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LET'S GET OUT OF HERE

# THE HOOKUP HYPE

Many teens bypass the emotional commitment of dating **PAGE 16**





# THE HOOKUP

## Romance and dating are becoming a thing of the past for many high school students

Written by Ashley Adams, Alex Cowdrey and Reagan King,  
Photos by Lindsey Farthing, Design by Sabrina San Agustin

**J**ulia Masterson, 2020 graduate, said she experienced how hookup culture captivates teenagers.

“I had some friends that fully transformed. They went from wanting to save themselves until marriage and then ended up going crazy. They started hooking up with so many different people, because it was just such a normalized thing,” Masterson said.

Although some do see the appeal in a committed relationship, hook ups are often the easier choice.

“With a relationship, you get consistency and someone to hang out with,” Junior Tyler Wolf said. “But it’s

high school, most people aren’t really looking for that.”

High school comes with homework and countless opportunities for extracurricular activities. Creating a relationship with someone else would involve taking out time for them, said Wolf.

“Responsibilities come with a relationship, but sometimes people only want the intimate side of things, so they turn to a hookup,” Wolf said.

Junior Julie Dean shared what she thinks is an appealing aspect of hookup culture.

“I think people look for hookups rather than relationships because they don’t

require an emotional connection as much as relationships do,” Dean said. “A lot of the time, people choose to get into the relationship without actually having to commit to a person.”

Wolf stated being committed to someone else can be fun, but it is not always simple.

“Being in a relationship is great if you can find it. But once something happens, like someone gets their heart broken, it often isn’t what they’re looking for anymore. They start to look for those quick connections,” Wolf said.

But for some, high school love can be real. Seniors Maya Welde and Luke Sallman have been dating for three years.



# UP TYPE

*More teens are choosing to hook up with one another rather than dating in the traditional sense.*

Both of their parents were high school sweethearts. Through watching her parents, Welde said she was shown that young love is possible, and can work.

“My parents have been together since they were 17, and I’ve always felt lucky to have that model of love,” Welde said.

Another successful representation of high school sweethearts is science teacher Michael Richards and his wife, Julie Richards. The pair has been together for almost 15 years. Richards and his wife met when he was a sophomore and she was a freshman.

According to those who have been in a committed relationship, such as Welde and Sallman, a relationship is stronger

once a label is established.

“I think actually having the title of dating says that I see him on a deeper level than just attraction; there’s a sort of deeper substance to our relationship,” Welde said. “He’s my best friend and my boyfriend.”

Richards said a title can create clarity for the people involved.

According to Sallman, defining a relationship shows that the couple actually wants to spend time together.

“Even just hanging out with her, we get to have fun. We’ll play games or just watch movies, and it means we’re content just being in each other’s company,” Sallman said.

The pair said it is no easier to be in a committed relationship; it has its set of flaws and struggles as well.

“It’s hard to know who you want to be already, and getting involved in a relationship that isn’t right for you can be hard, and probably won’t work,” Sallman said. “It would be better to be apart than trapped in that sort of relationship.”

But for Welde and Sallman, they believe the commitment works and is worth it.

“If your intention is just that physical attraction, or a temporary companion, maybe [hookups] are just better for you,” Welde said. “But for us, even with everything that comes with it, we wanted



someone long term.”

In contrast to Welde, Wolf said many teenagers find themselves in a position where settling down is not a path they want just yet.

“We’re teenagers, everything’s constantly changing. How can we really know what we want?” Wolf said.

Junior Thomas Peterson said there is a reason the younger generation seems to be the main contributors to hookup culture.

“We’re young. We don’t have a lot of strong morals yet. We make decisions off of impulse, especially because we’re in high school, our brains are still developing,” Peterson said.

Wolf added it is common to make snap judgments of someone based on their physical appearance.

“It has to do with infatuation. We’re quickly attracted to someone, and become obsessed with the idea of them or being around them, instead of the person themselves,” Wolf said.

Masterson said it’s easier to find a quick connection with someone in recent years.

“I think what’s changed the most is the way that people have been communicating in general, like with Snapchat. I’ve definitely noticed that people just have the ability to talk to more people at once,” Masterson said.

Peterson shared his point of view on the perceived increase in hookups.

“[Societal] culture has shifted a bit. Virginity is less of an enforced idea,” Peterson said.

Wolf suggested another reason for the shift.

“In the ‘50s, a lot of women took [on] the role of a housewife after high school. It was not as common for girls to get a higher education. But, once women started attending college, obviously, hookups started happening,” Wolf said.

