



Senior Destinations
Check out where our seniors will be headed next year on our map!

Graduation - Page 8



College Scandals and Culture

A look into the recent college admissions scandal.

Graduation - Page 9



The Spectrum

◆ *e cineribus et ad astra* ◆

JUNE • VOL. 38, GRADUATION ISSUE

ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL

www.thespectrumabrhs.com

Headlines

Unsung Heroes

Sanitizing Saints. Self-sacrificing superheroes. Meet the custodians of AB.

News – Page 4

The 90's Spectrum

A blast from the past of *Spectrum*.

Graduation – Page 7

Studying Abroad

The dos and don'ts of a foreign education.

Graduation – Page 9

Advice from Seniors

Don't go bowling with your calculators.

Graduation – Page 10

Seungri's Recent K-Pop Scandal

A stain on South Korea's "clean, modern facade."

Forum – Page 11

My Girl Hero Fatima

Hot Mama and Hotter Daughter go to college.

Forum – Page 11

Love Nest + a Confession from the Love Doctor

A final farewell from the Love Doctor.

Off-Topic – Page 14

SAT or Subtle Asian Traits?

The new online community for Asian-Americans.

Off-Topic – Page 14



Congrats to the new graduating class!
AB Staff

Reflections on the Meaning of Education

By NITHYANI ANANDAKUGAN '19
Graduating Editor-in-Chief

In one of my earliest memories in the AB district, I remember sitting criss-cross-applesauce on the rug of my Gates first grade classroom. My teacher, Ms. McLean, held a handful of buttons, and my classmates and I counted each of them as they slipped from her fingers into the button jar. The buttons represented good behavior; a full button jar indicated that the class had earned a reward.

At the time, I thought that Ms. McLean's button jar was part of a larger scheme to teach seven-year-olds to count big numbers because I spent much time that year calculating in my head the number of buttons in Ms. McLean's hand and adding it to the number already in the jar. This, I believed, was crucial to my education.

For my parents—and many others, I'm sure—education represents the coveted golden key to a better life. It was education, after all, that brought my father stateside to create a better life for himself and his family. So it goes almost without saying that I was raised to value my education, to honor it.

And I did... except for the fact that I didn't quite understand the meaning of education until very recently.

Throughout my elementary and middle school years, I read the assigned text pages, I listened and took notes in class, and I memorized my multiplication times tables. What I didn't understand at the time was that my education was much broader than the little things I learned. In fact, this all became very clear to me when I read Tara Westover's *Educated* over April vacation. The memoir traces Westover's journey from having never set foot in a school throughout childhood to becoming a scholar respected by mentors and peers alike.

Her family chose not to support her as she left their Idaho home searching for a truth and a reality that she could not have found on the isolated mountain where she grew up. For them, Westover's choices felt a lot like betrayal. For her, though, education referred to her personal growth in trusting herself over family loyalties. She valued her independence and the wealth of knowledge that came with it.

Westover's story is different from my own, but soon, education took on a deeper meaning

for me as well: it became much less about the things I did in class and much more about the things I learned from those around me.

Ms. McLean's button jar, for instance, certainly taught me arithmetic. But it also represented the karmic principle that if I do good, the world will send goodness back my way. So in Ms. McLean's class, I received the first jigsaw piece to the puzzle of my education.

I uncovered other pieces of my education throughout my twelve years at AB. For instance, I first learned about integrity in fourth grade. Mrs. May asked the class to define the word after we had misbehaved. We instinctively tiptoed toward the dictionaries, but sensing our movement, Mrs. May shook her head. "Integrity," she intervened, "is doing what's right when no one's watching." I have honored this definition ever since. It became another piece of my education.

In Mrs. Deschenes' fifth grade class, I learned not to take myself too seriously. I remember how my class plotted to over-extend our reading discussions to avoid starting the math lesson until after recess. I learned to engage in absurd conversations about whether Barney could be consid-

ered a stereotypical dinosaur (absolutely not) and to laugh about it when it was over.

In Mrs. Montepeluso's sixth grade class, I learned how valuable time can be. In Mr. Lewis's class, I learned about what earnest curiosity looks like. And in Ms. Berg's class, I learned to stop myself and ask the most crucial question: so what?

Of course, my friends educated me, too. Jasmine taught me about passion and commitment. Joanna taught me about kindness and compassion. And Amie taught me that it's okay to change my mind sometimes.

At a school as rigorous as AB, it is often easy to forget that, even between 8:07 and 2:47, we are more than just students—we are also human beings. And as I approach graduation, I have become keenly aware of this fact. Though what I've learned in class has certainly prepared me for the next chapter in my life at college, my education has only just begun. To me, this is at once frightening and exhilarating.

So as I leave AB today for what feels like the last time, I hope I'll remember to pursue my education—to keep my eyes wide open, so I don't miss the bigger, more important lessons that come my way.

Intro

Letter from Old EICs

By NITHYANI ANANDAKUGAN '19 AND JASMINE MANGAT '19
Graduating Editors-in-Chief

Writing this last letter as Co-Editors-in-Chief is tough. Letting go is even tougher. But toughest of all is moving on. By rough approximation, we've each spent 360 hours at *The Spectrum* since we joined the club Sophomore year. That's the equivalent of working on *The Spectrum* for fifteen continuous days without sleeping, eating only the Trader Joe's snacks courtesy of Mrs. Hammond.

Needless to say, that's a lot of time.

So the thought of heading off to college is bittersweet. While everyone must grow up at one point or

another, graduating this year feels especially monumental for us. We are, all at once, saying goodbye to our friends, school, teachers, and all things familiar; and we are handing over the reins to Anjali, Kirtana, and Serena. Of course, we trust them, but still, stepping away is more complicated after two and a half years. We slowly disentangle ourselves from our many responsibilities.

And as part of one of our final responsibilities as outgoing EICs, we'd like to hand off the mic to Anjali, Kirtana, and Serena, our new EICs. They are among the brightest and most dedicated individuals we've ever met.

So here it is: our final farewell. Signing Off,
Nithyani and Jasmine

Letter from New EICs

By SERENA HAN '20, KIRTANA KRISHNAKUMAR '20, AND ANJALI RAMAN '20
Graduating Editors-in-Chief

People often say that two's a party; three's a crowd, but three is really just a big party. When Nithyani and Jasmine first announced next year's Chief Staff positions, we couldn't have been more excited; soon, we thought, we would be commanding the Monday and Thursday meetings, deciding on all deadlines entirely by ourselves, and hogging Ms. Hammond's snacks just as Nithyani and Jasmine had. We'd also get to experience it together, as a big party of three EICs and a bigger party of twelve Chief Staff members.

Albeit excited, we also recognized the immense responsibility that holding this position would come with. While creating this Graduation Issue—our first issue as EICs—we encountered the struggles of painstakingly editing every article, of creating every page in the mock-up, and of ensuring that we were proud of every word of the final product.

But, as we adjusted to our new-found responsibilities, we never felt alone; we had each other, we had Nithyani and Jasmine, we had Ms. Hammond and Mr. Brusie, and of course, we had our fantastic new Chief Staff.

For the new school year, we strive to continue the many successes of our predecessors, successes that will help us achieve our new goals: equipped with an experienced and eager Reporting Team, we intend to pursue more investigative research that provokes meaningful conversations. In each and every newspaper section, we hope to improve our article quality so that it reflects the interests of our student body.

And, as part of one of our first responsibilities as incoming EICs, we'd like to express our gratitude to Nithyani and Jasmine, our former EICs. They are among the brightest and most dedicated individuals we've ever met, and we know they're going to accomplish great things.

So here it is: our first hello. Signing In,
Serena, Kirtana, and Anjali

Free Studio Tours Available!
Come check out our state of the art TV Studio!

Great Resources available to You!

Virtual Set

Kitchen Set

Theater Set

ActonTV is your local access TV Studio and Media Center. We are a non-profit 501(c)(3) membership organization that provides you with the video and audio equipment as well as education to help you produce your own videos and distribute them through our cable channels and online via our website and social media. For more information about ActonTV, please visit our website actontv.org where you can learn more about what we do, watch our programs On Demand or sign up for one of our media classes. Become a member today and take advantage of all that ActonTV has to offer!

Please consider donating to help us continue to serve the Acton community.

ActonTV's Mission

Creating community through media by providing the technology, facilities and expertise to encourage free speech and inspire creative expression.

Become a Member Today!

16A Craig Rd. Acton, MA 01720
(p) 978-263-6033
(e) support@actontv.org

The Spectrum

Founded 1982
e cineribus ad astra

Serena Han
Kirtana Krishnakumar
Anjali Raman
Editors-in-Chief

Michelle Gong
Chief Copy Editor

Amber Li
Emily Zhao
Chief Layout Editors

Teagan Smith
Mainspread Editor

Michael Cheng
News Editor

Neha Vijay
Forum Editor

Prisha Dayal
Off Topic Editor

Francesca Servello
Anushka Wani
Publicity and Finance Managers

David Brusie
Genevieve Hammond
Faculty Advisors

Contact Us
36 Charter Road
Acton, MA 01720
www.thespectrumabrhs.com
theabspectrum@gmail.com
Facebook and Instagram @theabspectrum

Copy Editors

Ma Comolli, Somya Prabhakar*, Katherine Gu,
Beth Howard, Ellen Liu, Justin Shan

Staff

Nithyani Anandakugan*, Madigan Anderson, Anna Charisse, Annabella Chen, Kelsey Chen, Natalie Dawn, Ananya Gade, Paolina Garro, Pratik Gazula, Swetha Hariharan*, Emily Hiltunen, Alisa Khomiakova, Ritika Koirala, Divya Krishnan, Julia Kuang, Iris Li, Jonathan Lin, Jasmine Mangat*, Akshitha Maqtedar, Srija Nagireddy*, Emmie Ohnuki*, Julia Olney, Ben Orr, Sydney Pascal, Anna Paradiso, Sonali Rai, Mila Rushkin, Neha Saravanan, Supria Shroff, Christopher Sousounis, David Tsitrin, Charu Tyagi, Aadhiti Vallatharasu, Brandon Wu, Jasmine Wu, Jessica Zhang, Rebecca Zhang, **Sophie Zhang**

Columnists

Katherine Chen, Lizette Sta. Maria*, Balwant-Amrit Singh*, Vera Tsang

Layout Editors: Peter Bi*, Kaitlyn Chen, **Grace Du***, Sarah Jin, Eileen Kou, Isaiah Lee, **Amber Li**, Jessica Zhang, **Emily Zhao**, Milena Zhu

*Graduating Spectrum Staff

Remembering Coach Johnson

By LILLIAN CHI '19
Graduating Correspondent

On February 15th, Acton-Boxborough's longtime swim and dive coach, Jeff Johnson, passed away unexpectedly just two days before the Boy's Swimming and Diving State Championships. At just 74 years of age, Johnson built an impressive legacy starting in 1977 when he began coaching the AB boys. He later began coaching the girls in 2002. With these teams, he was awarded National Federation of State High School Association's North Section Coach of the Year, Boston Globe Coach of the Year, Eastern Mass. Swim Coach of the Year (six times), and many more impressive recognitions. On top of his high school team commitments, Johnson coached the AB Town Team from 1975 to 2014, and he founded the Patriot Swim Club in 1992. For his achievements and deep **impacts** on the people and communities around him, he was added to the International Swimming Hall of Fame.

Over these past six years, I have gotten to know Coach as the most hardworking and dedicated person whom I have met. Out of the hundreds of swimmers he has coached over the many years, he still had a way of making each athlete feel special and supported. Johnson never failed to bring us smiles, and his laugh was infectious. Many days, he would hold out two fingers, putting his fingers in the shape of an "L" for "losers," an inside joke for the nickname we liked to call each other. We all trusted him, as he had trusted us.

Johnson loved to joke around and laugh, but more importantly, he loved to put his swimmers to the test. He always challenged his

swimmers to think smarter, not harder. He emphasized the importance of mental training before a big meet and taught us how to swim with good sportsmanship. Johnson brought out the best in everyone, and we all wanted to make him proud. By doing so, he managed to help countless swimmers grow stronger physically and emotionally.

Johnson's power was not only evident in his achievements but also in the way he interacted with his swimmers. Often, he would lower his voice to almost a whisper, knowing that everyone would tune in and listen to what he had to say. Everyone respected Coach and gave him their attention when he asked for it. He also knew how to help his swimmers through a bad race. During high school seasons, there were times where I felt like I had let the team down by not putting up a good enough time. But when I debriefed my race with him, he wasn't disappointed in me. He let me know that he rec-

ognized that I did the best that I could do, and that was just how it was. Coach's approval and guidance helped me and many others build up grit. I hope that I can take this healthy and resilient mindset and pass it on to others.

Finally, I am so grateful that he taught me and my teammates how to "swim through the pain." He encouraged us to embrace the pain of a hard race or difficult practice. This lesson helped the Boy's Swimming and Diving Team swim strongly at States. Just like these boys, I know we all can continue to swim on without our Coach. On behalf of all who swam or dove at AB and PSC, I would like to thank and commemorate Jeff Johnson for making us better swimmers and better people. I have been told that one of Johnson's favorite things was the sound of his swimmers hard at work in the pool, and I know that he is proud looking over us right now. #swimforcoach

Q CLEANER & TAILOR

Dry Cleaner, Tailor, Shoe Repair, Laundry

Quality Friendly Service

Reader's Choice Awards
2018

Voted #1 in Acton
& Regional Gold

Reader's Choice Awards
2019

159A Great Rd, Acton • QCleanerTailor.com

Call (978) 264-4005 and Ask for Kim!

News

George Arsenault

By SOMYA PRABHAKAR '19
Graduating Chief Copy Editor

After Mr. Hickey retired last year, Mr. Arsenault joined the community as the Director of Fine Arts and the director of the high school and junior high bands. His extensive experience with fine arts education at Westford Academy has enabled him to continue fostering the excellence of the performing arts at AB.

The Spectrum interviewed Mr. Arsenault for some thoughts after his first year as part of the AB community.

1. At the start of the year, what was your vision for the AB Band? So far, has that vision come true?

Continued excellence with an eye on the future. The [ABRHS] Band has been an institution for sixty years in town, so I was more keen to learn about the existing traditions than I was trying to implement any big changes. I'm also very interested in seeing how the students in the ensemble are motivated and what might motivate them in the future. With our musicians starting to diversify into orchestra, the landscape will likely change in the coming decade, but it's an exciting future.

2. How does your role at AB compare with your previous role at Westford Academy? My role at WA was 100% teaching. My role at AB is shared between teaching and my work as a school administrator.

The bands and schools are definitely more alike than different. AB has focused on marching band for many years, so we tend to put a significant amount of energy into that area, especially in the fall. WA was more of a concert band/orchestra focus. There was a marching band, but it was all-volunteer and didn't rehearse during the day.

Both schools have highly motivated musicians achieving at very

high levels.

3. What is your favorite memory from the past year? Least favorite?

Getting to know my new students and colleagues has been my best memory. My least favorite memory was not having lights for marching band until late September. It was a major challenge that I would prefer not to repeat in my career.

4. When you first started working at AB, what surprised you the most?

I've never worked in an open-campus high school before. I was surprised to see so many students walking around outside!

5. Why did you decide to come to AB?

Because AB's great! I knew Mr. Hickey for many years as his son was in my bands in Westford in JHS and HS. I also went to school with Ms. Moss during my undergraduate degree. I was ready for a new challenge in my career after nearly 20 years of teaching, and although it was a very difficult decision to leave a job and town that I loved, after speaking with Mr. Hickey and Ms. Moss, it sounded like a perfect new adventure, so I threw my name in the hat for consideration.

7. What was your first impression of the band when you visited last year? How did it change?

I loved working with this group last year when I visited because of their sheer power. I knew that the setup from the elementary school through JHS and HS builds a great band program. You can't make a band sound great if you're trying to start in HS. AB has a commitment across all levels to help the band succeed. My opinion of this group hasn't changed. It's full of some of the most dedicated student-artists in our community, and I'm proud to work with them every day.

Out of the Darkness Walk

By KIRTANA KRISHNAKUMAR '20 AND CHARLOTTE LI '20
Editor-in-Chief, Spectrum Staff

Clouds cast the field in grey shadows, muting the bright orange banner that stated, "Hope Walks Here." Volunteers shivered in the morning chill while they positioned themselves behind the registration tables and booths. As they chatted among themselves about trivial things—how they hoped it wouldn't rain or how they picked up bananas from the grocery store—people slowly trickled into the area until about a hundred people stood by RJ Grey Junior High School's gymnasium entrance. They all came from different backgrounds, from different experiences, and surely would've spent their Saturday mornings differently on a normal day. Nevertheless, these people gathered together in that field at 10 AM, enduring the cold, because they decided to devote their mornings to participate in the Out of the Darkness Suicide Prevention Walk. So, what brought them there to support this cause?

