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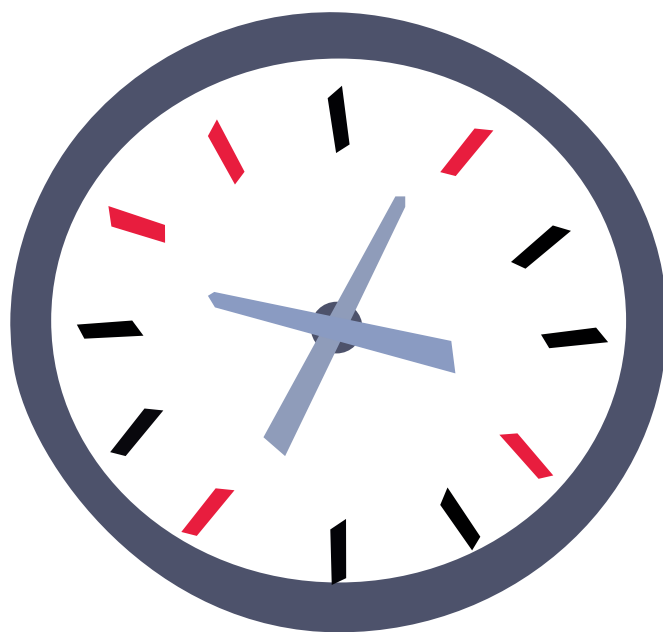
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Graphic by Mia George



Attendance policy *fails* its purpose

This year, the High School implemented an altered attendance policy whereby students arriving 10 minutes late to class receive an unexcused absence for the period and must attend a mandatory after-school study hall for missing work or cumulating absences.

The pandemic massively hindered our learning, forcing students to study without the communal aspect of congregation in the building and further measures enforcing physical separation. As a result, our passion for learning diminished. Although this is the first school year without COVID-19 restrictions in three years, the administration must acknowledge that the pandemic has had long-lasting effects on students. Therefore, it is irrational to impose such extreme consequences for attendance.

Impact on student responsibility

Although the attendance policy has effectively improved punctuality, it is not reflective of the core values the school continually emphasizes.

Students are instructed to hold themselves accountable and ensure individual respon-

sibility, but this strict policy hinders our ability to develop these qualities as we are entrusted with little freedom.

In high school, we should inherently hold ourselves accountable for arriving to class on time and actively participating. The harsh measures imposed to force this behavior signal that the administration does not trust us to make responsible decisions.

Although the policy is effective in limiting time students waste during bathroom breaks mid-class, a disproportionate number of students receive tardies who otherwise would not. Students who are typically responsible bear the weight of the actions of a few, limiting space to encourage proactive behavior in completing work and creating dread for seemingly superfluous study hall.

Impact on community engagement

The attendance policy is counterintuitive as the conse-

quence of study hall prohibits students from participating in highly-valued activities such as sports and clubs. For many, these commitments serve as a personal outlet for stress or anxiety. While receiving study hall may seem inconsequential, it can deter students from partaking in activities that give back to the wider community.

“Such extreme measures do not increase student engagement.”

Further, study hall prevents students from developing habits to efficiently make up for missed learning.

After school is valuable time for students to converse with teachers for additional help, yet if one is assigned a study hall, they will miss out on the opportunity entirely. Thus, study hall adopts the role of punishment instead of encouraging students to learn and improve.

Students arriving one minute after the 10-minute threshold often choose not to attend because they will receive an absence regardless. In addition, there have been instances where students incorrectly marked absent are still as-

signed to study hall.

Moreover, students who violate the Code of Conduct can also be assigned study hall. This begs the question: if one arrives 10 minutes late to class, does that merit the same punishment as violating academic or behavioral integrity?

Moving forward

While we recognize the intent and importance of boosting student attendance and promoting engagement, both the sudden transition to the policy and its wider consequences has been largely ineffective in creating students who will be effective and responsible beyond high school.

Ultimately, it is crucial to consider the varying levels of tardiness and the severity of each student's case. In return, students should not abuse the freedom of an eased attendance policy, but rather focus on the responsibility of being punctual for the sake of their own learning and the culture of the High School at large.

To read more on the attendance policy, scan here:



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Social Media Manager Ellie Taylor

Media Team Nuria Alvarez, Emilia Dalle, Vittoria Di Meo, Ella Friel, Giulia Scolari, Nassef Sawiris, Rahil Punshi,

Cartoonist Nick Landler

Columnist Anna Reznick

Reporters

Nuria Alvarez Martin, Blu Belinky, Tara Behbehani, Galilea Birch, Audrey Cushman, Ari Dacy, Maya Daley, Adrian Caillaux Diaz, Sanna Ekroth, Gaby Friedman, Madeleine Galuga, Jaden Gardiola, Rowan Hamilton, Alice Hay-Smith, Zoe Karibian, Leila Meilman, Tessa Nussenbaum, Ava O'Donnell, Amalya Otero, Valentina Pinault, Lilah Powers, Jagger Price, Yasmine Rivera, Ruby Rogers, Annika Skorsk, Anita Sosa, Ashlyn Tate, Mymy Taymour

Louisa Avery Adviser

Mission Statement

The Standard staff and adviser are dedicated to creating a collaborative, open forum that cultivates productive dialogue within the school community by publishing exemplary student news media according to the strictest standards of journalistic integrity.

Content

The Standard covers news related, but not limited, to the school community. Issues-driven coverage that aims to explore ideas, themes, concepts, trends and recent developments beyond the campus that are relevant to members of the community is also included.

Editorials

Articles published without a byline represent the majority opinion of the editorial board. They are unsigned.

Commentaries & Reviews

Articles with these bylines are opinions articles. They represent the view of the writer only and not necessarily the staff of The Standard or any other individual or group in the community.

Corrections Policy

Readers reserve the right to call attention to an error in print or online stories. Any queries regarding potential corrections can be emailed to the_standard@asl.org. The corrected version will appear online with a note indicating that the article has been updated since it originally appeared. If the article originally appeared in print, a note about the correction will also be printed in the following issue.

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The Standard is a member of the National Scholastic Press Association and the Columbia Scholastic Press Association.



NEWS

School implements pedagogical changes adhering to Ofsted requirements



Photo by Grace Hamilton

Posters outlining the Fundamental British Values are pasted to the walls in every High School classroom. With the commencement of the 2022-23 school year, the school introduced a series of changes regarding pedagogy, student life and curriculum to adhere to requirements outlined by Ofsted.

NEWS

Death of Queen Elizabeth II ripples through community



Photo by Anna Reznick

Two hours after the public announcement of the Queen's death Sept. 8, crowds gather in front of Buckingham Palace backdropped by a flag lowered to half-mast. The official notice from the Royal administration consisted of two sentences posted on the gates as a double rainbow framed the Palace.

OPINIONS

Capitalism holds potential to catalyze sustainability



Graphic by Antoine Warnery

The fundamental principles of capitalism are at odds with sustainability. However, government policies and public awareness have shown to serve as avenues for capitalism to boost sustainable development.

FEATURES

Students, faculty introduce new clubs to High School



Photo by Rudi Chamria

The annual High School club fair took place Sept. 30 in the Farmer Family Gym, showcasing over 70 clubs. Students visited club stands to gather more information about each club's mission and goals.

CULTURE

New film 'Blonde' exploits Marilyn Monroe's image, taints her legacy



Image used with permission from Netflix

The film "Blonde" follows the dramatized life and career of Marilyn Monroe, directed by Andrew Dominik. Since its premiere in September, the film has been criticized harshly with claims that it is exploitative of Monroe's legacy.

SPORTS

New boys varsity soccer coach Danny Cook shares aspirations for the season

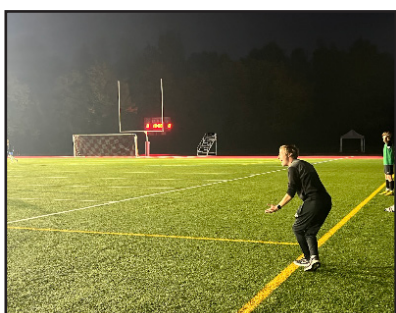
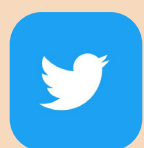
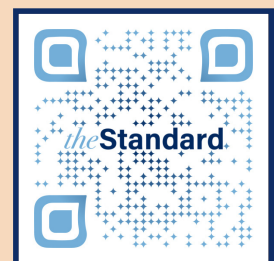


Photo by Sophia Bateman

New varsity boys soccer coach Danny Cook instructs players from the sidelines at the International School of Brussels Oct. 16. The team won against the International School of Brussels.



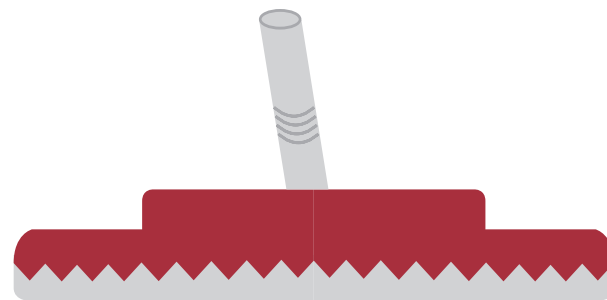
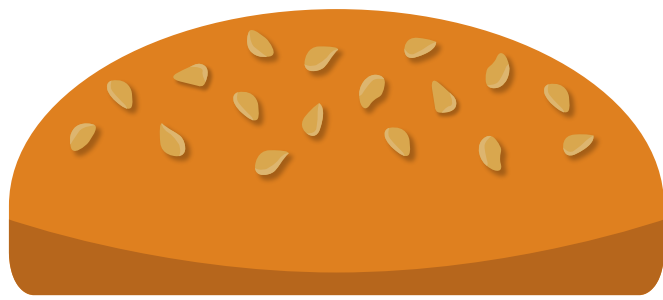
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Counting calories:

UK implements law mandating menu labels



Eden Leavey /
Features Editor: Print

Returning to the school this fall, Antonio Reis ('25) said he noticed new calorie labels on various cafeteria items, namely the yogurt pots.

The U.K. enforced a new law requiring food businesses that employ over 250 staff members to label calories on their menus April 6. A central aspect of implementing calorie labels is to combat obesity by helping individuals make healthier choices, according to GOV.UK.

Catering Manager Christine Kent said as a result of the law, their nutrition label system now automatically prints the number of calories and the ingredients on each item. However, Kent said because the majority of the school's clientele is under the age of 18, the cafeteria is not legally required to display calorie labels.

When the law was first enacted in April, all food items in the cafeteria were labeled. But shortly thereafter, Kent said the catering staff received feedback that students were not happy with the new calorie information, and catering

decided to remove the labels where possible.

"Very quickly we got a lot of comments from particularly some of the high school teachers saying, 'People in my class come and say they're feeling anxious about their eating,'" Kent said. "So the decision was made that we would not display the calories on the menus for the hot food."

Nonetheless, Kent said the catering staff stores a caloric breakdown of every menu they prepare so that if a community member has a question about the nutritional value of a food item, they are able to receive an answer.

Relationship with food

Lucy Ilyas ('26) said she has also noticed the enactment of the law at restaurants and that viewing the number of calories in each item has influenced her meal choices.

"It's definitely impacted how much I order because you don't really realize how many calories items at restaurants have," Ilyas said. "Shoving those calories in my face, I just feel like it makes me need to worry about gaining weight."

Alternatively, Andrew Okpoyo ('23) said he has always

utilized calorie counts and nutrition labels on packaged food to plan meals, even before the law came into effect.

"That plays a big factor in what I eat because I just want to be as healthy as possible," Okpoyo said. "If I'm stuck between two things, I'll just choose the one which has less calories."

Nonetheless, Reis said while calorie labels can be informative for consumers, one can quickly spiral into unhealthy eating habits. He said he worries about the potential negative effects of caloric labels on menus, particularly for adolescents.

"Looking at calories is always difficult because you've got to find the line," Reis said. "It can be a useful tool, but when it becomes an obsession – and it's difficult to tell when that happens – there'll be a point where you'll realize it is dominating your life. And that's when it can be really harmful."

Impacts of law

The prevalence of adolescents age 5-19 who are overweight or obese has risen from 4% in 1975 to over 18% in 2016, according to

the World Health Organization.

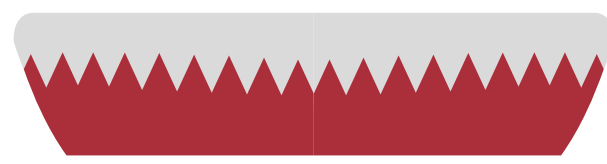
Ilyas said while the aim of the law is to spur healthier eating habits among the population and tackle the growing trend of surplus weight gain, she worries caloric labels on menus will be detrimental to people struggling with their body image.

