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the very best for the future!

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# The Spectrum

◆ *e cineribus et ad astra* ◆

JUNE • VOL. 41, GRADUATION ISSUE

ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL

www.thespectrumabrhs.com

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Flying caps to the face were taken for this photo.  
SPECTRUM STAFF

## On Staying Partial, not Impartial: A Reflection

By REBECCA ZHANG '22  
*Graduating Editor-in-Chief*

I tiptoed into *The Spectrum* as a wee little frosh, terrified of news—and the EICs. Four years later, I'm proud to announce: I no longer tremble at the sight of a stray Jasmine. News writing, on the other hand, required much more convincing.

Though professional journalism often leans left or right, democrat or republican, liberal or conservative, *The Spectrum's* take on news counters media bias by emphasizing reporter impartiality. From day one at *The Spectrum*, "impartiality" joined hands with "news" and galloped into the sunset.

Fourteen-year-old me absolutely abhorred that.

No ~quirky~ hooks? Horrifying. Bland verbs? Disgusting. Impartiality? Get away from me! But above all, I hated the lack of voice in news: I believed it to strip a writer of their own identity.

Now, don't get me wrong, I'm all for unbiased reporting! Impartiality is a powerful tool to wield against today's fake news and information warfare, and I'm inspired by reporters that maintain this rigor. Some journalists even sacrifice their voting rights to uphold objec-

tivity—an awe-striking dedication to their craft. So, even while I love my funky hooks and colorful verbs, I begrudgingly forsook them as I finally dabbled in news, believing the best and most accurate reporting must lack voice and the bias it carries.

Admittedly, I likely annoyed the previous Bits Editor with my first Bits article, "AB Reacts to the Atlanta Shootings."

"But, what if I just add in a paragraph at the end about how I feel?"  
"Impartiality, Rebecca!"  
"Okay, a sentence?"  
"Rebecca."  
"One word?!"

My struggle to locate the ever-elusive line between identity and bias only deepened when I became editor-in-chief. Frankly, I did not know how to balance my commitment to activism with my role as a supposedly impartial EIC. As a leader of two other clubs, I worried that covering their events would unfairly advantage them; I fretted that I only chose articles that promoted my beliefs for the front page; and, I agonized over bias in even the smallest edits. Though once unconscious choices, simple style decisions materialized as I edited.

Some decisions felt more trivial. *The Associated Press* capitalizes the word after a colon: should we? Nah. Should we add spaces around em dashes like them? Too ugly. Continue italicizing newspapers? Sure, why not!

Meanwhile, other choices left me Googling and frantically sifting through tabs, as we debated over capitalizing "white," de-hyphenating "Asian American," and choosing "BIPOC" over "POC." Uncertainty dominated every decision as I discovered that each lacked a grammatical right or wrong but rather depended on personal belief and bias. And as we chose the more inclusive and representative terms, my own voice crept in—and shattered every previous notion I had about impartiality in news.

It is perhaps impossible to remove voice from writing. From the questions interviewers ask to the most minuscule style choices, bias prevails. Any attempts to separate my identity from my role as EIC would similarly fall short, and I realized that previous efforts to view writing through an impartial lens only yielded inaccuracies.

Shortly after, I began interning at a local paper, covering local refugee resettlement. Though I had once believed news to be cold and

unwelcoming, my interviews with these families unveiled a new side of journalism: it is founded on human connection.

Storytelling fosters connection; our individual stories build relationships and communities. More inconspicuously, though, connection also fuels storytelling. Indeed, the most provocative stories in journalism often stem from trust and genuine friendship between reporter and source. I called my editor after a particularly moving interview, gushing over the family's sheer resistance and optimism, and asked how I'd ever be able to write an article without my own emotional reaction and relationship to them. His answer? *Tell their story exactly how you told it to me—with color. Don't be afraid to keep yourself in.*

I am no longer afraid of news reporting. Though I had previously believed the best reporting to lack voice, in reality, identity dictates every story, and it is our voices that fuel storytelling's power and ability to connect. After all, storytelling forges human connection. And so, as I twist my tassel to the left with the class of 2022, I look back at the connections I've made at *The Spectrum* and ABRHS as a whole, beaming at the role they've played in shaping my own story.

# Intro

## Letter from Old EICs

By JASMINE WU '22 &  
REBECCA ZHANG '22

*Graduating Editors-in-Chief*

Howdy folks,

Wow, that was our last “howdy.” Please let it echo in your hearts until the end of time.

To be honest, neither of us have processed that we’re graduating. The past few years certainly held challenges and weren’t easy. But we leave AB remembering the communities we’ve belonged to and the relationships we’ve forged. Being EICs of *The Spectrum* was certainly one of our greatest highlights. We’ve learned so much from this incredible responsibility and from all of our writers and chief staff.

To Emily and Adi, you will be the

most amazing EICs. *Spectrum* is our little baby, so it’s not so easy to hand it over, but we are confident that you will carry on our legacy and keep The Spectrum community thrivin’ and vibin’.

To our chaff, thank you for all the passion and love you’ve put into The Spectrum. It truly takes a team to survive the chaos of layout week. And then some to limp through the last day.

Lastly, to our readers. Thank you for supporting *The Spectrum*, (sometimes :p) reading our articles, and always finishing the crossword :)

Happy graduation to the class of 2022!

With much love,  
Jasmine and Rebecca <3

## Letter from New EICs

By ADI RAMAN '23 &  
EMILY XU '23

*New Editors-in-Chief*

Dynamic duo? Lame. Adi-das shoes? Very cool. That’s why we’re Adi-das Xus, or your new 2022–2023 co-Editors-in-Chief. We are Adi and Emily, two young debutantes with big dreams for *The Spectrum* and the world at large. As a quick introduction to our personalities, during our interviews for the position, the lovely Rebecca and Jasmine challenged us to decide which one of them should be run over on some train tracks. Adi saved both of them by sending tulips out of his right shoulder to bring them to safety while Emily just let the train choose.

Rebecca and Jasmine leave big shoes to fill, but we hope that we can stretch our toes to fit into the Rebecca-and-Jasmine-feet holes that they leave. We hope to continue to exemplify the ~quirkiness~ that they’ve brought to *The Spectrum*, along with adding a twist or two

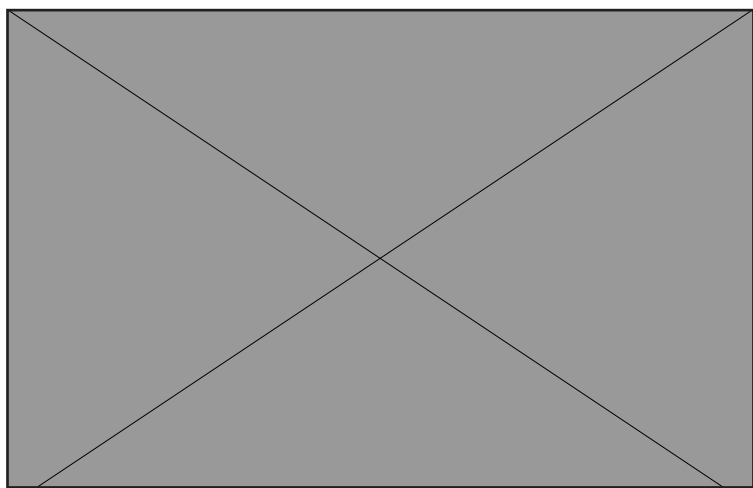
of our own. Think of it like honey mustard pretzels: pretzels are already twisty, so we’ll be adding our own sprinkle of mustard dust.

As the school year concludes, we’d like to acknowledge the adversity AB and the greater community has faced over the past year. Hate incidents have continued to pervade our community, with each incident cracking the foundation of diversity, equity, and inclusivity that a school should encapsulate. We hope that we can work together to provide a platform to uplift and empower those who wish to share their voices when confronting these challenges, and to continue to serve as your favorite school newspaper.

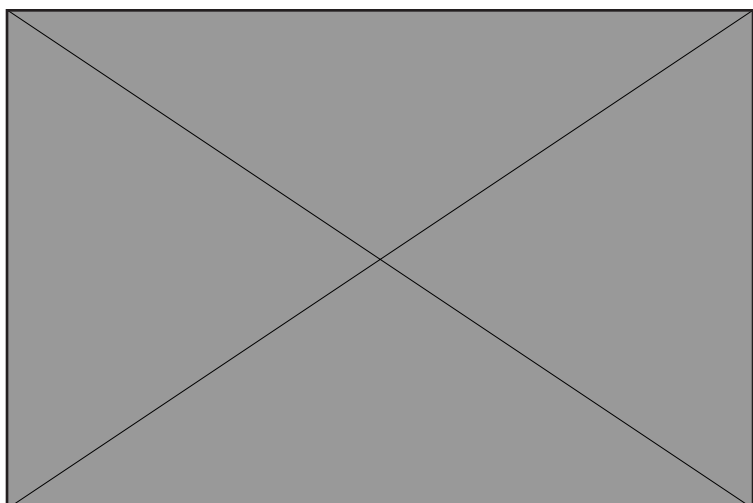
So, as we waltz (as debutantes, of course) into our tenure as co-Editors-in-Chief, we wish to bring the best of ourselves and others to the stage. From us, less waltzing, more writing. And onwards!

Hugs, kisses, and very warm wishes,  
Adi and Emily

## Two Hot Debutantes



Two lovely debutantes embroidering their own *Spectrum* merch.  
MILENA ZHU



Rebecca and Jasmine (faces not pictured) passing the proverbial torch.  
MILENA ZHU

## The Spectrum

Founded 1982  
*e cineribus ad astra*

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## Graduation Caps Off; Cash Out?

By JULIA XIAO '24  
*Spectrum Staff*

Black caps fill the sky as hundreds of high school seniors toss caps into the air. This touching moment is anticipated by many high schoolers. The throwing of the graduation cap, along with ceremonies, senior trips, and parties are all common events that celebrate senior graduation. Although the traditional elements of graduation express pride in students, increasing costs cause a disparity between those who can and cannot afford to celebrate. Specifically, the initial spirit of graduation has changed as seniors spend too much money in order to check off what seems to be normal, and the contrast of graduation ceremonies shows the growing separation.

Over time, symbolic actions developed to fully recognize seniors’ achievements. During the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries in England, gown outfits became popular in universities. One reason for their popularity was to show the person’s status as a scholar. Another tradition was attaching tassels, which would first be worn on the right side of the hat and then flipped to the left after receiving the diploma. They signified a rite of passage, or new stage of life. Finally, graduation caps were introduced in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. At the time, artists and students wore them in order to signify intelligence and superiority. The three traditions of the gown, tassel, and cap illustrate how graduation is rooted in celebrating wealth. Furthermore, for those not attending college, high school graduation acknowledges at least twelve years of school, making it a valuable investment.

Nowadays, certain aspects of graduation have become social expectations. Two modern-day graduation norms are parties and senior trips, which, although fun, are costly. According to *The Los Angeles Times*, travel agencies started to offer packaged week-long vacations in the 1970–80s. Students drawn in by the promise of a final celebration with friends would spend large amounts of money, ostracizing people unable to pay out because of their personal financial circumstances. Furthermore, graduation parties always include food, entertainment, decorations, and more. The costs of either hosting or attending can be burdensome. Social media posts of the glamorous and fun parties spread the message that everyone should participate, yet joining in is not possible for everyone, creating disparity. Additionally, even attendees might be worried about wearing the right outfit, drinking, and more. Overall, it can be said that parties such as these do not properly encapsulate the emotions of high school, and restraint with the expectations and spending of senior events is worthwhile.

To continue, the United States is separated into financial groups that have vastly different graduation experiences. Lower income communities have less resources available to support students to reach a successful graduation. Graduation rates can be used to illustrate the separation between affluent and lower income areas. In particular, the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education website states that in 2021, the four-year graduation rate of all students in the state was 89.8%, but only 81.7% for low income students. Among other revelations, these statistics display the difference

in opportunity, as non-graduates obviously do not receive diplomas in the ceremony. In this way, money influences the graduation ceremonies that students experience. Some do not have the luxuries of graduation celebrations because their opportunities for learning are disadvantaged.

Even at AB, there are barriers to enjoying a relaxing graduation. Although the fee can be discussed with the counseling department. The high school website states a minimum \$170 senior due, which covers the cap and gown, yearbook, senior outing, and t-shirt. However, it can be embarrassing for someone to have to reach out. In addition, the cost increases with other potential payments such as pictures, which are a burden for many people; AB’s senior photo options are almost over \$100, a common yet unfortunately high price nationwide. Photos and yearbooks matter because graduates want to commemorate their time in high school, but the price takes the chance away from those who can not afford it. These expenses betray the original purpose of graduation, which is celebrating the end of a stage in life.

The costs of graduation can hurt seniors from experiencing the pleasant graduation that they deserve after completing their high school journey. Potential inequalities can be reduced by not making trips or parties seem like an expectation and having awareness that not everyone can afford them. One step that can be made in our community is reducing or eliminating the mandatory fee while fundraising elsewhere. High school graduations ought to be happy, not stressful, and graduates deserve to have fun that is inclusive to all.

# Bits

## ABSEJ Community Building Event: AB Together at NARA

By ADI RAMAN '23 &  
EMILY XU '23  
New Editors-in-Chief

On Saturday, May 14, the Acton-Boxborough Students for Equity and Justice (ABSEJ) held a gathering at Acton's own NARA Park. ABSEJ was created following the murder of George Floyd to give students an open forum and a space to propose action. The club hoped to promote a better sense of community after the divide that the mascot removal caused. Families, students, and faculty members—including Principal Dean—were in attendance to a variety of musical performances and speeches.

At the event, music was a powerful tool in expressing the beauty of community and diversity as well as calling attention to the inequities that persist in our daily lives. Nino Ciampa '22, who gave multiple performances at the event with his band Nino Ciampa y su Orquesta, explained the origins of the group and its importance

in displaying AB's cultural beauty. Founded in 2019, Nino explained that "the purpose of the group is to have an authentic yet inclusive ensemble dedicated to playing and learning about Afro-Latin music styles such as cha-cha-chá, bolero, mozambique, merengue, and most importantly... la salsa!" He added that salsa was created in the 1960s by Cuban, Dominican, and Puerto Rican immigrants, emphasizing the rich history and diversity that inspired the band to play said genres. Additionally, Dear Asian Youth (DAY) featured Grace Chai '23 playing "Butterfly Lovers," a tragic love story piece and "Singing in a Fishing Boat at Dusk," pieces that exemplify the beauty of Chinese culture and allow her to connect with her heritage. The high school's choral ensembles took the stage as well, with the all-treble voice group Bella Voce performing "Mercy Me," the Madrigal Singers singing "El Almuerzo," and the mixed voices Chorale singing Moira Smiley's "How Can I Cry," a piece that encapsulates being able to

see injustice and hate but not having the individual power to easily confront it.

Along with music, speeches by representatives of different distinct groups of the AB community also resonated in the amphitheater. Such speeches featured Danillo Sena, the 37th Middlesex district's state representative, Black Student Union, Common Ground, and Young Democrats. Performances were also introduced by other student groups, such as the Latinx Affinity group, Muslim Student Association, Korean Club, and Dear Asian Youth. Mariana Maranga '23, an ABSEJ student leader, described that the goal of the event was to showcase student voices straight from the source. "We wanted to uplift as many groups as we could in a way that wouldn't be censored, which is why we didn't give many guidelines on performances," said Mariana. Citing Black Student Union's speech, she continued: "Recently, there's been little space for student voices, especially BIPOC

voices, and a disappointing lack of change. ABSEJ wanted to provide a space to allow important messages to be shared with the community." Mariana believes that "speeches are effective because they are very direct. They allow speakers to explicitly address an audience and explain ideas in their own words."

Isabelle Clare '22, an ABSEJ leader and a Young Democrats leader, described the process behind the poem that the Young Democrats presented: "We chose to [use] a rhyme pattern [to represent] the 'youth' and [non-rhyming] for 'society.' We thought that would best portray the drive that the youth have not only in politics and social movements." Isabelle also mentioned how other works influenced the speech, such as the musical Hamilton and Amanda Gorman's poem "The Hill We Climb" from President Biden's inauguration. Isabelle explained that the goal of the poem "was to express our frustration, as youth, of the dismissal we often face when creating change

because of our age. We wanted to emphasize the importance of youth in an ever-evolving world, and reiterate that we are not only capable of creating change, but have already created change." The goals of Young Democrats' poem align with ABSEJ's purpose of holding the event: to create a space to amplify voices previously muffled by others.