Acton-Boxborough social worker Ms. Anderson, ABRHS' Naviance Coordinator Mrs. Rosenman, and juniors Cara Barbieri and Saskia Campbell all shared the same reason for walking: to support the community and students at AB. In a community that has endured so much loss, many feel it is important to address the issues and try to make more connections with each other. Junior Olive Jaros thought the walk itself enabled these bonds to be made. She reflected that given the trag-

edies, "it's an amazing way to get the community to... get together positively, raising awareness." Her idea that the walk allowed us to "heal together" resonated among many walkers. Certainly, this notion of togetherness existed before the walk itself. Even during the school's times of loss, the community found ways to spread love and support each other, exchanging hugs and comforting looks in every hallway. By participating in the walk, we all intended to sustain the outpouring of warmth and support that emerged after the tragedy. We walked for our friends who have been affected. We walked for our community that has been affected. We walked to ensure that no one forgets the importance of our cause—prevent suicide.

Unfortunately, depression and suicide have directly affected many who were present at the walk. Co-walk chair Isaac Dawson's "best friend is now an angel." Caroline Browning lost her neighbor. Adult walker Marjorie lost her best friend, and she battled with depression herself. Despite these struggles, many still feel unwilling to discuss suicide and find ways to improve their loved ones' mental health. A walker recalled having tried to speak with a family friend's son about his depression, something the boy's parents put a stop to immediately in a hostile manner. One member of the walk group "Tylen's Team" said that "[i]t pisse[d] [her] off that [suicide and mental illness was so] stigmatized versus physical illness... it is hard to understand." Having lost her friend's son and her sister's nephew to suicide, she saw first-

hand how mental illness can break family members down and tear families apart.

Not being able to understand what people are feeling is one of the most terrifying things. However, there is courage in trying to be there for someone who is hurting, whether it be a best friend or someone you've never met. Sometimes, those who feel lost in complete darkness cannot see the light beyond that day. Sometimes, their loved ones don't know how to help them. However, that is precisely why we come together as a community: so that no one person ever feels helpless. We can all try to carry a glimmer of hope to those suffering and show them the light they cannot see.

Before the walk began, senior Isaac Dawson invited Mrs. Goyette to say a few words. Her inspiring impromptu speech gave everyone walking that day a sense of hope. Hope that none of us will "let a bad day, a bad week, a bad month be the end of [our] life." Hope that each of us can see that "[we] are more beautiful than [we]'ll ever know" regardless of the bad times. Most importantly, she told us not to carry the weight upon our shoulders alone: to let people in and to know that you are loved by everyone. And truly, we are all loved. As we walked, we looked back at the crowd walking with purpose, with its intention to help cope with the tragedy and ensure that no one falls prey to depression in our community. The looks we received made the cold weather subside, and we could feel the warmth of a better day coming into our hearts.

SPECIAL FLOWERS FOR SPECIAL EVENTS
MAUREEN CHRISTMAS AIFD, CFD
WWW.FLORALNOTESACTON.COM

Saying Goodbye To Mr. Crick After 24 Years at AB

By MICHAEL CHENG '20
News Editor

For over 20 years, Acton-Boxborough students have walked into the classroom of English teacher Mr. Crick, who wanted "everybody in the classroom to know the serious business [of] what [they]'re doing." That no-nonsense tone, which could sometimes even be intimidating, would carry through the year, punctuated by his litany of personal tales to tell. There's the time he biked across America. (Now in his 50s, he wants to recapture that feeling after he retires this June.) There are his nineteen straight Academic Decathlon trophies prominently featured against the wall. And, since 1992, there are his students.

However, to say that he has been here since 1992 would be a little misleading. Mr. Crick recalls, "That was the end of the 1991 recession that brought Bill Clinton into office, and the town—as I recall—voted down a tax override... so people who had no seniority got laid off."

Forced to leave AB after his first year of teaching, Mr. Crick took a job at an agricultural voca-

tional school teaching English and US History. There, he got to write "does not wear work boots to class" on his students' report card comments.

In the same two years, he also learned more serious lessons.

"I remember, I had some students that were struggling and having some difficulties in and out of the classroom. And I was a young teacher at the time, just starting out in my career. And I had thought that I wasn't doing a very good job for those particular students. And at the end of the year, a number of them [said] that I was the best teacher that they ever had."

"And so that really taught me to just always keep in mind the potential and possibility of every student in the room and realize that you don't know which students you're really affecting. It may not be the ones who are the most verbal or the most vocal, but you can really make a difference... not just what you teach them about the content, but the way that you treat them as human beings. And that's stuck with me ever since."

Thus, when he returned to AB

in 1996, he committed himself to ensuring that every student "[could] be serious about their studies [while] also enjoy[ing] the process of learning." This often involved him holding students responsible for being their best selves. Most importantly, Mr. Crick values being "intellectually curious and open," especially in his discipline.

"I try to run a really serious, invested, and engaged classroom that is simultaneously open and safe and supportive of asking questions that you don't know the answers to yet. That's when you really grow the most. And also, you know, be willing to have some fun and tell a couple of jokes along the way. But when it's important to get back on track, being able to do that, too."

Mr. Crick is not only known for his engaged classrooms, but also for being the successful advisor of the Academic Decathlon team for the past twenty years. While managing the AcaDec team, he found that one of his greatest joys was "watching a team coalesce... [P]eople... may not even know each other in September, but by the time we get to the state meet in March and then

the national championship meet, everybody has each other's back. Everybody is pulling and rooting for everybody else on the team and wants the best for them as well as for themselves... That happens in the classroom too."

"[When I retire] I will miss the arc of the year [the most], from September to June, and the way in which each year you start over [and slowly] build towards a destination. It almost always happens... [at] a certain starting point in the fall. And you have certain challenges and... opportunities to build your

craft as a student and as a teacher with that particular group. But by the end of the year, you see so much growth in the individual students and in the collective spirit of the class. You become a team, right? In September, you're not a team, you're just atoms in seats, but then you become a molecule. You... eventually become a living organism over time."

"And the way [in which a] particular section in [a] particular year... comes together over the arc of that year is kind of magical."

All New Clients
20% off
Any Single Service
Must present coupon.
Margo's
Hair Design
978.263.7836
Arlington Street, Acton, MA
Open Tuesday-Saturday www.margosdesign.com

News

Change the Schedule, Change Acton-Boxborough Life

By NEHA VIJAY '21 AND PRISHA DAYAL '21
Forum Editor, Off Topic Editor

On Friday, December 14th, Mr. Dorey announced a significant change to the daily routine of AB: a seven-period rotating schedule that will replace the eight-period day of the last two decades. According to his announcement, the new schedule “supports the health and well-being of our students within a rich learning environment that provides for all students to experience success.” However, some students and teachers were skeptical at first. Overnight, students created a petition that acquired over one thousand signatures and raised many concerns. In this article, *The Spectrum* set out to document both the main concerns and steps taken to address them.

The administration has developed this new schedule over the years, and although students were

aware that changes were coming, many did not expect it to happen so soon. Despite being labeled as a trial, the revised schedule will be in effect for the entire school year. Rather than a shorter trial period like last year's **3-week pilot**, the administration said that a full year is necessary to pilot the change to seven-period days. Although students continue to question the viability of putting all their eggs into one basket, the administration is committed to this schedule for the entirety of next year.

Students were also divided over the decision to replace midyear and final exams with cumulative assessments at the end of each term. These assessments would depend on teachers' preferences, meaning some classes will have cumulative exams while others will not. However, the weight of midyears and finals on the yearly average will be lowered from 25% of the grade to no more than 12.5%. Some

students favor midyears; to them, large hollistical tests are often grade boosters. Others celebrated the adjustment because it would take away the immense amount of pressure surrounding those exams.

One casualty of the new schedule was the lunchtimes, which were initially set to be cut down by more than ten minutes. The administration hoped to improve student wellness; however, most felt that this would be counterproductive to improving student wellness: Reducing a student's lunchtime would take away from the only leisure that many students have during the school day. However, the administration took quick action, moving the regular start time seven minutes earlier to keep the longer lunch periods.

One of the more prevalent concerns was about how teachers would adapt their curriculum to fit the longer periods, which shifted from forty-seven minutes to fifty-five. In order to understand more about this issue, we sat down with some of the department heads.

Out of all departments, science is the most impacted by the schedule change; it's the only department that will have less instructional time. AP sections would be the only classes retaining lab periods while the curriculum for leveled classes would be significantly cut down. For Mr. Baumritter, the head of the science department, “part of the challenge is to incorporate labs in the existing structure of the seven drop one schedule” to allow students to “be participating in hands

on activities.” While he acknowledges that “[t]here'll be less content” to a degree, he is still “hoping that we can increase the depth of understanding for students within the content that we are covering for those classes.”

In contrast, the World Language department would have the smoothest transition from the old schedule to the new schedule because the department has previously made significant changes to their curriculum, moving towards summative assessments and proficiency-based learning. According to Ms. Savukoski, the new schedule will enhance the current curriculum as it will “allow us to have a little bit more time for those performance assessments” which are “kind of rushed right now.” Ms. Savukoski explained how more time to conduct assessments based on real life experiences, such as shopping in “a market or a restaurant... will allow students to have a deeper experience.” In addition, teachers will be able to spend additional time giving feedback to students and providing more time for self-reflection. In terms of midyears, the department does not feel it is necessary to have one big assessment as teachers are “constantly checking in on [their students'] skills.” However, teachers still want to provide students with reflection time around the current midyear period.

Finally, we asked the head of the history department a broad range of questions besides the curriculum change, including the concern about whether tests

would be lengthened to fit the new fifty-five minute periods. Mr. Green believes that for history, “the assessment will still be a 45-minute long assessment. But instead of having to rush to pass it in at the very end... students will feel like they have more time to go and check their work.” We also discussed a major student concern about teachers “doubling up on homework.” Many students agreed that while a dropped period is supposed to alleviate homework stress, a teacher may just give extra work meant for two days. Mr. Green stresses how in these cases, “it's incumbent on the department leaders to be very clear with teachers that [they are] not going to do this. [However], the students also have to make sure that their information is accurate... on accusations.” For example, students need to think about whether students are given “a long range of time to complete something” before we are absolutely sure that the amount of homework given to us should be considered unfair.

Overall, there are mixed opinions as to whether the new schedule will benefit students and teachers or not. Some believe the change will enhance the learning experience, while others argue that the change is a step back from our current routine. Either way, it will likely take some time for staff and students to adjust to the new schedule, and only then will we begin to see how this change affects AB students for **generations** to come.



The new schedule is controversial at AB.
ONLINE SOURCE

Stall Seat Journal: Public Health

By VARUN HARISH '20
Public Health Club Co-President

The Public Health Club aspires to educate peers on a variety of topics, from clear problems like the Juuling epidemic to less visible issues like contaminated water. One of the club's major initiatives is the Stall Seat Journal—a series of public health posters on bathroom stalls around AB.

One of the most pressing issues facing the United States is the lack of public health information. The goal of Stall Seat Journal is to address this disparity by disseminating quality information about health topics pertinent to our school. The Public Health Club thought that because everybody uses bathrooms, they would be an ideal location for everyone to access important, easy-to-understand information from which our community will greatly benefit.

The first Stall Seat Journal, posted in January 2019, focused on the negative effects of juuling and teenage nicotine use. The advent of the Juul has created a whole new generation of teenage nicotine users by advertising appealing flavors, hooking them onto the product for life. According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse, 16.2% of high school seniors use e-cigarettes containing nicotine. That particular article also detailed the effect of nicotine on teenage brains and the abnormally high concentrations of nicotine in a Juul pod compared to other e-cigarettes.

The second Stall Seat issue showcased the importance of water safety and quality. In 2014, Flint, Michigan discovered high concentrations of toxic lead in their water supply. Even today, **hundreds of families in Flint** **do not use** their tap water. While

this incident is well-known, the contamination of drinking water across the many towns and cities in America often goes undetected. For this reason, many communities have poor drinking water due to pollution and lack of infrastructure. Moreover, since water is a resource necessary for all life, it is imperative that all Americans understand when their water might not be safe.

The Stall Seat Journal team looks only at the facts and creates its posters objectively. In the future, we want to continue to inform classmates about public health issues like safe sex practices, since sexually transmitted diseases are slowly becoming a major public health threat. If you are interested in helping out with the Stall Seat Journal, then reach out to teamphabrh@gmail.com

Unsung Heroes

By ANJALI RAMAN '20 AND
KIRTANA KRISHNAKUMAR '20
Editors-in-Chief

Clumps of tortellini pasta dirtied the floor, bright red marinara sauce smeared down the once-white wall. The brown boat was strewn off to the side, emptied of its contents. Hundreds of students passed through the mess, wrinkled their noses, and walked carefully around it to avoid soiling their pristine shoes. Someone had thrown a tray of pasta at the wall as a joke and hadn't even considered cleaning it up. An hour or two later, a custodian was notified of this mess. Within minutes, not even a stain remained.

Maintaining school facilities can be a difficult task, but without fail, the unsung heroes of AB ensure that our facilities are conducive for learning. The Spectrum recently sat down and interviewed Julie, a custodian at AB, to talk about her job and her experience at AB. Julie has worked at AB for about a year, and she graciously agreed to answer some of our questions about the job. The custodians work on three shifts to ensure that someone is always at the school. The first shift lasts from 6:00 AM to 2:30 PM, the second shift is from 2:00 PM to 10:20 PM, and the third shift covers 10:00 PM to 6:30 AM. These hours are tediously long, and there is plenty of work to be done during that time. While a janitor's job primarily is to keep the school clean, a custodian's job also includes fixing school amenities, putting up bulletin boards, moving furniture, waxing floors, putting new locks on the doors, replacing toilet paper

holders, and so much more. Custodians are the ones who come to save the day when clogged toilets destroy bathrooms, but also when there are big set-ups for school events.

Among the nine full-time and two part-time custodians, Julie is the only female. She has been a custodian for seven and a half years and worked as a bus driver before. She loves being able to interact with students daily, and she sees her job as one that enables her to help the students and maintain the environment. Many times during her career, she has had to deal with odd pranks that made her job harder. However, her easy-going, friendly nature allows her to recall how students would move fig trees into the accessible bathroom with a mere smile. Despite occasional silliness, Julie insisted that the custodians, students, and staff are always kind. If there's anything she wishes that students would always remember, it would be to respect their areas and try to recycle more; despite the signs stating which utensils can be recycled, students often throw their trays mindlessly in the nearest trash bin.

Hopefully, we students can fulfill these requests. It is the least we can do for the custodians who stand silently beside us, ready to assist in whatever way possible. Let's honor these individuals who ensure that the state of the school facilities don't hinder our day-to-day lives. Let's continue to express our gratitude when we see them in hallways, in the cafeteria, and in classrooms. Let's learn from them as we learn from our teachers. After all, their humility and capabilities make them true heroes at AB and are well worth studying.

Interact Club: Polio Charity Gala

By NATALIE DAWN '20
Interact Club Co-President

Interact Club is a branch of the international Rotary organization, and we are a community-service based club here at AB. Like Rotary, we encourage volunteers to work on both community and international projects. For the past year, our main initiative has been our work on behalf of the organization End Polio Now.

The lack of awareness about the prevalence of polio is worrying. We have heard numerous people exclaim, “Polio? I thought they got

rid of that!” when interacting with the community. Although there is an entirely effective vaccination, in three countries (Pakistan, Nigeria and Afghanistan), polio is still endemic and people continue to contract the horrific disease. End Polio Now visits these countries to vaccinate as many people as they can, focusing on the pediatric population which is especially vulnerable. This organization is also working with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, which agreed to match every dollar donated to End Polio Now with an additional two dollars. Despite all the amazing

donations being put towards this cause, End Polio Now still needs more help—that's where we come in. We are planning a formal charity gala this fall to raise money to end polio, this time for good! Join us on Saturday, October 19th at 7:00 at the Stow Community Center. Tickets are only \$15, and the event will include food, awesome games and activities, and of course, the fantastic opportunity for you to show off your moves. Join us in our fight against polio, and we promise you won't be disappointed! Remember, every vaccination can save a life.

Acton

BUILDING A CHINESE COMMUNITY

Revealing the intriguing history of Chinese immigration into Acton.

By Spectrum Reporting Team

Acton Before the Population Boom

When Kate Chang was in second grade at Merriam Elementary School in 1974, she was the only Chinese student in her school. In fact, she found herself to be one of the few minorities of any race.

"She came home one day and said 'people are picking on me.' They started using things like 'ching chang, chop chop, Chinaman sitting on the fence,'" recalls her father David Chang, one of the earlier Chinese-American immigrants to move to Acton.

"So I told her, 'You know, you should speak up and defend yourself.' Sure as heck she did. She punched a kid, gave him a bloody nose," he continued.

In response to the incident, the Merriam principal asked if Kate Chang's mother, Ann Chang, would be willing to come to a professional development session about racial sensitivity. In that meeting, the assembled teachers were shown a film depicting black and white students who learned to get along.

"...[E]verybody thought it was great. Except my wife said, 'Look, there's a Chinese kid sitting there. And he said nothing! And all he did was sit in front of the computer there,'" said Mr. Chang.