Richards said he observed how his students are impacted by the lack of commitment associated with hookup culture, despite most students being



*Seniors Maya Welde and Luke Sallman have been together for three years. “We’ve been together since I was 14, and I’m about to turn 18,” Welde said. “It’s just cool to be able to grow together.”*

private about their relationships.

"You typically see one person getting hurt and it's stereotypically the girl," Richards said.

Dean shared her perspective on the differences in hookup culture for girls and guys.

"It definitely makes women feel less valued, because most of the time it's men seeking out women for [a hookup] and I think women are more likely to catch feelings," Dean said.

Additionally, Dean said women are often negatively stereotyped compared to how men are viewed.

"If a girl gets with a lot of people, everyone hears about it and thinks of

them as someone who gets around.

Versus with men, you see them as more desirable because they are getting with that many girls," Dean said.

Wolf used a metaphor to explain how hookup culture is perceived differently for guys and girls.

"I heard this thing recently, for how girls and boys' [sex] life is seen. 'If you have a key, and it opens a lot of locks, it's a master key. But, if you have a lock, and it can be opened by a lot of keys, it's a broken lock,'" Wolf said. "I don't know why it's this way, but I'll admit that is how boys and girls are perceived."

Dean said hookup culture can affect a person's reputation in a variety of

ways. At the end of the day, she said it is important to remain considerate of others' decisions.

"I think [men and women] need to treat people with more respect," Dean said. "Even if you're still participating in [hookups], be more open minded to actual relationships as well."



*Students find convenience in hookups, leading them to treat relationships in a more casual manner. This is evident in multiple aspects of hookup culture from location, such as meeting up in cars, to the overall lack of emotions and*



# THE LOVE THAT LASTS

## Teachers give a lesson in love

### Q. What do you think of high school sweethearts?

A. "I think it's perfectly normal and expected for teens to fall in love and form deep attachments. I think it's rare and somewhat unrealistic to expect it to last forever, although not unheard of."

-Joanna Mays, Art Teacher

### Q. What is your advice for people in high school relationships?

A. "Stay true to yourself, be honest and if you are not happy with the person you are with, move on."

-Kerry Kinkelaar, Math & AVID Teacher

"Break up before college/post high school life. There are way more people out there than in the JoCo bubble."

-Rizz Alexander, Special Education Teacher

### Q. Have you ever been rejected? If so, how did you feel?

A. "Yes, it's part of life. It stinks in the moment, but in the bigger picture it is usually for the best."

-Rizz Alexander, Special Education Teacher

"It was miserable but ultimately it was part of the path that helped me find happiness."

-Kerry Kinkelaar, Math & AVID Teacher

### Q. With your current significant other, when did you know you wanted to marry them?

A. "I don't think it was a specific moment as much as it was a gradual process of forming a connection and creating a life together. Once we had moved in together and established similar life goals, marriage felt like a natural next step."

-Joanna Mays, Art Teacher

### Q. What are your do's of dating?

A. "Be thoughtful and patient, always try to do little things that will make your person smile and feel special."

-Matthew Shulman, Academic Interventionist

"Communicate about what bothers you, do not brush things off... they will come up later."