Lastly, audience members also found themselves with a renewed sense of unity after the event. Stephanie Lin '23 expressed, "it was great seeing teachers and students come together outside of school at a student-organized event to celebrate student voices. I think it really highlighted the goal of the event: to unite AB after a school year of division. It made me hopeful for the future, hopeful that we could overcome adversity together." Finally, Stephanie highlighted another one of the attractions at the ABSEJ event: the food. "The lobster rolls were good. I don't know if they were actually lobster," she noted.

## Read for Quick Cash

By PRIYA RAO '22  
Guest Writer

Are you looking for a local job? If so, look no further: a new website called *townXchange* by Tholyl Technologies started by Kugan Anandakugan and Siva Ramanan is launching on June 1st. Both Kugan and Siva are committed to helping students gain real-world experience as active Acton residents. They noticed a lost connection between students and their community, concerning students' integration into the workforce, and want to bridge the gap. Overall, this application helps connect local high school students to jobs and internships in their area. To get started, *townXchange* requires students, businesses, and residents to create accounts. Students then may apply to job postings made by the businesses and residents on the website. Finally, applications will go directly to the poster, allowing for direct communication.

Often, as high school students, it is difficult to enter the workforce due to poor community outreach; *townXchange* allows businesses and local citizens to connect with you, easing the process of job hunting. This is also beneficial for the community because it is more straightforward to find students, such as yourself, willing to help! For example, searching for jobs such as cashiering or pet care will be faster and more accessible for students

to apply for. This will increase the number of students working for businesses. Furthermore, home jobs needed by residents such as tutors or babysitting can be easily found, increasing efficiency for the residents posting and students searching for jobs. *townXchange* is also very beneficial to us as students searching for work; many of us go outside of town to work or do not find work opportunities at all because we are not aware of the local jobs available. *townXchange* will provide the link between these opportunities and the students who are motivated to take advantage of them.

Another problem we face in our community is the issue of safety. For example, while finding small jobs such as mowing a lawn, you cannot reach farther than your own neighborhood due to being uncomfortable going to an unknown house. *townXchange* will provide reliable software to verify residents' authenticity through a paid CORI check, a criminal record review, if they elect in, allowing them to reach more students. This will allow students to work for people around Acton without being concerned about their safety.

We are excited to see how you take advantage of the opportunities presented by *townXchange* throughout your time as AB students! Feel free to visit Tholyl Technologies' website at [www.tholyl.com](http://www.tholyl.com), or contact for further information at [contact@tholyl.com](mailto:contact@tholyl.com).

## Eating Disorder Education At AB

By APARNA KAMATH '22  
Guest Writer

**Trigger Warning:** Eating disorders

Eating disorders. We've all heard of them, right? Most of us even know people who have had one. Eating disorders are so incredibly complex yet common among high school students. As such, it is important that our community brings greater awareness to them and create a culture where open discussion on their impacts is welcomed.

My name is Aparna, and since the spring of 2020, I've been working to implement eating disorder education into the freshman health curriculum at Acton-Boxborough Regional High School. With the prevalence of problems with food and body image in teenage students, we all need to know how to handle a situation where an eating disorder arises. The pandemic has contributed to an increase in eating disorders among adolescents as well. Forbes cites isolation, a lack of structure, and generally heightened anxieties for this occurrence. It has been a time where people have become very aware of their own bodies and the people around them.

Eating disorders come in many forms and affect people of all demographics, but they're most prevalent in teenagers, women, and LGBTQ+ populations. About 30 million Americans and 70 million people worldwide suffer from an eating disorder, and although disordered eating may seem like simple dieting or weight loss tactics, they can rapidly spiral into uncontrollable psychiatric illnesses that affect both one's mental and physical health. If you have an eating disorder, you are not alone. There are so many people out there who care about your health and want to help you heal. It's important that you reach out to someone you can trust if you have an eating disorder or if you know someone who does.

The most prevalent cause of eating disorders in high school students is societal pressure to

obtain the so-called ideal physical appearance. Most teenagers use at least one form of social media, and new posts portraying the "ideal body type" only exacerbate insecurities. As a result, students feel the need to heavily diet and exercise in order to attain the supposed beauty standard, which can lead to dangerously unhealthy habits. Society's pressure to have the "thin ideal" is a significant cause of eating disorders, along with others like underlying genetic conditions, trauma, problems coping with stress, and more. A combination of these factors often result in eating disorders in teenagers.

The most common eating disorders in teenagers are anorexia and bulimia, but others like binge-eating, ARFID, and OFSED, also affect teens. Anorexia is weight loss due to excessive restriction, while bulimia typically involves binge-eating and purging to lose weight. Binge-eating disorder is the consumption of large amounts of food at a time. Another disorder, ARFID, or avoidant/restrictive food intake disorder, is characterized by highly selective eating habits and a mental inability to eat many foods. OFSED is a class of disordered eating that is characterized by maladaptive thoughts and behaviors related to eating, food, and body image and covers issues with food outside of the four previously listed.

There are numerous symptoms of eating disorders and multiple will often appear in the individual and gain severity over time. Here are a few: malnutrition, weight loss, loss of menstrual cycle, depression, anxiety, hair loss, low moods, inability to concentrate, a lack of interest in usual activities, gastrointestinal symptoms, exhaustion, and withdrawal from close ones.

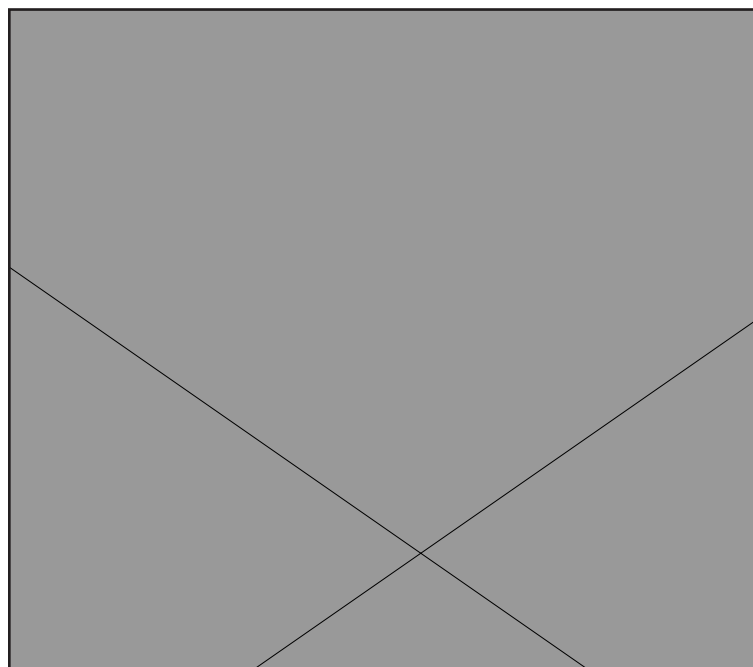
Of course, symptoms are more than just a list; they manifest in living, breathing humans, and we need to be aware of that. Simply watching for these signs in your friends, classmates, and family members will be a major effort in helping others get sup-

port for their issues.

Once you've noticed several symptoms building up in a person over time, it is vital that they take the first step towards healing. People with eating disorders are good at concealing them, so it may worsen before anyone notices that something is wrong. If you do see symptoms in someone, be honest with them. The best thing to do is to simply ask the question kindly. Instead of saying, "Do you have an eating disorder?", ask something like, "I've noticed that you have been offering your lunch to your friends lately, and it seems like you have trouble eating. Is everything alright?" Recognition is the first step of the process. You might be worried that you're overstepping, but it is more important that they realize their problem and seek help, so don't let your concerns stop you from speaking up.

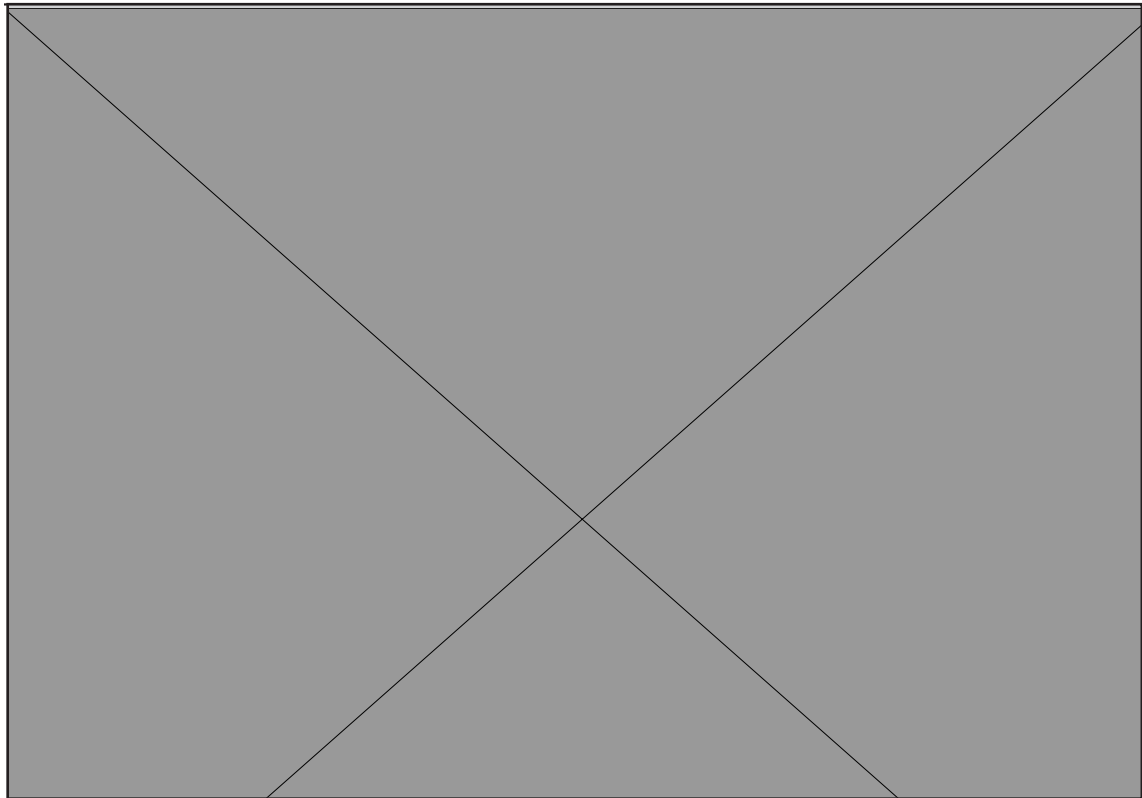
When talking to someone with an eating disorder, avoid extra stress and negativity. Pick a good time and place, and make sure that it's private, with no distractions or constraints. Explain your concerns, and be prepared for resistance. Stay away from placing ultimatums, commenting on appearance or weight, shaming, using manipulation or threats, or giving solutions. Then, encourage them to seek help, and be patient and supportive. Be their friend. Give them time to talk without interruption, or give them space if necessary. You know that you are with them every step of the way, so make sure that they know it too.

Some professionals who have experience with eating disorder education in teens are dietitians, pediatricians, and psychologists, and these adults are often some of the best people to talk to for someone who has an eating disorder. They can recommend various treatment options, including day, residential, inpatient, and outpatient treatments. If you would like to learn about eating disorders in more detail, navigate to Acton TV's "Education" section or YouTube channel and click on the video titled "Eating Disorder Awareness and Education."



Feeling stressed about your lacking resume? Get a job with *townXchange*!  
ONLINE SOURCE

# News



So many Spectrums!  
EMILY XU / Spectrum EIC

## The Spectrum's 40th Anniversary!

By NAKISA RAZBAN '23  
Off-Topic Editor

Your favorite high school newspaper is hitting a midlife crisis, and to celebrate, I interviewed our very own AB and *The Spectrum* alumni: English teacher Mr. Brusie! Drawn in by his love of humorous writing, Mr. Brusie joined *The Spectrum* as a freshman in 1994, and by his junior year of high school, he was editor of "The Other Side," a section we now know as "Off-Topic" (a rather respectable role if I do say so myself). His comedic commentary was inspired by writers like Dave Barry, a columnist whose humor column was featured in the *Miami Herald*, as well as talk-show host David Letterman.

Mr. Brusie recalls some of his most infamous pieces, one of which was aimed at the football team. It criticized "the amount of attention that the football team got in relation to other teams and clubs." His commentary did not end at sports, however; Mr. Brusie also tackled academics in an article that was "making fun of

the English curriculum." Perhaps karma is what brought him back to AB. Before becoming an English teacher here, Mr. Brusie wrote for various publications throughout college and then became a news writer for the *The Beacon* before realizing news was not his style. Although being part of *The Spectrum* did not create a straight path to his English teaching career, Mr. Brusie notes that reflecting on his time at the newspaper helped him realize that he wanted to work with highschoolers.

The communal and interpersonal aspect of working for the paper also played a large part in Mr. Brusie's high school experience. He recalls "layout nights" where *The Spectrum* staff would stay late into the night to prepare the paper for print, and how "collegial and fun" that environment was. Although layout week still exists, the new technology we have now makes preparing for print much more efficient, as all of our layout is done digitally. Back during his time at the paper, Mr. Brusie explains that they would have to "physically lay [the

paper] out" by gluing "the articles that were printed out onto giant poster boards and taking them to the printer."

Beyond creating a community, *The Spectrum* was also a creative outlet for Mr. Brusie. He states that he was "never the type to randomly make art" and that the structured nature of writing for a publication allowed him to explore his creativity. When asked about an aspect of the paper he wishes still existed, Mr. Brusie describes a recurring segment which was called "student spotlight," where one student would write a profile about another student." He notes that coincidentally, one of the students he wrote a spotlight about later became his wife. Hear that folks? Write for *The Spectrum* to find true love.

Mr. Brusie finishes by reflecting that "It has always been so valuable to have student voices that are allowed to be their own... I'm so glad [*The Spectrum*] is still around both in print and online." We've been around for forty years, so here's to forty more. Happy anniversary to *The Spectrum*!

## Understanding Race

By SOPHIA SAGHIR '24  
Bits Editor

In recent years, the repercussions of racism have become a heavily discussed topic both in the world at large and in the AB community. From the global Black Lives Matter movement to microcosms such as hateful graffiti in our own school bathrooms, the issue of racism has proven to be an important topic. In response to this, ABRHS is offering the new Understanding Race semester course to incoming 10th–12th graders. The goal is to understand race and racism through the exploration and analysis of major case studies.

Understanding Race has been in the works since early 2020, and the planning process has been lengthy and complex. Mr. Green, the leader of the Social Studies Department, started by meeting with various members of the larger AB community, including student and parent affinity groups, religious clergy, colleagues, and various other interested individuals. After talking with each group, Mr. Green gathered the many different opinions and concluded that some type of course or unit needed to be created and implemented to address race. Eventually, a committee was formed to both create the course and vet any needed materials. Overall, although the process has been long, Mr. Green stresses, "I really appreciate having had an opportunity to meet with a lot of people, and receive [and give] feedback. I feel like all of my conversations with students and all of the kind of activism around this year has been incredibly thoughtful, respectful, and mature, and it makes me want to [create this course]."

A partnership with Primary Source, a non-profit organization based in Watertown, Massachusetts, assisted in the development of the course. On their website, Primary Source defines their mission as to "[work] with teachers to foster students' knowledge, skills, and dispositions for thoughtful and engaged citizenship." The company acts like a consultant for the course and helps curate resources for the curriculum. This allows for greater access to a variety of resources for the class and generally provides guidance on how

to go about creating this new curriculum.

