

The Rice Village has undergone rapid development in recent years.

Originally developed in the 1930s, the outdoor shopping district attracted a variety of unique tenants over the decades, ranging from the punk-rock store Rat Records to surfboard retailer Bay Surf Shop, both of which have long-since closed. National chains began moving in during the 1990s, including Gap and Banana Republic, and other more mainstream stores have followed suit.

As Rice Village becomes increasingly upscale, trendy businesses like Sweetgreen and Shake Shack are in, while relics of the past are out.

While a few decades-old businesses remain, like Drom-goole's Fine Writing Instruments, which has been in the Village since 1987, the closing of the Half Price Books is a sad day for some Houstonians.

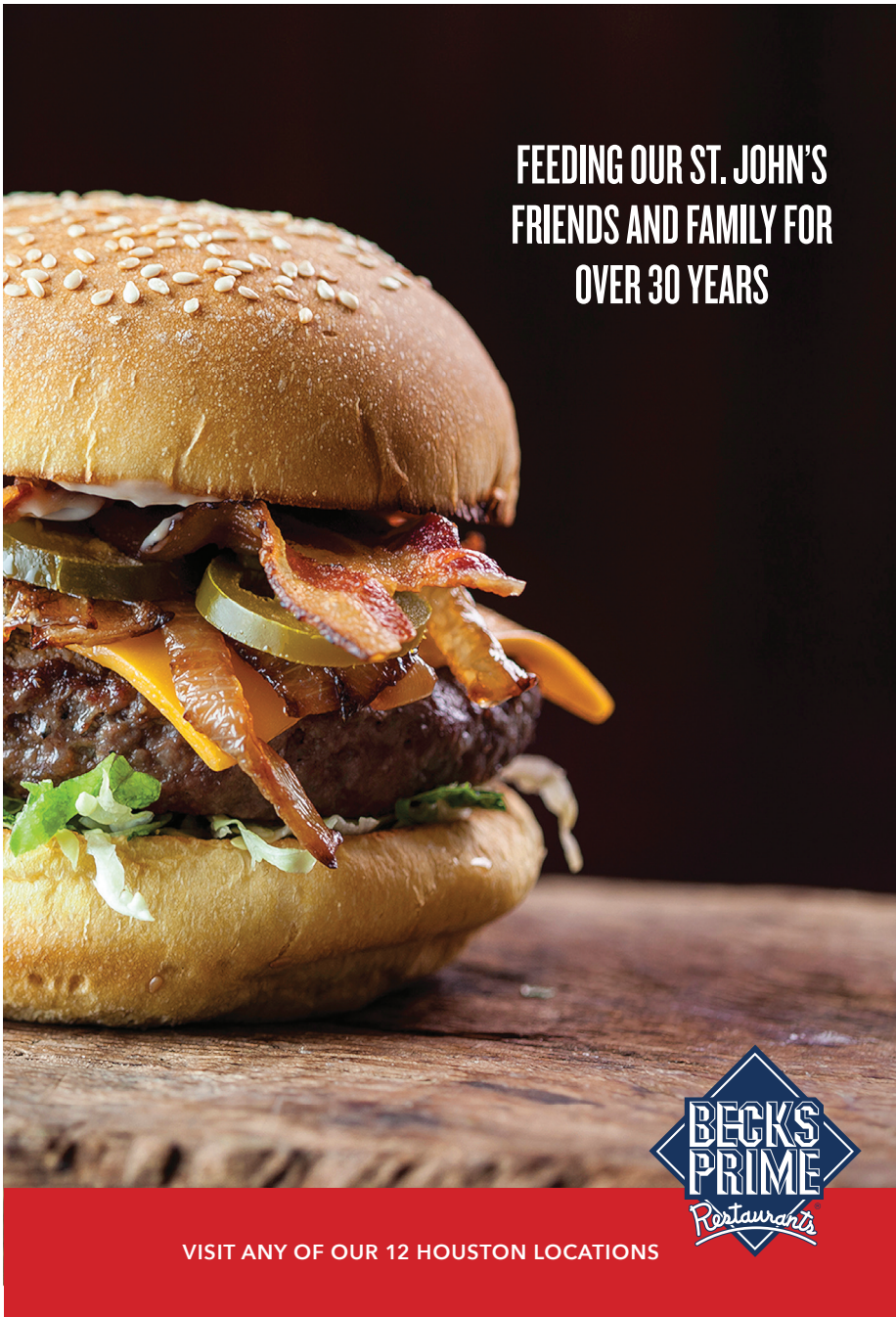
"It's the end of an era," Pesikoff said. "If those walls could talk, they could describe the old Rice Village, and I can't think of any other store that could do that."

While he is all for progress, Pesikoff will miss having a nearby store where he can find a classic book without spending a lot of money.


"Sometimes you just want to go get a Stephen King book, and there are a bazillion," Pesikoff said.

After Half Price Books closes, Agrawal said she will probably have to visit one of the Barnes and Noble locations to buy books. She is not looking forward to the higher prices.

"I still can't believe they're closing," Agrawal said. "It's sad to see so many places go."



FEEDING OUR ST. JOHN'S
FRIENDS AND FAMILY FOR
OVER 30 YEARS



VISIT ANY OF OUR 12 HOUSTON LOCATIONS




©2016 Kumon North America, Inc. All Rights Reserved.


WE MAKE YOUR SMART KID
EVEN SMARTER!

Give your child an
academic advantage!

SCHEDULE A PARENT ORIENTATION TODAY!

Kumon Math & Reading Center of
HOUSTON - WEST UNIVERSITY
4009 Bellaire Blvd., Ste. E&J, Houston, TX 77025
713-662-2115 • kumon.com/houston-west-university






713-349-9888
www.houstonareadrivingschools.com

2019 classes at St. John's

Fall 2019 Class
11/04/2019 to 11/22/2019
5 pm-7 pm
Monday to Friday
10 am-12 pm
Saturday

Avoid the D.P.S.
Take the D.P.S. Driving
Test with H.A.D.S.



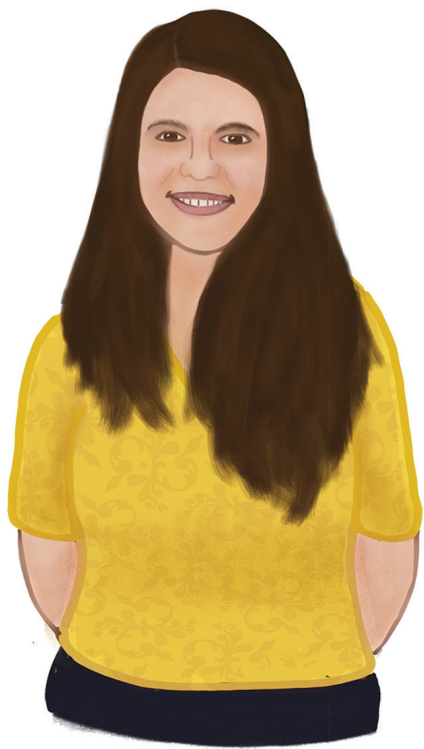
Come to the best,
Avoid all the rest!

The Best
Driver Training

Young alumni making an 'Impact'

"Impact!" is The Review Online's latest podcast series focusing on St. John's alumni who are changing the world and shaping the future. Sophomore Ella West talks with young alumni to hear what they are doing and how St. John's helped them get where they are today.

By Ella West



Vail Kohnert-Yount

Advocating for universal equality

While an undergraduate at Georgetown, Vail Kohnert-Yount ('13) once helped unionize the cafeteria staff. Since then, she has remained at the forefront of political action, whether it's co-hosting the annual Gulf Coast Planned Parenthood Roe v. Wade luncheon, co-founding the People's Parity Project or organizing a protest at Harvard Law School against then-Supreme Court nominee Brett Kavanaugh.

After working in Washington, D.C. for four years, Kohnert-Yount moved back to Houston for six months and began volunteering at Jane's Due Process, an organization that aims to ensure legal representation for pregnant minors in Texas.

At Harvard Law School, she and three fellow law students co-founded the People's Parity Project (formerly the Pipeline Parity Project), a national organization committed to ending harassment, discrimination and other injustices in the legal profession. In 2018, they organized one of the largest protests in Harvard Law history to prevent Justice Brett Kavanaugh from continuing to serve as a guest lecturer. Due to the mounting pressure, Kavanaugh chose not to return.

Kohnert-Yount and her People's Parity Project co-founders were recently recognized by Rep. Jamie Raskin (MD-08) in Washington, D.C. for their efforts to prevent law firms from having their own attorneys and other employees sign contracts that include "forced arbitration" provisions.

"If someone has a sexual harassment complaint or any other complaints," Raskin said, "they would not be forced into one of these secretive off-limits entities where real justice is not done."

This summer, Kohnert-Yount worked on cases in Texas involving sexual harassment and the assault of low-wage workers in the workplace. She has fought to help immigrant women whose employers threatened to have them deported if they reported any harassment or assaults.

Kohnert-Yount will graduate from Harvard Law in May and will move back to Texas to work at Texas RioGrande Legal Aid, an organization that provides legal services for low-wage workers.



Caroline Spears

Promoting environmental action

While attending St. John's, Caroline Spears ('13) heard mixed messages about climate change from teachers and the media, which motivated her to champion environmental causes.

At Stanford, Spears obtained a bachelor's and a master's degree in Atmosphere and Energy Engineering. Armed with an understanding of climate change, Spears encourages people to get involved in the climate change conversation by talking to local representatives about possible solutions.

For the past two years, Spears has been writing climate-specific policy papers for political candidates by compiling data from each politician's district, giving candidates pertinent information that they need to stay informed and up-to-date on the attitude of voters.

Because candidates do not usually have the time to run a full-time campaign and complete their own nuanced policy research, politicians tend to receive their information from lobbyists, who have ulterior motives. Spears created a whole new way to provide politicians with the necessary environmental information that will allow them to make informed policy decisions.

In her experience, many politicians view climate change as an overly complex, controversial issue, but scientists have already found feasible solutions — they simply need proper implementation. Spears uses data collected by universities across the country to determine what solutions are preferred by the voters in each district, which allows for climate reform while complementing a politician's ability to appeal to the greatest number of people.

Spears has provided several presidential candidates with information to form a basis for their climate change platform. Additionally, she has worked with politicians in Texas and Virginia, including Rep. Lizzie Panel Fletcher (D, TX-07), a fellow St. John's graduate ('93).

Spears recently founded and serves as the executive director of Climate Cabinet, an organization that consults with political candidates and other groups on climate change.



Farris Blount III

Supporting community through ministry work

Ministers commonly face the misconception that their job solely entails preaching on Sunday. In over three years as the executive minister at West Avenue Baptist Church in Cambridge, Massachusetts, Farris Blount ('13) has found that this is not the case.

After graduating from Stanford and Harvard Divinity School, Blount is now studying for his doctorate at Boston University's School of Theology.

While preaching is an important part of his job, Blount spends only a small fraction of his time preparing and delivering sermons. The majority of his work is behind the scenes, helping manage the church's finances and serving as the chief contractor for all building, maintenance and construction projects.