On the other hand, Okpoyo said he reads caloric labels in order to gain muscle. He said having access to the nutritional information allows him to fuel his body appropriately based on the exercise he will be doing each day.

"If it was earlier in the day, I'd have more calories but as it gets later, then I have less calories," Okpoyo said. "It matches in with my athletics and my sports, or if I'm going to the gym, calories help me recover."

In addition, Porter said displaying calories could be advantageous for people who need to be aware of what they consume due to conditions such as diabetes. However, she said she is concerned about how others' relationship with food – including her own – will worsen.

"Some people have to



Nutrition Facts

Data collected from an online survey conducted by The Standard Oct. 20-26.

*Percent values are based on 129 student and faculty responses.

Question / Statement	% Value*
Have you noticed an increase in calorie labelling on menus?	57.4% Yes
Do you choose your meal more carefully when there are calorie labels?	58.1% Yes
I look at the calorie labels on menus and food packaging to eat healthier.	56.6% Agree
I do not look at the calorie labels on menus and food packaging.	30.2% Agree
Food businesses should be legally required to include calorie labels on menus.	54.3% Agree

Graphics by Eden Leavey and Gideon Putnam



watch what they eat for medical reasons and I can see how that's really beneficial," Porter said. "But I could see the negative impact of this, like for me, the negative mind game that it plays on me."

Legalizing calorie labels

Regarding the necessity of the law, Reis said it is unjust to enforce calorie labels on menus as a legal requirement. He said if a restaurant's brand is specifically related to a lack or presence of calorie labels, such as a comfort food diner that focuses on flavor or a salad bar with an emphasis on health and nutrition, it should be allowed to make that choice.

Porter said an alternative option to the law could be producing two sets of menus, one with calorie counts and one without. She said this would allow customers to select whether or not to see the calorie counts, allowing them to make the healthiest choice for their physical and mental health.

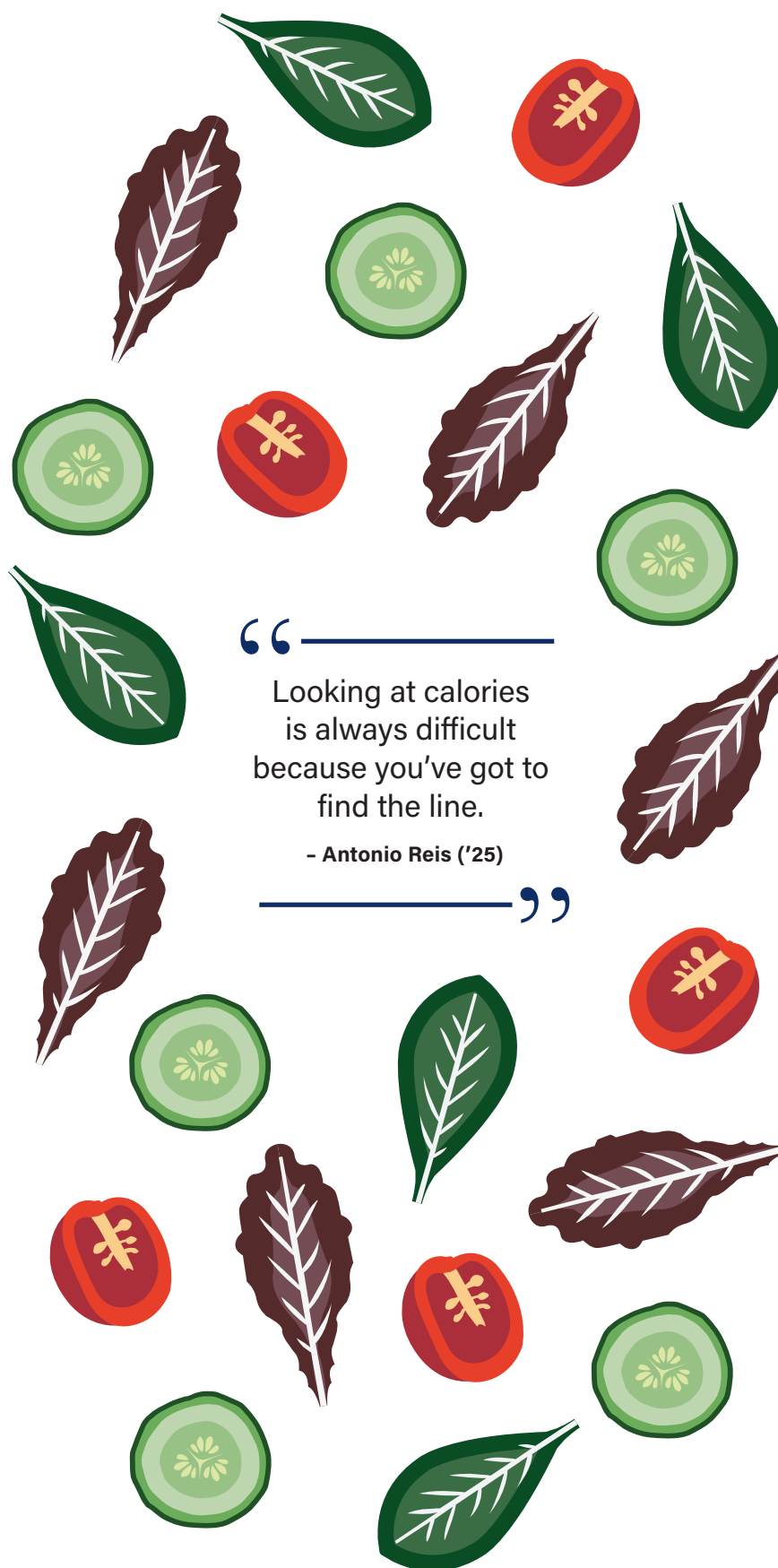
Meanwhile, Okpoyo said he would like to see more nutritional information on menus

as he finds knowing the ingredients and macronutrient distribution ranges of items important for making healthy decisions.

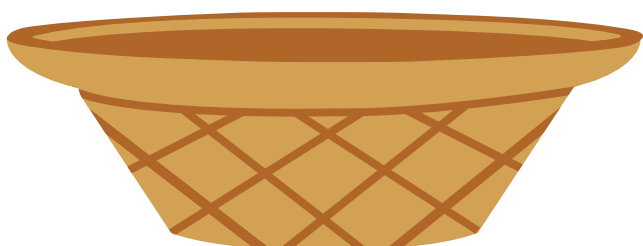
"I'm looking at macronutrients the most, so like the proteins, the saturates, the sugars," Okpoyo said. "At the end of the day calories have a bad rap, but for the most part, it's energy."

Ultimately, Ilyas said displaying calorie labels will impact everyone differently and the government will not be able to effectively evaluate the widespread impact until more time has passed.

"There are so many things telling you to you lose weight or to look like this and look like that, and if every time you go out to eat and you see those calories, it's probably not the best thing for people's self-image and self-esteem," Ilyas said. "However, you have to acknowledge the amount of people that this law will help. It is a mixed bag and we'll have to see how it plays out over the next months because it hasn't been enacted for very long."



“ Looking at calories is always difficult because you've got to find the line. — Antonio Reis ('25) ”





Graphic by Gabrielle Meidar



Graphic by Nicholas Landler

Current events told via 1 Waverley Place

Mine explosion devastates Turkey

Nassef Sawiris /
Media Team

A total of 41 people passed away following a coal-mine explosion in Northern Turkey Oct. 14, according to the BBC. The death count was confirmed after a rescue operation discovered the remaining missing body more than 20 hours after the fatal explosion.

Ozan Cetin ('23), who is from Turkey and has family residing there, said although tragedy is difficult, it is especially hard when one has a personal connection.

"It's very devastating," Cetin said. "For any type of disaster you hear about it's devastating, but when it's in my own country, it is extra sad to hear about."

While the cause of the disaster is yet to be determined, an initial investigation suggested it may have been caused by an explosive firedamp, which is a concentration of

flammable gasses, according to The Washington Post.

Sinan De Cabrol ('25) said he hopes there will be justice for the affected people, especially when taking into consideration the Turkish government's recent lack of accountability.

"There have been so many times where we've seen people die and the government shifts blame," De Cabrol said. "The absence of justice is sadly a pattern."

Ultimately, Cetin said the Turkish people are not accustomed to requests of reparations, and the individuals affected would appreciate it if some affirmative measures were taken by officials to instill justice.

"Even the energy minister will follow President [Recep Tayyip] Erdogan in saying that they will serve justice and then nothing eventually happens," Cetin said. "I know a lot of people in Turkey would just be grateful to see some action being taken finally."

Floods engulf Nigeria, leaves devastating impacts

Annika Skorski /
Media Team

Southern Nigeria is experiencing its worst flood of the decade due to overflow from the Rivers Niger and Benue in July, according to NASA. The flood has caused over 600 deaths and displaced more than one million citizens.

Alex Okosi ('25), who lived in Lagos, Nigeria for 12 years, said it is important to stay optimistic during difficult times.

"The flood is very tragic, and I know some of my family has been struggling there, but I think it will pass because floods always happen, so I am not really stressed," Okosi said.

In recent years, the number of floods in Sub-Saharan Africa has increased by ten times due to climate change, according to Brookings. Rainstorms that perpetuate floods are spurred by rising temperatures, which expand

the atmosphere's capacity for moisture.

Sabina Peterson Rajalingam ('25), a member of the Sustainability Council, said "global warming is affecting these communities, this is what we'd like to try and bring attention to." She said the council aims to spread awareness about the consequences of climate change.

In the long term, Okosi said the solution to flooding is lowering global temperatures.

"The best thing we can do to prevent this from happening again is to reduce our carbon footprint," Okosi said.

Additionally, Okosi said students can help by "spreading positivity or donating."

Furthermore, Rajalingam said she wants increased student participation in charities.

"It's a student's responsibility to be talking about this issue," Rajalingam said. "And since we are very privileged to be in this school and we have resources, we can help charities or anything like that."

COP27 to be held in Egypt

Nassef Sawiris /
Media Team

COP27 will take place from Nov. 6 to Nov. 18, in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt. These two-week long meetings allow world leaders, politicians and experts to set climate benefiting goals, according to The Guardian.

Zade Grandinetti ('26) said the conferences present an opportunity to set goals for reducing climate change, which will cause a decline in global emissions and further collective sustainability.

"These are the types of meetings and measures we need to take to achieve and reverse the damage we've caused to our planet," Grandinetti said.

The UN Climate Change Conference has taken place every year since 1995, according to Euronews. A total of 197 parties attended the most recent conference.

Lanier Ellison ('25), a member of the Sustainability Council, said the different locations of the conference and the high number of parties in attendance illuminates that climate change is a global issue.

"COP26 was held in Glasgow and this year it's being held in Egypt," Ellison said. "This shows that climate change doesn't exist in one place and it's an international problem."

Grandinetti said more action should be taken during the conferences.

"There are so many important people participating in the meetings," Grandinetti said. "These are the people who have the power to make big changes, yet things are still gradually worsening."

Furthermore, Ellison said she wishes the parties would be more effective.

"You can't allow the issue you're addressing on a yearly basis to get worse," Ellison said. "Because then, what's the point of you even gathering?"

“

For any type of disaster you hear about it's devastating, but when it's in my own country, it is extra sad.

- Ozan Cetin ('23)

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It's a student's responsibility to be talking about this issue.

- Sabina Peterson Rajalingam ('25)

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These are the people who have the power to make big changes, yet things are still gradually worsening.

- Zade Grandinetti ('26)

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Pandemic hinders developmental progress

Emma Lucas /
Opinions Editor: Print

It's been shoved down our throats for the past two years: masks, social distancing, remote learning and so on. This is the first school year without COVID-19 restrictions.

Our community has already seen the benefits of this return to normalcy. Clubs and sports trips, for example, have started up again, with teams traveling from Brussels to Milan. In general, it is refreshing to see friendly, mask-less smiles and walk the halls without a one-way system.

With the pandemic characterizing a substantial part of the community's high school experience, it's important we recognize the benefits of the return to normalcy. However, we must also take time to analyze the pandemic's impact on the student body and what it might mean for the future of high school.

The pandemic hit when cur-

rent high school students were in grades 6 to 9. Middle school and Grade 9 both mark key transitional periods in adolescent life, academically and personally. It is the first time students are expected to complete a higher caliber of work and, for many, the beginning of their transition into self-actualized individuals.

According to Scholastic.com, early adolescence marks the typical time when humans begin to explore their interests and develop perspectives by evaluating their communities. Students are just starting to grow physical and cognitive independence and form deeper relationships.

Isolation forced students to learn through their immediate home environments rather than in the context of the greater world, relying on the internet as a vehicle of education.

Granted, our community has been privileged to have had access to online learning platforms, like Schoology and Zoom, that eased the transitional period. Nonetheless, online learning debili-

tated students' opportunities to deeply engage with their course curriculum. While content knowledge is an important part of learning, it's also key to recognize how much of a role that in-person experiences, like experiments and simulations, contribute to education. A scientific study published in Frontiers analyzed online learning effectiveness in experimental courses. The study concluded that classes as such experienced a decline in effectiveness due to their online format.