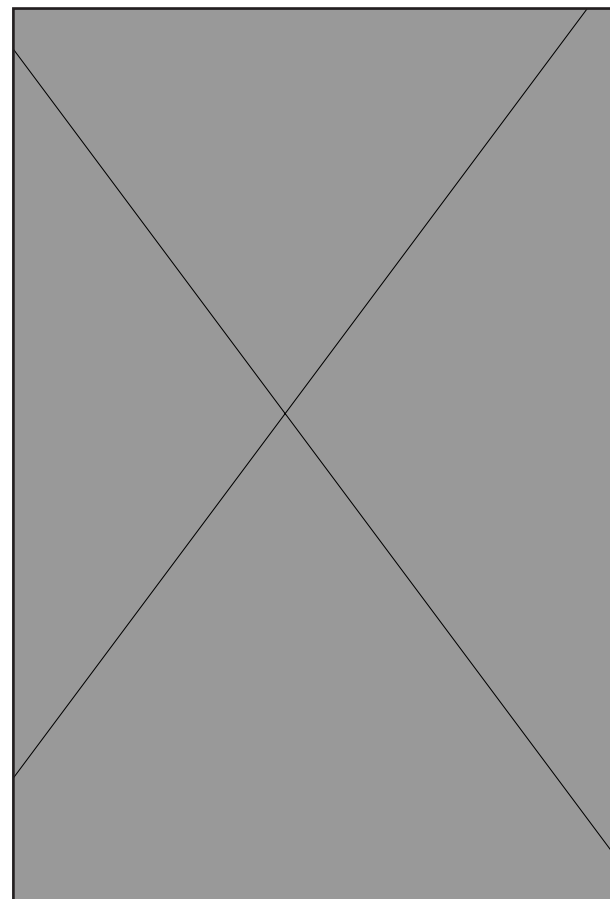
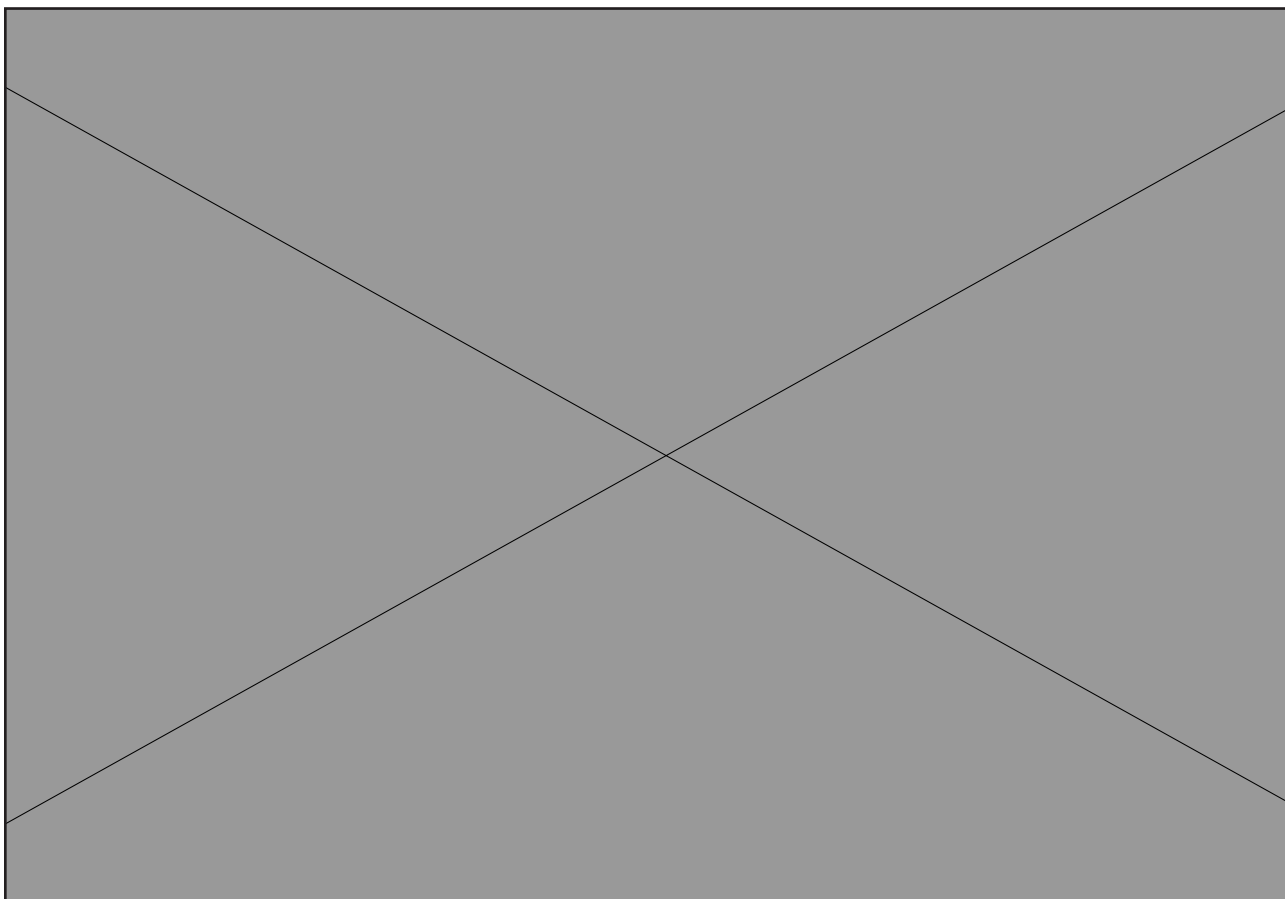
This is not your typical core history class; it is much more creatively structured by being entirely discussion and project-based. The format allows for a more engaging and impactful learning experience, creating a greater focus on the value of the curriculum.

The course puts emphasis on community-building in the classroom in the beginning: Mr. Green notes the importance of this step in creating an open and respectful learning environment as the course consists of serious and possibly uncomfortable topics. Following that, students will look at where the construct of race originates and explore historical conceptions of race using readings and hearing from guest speakers from the community to understand how racial myths are created and perpetuated in societies. There will also be two major case studies, consisting of the African-American and Asian-American experiences; students can access other narratives through a variety of other projects. At the end of the semester, students will be assigned a capstone project focusing on local racial issues affecting the high school or the greater community in Acton-Boxborough.

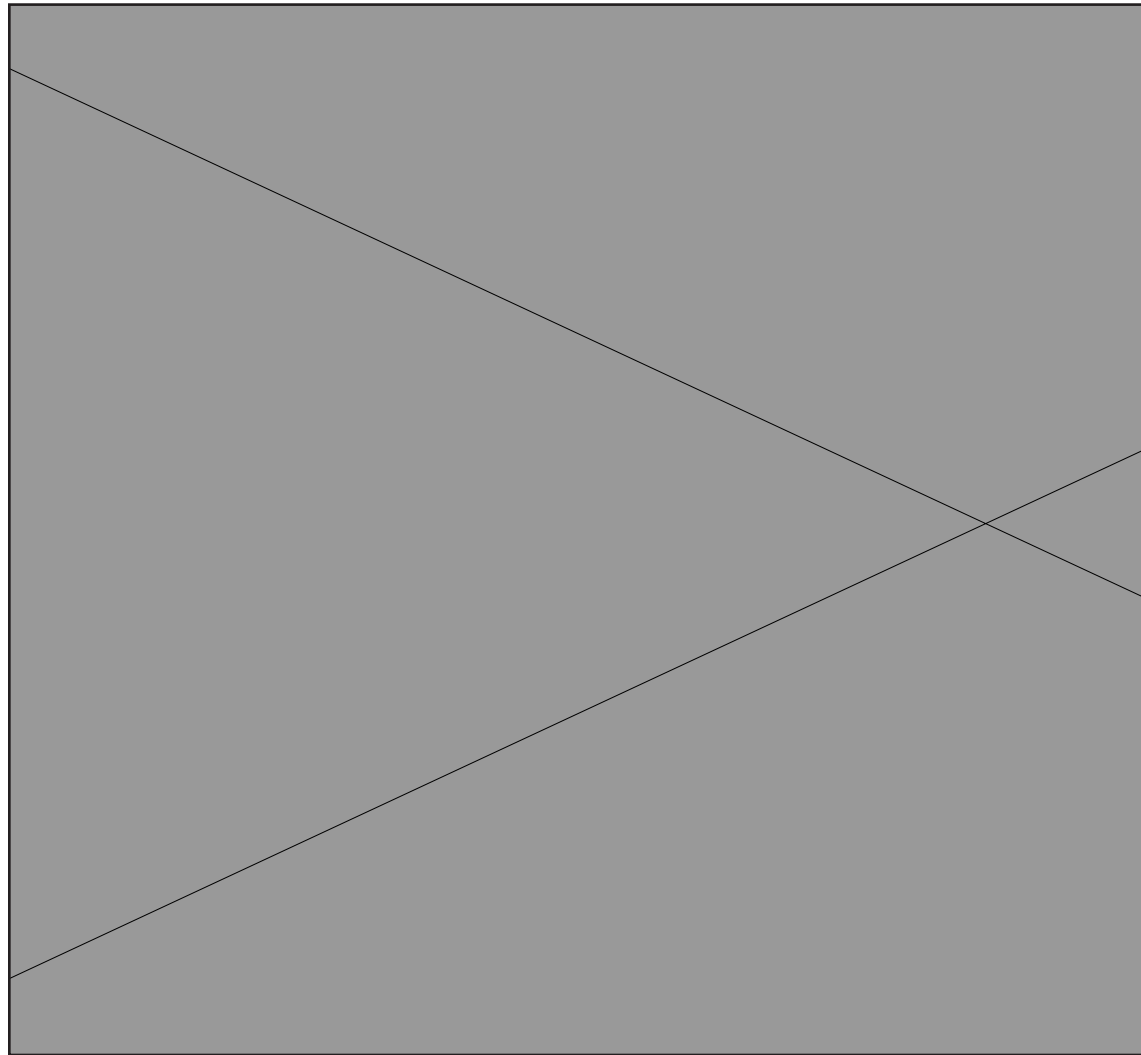
For students who would like to take the course at a more challenging and in-depth level, there is an honors option, which will have the same curriculum and class block as the regular class. The only difference is that the students taking the honors level will be required to complete additional work in the form of projects and discussions.

The topics being addressed and discussed in this course are ones of extreme relevance, as it's important for students to understand the issues surrounding racism and be able to talk about them without feeling judged. Mr. Green emphasizes this point: "I want to make sure that everyone knows it's a welcoming environment for everybody." It's unmistakable that the class will be an engaging and impactful experience that allows students to not only learn the historical aspects, but apply the ideas discussed in class to be relevant in the real world and our community.

## Senior Destinations: Where Our Seniors are Headed Off To!



# Graduation



iPad kids.  
ONLINE SOURCE

## Some Groovy Graduation Anthems

By THERESA NINTZEL '24  
*Spectrum Staff*

It's that time of year again! Summer is just around the corner, and we're getting ready to say goodbye to late-night cramming sessions and overdue English essays. Whether you're an underclassman taking your next step into the realm of high school or a senior feeling nostalgic about your past, we could all use some music to celebrate the milestone that is graduation (don't worry, I won't drill "Pomp and Circumstance" into your head). Over the years, pop music has given us unofficial "anthems" to recognize the occasion—songs that match the mood, emotions, and concepts of graduation so deeply as to become synonymous with the process. These songs come from many genres, and they can all reach the status of a perfect graduation anthem through a variety of factors.

Songs can have a unique outlook on graduation while still being effective. Songs that have poignant, bittersweet lyrics often work well for the occasion, matching the emotions felt by many seniors who have to say goodbye to their friends, teachers, and school. Some examples of these styles are "I Hope You Dance" by Lee Ann Womack and "See You Again" by Charlie Puth and Wiz Khalifa—basically any song you can imagine yourself crying to late at night with a tub of Chunky Monkey in your room. I know country songs can be pretty divisive, but I DARE you not to fall in love with the encouraging yet bittersweet lyrics and orchestration of "I Hope You Dance." The tone of the song is reminiscent of a parent or a close friend advising someone, telling them to live life to the fullest and

to "never take one single breath for granted" no matter what happens. "See You Again" is a Gen Z classic, and the sadness of the song plus the nostalgic factor creates the perfect formula for a bittersweet graduation day. This song conveys the feelings of saying goodbye to friends, some of whom might have become family throughout the years of being in school together. Despite spending a "long day without you, my friend," there is an underlying hope that friends will remain in our lives long after high school is over, and we will have more fun together when we eventually reconnect. Songs that look back on experiences also work perfectly for graduation, such as Green Day's "Good Riddance (Time of Your Life)," an unofficial graduation staple since its release. The passionate lyrics stick with the listener, reminding them of all the amazing memories they'll carry with them in their new phase of life. Even though life is unpredictable and some might be hesitant to leave their old life behind, this song reassures the listener that everything is meant to be. As someone who gets emotional over the little things, I should probably move on from these songs before I start sobbing.

Graduation is a celebration, after all, so why not have some fun songs to accompany the day? The oh-so-iconic "We Are the Champions" by Queen and "We Are Young" by Fun are upbeat and joyous while staying true to the spirit of graduation. Making it through the twists and turns of high school makes everyone a "champion", and the carefree, fun (pun absolutely intended) attitude of "We Are Young" fits perfectly with the ideal mood of the final days of high school. "We Are Young" might not be a super prophetic or deep song,

but it tells us to enjoy the moment, an important message for everyone to hear. Although there are moments when you just want high school to end (I'm looking at you, math summatives), there are also moments when you can "burn brighter than the sun", and it is important to seize the day and make the most out of every minute. Optimistic songs are also great for this reminder, and Natasha Bedingfield's "Unwritten" fits the bill as being a sunshiny anthem of optimism. Look past the confusing lyrics ("Releas[ing] inhibitions"? "Feel[ing] the rain on [my] skin"? I'd rather stay inside, thanks), and you'll find a song that radiates genuine positivity, which is perfect when confronting the small change of a new school year or a major change of graduating from high school. On the topic of fun songs, "I Gotta Feeling" by the Black Eyed Peas is another joyful anthem to enjoy as summer approaches, regardless of what grade you're in. "'I Gotta Feeling' feels like you're proud to move on," says Dhanvi Kalimreddy '24. "The 'good night' that Will.i.Am refers to [in the song] could be interpreted as college or the future in general."

Whether they explore the lighter side of graduation or tearfully say goodbye to the past, the goal of graduation songs is to help you deal with all the emotions that come up during this transition. Graduation is an emotional roller coaster; you're happy and excited about your future while also sad about saying goodbye to your past... gosh this article made me philosophical, and I'm not even a senior yet. Anyway, I'll leave you with this handy Spotify playlist to fulfill your end-of-school year needs. Until next year, that's all folks!

## Advice From '28 to '22

By GRACE CHAI '23, NAKISA RAZBAN '23, & EMILY XU '23  
*Chief Staff*

Oftentimes, when we think about giving advice, we imagine a wise, old soul doling out nifty bits of information to a young person, but what if the roles were reversed? Well, here is the cross-over you never knew you needed: Spectrum staff interviewing sixth graders on graduation advice for seniors! We interviewed them on a variety of topics, so adjust your cap and get ready for wise words from elementary school scholars.

### On Friendships

Elliot - Good at networking  
"I don't really have a lot of experience with graduating, but... just try to make friends as soon as you can [in college], 'cause if that person has other friends, you can make friends with their friends [instead of] spending half the year trying to find friends."

Kianoush - Pensive yet blunt

"Be prepared to possibly never see your friends again."

### On Making Smart Choices

Tyler - Trusts in aging  
"Make good decisions [the way] an adult would."

### On Improvement

Bowen - Future Self-help Author

"Make your time at college better than it was in high school, make it more enjoyable and make it better than it's ever been. It's final: you're not going to school after college. Make something you're happy with and try your very, very, very best!"

### On Self-Care

Ben - Well-rounded and wise  
"I don't feel qualified [to give advice to seniors]. But, make sure you take care of yourself. Be yourself once you go to college. Don't stress."

Minho - Realistic and parental

"Eat your vegetables in college. Don't panic, but don't get crushed by a huge workload."

Matei - Go-with-the-flow mentality master

"Don't really think about it too much; have fun and don't think. That's life; if you mess it up, just go with it. Meet with friends, and keep your sanity."

### On Academic Achievement

Alex - Wise words for the daydreamers

"Just try to focus on school. When you get to college and higher grades, you're going to need to pay attention a lot because in life, you're going to need most of the tools you learn from [the] higher grades [and] up. In elementary school, [it's alright to] mostly have fun, but [you should] still try to learn. If you're in higher grades, you should pay attention more."

### On Sushi

Anoushka - Prioritization Queen  
"Eat sushi because sushi is good."

### On Reaching Your Maximum Potential

Aidan - Darwin Devotee  
"Think of it as the next step

in [your] life, [you] will have reached a maximum potential that [you didn't] think [you] were capable of. [Make use of] opportunities to [reach your personal goals]. Continue to [learn], and you can [think about specific goals you want to reach] later in life. For example, in biology, you can continue to learn and make new discoveries. Hard workers reach their maximum potential earlier than other people."