Blount tracks all the money that comes in and out of the church to ensure that West Avenue Baptist has the financial ability and structure to pay its bills. He even writes all the year-end reports to guarantee that church donations are deposited properly.

Along with other ministry leaders, Blount oversees several ministries, teams and volunteers at the church.

During his time at St. John's, Blount never thought he would be a minister. Even now, he sometimes takes time to reflect and make sure he has chosen the right career path.

As a minister, there are often more lows than highs. He works with people from all walks of life who have endured many difficult experiences.

Blount attends many funerals to support those who are grieving, and he recently served as a character witness for a parishioner who was trying to keep her child out of juvenile detention. It was a reminder of why he became a minister.

The support he received in both Houston and Boston initially drew him to ministry, and it keeps him there to this day.



Mariam Matin

Helping college grads make a social impact

At Georgetown, Mariam Matin's ('11) friends often talked about how they wanted to find a job that could make a significant social impact, but usually they settled for more traditional or corporate employment. When Matin saw how unfulfilled they were, she co-founded an organization that gives undergraduates the resources to find jobs that allow them to work on the issues they care about.

Matin majored in economics and psychology, and after graduation, she worked at an advertising agency in New York City before doing product marketing at J.P. Morgan.

Along with two friends from college, in 2017 she founded Second Day, an organization "committed to supporting, educating and empowering young people who want to jump start their social impact careers."

Second Day launched their Impact Fellowship this fall at Rice, UT Austin, Georgetown and Harvard in order to help graduating seniors find social impact jobs.

Each student Matin works with has their own dream social impact job. Although she is not an expert in every single field, Matin helps students understand the industry by conducting research and connecting them to mentors so they can build a long-lasting career.

With Matin's help, participants learn how to position themselves for a job, write a compelling proposal and demonstrate a strong interest in the field. Second Day partners with organizations who conduct interviews with the fellows. Not only does Matin want to find employment for the fellows, but she wants them to find purpose. Second Day aims to ensure that each job placement will be a good fit for each fellow.

Get in. The future is waiting.



Taycan

Soul, Electrified



Local nonprofits help combat human trafficking



A 2nd Cup, a nonprofit coffee shop in the Heights, is dedicated to fighting human trafficking. As customers enter, they are greeted with #TilEveryoneIsFree at the entrance wall, a reminder of the nonprofit's cause.



Photo by Bailey Maierson

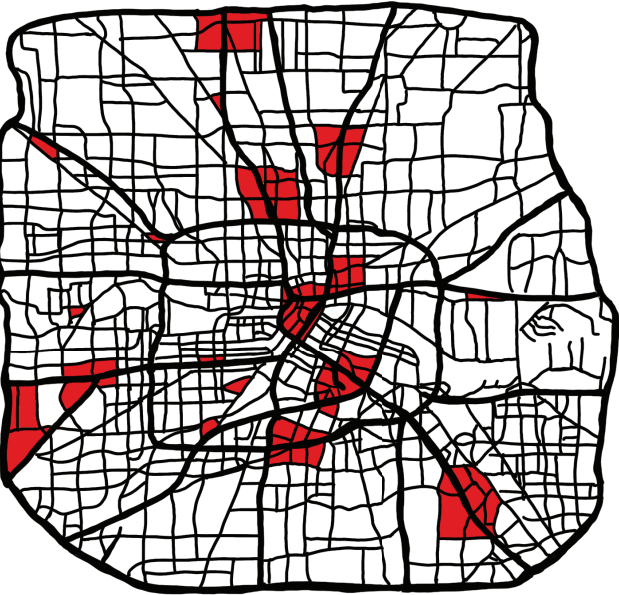
By Sophia Lima

The Galleria serves as a hub for shopping, entertainment and hanging out with friends. This shopping mall, just two miles from St. John's, also serves as a major hub for human trafficking. An article from CultureMap Houston described the Galleria as "one of the most sexualized districts in Houston."

Houston is one of the largest cities for human trafficking in the world because of its access to international borders and the I-10 highway. Houston also hosts many sports events and conventions, both of which are targets for sex trafficking. Human trafficking occurs when people are exploited through force, fraud or coercion for the economic gain of others. Victims include child soldiers, domestic servants and sex workers. Physical abuse, false promises and threats pervade this system. Approximately 40 million people are victims of human trafficking around the world, and about 1 in 4 are children. This underground industry generates over \$150 billion in illegal profits each year. Kathleen Grabowski has worked as a federal probation officer for 26 years and has encountered victims of human trafficking. Yet her daughter McKenna, a senior, only recently became aware of the enormous scale of the problem. "Human trafficking is something rarely spoken about, but it's such a big deal," Grabowski said. "No one really wants to admit it happens just streets away from us." As Grabowski grew increasingly aware, she searched for further ways to get involved. As a member of Art Junction, a student-organized fundraiser that encourages participation in the arts, she invites high school artists to create unique pieces for a silent auction and sale. 100% of the sales go to charity, so Grabowski knew she wanted the artwork to benefit the fight against human trafficking. She decided to dedicate her fundraising to A 2nd Cup, a nonprofit coffee shop in the Heights that is dedicated to battling human trafficking. The proceeds from A 2nd Cup provide aftercare solutions for human trafficking survivors, including housing, mentoring, tutoring and learning essential job and life skills. Grabowski also volunteers at A 2nd Cup every Sunday, where she aids the baristas and keeps the kitchen running smoothly while taking care of small tasks as needed. The coffeehouse was founded in 2011 by Erica Raggett, who, according to the Houston Chronicle, first became aware of human trafficking through her church. As a middle school teacher at the time, "the thought of one of her students ever being trafficked made her want to act," so she opened A 2nd Cup. The coffee shop also raises funds through

merchandising. They sell jewelry from Branded Collective, a Nashville-based nonprofit that aids human trafficking survivors through economic empowerment jobs. Branded's jewelry is handcrafted by human trafficking survivors. Captors of sex slaves often brutally mark them with a number or symbol: a forced tattoo, a burn or knife cut. Likewise, survivors engrave their initials into each piece of jewelry they make. Each piece of jewelry is also stamped with a number, and the purchaser can register this number on Branded's website to send a Message of Hope to a survivor. Once she began volunteering at A 2nd Cup, Grabowski discovered other organizations in Houston with the same mission. She now volunteers every other month at Elijah Rising, which was originally founded as a prayer gathering. This faith-based nonprofit organization aims to end sex trafficking in Houston through prayer, awareness, intervention and restoration.

Houston human trafficking hotspots



Source: Freedom Church Alliance

The Elijah Rising store, where Grabowski works, sells goods made by human trafficking survivors by providing them with materials to create candles, soaps, bath salts and more. Their slogan, "Goods That Empower," is displayed in giant white letters on their store display window. "They are not teaching them how to make a candle,"

Grabowski said. "They are providing victims with a stable job to help them reintegrate into society." The store even offers an exclusive candle subscription for \$25 each month. Elijah Rising hosts free Van Tours that educate the public by taking people to human trafficking hot spots in Houston. The two-hour tours run three times a week in private groups of eight to 12 people, featuring testimonies from the staff and relevant statistics. By shedding light on this issue, Elijah Rising hopes the information and shocking visuals will compel people to respond with action. The group has made significant achievements in the battle against human trafficking. In 2013, they negotiated the closure of Angela's Day Spa on Southwest Freeway which was a front for prostitution. In 2014 they opened the Museum of Modern-Day Slavery in the Heights in order to expose the harsh reality of human trafficking by recreating the appearance of a brothel and displaying a collection of artifacts. Elijah Rising recently added a new dimension to their efforts with the purchase of an 84-acre property in rural Fort Bend County where they have established a Restorative Care program that provides housing, trauma-informed counseling and a caring community of support for survivors. With life-skills education such as money management, the Restorative Care campus serves as a haven and transitional space for survivors. The campus also protects victims from falling back into the cycle of human trafficking. When researching human trafficking for her Data Analytics class, senior Louisa Sarofim learned that less than 0.2% of victims are successfully rescued. After the shocking discoveries from this project, she felt compelled to take action. "There is so little solid information on the topic, and research often grossly underestimates the number of victims," she said. Sarofim plans to do human trafficking training at the YMCA. The course includes how to identify a victim and respond, how to distinguish fronts for prostitution and what makes someone vulnerable to human trafficking. "It is so important to educate people our age on this topic because Houston is such a hotspot, and we are so close to danger," Sarofim said. "We need to be informed for our own protection and in order to help others."

Graphic by Matthew Hensel

Kamat makes 'little acts of kindness' for no-kill shelters

By Russell Li

Rhea Kamat first started making clay figurines in sixth grade when she had an overabundance of free time. She had no idea that her creations and love for animals would later come together, resulting in a project that promotes animal welfare.

Kamat, a junior, had previously rescued two cats and volunteered at a no-kill animal shelter, but contributions to her passion were limited.

After experiencing firsthand the pain of putting down a pet, Kamat wanted to give animals in shelters their best chances of survival.

She decided to do more to support animal welfare movements and took the initiative to develop her own project: Marticus Clay, named for her two pets, Catticus and Martie. Kamat raises money to donate to no-kill animal shelters by handcrafting clay figurines that resemble animals, fantasy characters and food. All sales are through the Marticus Clay website, and her profits benefit organizations like Houston Pets Alive! and Friends for Life.

"Shelters hate to put down animals, but overcrowding and a lack of resources leave no other option than euthanization," Kamat said. "My project provides another option by funding no-kill shelters to help spread the no-kill movement in Houston."

A no-kill animal shelter does not euthanize its animals, whereas a kill shelter may resort to such methods in extreme cases.

Although Kamat supports no-kill shelters, all animal shelters would benefit from increased funding.

"I find shelters that never put down



their animals, regardless of funding deficits, especially admirable," Kamat said. "I want to support these places so that one day all animal shelters can be no-kill, but sometimes it's necessary to volunteer at kill shelters because doing so may help alleviate the factors that lead to euthanization."

Kamat primarily raises awareness for her project through word of mouth and her parents' social media channels, spreading the cause to her friends, family and community. Since the launch of her website in November 2019, she has raised \$1,500.

Charitable acts are not unusual for Kamat.

"When you talk to Rhea, little acts of kindness jump out to you," junior Jenny Green said. "They highlight her character and carry over to everything she does."

Kamat did not expect her clay creations to appeal to many people, so she is "thrilled" at receiving an outpouring of support. Her success has inspired her to continue developing Marticus Clay to broaden its effect.

"This cause is inspiring for both myself and those who buy my products," Kamat said. "Each purchase helps give purpose to an action, even if it's as small as buying a clay thing."

Green recognizes Kamat's dedication to her work.

"When Rhea's empathy joins with a cause she is passionate about, the product is bound to be meaningful to both her and others," Green said. "From the way she enthusiastically discusses and addresses such topics, her readiness to make a positive impact is evident."

Through her project, Kamat has rekindled her hobby of making clay figures, and she



Rhea Kamat sells clay animals to contribute to the animal welfare movement. Her collection features miniature animals, food and cartoon characters.