"They didn't even realize that [it was an issue]. In other words, the whole scene was not directed towards Asians despite the incident... There [were] not even Hispanics or anything. It was just pure black and white," he added.

America's conception of race in the '70s was indeed drawn in black and white, and with good reason. By the 1970 census, Massachusetts on the whole was 96% white. Race discussions mostly revolved around the Civil Rights Movement. Asians were not part of that discussion.

When Mr. Chang arrived in Acton in 1968 with his family, he "did not realize there were no other Chinese in town," which led to some interesting interactions.

"...[M]y wife was talking to a neighbor, and somehow this subject came up about ironing shirts and the woman said to my wife, 'You're lucky your husband has this inborn knack for doing the laundry'...[T]hat was my introduction to Acton."

When long-time resident and current Board of Selectmen member, Dean Charter, was growing up in Acton in the 1950s, not only was it, according to him, "the epitome of the white-bred town," it was also, in many ways, a classic New England agricultural outpost. But by the time he graduated from AB in spring 1968, Acton "went from a very small farming community with a couple of small factories, to...a bedroom community for people working primary along the [Route] 128 belt."

"It was an interesting change because a lot of the folks that worked in those industries had much higher educational background than the folks that are already living here," he added.

The town's population, which



Headquarters of Digital Equipment Corporation, a tech powerhouse during the '70s and '80s which was based nearby in a former mill in Maynard. Many of DEC's workers raised families in Acton.

Online Source

was at 3,510 in 1950, doubled to 7,238 by 1960, and doubled again to 14,770 by 1970. Much of that infusion took the form of college-educated tech workers drawn by companies like Digital Equipment Corporation, which was a force in computing hardware until the 1980s with a headquarters in Maynard. Sitting roughly halfway between Route 128, and what would later become I-495, Acton became a more affordable community relative to closer towns like Lexington, drawing many middle class homebuyers.

"[Rt 128] was like the place to be, and anybody who had jobs on [Route] 128 was considered, you know, kind of a near-genius," according to Dean Charter.

Thus, aside from his race, Mr. Chang also embodied a different identity that arguably was even more representative of the changes coming to Acton. After attending graduate school at New York University where he studied satellite technology, David and his wife chose to settle down in Acton to be close to his job in the burgeoning technology hotbed around Route 128. During the 60s and 70s, the new residents were still mostly white, but eventually that began to change. As Asian families moved to town, the fabric of the town had to evolve to accommodate a new racial population.

"[Rt 128] was like the place to be, and anybody who had jobs on [Route] 128 was considered, you know, kind of a near-genius."

- Dean Charter

Pushes for Chinese-Americans Before 1965

The first wave of Chinese immigration to North America occurred around the beginning of the 19th century. Many of these immigrants worked as laborers on projects such as the transcontinental railroad. More Chinese started to pile into the West coast after news of gold found at Sutter's Mill in California spread around the globe, bringing people from many countries into the United States. Many were also pushed out their native country due to the opium wars against the British, which weakened China and its economy. Afterwards, most continued to work different labor jobs.

Since stepping away from the tech sector, Mr. Chang has studied the history of Chinese in America, recently co-authoring a book on



Acton Town Hall.

Online Source

Boston's Chinatown with an MIT professor. As he explains it, the Chinese were initially welcomed because they were willing to accept lower wages for manual labor. These immigrants, some fleeing famine and civil war, were quickly thrown into a labor market with high demand for workers in the mid 1800s. Then, once the California Gold Rush stopped producing the wealth many had dreamed of, the Americans started to oppose the immigration of East Asians. The white Americans deciphered that "the Chinese were working too hard and they were taking the jobs away... so there were literally huge movements to drive the Chinese out of California, out of the West Coast."

However, Mr. Chang explains that the Chinese people who had come for the Gold Rush "had nothing left to do in California. They [couldn't] just simply return home because they had invested a lot of money just to get here in the first place...[and] that's why the Chinese started moving to the East coast," even if it was not specifically Acton. In fact, the first group of Chinese to move to the East Coast arrived in North Adams, MA in 1870, as shoemakers in the Sampson Shoe Factory.

Following a lobbying campaign by many labor unions, Congress in 1882 passed the Chinese Exclusion Act, which was in many ways the first congressional attempt to control immigration into the United States. The act, which barred all laborers immigrating from China, was made permanent in 1902. These restrictions were later supplemented during the Progressive Era through provisions like the "Asiatic Barred Zone" of 1917, which extended the restrictions beyond China, into the Middle East, and the Indian subcontinent. Meanwhile, Asians living in the U.S. were denied citizenship as part of the Immigration Act of 1924. It wouldn't be until 1943 that the US lifted immigration and naturalization restrictions on their World War II ally that East Asians were

"[The Chinese] had nothing left to do in California. They [couldn't] just simply return home because they had invested a lot of money just to get here in the first place...[and] that's why the Chinese started moving to the East coast,"

- David Chang

given more freedom to emigrate from their home countries.

However, under the quota system then in effect designed to preserve the existing cultural and ethnic makeup, China was allotted only 105 immigrant visas per year until the system was overhauled under the Johnson administration in 1965.

Pushes for Chinese-Americans After 1965

1965 proved a pivotal year for US immigration policy, marked by the passage of the Immigration and Naturalization Act under the Lyndon B. Johnson administration. The act was groundbreaking in its elimination of the quota system which was born from the postwar resurgence of conservatism in the 1920s. In combination with the changing international landscape, the Immigration and Naturalization Act is largely responsible for catalyzing a wave of Asian immigration. Meanwhile, political unrest manifested itself in Asia throughout the 20th century, and it served as a strong motivator for emigration from Asian countries.

Mr. Chang became a political refugee in Hong Kong once Mao Zedong's communists took control of the Mainland and forced the Nationalist government to the island of Taiwan. Once he immigrated to the United States using a Taiwanese passport, Mr. Chang pursued an engineering degree from New York University. There, he found that "all the Chinese students [at NYU] were from overseas...they were from Indonesia, they were from Malaysia, Singapore, Hong Kong, and Taiwan," a direct result of strained diplomatic relations between communist China and the US which effectively cut off all channels of migration to the US from mainland China. Additionally, "[the US] wouldn't allow undergraduate students to come from Taiwan, so...only graduate students from Taiwan" allowed to emigrate. Mr. Chang's experience effectively characterizes this first wave of modern Chinese immigra-

tion as a matter of privilege, a commodity not accessible to those living in mainland China nor to those without significant education. Thus, "very few" people were actually allowed to leave this political turmoil, a fact Mr. Chang explains wouldn't change until 1979 when the US recognized the communist People's Republic of China, creating the diplomatic relations that allowed for the rising tide of Chinese immigration.

Mr. Chang does, however, trace the second wave of Chinese immigration to one monumental event: Tiananmen Square. These students grew up in the wake Mao's Cultural Revolution of 1966 to 1976, which was marked by massive suppression of free thought and individual liberties. In response, these students began to call for democracy and free speech in a post-Mao China. The 1989 Tiananmen Square student-led protest resulted in a massacre that is still heavily censored by the Chinese government. The West responded by enforcing embargoes on Chinese goods. Meanwhile, 80,000 visas were issued to Chinese emigrants, contributing to Mr. Chang's hypothesis that "the period of the big jump is because of Tiananmen Square." Tired and afraid of the political instability and further suppression, students sought to continue their education in a more stable political climate with democratic institutions, such as the United States.

Unlike previous eras of political instability in China, many of these well-educated students were able to leave the country, eventually settling into jobs like those in the booming American tech industry.

The emergence of communism in South Asia also contributed to a nationwide wave of Asian immigration. Catalyzed by the Vietnam War and its effects on the surrounding countries, the polarizing western fight to contain communism was perhaps responsible for the rise of oppressive communist regimes, such as the Khmer Rouge regime in Cambodia. The Vietnam War was a war of political ideologies and power, and while there was no clear winner, the losers were certainly the people, forced to flee as fighting reached their hometowns. The Vietnamese "boat people" sought refuge in surrounding countries, often in Cambodia. As more and more countries fell to the domino of communism in this region, the

Acton



The Tiananmen Square Protests of 1989, made iconic by this Associated Press photo, also were a turning point for US immigration from China: 50,000 visas were issued in the aftermath of the massacre. (AP) Online Source

people of these countries suffered more, particularly under Khmer Rouge, a regime which orchestrated the Cambodian Genocide in its quest for a master race. The effects of the Vietnam War and the spread of communism created a large refugee population that sought opportunity in the United States.

While there was at the time and remains today a sizeable population of economically disadvantaged Chinese migrants, the majority of Chinese immigrants had comparatively more resources such as education and financial resources relative to Cambodian and Vietnamese immigrants who were uprooted from their homes and arrived in America with very little in terms of support. These less-advantaged individuals often found support in communities with similar experiences, resulting in a self-segregation of Asian communities based on class and identity. As a result, though America often considers these groups as belonging to a homogenous "Asian American" community, there are many differences in culture and background that produced many differing outcomes as a result.

One factor that contributed to greater suburban Asian immigration were persistent stereotypes such as that of the model minority—of high achieving, principled, submissive workers. While positive on its face, these stereotypes are used to pit Asians against other racial minorities, and also to ignore sometimes painful pasts which prompted emigration.

As AB History Department Chair David Green put it, "we see first a vicious stereotyping, [of] East Asians especially, but also South Asians, as being what's called the model minority...that Asians are complacent. Asians are respectful, they're going to follow, you know, whatever it is so... This is a group of people that we are going to welcome into our community [in ways we may not for other races]."

Pulls for Chinese-Americans After 1965

In the late 20th century, a more diverse set of homebuyers started to move into Acton. They were mostly middle class families who found lower housing costs relative to other towns in the Route 128 corridor. David Green, whose family moved to Acton in 1979, remembers that "even though Acton is very expensive [today], you can still buy a very nice house in Acton, and for I'm going to say a reasonable cost compared to what you'd have to pay for that same house in Concord or Lexington, or even Wayland... because we lived in Ac-

ton, but we got the schools and we got the house. And so it's horrible to say, but it was good bang for the buck. It was really good bang for the buck."

When Green's family first moved to Acton, Acton's median home price (among all types of units) was \$82,400, compared to \$89,000 in Concord, \$85,200 in Lexington, and \$85,900 in Wayland [note: not adjusted for inflation]. Nowadays, while Acton's median home value grew to about \$560,000, Concord has grown to \$780,000, Lexington \$820,000, and Wayland to \$660,000.

Another draw to prospective residents: the schools. The district has long been well-regarded, but its prestige to homebuyers was amplified under the Reagan Administration, when ABRHS was one of the first high schools to receive a Blue Ribbon award as one of the premier schools in the country. The school district may have been a driving factor for these middle class families, particularly those who came from well-educated backgrounds or "And so it's horrible to say, but [Acton] was good bang for the buck. It was really good bang for the buck."

- David Green

cultures where education is of high importance.

Twenty years after Mr. Green's family's experience, another Chinese resident, who moved to Acton in 2000 also found that "in comparison, Acton's house prices are still more affordable than the I-95 corridor. So I think that and with pretty decent schools...I think that attracts a lot of people."

Another reason that made Acton a good fit for middle-class families was the background of these prospective residents. Mr. Green points out how "you see people coming from East and South Asia, already with resources, already with an education. And the concern is that they may not have a seat in a university or their PhDs might not be put to use in the way that they want in their countries of origin, but they were arriving here with assets so therefore, a town like Acton's perfect because maybe those assets aren't enough to purchase a multi-million dollar home in Weston, but it might be enough to purchase a \$500,000 home in a good bang-for-the-buck district with a reputation for good schools."

Acton After the Population Boom

In 2000, Xuan Kong moved to Acton with his family, citing Acton's maintenance of a "country-side feeling," access to the city through the Commuter Rail, good schools, and affordability relative to surrounding towns. These characteristics appealed to other families as well, allowing parents to work at their tech jobs in the city while living in a quiet, suburban community.

Kong is widely credited with blazing the path for Chinese residents to become more civically engaged. In 2008, he became one of the first Chinese-American residents to serve on the School Committee. But beyond his service in the town, Kong's election had an even bigger impact in the years to come. According to Kong, the attitude of "if Xuan can do it, so can I" spread among the Chinese community, prompting many members to become more involved in town politics.

Who is missing from this film? As Acton has moved into the twenty-first century, which groups of people have been left behind?

The Chinese community coalesced in other ways as well; although Chinese residents began to run for positions on the School Committee, they were more noticeable in the schools themselves. For example, Asians as a whole now make up a third of the student population in the district and a majority in certain elementary schools, such as Gates and Conant.

Chinese families also began to build cultural institutions for their Chinese community. Kong recalls many conversations when he first arrived in Acton about which Chinese language school they were sending their kids to, with many families making the forty minute drive into Newton. By 2003, though, residents established their own Chinese School in Acton, which became not only a place to teach children their native language and culture, but a hub for the adults to celebrate their culture and community. Former school principal Larry Sun explained, "the Chinese

language school, especially the cultural program, can provide a kind of community center for the Chinese population, because there is no Community Center, no YMCA, nothing like that... [and that's where you] have that opportunity to see so many Chinese people in one place." The Chinese community leveraged these resources for initiatives such as expanding and organizing volunteers to maintain the Memorial Library's Chinese language collection.

Kong in fact cites the Chinese School as one of the main advantages that the Chinese had in building a community. To Kong, it became a place for the Chinese community to become aware of town issues and also allowed the town a convenient forum through which to interact with the Chinese community.

In time, the town came to recognize, even celebrate, the prominence of the Chinese community. Sun describes how the Chinese

School hosted seminars from the Town Moderator, and meet-and-greets with police officers. Meanwhile, town officials asked Mr. Chang to give a presentation on "Who are the Chinese in Acton" to town staff. Then, in February 2011, they invited the Acton Chinese Language School to co-host the town's 275th anniversary celebration with music, dance, food, fireworks and a variety of lessons on Chinese culture that were available.

Looking upon this scene, with Minutemen holding muskets in colonial gear side by side with Chinese dancers in flowing dresses, an observer could plausibly conclude that Acton had finally lived up to its billing as a multicultural enclave, a bastion of inclusion.

However, as Ann Chang might ask us to ponder: Who is missing from this film? As Acton has moved into the twenty-first century, which groups of people have been left behind?

Thank you to everyone who helped us throughout the process; those who guided us through the process of understanding while staying out of the way; those who sat for long winded interviews, and then patiently fielded our countless follow up emails; who suggested others for us to interview; to those who gave feedback on our drafts at the absolute last minute.

David Green
Xuan Kong
Larry Sun
Ann Chang
David Chang
Kate Chang
Pam Lynn
Angie Tso
Susan Paju
Alec Lewis
and Josh Mishrikey,
Thank you for making this endeavor possible.

Looking Forward...

This was the first year of Reporting Team. We hope to continually improve in order to serve our community by diving deeper into its past and present.

Looking ahead, here are some things that next year's group is thinking about.

We would love to look into the narrative for the Indian community, seeing how it jibes and differs from the story above.

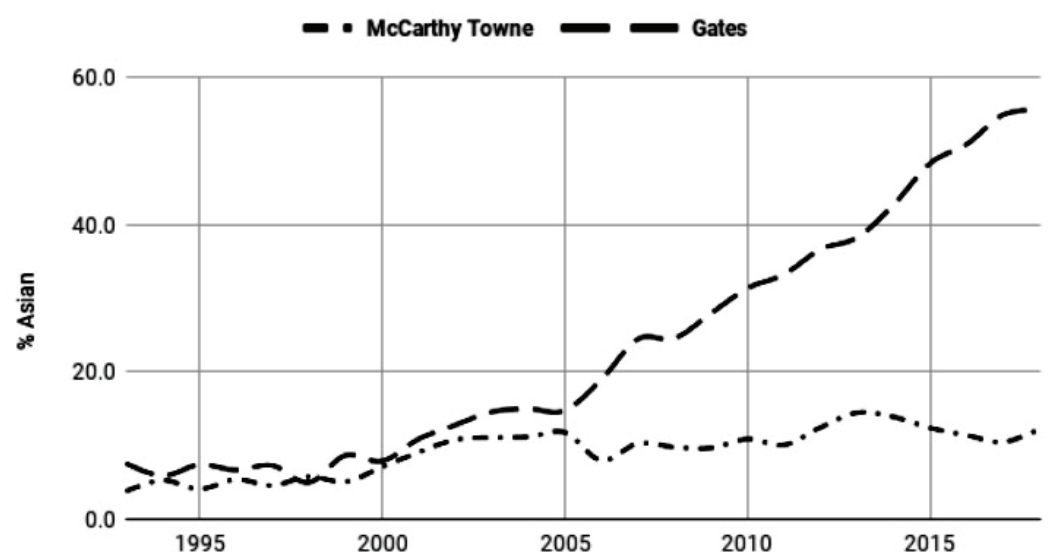
One of the things that Superintendent Peter Light highlighted in his entry process this February is how the elementary schools' racial imbalance is starting to make those schools "less diverse," and that he would love to figure out why. We would as well.