### On Staying True to Yourself

Megha - Straightforward and fun-loving

"Enjoy your time in college."

Lily - Appreciative of the little things

"Even though you're graduating, it doesn't mean that there's no time to have fun, play around, and be a kid for a bit longer. And remember to eat a ton of candy. That's important. And just to be happy and do what you love; that's what you're doing all this for. Do what you love and be happy doing it."

### Juniors: On Graduating Next Year

Grace - When in denial of aging, wax poetic.

"High school may seem like a blur in the grand expanse of time, but when you zoom in on the memories worth remembering, it makes the whole world burst into color."

Emily - Was-a-COVID-Baby-so-Still-Feel-Like-a-Freshman Syndrome

"Imagine: it's your freshman year, and you walk through the doors of Acton-Boxborough Regional High School, breathing in the stuffy high-school air. You close your eyes, taking in ABRHS' aura, noting that, overall, it's one of youth. You smile, trusting that your high school experience will be much like that aura: bittersweet, with flashes of extreme stress flooding your senses at the most random of times.

You open your eyes. It is the summer before your senior year. You have indeed experienced the highs and lows, the late nights, the sudden outbursts of intense communal stress known as 'AP week,' the walking-to-Dunkin' free periods that have morphed into the walking-to-Lower-for-Chipotle free periods, the occasional nap in class, and plenty of friendships found within the walls of ABRHS. In a split second, three-fourths of your time at the high school has elapsed, and, through it all, you're happy to say that high school hasn't been all that bad. Then, you realize that in exactly one year, you'll be graduating. Heck."

Nakisa - Good at concealing feels  
"Quite frankly, I'm terrified, but it's fine!"

Well, there you have it: a comprehensive interview with the bright young minds of tomorrow about everything from academic advice to musings on the meaning of life. We hope you were enlightened (or at least a little entertained) by this collaboration, and congratulations to the Class of 2022! Or, in the words of one sixth grader: "Nice, you graduated. Enjoy your life."

# Op-Ed

## Smile: A 2022 Senior Speech

By KOHARU AOKI '22  
*Senior Speech*

Good evening everyone! I hope you are enjoying this very special night. Everyone do me a favor right now and smile. Flash me your biggest, most beautiful smile. It's okay if you have tears in your eyes from being so proud of your little kid all grown up. Ok, awesome, you all look fantastic—hold it there for a few more seconds, look around at the wonderful people surrounding you: classmates, family, friends, teachers. Just take a second to appreciate whatever role they play in your life.

Perfect, thank you! Now why did I have you do that?

Because I can. And I'm being perfectly honest with you all! I just made a hundred or so people smile because I wanted to and I can. I never saw myself as the type of person to give a speech in front of a huge crowd at graduation, but I went along and submitted a draft because I wanted to and could put a smile on people's faces. Mission accomplished, that's all I have for you today.

Just kidding, but what I've gradually realized throughout high school is that there are so many things you can do to make people smile, just because you can.

I think in this world we get caught up in what people think of us and forget to remember what life is about. It's about enjoying the passage of time, the whole process of it on a day to day basis, as well as reflecting on the grand scheme of a lifetime. I'm sure we've all seen those posters in classrooms with quotes saying that it's not what shoes you wore or jeans you bought that matter, but what you learned and how you use it. So here's what I learned and I'm choosing to share it.

Now, our class is certainly a special one. So much has happened within our community and outside of AB these past few years, and I'm sure all of us have grown into different people since that last day of middle school four years ago. I started high school as a tiny 4 foot 11 kid with a full on bowl cut. Now, since then, I've grown a lot. I'm a full one inch taller and my hair no longer resembles a crash helmet!

Mentally, on the other hand, in these past four years in school, I've learned to smile more. I learned that there is almost nothing better than fully being in a moment with a smile on your face. What tops that is smiling with other people.

I've learned that, yes there are times to be serious, but the rest of the time? Why not have fun with life. There's a whole world that you can interact with, and once in a while, I'm reminded of that thought and it sparks up excitement.

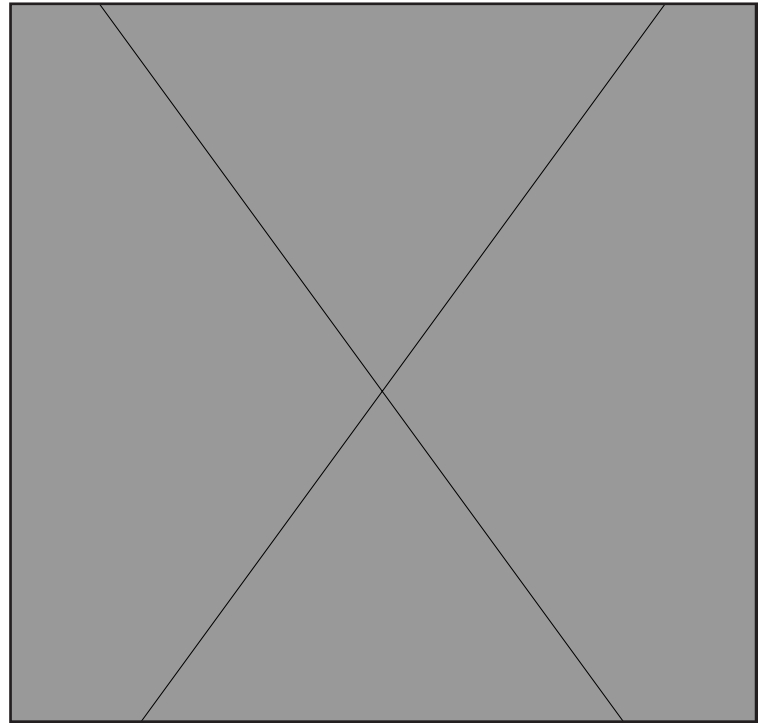
There's this crazy thing called nature. Think about how much time went into the evolution of a few cells to be able to suck up nutrients from the ground and air to form every leaf, flower, fruit, and tree. There's rodents and birds and insects that survive the very wicked wacky New England weather that we love and struggle with. Appreciate its beauty! Go play in it! Explore! Be kids again! Run around, build forts, skip rocks, make acorn whistles! Have fun!

Then there's other people! I've always explored nature, but it took me a while into high school to realize I can just simply interact with other humans! If it's not going to harm anyone, you can just go up to people and be friendly. With every tick of the clock, we are sharing time with

the people around us, yet at the same time they each have their very own life. You really don't know what's going on in theirs, and no one fully knows what is going on in yours, either. So be kind. Spread the smiles. Don't be afraid to be a little ridiculous either. The worst that happens is it makes someone think you're a little unique, and the best case scenario is that you make someone smile or you make a friend.

I don't have a dog, but I keep a bag of treats on hand to give to people with dogs. My friends and I decided to wear themed outfits the last few weeks of school. We did tropical, cowboy, onesies, and probably have gone to classes with tinfoil on our heads at some point. Why? For fun. To make ourselves and onlookers smile. This year, I've fully absorbed that this is our final year of going to school with this group of people, so I tried to make the most out of the time and talk to everyone. I've met so many absolutely amazing people that I will remember for the rest of my life and had the most fun this year because of them. Find those friends that halve your sorrows and double your joy. An inverse relationship if you will. Shoutout to the math department!

These are the little things you can do just because it's fun and will make people smile and in my experience, it has made me smile a lot more and appreciate the gift of living. Graduating is synonymous with growing up, but I think it's okay to stay young in some aspects. Continue to grow and mature, but don't forget that the whole world exists and you have every right to play and be curious. Do things that make yourself and others smile just because you can. Stay young and congratulations AB Class of 22!



Podcast, announcer. Potato, po-tah-toe.  
ONLINE SOURCE

## Take the Step: Speech

By AARON WRIGHT '22  
*Senior Speech*

Good Morning AB (in the voice of morning announcements)! Wow, I'll miss that. Actually, I guess it's time to say goodbye. I'm Aaron Wright, and I'd like to take this opportunity to share some thoughts I've had about this upcoming stage in our lives.

When I was in elementary school, I thought by the time we graduated, we'd have hover cars, personal robots, time travel, and those cool machines that 3D print any food that you could possibly want at a moment's notice. While none of this has come to fruition, it goes to show we really don't know what the future holds for us. Heck, who knew we'd be living through a pandemic, attending classes online, and frantically waking up only to find out today was your asynchronous day. Many of us are curious about what the future holds once we depart AB and begin our lives in a new environment. It's a change that will test our limits, our courage, our grit. The class of 2022 is special, as the pandemic curated a class of innocent sophomores on March 13, 2020, into well-equipped and ingenious thinkers. As we turn the page into this next chapter of our lives, I'd like us to remind ourselves of the importance of being adaptable and how it not only relates to making ourselves comfortable, but to be willing to accept and embrace change.

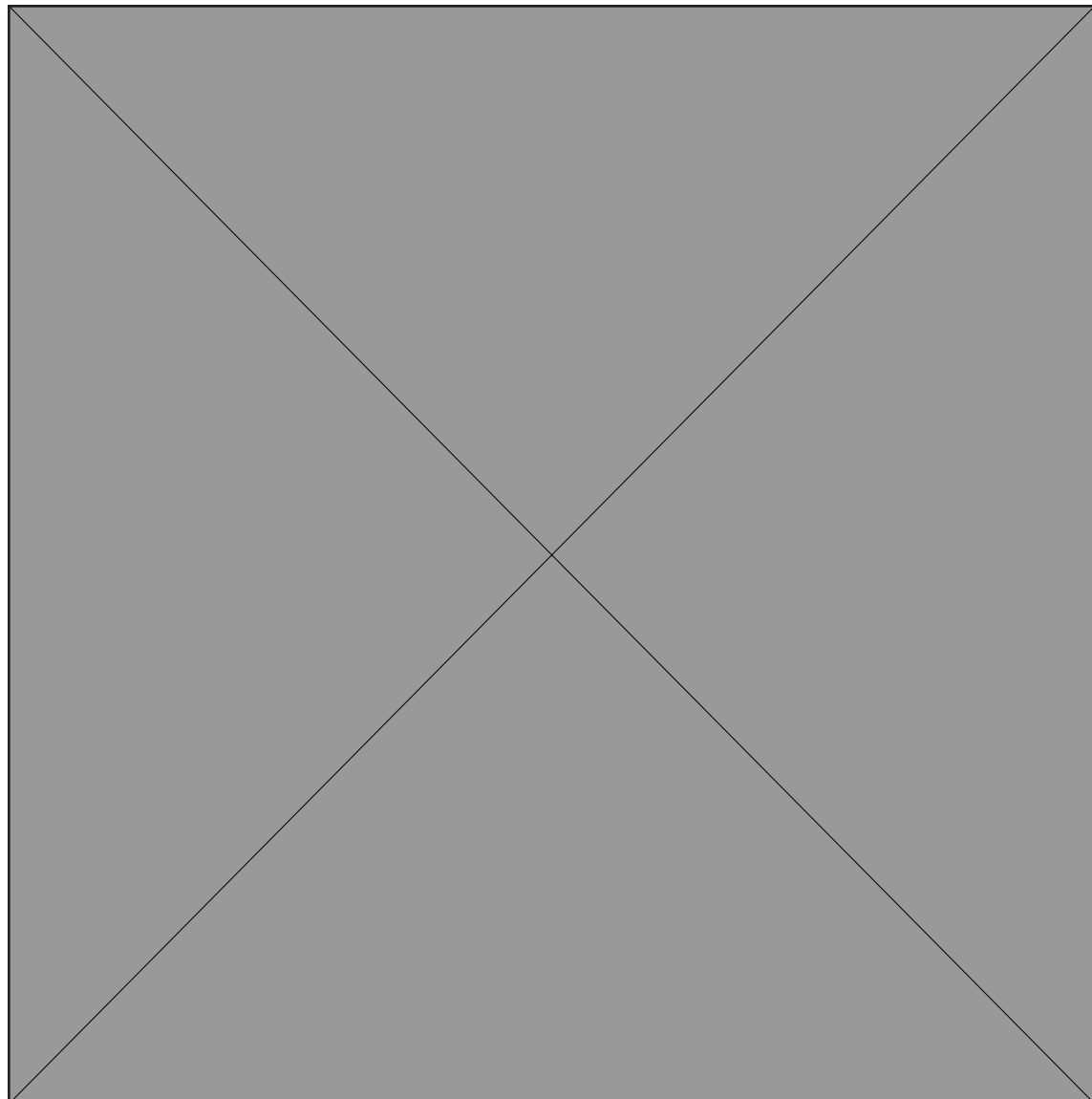
I remember walking into the school to pick up my Chromebook when they first introduced the initiative. I recall passing the Lower Gym and seeing rows and rows of desks, perfectly aligned in the center to accommodate students for socially distant lunches. The setup felt dystopian, to say the least; however, I realized at that moment how important than ever it was to be able to accept the changes around us. When we begin our journeys to adulthood in just a few short months, we must keep in mind that nothing around us is familiar. That overwhelming feeling of newness can be breathtaking, distressing, and even exhausting. If we continue to let these emotions define our transitions, we will never be able to comfortably adjust into our new environment. How can we adapt if we fail to recognize that the changes over the next few months are inevitable, real, and necessary? We can't. To begin to adapt, we must accept that changes are happening.

Acknowledging change is the first step to overcoming the hardships of adaptation. However, to seize the mo-

ment, garner the courage to find new creative outlets, foster new relationships, and feel confident in your own abilities is an essential next step in our transition. This step we must all take is embracing the change. Welcoming an adjustment with open arms and reaping the benefits from its affectionate grip on your mindset. It's a powerful tool that can only be wielded by an individual who's willing to undergo change. Without accepting that our lives will be different heading forward, we can not undergo the process of bettering ourselves and maturing into the people we were destined to be. As painful as this journey may be, it's for our own good. Whether you realize it or not, all of us have undergone changes over the past four years. We've moved from trend to trend on TikTok, from cash to crypto, even from the sandwich bar in the cafeteria to the pre-made sandwiches which by the way, I am still so upset by.

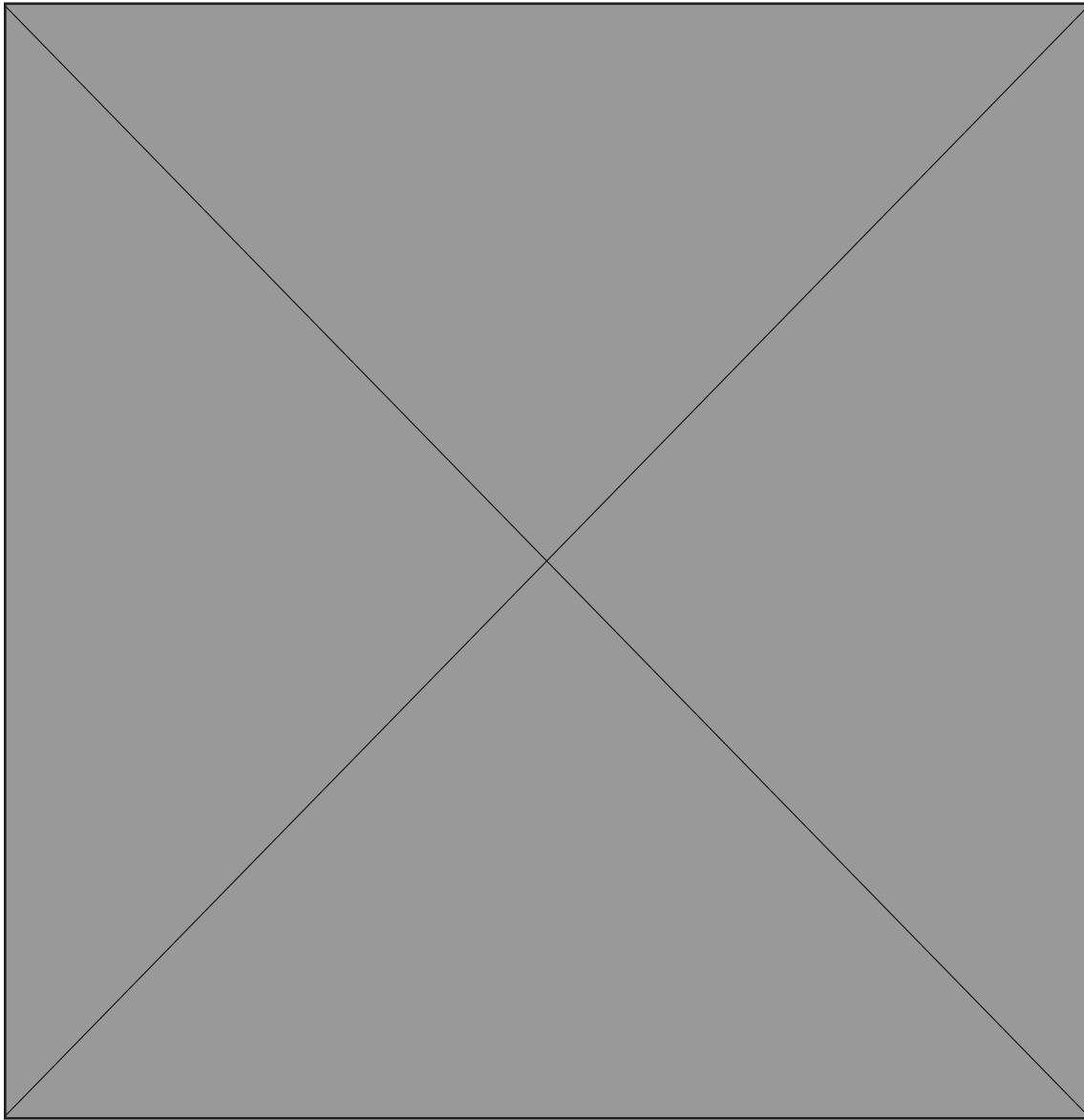
The class of 2022 has faced many ups and downs over the last twelve years of our lives, and we are sure to face many more over the next one hundred as well. So, as we embark on our journeys, we must keep in mind that change is beneficial. To become the greatest versions of ourselves, we must be willing to accept and embrace the changes surrounding us. Take a moment to remind yourself that your attitude when facing the challenge of adjustment is the only thing getting in the way between order and chaos throughout the process. By simply approaching the challenge with a defeatist mindset, you are limiting your potential to flourish, because nothing worth having is easy to obtain.