Current Grade 11 and Grade 12 students missed out on the full curriculum of Science 9 and Science 10, in which much of the content laid the foundation for future elective classes and science APs. As a result, post-pandemic science courses had to cram in not only the class syllabus, but also foundational material, leaving students with more accelerated schedules.

I experienced this in my AP Chemistry class last year, as my teacher acknowledged on multiple occasions the disadvantage our class had due to the fact that we missed prerequisite chemistry knowledge from Science 10. But, as of this past summer, students planning to take higher level science courses must complete additional

course work in preparation, which marks a step in lessening the effects of post-pandemic learning.

This could also explain why current Grade 11 and Grade 12 students feel slightly more overwhelmed with these pivotal years than before. Since their Grade 9 and Grade 10 years were modified, this is the first time that they are experiencing the "true" high school experience and course load.

Additionally, an article by Psychology Today on attention spans during the pandemic highlighted that, "what has not changed is our attention spans, but our ability to engage with new ideas." The article further attributed increased stress and anxiety to information-overload and mass consumption, both of which are direct results of digitizing learning and social life.

Because isolation forced us inwards, it not only changed the way we learn but has also changed the way we interact. Social interaction was limited to media and messaging systems, with then-middle schoolers and Grade 9 students' world views being reduced to the portrayal of reality on the internet.

As a result, teenagers were learning behaviors and social functions through media rather

than face-to-face interaction. A scientific study on stress-related growth in adolescents after COVID-19 published in Frontiers concluded that teenagers were "more vulnerable than adults to mental health problems, in particular during a lockdown, because they are in a transition phase... with increasing importance of peers, and struggling with their often brittle self-esteem." This reinforces the idea that school is not just a place we learn academically, but a means in which we develop interpersonal and presentational skills.

Lockdown wasn't necessarily all bad. In some cases, it forced people to spend an elongated period of time with themselves, that, for some, sparked introspection and self-growth. But self-actualization can only go so far without putting said progress in context to wider reality.

Even though we've left COVID-19 far behind, we can still recognize its long-term effects on the student body, today. Almost every day, I hear a senior saying how they "can't

believe they're already a senior." Perhaps this is just the passage of time, but it also could be attributed to the fact that time has gone by in a significantly different manner these past few years, making us feel as if we missed out on our formative

years of high school. The sense of community and tradition that the school has aimed to foster has dwindled. Long-held traditions, such as Grade 12 Bottom-O bathrooms and Grade 11 black chairs, have practically been abandoned. Spirit weeks don't feel as "spirit-y," and we've not witnessed the return of "Beast Week" or anything along the lines of natural student-led spirit. This being said, it's still a work in progress, with students working to bring back Global Festival day.

It will take time for things to feel completely "back to normal," and perhaps we will even have to redefine what "normal" is. As we adjust, we should recognize what we can't control and make sure that what we can control are building up the community and not distancing it, once again.



Graphics by Emma Lucas

Progress Reports

The Editorial Board offers its first report of the school year.

Photos 1 courtesy of Terry Gladis and Christin Putnam, photo 2 by Eden Leavey, photo 3 courtesy of Alex Poufar, photos 4, 5, 7, 8 by Emma Lucas, photo 6 by Clara Martinez

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E: Extending P: Proficient D: Developing B: Beginning I: Insufficient Evidence				
The variable x is used to indicate any number possible given the other numbers specified in the combination.				
Quarter 1	Semester 1	Quarter 2	Semester 2	LETTER GRAD
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Standards-Based Grading (C): It should not be this hard to understand. Mia George



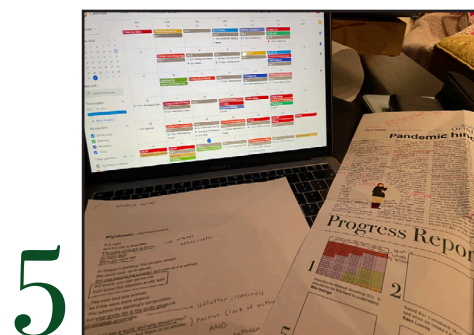
Salad Bar Comeback (A+): It was sad when we tossed it due to COVID. Eden Leavey



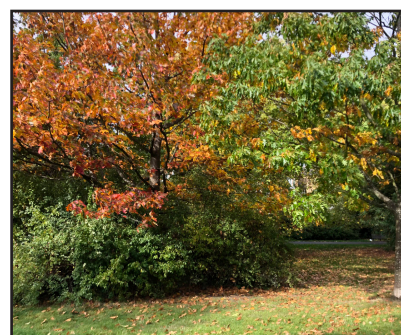
Sports Trips (A-): Team spirit has been great, but trips were poorly coordinated. Tristan Weiss



ASL Wifi (C-): Bring your own device? More like bring your own router. Elena Alexander



Senior Year First Quarter (F): They lied about junior year. Ella Podurgiel



Fall Weather (A+): Giving Gilmore Girls. Clara Martinez



Cold/Flu Season (B-): So many tissues. Grace Hamilton



Gails Expansion (B): Still waiting out the door. Emma Lucas

Britain faces economic decline

Rahil Punshi /
Media Team

Britain has been experiencing economic turmoil: inflation figures are the highest since 1990, a record pay drop occurred this year and the pound is at an all-time low against the dollar, according to the Office for National Statistics. Among the G7 countries, the U.K. is the only economy to remain below pre-pandemic levels, despite the eurozone reaching levels 1.8% higher than in 2019, according to The Financial Times. Safe to say, Great Britain desperately needs an economic revamp to pull itself out of the mess it created.

1970s

The U.K. is the second largest services exporter in the world. However, London is over 50% more productive than any other region in the U.K., according to Durham University. This makes the British economy highly dependent on one city: London. Having London as Britain's only major economic productivity output diminishes productivity in other regions, therefore contracting the U.K. economy.

The shift to a services led economy began in the 1970s, and some manufacturing dependent regions were able to adjust to a services based economy, but many did not, leading to an increase in unemployment. The inadequate adaptation from these regions led to mass declines

in productivity compared to the U.K. London's productivity advantage roots from its human capital and economic agglomeration, which is highly beneficial for the services sector, per The London School of Economics. Still, increasing productivity in other British regions will reduce the dependency of London on the British economy.

If the government increases investment in these regions, human capital and supports employment, the productivity gap will greatly narrow. Yes, the government would need to borrow tens of billions of pounds to realize this plan, but the benefits far outweigh the disadvantages. Ensuring these regions do not depend on London for economic growth will return profits and eventually develop self-sustaining economic regions.

Investments for poorer

households will help more of the population to take advantage of remunerative opportunities, thus economic inequality will diminish. This will increase productivity across the U.K., and thus allowing Great Britain to avoid stagnation and sustain economic growth for decades.

2007

In 2007, the U.K.'s GDP per capita was \$50,653, higher than the U.S.'s GDP \$48,050, according to the World Bank. Yet, following 2007, the U.S. has consistently had a higher GDP per capita, even the country was at

the epicenter of the Great Recession.

The U.S. was not the only country to have a strong rebound from the recession.

According to the Resolution Foundation, France and Germany— fellow members of the G7—experienced 34% and 27% growth, respectively, in real median household disposable incomes from 2007 to 2018. Within the same timeframe, the U.K.'s shrunk by 2%. Improvements in disposable income are crucial to bolstering consumer spending, the largest contribution to the British economy, according to the U.K. Parliament.

2020

The withdrawal of the U.K. from the European Union on Jan. 31, 2020, commonly known as Brexit, has dramatically affected trade in the U.K.

The U.K.'s total trade as a share of the GDP has declined eight percentage points since 2019, according to the London School Economics. If the U.K. does transition to a manufacturing based economy, the outcomes would be detrimental.

2022

Paired with high economic inequality in the U.K., lower wages facilitate the wealth divide Britain faces. According to the Financial Times, the three highest paying sectors showed the largest in

crease in earnings than the pre-pandemic level across the U.K. While the high income earners have been even better prepared or rising prices, workers on lower incomes receive less pay growth, creating a cost of living crisis. In April, the top earners faced a 7.9% change in consumer prices, although the poorest households encountered a steeper 10.9% change, according to the Institute of Fiscal Studies.

Rising energy and food prices are the chief culprits for this sharp change since low income earners spend a larger proportion of their wages on food and energy, according to the FT.

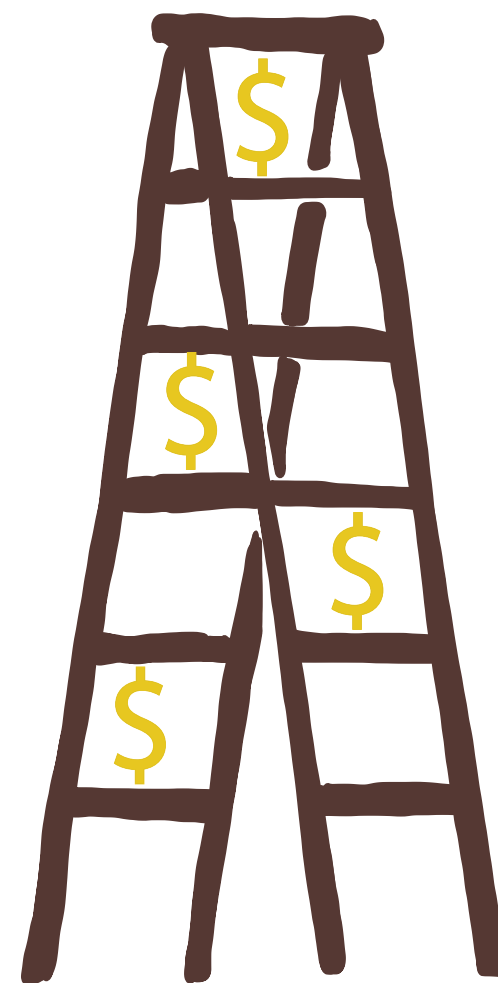
In addition, Liz Truss's prime ministerial tenure was brief but catastrophic. Truss's cabinet made the decision to abolish the 45% tax rate to cut more taxes for the highest income earners and the least for the lowest income earners.

The plan was irrational during a year of double digit inflation. The pound dropped to a record low of \$1.035 against the dollar, forcing the Bank of England to buy £65 billion pounds worth of gilts to calm the markets. Rishi Sunak, Truss's opponent for Number 10, and current Prime Minister, had predicted that Truss's plan was

inflationary and it would spook the markets, according to the FT. Sunak was right and Britain must lift itself out of its mess before it leaves an irreversible mark on the economy.

2008

The U.K was affected by the 2008 Financial Crisis, shrinking more than 6% from 2008 to 2009.



Graphic by Emma Lucas



Graphic by Emma Lucas

Glossary

G7 countries
The “Group of 7 countries” houses the world’s most powerful economies.