And finally, we would love to look more at "Which groups of people are missing from this film." And more importantly, to ask, "Why?"

Reporting Team Members:

Jasmine Mangat '19
Michael Cheng '20
Anjali Raman '20
Neha Vijay '21
Srija Nagireddy '19
Mila Rushkin '20

Asian enrollment (as % of school)



Source: Department of Education

Graduation

Spectrum in the '90s

By MICHAEL CHENG '20
News Editor

When I asked now-history department chair David Green about his time at *The Spectrum*, I was struck by the fondness with which he recalled his experience. After making “a very social decision” to join the school newspaper, he made his way up in the ranks to Entertainment Section Editor (Yes, it existed!). He liked the position “because it allowed [him] to expose the school community to aspects of entertainment that might not otherwise get out there.” And he took many opportunities to do so. For example, in 1990, Mr. Green wrote a review of *Stabat Mater*, the magnum opus of an underappreciated artist Giovanni Pergolesi from 1736.

Still, what Mr. Green remembers even more than sharing pre-Mozartian composers was the community. He talks about the “high levels of bonding, social drama, and even anger at times” as the staff physically assembled each issue by hand, often until 11:00 p.m. or midnight.

Many others from the era also incredulously recounted doing layout by hand. Former Off Topic editor from 1998 (and outgoing advisor who will be sorely missed) David Brusie recalled using “this stuff called spray mount, which was an adhesive that you’d spray from an aerosol can onto the back of cut-out articles onto giant boards.”

But while Mr. Green considered the physical layout process “arduous and stressful,” in the end, he said that they were rewarded with “delivering the master to an actual printer and waiting with great interest to see the final product!”

Former Layout editor Adam Steeves (1994–1998) also found the late nights of layout using “X-AC-TO knives and spray glue” rewarding. Once *The Spectrum* started to layout on the computer, the staff bonded in other ways: “We had

one special monitor meant for precision graphic work that had a button... to temporarily scramble, bend, and distort all of the content on the monitor. The effect of pressing this button while someone else was very carefully laying out a section of the paper on this monitor late at night was typically a near heart attack.”

Within the broader school community, Steeves says that “the faculty... encouraged reading the paper and writing articles for it... and the paper felt like an institution that was part of the school as a whole.”

Tim Dalton, who was part of the same staff as Steeves, recalls, “there was generally good morale driven by nerdy inside jokes, too much Elvis Costello, and the sheer number of hours spent staring at QuarkXPress pixels.” Dalton relished the “opportunities to find in [his] ugly-duckling peers that, happily, [he] was not the only nervous oddball or brainy obsessive in the school.” Dalton continued, “Smart, driven, energetic editors and writers—and a critical mass of readers who cared enough to read each issue—made it successful.”

Unfortunately, the edifices that those in the 90s had built, the sixteen pages of layout issue in and issue out, and maybe even the critical mass of readers, had crumbled by 2014. However, the character of the staff by all accounts remained intact. It remained a community where students came to share in everything from Schedule Changes to Seungri with equal parts humor and vigor. As 2016–2017 Editor-in-Chief Pooji Jonnavithula brought *The Spectrum* out of the ashes and back into the stars where it had once been, she found that “[the] [t]ypes of people drawn to the newspaper are very different from other clubs.” And that brought us success more than anything else.

Kirtana Krishnakumar contributed reporting to this piece.

Senior Summer Trip Ideas

By JASMINE MANGAT '19
Graduating Editor-in-Chief

The summer after senior years is a crucial one: students are often working to save up for college, relaxing with their high school friends one last time, and are unwinding from the past four years of hard work. While working all the time and staying in the area is one option for how seniors can spend their summer, it’s also important to step outside of your comfort zone and consider taking a trip as a way to spend the last few months with some of your best childhood pals. Here are a few potential summer trip ideas within the budget of a typical high school student:

Cape Cod:

The Cape is known for its famous beaches, lighthouses, and food. While driving by the Cape Cod National Seashore, you can spend a day at some of Cape Cod’s most well-known beaches such as Nauset, Marconi, and Race Point Beach. If you have a little more money on you, consider renting a house on Airbnb. Make sure to book it ahead of time and avoid 4th of July at all costs due to the high prices and big crowds. If you bring a few friends along, you can split the price and make the trip even more affordable. While you’re there, check out Commercial Street in Provincetown to visit some shops, restaurants, and gardens.

Montreal:

Many people forget that our fellow Canadians are just a five-hour bus ride away! However, don’t forget that Montreal can also double as a trip to France given the amount of French influence you can find. To get a real view of the city, hike up Mont-Royal. If you want to immerse yourself in the culture, make sure to take a walk through Old Montreal on St. Paul Street to visit some French stores galleries



Cape Cod is a wonderful place for a summer trip
ONLINE SOURCE

and restaurants. Before you leave, make sure to also visit the Basilique Notre-Dame to appreciate the city’s gothic architecture.

Six Flags:

If you’re looking for a thrill this summer, you can’t go wrong with a

day trip to Six Flags. From the roller coasters to the water park, Six Flags is a great option to scream away all of the anger and stress you might have had, bottled up inside you for the past four years of your life!

Indo American Convenience Store



485 Great Road,
Acton, Massachusetts
Phone: (978) 263-0144

Come! Visit our store to shop for wide variety of spices, Dals, flours, Indian breads, frozen Indian food/dinner, Indian Sweets, Fresh Vegetables, Canned, Pickled items and more.....

Persian Groceries Available too....

Open 7 Days A Week From 9:30 am – 8:30 pm

The Monopoly on Standardized Testing And The SATs

By JASMINE WU '22
Spectrum Staff

I took the SAT in both seventh and eighth grade. For the most part, I was disinterested because I knew my scores wouldn’t matter until high school. Now, as I prepare to take the Biology SAT Subject Test, I know that even though it’s smaller than the SAT, it matters this time. The real SAT is an even more inevitable, looming hurdle. These tests will affect my future. Honestly, that’s the scariest part: knowing that the College Board has so much influence on one’s college, and eventually adult, success.

Any mention of the SATs strikes fear into the hearts of a typical high schooler, and the College Board is equally daunting. Despite its prevalence, few students question the authority it holds over standardized testing. Founded in 1900, the College Board is a not-for-profit organization that aims to organize the college admissions process and expand access to higher education. Its broad reach encompasses AP classes and tests, the SAT, and all SAT II subject tests. Indeed, colleges need a

standard exam to assess a student’s readiness, but the College Board has taken over the entire admissions system.

While parents and students alike recognize the College Board’s testing as a necessity, the media has raised concerns about its legitimacy as a not-for-profit, instead casting it as “A Very Profitable ‘Nonprofit,’” a “hedge fund,” or a “NINO (non-profit in Name Only).” Money from registrations fees, late penalties, official study guides, and other preparations for the various College Board assessments amount to tens of millions of dollars. Theoretically, these earnings should cover operating costs and provide compensation for the College Board’s employees; however, this so-called compensation for its administrators seems to have transformed into excessive profits. College Board’s ex-president, Gaston Caperton, earned over \$2 million dollars in bonuses and base pay, and its current CEO, David Coleman, earned a total of \$732,192 in 2013. These high sums raise questions about the College Board’s ethics and motives as a not-for-profit, mission-driven organiza-

tion.

Skeptics of the College Board’s not-for-profit status also point to its competitive attitude. Since its establishment in 1959, the ACT, a separate nonprofit organization, has gradually gained popularity. Today, colleges and universities often declare no preference between the SAT and ACT. Still, the College Board competes for superiority. In recent years, it released a redesigned SAT with content, scoring, and format changes, featuring a grammar section almost identical to the ACT. Essentially, in order to keep up with the ACT’s increasing popularity, the College Board imitated its rival. Improving its test is not inherently wrong, but if the College Board’s only goal is to improve accessibility to higher education, its attempts to prevent ACT from gaining more power in the industry should be unnecessary. By seeking to maintain its standing, the College Board reveals its underlying motives, which directly contradict its not-for-profit status.

Despite the ACT’s previous growth, the College Board still dominates the standardized testing

industry. No other company exerts as much influence on education, and the College Board has no significant competitors for the SAT Subject Tests and the AP system, which are either required or advantageous for a student pursuing college. Thus, in many ways, although ACT has started to compete with it, the College Board has established itself as a monopoly.

Unfortunately, this monopoly has lowered standards due to the lack of sufficient competitors that would push the College Board to improve its testing. Already, incidents involving recycled questions, misprints, and irregularities have complicated public opinion of the College Board’s exams. For example, despite knowledge of a test’s reproduction and distribution by a Chinese test prep company, the College Board still released the exact SAT form; since it has prestige and popularity, it can be careless and idle, casually violating its stated mission to create fair and honorable tests.

Every high school has a distinct staff, curriculum, and grading system, so although the College Board

may have a monopoly, colleges and universities still need a universal standard to judge a student’s readiness for higher education. For example, at a school as rigorous as AB, it is hard to achieve outstanding academic success but other high schools may differ. Grades translate differently in different schools, so colleges need universal standards to evaluate competency.

However, if a single private entity is responsible for administering all standardized tests, that organization has so much power that it may not accomplish its original goals. Having multiple, separate organizations with similar exams may seem unnecessary, but students could benefit from a competitive standardized testing marketplace. Rivalry keeps the College Board on its toes, and ideally, it would force them to pay attention to public demands and make alterations. However, rivalry could just as easily escalate and destroy the necessary standard by producing a needless amount of exams. Though creating the right degree of competition will be difficult, it will be needed to counter the College Board’s monopoly.

Graduation

When You Play This Back

By CURTIS DEESE '19
Senior Speech

When I was twelve years old, I moved to Acton Boxborough from Watertown. If you had told sixth-grade-me that for my senior year, I would be writing an essay for AB to hear, I probably would have been pretty disappointed in my future self. At the time, I had sworn to never get attached to this place, to never find close friends here, and to never love this district like I had loved Watertown. To me, the act of enjoying Acton was the act of replacing Watertown. It did take me a few years, but, despite my best efforts, I did make friends, I did become pretty attached to this place, and I did come to love these schools as much as I had loved my hometown, and that's why I'm writing this essay. As I made friends in AB, I realized how special the people here are. So I decided to write this to thank them. My name is Curtis Deese, and this is my thank you note.

The first "thank you" goes to the teachers of AB. The best thing a teacher can give you is the ability to apply what they've taught you. The teachers I've had have shown me how education is about more than memorizing and reciting information - they showed me that education involves individuality, and independent thought. The information you'll learn will be useless if you don't apply it somehow, if you don't provide a view that only you can give. History and english and math and science are taught everywhere, but you have the ability to make your education unique to you. It's all about how you see it. At the end of the day, the simplest way to describe your existence is that it's a viewpoint. Some people clump together, and all see the same thing. Others search for their own vantage point, for their own place to stand. My favorite teachers here have shown me I could find my own place.

The next "thank you" goes to my friends. Recently I've been thinking a lot about how I'm going to have to part with my best friends this year. The worst part, I thought, was that I would never be able to find anyone quite like them. I would never be able to find people who understood our group's jokes and sense of humor. I think everyone here can relate to this to some extent. The people we treasure most are

irreplaceable. This made me very sad, until I realized that it wasn't a totally bad thing. Real friends are completely unique to you. It just shows that your bond is real. Real friends are irreplaceable; especially the friends you've made throughout high school. So, thank you for being so amazingly unique.

Lastly, I want to end by saying that one day you'll realize that the people in this period of your life gave you the greatest gift possible. You'll realize that despite how bad your day was, or how hard growing up is, or how bad of a test score you got, your friends taught you the most important thing you'll ever learn. If a friend loves you, you know that their love is real because simply because it is a choice. They don't have to love you. They aren't related to you, and they don't

have anything binding them to care about you, and yet they chose to, and they chose you. Your friends are the ones who taught you that you have the capability of giving love, and that you are deserving of love. That is a lesson which can only come from a friend, not a teacher, not a parent. Just a friend. So, I'd like to sign off as a friend, and say thank you, and goodbye. I wish all our time together could last forever, but I know it's best that it will end, because that's what makes it beautiful. Something isn't beautiful because it lasts. It's beautiful because it happened - because it happened to you and because it meant something. This means everything. Thank you AB. It was a pleasure to grow up with you by my side.

Sincerely,
Your friend

One More Hill

By IVANA BARNES '19
Senior Speech

When we are taught what to do to achieve success, many of us have heard "play to your strengths." While this is true, I think we also need to pay attention to our weaknesses. And I don't mean like improving them to become perfect and well-rounded. I mean because you can have a lot of fun doing something you're bad at.

When I first joined cross-country I was the slowest girl on the team. I bet you are all guessing what's coming next, "but then I worked and worked and worked and I became the fastest." That's not true.

I worked really hard and I got better, a lot better. But I'm still not nearly as good as a lot of the people doing it. Still, when I think about what I've done over the course of my time in high school, about giving up two hours every day, dragging myself up one more hill, stressing before every meet, and then coming home at 9 o'clock only to study for a test. When I think about whether that was worth it, I immediately know the answer is yes, and my current times have nothing to do with it.

I was so close to not joining the team freshman year. I was scared of being bad at running, or embarrassing myself, and I didn't see the

point of doing something where I wouldn't succeed, something I wasn't good at. But if I hadn't, I wouldn't have made the friends that I have today, I wouldn't have learned to manage time, I would be even more tired and stressed, and I also wouldn't have learned to push through when things get difficult. It was precisely that running didn't come easy for me that made it such an important learning experience. I learned to push myself and work hard even when I wasn't going to do amazing. I learned to value improvement even if many were still running faster than me. Joining cross-country allowed me to grow more than anything else in high school.

Now, almost 4 years later, we are all starting a new part of our lives. We will have new experiences and new opportunities, new chances to remake ourselves. I know whenever I get that chance my instinct is to try to start over, to not make mistakes this time, to be perfect. But my wish for all of us is that we do exactly the opposite. I hope that we dare to try something we are bad at. Something we think we have no hope succeeding in. And not because we might be good, but because we will learn a lot about ourselves along the way, connect with new people, and most importantly, have a lot of fun while we're at it.

READER'S CHOICE AWARDS 2016

1

READER'S CHOICE AWARDS 2016

Sal's Auto

COMPLETE CAR CARE

Quality. Trusted. Local.

Family Owned & Run for 40 Years!

Call Today! 978-263-2614

ASE CERTIFIED

Angie's list SUPER SERVICE AWARD 2016

BBB ACCREDITED BUSINESS A+

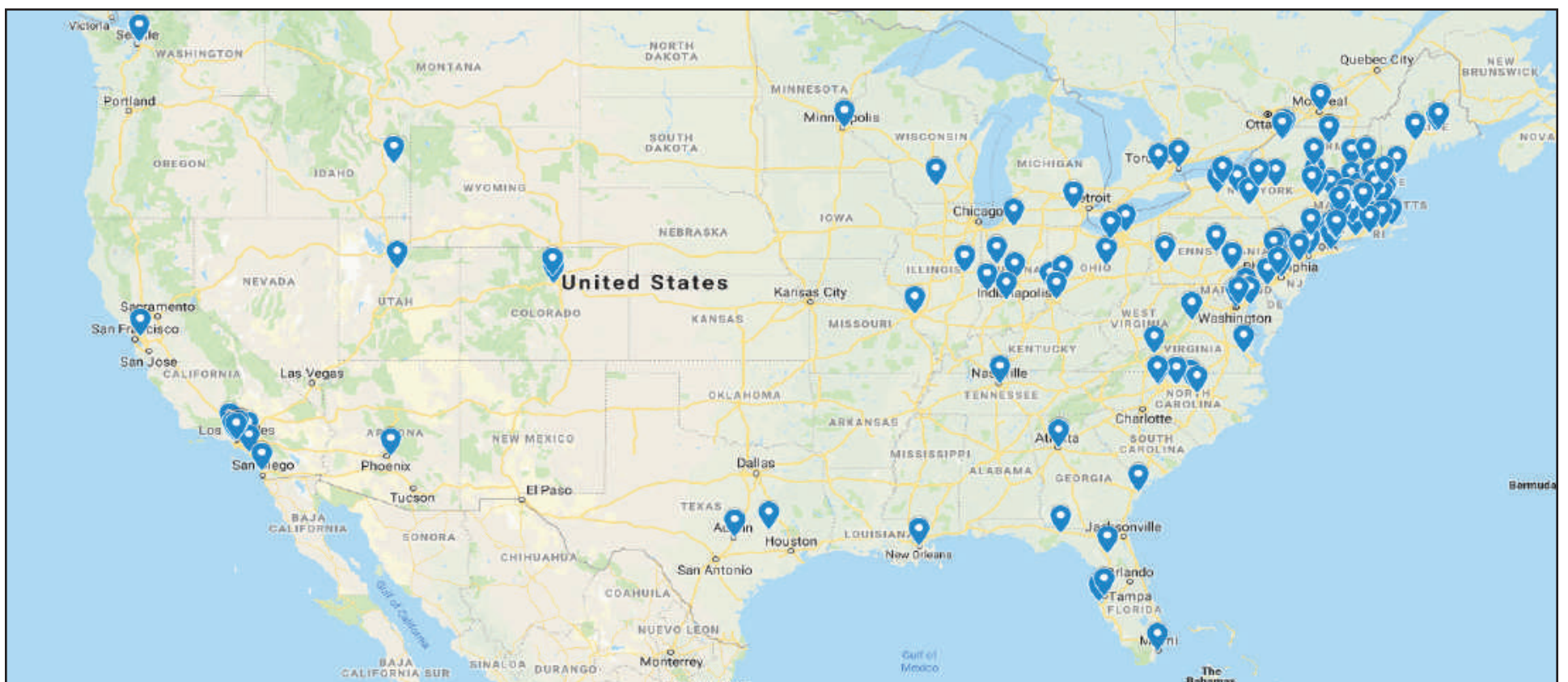
5 Willow Street • West Acton, MA

SalsAutoTruckRepair.com



Perserverance is key. ONLINE SOURCE

Class of 2019: Our Seniors' Destinations



Graduation

College Perspective from a Former AB Student

By SYDNEY SMITH '18
Former Chief Copy Editor

Hi *Spectrum* readers; I'm Sydney Smith, former chief copy editor. Last year I brought you an interview with Mr. Noeth. This year I'm bringing you an interview with myself, an actual college student.