With that, I will always remember the tenacity our class has displayed in such trying times. They told us the pandemic made us incapable, incompetent, and unprepared to face the real world, when in fact, we're just warming up. Today is a celebration of our achievements, and proof that we can do anything we set our minds to. Our ability to find the good in things when we face unpleasantness, and the diligence we exhibit, as we continue striving to make our dreams come true, reaching our goals, and fulfilling our desires, will be something I will never forget about our class. I have no doubt that each and everyone of you will be able to take full advantage of the change that is coming. Congratulations Class of 2022. I look forward to seeing the amazing things we accomplish in the fast approaching future. Thank you.



Go on into that great big world!  
ONLINE SOURCE

## Op-Ed



A toxic relationship: Exhibit A.  
ONLINE SOURCE

## Neon Nudity: A *Euphoria* Paradox

By ALICIA GU '23  
*Spectrum Staff*

**Trigger Warning:** non-graphic descriptions of underage sex work and sexualization of minors

Whether you've watched the show yourself or seen the entire plot unfold through TikTok edits, you have most likely found yourself enthralled by *Euphoria*'s drama, which returned in January after two years of anticipation. *Euphoria*'s visually stunning storytelling has seemingly created its own genre, featuring complex characters decked out in glittery, neon makeup shot on film cameras. This HBO series is centered around Rue, a 17-year-old drug addict and the intertwined storylines of those around her. However, from Cassie and Maddie throwing it down to the maddeningly slow burn of Fez and Lexi (aka Fexi), *Euphoria*'s second season introduced unexpected plotlines that intrigued some—and appalled others. Despite the show's explosive success, creator Sam Levinson has faced a surge of criticism due to the very scenes that gave *Euphoria* its relevance; *Euphoria*'s reliance on beautiful, dark visuals inevitably results in the romanticization of dangerous themes for emotional shock value, therefore contributing to the misogyny it attempts to critique.

The most common praise for *Euphoria* stems from its vivid portrayal of teenage experiences; the show never hesitates to illustrate raw scenes, distinguishing it from countless other teen dramas. However, while common topics such as addiction and sexual deviance are shown to be the underlying sources of trauma for many characters, other characters seem unaffected. Obvious examples include Kat's part-time job as a camgirl, performing erotic acts online for clients, and Jules' sexual activities with older

men, both of which serve as outlets for the characters to cope with inner turmoil. While season one portrays an insecure Kat "getting that bag" by seducing men online, her endeavors are never mentioned in Season 2. The portrayal of underage sex work as "empowering" implies that camgirling is a way for teenagers to reclaim their sexuality and make easy cash, as Kat's supposed sexual liberation supersedes all the long-lasting trauma that young girls in the sex industry face from being groomed and sexualized by older men. Similarly, throughout Season 1, Jules has sex with older men as part of her journey to conquer femininity, yet no lasting emotional effects are addressed later, despite the fact that she was repeatedly exploited as a 17-year-old without the ability to consent. *Euphoria* does diverge from its blatant romanticization of harmful behaviors by illustrating the emotional damage of Rue's drug addiction, but Levinson's attempts at character development for the other girls leaves much to be desired. *Euphoria*'s depiction of minors engaging sexually with adults as a form of empowerment and profit is dangerous due to its inherent romanticization of nonconsent, crafting a false narrative for young girls who do not yet fully grasp the sex industry's exploitative nature. Viewers should question who truly benefits from illegal sexual activities: girls like Kat and Jules, or the men who take advantage of them?

Another way that *Euphoria* perpetuates harmful expectations of teenage sex is its tendency to force its actresses into extremely explicit scenes. The hypersexualization of female characters is nothing new (e.g. Megan Fox in *Transformers*); Hollywood was built to cater to the male gaze, with white men producing 95% of films. Although the series was written to parallel his own struggles with addiction, Levinson's ability to identify with his characters

ends there, severely undermining his handling of female representation. He follows the age-old trend of male directors exploiting women's bodies for viewership in a manner that men are not subject to: there are no close-up shots detailing every inch of Nate Jacobs' glittering body under neon lights like there are for Cassie. Yes, both male and female nudity appear in every episode, but the angles, editing, and implications of the scenes are wildly different. Some argue that Levinson's intent is to force viewers to see Cassie in the way that men who objectify her do; however, his obsession with showing her nude in every episode is excessive and unproductive in an industry that profits off of that tendency. There is a fine line between subtle commentary and perhaps unintentional reinforcement of misogynistic ideas ingrained in pop culture, and Levinson crosses that line every episode. By glamorizing underage sex work and painting female characters as subservient to the male fantasy, *Euphoria* contributes to the objectification of young girls in media by directly participating in it.

While *Euphoria*'s depictions of teenagers fail to diverge from Hollywood's norms as some claim, these aren't reasons to boycott the show altogether. The show is a rare source of comfort for many teens who see themselves in the suffering of characters like Rue, Lexi, Kat, and even Nate. However, viewers should at least be aware of the subtle misogyny written into the vast majority of media today due to its overwhelming influence on large audiences.

If you are looking for more shows/movies like *Euphoria* that are written by women and maintain a similar sense of raw teenage crudity, some suggestions are *Sex Education*, *The End of the F\*\*\*ing World*, *Grand Army*, and *Lady Bird*.

## The Anti-LGBTQ Bills

By AVNI MISHRA '23  
*Reporting Team Leader*

The front entrance of ABRHS teemed with students and faculty, all walking out of their fifth period class. The weather was perfect: warm and sunny—a juxtaposition to the unnerving reason the national walk-out was organized for. On March 11, hundreds of AB students protested the "Don't Say Gay" bill after it was passed by Florida's senate on March 8th. The bill is part of a disturbing trend of heterosexist legislation passed in recent years: in 2022, more anti-LGBTQ+ laws have been signed into law than ever before. This direction of law-making is incredibly harmful for LGBTQ+ youth by restricting access to educational resources and mental health support, and will amplify issues of heterosexism on a national level.

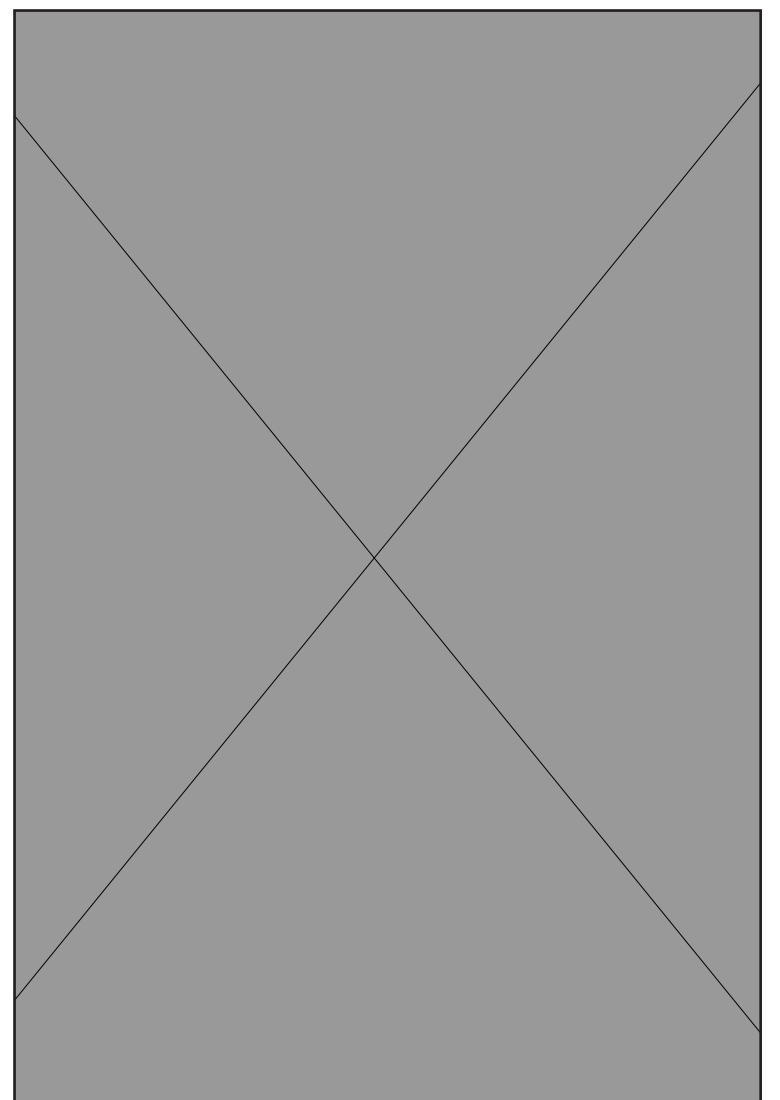
The "Don't Say Gay" Bill (officially known as House Bill 1557, Parental Rights in Education Bill) prohibits the discussion of gender and sexuality in third grade classrooms and below. Since its creation, copycat bills in Georgia, Tennessee, and Kansas have followed. Moreover, in Texas, Governor Greg Abbott called upon Child Protective Services to investigate doctors and parents of trans minors, asserting that gender-affirming care is "child abuse." While it is not a bill, the investigations have led clinics to stop providing gender-affirming care and left families terrified of being separated. All of these anti-queer actions share a common thread: they target children, which is especially disturbing when examining these bills' effect.

These measures aim to limit resources and education of queer identities, creating an environment in which queer children are told their identities do not belong in a classroom setting, preventing them from speaking about and seeking help for their problems. LGBTQ+ youth already experience heightened mental

health related issues, according to the Human Rights Campaign Foundation, gay individuals are twice as likely to suffer from mental health disorders than heterosexual people, and trans individuals are four times as likely to suffer from mental health disorders than cisgender people. By cutting off a source of assistance, these numbers threaten to increase. Additionally, by enforcing these ideologies on young queer people, this internalized heterosexism can remain with them into adulthood, possibly preventing them from ever getting help.

These laws not only affect queer children but also instill hatred and ignorance in all students. By challenging the discussion of queer identity but allowing the discussion of cis heterosexual identity, education now promotes "othering" LGBTQ+ people, or categorizing LGBTQ+ identities as inappropriate and unworthy of inclusion. There is no room for deviation from the cisgender and heterosexual norm. These teachings remain with children for the rest of their lives, bringing up a generation of people who were taught that discriminating based on sexual and gender identities is valid.

Despite how bleak the future of LGBTQ+ rights may seem, there are preventative measures that can be taken to ensure a brighter future. Signing petitions to combat these bills is an excellent first step. From there, we can reach out to our local representatives and senators via phone or email and compel them to take action. We should also support queer people who may be in need of reassurance during this difficult time: even expressing resistance to these discriminatory bills on social media is a good way to renounce and amplify the problem. Just look at the progressive pride flag flying high over the main entrance of ABRHS; a community can come together to fight injustice and ensure a better future for all of its citizens.



A queer pride parade.  
ONLINE SOURCE

# Op-Ed

## Should Russian Athletes be Banned from Sporting Events?

By AVNI MISHRA '23  
Reporting Team Leader

In Eastern Europe, violence rages as Russian forces attack the streets of major Ukrainian cities and towns. The international conflict coincides with a cross section of many global sporting events. However, as the struggle between Ukraine and Russia escalates while events like the World Cup proceed, a new debate topic comes into question: Is it fair to punish the athletes of a nation for their leader's actions? The answer, like the general discourse over the morality of war, is uncertain. Neither side is completely moral, but it is ultimately in the interest of international security to implement sporting bans on Russian competitors.

Over the past few months, multiple sporting organizations have prohibited Russian athletes from participating in their events. FIFA suspended the Russian soccer team from qualifying for the World Cup, the Paralympics banned Russian and

Belarusian athletes, and Formula One, a popular racing competition, rescinded their contract to host the Grand Prix in Sochi. The International Olympics Committee, having already ended their 2022 Winter Games, strongly suggested that other sporting organizations ban Russian athletes from participating—or, at the very least, make them compete individually. Multiple organizations for rugby, tennis, ice hockey, basketball, and other sports have followed suit.

These bans can aid in denouncing the actions of a country; when global organizations unite in opposition to Russia, it sends Russian government officials the message that their actions will not be tolerated by the rest of the world. The platform of sporting events is particularly effective against President Vladimir Putin who has prided himself on Russian accomplishments and funded many events in soccer, racing, martial arts, and many more, so long as they are hosted in Moscow, Sochi, or St. Petersburg.

In this manner, trade sanctions behave similarly. After Russia's initial invasion on February 22nd, the U.S., France, Australia, and other countries have placed 4,362 sanctions on Russia. These sanctions are projected to cripple the Russian economy; inflation rates are predicted to rise by 20%, and unemployment is expected to double. Further, imported goods are not entering the country, leaving Russia with a shortage of supplies. Shoppers are panicking out supermarkets and stores, worsening the situation. These sanctions represent the world's rejection of Putin's actions; however, the people bearing the consequences are citizens who did not call for an invasion of Ukraine. Banning Russian athletes seems far more reasonable than trade sanctions that drastically affect a larger number of people. For the Olympics, an event that was founded on global peace and unity through sports, taking these measures only reinforces their ideals. As such, other international sport-

ing events that promote unity should follow suit and prohibit Russian athletes.

Nonetheless, an argument can be made for the opposition. An individual does not inherently reflect the actions of their government and punishing the citizens does little to affect the policies of Putin's administration. Furthermore, by banning all Russian athletes, we risk taking a platform away from those who oppose Putin's actions. For example, on February 25th, Russian tennis player Andrey Rublev wrote "No War Please" on the camera following his semi-final match. His message made headlines and shed light on the Russian citizens' thoughts and wishes over this conflict. In removing all Russian influence, we remove powerful voices like Rublev's. Additionally, by equating the Russian government's actions to those of the citizens, we risk creating xenophobic attitudes towards Russian people. This circumstance has occurred before during the

Second World War, when Japanese Americans were put into internment camps after the U.S. declared war on Japan, creating lasting prejudice and discrimination that continues to affect Japanese Americans today.

This debate rages alongside Russia's attacks on the Ukrainian people. In the midst of conflict, it is difficult to discern between unfair and necessary punishment. While we grapple with the correct course of action, we must also ask how this impacts the innocent lives affected by war. If we take the offensive stance and punish Russia, we affect innocent civilians who might also oppose the war. If we take the defensive stance and let Russia go, we force more Ukrainians to flee their homes and take refuge for safety. In either situation, the lives of innocent people are subjected to cruelty and injustice. At the end of the day, the only way to end these conflicts among citizens is to end the conflicts among the governments.