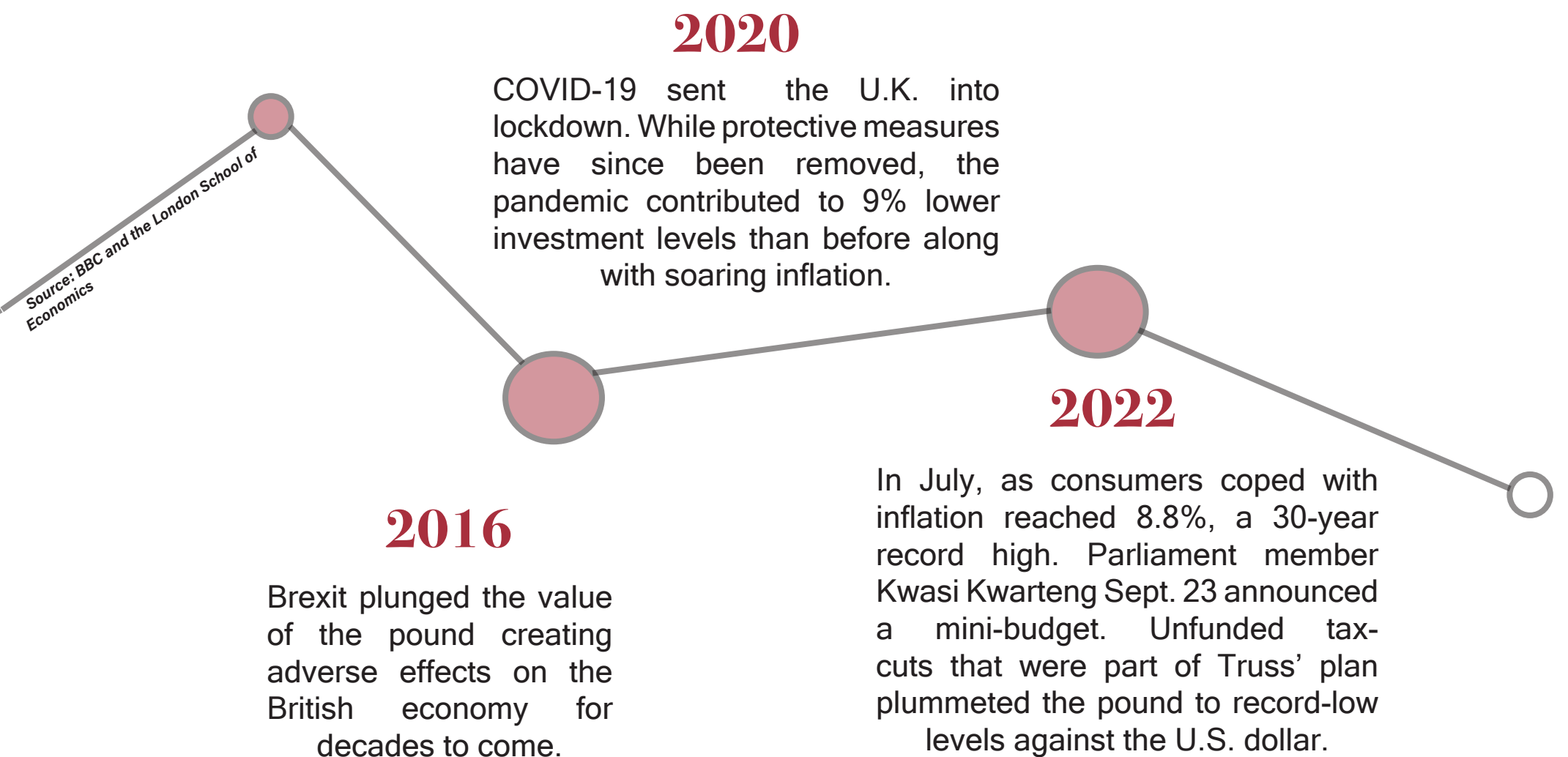
Disposable income
Disposable income is the money households have to spend after taxes.

Productivity
Productivity in economics is how much output can be produced with a given amount of inputs.

Economic Agglomeration
Economic agglomeration is the benefits received by firms and people.

Source: Dictionary.com

Graphic by Mia George



Affinity group spaces shift, prompts discussion on **impact**, next steps

Changes to affinity group spaces in the High School have led leaders and members of former affinity spaces to re-evaluate how they may continue to make an impact on student life, as the groups shift from closed doors to inclusive spaces.

Rudi Chamria /
Lead Features Editor

For the last three years, Eleanor Ilyas ('24) has observed affinity groups as a positive addition to student life, since entering the High School in 2020. However, in an assembly Sept. 2, Head of School Coreen Hester announced identity based groups must allow students of all identities to join. Thus, affinity groups – groups only open to specific identities – have subsequently been discontinued. Hester said this was one of several changes implemented to meet standards outlined by the Office for Standards in Education.

The Ofsted report specifically names identity-based groups, stating they “provide opportunities to discuss world issues.” However, according to the report, affinity spaces that are restricted to

specific identity groups were not well regarded, as Ofsted stated “some parents and pupils feel that this approach is divisive.”

Director of Institutional and Community Equity Mirangela Buggs said opening affinity group spaces to all is a necessity to comply with U.K. guidelines in order to preserve “protected characteristics,” a list of identities which must be acknowledged and sheltered by schools.

Buggs said coming from her background directing equity and inclusion in independent schools in the U.S., affinity spaces were commonplace and widely accepted. However, she said she recognized the importance of “adjusting to the U.K. sensibility and the law.”

World Languages and Culture Teacher Udai AbuLteaf, who was the faculty sponsor of the Arab Affinity Group, said cultural and affinity groups have always played a vital role in student life and found their beginnings due to student demand.

“The important thing about affinity groups was that they were student-initiated,” AbuLteaf said. “Students felt a need for the space and reached out to teachers to help them make those spaces.”

Matthew Sherman ('23), the president of the Students of Color Society – formerly known as the Students of Color affinity group – said the group has now allowed people of all races and cultures to join the conversation. Regardless, he said the conversations and objectives of the club have not changed.

“The activities that we do have all stayed the same, the way the students treat the group will stay the same,” Sherman said. “It’s actually expanded in numbers of people since last year. There’s really no negatives.”

Moreover, Lucas Marty ('26) said the closure of affinity groups is a positive change because it is more productive to have people with different experiences in discussion.

“If you want to talk about issues that a certain group of people has, you are not going to get anywhere by just having those people talk about it,” Marty said.

Math Teacher David Hill, who is also the faculty sponsor of the Students of Color society, said although the space is open to all, the dialogue will continue to be centered around students of color’s experience, and their meetings would “not be an intellectual conversation, but an experiential conversation.”

Similarly, Sophie Singer

('25), a Grade 10 representative of the Mitzvah Club, replacing the former Jewish Affinity Group, said the club has focused on opening discussions to the wider community.

“This year we were really speaking about expanding it out to, like, anybody,” Singer said. “Yes, it’s, like, predominantly made up of the Jewish students in school and we want it to be a place where Jewish students can come and feel connected.

But, we also want it to be open to any-

body, who either wants to come support or wants to learn more about the culture.”

Social Studies Teacher Christin Putnam, who is a faculty sponsor of the Mitzvah Club said in an email on behalf of the group that it aims to be inclusive of all and spread discussion of Jewish heritage.

“We are all part of the same family so that even if someone is not Jewish, the Mitzvah Club is a place to learn about Jewish culture and be part of our family,” Putnam said.

Marty said now that affinity groups have shifted to be all-inclusive, it will be beneficial for both newcomers and original members of the spaces.

“Having multiple viewpoints is definitely going to be useful for all parties involved,” Marty said. “It allows for more discourse between people.”

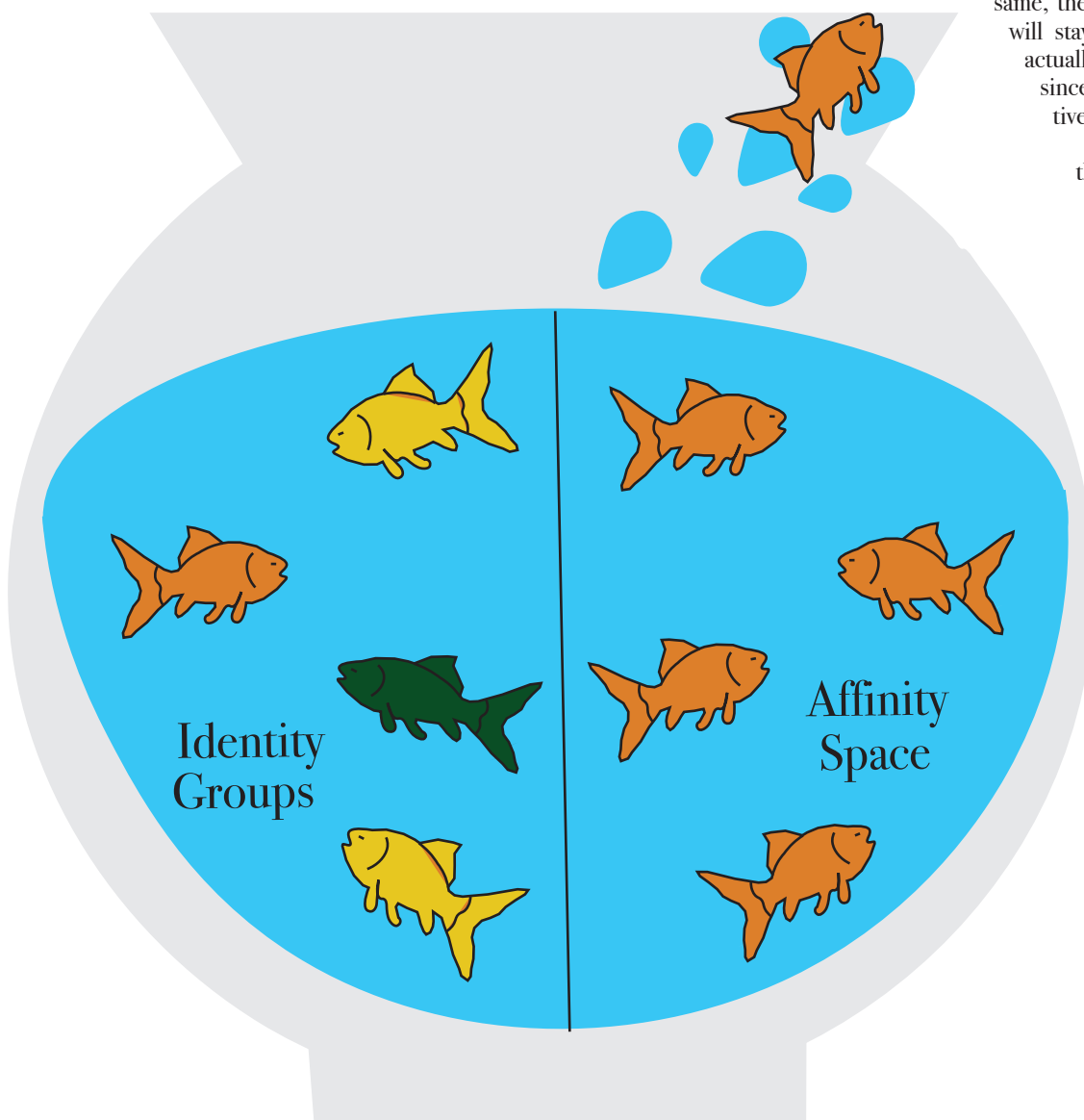
Further, Principal Devan Ganeshanathan said although students will need to adjust affinity groups to be inclusive of all, students may now be able to further build understanding in the community.

“Ideally, the impact will be, now that they are open, there is space for more allies,” Ganeshanathan said.

AbuLteaf said though there may be contrasting opinions on this change, he believes the community will come to terms with it and also make identity clubs “more grounding and more rewarding” for students.

Having multiple viewpoints is definitely going to be useful for all parties involved.

–Lucas Marty ('26)



According to Director of Institutional and Community Equity Mirangela Buggs, the U.K. Department for Education has posed guidance for school leaders and staff, pertaining to national anti-discrimination laws – specifically the Equality Act 2010.

What does the Equality Act 2010 protect in schools?

- Equality in the admissions and hiring process
- Identity-based equality discrimination with pupils
- Reasonable adjustments which accommodate all identities

What does the Equality Act 2010 state in regard to closed affinity space?

Schools must encourage pupils of all characteristics to engage in all school activities. The Department for Education said, for example, “encouraging both boys and girls, and pupils from different ethnic backgrounds, to be involved in the full range of school societies.”

Source: Department for Education

“As a community we are creative and we are now at a transition point,” AbuLteaf said. “Any transition requires growth to progress.”

Iman Eldukair ('24) said although there are positive impacts of opening affinity groups, students said they benefitted from closed groups as well. Eldukair enjoyed participating in the Arab Affinity Group last year due to the “safe environment” it created. Eldukair said while the opening of affinity groups will not automatically create an insecure environment, the conversations may be less authentic.

“I don’t think that it will no longer be safe,” Eldukair said. “I just think that people wouldn’t be as open with things or they wouldn’t feel comfortable enough to say certain things, which takes away their voice.”

Hill said backlash regarding the exclusivity of affinity groups was often “misguided or misinformed,” and that affinity spaces were really meant to combat the issues they have been accused of perpetuating.

“The biggest impact of opening up the space... is the narrative around why the space is being opened,” Hill said. “The narrative suggests that these spaces are exclusionary and inequitable. And the irony of that, is the purpose of these spaces is to actually create equity.”

Eleanor Ilyas ('24) said she believed affinity groups “added something really positive to the community” last year, despite adverse reactions from certain students and parents. Ilyas said affinity groups added an important space for communities who are not always able to share their experiences openly.

“The world we live in is a place for specifically white, cisgender, heterosexual men,” Ilyas said. “I think if you have a problem with there being specific spaces for people who don’t fit those boundaries to talk about the problems that they face, then you really need to look into yourself and wonder why you have a problem with that.”

Hill said although opening up affinity groups may be difficult for current members, it is a good reminder of how safe spaces for minority groups have historically been shut down, and the closure may be a pivotal educational moment.

Singer said she personally did not feel an impact after affinity spaces were opened due to the fact that she has a strong Jewish community around her, and she did not require additional support at school. Singer said if she was less connected with her Jewish heritage, she would feel the impact of this change more.

“I do see if someone were to tell me that affinity groups was something they really wanted, I think I’d be able to see where they’re coming from,” Singer said.

Ilyas said former affinity groups may still be effective after changes as long as the community respects the newfound space.

“If people aren’t joking about it, and it’s happening exactly as it did last year, it just happens to be named something different, than I think the integrity still holds,” Ilyas said.