Q: Why should I listen to you?

A: I'm a freshman Computer Science major at UMass Amherst, and I did pretty okay. I also managed to hold on-campus and off-campus jobs, volunteer, and be **on an registered** student e-board.

Q: I don't like this format. Can you just write an actual article?

Sure. Here are some nuggets of wisdom that I stumbled into over the course of the year, or gleaned from a college advice book that I bought at a yard sale for 50 cents.

Let's start off with the academic advice. College is different from high school; your professors won't learn your name unless you give them reason to, which is why you should actually go to office hours. I know this is advice that you'll hear bandied about everywhere, but no one takes it. Make it a habit to attend office hours of the classes that matter to you. Ask questions about class projects, important homework assignments, or readings. Or, as I sometimes do, say you're there to "absorb knowledge" and just listen to others' questions. If you consistently go to office hours, you will do better in class. If you don't do well in class, you will still look dedicated. Regardless, you'll distinguish yourself, especially out of a hundred students in a lecture hall.

It's hard to focus in a large lecture hall class. Of the students who came to

my Introduction to Computer Science classes, half of them played on their phones or computers. I was different, but no better—I read political commentary on my computer the whole time. So here's my quick fix for paying attention: bring only a notebook and a writing utensil to class, unless the class explicitly requires a computer or other materials. Remove all distractions.

In non-lecture-hall classes, show up early during the first week of class to lay claim to a good seat. Sitting in the front and center will make it easier to focus. If front and center isn't your style, you can aim for a middle center seat or a spot near an outlet.

In order to maximize productivity, start long-term projects the day that they're assigned, even if that just means thoroughly reading the instructions! The more time you allow yourself to process the information in the back of your mind, the better. I've had coding solutions come to me in my sleep—I can vouch for this method. Your productivity will suffer if you eat every meal with your friends. There's absolutely no shame in eating alone, and you can work while doing so. Even if you don't do homework, you'll likely leave the dining hall sooner than you would have had you made it a social event. That's why it's good to eat one meal with friends per day; it's an optimal balance of social time and work time.

Now for non-academic tips. In terms of on-campus jobs, it's generally best to work in the library, as a night residence hall monitor, or as a grader for a course. The first two are desirable because you can usually do homework while you work. But library positions are competitive, and checking people into their hall can require you to stay up until 2AM. The last job is one I actually held this se-

mester—I graded one section of multi-variable calculus—and although it gives you fewer hours, it's extremely flexible. As for the worst jobs, I've been advised against working in the dining hall.

If you have a meal plan with dining dollars that carry over between semesters but are replenished every semester, consider saving up during the fall semester to treat yourself during the spring semester. Campus food grows boring quickly, so eat in the dining halls often

before you get tired of the options, and then look forward to dining with variety later on, thanks to your stash of dining dollars.

Here's a less ethical life pro tip: become close to someone who has a car on campus. Hopefully, you'll start to like them for more than just their convenient access to transport though! Even if your college provides free public transit, as mine does, sometimes a car is far superior. A bus route may take an hour

to get somewhere that would take 20 minutes to drive to, so instead of asking potential pals what their major is, ask them where they park.

Finally, I find that too many people, regardless of what school they attend, make the same mistake: asserting the superiority of their school's squirrels. Don't fall into the trap of thinking that your college or university's squirrels are somehow more special than anyone else's squirrels. That's patently untrue.

Hansen Auto Body

QUALITY, AFFORDABLE AUTO BODY REPAIR & PAINTING
SERVING THE AB COMMUNITY SINCE 1995



- Handle Insurance Claims
- Environmentally Friendly
- Towing Available
- Satisfaction Guaranteed!



5 Willow St. Rear, West Acton
978-263-6606
HansenAutoBodyActon.com



STOP BY HANSEN AUTO BODY TODAY FOR A FREE ESTIMATE!

College Scandals and Culture

By JESSICA ZHANG '22
Spectrum Staff

As high school students, the pressure for success in college admissions is a pressing fear; everyday, we hear our friends talk about their grades rising or dropping and conversations about the intensity of college admissions. Recently, a scandal concerning college admissions fraud has caught the nation's attention, illuminating how desperate some are to get into college. However, these college scandals show more than a fracture in these people's morality; they are also indicative of the middle class's need to get into college, and the idea that it is a requirement to succeed in life.

News about the college scandals first broke last March. Fifty privileged people were charged for cheating their way into college, most of whom were parents trying to get their kids admitted. The cases of Lori Loughlin and Felicity Huffman, actresses who appeared in *Full House* and *Desperate Housewives* respectively, stood out. According to the *Washington Post*, the whole system was built around William Singer, a "well-connected college admissions advisor." People paid him to bribe college athletics coaches, who then recruited students for collegiate sports even when the applicant was not an athlete. Singer also paid Mark Riddell, a 36-year-old man from Florida, to take the SAT or ACT exams for students, or to fix answers to get a client a near perfect score.

So how does this affect other people? What the bribers aren't considering—or possibly have considered and dismissed—is that their actions take away from another's spot at the campus. Less affluent families already struggle with college admissions. For example, need-aware schools consider financial aid when admitting students since they have

a limited budget and prefer not to burden students with heaps of debt; they favor students who can pay full tuition, which mostly consists of the upper middle class. Adding another disadvantage against less affluent families is simply unfair and discriminatory. Additionally, taking a spot without merit is cheating and steals from another who has earned it. Nevertheless, these college scandals demonstrate just how far people will go to get their child into a good and prestigious school. Although it seems that these individuals went to extraordinary lengths to ensure their spot at their choice school, these scandals are not too far fetched from ordinary college admissions. For example, since schools want families to donate to them, legacy gives an advantage to siblings or children of alumni. College staff are bribed to facilitate the acceptance of students, and like the current admissions fraud, this demonstrates the power of the wealthy. Money being used as an advantage is a common theme and is ingrained in our society.

In this age, college seems like the end goal; it is the bridge that will ensure our success in the future. Members of the middle class typically want their kids to get into college. And yes, there are benefits to college—getting this higher education means a higher salary, professional connections, and ex-

perience and internships. But these only apply when the college is well-suited for the student. As the competition's intensity increases each year, a need to go to a name-brand, selective college increases as well; however, families only tend to focus on how esteemed and distinguished a school is when deciding where to attend. For many, college is important, but parents overlook how important it is for a school to suit their child's skill set. Choosing a school should be based off of how well the student fits in, and many people don't even go to college because they may feel as if their path or career in life is facilitated by something else. Everybody needs to work hard in order to achieve great things in life, but education can surface in various forms, including independence from the university structure. It does not help a student to go to a college that is not suited for them, as it will only inhibit their path to success. Accomplishment depends on an individual's ambition, for if they lack the motive or skill set particular to their school and need a different approach, then succeeding will be difficult.

In the end, we all know that feeling of needing to get into a good college, exemplified by the middle and upper class, but no one benefits from cheating to get into a school. It only serves to heighten the disparity present in our society.



Lori Loughlin is one of the key figures in the recent scandal.
ONLINE SOURCE

Studying Abroad

By JONATHAN LIN '21
Spectrum Staff

Your hard work for the past three years has finally paid off.

Sure, there's still one more year to go, but everyone knows that most of senior year doesn't really matter; what matters now is applying to colleges. Turning on your laptop, you enter "colleges to apply to in the United States" into the Google search bar. After hours of scrolling, nothing seems to fit your style. One school is highly ranked for the subject you want to major in but has horrible dorm ratings; another is good for job placement but comes with lackluster dining. Then it hits you: Why do I have to study in the United States?

A good reason to ditch the **states** when searching for colleges is the monetary incentive; in the U.S, the costs for education tend to skyrocket after high school. As of September 2018, the *Atlantic* reports that the United States spends an average of \$30,000 per student annually on tuition alone, more than twice the average of developed nations.

It's not even an issue of quality. Oxford University, a school located in Great Britain with an educational system comparable to the Ivy Leagues, charges just 10,000 euros annually for a degree in economics. But the rewards don't stop at a cheaper tuition; Jennifer Viemont, founder of an advising service known as *Beyond the States*, explains, "The cost is what makes people think about going to college abroad, but then they start to see the other benefits like learning a new language, travel opportunities, and being prepared to work in a global economy."

Nikhil Kommineni, a current senior at Bromfield High School who will attend Oxford in the fall, reflects, "I think my debate [and

Model United Nations] experience has sort of shaped the way I see the world and has made me realize that there are so many different countries and cultures in the world that if I can get the chance to experience a different one for three years in college, then there's no reason not to take the opportunity... I've also held the belief that if there are 195 countries in the world, I don't want to spend most of my life in just one."

In fact, Nikhil is far from alone in the flood of American college prospects seeking affordable degrees overseas. A report from IIE Publications finds that over 47,000 students earned degrees abroad in 2012, a number that has increased annually ever since.

Drawbacks, however, do exist. Viemont furthers that fraternity life and sporting events common in the U.S. such as football cease when you step foot on a European campus. Further, once you decide on a major, it becomes very difficult to change course. Nikhil describes the nuances of the application process as the following: "[W]hen you apply, you pick a major, and you only study that major for the duration of your degree... U.S. schools usually sacrifice depth of study for a broader scope of study and vice versa for Oxford," meaning that if you pick an area of study, there's no going back.

Ultimately, whether you want to study abroad or not is your choice. Yet, it is important to keep in mind that college is meant to be an exciting—albeit mysterious—gateway to new opportunities. With advantages such as lower costs and increased cultural exposure, mixed with disadvantages including a locked-in path of study and lack of American traditions, deciding on where that gate to success lies can be a game changer for your life.

Graduation

Boxborough Insurance Agency

650 Massachusetts Ave. Boxborough, MA

Call Us At:
(978) 635-0044

Open 9am - 5pm
Mondays-Fridays



The Opioid Crisis

By **VICTOR SUN '19**
Senior Project

\$270 million—the amount of money paid to Oklahoma by Purdue Pharma in a lawsuit settlement. While the outcome of one of 2,000 lawsuits filed against the opioid crisis' biggest villain seemed inevitable, punishing opioid manufacturers won't solve the decades-old opioid crisis gripping America. The solution is to tackle the underlying structures sustaining the opioid crisis. The US needs to act, and while the remedies require significant amounts of resources, they will prove worth it.

According to Brown Medical School's Dr. Traci Green, whom I interviewed last November, the US needs to first decriminalize opioid use. If an officer catches a person with small amounts of opioids and doesn't believe that the addict is a dealer, then the officer should bring the addict to a treatment center rather than to jail. "In all of my research, I have seen that jailing addicts hasn't worked," she says. "Once they are released, they go back to using drugs."

In fact, Dr. Green thinks incarceration makes the problem worse. "People don't realize that after spending months in prison with no access to drugs, even small amounts can be fatal. Overdosing on the first use out of jail is very common. We need to reform sentencing to better forgive and expunge peoples' records so that getting pulled over with drugs wouldn't necessarily land you in jail." Her thinking reflects a growing consensus that addicts can better receive the resources they need to curb their addictions without fear of incarceration.

When deciding how to decriminalize, the US should look at an existing program. Dr. Green thinks America should follow Vermont's template. "Vermont has stopped prosecuting possession arrests, so we've seen huge decreases in the number of people in jail." Now, a key distinction here: decriminalization doesn't mean legalization. The US isn't allowing stores to sell pot or anything else, the country is just making sure addicts don't land behind bars. While decriminalization will stem the flow of prisoners into overcrowded penitentiaries and assuage recidivism rates, it won't solve the problem: a free addict isn't a cured addict.

The US must also ensure that

all addicts can afford the expensive treatments they need to curb their addictions. Requiring healthcare companies to pay for treatments prescribed to addicts who have existing coverages and an addiction diagnosis will help immensely. For anyone without healthcare, the government covers their treatments. Dr. Green told me that "Massachusetts is a good template since health insurance and MassHealth cover all rescue treatments and the state has health centers that provide consistent rehab." However, Dr. Green believes there is one last thing America needs to do to ensure addicts will recover effectively.

Decriminalizing drugs and access to free treatments is all for naught if addicts can't get to the treatment facilities. Dr. Green believes that establishing community-based treatment centers would bring treatments to users who live in isolated areas. "Many users live several hours away from the nearest treatment center. Since regular trips isn't a feasible option, lots of people don't get the help and resources that they need." Having access to treatments just minutes from an addict's house ensures that everyone can get treated.

On April 1st, China agreed to cease production of fentanyl, the deadliest opioid on the market. For most, this may seem like enough. They wouldn't be wrong—China accounts for 40% of the US's drug imports. However, people who feel that shuttering drug manufacturers quenches the crisis likely think pharmaceutical companies deserve all of the blame because of aggressive marketing. But in reality, big pharma is one part of a failed system: the criminal justice system, corporate lobbyists, and the government's slow response all play crucial roles in the crisis we face today. There's no way around that. But what we can do is ease the symptoms through change. Decriminalizing personal drug use. Changing healthcare regulation. Creating more treatment centers. These are the ways in which the US can treat an issue killing 70,000 people a year. It won't be easy, and it will require everyone's cooperation, but in the end, it will save lots of lives. Before the interview ended, Dr. Green impressed upon me one last idea: "We will not make our way out of this problem by science alone, but only with a partnered and collaborative approach."

Senior Projects and the Future

By **NITHYANI ANANDAKUGAN '19**
Graduating Editor-in-Chief

Every year, several members of the senior class at ABRHS dedicate themselves to a cause that matters to them. The Senior Project English class offers students the opportunity to develop and execute a self-directed project that impacts the community in some way. Last month, before our seniors wrapped-up their final year of high school, they shared with the community the fruits of their labor.

This year's senior projects were truly remarkable.

Just about everyone entering the library on May 21st to preview the Senior Project Exposition had heard whispers about the chickens. Jen Benati and Hunter Whitbeck raised chickens for part of their project. The pair aimed to create a self-sustaining system: the crop they planted helped to feed their chickens, and the chicken waste helped to fertilize the crop. Jen and Hunter hoped that implementing such a system on a larger scale in Appalachia, for example, might help alleviate some of the harsher effects of poverty.

Near Jen and Hunter, Andy Jian and Dwight Fairchild had set up their project. With a focus on environmentalism, Andy and Dwight wanted to tackle the issue of waste management. They found that styrofoam often builds up in landfills because the material is not biodegradable. Through much research, though, the pair found a potential solution: mealworms. This type of worm is able to eat, digest, and break down styrofoam. Introducing

mealworms to landfills would help reduce the styrofoam buildup.

Focussing her project more locally, Maria Rofail worked with Boxborough's Peter Pan Center for Social & Emotional Growth. She sought to work with kids who struggle to communicate with others. To develop their collaborative skills, Maria planned a group art activity for the students that would push them to communicate with their peers; though she anticipated that the children would lose interest after about fifteen minutes, she found that they remained engaged for much longer. The young students became invested in making their art project the best—a heart-warming success for Maria.

In an even more localized project, Grace Zhang and Britney Zhou spent this past year creating a green space that students could use to relax here at the high school. They

built this green area in the Upper Level of the stairwell across from Student Center East. Though the pair originally hoped to create a green wall using living plants, they ultimately used fake ones because the stairwell space lacked an electrical outlet, which would have been necessary to help pump water continuously to the living plants. Regardless of this minor setback, the green space left the desired impact. Even the day after Britney and Grace assembled the sofa and put finishing touches on their green space, students began to use it as a place to unwind with their friends.

Listening to this year's seniors present their work has left me hopeful for the future. The senior project students have demonstrated that, with time and dedication, our generation can certainly solve the problems that matter to us.

THE SILVER UNICORN BOOKSTORE



Acton's new independent bookstore

is proud to support our friends at

The Spectrum!