Photo by Grace Randall

has also come to appreciate her work for the joy it brings to her customers.

Moving forward, Kamat plans to devote a few hours each weekend to expanding her nonprofit now that she has more free time. She hopes to streamline her website, restock existing clay products and open up a custom requests section for figures that are not currently offered.

"Last semester, it was challenging to balance managing the company with school and testing for college," Kamat said. "Starting [in January], I've been able to spend more time helping the company move along and the no-kill movement, because that's what this effort is all about."

Visit www.marticusclay.com to donate to Rhea's fund.

VISION OPTIQUE

20 year anniversary

Serving Houston & SJS community since 1999

- Digital & Computer Eye Strain Solutions
- Leading Contact Lens Practice
- Myopia Control & Prevention
- Sports Vision & Eyewear
- Dry Eye Center

Kroger Center @ Buffalo Speedway
713-838-2020
5158 Buffalo Speedway
Houston, TX 77005

Optometrists
Dr. Bridgitte Shen Lee
Dr. Bradley S. Owens
Dr. Erica Ngo

The next Elon Musk? Student inventor programs self-driving car



Ethan Saadia displays his self-driving car, a toy Mini Cooper modified with 3D printed parts and an electric control system.

By Fareen Dhuka

Although Ethan Saadia doesn't have his driver's license yet, he has built his own self-driving miniature car.

Inspired by Elon Musk's work with Tesla and the self-driving car industry, Saadia, a junior, modified a red Mini Cooper with his cutting-edge self-driving platform, which he calls Project WOMBAT (Working On Machine-Based Autonomous Transport).

"Every Tesla that comes out of the factory is now fully equipped to be a self-driving car as soon as they push out the software in a few months," Saadia said. "I just wanted to be a part of that."

Saadia has always been intrigued by technology and passionate about creating innovative products. Before eighth grade, he released the Mav App, a class scheduling app designed specifically for St. John's students. It was recently released to the App Store for Apple Watch. Later that year, he created a robot powered by electrical signals in his arm muscles.

As a sophomore, Saadia programmed Mav World, an augmented reality app depicting campus buildings surrounding the Great Lawn.

Saadia built his self-driving car by modifying a kids' toy car with custom 3D printed parts and an electronic control system. Finding the right car and staying under budget, took extensive research. He also took technical aspects into account, including the car's ability to be transformed and its turning radius.

After deciding on a Mini Cooper, Saadia needed the right amount of computing power in order to employ machine learning, an application of artificial intelligence that allows systems to learn from experience.

"When you look at how it actually works from a technological perspective, it's just computers and calculations," Saadia said. "There's a myth about artificial intelligence becoming self-aware and destroying us, but it isn't happening in the foreseeable future. The car is not growing an artificial brain."

To turn on the car, Saadia must start the master

program from his computer, which provides him with remote access. Specialized hardware allows the car to run advanced deep learning models in the camera system, which the car uses to detect obstacles and avoid collisions. For instance, if a dog enters the camera image, the model locates and classifies the dog. If the dog is in the car's way, the car will stop until the path is clear again.

Most self-driving car companies use a remote sensing method known as LiDAR to create a 3D map of any surrounding objects. According to Saadia, LiDAR is not as adept as cameras for understanding what the car sees.

"We don't have lasers shooting out of our eyes," he said. "We just use visual cues from the world around us to figure out where we can drive and when we have to stop."

Using this theory, Saadia implemented two advanced cameras for the car to maneuver itself, similar to Tesla's exclusive use of cameras in most of their self-driving cars. Without any external command system to direct motion, his car relies solely on the battery-powered cameras.

Saadia's advisor and ISP supervisor Dwight Raulston frequently checks his progress. According to Raulston, Saadia's project is the first self-driving car he has seen a student make in his 38 years teaching in the Upper School. The most similar project he could recall was a freshman welding his own go-kart.

While many of Saadia's physical modifications used toy car parts, he designed and 3D printed numerous custom parts. Sometimes it was just trial and error.

"I had to try a lot of things and see what worked," Saadia said. "There was a lot of prototyping before anything did work."

Saadia faced particular difficulty in steering the car. The original steering mechanism was not built for high tolerance, so Saadia spent weeks making extensive modifications in order for the car to move in the desired direction.

Saadia's work has impressed faculty and inspired peers to take advantage of school resources, especially the Engineering room.

"I remember seeing Ethan's car work last year in a video and being extremely impressed that he was able to create such an invention completely on his own," junior Henry Miller said. "It's so cool that St. John's students have the opportunity to explore their interests in this way, and I hope to explore these opportunities for myself."

Photo by
Danielle Saadia

Apps aid focus, productivity

By Ellie Monday

After a particularly busy week earlier this year, a sophomore girl who asked to remain anonymous realized that she had only slept a total of four hours in seven days. Apalled, she began researching ways to combat the root of her problem: procrastination.

Most students admit that they have accidentally pushed off an assignment until they find themselves dangerously close to its deadline. A StudyMode survey of 1,300 American high school students revealed that 86% of them procrastinate, primarily through social media.

Students cite struggling after eight hours at school. Homework time is also reduced by the rigor that St. John's extracurriculars demand.

Jessie Beck, a sophomore and two-sport varsity athlete who also plays club softball, frequently arrives home late on school nights and goes straight to sleep before finishing her work.

"By that time, I'm not in a mental state to do my homework," Beck said.

As a result, she sometimes ends up completing assignments the day they are due. She even recalls studying for a quiz while walking to that class.

Jessie's older sister Catie will sometimes walk into her room late at night and see her asleep with all the lights on and her computer in her lap.

"If I start [homework] early, I don't feel like I have to finish it right then, so I just talk myself out of it until the very last minute," Beck said.

Ironically, the rising solution to procrastination lies in the main culprit: phones. Apps such as Forest, StudyBreak and Screen Time's weekly data serve as self-restriction methods to keep students on task.

Such apps have yet to become widely popular at St. John's. According to a poll of 65 students conducted on The Review online, only 51% indicated that they use anti-procrastination apps.

Procrastination can be frustrating to teachers as well, as cramming assignments in a limited amount of time degrades its quality. English teacher Kyle Dennen is skeptical of apps as a long-term solution.

"These apps are more of a Band-Aid than anything else," Dennen said. "I'm much more concerned about the detrimental effects that constant exposure to screens has on a student's overall well-being."

The sleep-deprived sophomore partially attributes her improved study habits this year to a computer app called 1Focus, which blocks apps and websites for a set duration of time.

She says that if students commit to these apps and don't disable or cheat them, they are good resources to prevent procrastination.

"When I slept four hours that entire week, it was really unhealthy for me," she said. "Thankfully, this year I have systems in place that are helping me to not procrastinate [to that extent] again."



51% of students use anti-procrastination apps

Data from a Review Online poll of 68 students

Graphic by
Matthew Hensel

Visit Ethan Saadia's website to learn more about Project WOMBAT and other initiatives.



Pulaski / Graphics by Matthew Hensel and James Sy

has exploded since the 2015 Supreme Court ruling that legalized same-sex marriage, LGBTQ+ individuals are still marginalized, stigmatized and oppressed.

According to PRISM board member Jordan Fullen, a lack of acceptance persists in the community, and LGBTQ+ couples still have to take “precautions” when out in public.

“It’s not uncommon for queer people to be harassed or, in more extreme cases, hate-crimed for showing affection in public,” Fullen, a senior, said. “Most people agree that LGBT+ individuals should have rights, but when some see those rights in practice, that’s when issues arise.”

Still, Fullen says that attitudes toward LGBTQ+ people are generally “going in the right direction.”

“People are allowed to feel more comfortable expressing who they are and being open about it,” he said. “If I was in the same position 10 years ago, I don’t know how comfortable I’d be being the same person I am today — out and open and unapologetic about it.”

Gender norms are also changing, albeit slowly. Several senior boys interviewed said that some girls still appreciate traditional gender roles. One boy called them “symbolic”; another said that if he didn’t conform to these standards, he would be “judged.”

For some, old-fashioned expectations like men making the first move have all but disappeared.

“I definitely don’t think that I, as a man, am expected to initiate anything,” senior Robert Garza said. “If I’m really interested in someone, I won’t be thinking about feminism.”

DATING AT SJS

Why There’s No PDA on Campus

Everyone at Foster High School is familiar with the Cafeteria Incident.

During lunch at the school in Richmond, Texas, two students were caught having sex under a blanket just outside the cafeteria, allowing everyone inside to see what was going on. This incident surpassed a simple public display of affection, landing on the news and prompting the Rosenberg Police Department to file charges against the couple for public lewdness.

But PDA is not always so extreme at Foster — or anywhere. Usually, students can just be seen cuddling and kissing in the hallways or parking lot after school.

“A lot of times it can be too much, but people really don’t care,” said Bella Quaid, a junior at Foster. She added that most adults and staff members turn a blind eye to these smaller acts of affection.

Just across Westheimer, though, videos of Lamar students hooking up in classrooms are commonplace on social media apps like Snapchat. While extreme forms of PDA are still relatively rare, Lamar students are more open in their affections.

“You might see somebody kissing in the stairwell,” said William Flood, a senior at Lamar.

These bigger public schools, such as Lamar and Foster, reflect trends in movies and TV shows, while St. John’s students are more reserved in their relationships. Some prefer this more permissive atmosphere, though.

At Foster and Lamar, what is considered the norm would be considered scandalous at St. John’s, where even the most minimal PDA is considered “a little disturbing.”

One St. John’s senior said that if he saw PDA around campus, his reaction would be, “What? They’re holding hands? That’s so gross.”

At small independent schools, the prevailing attitude toward PDA is contempt mixed with confusion. Many people agree that couples should find other times outside of school to convey their emotions.

According to a senior girl at Kinkaid, the most common PDA is people walking together. “Very rarely do you see people holding hands,” she said.

This “innocent” and even “prudish” climate at smaller schools is far from your normal TV high school portrayal. Typically, at St. John’s, one of the only indicators of a relationship is wearing your significant other’s sweatshirt. Even hugging is uncommon.

PDA is especially rare for LGBTQ+ students. According to Fullen, many LGBTQ+ students are closeted in fear of the social ramifications they may face if they are completely open about their sexuality. Consequently, the dating pool at SJS is small, so many LGBTQ+ students don’t experience relationship and hookup culture until after high school.

“Queer dating culture is pretty much nonexistent here,” Fullen said. “We have come a long way in the acceptance of queer people here at SJS, but relationships will only begin to flourish when people feel comfortable to just be and live their truth without fear.”

Regardless of one’s sexuality, though, PDA is still extremely rare in comparison to what happens in many larger high schools.

“PDA is meant for more private moments,” Archer said. “That’s why it’s called ‘intimacy.’”

Other students would like to see a more relaxed attitude at school.

“A little bit of modesty is good, but I think too much is suffocating,” Garza said. “A little more affection wouldn’t kill St. John’s.”

The small school community creates a more judgemental atmosphere in which even the simplest gesture of affection can turn into a salacious interaction, making it difficult to achieve this more carefree approach.