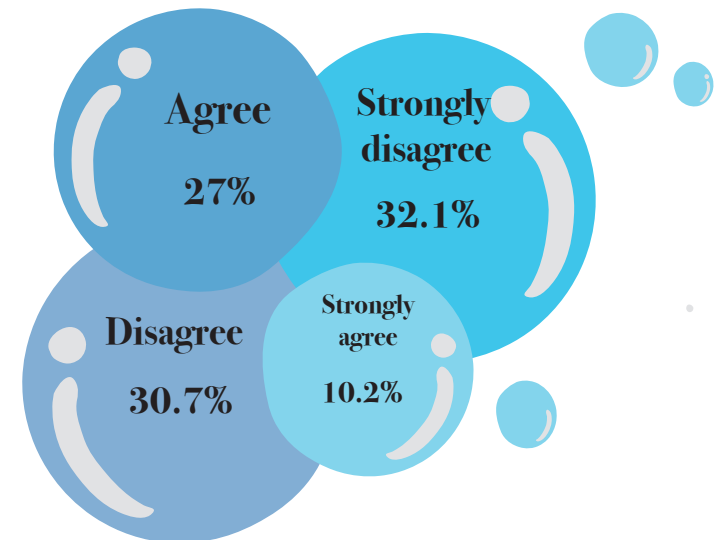
Ganeshanathan said he believed High School students will be considerate and acknowledge the importance of the space, and he said those who didn’t respect the space, he “would imagine to be subject to social correction.”

Ultimately, Buggs said although there may be conflicting ideology between American educational doctrine and Ofsted’s requirements, shifts can be made to honor British principles and retain the integrity of the school’s mission.

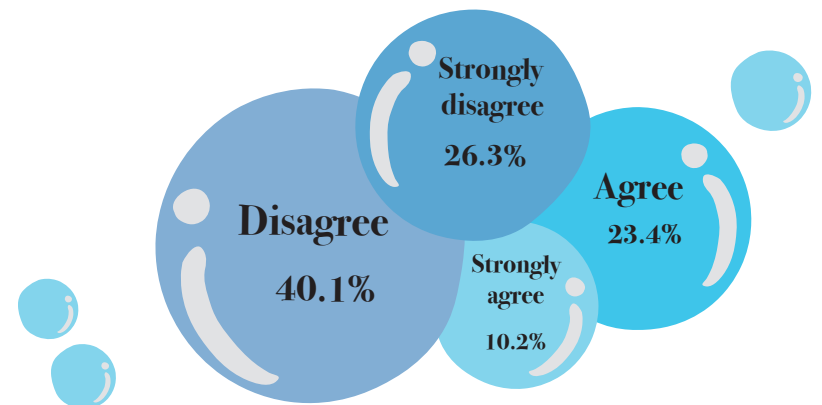
“We can still be ourselves as a school in terms of pedagogy and values,” Buggs said. “There’s certain pieces of our school that have to be squarely about being in the U.K., and it feels like that’s what happened with the decision to shift the affinity group dynamic.”

Blu Belinky contributed to reporting.

Closed affinity spaces are exclusionary.



The closure of affinity groups has had a positive impact on the High School community.



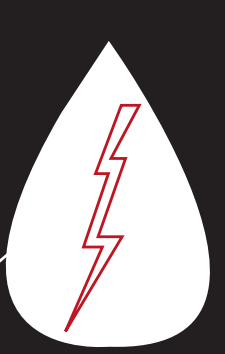
Graphics by Rudi Chamria

Ela Gulener ('24)

Gulener said she has a red lightning bolt as a tattoo, which she decided upon because the "red represents power and confidence" which is how she wants to be perceived.

Gulener said she also has a second tattoo that counters the tattoo of her close friend.

"Another tattoo I have is a flower with my best friend," Gulener said. "It is a matching tattoo since we've been best friends for 12 years."



Tattoos: Meaning behind the ink

Community members examine the value and societal perceptions of tattoos, giving personal anecdotes of their experiences.

**Ella Friel /
Media Team**

Carefully traced lines of ink planted onto skin, many tattoos have unique significance. Students and faculty with tattoos voice their opinions on this permanent form of self-expression.

Level of significance

According to an online survey sent to High School students and faculty Oct. 12-23 with 244 responses, 68.9% believe tattoos should be meaningful.

Fernando Hartogs ('24) said he echoes the notion that due to their permanence and the complex process of creation, tattoos must carry significance.

"You should never get a stupid tattoo," Hartogs said. "You shouldn't get a tattoo to show it off. I feel like it's meant

to be a personal thing."

Alternatively, Yearbook Teacher Lina Densley said a tattoo is unique, and it is up to each individual to determine the significance of their tattoo.

"What meaning it has for you can really vary," Densley said. "I know people who have meaning associated with deep and emotional connections and meaning as simple as, like, 'this is a thing I care about.'"

Social Studies Teacher Aaron Fazio said he feels it is necessary that his tattoos carry meaning but recognizes each individual's autonomy.

"I would want it to have some meaning, whether that's big or small, but I think it doesn't have to for everybody," Fazio said. "I have a friend who has a piece of cake on one leg and a taco on another. And she has all sorts of crazy tattoos that's just, you know, well how she wants her body, and I think that's perfectly fine."

Self-expression

Ela Gulener ('24) said tattoos ultimately showcase personality.

Densley, for example, said her sister-in-law has a semi-colon tattoo – which typically represents solidarity with those who struggle with mental health – and chose to get it because it "reminds her of a specific time in her life."

Performing Arts Teacher Todd Sessoms said one of his tattoos, which was done with two of his friends, symbolizes the poem "13 Ways of Looking" by Wallace Stevens.

"We made it ultimately so that there are 13 birds, and each bird represents a different stanza of the poem, and they're specifically crafted to the visual representation of the main idea of the stanza," Sessoms said.

Societal expectations

According to the survey, 11.9% of the community have tattoos, and 45.9% said they

have considered getting one.

English Teacher Hannah Notowitz said her tattoos have impacted her professional life.

"I've been asked to cover them up at work," Notowitz said. "And, I understand why people ask you to do that, but I don't agree with it."

Notowitz said tattoos often carry a negative connotation.

"People are worried about how a tattoo will make you seem," Notowitz said. "Tattoos have often had connotations of danger. Some people might feel as undesirable or dangerous or untrustworthy. You're messy."

Fazio said tattoos are judged differently depending on one's location.

"It's a very cultural thing," Fazio said. "In other coun-

tries that I have worked in, I had to be very covered up. Here, I feel like I've seen teachers with many."

Likewise, Sessoms said he feels as if societal perceptions of tattoos depend on the nature of one's surroundings.

"Each environment that we're in has its own cultural expectations," Sessoms said. "There are codes of behavior and conduct, and I think depending on the environment that you're in, folks are going to perceive things differently based on the expectations of that environment."

However, Sessoms said he would not go around advertising his tattoos because "it might not fit with the professional culture."

Hartogs said if the place-

ment or quantity of one's tattoo hinders their ability to work adequately, it becomes problematic.

"The minute the tattoos start impacting, like, your ability to get a job or your ability to be viewed as by a certain person, then I think that yes, it's too much," Hartogs said.

Conclusively, Densley said while she does not want to have many tattoos, it is a valid and individual decision.

"I have a limit, I don't want to be covered with them," Densley said. "But I don't think there's anything wrong with anybody who does want to be covered. I think that's a very personal choice."

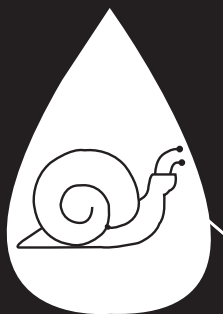
To view related online content, scan here:



**English Teacher
Hannah Notowitz**

Notowitz said she has eight tattoos, the most recent of which is a snail that she got because it reminds her of childhood pets and is representative of a challenging time period in her life.

"I got it at a frustrating and difficult time in my life," she said. "I specifically chose a snail as well because I wanted to remind myself that it's okay to be slow and to be patient and to just make steady progress."



**MS/HS Yearbook
Teacher Lina Densley**

Densley has a memorial tattoo on her chest which represents the passing of each loved one in her life.

"The moon represents my youngest brother who died when I was 11," Densley said. "The stars represent other family members and important people to me that I've lost."



**Social Studies Teacher
Aaron Fazio**

Fazio got a tattoo of a phoenix to remind himself of his strength during his sophomore year. He said the year was challenging as he developed a medical illness.

"I had a brain tumor, and it was kind of a five year post-brain surgery present," Fazio said. "I have one tattoo. It's a phoenix and it says, 'If you want to live, keep moving' and it's on my left arm."



IF YOU WANT TO LIVE, KEEP MOVING

Increasing popularity of secondhand shopping prompts reflection

Anahi Pellathy /
Culture Editor: Print

“I literally cried when I found these,” @teabby on Tik Tok boasts of an exciting thrift find to her 820,600 followers in a haul video she posted in January. She goes on to show item after item that she purchased from the Goodwill bins, a program by the American thrift chain in which items are weighed and priced by the pound. The video has racked up 103,100 likes, demonstrating the success of the secondhand shopping phenomenon sweeping social media. A report by ThredUp found a 35% increase in the secondhand market in 2021 and predicted that the secondhand market would experience growth 16 times faster than the broader retail clothing sector by 2026.

Iona Sweidan (‘25) said she believes social media has had a huge influence on Generation Z’s clothing consumption, citing rapid trend cycles as an example of a problematic effect.

“We’re kind of the generation participating in social media most avidly right now,” she said. “That’s just created such quick trend cycles, you know, hyper trends and everything – you buy new things, and a month later it’s out of style”.

Sweidan said she has been going to charity shops her whole life, and a lot of her clothing is secondhand even if it was not bought at a thrift or vintage shop because she has many hand-me-downs from older siblings and friends. She said she gained an appreciation for secondhand shopping after learning about the fast fashion industry.

“I’ve done so much work surrounding fast fashion, and just knowing that I’m not actively contributing to everything that goes into the production of new clothes is a pretty cool feeling,” she said.

Bridget Doherty (‘25) said her family has been shopping at charity shops “forever,” but she has started thrifting more in recent years.

“My dad used to do it and I used to get embarrassed, but now I do it so much more often,” she said.

Ethan Allaway (‘23) said he started shopping secondhand about two years ago after switching schools and enjoying the affordability.

“I was in a school with a uniform, so I didn’t really have that many clothes,” he said. “I also, like, don’t have much money because I don’t have a job.”

Allaway said he began his junior year with around two items that were secondhand, but after receiving store suggestions from his friends, his wardrobe now has an even split between secondhand and new clothing.

Eleonore Reilly (‘23) said she has only tried thrifting once with a friend, and didn’t find anything that suited her style. She said she prefers to shop from new retailers.

Doherty said she has observed an increase in secondhand shopping among Generation Z, and that charity shopping has become a popular trend.

However, Allaway said he has observed a darker side to the increased interest in thrift and charity shopping among high schoolers, specifically in the mindset of

wealthier students who are able to “try on” a different lifestyle as if it is a costume.

“In ASL, the community is very, like, well-off, so they don’t really have to shop secondhand,” he said. “When they do, they kind of only do it because of the ‘trend’ in a way, whereas a lot of people shop secondhand because they have to, because it’s affordable.”

Allaway said he recognizes the privilege in “being able to thrift instead of having to,” and understands his role in this dynamic.

“I kind of fall under that group of people because I don’t have to thrift,” he said. “But I don’t see it as a trend. I like the clothes there, because there’s a wide variety and it’s not that expensive, but I still understand that there are people who have to while I choose to.”

Sweidan said she has also seen increased interest in thrifting from her peers, but believes this is a positive swing mainly because of the environmental benefits.

“I definitely think thrifting has gotten more trendy, but I don’t think that’s a bad thing,” she said. “I’ve heard arguments where people are saying that people are taking away clothes from people that need it, but there’s so many clothes that

have already been made that are just out there, mostly in landfills.

There really are enough clothes for more than everyone.”

Sweidan said she feels that it is still a minority of Generation Z that is choosing to shop secondhand over new retailers, but that increased interest in secondhand shopping could be a way to combat the harmful effects of fast fashion trends.

“It’s really not that hard and it’s a great way to limit your specific, individual kind of use of fast fashion retailers,” she said. “I think that’s definitely something everyone at ASL could work on.”

Reilly said that as she does not shop secondhand, she prefers to purchase sustainably-made clothing from current retailers.

“I won’t buy clothes that often, so I won’t buy fast fashion, but I’ll buy clothes that are maybe more expensive but better quality that I can keep for longer,” she said. “As long as the clothes are produced sustainably, I think it’s okay to buy new clothes.”

Allaway said a potentially problematic element to the increase in secondhand shopping is the risk of increasing prices.

Similarly, Doherty said she has noticed prices climbing on the clothing resale app Depop.