12 Spruce St. in West Acton

SilverUnicornBooks.com

Advice From AB Seniors

By **NITHYANI ANANDAKUGAN '19** AND **JASMINE MANGAT '19**
Graduating Editors-in-Chief

School:

School is tough. We learned that the hard way. Here are some things we'd tell our underclassmen selves to make the intellectual journey a lot easier. First, always date your notes. Remember to hole punch your papers. Always apologize after breaking glassware in chemistry. Bring pencils to class. Don't not do your homework. Always close your backpack, so if you try to make a dramatic turn, all of your belongings will not fall out and strike those around you. Don't drop a bowling pin on your graphing calculator, so it shatters, and you can't use it anymore.

College Preparedness:

Standardized testing is so much fun. Enjoy it. Donate all your money to the College Board, so you can take the SATs too many times. Remember to sign up for your APs, so you get the opportunity to **the** listen to the chorus of squeaking chairs in the Lower Gym as you write furiously in blue or black ink. And don't forget about those college essays. Write about that time you visited a developing country for a full week to teach some kids arithmetic, but in the end, they taught you, and you're a better person for it, so in conclusion, you deserve to

go to college.

Extra-Curriculars:

There are so many opportunities for you to shine at AB, and there are so many lessons to be learned. Students walk out of Science Team knowing the meaning of love, kids on the Speech and Debate Team gain a new appreciation for the value of silence, the members of the AcaDec Team learn about compassion, and Spectrum staffers learn to punctuate. Choose your cult wisely.

Social Life:

Don't need it. Our only friend is the College Board, a wonderful non-profit organization that certainly doesn't allocate its profits to sustain its CEO's lavish lifestyle. We are most inspired by our friend, the College Board, for its dedication to educating the youth of tomorrow. When you find someone as kind and compassionate as the College Board, you'll find that you won't need anyone else.

Drugs, Alcohol, & Juuling:
Don't.

Sleep:

Optional. Students who do choose to sleep often report reliving only the most embarrassing parts of their day, like that time they shamed one of their teachers for having to use the bathroom, without knowing that said teacher was standing right there. That student, in fact, hasn't slept since. So if you do choose to sleep, get your act together.

The Future:

The future is unknown. The only way to know it is to have a time machine. Those don't exist. This is why we have commissioned a group of accomplished scientists to collaborate in building the first ever time machine. Hopefully, this will one day help us gather a better understanding of what the future might hold. Until then, we won't know the answers to all of our questions. And that's okay. In other news, if current rates of global climate change persist, there will be no future, so don't worry about it.

MC **Mass Cultural Council**

This program is supported in part by a grant from the Acton-Boxborough Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.

Forum

Political Martyrdom and the British Exit from the EU

By MICHAEL CHENG '20
News Editor

On March 26th, Theresa May offered to resign as Prime Minister of the United Kingdom if Parliament were to ratify her agreement on Brexit, the British withdrawal from the European Union.

This is reminiscent of her predecessor, fellow Conservative David Cameron, who won his election due, in part, to his promise of a referendum on whether or not to leave the EU. The vote, held June 23rd, 2016, was won by the Leave side with 52 percent of the vote. Cameron then resigned a day later, horrified by the result of the referendum he had called.

Much of the debate during the campaign was about the United Kingdom's degree of sovereignty—its ability to regulate issues like trade and immigration free from Brussels' interference. Now, three years later, many of these issues still remain hotly debated. Most notably, people harbor strong opinions about the potential land border between Northern Ireland (part of the UK) and the Republic of Ireland (an EU member).

Cameron's sudden resignation left the arduous task of navigating these issues to Theresa May, who has struggled to appease the various factions involved. May has spent the past two years entangled in negotiations for an "exit agree-

ment," setting the terms of Britain's withdrawal and the future of the EU and UK's relationship. If an agreement is not ratified before the deadline, which both sides have begrudgingly pushed back to Halloween, a "No Deal" secession—whereby all EU laws vanish overnight from the UK—will wreak havoc on British life. On the whole, both parties consider this the worst possible option.

However, the parties cannot agree on anything better. Criticized by many in the opposition Labour party for going too far, yet scorned by some in May's own party for not going far enough, the exit agreement May negotiated with EU leaders has been soundly rejected three separate times.

May has been unable to distance herself from the fallout of her agreement. In a historic rebuke this March, she became the first Prime Minister to be held in contempt by the chamber she leads. Her failure to provide Brexit-related evidence even pushed conservative lawmakers to attempt to vote her out of office earlier in March.

Part of May's plight is her own doing. After the 2016 referendum, May decided to call an impromptu Parliamentary election in 2017, hoping to increase her pro-Brexit party's seats before exit deal negotiations began. Instead, the vote was an unexpected disaster for May, weakening her hand at the

negotiating table and putting into question the 2016 electoral mandate to leave the EU.

The confusion and chaos that has characterized Brexit in the years since can be traced to the mixed messaging from these two elections. However, Parliament has done no better than May in parsing these signals. After rejecting her agreement, Parliament held eight non-binding "indicative votes" on Brexit, with alternatives ranging from a "No Deal" Brexit to a looser "customs union" to a second referendum altogether, in an attempt to gauge legislative attitudes. When voted on individually, all eight failed to gain a majority of support.

This exercise highlights another issue with the 2016 referendum: it attempted to smash many different visions for the EU-UK relationship together into a binary choice: stay or leave. As British comedian John Oliver succinctly noted this February, "the reality is, this situation is much too complex for an up or down referendum."

However, as we have already seen with Parliament's indicative votes, adding layers of complexity does not fix our electoral murkiness. On the contrary, it distorts the outcome. In fact, a famous mathematical proof from the 1970s finds that once there are more than two options, there can be no electoral systems where vot-

ing for something always helps its chances (e.g. voting for Clinton always makes her more likely to win) — except in a dictatorship. There are other similar theorems, and together they send a clear message: there are no perfect electoral systems.

Despite this fact, our democracies are built on the unquestionable truth of our electoral outcomes. Brexit's two semi-conflicting votes are problematic only because we have assigned a paradoxical perfection to both.

While we hire legislators for the express purpose of making complicated decisions for us, we believe in our hearts that we, the voters, can directly make informed decisions on the most complicated of issues, like dissolution of a decades-old political entity. To do this, we rely on using intricate voting mechanisms, which produce "electoral mandates" that we then treat as eternal gospel, at least until they are contradicted by the very next vote.

All of our lawmakers, including Theresa May, are held to similar paradoxical standards of perfection—they are expected to be pragmatic yet unwaveringly principled, to represent changing constituencies without ever changing their own positions, and to continually serve the interests of the entire nation while being accountable to a select few in their

district. But on top of everything else, perhaps the most absurdly aspirational expectation is that they create and preserve these mythical ideas about the perfect election and the unassailable mandate.

In the real world, democratic societies are forced to make trade-offs. In the real world, the will of the people is not a scientific fact.

Yet it is this unrealistic expectation that Theresa May was charged with carrying out. And in the face of this impossible task, she soldiered on. She gradually downplayed her offer to resign, determined instead to hold one last vote on her Brexit deal, scheduled for the week of June 3rd.

The BBC's political editor recently said that "pulling off a victory in the Brexit bill would seem to be like pulling off a miracle." In lieu of a miracle, a loss would ironically leave the UK once again with a binary choice: stay, or leave without a deal at all.

A loss would also likely spell the end of Theresa May's career, sending her to the history books as a quixotic figure, who searched for consensus and certainty where it no longer existed.

Over the course of this article's many drafts, one consensus, however, did emerge: there were no notable protests when Theresa May resigned as the Prime Minister on Friday, May 24th, unable to solve what she had been elected to solve.

Seungri's Recent K-Pop Scandal

By DIVYA KRISHNAN '21
Spectrum Staff

In East Asia, bordered on three sides by water and to the north by a militant, socialist state, there exists an unlikely bastion of democracy and capitalism: South Korea. A relatively young country, it has yet to reach its true potential as a political and economic powerhouse. On the heels of the Korean War and a recent financial crisis, South Korea plans to achieve this with a sort of rebound technique, a Trojan Horse to the major leagues: economic soft power. Its biggest export? K-pop.

South Korea's most prominent K-pop artist in history is a boy band called Big Bang, whose popularity enabled them to fill American arenas and sell more than 150 million albums worldwide. Earlier this year, Seungri, a member of Big Bang, made sudden and shocking headlines in connection with a case of sexual assault at the Burning Sun nightclub, which he owns.

The issue arose when an anonymous man, referred to as Mr. Kim, filed a report stating that he had tried to help a woman being harassed by calling the security, only to be assaulted by security and police himself. For the first few weeks, the case only cir-

culated local news stations, attracting minimal international attention.

However, when Seungri was revealed to be one of the principal investors of the club, what had once been a social justice case concerning only the Korean people widened to an audience of nearly every K-pop fan within reach of social media. As a result, the focus of the case turned away from more involved culprits towards Seungri, attaching the shallow and almost obstructive label of "K-pop scandal" to something much, much greater.

As the case proceeded, news outlets began alleging that Burning Sun was guilty of more than a few isolated cases of sexual assault. They stated that VIP clients of the club were offered prostitution services in return for great amounts of money; in some cases, innocent clubgoers were drugged by club staff and brought to back rooms to perform sexual acts under the influence. Further, news outlets claimed that this was not a recent occurrence. In fact, the only reason the club had been able to get away with it was because a co-owner of the club had been bribing police officers for their silence, expanding a social justice scandal into a corruption case that questioned Korea's own law enforcement.

Up to that point, Seungri's name

had only been mentioned in passing to draw attention to articles and headlines. However, a news station called SBS announced that Seungri had been aiding in the procurement of willing and unwilling prostitutes, for various foreign investors and other rich clients. They revealed the existence of a group chat in which Seungri discussed payment for prostitution services and distributed graphic videos of sex with drugged women, whom he filmed without the women's knowledge or consent. Members of the group chat included prominent actors, CEOs, and some of Korea's most beloved musicians—voices of a generation, representative of Korea's burgeoning entertainment industry as well as its fraught social divisions and gender inequality.

While the K-pop label and Seungri's position as the face of the investigation attracted much needed attention to the Burning Sun case, they also threatened to dilute the significance of the entire affair. South Korea, a strong ally of the United States, is viewed as progressive in relation to its neighbors, a "Western-esque" country in the East with its high rise buildings, flourishing capitalist economy, and democratic government. Beneath a clean, modern facade, a tempest of social inequality and injustice exposed itself. Regardless of how progressive Korea portrays itself, the Burning Sun investigation has revealed that some of the most famous and well-loved faces in mainstream media can be chest-deep in sexual assault, rape, and corruption crimes while maintaining their influence.

Many of the suspects revealed in the case have yet to be prosecuted; however, justice comes in increments, rarely leaps and bounds. If executed properly, this case has the potential to overturn South Korea's social climate and clear a much-needed path for growth and change.

My Girl Hero Fatima

By ANNE LIZETTE STA. MARIA
Girl Heroes Columnist

Very soon, I will graduate high school and begin college. I tend to get overly sentimental about leaving things behind, but I'll be taking a few things from my past with me to my new school: the flower crowns I wore on my eighteenth birthday, the miniature Québécois and Philippine flag souvenirs from my sophomore year travels, and, perhaps most importantly, a very, very good friend of mine—Fatima Zahid. I can't wait to spend my freshman year transitioning into college with someone I love and trust. Fatima and I have known each other since seventh grade, and our friendship has only gotten stronger throughout middle and high school. (You know you're besties when you call each other Hot Mama and Hotter Daughter!) She has always inspired me with her independence, discipline, and kind heart, and I'm excited to have her by my side at the beginning of this new chapter in my life.

My future roommate has actually been a hustler since we were in eighth grade, working as a psychologist home office assistant, a nursery teacher, and most recently, a waitress. As someone who only got her first job at eighteen, I was very impressed by this. I had never met anyone so driven!

Although she's always had a job, Fatima's always prioritized her school work. Last year, I remember her designating a separate notebook for studying and committing to studying one hour a night for math when she noticed she was struggling. This helped her boost her grade, and

it showed me her determination to improve whenever she was faced with challenges. There's something so awe-inspiring about a young woman who can get her coin, get good grades, and get her life together—and that's the exact kind of energy that I want to be around next year.

Another thing I love about Fatima is how intuitive and empathetic she is to the people around her. Once, I was experiencing a lot of emotional pain but was unable to express it because we were attending a Girl Up meeting. I didn't even have to look at Fatima once for she to see the emotions on my face. Swiftly, she sat right next to me and held me close. I remember practically melting into her warm embrace as she gave me a safe space to cry it out and talk about what was wrong. Fatima and I have had a lot of crazy moments through the years—from her spontaneously doing an Algerian "high-pitched tongue trill" at our friend's brother's wedding, to model posing for our aesthetic photoshoot at the skatepark—but nothing quite struck a stronger chord with me than the simplicity of that one moment at Girl Up. It's such a relief to know that next year I'll be sharing a space with someone who's always going to have my back.

To Fatty, my future roommate, I'm really happy to have a friend like you in my life, and even happier to take you to UMass Amherst with me. Let's try to buy you an actual college sweatshirt between now and August. You bring the mini-fridge, I'll bring the microwave, and we'll decide who gets which bed when we get there.



Seungri and Burning Sun have taken South Korean news.
ONLINE SOURCE

Forum

Argument About the Notre Dame Fire Fundings

By SYDNEY PASCAL '22
Spectrum Staff

On April 15, 2019, at 6:20 PM in Paris, a fire broke out in the Notre-Dame Cathedral. Fifteen hours later, the spire, roof, and much of the upper walls were burnt to a crisp. After surveying the aftermath, it has been estimated that restoration could take more than 20 years. President Emmanuel Macron launched a fundraiser which was able to raise over one billion euros. With all that is going on currently in the world, one billion dollars going towards the restoration of the Notre-Dame Cathedral may seem as a mispend to some people.

The BBC reported that "Unitec, the national union representing construction economists in France, has estimated that the repair and restoration work on the Notre-Dame will cost a maximum of €600 million." In other words, at least €400 million will not be used and go right to the church.

Although the cathedral is an important part of history, that much money should not be going to rebuilding, or at least the remaining amount could be used in better ways than simply going into the already wealthy Catholic Church's bank.

There are organizations, charities, and disasters that need funding more than the rebuilding of a cathedral. There are so many great organizations that help nature; they plant trees, help endangered and hurt animals, and clean the beaches and oceans. Many charities also exist that help people who are homeless or poor, and children whose parents can't provide for them. These nonprofit organizations are always looking for more donations because they need to pay people to fund their work and materials. Most of them are very worthy causes, but it's hard for them to get money to do the good things they do. It's hard for them to get a lot of money because average people can't donate large

amounts, and the rich are donating to things that boost their reputation, like donating to well-known organization. Organizations like Ocean Conservancy clean up the ocean, but it's hard for them to find funding. The one billion euros would be enough to clean up the entire garbage patch in the Pacific ocean. This action alone could be so impactful. Less sea animals would be able to live and be healthier. From a business standpoint, the fish would be healthier and more plentiful so the fishermen could make more money. Beyond this, there is much more of an impact with donating an organization like this than the cathedral that just looks pretty.

Although such disaster may be affecting many lives, there are many other problems that are impacting people today, caused by nature and by man. For example, in Michigan, there is a drought that has been going on for almost two decades, and people in Puerto Rico are starving. Even if the

Church wanted to keep the money, there was a bombing in Sri Lanka on many Christian churches. Further, many churches have been bombed, robbed, burned, and invaded. These are innocent people being punished for being faithful to their religion. With all this money, the church should give some away to the strong people who are fighting for the same religion.

There are a few reasons, though, that make the cathedral a viable fund to donate to. It is one of France's most famous landmark and it's a massive part of Paris's history and culture. It's more than 850 years old, and it took 200 years to build. Britain's King Henry VI was crowned King of France in the cathedral in 1431 and Napoleon Bonaparte's coronation also took place in the cathedral. It was also very beautiful, with stain glass window, amazing architecture, and it had many holy relics. Though it is an important part of history and it attracts tourists to the city, are we memorializing the past at the cost

of the present? It's very cool and a historic landmark, but we are funding it at the cost of higher impactful and more urgent causes.

It is quite obvious that the poor people of France are not the ones donating to the cathedral's growing fund. The wealthy donating has only fueled the flames of an ongoing working class movement called the Yellow Vest movement. This movement strives for many things: lower fuel taxes, and most relevant, to bring back solidarity tax on wealth. The wealthy are not being taxed for the crazy amount of money they have, and with the growing divide between the middle class and wealthy, the people want justice. This further proves that there are so many better causes that the money could go to. It also exemplifies how powerful the rich are when they work together. The money should not be going to, or at least completely going to, the cathedral. But sadly, with the control of the wealthy, this won't change. Or at least, it will not change soon.

Stigmatized Political Views' Effects on the Nation

By PRISHA DAYAL '21
Off Topic Editor

"No one with a college degree and a brain would vote for Trump!" a girl concluded during a class discussion at RJ Grey Junior High School. Everyone agreed and laughed along. My thirteen-year-old sister, recalling the incident, questioned whether the Trump supporters "were laughing out of obligation."