“In a bigger public school, you don’t know everyone, so people feel more comfortable with PDA,” senior Julia Jones said. “Here, it’s such a small, confined space that if you’re holding hands or making out in the

hallway, everyone’s going to see you and everyone’s going to be talking about it.”

Mind the (Age) Gap

The harsh scrutiny of relationships not only affects PDA but also age gaps between couples. At other schools, the rule of thumb is a couple two grades apart, while unusual, is not radical. At St. John’s, however, one grade level is the limit. Several senior boys indicated that dating two grades down is not respectable.

Students from public and private schools are not all that different, though. It’s the environment that makes all the difference. There’s one thing all students from every school can agree on: seniors dating freshmen is unacceptable.

“With a one-year gap, there’s barely any talk about it,” a senior girl at Kinkaid said. “Two years is a little weird. Three years people would think is disgusting.”

It’s harder to maintain a relationship with a partner years apart because levels of emotional maturity and life experiences vary across grade levels. While a senior might be worrying about leaving for college, their sophomore partner may have no understanding of what’s in store.

“When you’re [an adult], the difference seems trivial,” said Anuraag Routray, a senior at Cinco Ranch High School. “But every year of ‘living life’ is much more impactful when you’re 15 and 18 rather than when you’re 35 and 38.”

The tight-knit St. John’s community also contributes to the dearth of serious relationships.

“Everyone knows everyone, so if you’re dating someone, everyone’s going to know in a second,” Archer said. “You’re either not dating or you’re very much dating, and some people would prefer to be private.”

People who have attended St. John’s for a long period of time also find that the dating pool here is no longer appealing.

Some combat the issue by dating across grades or outside of SJS.

“I’ve been here [since Lower School], and I’m so over our guys,” Cassidy said.

‘I Just Have Other Priorities’

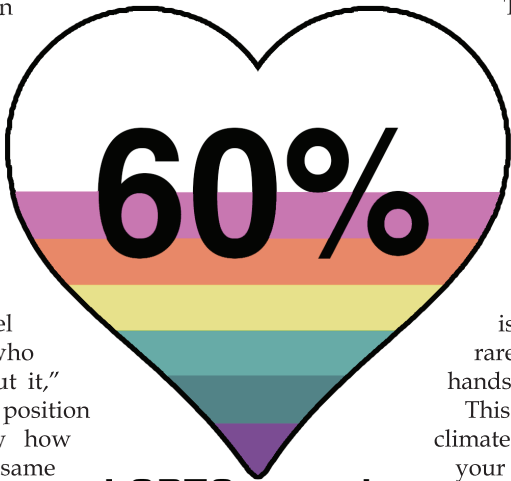
St. John’s students tend to prioritize homework and extracurriculars, so having a full-time relationship often just isn’t feasible, which leads to casual hookups at parties instead.

“It’s very hard to maintain having a significant other alongside the sometimes crushing academic workload,” Garza said.

Even when students are in a relationship, academics can take priority over all other pursuits. Shah stresses the importance of communicating to any potential partner that academics come first.

Regardless of where one attends school, though, dating isn’t as commonplace as pop culture would lead one to believe. High schoolers seem to be preoccupied with other activities, leaving finding a partner at the back of their minds.

“I’m not at a time in my life where I’m going to devote significant resources into seeking out a relationship,” Garza said. “I just have other priorities.”



Interest in musical leads to double 'Dancing Queens'

By Ella Chen

Just minutes after Sarah Hill learned that she had been cast as Sophie, a leading role in the Upper School musical "Mamma Mia!," she received a phone call from Natalie Brown, who had also been cast as Sophie.

There wasn't a typo on the cast list, nor were Hill and Brown upset that they were playing the same part. Such is the nature of a double-cast musical.

Double-casting became necessary when over 75 students auditioned in September. In order to give students as many performance opportunities as possible, the directors decided to double cast the ensemble and the female leads.

"It really is an opportunity to get as many of our talents onstage as possible, and we have so many talented students," lead director Jamie Hardin said.

One of the most popular of the so-called "jukebox musicals" of the 1990s, "Mamma Mia!" draws from the expansive songbook of the Swedish pop quartet ABBA. Composed by the male half of the group, Benny Andersson and Björn Ulvaeus (and book by Catherine Johnson), "Mamma Mia!" amassed 5,773 performances over its 14-year run, making it the ninth-longest-running show in Broadway history.

ABBA, which also featured Frida Lyngstad and Agnetha Fältskog, was a global phenomenon from 1976 to 1981. 25 of their hits landed in the UK Top 40 and nine went to No. 1, including show highlights "Dancing Queen," "SOS" and "Take a Chance on Me."

The show revolves around Sophie Sheridan, who is getting married on a Greek island where her mother Donna (played by Karli Fisher and Sophia Groen) lives. Because her mother has never revealed the identity of her father, Sophie invites three men who are most likely to be her father. Hilarity, lots of sequined jumpsuits and many ABBA songs ensue.

Rosie (played by Meridian Monthy and Gabrielle Solymosy) and Tanya (played by Katina Christensen and Amelia Williams) round out the cast as Donna's old friends the Dynamos.

According to Hardin, double-casting allows actors to put their own spin on each character.

"What I love about having the two casts is its two interpretations," Hardin said. "It's going to be two different performances, so people should really come and see both."

Brown, a junior who has been performing in musicals since she was four years old, said that having two casts highlights the differences of each character.

"It's really interesting to get to see how different parts of the characters are brought out by different actors," she said. "Everyone is so talented, and I love watching all of them."

"Mamma Mia!" marks sophomore Bobby Hlavinka's musical debut. He plays Skye, Sophie's fiancé. Despite being nervous in early rehearsals, Hlavinka soon became accustomed to his role and its many challenges.

When Hlavinka was struggling to learn one of the dances, Hill leaned over and told him he was doing great.

"It may not seem like a big deal, but Sarah has this effect of making me feel better whenever she is around," Hlavinka said.

In an effort to accommodate all the cast members, the directors created a sound booth offstage, which allows actors to sing backup when they are not onstage.

In order to maximize the double-cast concept, the directors grouped specific students for each cast based on who they felt would best work together.

During rehearsals, actors who had been double-cast would take turns running through the musical numbers.

"Sometimes having two people play



Actors in "Mamma Mia!" rehearse the musical number 'Does Your Mother Know.'



Photo by Maxx Shearod

the same role is helpful," choreographer Victoria Arizpe said. "If someone is missing a rehearsal, I can have their counterpart step in for them so I can see what it's going to look like."

While having two casts gives more students the chance to perform, it also requires more rehearsal time.

"At some point you're having to switch off between the two different casts, so the rehearsal time starts to double," ensemble director Scott Bonasso said.

Despite the challenges, the directors

were happy to see so much enthusiasm from their actors.

"The entire cast has been really fun to work with," Arizpe said. "It's a fun show, so that also feeds the process. Everyone seems to be having a good time."

"Mamma Mia!" will be performed in the Lowe Theater on March 5 at 7:30 p.m., March 6 at 7:30 p.m. and March 7 at 2:00 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Tickets become available for purchase on Feb. 25 at 9:00 a.m.

MADE FOR
FITNESS.

DESIGNED FOR
THE MAVS.

BUY NOW AT JUST HER SPORTS OR ONLINE!



 **SPRING SCRUNCHIES**
SPRINGSCRUNCHIES.COM | @SHOPSPRINGSCRUNCHIES

Color Factory

Interactive exhibits capitalize on millennial Instagram trends

By Lydia Gafford

With rooms of dazzling lights, bright colors and delicious food, Houston's Color Factory is a celebration of creativity specifically designed for the Instagram generation.

In October, Houston became Color Factory's third location along with San Francisco and New York. Featuring 19 interactive experiences from artists around the world, these unconventional installations are characterized by their striking, vivid aesthetic.

Vivian Terry, a junior, found the experience highly stimulating. "Once you start walking through, you see all the different colors and dimensions," Terry said. "It feels a lot more alive than it seemed at first glance."

Color Factory reflects a trend of interactive art exhibits that provide ready-made Instagram photo ops. In the age of social media, taking pictures is a critical element of the experience, attracting Millennials and Generation Z. Similar interactive exhibits at Candytopia and the FOMO Factory have recently made their mark in Houston.

Whether or not visitors have an Instagram account, everyone can still appreciate the artistry of the installation. "The most important thing is definitely not Instagram pictures," Terry said. "It's the cool ideas that all these artists came up with."

Every room is designed by a different artist, with some even featuring a complimentary food pairing.

Located in Upper Kirby (3303 Kirby), tickets are \$35 for adults, and anyone under 16 must be accompanied by a parent or guardian, so bring your ID. The entire experience takes 60 to 90 minutes, depending on the number of photos you take and how long you look at the exhibits.



Vivian Terry, left, and reporter Lydia Gafford, below, explore the exhibits of the newly opened Color Factory.



Photos and design by Grace Randall



to learn and grow. Visitors can poke and play with the floating orbs while reflecting on what the colors mean to them.

Your Magic is Real

Alicia Eggert and James Akers wanted to showcase the power of collaboration. In a dark room, two or more people can complete a circuit that illuminates with a colorful light sequence. The longer the connection is held, the brighter the room becomes. The room goes dark once the connection is broken.

"I hope it inspires people to engage with each other more and to imagine how much more might be possible if we all worked together towards a mutual goal," Eggert said. "I believe we might really be capable of magic."

Confetti Accumulation

Created expressly by Color Factory, this exhibit features pounds of colored confetti falling from above and covering the floor of a bright yellow room. Visitors can play in the confetti just like snow. Sweet colored popcorn is provided by Make Your Life Sweeter.

Night Bright

Another Color Factory original, this exhibit is reminiscent of the popular Lite-Brite toy and features three walls in a small dark room that can hold giant light pegs, allowing visitors an opportunity to express their own creativity.

Color Me

Illustrators Andrew Neyer and Andy J. Pizza created large-scale black-and-white murals that allow visitors to fulfill the childhood desire of drawing on the walls with massive blue markers. Any mark a visitor makes becomes a permanent part of the installation.

Pizza loves the exhibit because it provides a creative medium that anyone, regardless of artistic ability, can enjoy.

"No matter who you are, drawing something technically impressive with the giant markers is impossible," Pizza said. "All you can do is pick them up and play. It takes the pressure off and means anyone can feel safe giving creativity a go."



Chromaroma

Color Factory has partnered with Art and Olfaction, a nonprofit focused on accessible education and experimentation with scent, to develop an olfactory experience featuring 15 unique scents including cereal milk, a day at the beach and new shoes. The room is filled with colorful pipes from which one can waft the smell of money or a rainy day.

Complementary Compliments

A trio of creators (Christine Wong Yap, Leah Rosenberg and Erin Jang) have assembled a brightly colored room that resembles a jail visitation facility in which visitors can exchange kind comments across the glass.

"I would like visitors to have a chance to look closely at someone — to slow down, observe colors around them, share an experience, and feel a sense of connection to someone else," said Yap, a New York-based artist.