“When it first came out, it was kind of equal to thrift shopping in person,” she said. “But now, I think it’s become more popular and the prices are going way up for clothes because sellers are like, ‘Oh, people are going on Depop so I’m just gonna make my clothing more expensive.’”

Similarly, Allaway said Depop’s prices have become too high, so he now prefers the app Vinted.

“I’ve sold like a bunch of things on Vinted, but I’ve only bought two things,” he said. “I think Vinted is better than Depop because Depop is more trendy and a lot more expensive as far as I’ve seen.”

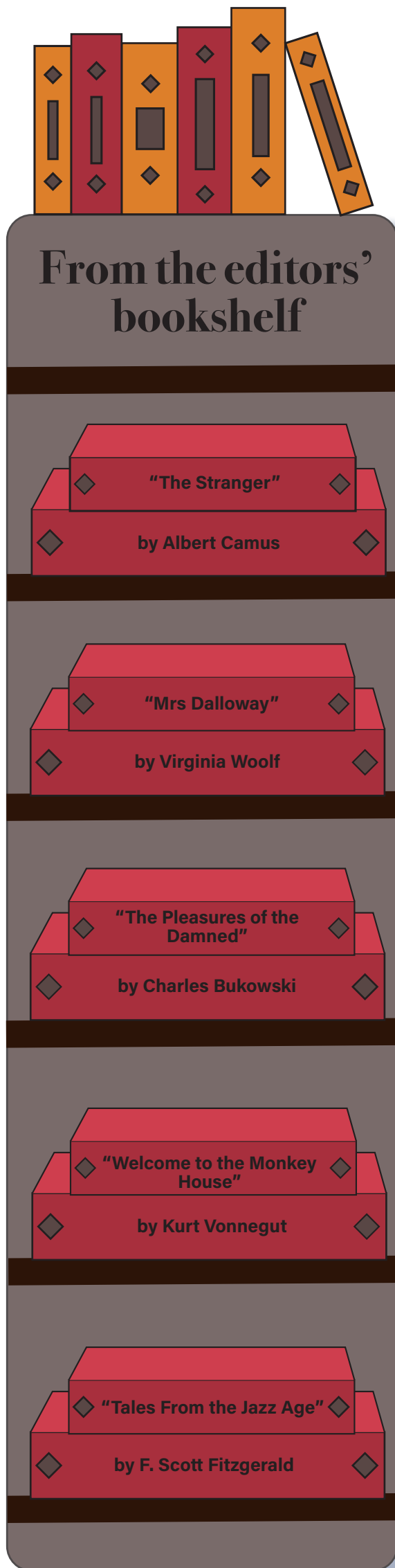


Ana Costa (‘23)
Colorful long sleeve top
from Depop.

Iona Sweidan (‘25)
Patterned tank top
from Depop.

Standard staff *summary*:

Editors offer their take on trending pop culture, hidden gems and everything in between. From music to literature, the editors have it covered.



ALBUM REVIEW | Taylor Swift's 'Midnights' album disproves stereotypes, reveals insecurities

Grace Hamilton /
Editor-in-Chief

Taylor Swift, arguably one of the world's most coveted songwriters, released her much-anticipated tenth album "Midnights" Oct. 21. As with any other Taylor Swift fan, I listened to the debut collection of songs on the first day of release.

"Midnights" reflected Swift's culminating experience with songwriting alongside her unbridled honesty. The album aligns with her recognizable style, yet follows a distinct path. Instead of conforming to pressure to provide fans with more

of the same content, Swift pivots to a style that, to an average observer, is refreshingly genuine.

Swift employs techniques such as synths, tones and warping effects, adding a synthetic ambience to her music. Theatrically, "Midnights" fits an umbrella of topics that keep Swift up at night.

Underneath the wider ap-

proach, Swift sings about gender stereotyping, cancel culture and her own deeply-rooted insecurities, many of which are topics appealing to listeners with a range of experiences.

Ultimately, "Anti-Hero," "Lavender Haze" and "Maroon" come out on top. Even so, each song seemed to be a piece unfolding to reveal a larger puzzle, one listeners are tasked with unveiling.



"Midnights" Songs:

Lavender Haze
Maroon
Anti-Hero
Snow on the Beach
You're on Your Own, Kid
Midnight Rain
Question...?
Vigilante Sh*t
Bejeweled
Labyrinth
Karma
Sweet Nothing
Mastermind

BOOK REVIEW | 'Slaughterhouse-Five' by Kurt Vonnegut prompts contemplation of free will

Clara Martinez /
Lead Culture Editor

Yanked between World War II flashbacks of the Dresden firebombing and the trauma that follows the protagonist into old age, Kurt Vonnegut's "Slaughterhouse-Five" is deeply thought-provoking on the role of morality and fate in war.

The novel begins with a non-fiction chapter where Vonnegut explains his experience in "Schlachthof-Fünf," a slaughterhouse underground in the city of Dresden, where he became an unintentional witness to one of the most lethal bombings of World War II. In the second chapter, his perspective unites with the novel's protagonist, Billy Pilgrim.

Time jumps throughout the book between the 1940s and late 1960s when Pilgrim's children put him in a hospital for his flashbacks of the Tralfamadorians. Pilgrim claims that these aliens resembling toilet plungers abducted him and brought him to their planet.

The Tralfamadorians' world has no sense of time or chronology aside from the present moment. During his time on their planet, Pilgrim tries to understand why they find the concept of free will so ridiculous. The Tralfamadorians also criticize the stories they hear of human violence, which sets Pilgrim spiraling back to his time serving in the war. The contrast between historical events and the Tralfamadorians' commentary on human behavior proposes a

new perspective on what truly constitutes free will.

In addition, the concept of a "children's crusade" that is mentioned throughout the book adds to the developing themes of antiwar satire. Through comparing soldiers charging into battle to naive children, Vonnegut uses an ironic contrast to pose serious moments of reflection about the overall absurdity of war.

Vonnegut writes in an unparalleled manner of using humor as a device to make readers understand the tragedy of war. He uses comedy to bring unfathomable tragedies, such as the bombing of 22,000 people, down to earth in a simple and

plain portrait of people's day-to-day lives.

The phrase "so it goes" is repeated throughout the novel, which seems at first to be one of Pilgrim's coping mechanisms to keep pushing forward. But, as the motto appears more frequently in the aftermath of deeply appalling events, the phrase becomes ironic. "So it goes" was initially repeated by soldiers in the war when commenting on death, and Vonnegut spins the commonly-heard phrase to highlight its ludicrous meaning in the context of mass killings.

Pilgrim repeats the phrase every time death is provoked, turning the idiom into a com-

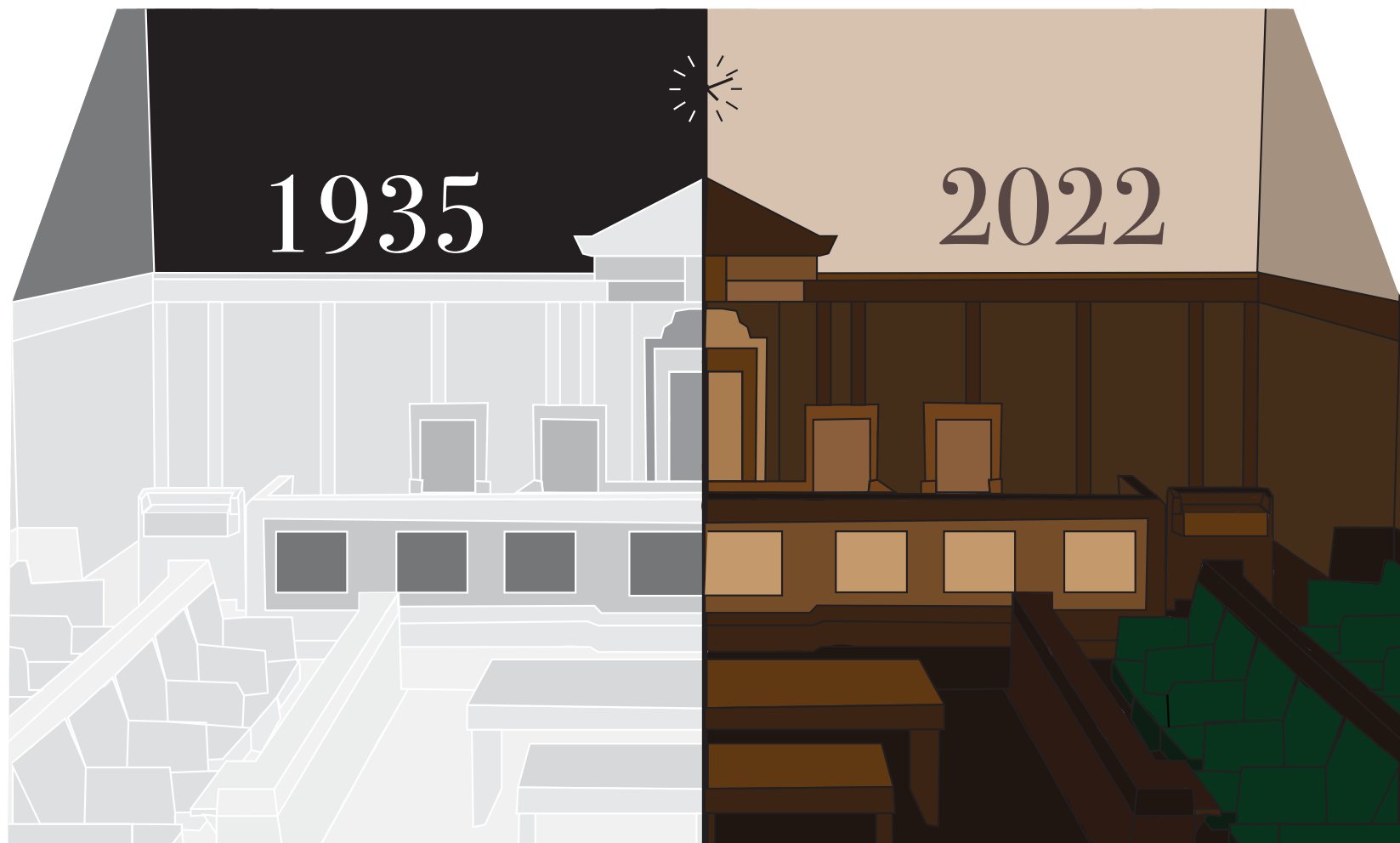
mentary on confronting death instead of accepting the way things are.

Although the novel is not a challenging read, it takes on more meaning and shapes the more one thinks about the true extent of free will in modern society. It is as startling as George Orwell's "1984" with the sly humor of J.D. Salinger.

"Slaughterhouse-Five" does not attempt to fix all global conflicts in under 200 pages. But, it sends a question quietly to the doors of lawmakers that echoes back louder through the masses. That question begins and ends the novel, sung by a bird with no one to listen: "Poo-tec-weet?"



Graphics by Clara Martinez



Graphic by Clara Martinez

'To Kill A Mockingbird' play emphasizes **stagnating** progress in racial equality

PLAY REVIEW

Grace Hamilton /
Editor-in-Chief

An innocent Black man. A bigoted white jury. A deeply defective judicial system. This is a case one might expect to encounter in present-day America. Yet, the stage adaptation of Harper Lee's 1960 novel "To Kill A Mockingbird" takes place in the mid-1930s deep in the American south. Its message resounds today.

As a self-proclaimed theater lover, I've seen my fair share of historical takes, from "Six" to "Hamilton" to "NW Trilogy." That said, "To Kill A Mockingbird" — shown at the London Gielgud Theater — is a cut above the rest.

When the curtain drops, the viewer is greeted by three children: Scout, Jem and Dill. Each gazes out at the audience as they passionately debate the alleged murder of a local townsman. Within minutes, the stage shifts back in time from the children's conversation to a courtroom with a jury, judge and witness stand.

The young children become the framework to recount the story of Tom Robinson, a young Black man falsely accused of raping young white girl Mayella Ewell.

Atticus Finch, a white lawyer, becomes embroiled in an Alabama court case where he defends Robinson against undeniable racial injustice. Finch is portrayed as an advocate for justice at large, but whether he is a proponent of racial equality

in particular remains unclear.

The heart of the play lies in the courtroom. Testimonies from Mayella Ewell and her father Bob are loaded with tension and outrage as they argue for the execution of Robinson.

Most alarmingly, Bob Ewell's behavior feels eerily parallel to extremist American thinkers today. The Ewells are real and uncontrived. They snicker at Atticus's supposed intellectual elitism when he defends Robinson on the stand.

At the hands of a bigoted jury, Robinson is convicted of a crime he did not commit de-

spite all evidence in his favor. The story epitomizes the seeming impossibility of breaking a cyclical system built to perpetuate inequality. The old adage of innocent until proven guilty seems to exclusively ring true for the privileged.