The situation may seem insignificant, but the class's demeanor could have broader implications. Living in an echo chamber, an environment where a person only encounters beliefs or opinions that coincide with their own, exacerbates the stigma surrounding conservative views. This is because people are less accepting of alternative ideas when their own views are constantly reinforced. Critically, in a left-leaning town like Acton, conservative residents are condemned far more than their liberal counterparts. If we fail to promote open dialogue, teenagers will continue to express distaste towards peers with different political ideologies, preventing students from

voicing their opinions.

The media plays a significant role in establishing which views are "politically correct". However, many mainstream media websites present biased perspectives, which often go unnoticed by students. For example, many media outlets display Republicans as being racist and xenophobic, while portraying Democrats as being open-minded and accepting. While racist views should never be endorsed, broad generalization of a certain political party is simply untrue. These broad generalizations are ingrained in the minds of adolescents, making them dismiss the opposing party's views. Further, students who agree with the Republican argument choose not to express their own opinion because they fear hostility and criticism from their peers. Addressing this negative sentiment is crucial because having a classroom atmosphere with only one dominant viewpoint merely reinforces a person's pre-existing beliefs instead of challenging them. Nonetheless, learning how to filter out misconstrued information can help students use news outlets to stimulate their

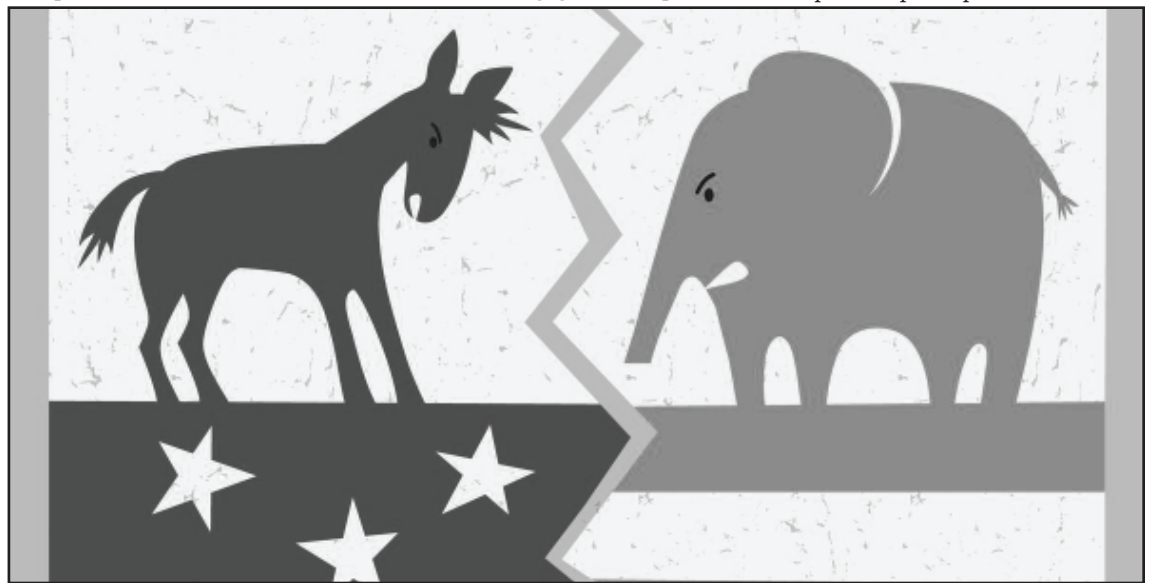
thinking rather than have it dictate their opinions.

External factors such as biased media outlets will always influence a student's mindset of what views are "correct." However, the polarized climate in our schools is often self-inflicted. When students post a political article on social media platforms such as Facebook,

peers who disagree with the stance write a series of hurtful comments, degrading the person. Rather than ridiculing those who challenge our preconceived notions, we must grab the opportunity to strengthen our opinions and defend our stance on an issue.

Student engagement in politics is

more important than ever. The lack of participation creates a vicious cycle where some views are stigmatized, creating a hostile, unaccepting environment for students. If we continue to hear only the echoes of our own opinions, we will always deem opposing voices as "invalid." We are the next generation of politicians and leaders. To create a united front, we need to celebrate the spirit of political participation.



Partisan divides tear the American flag.
ONLINE SOURCE

Journalism and Its Important Role on Public Opinion

By AKSHITHA MAQTEDAR '21
Spectrum Staff

In a recent interview with CNN, Donald Trump confirmed that he was dropping out of the 2020 election. His confession shocked his supporters who continued to lament about their loss of such a strong candidate. Well, fortunately for all Republicans, this situation did not occur, but as the journalist, I might have made you believe it did. A journalist's role is to notify the public about truthful and relevant information. Journalism is different from normal news coverage in that journalists have the ability to include their own opinions in their writings. Every day, countless people read news articles about elections and problems in our society, and many of these articles try to sway the public instead of simply informing them of the truth, which can be detrimental. However, sometimes the opinions provided by journalists in their articles can help the public by allowing them to think critically about situations in the news. Therefore, society

is left asking if journalism should be allowed to influence the public, or if it should just adhere to the facts.

Much of the news we receive today comes from journalists who are granted freedom of the press from the First Amendment in the Constitution. With the rights ensured by the government, journalists can express their opinions through their articles. However, a journalist's assertion of their own opinions can often lead to biased information in an article, which can influence readers' perspectives. Many individuals are beginning to distrust journalism due to its apparent bias. In a Knight Foundation and Gallup Poll, the majority of people surveyed stated that they lost their trust in the media in recent years. Since people are beginning to lose trust in the validity of journalism, allowing it to sway the public can decrease its credibility, defeating its purpose of informing individuals so they can become more knowledgeable.

A prevalent example of a journalist's influence on citizens is the coverage of presidential elections. In 2016,

many blamed the media for swaying the results of the election by delivering clickbait-style coverage with an abundance of bias and conspiracy theories. Elections exist as a means for political parties to compete for the support of the people, and the end result heavily depends on journalists. Since a democratic election must be free and fair, journalists are responsible for provid-

ing information to citizens, allowing them to critically examine the facts to make informed decisions.

While the media may currently be controversial, it will continue to exist in the future. The uniqueness of journalism can be detrimental, as the opinions in the articles can sway the public's ideals. However, to stop journalism from changing individuals ideas, a distinction needs to be made

between articles about facts and opinions. While articles about the election might benefit from being more factual and accurate, opinion articles about candidates might be more useful if the reader understands the writer's point of view. As the impact of journalism grows in our country with the expanded use of technology, society curiously waits to see how journalism will progress and gain the trust of all.



Journalism can affect the public's view.
ONLINE SOURCE

Forum

How Do We Get People to Care About the Climate?

By SOPHIE ZHANG '22
Spectrum Staff

As the clock struck noon on March 15th, students began streaming out of school, risking their grades to join a walkout for climate change. However, the majority of us remained in our classrooms, and the hallways lacked that rush of excitement. The walkout only focused on awareness and rhetoric, and I found it almost useless. However looking back, I was just scared of being judged as “overly passionate” or a “tryhard.” I didn’t want to join a walkout that would lose steam and be deemed “pointless.” Nevertheless, as students, we need to step out of our comfort zones and orchestrate bigger movements to protest for causes we believe in.

Despite its marginal effect on

individual action, climate change has built up and impacted our daily lives. According to the Committee on Climate Change, “global CO2 emissions from human activity have increased by over 400% since 1950.” Due to the heat-trapping properties of greenhouse gases, the Earth’s temperature continues to rise, accelerating the melting rate of ice caps and amplifying the effects of natural disasters. According to Vox, 2017 set a record year for climate related emergencies. Three major hurricanes, blazing wildfires, and multiple floods costed about \$360 billion in losses.

And yet, climate change appears far removed from our daily lives. The temperature doesn’t feel warmer; the shore-line doesn’t seem closer. We value convenience over the condition of the Earth. After engrossing myself in the

zero-waste movement and sustainability, I regularly rinsed out my daily Chobani yogurt cups and tossed them into my cardboard recycling box; however, after a few weeks, I got lazy. I left my finished yogurt on the table, not washing it or throwing it away. After some complaints from my dad about my messy habit, I simply threw out the dirty plastic. I never fully incorporated sustainability into my daily life; it was only a new trend I could obsess over.

Having little motivation to begin with, how can we as busy students inspire institutionalized change to slow global warming? To start, we can incorporate small acts into our routines that reduce our carbon footprint: turning off lights, taking shorter showers, recycling, and composting. Our laziness should not be a factor that stops

us from fixing our toxic lifestyles. While maintaining these habits, we need to also shift our focus onto the bigger contributors. According to Fortune, “100 companies have been responsible for about 71% of the world’s greenhouse gas emissions.” By recognizing that we provide demand for these harmful industries, we can also discover that we do have leverage over these major corporations. As Americans have done before with the Civil Rights Movement, we can boycott these toxic companies. We can call our representatives and protest in front of state buildings. CEOs and politicians often act when their approval ratings are being threatened. Like these big powers, we also fear ostracization, but luckily for us, popularity is not our job.

Even though it is terrifying to initiate protests and demonstra-

tions, in the end, it is the most effective way to confront our government and companies. Greta Thunberg, the figurehead of the global climate change walkout, first protested alone in front of the Swedish parliament building. Her parents tried to dissuade her, and her classmates wouldn’t join her. However, the Guardian states that over one million students stood by her side when they skipped school to protest on March 15. If we show our passion, other people will be moved too. Protesting climate change is not lame. Moving out of your comfort zone is scary but necessary. In the end, we need to create so much commotion that the higher-ups have to acknowledge and act against this disastrous threat to Earth. If we don’t, the temperature will only climb higher and our precious planet will suffer an apocalyptic end.

Donald Trump’s Impeachment

By CHRISTOPHER SOUSOUNIS '21
Spectrum Staff

Special Counsel Robert Mueller’s report has been out for several weeks, and a quick overview of the document indicates that Trump has not done anything serious enough to warrant his removal from office. However, talk of impeaching current president Donald Trump is on the rise. But what does the report really say? Why is it so controversial, and how might things play out in the coming months? Here’s what we know for sure.

On April 18, Robert Mueller finally released the long-awaited report he had compiled regarding federal investigations into Trump’s alleged collusion with Russia on the 2016 campaign trail, as well as his possible obstruction of justice. While multiple charges were brought against members of Trump’s campaign, according to Mueller’s findings, there is no substantial proof to claim that Trump colluded with the Russian government to snag the presidency. Moreover, despite detailing numerous attempts by the president to interfere with the investigation in his report and not completely exonerating Trump from charges of obstruction of justice, the Special Counsel concluded that he would not recommend any new indictments against Trump.

With the next presidential election just around the corner, there is little doubt that Trump’s base is fired up for 2020. However, those on the other side of the aisle are not finished with Trump yet. Some congressional Democrats

contend that one of the reasons for Mueller’s inability to endorse any indictments is a Department of Justice policy preventing him from charging a sitting president. That leaves the analysis of evidence to Congress, where senators Kamala Harris and Amy Klobuchar are pushing for impeachment proceedings.

However, Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi wants to take things slow, fearing that initiating impeachment proceedings, which are still doing poorly in the polls, may trigger political fallout in the coming election. Tensions are high, and so are the stakes.

The reality is, impeachment talks are not only futile, but they just stir the pot when it comes to defusing the Trump presidency. Currently, Trump is sitting with the upper hand. The House of Representatives, which votes on impeachment, just might have the capacity to do so given that Democrats won back a majority last November. The actual chance of even having a vote in the House of Representatives is, for now, quite small, as support for impeachment is relatively low. Still, the analysis Mueller provided on the collected evidence is highly contested and complex; even if there was any discussion in the House, it would either stall or the vote wouldn’t favor continued impeachment proceedings. Finally, even if a vote did pass the House to reach the Senate, where a trial would then be held, the majority of the Senate is Republican; any trial there would certainly need to be convincing enough to convince vehement Trump backers to condemn him

of a crime. It’s not clear whether the House Judiciary Committee will conduct another investigation, but it’s highly unlikely Trump will be impeached, especially since the evidence against him is unsubstantial. We may just have to wait and see whether the House follows through on yet another investigation into Trump’s alleged obstruction of justice.

Democrats should be careful where they step; in any world where an impeachment trial makes its way to the Senate, they may be closer to accidentally handing him the 2020 reelection campaign instead. If the Senate were to have the chance not to condemn Trump and help him avoid impeachment, the Democrats would surely be devastated. In fact, some liberals have actually become outspoken against impeachment, claiming the best way to oust Trump is to defeat him in 2020. Otherwise, an impeachment trial that is almost certainly doomed to fail could risk catapulting Trump into another term.

For now, if Democrats want to ensure taking back the presidency, they should focus on other issues instead of wasting their time challenging the Mueller report. Impeaching Trump would do little more than to reinforce the major partisan divide plaguing the nation. Given the fragility of our political climate, I would argue any Democrat who is an active advocate for impeachment is not only acting against the interest of their own party heading into the next election, but is also a proponent of an intensified partisan schism that may not heal for years to come.

Easter Bombings

By NEHA SARAVANAN '22
Spectrum Staff

This Easter, on April 21st, three Christian churches and three luxury hotels across Sri Lanka were targeted in a series of terrorist bombings. The churches were located in Negombo, Batticaloa, and Colombo, all on the coast of Sri Lanka. Terrorist groups have claimed responsibility for the crimes and are currently being investigated. The death toll currently remains at two hundred fifty-three people, and over five hundred people were injured.

Police believe that two terrorist groups, ISIL and the National Thoweeth Jama’ath, are responsible for the attacks. ISIL is a jihadist group known for its disturbing videos of criminal violence. Unfortunately, the Sri Lankan government has been unable to arrest citizens joining ISIL; unless they commit criminal acts, ISIL’s members are protected by the law.

The National Thoweeth Jama’ath is a local jihadist group that the local government had been warned about years prior to the Easter bombings, as the terrorist group had promoted the harm of non-Muslims. However, the National Thoweeth-Jama’ath was known for its lesser crimes in Sri Lanka, such as vandalism of Buddhist monks’ properties and promotion of pro-ISIL messages across social media. Although ISIL and the National Thoweeth Jama’ath are not associated with each other, the

latter is influenced by ISIL.

With the recent bombings, a whirlwind of religious and racial tensions has confounded the public. Sri Lanka is under severe political stress as upcoming presidential elections only heighten the turmoil. Two days after the bombings, the Sri Lankan Head of Defense Forces resigned, followed by the Secretary to the Military Defense. To prevent future crimes like these, the government has begun to deprive innocent Muslims of their privacy rights, an action that echoes the misled policies in other countries. The political response to the event has been lackluster and nowhere near enough to settle the hearts of Sri Lankan citizens. Government officials only care for how their reactions will affect their own political reputation in the coming presidential election; their citizens’ safety is not their number one priority.

In light of the attacks, nations worldwide have expressed their condolences. The Eiffel Tower dimmed its lights to honor the victims, and the Burj Khalifa lit up with Sri Lankan flags. Organizations have opened up to donations to send to Sri Lankan families in need to repair the destruction brought by the terrorist attacks. Even as the global community prays for Sri Lanka, nations fail to provide any other consolation. As these attacks repeat themselves around the world, international leaders must propose a more viable solution to the senseless deaths.

Competition for Leadership Can Strain Friendships

By REBECCA ZHANG '22
Spectrum Staff

If you had the choice between friendship and success, which would you choose? As extreme as the question appears, many unknowingly face this decision everyday. Whether it is choosing between studying for a test and hanging out, or selecting between an academically advanced college and one with close friends, the choice is certainly not easy. But, as the seniors graduate and leadership positions open, students face pressure to transcend expectations and snag these roles. Suddenly friendship is simply a side-thought, and it is every man for himself. Although most friends publicly support each other, student competition makes it

difficult for students to truly feel happy for those who have out competed them.

Of course, on a planet with over seven billion people, no two people are the same; it cannot be generalized that everyone is unhappy for others’ success. However, in the highly competitive atmosphere of AB, rivalry between friends is inevitable. Competition at school can be both beneficial and harmful. According to The Classroom, competitiveness creates motivation and “challenges students to work harder.” However, extreme competition has lasting consequences. By raising expectations to unattainable levels, students are left feeling inadequate and inferior to those around them. Many students tend to compare themselves to

others, striving to be the best. As a result, competition can heavily strain friendships.

At AB, many people yearn for a leadership position. Whether leadership is a longtime goal, an interest, or for college applications, high levels of competition focus around this. So when one fails to obtain a position, a variety of reactions occur—most notably jealousy. There may not be a clear stand-out for the role. Thus, jealousy sparks accusations of the new captain as undeserving and entitled. Conversely, others feel badly about themselves. Because of these comparisons, failure to gain a leadership role can cause one to feel like they are not good enough. Especially with an activity that a great amount of time is poured into, watching someone

else succeed leaves others feeling lost.