## Pay-nful Paywall Issues

By EDDY ZHAO '25  
Spectrum Staff

You've just discovered the best source for your English essay, and you're confident it will earn you an A. It's even from a reputable source: *The New York Times*! As you scroll down to read your newfound information, a message interrupts you: For just \$4 every four weeks, subscribe now! And just like that, your aspirations of perusing that fabulous source are crushed.

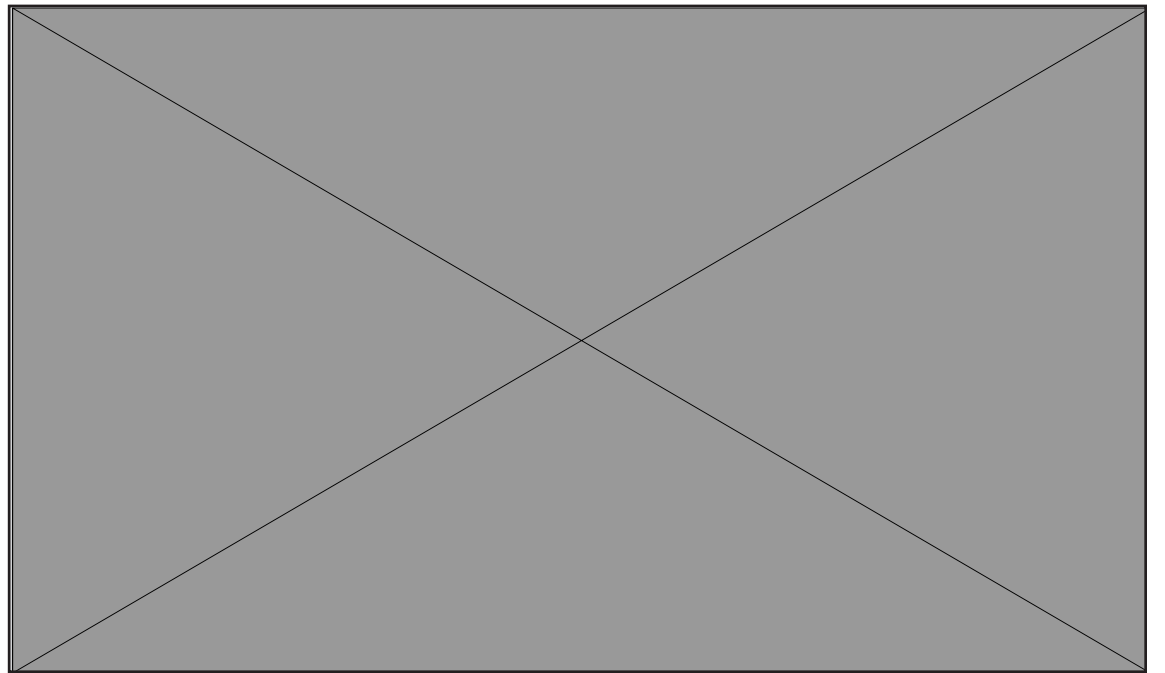
Pop-up messages requiring users to pay for accessing content are known as paywalls. Popularized in the last decade, they are an irritating new addition to newspapers and other sources, allowing them to make more money while delivering the same content found in a physical paper. Despite the ease of obtaining information for free online, businesses employ multiple strategies to convert the normal consumer into a paying subscriber. However, paywalls ultimately do more harm to society than good, generating a slew of problems that will degrade the quality of the news you have been reading.

As the world shifts to a digital environment, news sites are resorting to paywalls to profit without income from advertising. Since many people now use ad blockers, which improve their quality of life at the advertisers' expense, news organizations can't generate revenue from digital advertising. The solution? A paywall. Most businesses limit users to a certain number of articles each month, and once they are hooked, they force readers to pay to see more. This development is becoming increasingly popular among media giants; according to the Reuters Institute, more than 69 percent of major newspapers in the European Union and the U.S. now have online paywalls, a trend that has accelerated since 2017. Particularly in the U.S., the paywall's profitability has increased from 60 percent to 76 percent.

Although paywalls supply vital funding to news organizations, they cause major issues with the spread of news through-

out society. For example, they decrease the amount of real news available on the web for free. According to Techdirt, "people who pay for news in the US are on average wealthier and more educated than those who don't." This move directly restricts information from reaching a large portion of the population. As a result of information restriction, the amount of exposure to fake news on the web is also increasing. After all, the goal of fake news writers is to attract a large audience to their phony pieces, and limiting access to actual news only aids in their success. The American Press Institute maintains that most people start subscribing to news in order to gain expertise about a certain topic, and paywalls prevent people from receiving the information they need—they may even lead to people getting incorrect information. For students, who are developing a sense of self, it also leads to poorer grades, harmful health decisions, and other decision-making factors, according to Austin Community College. Fake news influences reputation and beliefs, which can polarize, causing more divisive political or social movements and protests.

The paywall is a socially damaging mechanism. While it allows news organizations to profit, it also limits the amount of real news available to individuals who cannot afford a subscription. This goes against journalism's primary value, spreading accurate facts and information around the world. Newspapers, however, require a consistent source of funding in order to continue providing the high-quality journalism that so many people expect. A compromise can be found through alternatives: requiring adblockers to be disabled, content bundling, and pay-per-view articles allow users to access the material they need while also supporting news sources. Paywalls continue to envelop the world of journalism for the time being, but hopefully one day we will be able to obtain information and support our favorite news sources without spending a dime.



Satoshi Nakamoto! Come out, come out, wherever you are!  
ONLINE SOURCE

## Bitcoin: The Currency of the Future?

By MEI SHAO '25  
Spectrum Staff

Bitcoin. Ethereum. Dogecoin. Squid coin. I'm sure you've already heard of at least one of these names before—they're synonymous with the wonderful world of cryptocurrency! In an ever-evolving world, cryptocurrency might prove to be more than just a meme: it may be the currency of the near future.

Cryptocurrency, or crypto for short, first popped up in 2009 with the potential to change the way we spend. It's a form of digital currency that is hosted on a decentralized platform, which means that a community hosts it instead of a single government or group of banks.

Why do these traits matter? First, decentralization proves its worth when faced with the common causes of financial crisis. For example, in the financial crisis of 2008 (only a year before crypto's first appearance), John Lawrence, an author and speaker, commented that "wealth had become hyper-concentrated in firms considered 'too big to fail' without bringing down the entire economy."

Essentially, people put all their trust in banks to do the right thing. This system toppled when unsavory banks committed unsavory acts at the wrong place and time, sending the economy into a fi-

ancial crisis. Our system then begins to look a little precarious: why should we continue to put all our faith in an organization to do the right thing? This is where crypto comes in. Since it's hosted by a whole community of people, trusting Bitcoin, the largest form of crypto, means putting your trust in 106 million individuals across the globe with separate interests, rather than a handful of banks. To inflate crypto and trigger a financial crisis, a sizable chunk of these individuals would need to get deluded at once, and though pessimists might argue otherwise, such an event is unlikely. Thus, by using crypto, we will be able to avoid financial crises—or perhaps prevent them altogether.

Further, unlike a Franklin that you can see and touch, crypto is entirely digital. This trait proves its worth against misplacement, privacy issues, and even counterfeit, along with any other physical threat that might threaten physical currency. According to the FBI, there were 2,440 bank robberies (burglaries and larcenies included) committed in 2019, resulting in the loss of ~482 million dollars. These dangers can be entirely avoided by transitioning to a digital currency that only exists in zeroes and ones. Though the practice of hacking insecure places of crypto exchange is becoming widespread, properly

secured networks are extremely unlikely to get hacked. Therefore, the digital nature of crypto is more secure and efficient than regular currency.

Based on my exaltations of cryptocurrency, you might be wondering, "Why the heck aren't more people using it?" As it turns out, crypto has some fair criticisms, one being that not all forms of crypto are well established; in fact, some are deliberate scams designed to steal your money. One such example is OneCoin. Its "founder," Ruja Ignatova, advertised the so-called "Bitcoin killer" all over the world, drawing in many investors. However, the coin was an elaborate scheme valued at about four billion dollars. Ignatova disappeared and ran off with the money as the warrant for her arrest was filed. Trust is a commodity, and as a result of many scams, there still isn't a lot of it to go around for crypto, which confines it to niche spaces on the Internet.

As scams arise, however, we can take steps to educate ourselves by being sensitive to sketchy situations. Then, we can build up crypto's trust reservoir. Educate yourself and the people around you with credible sources such as Investopedia, and maybe, very soon in the future, you'll be able to walk into McDonalds and buy a Big Mac with your favorite type of crypto.



# Off-Topic

## Love Doc: A Senior's Last Hurrah

By JULIA KUANG '22  
Columnist

Ah. Aah. Aaaaaah. AHHH-HHHHHHHHH. The time has come...the time has finally come for me to say goodbye to the beLOVED, incredibly well-written Love Doctor column at the Acton-Boxborough Regional High School's prestigious *The Spectrum* newspaper club. The complex emotions I'm feeling right now are hard to verbalize, but I'm dedicating this article as a love letter to this column. Yep, you heard it here folks—this is a HEARTfelt love letter to you all from the love doctor. Think of it as my final stand. I'm retiring.

First off, I'd love to give a HEART-y shoutout to my dear, dear successor Dr. Gu. She's way too overqualified for this job and

you all will be in a pair of very LOVEly hands. She graduated from HEARTvard so you know she's legit. Dr. Gu, I sense the coming of a new era of Love Doc, filled with joy and delight. It'll bring forth world peace. But for realties, thank you so much. I have high hopes and good faith you'll astound the world with your wonderful love expertise.

To my last three years as Love Doc and you lovely, lovely readers (yes, all two of you!): thank you for sticking around. It's been good. There have been days (even for someone as perfect as me, who knew?) when I've reflected and regretted getting a doctorate in loveology. Will I ever be able to pay back half a million in student loans? Probably not, considering the pennies that this column never paid

me. But at least I had fun with it, haha! And most importantly, I had a lot of fun giving advice to you all. I'll be sad to see this part of my life end.

But alas, there are bigger and better things out there for me! I'm getting another degree today, hopefully. While I may have somehow regressed back to being a high school senior, I will genuinely look back at my Love Doctor years with fond memories. Now, I have one last confession I've been holding in for all these years: I actually write these high—high on life! Substance abuse is an absolute no-no and don't you EVER forget that. And with that...congrats to the class of 2022 (and me, duh)! Don't miss me too much, but keep me in mind as you go forth with your romantic endeavors.

## Love Doc: Wild Summer Edition

By ALICIA GU '23  
Columnist

Welcome back, loyal readers! You're probably wondering where Dr. Kuang is. Sadly, she is retiring after three years of giving you hopeless romantics some much-needed advice... which means that I'll be your Love Doc for the next year! Thanks to our beloved Editor-in-Chief Emily Xu for coercing me into this, and shout out Julia for being a legend. If you find yourself doubting my ability to get you boo-ed up, my qualifications consist of the following: I used to live tweet every episode of *Love Island USA* (and earned a respectable 11 followers), and I've watched an unhealthy amount of K-dramas/romance anime. 'Nuff said.

In any case, YOU'VE MADE IT! No more school, APs, or rolling out of bed at 7:55 a.m. (if you're chronically tardy like me) for the next two months. So, now that the senior/Term Four slide is over, it's time for the more important type of sliding—sliding into those DMs! Let's get started.

Q. My partner and I will both be traveling over the summer, and I'm scared we'll drift apart... what do I do?

Summer can be a challenge for many couples, no matter how strong they

think their relationship is. I'd recommend that you either tattoo your name somewhere on their body while they're asleep, spam Game Pigeons to them every 30 minutes, or wait until you both return and hit them in the head with a baseball bat so that they forget about the entire summer. It'll be like nothing ever happened; and, if they somehow suffer permanent damage, did they even really love you?

Q. If I see a hottie in the wild, do I ask for their Snap, IG, or number?

Yes, the holy trinity of simpery. Classic, and boring. Here are some alternatives:

If you're planning for the future: LinkedIn

If you want to feel young again: Google Chats

If they look like they'd make thirst traps: TikTok

If you want to get red flags out of the way: Reddit

Q. How do I find a placeholder for my hallway crush over the summer?

Find the nearest boba shop in an area and make sure you look hot—like, even hotter than you normally are. As in Twice-concert-bound-with-backstage-tick-

ets hot. Most importantly, make sure you feel hot; I recommend putting on some Megan Thee Stallion in the car.

After you arrive, order a passion fruit green tea boba with lychee jelly—class recognizes class—and pretend to do your summer reading or read any book (people might get suspicious—no one starts summer reading until the week before school). Now, all you have to do is wait for the perfect person to walk in, and once they do, stare at them inconspicuously. If you followed Step 1, they'll probably ask for your number (or your LinkedIn, if they're really 'the one') too. Boom!

If you're too lazy to do all that, just watch the new *Spy x Family* episode. It will give you pretty much the same effect.

Well... IT'S OVER! Both this school year and this first attempt at a Love Doc column. Congratulations to all of you seniors! I hope I was able to impart some of my wisdom upon some of you before you leave for college. GU-d luck in your romantic and educational endeavors, and I hope you find happiness and fulfillment in whatever you do.

Dr. Gu, PhD  
HEARTvard University

## English Curric Review

By OLIVIA HU '22  
Managing Editor

Four years of English have unearthed a slew of short stories, novels, and poems (unfortunately) for my reading pleasure. While the curriculum itself is under reform (why are these white, male, straight authors still out here gatekeeping?), there are a few reads worth noting. For my lovely freshmen, consider this a preview for the coming years; and seniors, join me on a stroll down memory lane as I present to you my unabashedly biased review of AB's English curriculum books.

Books by William Shakespeare

First up is our resident girlboss/weird uncle, William Shakespeare. It's really a vicious cycle with him, and this honeymoon phase ain't gonna last. You see, Hamlet was a success. Willie covered themes of depression, regret, and supernatural all with a dash of artistically unhinged chaos. Overlooking the ridiculous plot points, like when Hamlet is rescued by a pack of friendly pirates, it's hard not to enjoy the jaw-dropping, book-throwing, chandelier-swinging (in the 1996 film adaptation only) blowout of a finale.

My issue with Willie is that he never treats his female characters right: is he critiquing gender norms or plainly abusing these fictional women? (Spoilers ahead!) You see, Hamlet's Ophelia, an innocent young lady, gets thoroughly gaslit, loses her entire immediate family, goes insane, and dies. Very sad. Post-mortem, however, her legacy is commemorated in poems, paintings, and music worldwide. Comparatively, in *Macbeth*, Lady Macbeth starts off a boss, using her husband to gain political power. But she unfortunately goes crazy, haunted by guilt and regret, and also dies. And in *Romeo and Juliet*, well, we all know how that one ends. See the trend here? Willie walks a fine line with these women, and I struggle to take his side.

1984 - George Orwell & *A Brave New World* - Aldous Huxley

I pair these two ironic reads, not because their authors are both British and have notably large foreheads, but because both narratives double as social commentary. Set in dystopian worlds ruled by somewhat totalitarian governments, the two books examine relevant topics such as consumerism, propaganda, manipulation, and emotional repression. Without giving too much away (because the plot twists are UN-

REAL), the books feature generally relatable characters (though either lovable or hateable) who struggle to navigate their humanity. Their actions prompt us to reflect on our current society: are the exaggerated plot details—think phobia torture rooms, mass producing babies, hypnotic sleep-teaching, and being forced to wear the same outfit every day—really that bizarre and inapplicable to our daily lives? That wasn't a rhetorical question; both novels left me questioning our societal norms and the flawed systems we perpetuate.

*The Remains of the Day* - Kazuo Ishiguro

Unpopular opinion: this book is not as dry as a saltine cracker! Haters, try reading between the lines next time. This masterpiece is narrated by protagonist Stevens, a twentieth century butler at Darlington Hall. Ishiguro threads the narrative with undisguised commentary on the World Wars, generational divides, and English aristocracy. Yet, amidst the social criticism, the book is filled with allegories and subtle plotlines: it's a convoluted stream of consciousness or a delicate love story; it's the diary of a crusty walnut of a man, or an exploration of dignity, regret, and finding joy beyond the glimmers of youth. Essentially, it's art, if you give Stevens a moment to speak his mind. Closing the back cover prompted a wave of nostalgia, melancholy, and an unexpected desire to improve my British accent. After all, instead of melting my brain surfing the Google, I might as well utilize the time that remains in my day.