Each character is remarkably real, with flaws, quick tempers and egotism. This genuine depiction does not undermine their portrayal, but instead emphasizes their humanity. I found myself invested in the motivations of every character on the stage, whether they instilled a deep hatred or empathy.

The production quality of "To Kill A Mockingbird" proved to be the icing on the cake. The combination of acting ability, costume design and stage props brought the story to life.

The characters' dress seemed to be pulled directly from the 1930s, with outfits that mirrored both the character's role and personality at large. Even more notably, each actor embraced their character in full, with a rawness and ethos extending to every audience member.

Ultimately, this play elicits a feeling of heaviness. As a white girl, I have only confronted the manifestation of racism in the justice system in headlines. I have never had someone close to me involved in the U.S. carceral system. I

have never truly been forced to reckon with the oppression entrenched in U.S. justice systems centuries ago. The play evoked despair in me, and yet, is a reality with which millions have to live. In the span of nearly a century since this play's timeframe, we have stagnated.

The live rendition of this coveted novel screams for reform. We can't distance ourselves from entrenched inequality. Racism should never be a back-page issue.

In essence, "To Kill A Mockingbird" unearths a reality we often overlook, all conjoining to form a compassionate but unsettling tale. The live rendition is beautiful and sincere, with a clarity that indicts the modern-day justice system through a tale of the past.

“ I found myself invested in the motivations of every character. ”



Varsity jackets spark controversy

In light of a new order of varsity jackets coming in with a new design and an undecided method of distribution between teams, athletes and non-athletes reflect on their view of the School's well-known jackets up to now.

Elena Alexander /
Sports Editor: Print

Pete Stathopoulos ('23) went downstairs to the athletic equipment room to pick up his varsity jacket for the first time in September 2021. Stathopoulos said he was excited because the jacket was a symbol – a subtle statement that's not “in your face” – for getting into varsity.

“Once you make the team for the first time, the first thing you kind of think of is ‘when am I getting my jacket,’” Stathopoulos said.

Many recognize athletic jackets around the school. Walking in the halls, the black windbreakers with “ASL” written in bold orange letters on the back are often hard to miss.

Background

Nowadays, the jackets are known as “varsity jackets” among the student body, but Athletics Director John Farmer said they were not always just for varsity athletes.

Farmer said the jackets used to be mandatory purchases for all High School athletes. Farmer said a change in the school's policy in 2014 meant that the school started loaning out the jackets for athletes, and eventually, the athletes would have to give back the jackets at the end of the season. If an athlete didn't return their jacket, they would pay an £80 fee.

Farmer said dwindling stocks from people keeping the jackets when they left the school over the years meant that jackets had to become exclusively for varsity athletes.

“Slowly but surely, we've been losing more and more of them to a point where we've only now been able to hand

them up to varsity athletes,” Farmer said. “We had to draw the line somewhere.”

Farmer said there is a new order of jackets with a new design being shipped to the School and the plan for these jackets – who they will go to and if there will be different prints for different sports or different sport levels – is still unclear.

Purpose

Farmer said the point of distributing sports jackets in the first place was to provide comfort and utility to athletes in the face of London weather, as well as to create a uniform look for athletes.

“We wanted a standard look that all ASL athletes would wear together and feel a part of a group, part of a team, part of a school and represent us accordingly,” Farmer said.

Pros

Stathopoulos, one of this year's varsity boys soccer captains, said the jacket inspired him when he was a JJV athlete and represented his goal of becoming a varsity athlete.

“When I was younger, like as a freshman, I would look up to some people on the team who would wear those jackets and be like, ‘I want to be on the team but I also want to be wearing what they're wearing because it signifies that I'm on the team,’” Stathopoulos said.

Having attended the school since Grade 4, Stathopoulos also said the

Karina Medvedeva ('23) plays varsity volleyball and Dara Hejazi ('23) plays varsity soccer.

Photo by Elena Alexander



Volleyball

Soccer

Field Hockey

Cross Country

Total participants: **57**Total participants: **108**Total participants: **21**Total participants: **23**Number varsity: **24**Number varsity: **38**Number varsity: **21**Number varsity: **23**Percent varsity: **42%**Percent varsity: **35%**Percent varsity: **100%**Percent varsity: **100%**

Statistics from Doreen Murphy

jacket comes with a sense of pride to represent the school that has been his home for over eight years.

“Being able to say that I made this team and I’m able to wear this jacket to represent my school at the highest level of whatever sport I’m playing is very important to me,” Stathopoulos said.

Layla Khatiblou (’25) said she first got the jacket when she was a freshman for varsity girls basketball, after being in JV girls volleyball the previous season. She is now on varsity girls’ volleyball.

Khatiblou said she feels proud when she wears the jacket as it is a symbol of her hard work and she also feels motivation to continue to improve.

Outside of personal connection to the jacket, Khatiblou also said the jacket represents a commitment to the team through the act of the whole team wearing it and the energy varsity athletes put into their teams.

Stathopoulos said the jacket is a visible link that fosters connectivity within sports teams.

“When you have the jacket, you feel like you’re more part of the team,” Stathopoulos said. “Our tradition before a game is we all walk out and leave the locker room together with our jackets on. And when we all take our jackets off, we all say ‘jackets off’ and we all take them off. So we all look the same when we’re warming up to show the other team and to show whoever’s watching that we’re a team, we’re unified.”

Regarding the role of jackets in the wider community, Khatiblou said wearing the jackets are an informal way to advertise games and send a message about someone’s passions. She said wearing the jacket has led to peers to ask her about her sport.

“It kind of tells people a little bit about yourself almost in a way without you having to say anything,” Khatiblou said.

Implications

Sabina Peterson Rajalingham (’25) first received the varsity jacket in the fall season of her Grade 9 year for the varsity girls’ soccer team.

Peterson Rajalingham said initially, the jackets did not hold any particular significance for her. Now in Grade 10, however, Peterson Rajalingham said she has “mixed feelings” about the jacket because of who gets it and who does not.

“I think the fact that only varsity players get

to wear them is not super inclusive to like other sports players or even people who don’t play sports,” Peterson Rajalingham said.

Claire Corley (’23) said she has not felt personal negative impacts from varsity jackets in the school, but she said she “very strong feelings” about the potential harm of varsity jackets because of her experience prior to ASL in an Arizona public school.

“It’s just, like, previous experience that makes me a little wary of what can develop from the concept of varsity jackets,” Corley said.

Corley said varsity jackets can cause division within a school by age – as varsity athletes are usually older – participation in sports and sports level.

“I think that it furthers any cliques, I guess you could say, or any separation of people based on sports just within the community itself,” Corley said. “And then within athletes, I think it kind of separates

those into people who are good enough people who are not good enough and kind of takes away from what I think should be the actual meaning behind high school sports and like objectifies the entire situation.”

Corley said the purpose of high school sports should be to “build and community and teach leadership” and varsity jackets defy that purpose.

“I think that varsity jackets, not only ... enforce a stratified sense of leadership and superiority among athletes, but split up a community that sports are intended to build,” Corley said. “Sports should be a uniting factor and I think that when you add a factor into it that is designed to separate out those who aren’t good enough, I think that completely defeats the purpose.”

Corley said putting material value to varsity sports through jackets looks down upon effort people put into hobbies that are not athletic-related.

“I think it also discredits students who put in the same amount of effort that sports players do into academic roles and academic positions,” Corley said.

Peterson Rajalingham said the jackets serve as a status symbol because everyone recognizes them as a varsity jacket, perpetuating a divide between varsity and non-varsity athletes.

“Wearing a jacket is something that you can see and immediately think like, ‘Oh, they’re a varsity athlete,’” Peterson Rajalingham said. “And I think that in people’s minds, I think that makes their status elevated.”

Peterson Rajalingham said representing the school at the highest level of a sport does not need to be a public statement.

“It does symbolize that you are the best of the best athletes in the high school,” she said.

“But I’m not sure if that’s like necessary to recognize through a piece of clothing.”

Peterson Rajalingham said the school-representation aspect of the jacket makes it unfair that non-varsity athletes do not get the jackets as JV athletes should also get the chance to represent the school.

Based on her JV experience, Khatiblou said “it’s a little disappointing” that JV teams don’t get the jacket, as those teams miss out on an opportunity to be more connected. She said that extra connectivity from having a jacket would help JV teams to feel more purpose.

“You’re not less bonded, but you don’t share something in the same way,” Khatiblou said. “Like, it’s kind of cool if everyone together does something. I feel like sometimes on JV teams, that’s not the case. Not everyone’s as bonded or serious about it. So I feel like that’s the only sad thing, and if people aren’t serious, then it’s kind of hard.”

Echoing Khatiblou, Farmer said he recognizes JV athletes miss out on a connecting link by not getting a jacket.

“We have plenty of non-varsity athletes who need an outer shell and outer layer, a warm layer beyond what they have,” he said. “And so what it means is ... a JV player would wear his or her own stuff basically, which means that the team doesn’t look like a cohesive group that’s all in a uniform together before the match starts.”

Next steps

Due to unpredictable London weather, Corley said she respects the school’s desire to provide jackets to their athletes. She said, however, JV athletes should get jackets too because “JV is going to get as cold as varsity.”

Peterson Rajalingham said all athletes should have jackets to help close the status gap between varsity and non-varsity athletes.

Khatiblou also said JV teams should receive some extra piece of spirit wear to wear outside of games, jackets or not. She said there should be something for JV that is different from varsity.

“I think JV should get something because they’re just equally as important,” Khatiblou said. “They’re equally important teams, you know, [but] they don’t get as much support and maybe we should support the JV teams more because a lot of those players a lot of the time later on will make a varsity team in coming years.”

Overall, Corley said having varsity-only jackets shows unbalanced priorities within a school.

“It kind of raises the question of ‘if we are going to objectify things and we are going to use material objects and material wealth to define what is successful, why don’t we do that with performing arts? Why don’t we do that with STEM? Why don’t we do that to that same extent?’” Corley said. “And I think it kind of just shows not only what the school values but how, and how the school treats the difference between its academic students and its athletic students and where they feel those students’ priorities lie.”

Takeaways

Farmer said it is not surprising the school’s stocks of the jacket have decreased so much over time because of how popular the jackets are.

“It’s amazing how much people like them,” Farmer said. “I mean that, because I can’t think of anything else that we have that stood the test of time the way those things have.”

Farmer said jackets like these foster excitement for the sports program.

“At the end of the day, what I want is people happy and fired up about what they’re wearing and excited to be a part of the sports program and if what they’re wearing adds to that then that’s a benefit,” Farmer said.

Ultimately, Stathopoulos is another athlete who does not plan to return to the athletic room at the end of the sports season, varsity jacket in hand.

“I’m keeping mine, that’s all I’m saying,” Stathopoulos said. “I don’t mind if Mr. Farmer hears, I’ll pay him the £80 and I’m keeping my jacket.”

“Being able represent my school at the highest level of sport is very important to me.”

– Pete Stathopoulos (’23)

“It kind of tells people a little bit about yourself without you having to say anything.”

– Layla Khatiblou (’25)

“Varsity jackets split up a community sports are intended to build.”

– Claire Corley (’23)

GOATS say goodbye

COMMENTARY

Elena Alexander /
Sports Editor: Print

On the public tennis courts of Compton, California in the 1980s, a tennis legend was made.

After an outstanding career spanning 27 years, Serena Williams announced she was stepping away from tennis for the time being. She uses the word “evolving” to signify she may not be done with tennis for sure, but will be focusing on it less.

Williams is undoubtedly the greatest of all time in tennis as she was not only extraordinarily successful – winning 23 Grand Slams and smashing countless records – but she also changed the game of women’s tennis.

Born in 1981, Williams began playing tennis at age three under coaching from her father, Richard Williams, according to *The Guardian*.

Playing alongside her sister, Venus, Williams scaled the ranks fast. She turned pro at 14 years old in 1995 and won her first Grand Slam four years later in 1999.

Grand Slam wins piled up fast for Williams after 1999; she has since won 23 singles Grand Slams. The public even attached her name to winning all four Grand Slams consecutively: The Serena Slam. She accom-

plished this feat two times: the 2002-2003 and 2015-2016 seasons. In addition to success with singles, Williams won 14 Grand Slam doubles with her sister,

Venus, and four gold medals at the Olympics – three in doubles with Venus, and one in singles.

Another tribute to Williams’ success is her 319 weeks as the Women’s Tennis Association #1, – 186 of which were consecutive – a record tied with Steffi Graf, according to the U.S. Open website. All this success on the court accumulated to a total of \$94 million in prize money, which is twice as much as any other female athlete, according to *Forbes*.

Williams’ results demonstrate top-caliber performance from women’s tennis. However, her merit extends beyond her wins, rankings and achievements.