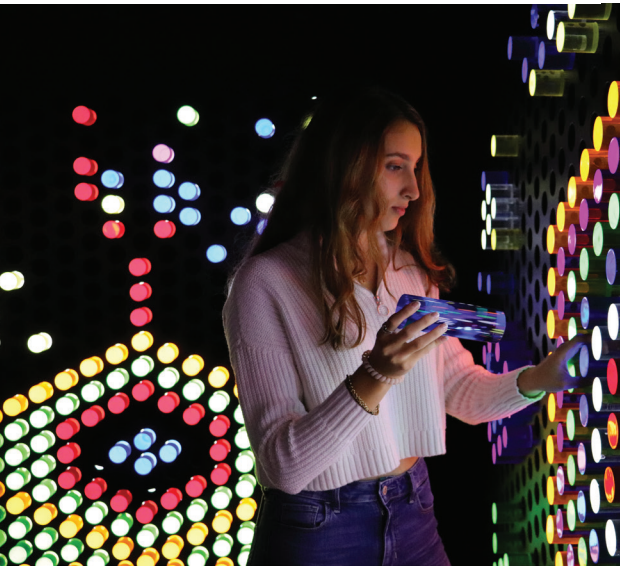
Terry says she felt closer with the people accompanying her as a result of the exhibit.

In "Perfect Pairing," a sub-exhibit that follows, Mod-Sweets offers guests pieces of candy that compliment each other based where they sat in the "jail."

To the Moon

The final exhibit consists of the epitome of childhood nostalgia: a ball pit. Color Factory partnered with NASA to create a sea of white balls beneath 10,000 hand-placed optic lights resembling stars. Visitors are also offered black "gravity-defying" ice cream from Aqua S. as they exit.

Color Factory opens at 9:30 a.m. and closes at 6 p.m. (Mon, Tue & Thu), 8 p.m. (Fri and Sat) or 7 p.m. (Sun.)



(John) CANDY

Comprised of thousands of individually-hung colorful strings, artist Eric Rieger's creation, a layered gradient, resembles a jawbreaker. Upon entry, customers are greeted with complimentary mochi from My Mo Mochi.

Unwoven Light

Soo Sunny Park has constructed a mirage-like, reflection-based exhibition that hangs from the ceiling of an otherwise bland, white room and consists of a chain-link fence woven with glass diamonds that allows sunlight to shine through.

Thought Bubbles

Richard Harvey and Keivor John designed a room of massive colorful spheres that float above a quotation expressing the feelings of a Project Color Corps student.

Project Color Corps is a nonprofit partnered with Color Factory that utilizes color to revitalize urban areas. Projects have repainted disadvantaged schools in California to make them a happier place for students



Music of the 2010s: Sounds as complex as the decade was chaotic



Graphic by Grace Randall
& Celine Huang

By Indrani Maitra

The teenage years are a time rich in self-expression, pushing social boundaries and adhering to global trends.

Contrary to parental fears, youth culture is not the root of modern moral degradation nor is it an outlet for teens to rebel against the sacred values that defined past generations.

Youth culture is an attempt to form a social identity. Teens feel trapped between childhood and impending adulthood, so they embrace the wondrous transition of adolescence.

Pop culture allows teens to partake in something bigger than themselves, eventually forming their own worldviews based on what they see and enjoy, not just what their friends or family want them to like.

Teen culture is an artifact of growing up, and every ten years, it's fun to look back and see how it's evolved, especially when we see the world gradually devolving into chaos.

As sophomore Thalie Waters said, "The culture of youth in this decade is very divergent, which differs from youth cultures in the previous decades."

How Pop Earworms Reflected the Optimism of the Early Decade

Music went through an unprecedented revolution from 2010 to 2019. The progression of popular teen music taste was as complex just as the decade was chaotic.

Teen pop made a significant comeback in the early 2010s. English teacher Elizabeth Rasmussen Carlson ('08) recalls cheerful and catchy pop songs dominating the early years of the decade. The trifecta of pop earworms were Katy Perry's "Teenage Dream," Carly Rae Jepsen's "Call Me Maybe" and especially Miley Cyrus's ubiqui-

tous "Party in the U.S.A."

Defined by their cheeky essence and europop vocals, such songs were the epitome of teenage idealism. Their wry lyrics captured the fleeting nature of young love and new beginnings.

"When I think of 'Party in The U.S.A.,' I immediately associate it with the 2010s," Carlson said. "Songs like those were just so fun to listen to."

Math teacher Alice Fogler ('10) considers mainstream pop the defining genre of early 2010s.

"All iconic songs that have come out in the early decade were pop," Fogler said. "Beyoncé literally dominated pop and really hit her stride as a solo artist. Everyone now knows her as Beyoncé, not 'that one girl from Destiny's Child.'"

Fogler also cites Taylor Swift and indie singer-songwriter Sara Bareilles as pop music icons of the decade.

"They were adored by teens," Fogler said. "Neither of them really existed until the beginning of the decade, and now everyone recognizes their names. They both really transformed this decade."

In high school, Fogler strayed from these musical conventions, finding herself engrossed in the punk rock scene. Fall Out Boy and Paramore were her favorite bands.

"I was so devastated when Fall Out Boy broke up [in 2010]," Fogler said. "Alt music was my life."

Theatre director Kat Cordes, who graduated high school in 2010, considers the decade's musical trends "revolutionary," particularly for non-mainstream pop genres.

Dubstep, a type of electronic dance music characterized by syncopation and high frequencies, emerged in the early 2010s. Dubstep artists revolutionized music and influenced today's indie pop figures.

Cordes's musical tastes, like Fogler's, were divergent from the cultural norm. She was fond of "screamo," an aggressive subgenre of emo and hardcore punk by bands such as Bring Me the Horizon and a Day to Remember.

"I will love emo pop punk music until the day I die," Cordes said. "That brand of alternative music always really appealed to me."

Dubstep and EDM led to the lo-fi phenomenon and contemporary R&B. Meanwhile, alt rock led to a trove of emo hip hop musicians like XXXTentacion, Lil Peep and Juice WRLD.

"Without the dubstep movement, we wouldn't have SoundCloud rappers," Cordes said. "We wouldn't have any lo-fi chill pop study music that teens listen to 24/7."

Baroque pop artists transitioned towards modern day music. Prevalent indie and synth pop artists would not exist without Lana del Rey.

"We wouldn't have Halsey without Lana, we would not have Billie Eilish without Lana," Cordes said.

How Hip-Hop Became the Dominant Force of Social Consciousness

As the world devolved into chaos and the digital world took over, the teen music scene underwent a seismic upheaval. Mainstream music progressed from trashy pop to urban rap. Alternative culture distegrated. The line between activism and art blurred.

By the end of the decade, hip hop became the dominant force. By 2017, the influence of streaming services like Spotify on the Billboard Hot 100 allowed rap to surpass rock and pop.

"Teens really like that music because it

helps develop self-confidence," freshman Kacey Chapman said. "Those songs really encouraged people to be themselves."

The infiltration of politics into art is the most prominent change in the pop culture this decade. Songs evolved from love letters to scathing critiques of social injustices.

In 2016, Beyoncé released her uber political album and corresponding mini-movie *Lemonade*, an unabashed embrace of her black identity and commentary on police brutality.

Childish Gambino's 2018 hit "This is America" won the Song of the Year Grammy for its unflinching look at gun violence and racism.

Kendrick Lamar's Pulitzer-Prize "To Pimp a Butterfly" explores the complexities of black masculinity and colorism.

Artists like Lil Nas X and Troye Sivan use music to express queer desire and be refreshingly open about their identity.

Even Taylor Swift, who has tried to remain apolitical, recently ventured into more serious territory, addressing rampant inequality, double standards and gender roles in her album "Lover."

While in the early decade, an artist releasing political songs was subject to much rancor and controversy, political protests expressed through music are far more ubiquitous now. Maybe it's because we need to understand the political climate.

"Music is a creative outlet for activism and asserting your identity," Waters said. "It's what's normal now."

Additional reporting by Sophia Si and Chloe Zhao

Visit the Review Online this month for the next installments of the Decade in Review on movies, television and technology.

Basketball captains model spirit, sportsmanship



Seniors Eliza Holt and Charlie McGee strive to lead by example. Holt balances schoolwork with three varsity sports. McGee returned to basketball in January after an injury sidelined him for the first half of the season.

///
Photo by
Claire Seinsheimer

Practice makes a perfect teammate

By Wenqing He

Juggling school and three varsity sports can be a challenge, but for senior Eliza Holt, her athletic involvement keeps her grounded in school.

"I find it extremely hard to go home and start doing work right away, so practice from four to six is not too much time," Holt said. "Seriously, I would not be doing anything else during that time."

Holt is a captain of the basketball and lacrosse team and a star player on the volleyball team. Her athletic talent, as well as sportsmanship, earns her respect and praise from her fellow teammates.

Madeline Ou, a sophomore who plays basketball with Holt, commends her work ethic.

"Eliza has an amazing work ethic not only on but off the court," Ou said. "She's the type of person to get in the gym early in the mornings for extra practice and the person that everyone can rely on to stick with the game until the very last second."

Holt started playing basketball in third grade on her UCAL team and has always enjoyed the physicality of the sport. She began playing lacrosse in eighth grade at school. In both sports, Holt committed many days and weekends to practices and games, allowing her to develop her habits and passion.

Unlike the other sports, Holt had a relatively late start playing volleyball — her friends convinced her to try the sport when she dropped field hockey after her freshman year. Holt considers picking up volleyball one of the best decisions she has ever made.

"I love my team in all the sports I play," Holt said. "They make each and every game so much fun."

Holt is thankful for how flexible teachers are with tests and assignments. The environment the teachers create is exceptionally supportive in both academic planning and mental and physical health.

"My teachers have always been very nice to me about late work or pushing

back tests," Holt said. "I always had at least one teacher move my test so that I wouldn't have two tests or something on the same day."

Holt finds that she gained qualities that make her a better person from playing sports. She said that sports give people a better understanding of their talents, allowing them to take full advantage of their abilities. She attributes her perseverance to the training and competition that comes with sports.

"In conditioning, when you think you can't continue, that's when you have to push the hardest," Holt said. "Coach Campbell also doesn't give you the choice to give up."

Holt believes that competitiveness is a crucial prerequisite for athletes.

"Competitiveness is a must-have quality of all athletes," Holt said. "You have to always want to win, even in practices, because it raises the spirits of the entire team."

She also finds that leadership is a necessity for both captains and team members because a team grows together with the help of one another.

As a captain, Holt feels she cannot expect hard work from her players if she is not willing to put in the same effort herself, emphasizing the importance of leading by example. Lily Pesikoff, a sophomore who is on varsity basketball, appreciates Holt's support.

"She has done a spectacular job in leading our team this year, not only as a captain but also as a person," Pesikoff said. "She is someone who I can talk to about anything anytime, which is a great quality for a leader."

Even with all the necessary skills, Holt believes spirit is the deciding factor in a team's success. As a captain, she wants to see the team collectively cheering and supporting one another in every game.