-Rizz Alexander, Special Education Teacher

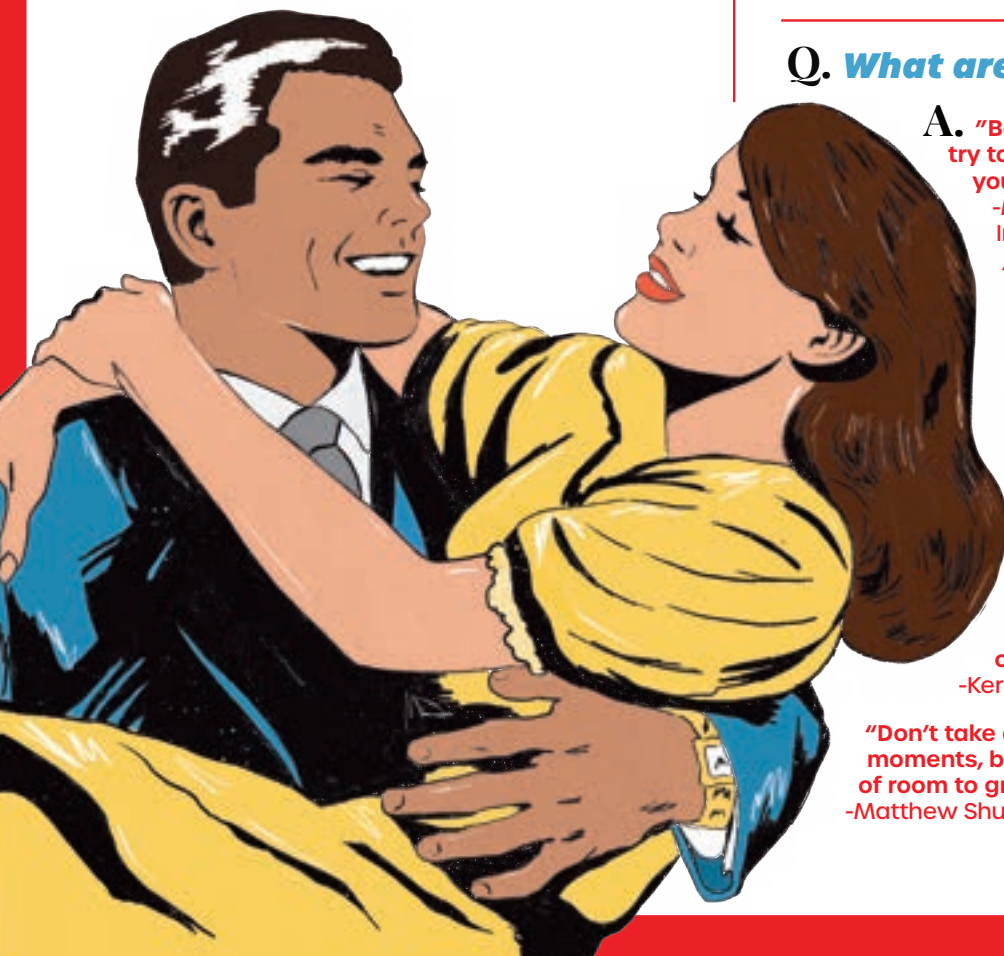
### Q. What are your don'ts of dating?

A. "Don't settle for anyone who treats you less than the greatness you deserve. Don't compromise your values."

-Kerry Kinkelaar, Math & AVID Teacher

"Don't take anything too seriously... Enjoy the moments, but remember you've still got a lot of room to grow and mature."

-Matthew Shulman, Academic Interventionist



# CONSENT IS **KEY**

In recent months, there have been protests at several universities across the U.S. in response to sexual battery allegations at fraternity houses. At the University of Kansas, female students came forward with allegations against members of the Phi Kappa Psi fraternity; as it currently stands, the university opened an investigation after a fraternity member was accused of sexual battery. The university should have disbanded the chapter outright.

College students are not the only ones impacted by rape and sexual battery. Nevertheless, if college students are expected to be held accountable for their actions, so should students of all academic levels.

Knowing there are students within our high school who are victims of sexual battery and or rape -- and that their alleged abusers are walking the same halls as them -- sickens us.

Rape is wrong. There should be no need to explain why forcing people into sexual acts or intercourse without their consent is not only illegal but incredibly cruel. No one should forcibly use someone else's body for any reason.

Often women are seen as the only victims of sexual battery. While women may be the most common, men are just as capable of being assaulted. Silencing a man's voice and calling him too weak for "letting it happen" is just as bad as telling a woman she was "asking for it."

To prevent rape or sexual battery from occurring, it is imperative to know their legal definitions.

While often misconstrued as the same concept, rape and sexual battery are two different things. Kansas Statute 21-5505 defines sexual battery as the touching of a victim without their consent to arouse the sexual desires of the offender.

Rape, on the other hand, is defined by Kansas Statute 21-5503 as "knowingly engaging in sexual intercourse with a victim who does not consent to the sexual intercourse."

Along with educating oneself on what rape and sexual battery are, it is equally important to know how to prevent these actions. Preventing rape has nothing to do with what someone is wearing or how dark an alleyway is, but rather all to do with consent.

Consent is a key aspect to preventing sexual battery, but Kansas does not have any laws regarding its definition. The closest neighboring state to have a consent definition is Arkansas. Arkansas Codes 5-14-203 and 5-14-125 define a lack of consent as "if a person

engages in a sexual act with another person by forcible compulsion."

Additionally, in Arkansas, if one is intoxicated to the point of not being able to give consent, all sexual acts are considered sexual battery.