For one, Williams’ dedication was unmatched. In an essay for *Vogue*, she describes how she strives for her own version of perfection motivated her. Williams played tennis through a myriad of challenges. For example, Williams continued playing after having a near fatal C-section, through

breastfeeding and even postpartum depression. She continued playing after her half-sister, Yetunde, was murdered in 2003, when she went through an extreme period of grief. Williams continued playing despite the overt racism and sexism she endured.

Williams ultimately changed the way women’s tennis is played. With her unrelenting power on the court, she introduced a level of unprecedented intimidation and dominance. Williams was unafraid to be forceful. Her serve is an example of her strength: she averaged 170 km

per hour, 12 km faster than the average female tennis player – according to *Business Insider*.

Williams inspired a new generation of women of color onto the tennis court, which is a remarkable change considering the history of tennis as a white-dominant sport. For example, Naomi Osaka – a Japanese-American that has been ranked #1 for the WTA – proclaimed herself a “product” of Williams’ legacy, mentioning in a press conference during the U.S. Open that Williams inspired her to pick up a tennis racket.

Representation matters, and Williams’ success was the representation needed to open the floodgates and welcome a new side of women’s tennis.

Williams also never hesitated to make a statement. Known for unconventional and eye-catching outfits, she pushed the boundaries of traditional all-white tennis fashion. For example, when playing in the French Open just over a year after giving birth, Williams wore a tight black catsuit.

According to *Vox*, the catsuit was designed to help with circulation, but French Open officials disapproved, calling it disrespectful to the tradition of tennis. One can also look to the outfit Serena wore to her last tennis match: a black dress with a star spangled chest, ballerina-style skirt and sheer sleeves.

Williams’ barrier-breaching fashion was important because it mirrored her barrier-breaching mentality and legacy; it sent the message that Serena was not afraid to test the limits and inspired others to do so too.

Williams’ impact on the game resulted in enormous popularity. Even in the twilight of her career, she decimated the ESPN ratings record for a tennis game during her last match of the U.S. Open Sept. 3, which averaged 4.8 million viewers. A fitting way to end the career of a tennis legend.

Moving forward, Williams says she is setting aside tennis to focus on other passions and her own family, as she writes in her *Vogue* essay. For one, she owns a venture capital fund called Serena Ventures that is diversity focused, aiming to prioritize funding to companies run by women or people of color.

In addition, Serena published a children’s book in late September, “The Adventures of Qai Qai,” which has the theme of gaining personal confidence.

These moves off the court contribute to Williams’ legacy as they show she is using her influence from tennis to change the world in other ways, too.

Ultimately, it is clear that Williams’ legacy lives both on and off the tennis court. She revolutionized women’s tennis by changing the players and the game. She used her influence for causes outside of tennis. She continues to inspire girls every day to reach their potential.

Serena Williams is the GOAT in tennis, if not one of the greatest athletes of all time.



Since **Roger Federer** retired from tennis and **Serena Williams** announced she's taking a break from the sport, we reflect on two of the most talented tennis players of all time and why they are so great on and off the court.

COMMENTARY

Spencer Towfighi /
Lead Sports Editor

In September, Roger Federer officially retired from tennis after 24 dominant years. In my opinion, he goes down as the greatest of all time in men's tennis. The one-handed backhand. The serve and volley. The all white. The elegance. Truly, the only way to describe Roger Federer is perfection.

However, I absolutely hate any GOAT conversation when it comes to sports. Oftentimes, the argument that solely winning matters will be used to decide the best player, which I think is too narrow of criteria.

For me, I've decided to declare my GOATs through a few lenses – their wins, their trophies, their brand off the court and their style in play – and all aspects lean towards Federer being the GOAT.

I start with wins. In the four Grand Slams – the Australian Open, U.S. Open, French Open and Wimbledon – Federer had an 86% win rate in his matches and an all-time record with 369 wins.

This is 35 wins more than second-place player Novak Djokovic, according to the Olympics. His win rate and number of matches won shows his dominance on the court and makes it hard to not think about wins when you think about Federer. Accompanying the win rate and wins, Federer acquired an incredible 20 Grand Slams in his career. Of the 20, eight of them are Wimbledon titles, a remarkable accomplishment as Wimbledon is considered the hardest Grand Slam to secure.

In addition, it's hard to not mention Federer's infamous 2005 and 2006 seasons. Both Federer and rival Rafael Nadal were in the peak of their careers, and despite the fierce competition Federer still dominated. In 2005, Federer maintained a 95.3% win percentage in all tournaments.

Along with his wins, Federer that year won his second U.S. Open and third Wimbledon, as reported by Tennishead. He was simply unstoppable.

Federer would go on to follow up his 2005 year with an equally impressive campaign. In 2006, Federer won 12 major tournaments, the most tournaments won in a calendar year by any male tennis player, and in those 12 included an Australian Open, US Open and Wimbledon title, according to Playo.

Federer would end 2006 with an astonishing 94.8% win percentage record and between 2005 and 2006, the Swiss spent 237 consecutive weeks as Association of Tennis Professionals world number one, according to Tennishead.

Federer's 2005 and 2006 seasons represent his incredible skill. At his best, Federer is truly the GOAT and dominated the competition. The tennis world is yet to see a two-

year span as dominant as Federer's since his 173 wins between 2005 and 2006.

During 2005-2006, and his entire 24 year career, Federer showed off his incredible play style. His must-see way of playing tennis cements him as the GOAT. By play style, I'm not referring to his wins, rather to the way Federer played tennis. Federer was a risk-taker. He was offensive, meaning he'd often go for winners on both his forehand and backhand.

Also, Federer loved to get to the net and volley, adding to his aggressive play style. It was electric to watch Federer and his play style was a breath of fresh air to the tennis world as it saw a shift from the serve-reliant styles of Andy Roddick and Pete Sampras to a more enjoyable, unpredictable way of playing the sport.

What makes Federer the GOAT is not just his wins and play style – however, it is also the

brand he built for himself. Federer has made over \$1.1 billion through endorsement deals alone, according to Sportico. His partnerships with companies such as Rolex, Mercedes Benz and Uniqlo have made Federer a global name.

To further the point of Roger's brand,

despite not playing a single match, in the period after the 2021 U.S. Open Federer earned the most money in the tennis industry solely through endorsements, according to Statista. He's earned roughly \$90 million while second place, Naomi Osaka, has earned around \$56.2 million. Federer has made roughly \$34 million dollars more than any other player this year before he even played a single match.

Without a doubt, Federer will be missed by the entire tennis community. His wins, play style and popularity make him the GOAT.



Grade 9 ban from varsity soccer reverses for next season



Varsity boys soccer player Sam Singer ('23) tackles an opposing player for the ball while playing ACS Hillingdon Oct. 17. Grade 9 students were not allowed onto varsity soccer teams this season due to U.K. Football Association guidelines. *Photo by Clara Martinez*

Clara Martinez /
Lead Culture Editor

Soccer athletes under the age of 15, primarily Grade 9 students, were unable to be a part of varsity soccer teams this season in accordance with the U.K.'s Football Association guidelines on age banding.

Rishi Kurada ('23), one of the varsity boys soccer captains, said he was disappointed when his coaches informed him there would be no freshmen on the team this season.

"I think it's quite a shame because every freshman when they come into high school, they want to make the best team possible and it ruins a bit of motivation for them," Kurada said.

Director of Athletics John Farmer said the school received an exemption of the restriction from the FA three weeks after tryouts concluded, so upcoming seasons are not currently expected to have the age cutoff.

The FA Handbook states "a player under the age of 15 as at midnight on 31st August in the playing season" may not compete with teammates two or more years older or younger because of physical differences in size and strength.

Farmer said the school's extensive safeguard-

ing training for coaches allowed varsity soccer teams to have a "pass" on the age guidelines three weeks after tryouts, and it was too late to change the rosters for the current season.

Despite receiving an exemption from the FA, Farmer said the regulations that prevent athletes playing with students two years younger or older than them are twofold, regarding safety both on and off the field.

"It isn't just about people being on the field, it's about the fact that there are locker room and changing room considerations there as well," Farmer said.

As a leader to the team, Kurada said he would have liked to be a role model to athletes new to high school and unite all four grade levels.

"Soccer is like one way for me to interact with other grades, and I feel like now it's kind of shutting off the connections between the seniors and the freshmen," Kurada said. "It's just kind of sad for us. We don't get to know the youngest in high school and the youngest don't get to know the oldest."

On the other hand, Grade 9 JV soccer player Luseni Conteh ('26) said he doesn't mind that freshmen are unable to be a part of the varsity team because it incentivizes younger players to work toward a higher achievement.

"It allows you to go up the ranks and get a feel for the game in the different ranks," Conteh said.

While Farmer said it is beneficial for Grade 9 students to play on JV to strive toward a goal, he also said Grade 9 students can also be pushed to improve through playing with seniors on the same varsity team.

"It's great from the standpoint that it gives those students something to shoot for," Farmer said.

Farmer also said allowing for younger students to compete on varsity all four years allows for a "team culture" that provides continuity in traditions that are passed "generation to generation."

In addition, first-year varsity soccer player Nicholas Farinola ('24) said limiting the inclusion of younger students could potentially hinder the team's success because more skilled players might only be eligible for JV.

"If someone is good enough for the team, regardless of their age, they should have the opportunity to play and compete," Farinola said. "By excluding freshmen, this might set the precedent that not all the best players are on the team."

Concerning the varsity girls soccer team, athlete Lulu Hogan ('25) said she is apprehensive about replacing the 11 graduating athletes next year, as many newcomers will have never played

in a major tournament before.

"The biggest grade on our team right now are seniors so they're all leaving next year, which means we won't have a full team and we're going to need incoming freshmen on the team," Hogan said.

Conteh said there is an element of the ban being reversed for next season that seems "unfair" to current Grade 9 students who have worked hard and were unable to have the same opportunity.

In contrast, after playing for the varsity team as a freshman, Hogan said freshmen should have the opportunity to be able to compete in varsity matches and tournaments like ISSTs.

"You build these relationships with your team, and it sort of is all built up to the big competition of the season," Hogan said.

While there have been five injuries on the girls varsity soccer team this season, Hogan said they were not caused from contact. Farinola, who sprained his ankle after being tackled, said his injury as an upperclassman suggests that risk from contact sports does not correlate with the age of the player.

"It could happen to anyone," Farinola said. "It's just, I guess, part of the game."

We don't get to know the youngest in high school and the youngest don't get to know the oldest.

- Rishi Kurada ('23)

By excluding freshmen, this might set the precedent that not all the best players are on the team.

- Nicholas Farinola ('24)



1



3



4



2

In case you missed it...



5



6



7

1. Makram Salaam races toward the finish line during a cross country meet Sept. 17.
 2. JV girls' volleyball captain Nuria Alvarez Martin ('25) cheers on her team at ACS Hillingdon during their 2-0 win Oct. 17.
 3. Alex Poufar ('25) dribbles towards the goal during the varsity boys soccer match against the British School in Paris at Canons Park Sept. 24. The team won 3-0.
 4. Rion Emery ('25) smashes the ball to win the point. The varsity girls' volleyball team won the match against TASIS 2-0 Sept. 21 in the Farmer Gym.
 5. Varsity boys volleyball captain Darren Morris ('23) dives for the ball to save the point during a game against ACS Cobham in the Farmer Gym Sept. 14. The team won 2-1, and have been undefeated this year.
 6. Katherine Demetris ('23) headers the ball away during the varsity girls' match against Frankfurt International School Sept. 24 at Canons Park. The two teams tied 3-3.
 7. Evelyn Snizek ('23) drives with the ball during a varsity girls' field hockey game against International School of Brussels Oct. 22. During their trip to Brussels, the team won 6-2 and 3-0 against ISB.
- Photo 1 by Ella Podurgiel
Photo 2 by Elena Alexander
Photos 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 courtesy of Colin Bridgewater*



1: Emma Symonds ('23) and Alexandra Pritchard-Cannon ('23) tell a student about their Every Mind Matters Club at the Clubs Fair in the Farmer Gym Sept. 30. The fair allowed students to learn about and sign up to different clubs.

2: Students perform at the Student Spotlight Assembly in the School Center Oct. 7. The assembly, which was organized by the Student Council, included a card trick, an orchestra duet and a singing solo.

3: Grade 9 students carve pumpkins during a competition between advisories in the Commons Oct. 27. Each advisory was given 30 minutes to carve the best Halloween themed pumpkin, with the winning advisory receiving an off-campus lunch in December.

4: Olivia Ford ('24) walks down the runway at the Sustainable Fashion Show in the School Center Oct. 27. The fashion show featured students modelling sustainable clothes from designer brands and thrift stores.

Photo 1 by Anna Reznick
Photo 2 by Sophia Bassi
Photo 3 by Rowan Hamilton
Photo 4 by Galilea Birch

2022 **fall** *in review:*

The Standard looks back on the fall months, from grade level activities to the student spotlight to the club fair.