"If you're not hype on the bench," she said, "you have no shot of winning in the game."

Rebounding from serious injury

By Cameron Ederle and Wilson Bailey

While hanging on the rim of a basketball hoop after a preseason practice, Charlie McGee slipped and fell onto his wrist.

"I felt it break the second I hit the ground," McGee said. "When I looked down, my wrist was curved."

One X-ray later, McGee confirmed that his wrist was broken, subjecting the captain to months of rehab and confining him to the bench for the majority of his senior season. After eight weeks of dedication towards his recovery, he got back on the court for the Jan. 7 game against St. Pius X.

To prepare for his last season of high school basketball, McGee spent all summer and fall season training. He left the cross-country team in order to stay focused on basketball.

According to head coach Harold Baber, McGee has shown much improvement since his freshman year.

"When he first got to varsity, he was pretty much just a catch-and-shoot guy," Baber said. "He's developed tremendously."

As a junior, McGee was named to the all-SPC roster as the best guard in the conference. He also averaged 16 points per conference game that season and shot 38% from beyond the arc.

"This is what happens when you put in the time, effort and hard work," Baber said.

Last season, in the Feb. 8 game against Kinkaid, McGee scored 26 points in a career-high effort.

"He's one of the best shooters we've ever had in the program," Baber said.

Along with his skill, Baber notes the positive impact that McGee's attitude has on the team.

"The younger guys gravitate towards him and like to be around him because he is very approachable, and those young guys see how hard he works," Baber said. "That hard work has turned into success."

McGee brings a competitive energy to team practices, pushing his teammates to work harder.

"When we're running sprints, he always tries to be the first. He leads by example," Baber said.

McGee's recovery process reflects his dedication. He began rehab only a day after his surgery. His rehab, which included range-of-motion training and blood flow restriction, was mentally challenging.

"I'm barely lifting this one pound weight, and I'm thinking, how am I going to dribble or shoot a basketball?" McGee said.

The hardest part of the recovery process for McGee was watching tight games from the bench.

"You know that if you were there, if you were not injured, you could help the team," he said.

Without McGee, the Mavs went 15-3, securing some key victories. They defeated Lamar for the first time in six years, earned 2nd place at the Vype Tournament and have been strong in conference games.

"Charlie is a very unselfish player," Baber said. "A lot of what we do and how we play offense is making the extra pass, finding the open guy and passing up a good shot for a great shot."

On his first game back, McGee admitted to feeling a little bit rusty in his play, but he felt relieved to be back on the court.

"Charlie is a great player. Add that to a great team and something special can happen," Baber said.

As he approaches the end of his senior season, McGee hopes to leave his mark on Maverick basketball.

"It's about leaving a legacy and making all that work you put in worth it," McGee said.

With 12 returning players on the roster and eight seniors, the team will look to its experience in the upcoming SPC matchups.

"We have one of the best teams that we have had in a really long time," McGee said. "For the seniors, this is our last go at it. This is where we have to give everything we have one last time."

SHATTERED

The Astros broke our hearts, but we still stand with them

By Claire Seinsheimer and SJ Lasley

If you know us, you know that we love the Astros. They provide a guaranteed constant in our lives. Their 162-game schedule allows us to watch them play more often than other Houston sports franchises, and the team itself gives us something pure and genuine to root for.

- Review Online, October 22, 2019

Just a month after we wrote this ode to the 'Stros, the Astros cheating scandal broke. Houstonians were devastated.

Former pitcher Mike Fiers admitted that the team used electronic sign-stealing technology in the dugout, propelling the Astros franchise into a vicious spiral of self-destruction.

You've heard the rumors; you may have read the Major League Baseball report. You probably have your own opinions on the matter, but the truth is undeniable: The Astros violated an MLB memorandum. We openly broke the rules.

After the scandal broke, MLB announced the yearlong suspensions of manager A.J. Hinch and general manager Jeff Luhnow.

Owner Jim Crane then took it a step further and fired the two vitally important pieces of the Astros franchise. In one fell swoop, Luhnow and Hinch were gone.

Yes, dismissing Hinch and Luhnow was the morally correct thing to do. As Jim Crane said, "We need to move forward with a clean slate." From a publicity standpoint, he looks like the good guy.

Luhnow, who had been general manager since 2012, witnessed the worst seasons the club has ever experienced. When Hinch was hired in 2015, the club was on the rise, and he gave the team just what it needed to reach its full potential. Luhnow's blockbuster acquisitions of Justin Verlander in 2017 and Zack Greinke in 2019 accelerated their success. The 2017 World Series not only brought joy to the city of Houston after the destruction of Hurricane Harvey, but also gave the players the platform from which they could give back to their community. While Hinch's and Luhnow's reputations might be tainted, the work they did on and off the field remains unmatched.

As die-hard Astros fans, we are inclined to defend them no matter what, but this situation is a tricky one. We recognize the faults and shortcomings of the organization, but nothing makes us angrier than hearing

uneducated baseball fans calling for MLB to vacate the 2017 World Series title.

The Astros are certainly not alone in this scandal. While they are currently the only team to have received punishment from the MLB for sign-stealing, there are strong indicators that many other teams have done the same. The Red Sox "parted ways" with manager (and former Astros bench coach) Alex Cora. MLB had yet to even punish Cora, but both the organization and Cora himself clearly knew a suspension was coming. Not only did Cora instigate the cheating with the Astros in 2017, he went to the Red Sox in 2018 and did the exact same thing — winning another World Series. MLB may be finalizing his punishment, but the Red Sox organization needs to be as thoroughly investigated as the Astros. Days later, former Astros outfielder Carlos Beltran was let go just weeks before he was to begin his first season as manager of the New York Mets, allegedly also because of the potential punishment that awaited him.

We understand that what the Astros did was unacceptable despite similar practices by other teams. If such actions are common throughout the league, MLB should not only be targeting the Astros for doing something that doesn't upset the competitive balance.

We know they cheated, and opinions on the proper

punishment will undoubtedly vary. In addition to the suspensions, the Astros were also assessed a \$5-million fine, the largest that commissioner Rob Manfred could dole out. The team was also stripped of its first two picks in the draft for the next two years. We might not realize it yet, but this could be the most painful part of the punishment. Astros superstars Alex Bregman, Carlos Correa and George Springer were all first-round draft picks once upon a time. The punishment is brutal. It's impossible to definitively say how this penalty will affect the upcoming season. Maybe our talent will fizzle out without the potential advantage that sign-stealing provides, but it would also be impossible to say that the Astros do not have superior physical athleticism and skill. You could pitch anyone a fastball, and even if they knew it was coming, it would take a practiced and well-coached player to predict its placement and knock it out of the park.

So, yeah, if you know us, you know we love the Astros. It is a disappointment to know that our pride in the team's purity and authenticity has been tainted, and it will take some time for the organization to recover. This season you will still find us glued to our TVs or at Minute Maid Park decked out in orange and blue. We hope you join us.

Graphic by Matthew Hensel

Club swimmers make time for practice with whole team

By Natalie Boquist

The newly built Lamar High School pool facility has provided Maverick swimmers with a new and improved practice space, but it also came with a new reality for club swimmers.

Club swimmers are now required to attend at least one Maverick practice of their choice each week in addition to their club responsibilities.

In the past, the team's access was limited to the Weekley Family YMCA. With only three or four pool lanes available, the team did not have enough room for club and non-club swimmers. Since club swimmers had access to other pools, coaches and practice times, they were exempt from school practices.

This year, the athletics department negotiated pool time in Lamar High School's new facility. The swim team is now able to use eight pool lanes from 6:00-7:30 a.m. and 4:00-5:30 p.m. every school day. This new facility provides more space while also allowing the swim team to train concurrently with the diving team, which creates a more cohesive team unit.

Only half of the events at swim meets are individual, so the team must be in tune in order to win meets. Before the club swimmers attended school practice, that sense of unity was not present among the team.

The team has already seen a change in dynamic with the new rule in place. Freshman club swimmer Zoi

Halastaras said the change has helped her get to know her teammates and coaches better.

"Only swimming with the people on your team at meets doesn't necessarily build team community and companionship," Halastaras said. "When we go to practice with the non-club swimmers, that team bond definitely strengthens."

Training together in the same facility at least once a week has also created better understanding between club and non-club swimmers.

"I think it could be a challenge for non-club swimmers to be required to attend daily practice and then not be placed in a favorite event," assistant coach Krista Hensel said. "If swimmers don't earn a spot, we are striving to put more emphasis on an environment that builds and strengthens the team mentality of collective work put in by all our swimmers."

For senior club swimmer Will Sampson, the new rule holds the club swimmers more accountable for being a part of the team. The joint practice times also allow all swimmers to practice relay exchanges and other technical skills.

"Even though we are still not extremely integrated into the SJS practice regimine, it still facilitates more team cohesion and forces you to be more involved," Sampson said.

Since the requirement is only once a week, club swimmers have found flexibility in their schedules to meet the requirement.

"Sometimes, I can't go to club practice because I have to go to St. John's practice," Halastaras said. "But it's not that hard to work around since we're only required to attend one practice."

Their ability to choose which school practice to attend also helps them ensure the new rule does not impact their club training.

"I choose to go to SJS practice on Friday morning because my club does not offer a practice at that time, so there is no effect on my club swimming," Sampson said.

Even though the club swimmers only attend one practice a week, bonds are still formed simply from the experience of doing the same sport.

"The sport of swimming is a family — once a swimmer, always a swimmer, no matter the experience level," Hensel said. "The shared experience of being in the pool in a sensory-deprived environment, staring at a black line on the bottom of the lane, pushing oneself to and beyond limits, overcoming real and sometimes mentally perceived obstacles brings a team together."

STAFF EDITORIAL

Teens need sex education. Where's ours?



Illustration by Angela Xu

For many St. John's students, sex education consisted of a 30-minute gender-segregated egg-and-sperm presentation in sixth grade. At the time, we were not as preoccupied with the idea of sex and may have checked out once the presenter compared the shape of a uterus to the Texas Longhorn logo.

Although basic sex education is necessary for pre-teens to understand the foundations of the human reproductive system, the discussion should not end in a middle school classroom.

Like it or not, relationships — sometimes sexual in nature — are part of high school life. Abandoning the conversation or providing minimal education only increases potential risks.

According to the Journal of Adolescent Health, comprehensive sex ed does not promote sexual activity nor promiscuous behavior; it is necessary to ensure the health and safety of teenagers.

Last month, the consent advocacy group Speak About It returned to campus for a second time. The skits they performed prompted candid conversations among 11th and 12th grade students surrounding the importance of consent.

The performers did an excellent job of clarifying that students should make sure that the person they're with is in agreement about everything from holding hands to sexual intercourse. By presenting a variety of sex-positive scenarios, including same-sex relationships, thankfully they did not focus on victim blaming or slut-shaming.

Although overly theatrical at times and not always applicable, the assembly was nonetheless a step in the right direction.