If you do not have consent, you can not continue or begin with the attempted sexual act. Agreeing to go on a date with someone is not consent to physical intimacy, being in a romantic relationship with someone does not automatically guarantee consent and presenting a gift to someone does not mean they owe you a sexual favor in return.

Furthermore, asking for and giving consent does not "kill the mood," but rather solidifies each person's willingness to participate in any sexual act.

With the legal definitions of sexual battery, rape and consent now defined, ignorance is no longer an option. Hold yourself and your friends accountable for being part of the solution and not the problem. Dismissal of this issue only encourages and makes it easier for the abusers to continue their horrific acts.





# #WhyIDidntReport

This hashtag is used to highlight the stories of survivors of sexual battery. Write why you did not report below and tear this page out to share your story. The Express has arranged for a wall at school to be available for people to share their stories.

Read more about sexual battery in the editorial of this month's edition of *The Express*.

To read more stories of survivors, search @whyididntreport on Instagram.

National Sexual Assault Hotline: 1-800-656-4673





# DISABILITY

Students find ways to involve themselves in high school despite the challenges presented in their lives.

Written by Lindsay Maresh and Lucy Halverson, Photos by Laura Benteman,  
Design by Sabrina San Agustin

Under the Friday night lights, senior Ainsley Aadland dances for the cheering crowd, alongside the BVNW dance team, The Pack.

Aadland is involved in a variety of school activities including Special Olympics, Unified Sports and the dance team. Aadland, who has Down syndrome, has been a part of the dance team for four years.

Mandie Aadland, Ainsley's mom, said The Pack has been a huge activity for Aadland throughout high school. Mandie explained how this team has allowed Aadland to be a part of something within her school.

"I think that's a part of high school, to feel like you matter, that you get to be a part of a group, and there is some identity there and some pride there," Mandie said.

Aadland shared her experience and favorite parts of being on the dance team.

"It's really fun to dance [with] my friends. I have a best friend on the

*Left: Juniors Elijah Henderson and Hudson Henzlik, along with seniors Ainsley Aadland and Regan Poppen, spend time together in Connections class.*

*Right: Aadland is a member of The Pack dance team and stands for the National Anthem during a recent football game.*

team, her name is Regan," Aadland said.

Senior dance team captain Regan Poppen has known Aadland since the two were in elementary school. Poppen explained how she has seen Aadland devote herself to performing well, alongside the dance team.

"Ainsley works really hard. She likes to practice a lot on her own, and in her garage; she loves performing for her family and her friends, and it's really cool to see how involved and how much she cares about the dance team," Poppen said.

Poppen is also a peer mentor for the students in the Intensive Resource class. Peer mentors are typical peers who assist students with disabilities during their classes. Poppen shared her experience in peer-mentoring and how it has impacted her.

"I find a lot of joy in it. Not only can I make an impact in their lives and help them out but they definitely make an impact in my life as well," Poppen said.

Peer mentoring, Poppen said, has impacted her by building strong friendships with Aadland and other students with special needs, as well as educating Poppen on important life lessons that she would not have otherwise learned.

"Usually when someone has abilities that are different from yours, your instinct is to handle them, and just kind of give them whatever

they want and bend the rules; but one of the lessons I've learned is that boundaries and saying 'no' is also really important," Poppen said.

Junior Hudson Henzlik is another peer tutor in rooms 101 and 102, the Intensive Resource classrooms. He helps out in the Connections class, which takes place during fifth hour, by helping students with disabilities improve their social skills. Henzlik has been a peer mentor since middle school and said he plans to continue peer-mentoring throughout high school.

"One of my favorite parts about [peer-mentoring] is lunch or activities, getting to know [the students], and then introducing them to my friends, so



“We aren’t any less human just because we have disabilities, so we should be treated like everyone else.”

-ISABELLA SHEPKER

then everyone knows them and they get more involved,” Henzlik said.

Intensive Resource teacher Robin Hodges works with students who have special needs. Hodges described the Intensive Resource classrooms as a place where students with disabilities learn how to be as independent as possible, by practicing functional life skills.

“Every student in our program is capable and many of them will be able to live independently. So we try to foster that in everything we do as far as goals and lessons,” Hodges said.

According to Hodges, the 26 students in Connections are like a family. Along with having a supportive environment, Hodges said rooms 101 and 102 are a joyful place to be.

“We have the happiest room in the entire building,” Hodges said. “You come in and it’s filled with joy and our students are excited to learn.”