Since I'm not able to flesh out my thoughts on the plenty of other books I've come across, here's the SparkNotes version (which you and I are both unfamiliar with, I'm sure):

Books that somehow moved my old lentil of a heart: *The Great Gatsby*, *Of Mice and Men*, *A Separate Peace*, *Lord of the Flies*, *The Catcher in the Rye*

Sooooo overrated: *The Kite Runner*, *The Old Man and the Sea*, *Joy Luck Club*, *Romeo and Juliet*

Baddies (like actually bad): *The Crucible*, *The Odyssey*

Worth picking up: *Beloved*, *The Glass Castle*, *Homegoing*, *When the Emperor Was Divine*

That's all I have for you, my lovelies. Thanks for your time! And if you ever want to gossip about Willie's latest drop or your favorite English read, you know who to call :)

## Answers to Crossword

Are you looking for the crossword answers? Well, here you are! If you're here to get the answers to the crossword to brag to your friends, "haha, I did the crossword in three minutes," STOP HERE! Close your eyes. Go back to the crossword. Think about what you're proposing. Don't cheat. That's pretty beta of you. Anyway, for all you alphas (non-cheaters) out there, here are the answers!

ACROSS:

3. High School Musical
6. Sliding
8. Tassels
11. No cap
13. Fireflies
14. Sand
15. As It Was
16. Handshake

DOWN:

1. Dog Days
2. Popsicle
4. Skip
5. Senior Assassin
7. Camp
9. Confetti
10. Riptide
12. Friday
17. Solstice

# Off-Topic

## A Graphic Novel Guide

By NAKISA RAZBAN '23  
*Off-Topic Editor*

Are you looking for something fun to do this summer? May I suggest making your way through the Acton Library's entire graphic novel collection? That's what I did this past year, and I have come here to share my favorite graphic novel authors and books with you all. Enjoy, my little bookworms <3

Kay O'Neil

My dear, I know that you are stressed out and the jarring realization that you will soon have to go out into the real world and be a person is not helping, but please take a moment to yourself to breathe, relax, and immerse yourself in the world of Tea Dragons. Yes, tea dragons: little creatures that grow different herbal teas on their heads and have a very moody yet endearing temperament. I definitely recommend picking up O'Neil's beautifully drawn series The Tea Dragon Society. Filled with complex characters, this book offers an important lesson on organically incorporated representation and diversity within fiction. For example, in the second book of the series, a lot of the characters speak sign language and seeing that experience translated so creatively into drawings was really eye-opening. O'Neil's style is very soft and cozy, with warm color palettes and ethereal visuals. Despite most of their books being geared towards younger audiences, readers of all ages can appreciate the mature themes they explore.

A few of my other favorite books by them are Aquicorn Cove, and Princess Princess Ever After.

Tillie Walden

Every panel feels worthy of a painting; I've never seen anything like it. The fantastical backgrounds of her books are so detailed and vivid that they bring the whole story to life. Tillie's stories are also very dream-like in that as the reader you never fully understand what is going on—but for once, it is a good thing. Reading her books is really more about the journey than a concrete conclusion, bring-

ing us along for the ride through vastly different landscapes, from deep space to small-town ice rinks. And I am here for it! The first book I ever read by her was Spinning, which recounts her childhood as a competitive synchronized ice skater. It was an incredible read on its own, but also allowed me to see how some plot points and characters from her other books were drawn from her own experiences. Other books by her that I adore: On a Sunbeam, Are You Listening?

ND Stevenson

Let me start off by saying that Stevenson is the executive producer of the series She-Ra and the Princess of Power. Hooked? I thought so. I ADORE their art style, it feels so cutesy and very original. All of their characters are extremely well developed and I found myself rooting for both the protagonist and villain. I don't believe they are able to write two dimensional characters, as we get to learn about everybody's backstory and motivations. All the characters are so spunky and full of quirks and traits that are naturally unveiled throughout the tale. Overall Stevenson is an incredible story teller, you won't be able to put their books down! Although it isn't a graphic novel, their autobiography The Fire Never Goes Out is really worth a read as it walks you through the evolution of their art style and their own growth as a person. A few of their graphic novels that I love: Nimona and The Lumberjanes.

Now then pals, don't you DARE lament on your lack of entertainment when the humidity rises and the sun starts beating down: you are prepared! Use these books as shade and free trips to the other side of the world, or, you know, the corner store down the street. I hope my spotlight on these incredible artists have helped you in finding your next read, and PLEASE tell me about your favorite comic book/graphic novel artists! I'm always on the lookout for more. Happy summer friends~

## Fun and Fresh Summer TV Shows

By ELSA LEWIS '25 & SHREE JAYAKRISHNA '25  
*Spectrum Staff*

When summer rolls around, our favorite thing to do is curl up on our couches and spend hours scrolling through Netflix. Nothing beats the feeling of eating a whole pint of Ben and Jerry's and not having to worry about your next test. If you're feeling lost, we're here to help avoid the painful search for the perfect show to watch this summer. No matter the genre, these shows appeal to a wide audience.

If you're a sci-fi lover, it's time to travel back in time to the 80s with Stranger Things. Follow middle-schooler Will and his friends as they experience odd supernatural occurrences, including the appearance of a mysterious girl named Eleven. What really drew us to this show is its unpredictability. Just when you think you know what's going to happen next, the show's plot will completely shock you. Overall, Stranger Things is the perfect mix of suspense and youthful charm, making it one of our favorites.

For fans of dramas, How to Get Away with Murder is for you. Follow Annalise Keating and her group of law interns throughout the twists and turns of the show as they uncover puzzling mystery after puzzling mystery. The suspenseful plot and complex characters make watching this show feel like a real-life game of Clue. So sit back—but don't relax—because this show will have you on the edge of your seat!

When you're trying to give yourself a good scare in the wee hours of the night, American Horror Story is the show to watch. Each season has a new settings, new plots, and new characters, ranging from asylums to summer camps, witches to cult members, and everything in between. The best part about watching this show is its element of horror; screaming whenever a jump scare occurs is what makes this watch experience truly unique.

If you're ready to laugh until tears leak out of your eyes and you need water to stop your hiccups, then New Girl is the perfect comedic

experience for you. The story goes like this: after a rough breakup, Jess Day is looking for a fresh start. As a last resort, she moves into a new apartment with three guys—totally not what she wanted as a young teacher trying to kick off her career. Although her roommates find her habits and personality unusual at first, her bubbly character and sweet nature grow on them. Our raving is not unwarranted; the show's genius humor and realistic approach to sticky social situations make it our first pick for a summer rom-com. Grab your favorite treat (and some friends) and get ready to experience the highs and lows of being a young adult living in an unpredictable world.

Whatever your favorite genre is, there's at least one show that can keep you occupied this summer. While these are only a few of our favorites, there are many more shows out there for our fellow binge-watchers. When you're taking a break from that hot summer weather, make sure to spend some quality time with your couch and TV!

## Ranking all of the Darkest Colors

By GEORGE JI '23  
*Spectrum Staff*

What's the darkest color you can think of? Blue? Think harder. Dark blue? I guess. If you want to go even further though, that's when things get complicated. For one, what even makes a color light or dark to begin with?

Stunned, you pause for a moment to collect your thoughts. "It's the different wavelengths of light something absorbs," you say confidently.

I knew you would say that.

And in a way, it is true. Indeed, the colors we see are determined by which wavelengths are absorbed or reflected, and in general, the darkness of a color can be determined by how much light it absorbs, but it's not always so simple. If you've been looking at colors as long as I have, you'll notice that some colors on the spectrum appear naturally darker than others, having more to do with how light reaches the brain. The darkest color will reflect the least light, but really, it just needs to look that way.

What about gray? If you were

looking for the darkest color, this is probably the first place you'd look. But you're a fool. Still, it's one of my personal favorites, though it could definitely afford to be more vibrant in its execution.

On the other hand, if I told you dark green was the darkest color right now, you'd probably believe me—and for good reason. Dark green has been observed to have a calming effect on the body, and its abundance in nature plays no small part in that. When I think of the color green, I think of my favorite sweater. You've probably seen me wear it a few times. It won't be surprising to know then, that green appears pretty dark. But it's not quite what we're looking for.

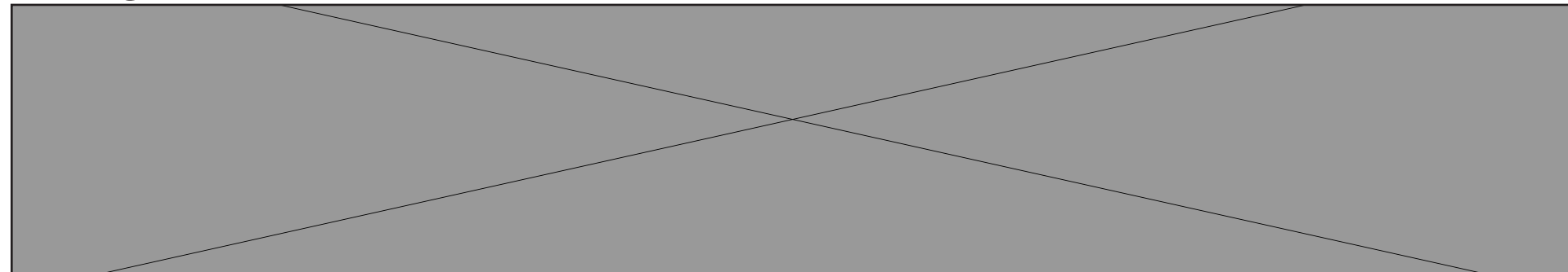
One color you can't help but hate, purple, is often associated with the ruling class. The google classroom for my chemistry class is purple, and in some cultures, it represents even death. The color is clearly evil. That being said though, purple is the darkest color. Guess I can end things here since we've fulfilled the purpose of the article and definitely just found the darkest color—BWAHAHA you

should have seen your face! Hahaha you looked so relieved! Oh man hahaha!

Take a second to look at the nearest blue object and shout out what it is. Odds are, it should take less than five seconds for me to hear you say it from my fourth period class. A Patagonia sweater, a colored pencil, the seat you're sitting on: that's how common dark blue is, and why not? Blue is, after all, the darkest color. If you know anything about the anatomy of the eye, you'll know that colors are perceived through three types of receptors, called cones. Each person has red, blue, and green cones that receive certain wavelengths. In normal people, the cones that see blue happen to be the weakest, making it appear darker even at similar saturation levels. Unlike most people though, I can see all wavelengths of light (twenty-twenty). For me personally, the darkest color is more of an idea than anything.

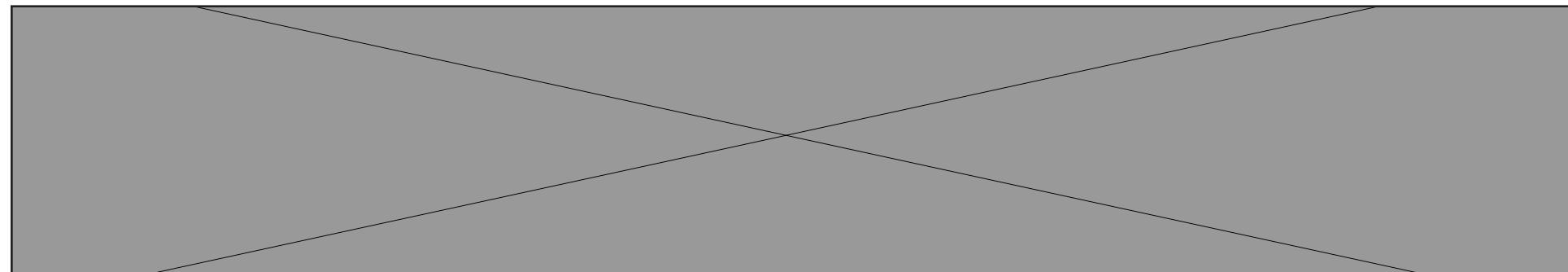
Officially though, the darkest color is still blue. Join me next issue when I answer the next big question: what's the lightest color?

## Congratulations! Can't Wait to Steal Your Room and Life



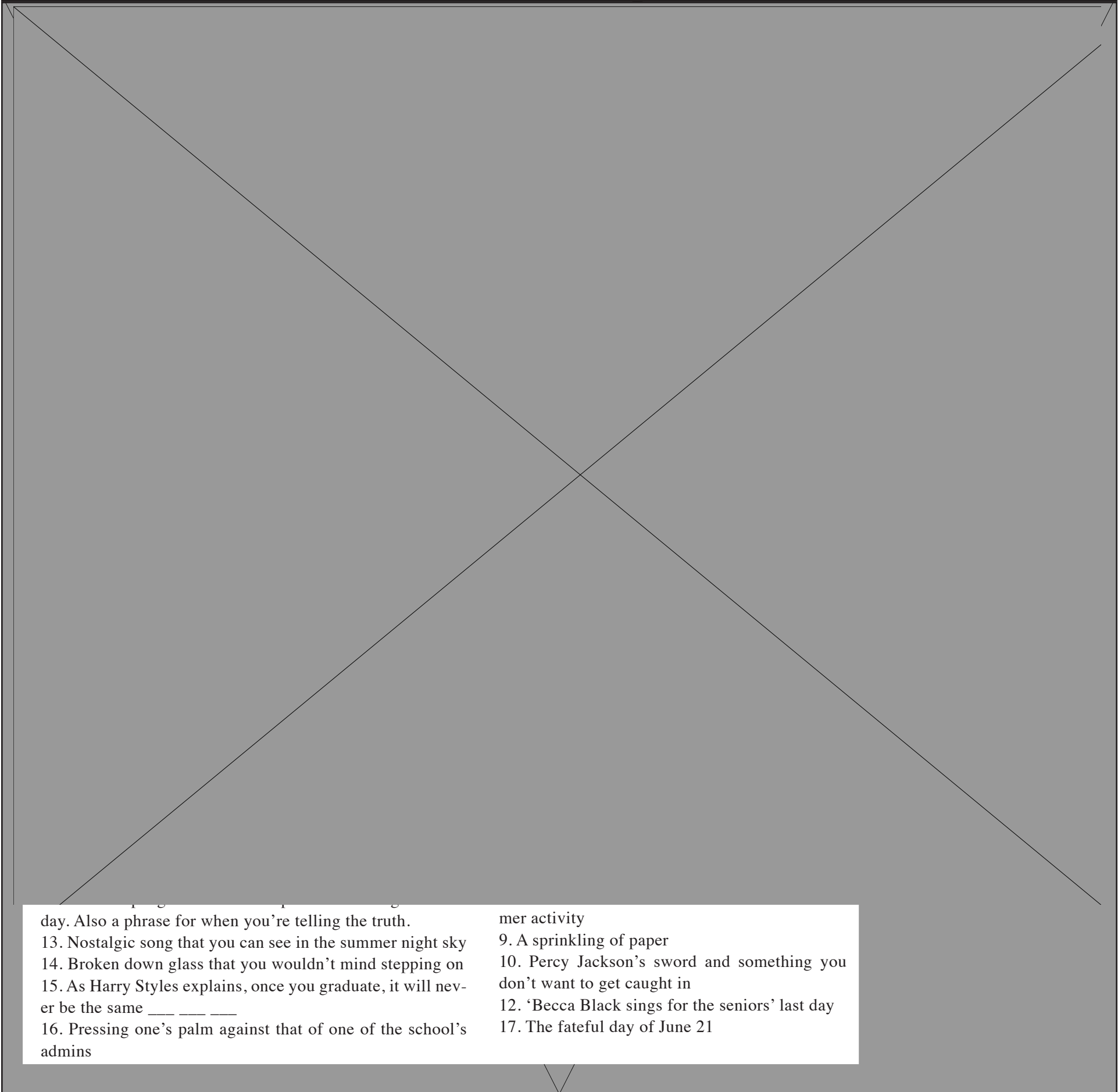
So sad :(  
KAT KHOMIAKOVA / Spectrum Staff