The next day, Peer Leaders were asked to brainstorm questions relating to the Speak About It assembly. Peer Leaders posed questions concerning sexually transmitted diseases and birth control, yet Speak About It was unable to provide answers because, according to the Speak About it educators, "that's not

really what we're here for."

The topics that we need guidance with illustrate the lack of overall knowledge regarding sex. We need a reliable source of information, otherwise some will resort to the internet or friends for answers, both of which can be unreliable or even dangerous.

If we abdicate the responsibility of teaching students about sex, then pornography may become the basis of a teen's knowledge of sex, creating unrealistic expectations and scenarios. According to Covenant Eyes, a company that monitors internet usage, 93% of boys and 62% of girls have been exposed to porn before the age of 18.

Sex may be a taboo topic in schools, but if a Speak About It performer can fake a female orgasm on stage, why can't students learn to properly put on a condom?

It feels counterintuitive for the School to focus on consent, an extremely important topic to be sure, before discussing basic biology. And since human reproduction has been removed from the biology curriculum, the only Upper School students who can learn about it are those who take Anatomy, an upper-level elective.

For some, the recent consent training felt a bit too-little-too-late. Speak About It performed scenes of abusive relationships, which triggered some students who had experienced trauma well before 11th grade or perhaps were not even aware that they had experienced a non-consensual encounter.

So what are we doing to educate younger students?

We encourage the School to provide an all-inclusive sex ed and consent training curriculum no later than freshman year. Students need to obtain accurate information in order to make informed decisions. Otherwise, the cycle of unfulfilling and possibly dangerous relationships will continue.

re/view

St. John's School
2401 Claremont Lane
Houston, TX 77019

review.sjs@gmail.com
sjsreview.com

SNO Distinguished Site 2018-2019

Facebook SJS Review

Twitter @SJS_Review

Instagram @sjsreview



Member **National Scholastic Press Assn.**
Pacemaker Finalist 2019
Pacemaker 2015, 2018



Member **Columbia Scholastic Press Assn.**
Crown Finalist 2020
Gold Crown 2015
Silver Crown 2014, 2016-2019

QUILL & SCROLL

Blue and Gold Award 2019

Editors-in-Chief

Izzy Andrews (Content), Mia Fares (Administrative),
Sophia Lima (Managing), Leila Pulaski (Design)

Online Editors-in-Chief

SJ Lasley, Sinclair Mott

Assistant Online Editors-in-Chief

Laney Chang, Fareen Dhuka

Assignment Editors

Noura Jabir, Abigail Poag

Online Section Editors

Megan Chang, Ashley Yen

Video Editor

Ryan Doughty

Design Editor

Taylor Britton

Assistant Design Editors

Matthew Hensel, Grace Randall

Photography Editor

Claire Seinsheimer

Visuals Editor

Celine Huang

Business Manager

Mehak Batra

Copy Editors

Sara Doyle, Indrani Maitra, Ella West

Staff

Maira Ansari, Aatiqah Aziz, Wilson Bailey,
Mia Baumann, Max Beard, Katya Bigman,
Kennedy Black, Natalie Boquist, Camille Carleton,
Edward Chen, Ella Chen, Gabe de la Cruz,
Olivia Doan, Cameron Ederle, Lydia Gafford,
Diane Guo, Wenqing He, Matthew Hensel,
Natasha Janssens, Sophia Jazaeri, Ethan Kinsella,
Rahul Lal, Russell Li, Bailey Maierson, Afraaz Malick,
Lily McCullough, Lizzie Mickiewicz, Hamzah Mir,
Ellie Monday, Leonardo Morales, Sierra Ondo,
Caroline Pressler, Davis Rae, Grace Randall,
Jack Ringold, Rahul Rupani,
Matthew Samson-Williams, Keval Shah,
Maxx Shearod, Julia Smith, Gabrielle Solymosy,
Mira Thakur, Alice Xu, Angela Xu, Chloe Zhao

Advisers

David Nathan, Shelley Stein ('88), Chuy Benitez

Mission Statement

The Review strives to report on issues with integrity, to recognize the assiduous efforts of all and to serve as an engine of discourse within the St. John's community.

Publication Info

The Review is published five times during the school year. We mail each issue — free of charge — to every Upper School household with an additional 1,000 copies distributed on campus to our 694 students and 98 faculty.

Policies

The Review provides a forum for student writing and opinion. The opinions and staff editorials contained herein do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Headmaster or the Board of Trustees of St. John's School. Staff editorials represent the opinion of the entire Editorial Board unless otherwise noted. Writers and photographers are credited with a byline. Corrections, when necessary, can be found on the editorial pages. Running an advertisement does not imply endorsement by the school.

Submission Guidelines

Letters to the editor and guest columns are encouraged but are subject to editing for reasons of clarity, space, accuracy and taste. On occasion, we will publish letters anonymously. The Review reserves the right not to print letters received. Letters and guest columns can be emailed to review.sjs@gmail.com or hand-delivered to the Review room (Q210).

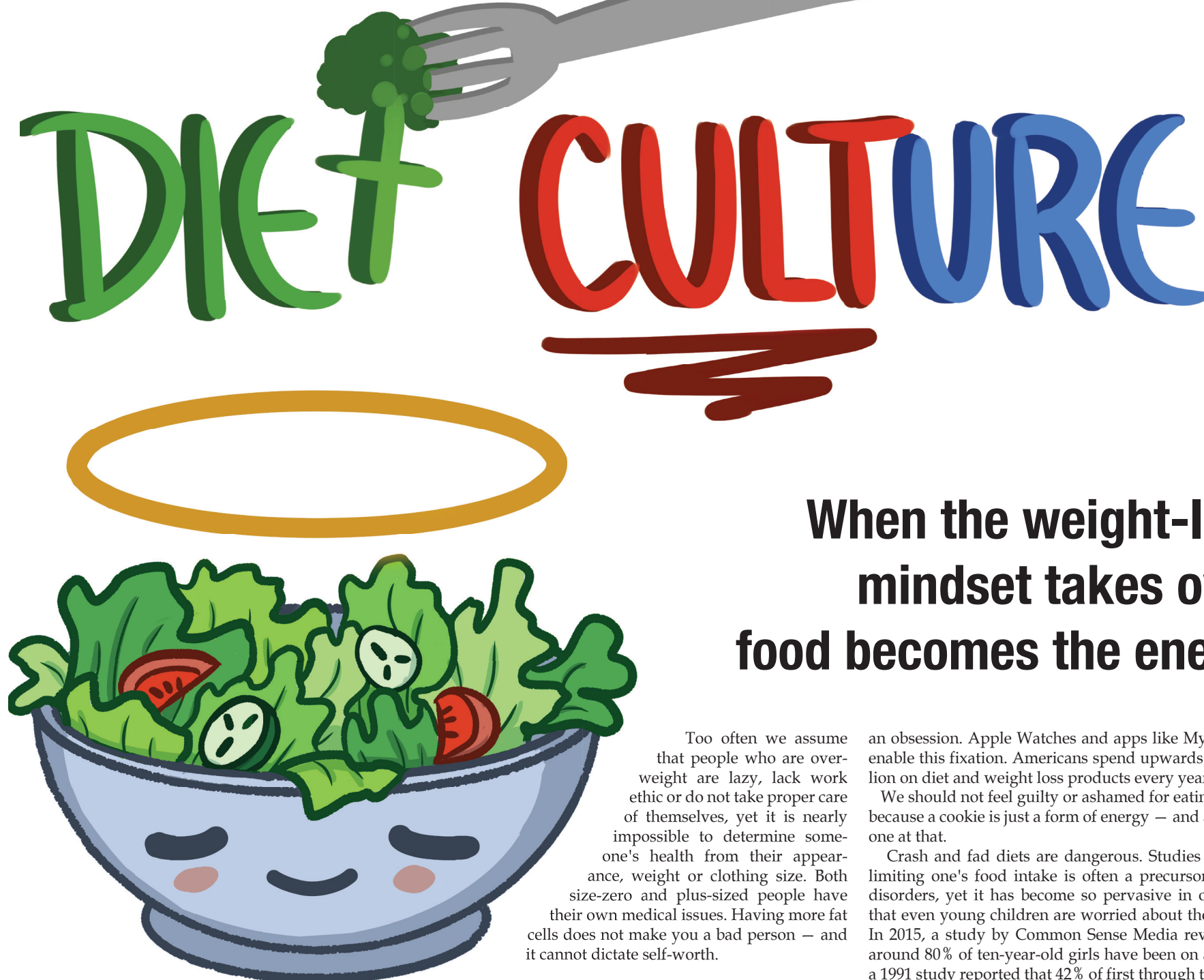
75%

of U.S. schools emphasized
abstinence in sex ed

35%

of U.S. schools taught
students how to use a condom

Source: Guttmacher Institute



When the weight-loss mindset takes over, food becomes the enemy

Too often we assume that people who are overweight are lazy, lack work ethic or do not take proper care of themselves, yet it is nearly impossible to determine someone's health from their appearance, weight or clothing size. Both size-zero and plus-sized people have their own medical issues. Having more fat cells does not make you a bad person — and it cannot dictate self-worth.

an obsession. Apple Watches and apps like MyFitnessPal enable this fixation. Americans spend upwards of \$60 billion on diet and weight loss products every year.

We should not feel guilty or ashamed for eating a cookie because a cookie is just a form of energy — and a delicious one at that.

Crash and fad diets are dangerous. Studies show that limiting one's food intake is often a precursor to eating disorders, yet it has become so pervasive in our society that even young children are worried about their weight. In 2015, a study by Common Sense Media revealed that around 80% of ten-year-old girls have been on a diet, and a 1991 study reported that 42% of first through third grade girls want to be thinner.

We have created a society in which children are engaged in risky dieting behaviors that often lead to full-blown eating disorders. Something has to change.

So we must challenge the norm. Do not call yourself fat, shame yourself for eating a slice of pepperoni pizza, or talk about your diet to a classroom full of impressionable students.

Diet culture thrives on our insecurities and the belief that we somehow need to improve. Weight does not determine character, and we are not good or bad because of what we eat.

By Julia Smith

Last year, I was sitting with friends in front of the cafeteria fireplace on one of the few cold days before winter break. One of my friends was sipping on her daily can of La Croix when she jokingly remarked that she might be addicted.

The theory caught the attention of another friend, who warned that carbonation could cause weight gain, or so he had read.

A long discussion ensued. If La Croix had zero calories, then she shouldn't gain weight, but the bloating effects of the bubbles could not be ignored.

As it turns out, La Croix does not in fact lead to extra pounds: its lack of calories ensures that the contents of the beverage will not be converted into fat.

Still, the seed of fear had been planted.

Such reactions are fairly common and reflect a culture in which weight gain is feared and calories are the enemy. In such circumstances, even water — that paragon of health — can be viewed with suspicion.

The Moral Value of Food

"Diet culture" is a system of beliefs that promotes thinness as the only path to health and desirability, but what makes dieting even more dangerous is when society places a moral value on food.

This unhealthy system pervades our society. Celebrities promote dangerous diets while friends make casual remarks about needing to work off dessert. It seems like everyone believes that eating "clean" and exercising constantly not only makes you thinner, but somehow makes you better.