Hodges described Aadland, who is a part of the Connections class, as an artistic and creative individual.

“She’s quiet in the classroom, but if you give her any project [where] she can express herself with art, she loves it,” Hodges said.

Junior Elijah Henderson is a student in room 102 as well. Henderson has Mosaic Trisomy 18 which is a rare chromosomal disorder, according to math and engineering teacher Karen Stohlmann, Elijah’s mom. She explained how her son experiences his surroundings.

“Elijah experiences the world with the volume turned way up. So every emotion is bigger to him than it is to you or me. Every sound is bigger, every texture is bigger. I think

sometimes we forget that,” Stohlmann said.

Elijah does sometimes face a lack of inclusion, Stohlmann said.

“We’re pretty fortunate that no matter where Elijah is in the world, people are not mean to him, but sometimes he is just invisible,” Stohlmann said. “No one goes out of their way to be mean, but nobody goes out of their way to make eye contact, to speak to him, to ask or even assume he has an opinion.”

Despite the challenges he has faced, Henderson is an optimistic and hardworking individual, Hodges said.

“He has a really good sense of humor, and he’ll do something funny and look at you like ‘are you gonna laugh or not?’” Hodges said.

Henderson participates in Special Olympics, Unified Sports and the Howlin’ Husky Marching Band. He is a percussionist in the front ensemble and marches in the drumline for the band. Henderson shared his favorite aspect of being in the band.

“Well, I like [playing] the cymbals and the drums,” Henderson said. Daniel Kirk, the band director, explained how

Elijah works on team goals with the band.

“He works toward a common goal, he works as a part of the team. He works on goals outside of himself,” Kirk said.

Kirk also said Henderson has contributed to the band.

“He brings this sense of joy and spirit to [the band]. He’s never in a foul mood, and there is something delightful and refreshing about that,” Kirk said.

In addition to the band, Henderson has a job at Price Chopper. Stohlmann shared her concerns with the employment options

for her son.

“Just the opportunities I think typical people take for granted. You know, like being able to have a job. Ok, my typical kid turns 16, ‘go get a job,’ right? My disabled kid turns 16. Well, can he have a job? Will somebody hire him? Will somebody help him?” Stohlmann said.

Henderson got his job through the Career Development Opportunities Program (CDOP). This program, Hodges said, allows students with special needs to have a foundation for school-to-work transition. Aadland is also a part of CDOP, and works at Beauty Brands.

“It’s so much fun; I organize and [put on] stickers,” Aadland said.

Sophomore Isabella Shepker has a physical, rather than intellectual, disability. Shepker is blind with little vision remaining in her left eye. She has a condition called Peter’s Anomaly which causes thinning and clouding of the cornea. Shepker also has a prosthetic right eye.

Shepker said some of the things she does differently at school to accommodate her disability include using technology in order to see.

*Left: Aadland and Poppen have known each other since elementary school.*

*Right: Henderson and Henzlik work together during Connections class.*

“Don’t underestimate any of them and their abilities, because they’re going to do great things, and they have great jobs lined up, and they have great skills, and they bring joy to the world.”

**-ROBIN HODGES**







*Sophomore Isabella Shepker works on her project in her Software Development and Game Design class. (Photo by Laura Benteman)*

“I have to work on technology instead of on paper, like everyone else does, and I have to read by audio or else my eyes would get really tired,” Shepker said.

Shepker uses a cane for mobility. She said it allows her to navigate without running into obstructions.

“If there’s a wall nearby, the tip [of the cane] will hit the wall and let me know, ‘hey, there’s a wall over here,’ or if there’s something on the floor, it’ll tell me there’s a thing on the floor and it definitely helps me with stairs,” Shepker said.

Isabella’s dad, Matt Shepker, said he would like other students to know that unsolicited contact can be startling for someone who is blind.

“Being grabbed or touched without any kind of knowledge that it’s coming is a big thing, because if they can’t see it coming, [and] all of a sudden they’re being grabbed, they’re going to freak out,” Matt said.

Shepker said being blind does not hold her back from doing the things she loves, such as coding and playing games on her electronics. The only thing that is different for her, Shepker said, is the need to have an oversized computer screen in order to see.

Matt said Shepker is learning code as well as 3-D modeling on her computer. “She’s learning to

write in two different programming languages right now, which is a big undertaking for anybody,” Matt said.

Shepker wants people to know students with disabilities are not different from their typical peers.