## Lack of Validation & Senior-itis: A High School Experience



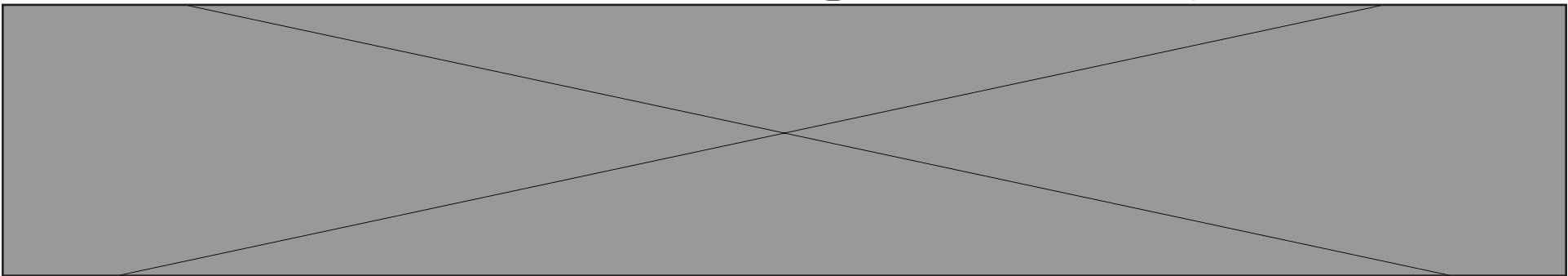
Time flies by.  
EMILY HILTUNEN / Spectrum Staff

# Off-Topic



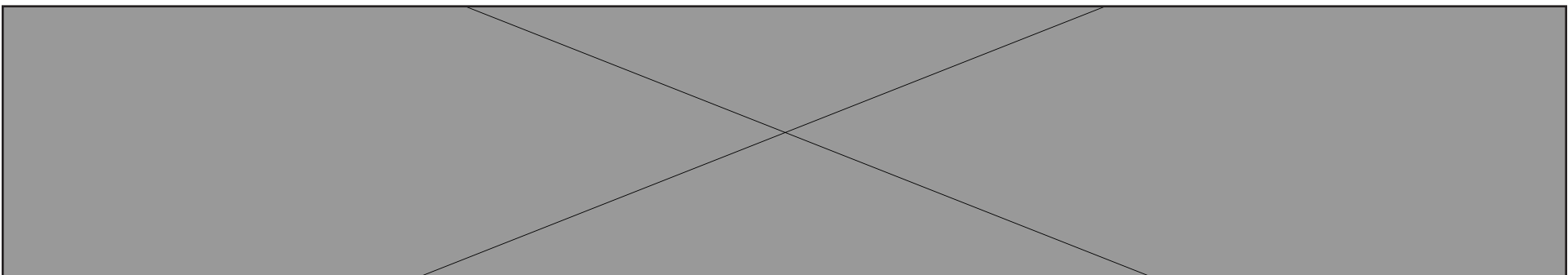
- day. Also a phrase for when you're telling the truth.
- 13. Nostalgic song that you can see in the summer night sky
- 14. Broken down glass that you wouldn't mind stepping on
- 15. As Harry Styles explains, once you graduate, it will never be the same \_\_\_\_ \_
- 16. Pressing one's palm against that of one of the school's admins
- 9. A sprinkling of paper
- 10. Percy Jackson's sword and something you don't want to get caught in
- 12. 'Becca Black sings for the seniors' last day
- 17. The fateful day of June 21

## Archibald Bartholemew Chang Bids Goodbye to a Friend



Bye-bye, butterfly.  
PHOEBE ABADI / Chief Layout Editor

## A Moment, A Memory, Magic: Nostalgia in the Hallways



Bittersweet memories float to the surface.  
BIZ BROOKS / Guest Artist

# Spectrum Staff

## Sappy Spectrum Staff Say Sayonara to Spicy Senior Staff

By CHIEF STAFF  
2022–2023

Dear Jasmine,

Oh, where shall we be next year without your wise guidance? Whether it be helping editors through awkward Zoom calls or dreaming up fun icebreakers, your knack for working through sticky situations has been indispensable in helping *The Spectrum* run smoothly.

In honor of your twinning moments with the other half of Rez-berry Jams, your thoughtful edits, and that one time you burned your ballet shoes on Zoom, we raise a glass of Poland Spring Sparkling White Peach Ginger. Cheers to graduating and congratulations!

Dear Rebecca,

Inspiring, passionate, queen of quirkiness, we peasants bow to your majestic vocabulary and enthusiasm for the hallowed paper we sacrifice years of our lives (or rather, our sanities :) to produce.

Indeed, we know no one more capable of challenging writers to use their noggins in ways they never comprehended. From professing your love for em dashes or being a walking advertisement for our be-

loved newspaper (dedication at its finest!), we will sorely miss your passion and beautiful slideshow presentation skills.

As the wise Ocean Vuong once said, “In a world as myriad as ours, the gaze is a singular act: to look at something is to fill your whole life with it, if only briefly,” so thank you for giving your all to *The Spectrum*!

Dear Milena,

We will forever miss your insightful captions and titles. Sadly, we won’t be getting any more cat updates during Layout weeks. Your perfected technique in shoving newspapers at the perfect angle will be imparted to future Spectrum-ers for years to come, and we will always think of you when we see a newspaper hang out at the incorrect angle. Loose pages go in, edges go out. We’ll miss your concentrated “driving face” during pixelated Zoom meetings on your way to volleyball practice!

Dear Sophie W.,

Thank you for being an unlimited fountain of Indesign knowledge. Frankly, we will probably still need your help even after you graduate... Layout weeks won’t be

the same without your dedication and pulling those crazy late nights. We are going to miss all the wisdom you brought next year!

Dear Amelia,

Thanks for the help in Pub-Fin! While it was difficult to return to normal after the pandemic, your help in the Pub-Fin department contributed to reviving our lovely paper. Congrats on graduating!

Dear Fran,

Our beloved. Is there anything more iconic than that pink stone ring, a different pair of earrings each day, and heart-shaped glasses? We think not. From your stresses over *Wuthering Heights* to your commendable hatred of Jake Gyllenhaal, it is hard to find someone who has taken as deep of a nose-dive into pop culture. You always worked so hard to keep Publicity and Finance running, and we know you’ll do amazing things going forward.

Dear Sophie Z.,

Thank you for being our number one muchacha! It’s going to be hard to imagine *The Spectrum* without your aesthetic outfits and general quirkiness. Taro’s cute ap-

pearances on Zoom will be forever missed, and, of course, we’ll miss your insightful news analyses too <3

Dear Belle,

Your K-drama and anime recommendations truly brighten our lives even beyond *The Spectrum*. We’ll miss your “male-lead-in-a-K-drama fits,” weekly *Attack on Titan* episode discussions, and the incredible energy you brought to every meeting made our meetings better and better every single time.

Also, I [Grace] want to personally thank you for the incredibly helpful, detailed comments that you left on each of my “Forte” drafts. Without you, I think I would’ve left all the non-musicians out there scratching their heads, wondering what “vernacular music” was. Your dedication to the writing process really challenged us to think outside of the proverbial box, and, for that, we are eternally grateful <3

Dear Olivia,

You are the cutest box hermit that ever graced *The Spectrum*. Your indispensably wise comments always made us send virtual finger hearts, especially during first and second drafts, when we wanted

to drive a message home to the writer but didn’t want to resort to writing passive aggressive emails. Your presence at Speccy meetings made humble 152 West a happier place, and we will miss you lots next year!

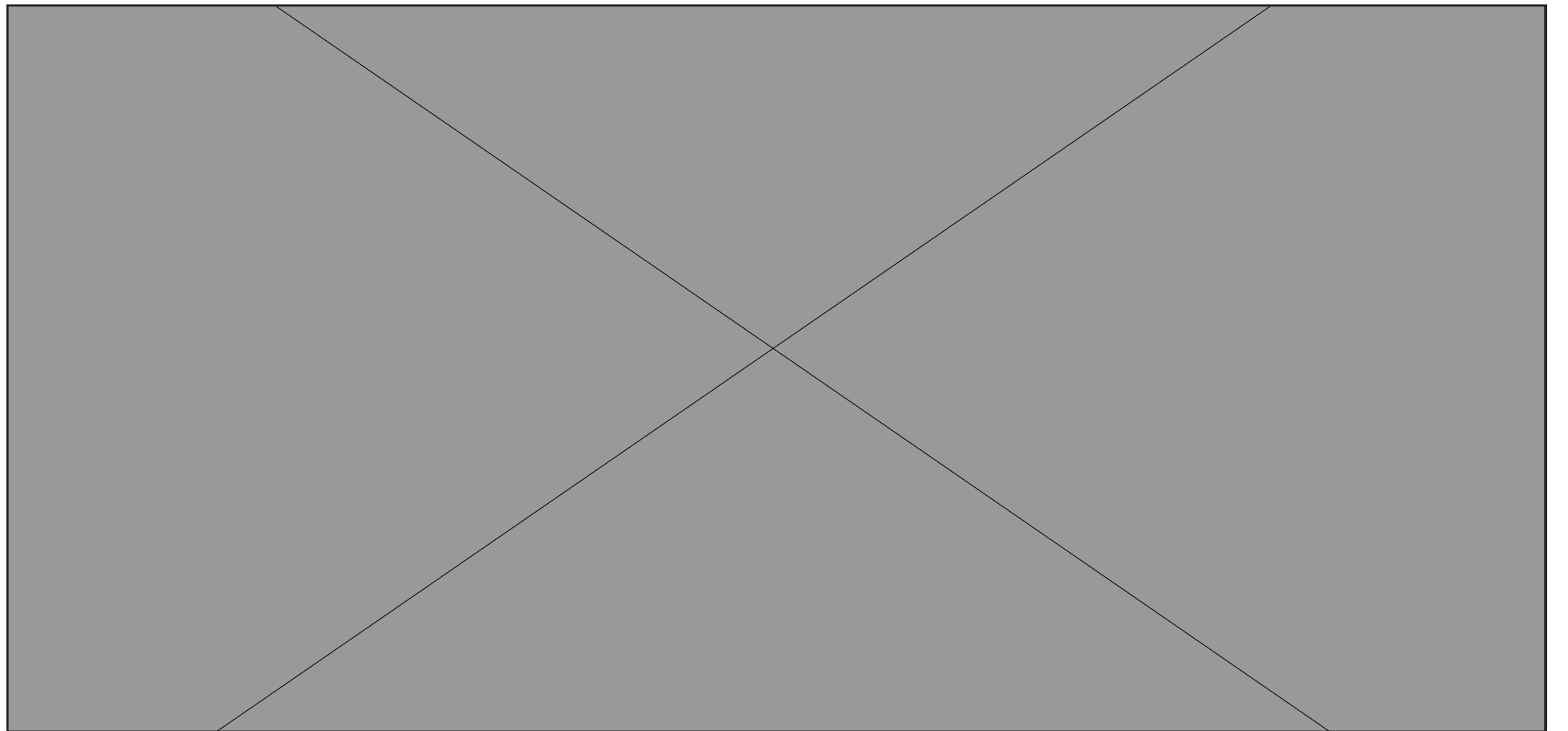
Dear Supria,

Thank you for your insight in running *Off The Spectrum* and putting together both entertaining and enlightening episodes for our ears to absorb. Even with the small team we had, we managed to pull off some pretty fun stuff, and for that we thank our lovely Podcast Director.

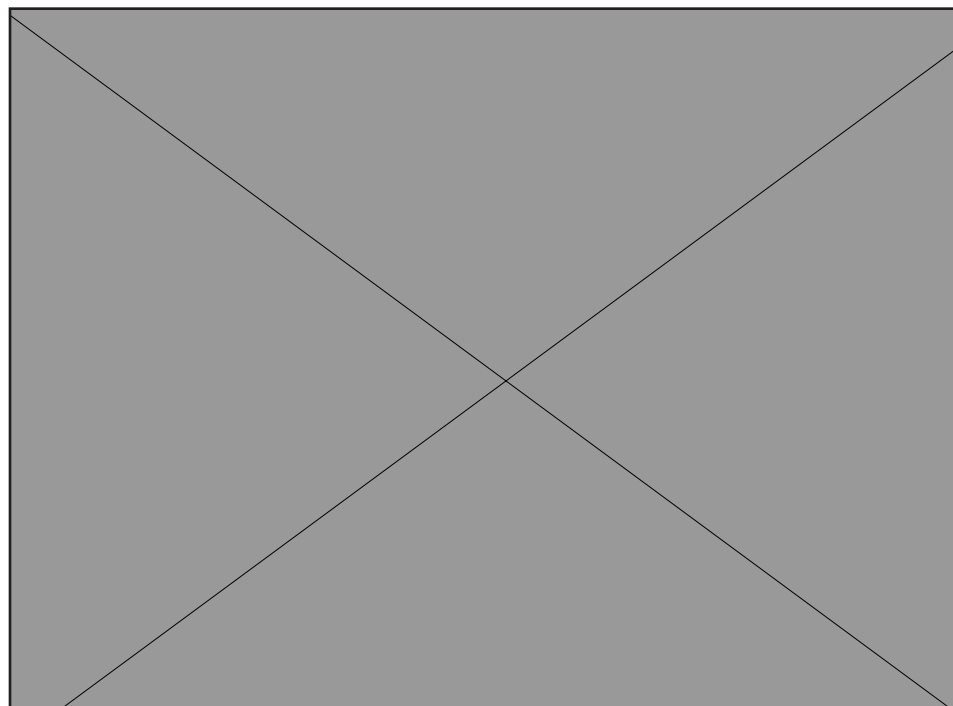
Dear Ms. Hammond,

Thank you for all your love for *The Spectrum*. We couldn’t have done any of this without you, and we truly appreciate the many a late night spent with us in the Mac Lab. As we are typing this, we are awaiting your return. It is currently 8:43 p.m. We are sweating. There is no air conditioning. Return quickly.

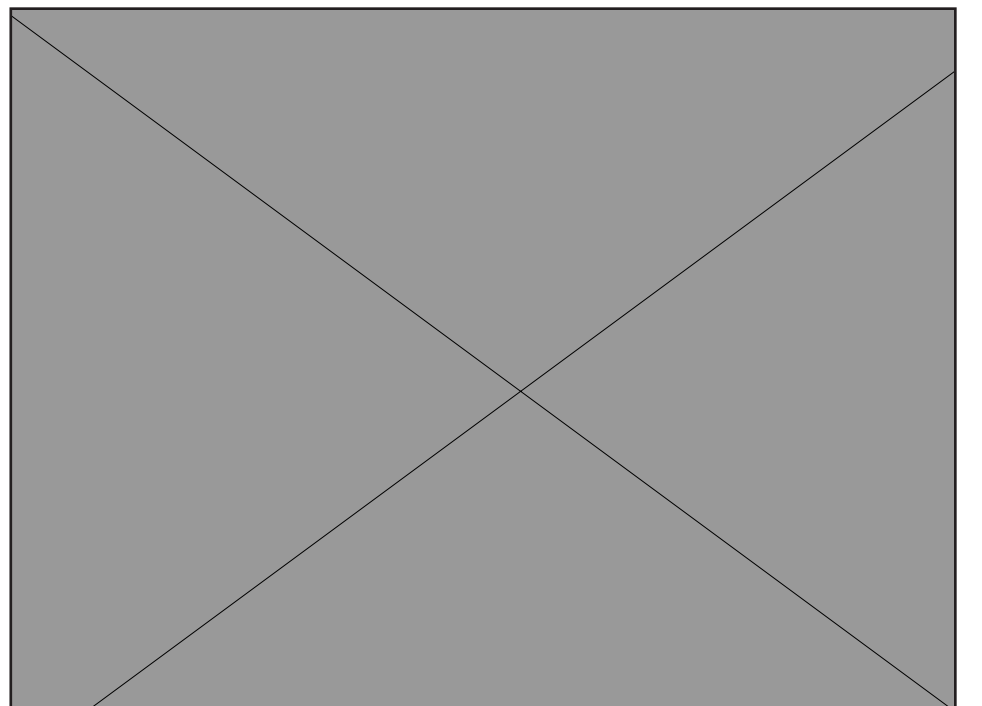
Lots of love,  
*The Spectrum* Chaff <3



Not Pictured: Belle Hu, Olivia Hu, Amelia Kim, Fran Servello, Supria Shroff  
Graduating Seniors / Spectrum Staff



Not Pictured: Belle Hu, Olivia Hu, Amelia Kim, Sam Liu, Fran Servello, Supria Shroff  
Spectrum Staff



Not Pictured: Sam Liu  
New Chief Staff / Spectrum Staff