From a young age, I was taught that there exist two types of food: good and bad. Consuming good foods (salads and fruit) made you pure and healthy, whereas eating bad foods (Oreos, Gushers and other sweets seldom found in my house) meant you were greedy, unable to control yourself or simply bad.

While some are not concerned about eternal damnation for eating devil's food cake, many fear weight gain. Dieting is so ingrained in our society that most dread being undesirable more than they worry about their long-term health.

Lizzo recently decided to take a break from Twitter after trolls constantly harassed her and made insensitive jokes about her appearance. This rampant fat-shaming is just one of the ways that overweight body types are portrayed as morally inadequate.

Beauty is Not Pain

Weight loss is a tool used to increase self-esteem and make people feel better. It's February, and by now most New Year's resolutions have crumbled and feelings of guilt are setting in.

While losing weight is not an inherently terrible goal, the extreme focus on weight loss is problematic. Diet culture promotes the idea that conforming to a specific body standard is more important than your health, both physical and mental.

In middle school, one of my teachers took great pride in constantly complaining to the class about her juice cleanse, which made her cranky and tired. All those complaints seemed like an excuse for her to show how she was sticking to her resolution to become a new and improved version of herself.

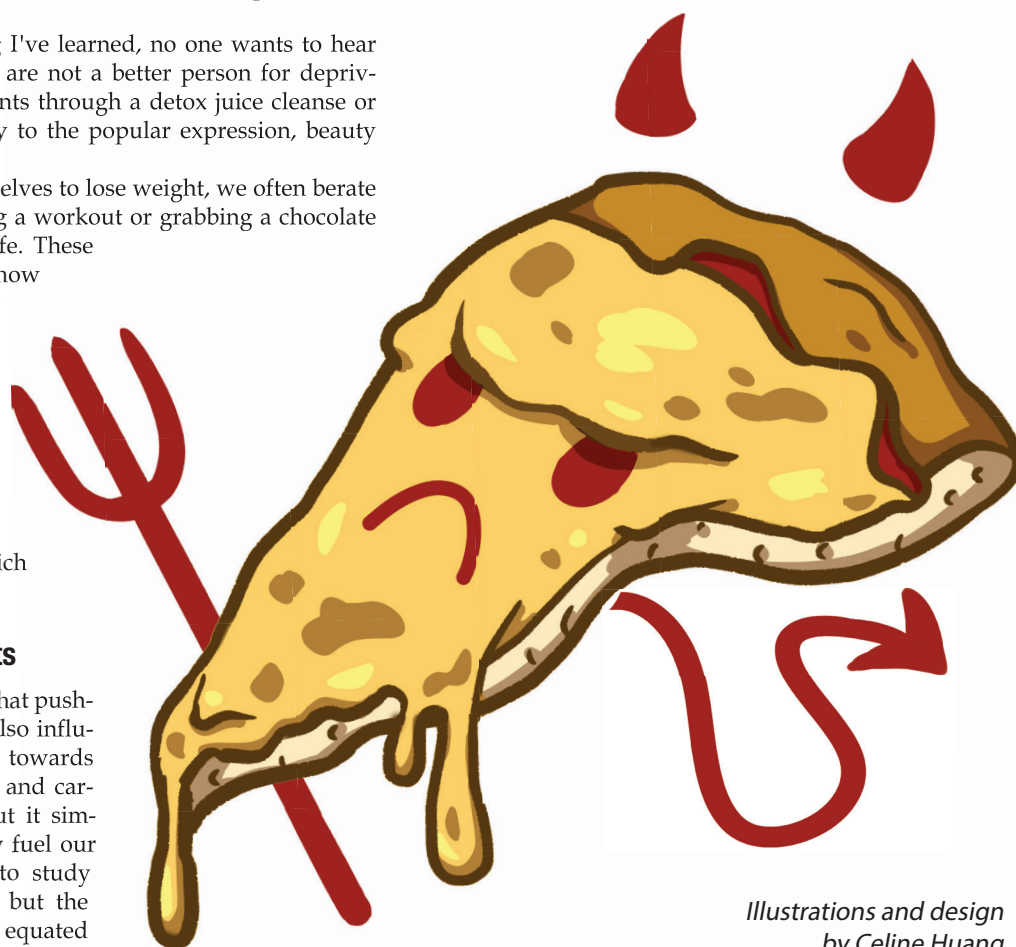
If there's one thing I've learned, no one wants to hear about your diet. You are not a better person for depriving yourself of nutrients through a detox juice cleanse or a water fast. Contrary to the popular expression, beauty is not pain.

When we push ourselves to lose weight, we often berate ourselves for skipping a workout or grabbing a chocolate croissant from the cafe. These rigid ideas about how we eat and how our bodies should look can cause our mental health to suffer as we constantly push ourselves towards some unsustainable goal and deprive ourselves of that which makes us happy.

The Danger of Diets

The body standard that pushes us to lose weight also influences our attitudes towards food. All calories, fat and carbohydrates are, to put it simply, just energy. They fuel our bodies, allowing us to study hard and play hard, but the term "calorie" is now equated with fat.

Calorie-counting has become



Illustrations and design
by Celine Huang

60 SECONDS WITH



Portraits by Lizzie Mickiewicz

JOHN PERDUE

- Nickname**
The Kid, JPerds, Perdooch
- Dream job**
Chubbies model
- Weird hobby**
Throwing weights like children
- Quirk**
Wearing short shorts
- Theme song**
"Cantina Band"
- Love to hate**
Cauliflower ear
- Hate to love**
Tik Tok
- Relationship status**
Lexbot
- Red carpet date**
Natalie Portman
- Phobia**
Needles
- Doppelganger**
My mother
- Known for**
My academic prowess
- Book**
Vocabulary Energizers 3
- Slogan**
I wouldn't have it any other way
- Allergies**
Losing
- Follow me?**
@J_Perds

LEXIE LEITNER

- Nickname**
Lexbot
- Dream job**
Ballerina
- Weird hobby**
Manchester girl accent
- Quirk**
I drink coffee with a straw
- Theme song**
"How Do You Sleep" by Jesse McCartney
- Love to hate**
Lizards
- Hate to love**
Wrestling
- Relationship status**
The Kid
- Red carpet date**
Patrick Dempsey
- Phobia**
Flying
- Doppelganger**
My sister... if she had blonde hair
- Known for**
Eyebrows?
- Book**
Traditions and Encounters AP
- Slogan**
I'm Lexie and I know it
- Allergies**
Incompetence
- Follow me?**
@lexieleitner

FREEDA OF THE PRESS

BY MIA FARES



LINKEDIN



FACEBOOK

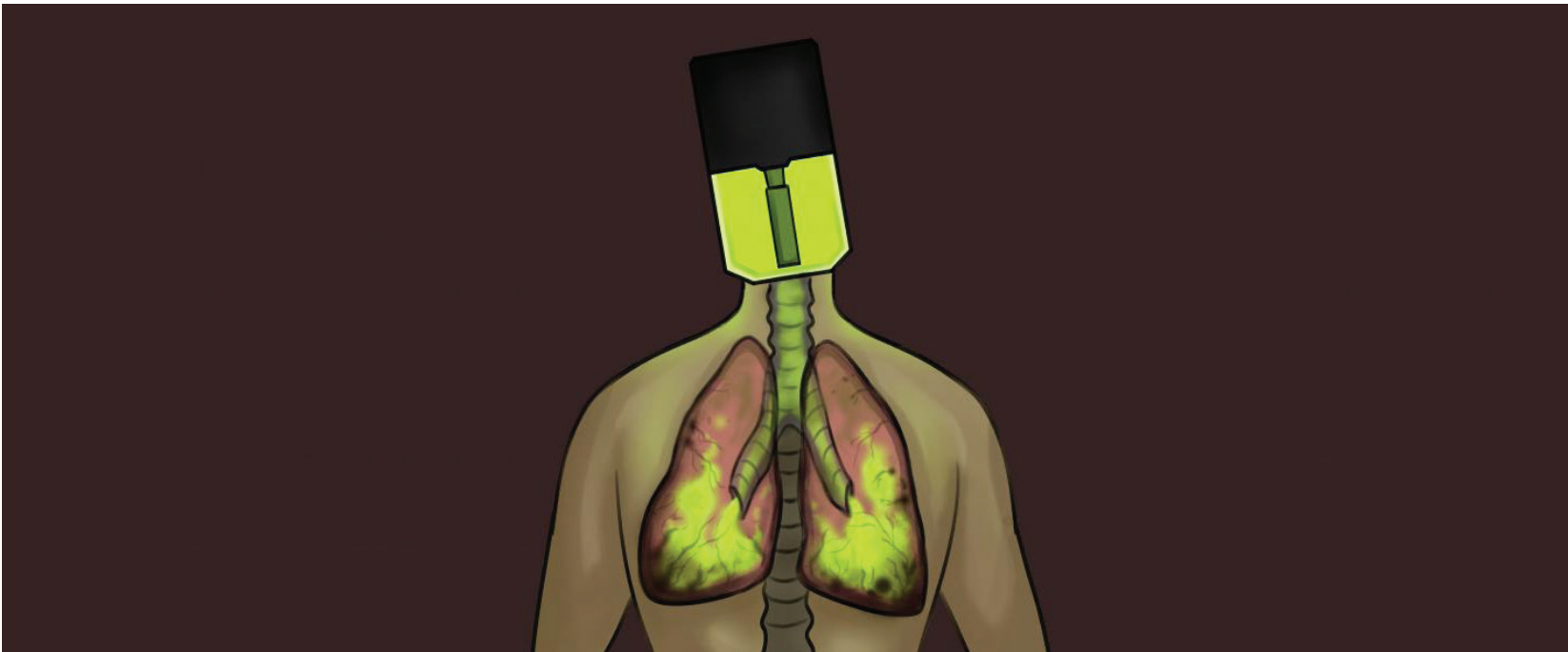


INSTAGRAM



NAT GEO

TRENDING ON reviewonline



CELINE HUANG

Special Report: How vaping trends threaten teen health
According to the CDC, over 2,000 people have been hospitalized due to vaping, and teens remain disproportionately at risk.
Story by Julia Smith



MAYA ADDIE

Alumna performs at Radio City Music Hall
Isabel Wallace-Green ('15) recently performed in the Radio City Christmas Spectacular.
Story by Abigail Poag



FAREEN DHUKA

Sara Rose Caplan speaks to PRISM about LGBTQ+ experience
PRISM invited alumna Sara Rose Caplan ('11) on Dec. 3 to speak to members about her experiences as a transgender woman.
Story by Chloe Zhao and Lydia Gafford



MATTHEW HENSEL

New Lamar pool provides swimmers with quality training space
The swimming and diving team has benefitted from practicing in Lamar's new pool this season.
Story by Leo Morales and Sophia Jazaeri



CELINE HUANG

Impact: Caroline Spears
Sophomore Ella West sits down with Caroline Spears ('13) to talk about her work writing legislative papers for politicians.
Podcast by Ella West