“We aren’t any





*On percussion, junior Elijah Henderson plays with the rest of the BVNW Band during halftime of the football game, Oct. 22. (Photo by Bailey Thompson)*

less human just because we have disabilities, so we should be treated like everyone else,” Shepker said.

Agreeing with Shepker’s point, Stohlmann explained how students with intellectual disabilities are treated differently.

“Sometimes it’s easy to make folks with disabilities more of a pet than a friend. And that’s kind of awful. So, knowing that other people treat them with friendship, versus as a token, is pretty important,” Stohlmann said.

Stohlmann said she believes it is important to include everyone despite their differences.

“I think [inclusion] is a concern we have with every one who’s different and that’s gender, sexuality, race and disability. Acknowledging that there needs to be inclusion, acknowledging that those differences are different, but not abnormal,” Stohlmann said.

Henzlik added to this by encouraging all students to be kind to their peers who have disabilities.

“All [the students] feel the same things we do, and I think it’s important to include them,” Henzlik said.

Hodges agreed with Henzlik and shared her advice for how Northwest should view students with disabilities and their potential.

“Don’t underestimate any of [the students] and their abilities, because they’re going to do great things and they have great jobs lined up and they have great skills and they bring joy to the world,” Hodges said.







This design represents the different emotions people feel while struggling with mental illness. People do not always show their true feelings to others. I wanted this to show that you have to check in on people even if they are smiling on the outside.



This is a front cover I designed to represent the cultural shift from old time love to hookup culture. I illustrated each scene as it would have been seen in comic books back in the 50's and 60's. The twist is that all of the speech bubbles are phrases commonly used today in hookup culture.



In this design I wanted to represent the different kinds of relationships that we see nowadays. I wanted it to be clear that there has been a shift from the dating we hear about from our grandparents to what teenagers experience today. I also wanted to include the infographic as a way to tie in advice from an older generation.



This design is all about inclusivity. I wanted each person featured in the story to be shown in their own way. I also wanted to emphasize how all of these students have the same abilities as everyone else.

**EDITORIAL** PAGE 2

# CONSENT IS KEY

In recent months, there have been a lot of news stories about sexual assault and consent. At the University of Florida, we have a lot of students who have been sexually assaulted. It's important to talk about consent and what it means. Consent is not just saying "yes" or "no." It's about understanding your own boundaries and respecting others'. We want to make sure everyone knows what consent is and how to give it. We want to make sure everyone knows what consent is and how to give it. We want to make sure everyone knows what consent is and how to give it.

**Page 1** (left column): In recent months, there have been a lot of news stories about sexual assault and consent. At the University of Florida, we have a lot of students who have been sexually assaulted. It's important to talk about consent and what it means. Consent is not just saying "yes" or "no." It's about understanding your own boundaries and respecting others'. We want to make sure everyone knows what consent is and how to give it. We want to make sure everyone knows what consent is and how to give it.

**Page 2** (right column): We want to make sure everyone knows what consent is and how to give it. We want to make sure everyone knows what consent is and how to give it. We want to make sure everyone knows what consent is and how to give it. We want to make sure everyone knows what consent is and how to give it.



In this design I wanted to show how sexual assault stays with survivors wherever they go. I wanted to convey that the memory of what happened doesn't go away after it happens. On the second page of this design we did an interactive activity around our school where students tore out that page and wrote their own story on it then we put all of them up.



## Designer of the Year: Sabrina San Agustin

This year I really wanted to focus on pushing my boundaries and trying things my staff has never done before. This involved a lot of trial and error. I had some good ideas that ended up making it into the paper and some ideas that never ended up working out. In the end though, I believe I grew immensely as a designer.

The designs I have chosen in my portfolio showcase the work I have done and a lot of new styles that I tried this year. One of my main components to pushing my boundaries was trying new techniques. I experimented with pictures, illustrations and typography. I think to be good at anything you have to go out of your way to make yourself better. This year I spent a lot of time on youtube. I was constantly looking up how to manipulate text in illustrator or how to combine photos in photoshop. I think taking the initiative and teaching myself new techniques really broadened my portfolio.

I believe art should make people curious. Another goal of mine was to have viewers gain curiosity while looking through the paper. Some of my designs provoked questions but it drew people. This made them want to read the story and we gained a lot more readers this way. I think design is all about keeping people engaged and not scare them away from the text. This was a big goal that I focused on this year.

Being a designer is not always an easy job. You have to always be thinking of new ways to present a story to someone. These are just a few examples of the way I have grown to tell stories better.