Despite vexed feelings, most people try their best to be proud, put on a smile, and congratulate the new leader. People rarely openly express their jealousy and defeat in order to avoid conflicts. In addition to affecting those who did not get the role, the absence of communication can cause a new leader to be afraid to be happy for their own success. But by never bringing up the situation, relationships are shaken. How can friendships be earnest without trust and honesty? Getting upset over not achieving a goal is human nature. Yet, we never talk about it. The lack of communication hurts both sides. Because we don’t talk, we don’t know the true stress that each side equally feels.

Competition is neither good nor bad, but the way one approaches it will determine its negative or positive effects. Thus, as leadership positions are announced, let’s talk about it, for all successes should be celebrated. Whether you are someone who feels guilty for being jealous or someone who feels guilty for getting a highly-sought leadership role, in the end, friendship extends way beyond a weekly club meeting. Ultimately, we will support each other tomorrow regardless of jealousy or annoyance today. It is okay to have emotions about someone else reaching your dream. But it is not until students communicate about their true feelings that one will be entirely excited for another’s success.

Off Topic

Love Nest and a Confession from the Love Doctor

By BALWANT SINGH '19
Graduating Love Doctor

It's time for everyone to know the truth.

I know a lot of rumors have been going around, and I just want to address them and give my side of the story. My name is Mr. Balwant Singh. I never earned my doctorate in loveology, and I don't think I ever will. I lied on my resume in order to obtain this position. I know my readers are victims of malpractice, and I deeply apologize for any inaccurate or wildly incorrect perspectives I've brought to the table. Before this scandal goes any further, here is my apology article—and no, I will not fake-cry in a sweatshirt for a couple of minutes (think: James Charles and Laura Lee). Fun fact: I never would have been able to make those references until today because I've actually done my research this time.

The psychology of it all has been haunting my mind, and the guilt has been following me everywhere. To be honest, I don't even think I am remotely qualified for this position.

And thus, I relinquish all of my power to rising sophomore, Julia Kuang. She is a strong candidate, and I know this because I've had the pleasure of having her under my wing this past year, observing my various edits and thought-processes. Again, it was all fake, but it was good practice for her. I am proud to entrust her with the title of Love Doctor. Any lawsuits, allegations, and defamations that were or will be made to me will be taken seriously. I have the best pre-law rising college freshmen at my side, and I'm here to win.

I'm sorry. That's it. And sometimes simpler is better, am I right, or am I right? I'm not actually sorry, my prefrontal cortex isn't fully developed, and I am a teenager, so honestly I am the victim here because you all shouldn't have been listening to me in the first place. I'm not a marriage counselor or anything. So I honestly don't understand why I'm being attacked here in the first place. You all should be apologizing to me because I've had to deal with this for the past year. Furthermore,

I am literally a literary genius. I've done everything without any experience whatsoever, and I may sound hypocritical right now, but honestly, HONESTLY, these have been great. Start taking responsibility for your OWN actions and stop blaming others just to gain popularity.

Q: Did I deceive everyone, including my supervisors, my apprentice, my family, my friends, my deans and counselors, my teachers and coaches, and anyone reading these past articles in the towns of Acton and Boxborough?

A: Yes.

Q: Did I provide false information that could have been completely detrimental to society?

A: Perhaps

Q: Am I proud?

A: I plead the fifth.

However, I've learned from my past mistakes and I've grown. So for the last time (because I do not want to be prosecuted and I plan to

change my name and move to some remote island—don't follow me), I will be answering a question that I have been fabricating in my mind for the past year (they were never real questions).

Q: My boyfriend and I are having communication issues, so I'm concerned for our relationship. What should I do?

A: Look chica, I've watched approximately two romantic movies in my life (like I said, I've done my research), so I know exactly what's going on. You probably caught him cheating or something and then went up to him and confronted him. And then he was all like, "No! You don't understand, let me explain!" And then you go "Whatever, [insert your boyfriend's fake name], I don't want to hear it. I've heard it all before." And then you go look into the sunset or something and walk away, tears rolling down your eyes, while you play Spotify's Sad Bops playlist as you walk on the sidewalk. You're freezing because you've never actu-

ally owned a sweatshirt and have been stealing your boyfriend's because it's "quirky," so you cross your arms and ignore the world. Let me tell you, the world doesn't revolve around you, and you probably don't know anything. This whole situation would have never happened if you had just stayed and listened to him. Maybe he was cheating on you for charity. Would you have seriously stopped him if he was raising money for low-income families? What kind of sick monster are you?

Anyway, that's the one question I should have answered for the last YEAR. Honestly, no other problems exist except for the one above. If you're worried about starting a relationship, get over yourself. Just shoot your shot. Stop waiting for the world to bring you your Monarch (gender neutral, thank you) Charming and create your own path. And with that, I end this article and my writing career.

XOXO,
Mr. Balwant Singh

Summer Plans Quiz

By SUPRIA SHROFF '22
Spectrum Staff

It's the time you've all been waiting for: summer! I admit I'm that person who won't stop talking about summer during the school year, but then when summer actually hits, I mope around the house and even start to miss school. To ensure that doesn't happen to you, I created a quiz to make sure your summer will be full of fun! Keep track of your answers until the very end.



library

d) I go to the locker room and change for sports practice

What do you daydream about during free time?

- a) Traveling
- b) Making slime
- c) That really interesting history fact you learned last class
- d) How you're going to improve your time in your sport.

If you could be anything you wanted to be, what would you be when you grow up?

- a) Yelp reviewer of 5-star hotels around the world
- b) An engineer
- c) A philosopher
- d) A famous basketball player

Who is your role model?

- a) Rick Steves
- b) Thomas Edison
- c) Marie Curie/Albert Einstein
- d) Michael Phelps

Now tally up your answers!

If you have...

Mostly A's: you should go on a trip this summer! Maybe to someplace far away, or just hang out with some friends in Boston!

Mostly B's: you are creative! Try creating something or just engaging in an art project! Maybe learn a new skill or craft!

Mostly C's: you really enjoy academics! Try googling some brain teasers or reading a new book!

Mostly D's: you love athletics! Try going on a hike, playing a sport outside, or even just taking a nice walk for some fresh air.

What is your favorite class?

- a) World Language Class
- b) Ceramic/Painting/Photo
- c) Math, Science, English or History
- d) P.E.

Which animal speaks to you most?

- a) Koalas - they're adorable and unique as they are only native to Australia!
- b) Unicorns - they're sparkly and enchanting and don't exist, which makes them even more magical!
- c) Paramecia - did you know that they're single-celled organisms that move with tiny hairs called cilia?
- d) Leopards - I wish I could run that fast!

If you could join any of these clubs, which would it be?

- a) Spanish Cooking Club
- b) Animations Club
- c) Math Club
- d) Relay Race Club

You have to choose a book for a book report. Which one do you choose?

- a) *10 of the Best Things to do in Tokyo*
- b) *How to Make an Origami Crane*
- c) *Hardest Riddles and Puzzles to Solve*
- d) *How to Play Ultimate Frisbee*

What is the first thing you do after school ends?

- a) Get on the bus/walk home
- b) I go to a club or go to my job
- c) I start on homework at the

SAT or Subtle Asian Traits?

By JULIA KUANG '22
Spectrum Staff

Subtle Asian Traits. If you know, you know. Some of you have never even heard of Subtle Asian Traits, and it shows.

Subtle Asian Traits (SAT! 1600 or else) is a legendary group on Facebook with over 1.3 million members. From Kpop to boba, SAT encompasses every aspect of being an Asian. SAT uses memes as an engaging way to showcase relatable asian traits. Here are some of the more common types of memes:

1. Anything boba/bubble tea related. It's honestly a bit concerning.
2. UWU OWO
3. "If you know, you know"
4. Heart react for _, Like for _
5. Surprised Pikachu (kinda dead nowadays)
6. "Some of you don't _, and it shows"
7. ABGs (Asian Baby Girls), hypebeasts, international students, people with airpods
8. The sewing (cookie) container
9. Lactose intolerance
10. Tag yourself

There are many more, but I just

can't think of any right now.


Subtle Asian Traits has inspired others to create groups targeting their own demographics on Facebook. For instance, Subtle Curry Traits is a group aimed for those of Indian descent. Subtle Asian Dating is a group where lonely Asians "shoot their shot" and "auction off" people in hopes of gaining a relationship partner. Subtle White People Traits caters towards Caucasians as the name suggests.

Satvi Naik, an AB freshman and member of Subtle Curry Traits, takes pride in saying, "I'm a curry." The phrase showcases her loyalty to the facebook group as well as her attachment to her ethnicity and culture. Subtle Curry Traits has greatly impacted her in this manner.

But on a more serious note, Subtle Asian Traits often makes fun of Asian stereotypes, such as getting good grades, having strict parents, and only being able to decide strictly between becoming a doctor, lawyer, or engineer. Considering this relatability, Rebecca Zhang, another AB freshman, thinks "[Subtle Asian Traits] is a community." United through relatable memes, stories, and funny

Facebook posts, members from all over the world contribute to the SAT community. One especially passionate contributor, Nicole Bell, exclaims that she "love[s] to tag Julia (lol me) in Peppa Pig memes!" Peppa Pig is blocked in the Chinese media since she "promotes gangster attitudes," and as a result, Peppa is a viral figure among the younger Chinese generations. Memes like these are part of what brings the members of SAT together. Growing up in an Asian family, especially in parts of America with a lower percentage of Asians, can make one feel isolated. However, SAT brings members together by reminding them that culturally, they are not alone and that there are many others out in the world experiencing the same struggles or amusements.

Overall, Subtle Asian Traits is a great platform that unites Asian people around the world. If you're Asian and you aren't a member of SAT, I encourage you to join it, and maybe you'll get a laugh out of it, unlike this article. If you aren't Asian, hopefully you are convinced to join SAT to learn about different cultures and connect with teenagers from all over the world over memes and jokes.



Gallant Insurance Agency, Inc.

Gallant Insurance proudly supports The Spectrum and its readership!
We Are AB!


A full service independent insurance agency providing our communities with honest and knowledgeable insurance services for 50 years.

Proudly offering insurance products & services for:

- Home
- Auto
- Business
- Life

199 Great Road
Acton, MA 01720
P.O. Box 975

Phone: 978-263-3500
Fax: 978-263-1438



Independent Insurance Agent

'19 Bops

By RITIKA KOIRALA '20
Spectrum Staff

1. Broccoli by D.R.A.M. ft. Lil Yachty
2. Stitches by Shawn Mendes
3. Work by Rihanna & Drake
4. Sorry by Justin Bieber
5. Love Yourself by Justin Bieber
6. iSpy by KYLE & Lil Yachty
7. Closer by The Chainsmokers & Coldplay
8. Mask Off by Future
9. Location by Khalid
10. Bad and Boujee by Migos ft. Lil Uzi Vert
11. Despacito by Luis Fonsi & Daddy Yankee
12. Shape of You by Ed Sheeran
13. The Middle by Zedd
14. Lucid Dreams by Juice WRLD
15. In My Feelings by Drake
16. Sicko Mode by Travis Scott
17. Thank U, Next by Ariana Grande

Spectrum Staff

Seniors: What They'll Miss Most

By SPECTRUM STAFF
2018–2019

Nithyani Anandakugan, Co-Editor-in-Chief

I'll miss our Thursday meetings most. I'll miss working productively for maybe twenty percent of the time and goofing off for the rest. I'll miss Computer Lab 233S, the way the lights can be dimmed and brightened to set the correct ambiance. I'll miss the victory song we play as we hit send to submit the paper to print. I'll miss glancing through all our colorful spreadsheets. I'll miss how the stack of papers smells fresh off the press when we gather in Ms. Hammond's room to fold each copy. And of course, I'm going to miss Jasmine.

Jasmine Mangat, Co-Editor-in-Chief

There are way too many things I'll miss about The Spectrum so I'll list multiple! I'll miss coming into meetings after a stressful day of classes and just hanging out with the rest of the staff with some amazing Trader Joe's snacks (thanks, Ms. Hammond!). I'll miss giving advice to nervous underclassmen who need a reminder that everything is going to be alright in the end. I'll also miss simply talking to members of our staff. Whether it be about an article, brainstorming, layout, editing, etc. my conversations with most members would veer off into something completely different surrounding school, our personal lives, and current events. It's these conversations that made Spectrum really special for me for all these years because they allowed me to get to know some amazing people.

Oh...I'll also miss plotting against Nithyani so that I could overthrow her and become the sole EIC.

Somya Prabhakar, Chief Copy Editor

The Spectrum has been such an important part of my high school experience, and there are so many things I'll miss. I'll miss the opportunities I've had to help writers and section editors throughout the writing and editing process. I'll miss sitting down with the chief staff during Layout week and cutting and editing articles until they fit into their spaces on the paper. I'll miss finding little mistakes like "Graduation 2017" and "ab astra" after print and reminding each other to check for them during the final read-throughs. But most importantly, I'll miss running the newspaper single-handedly while letting Jasmine and Nithyani (and Serena, and Kirtana, and Anjali...) think that they're the ones in charge.

Kaitlyn Chen, Chief Layout Editor

A lot of people have mentioned Trader Joe's already, so I guess I'll have to talk about something else, like Layout Week. I'll miss the Monday excitement of thinking we'll finish laying out everything on the first day and then spending the next two weeks actually finishing it. I'll miss writing random titles and headlines like "the latest 411 on 420" and "Celly's Korner" and leaving immediately after to steal snacks from Ms. Hammond. Of course, I'll also miss the entire layout group and our cult circle. Leave me a spot for when I return!

Grace Du, Chief Layout Editor

As an Layout Editor, I'll miss our roly chairs and the way people scooch around the MacLab even though walking from place to place would be much easier. As an Layout Editor, I'll miss squinting at an InDesign file trying to figure out if these two lines of text are perfectly aligned and eventually giving up when they aren't. I'll miss our victory songs that end each Layout Week, the weird "techno polka" that a certain former Chief Layout Editor liked, and being addressed as "Boss Du" by a future one. However, as an Layout Editor, I think I'll miss the gen. staff meetings the most (plot twist, right?) especially the days when we didn't have to work on the website. Over the last three years, our thursday meetings has become a place where I can just sit, pretend to do school work, doodle on the whiteboard, eat all the snacks that we promised not to bring into the computer lab and chat with my friends before the tropical storm that is Layout Week hits and actual work begins.

Grace Gong, Forum Editor

Folding the paper together was definitely the most memorable bonding experience—having a down time to do a repetitive (although somewhat soothing) task gave me time to really slow down and chat with my friends. I really also love that moment when we open the snack boxes to Joe Joe's, cheddar bunnies and quinoa chips—everyone crowds around and shares the food in a wholesome way that I will surely miss.

Favorite Memories

By SPECTRUM STAFF
2018–2019

"The one time I was calling The Minor Chord and I was doing my little speech when the man on the phone was like, "lEt mE sToP yOu rIgHt tHeRe." That was the day I died." —Anushka Wani '21

"Watching Nithyani being buff and doing push-ups." —Sophie Zhang '22

"The time I watched Nithyani and Jasmine record their very serious documentary where Nithyani tried to pretend that she was angry for 15 minutes straight while smiling uncontrollably." —Serena Han '20

"All of it." —Peter Bi '19

"When we finished our layout meeting and then Jasmine and I hung out in the Mac Lab for ~fun~ to avoid going home and getting college decisions." —Nithyani Anandakugan '19

"Getting a hug from Nithyani at the beginning of every chief staff meeting." —Kirtana Krishnakumar '20

"The amazing people :)" —Anna Charissé '20

"Folding newspapers and talking to others on the Spectrum Staff!" —Grace Gong '19

"One of my favorite memories from this year includes sitting on one of the rolling chairs in the Mac Lab

and forming a train with the other staff members and rolling down the hallway. We went up until the bathroom where we waited outside to scare Amber Li but then the librarian yelled at us. I'll miss this along with the rest of the layout week shenanigans that ensued." —Jasmine Mangat '19

"Seeing the physical papers after having worked so hard on them" —Adam Ford '19

"Learning about all the odd things going on behind the scene in Acton and Boxborough. Local government is never boring." —Srija Nagireddy '19

"Anushka Wani" —Francesca Servello '22

Ms. Hammond's Bye

By Ms. HAMMOND
Spectrum Advisor

The seniors who graduate from the staff this year own The Spectrum. They relish being completely responsible for its operation, from beginning to end, brainstorming story ideas, recruiting and encouraging writers, making sure that funds are sufficient for us to be able to print 5 issues per year, and every other aspect of the paper's life.

Somya, Kaitlyn, and Grace Du make up the backbone of our production team, as Chief Copy Editor and Layout Editors respectively. They are excellent at these jobs, not just in technical ways but much more importantly, in the unflappable mastery they bring to their work, and the smiles and laughter that accompany every minute. There is never any hysteria when the paper is in production; maybe they're just really good at hiding it, but the fact is, they produce well designed, clearly organized, and highly readable issues every single time, while also not keeping us at school until midnight. They probably don't know how unusual that is, but in 15+ years as advisor, they are as professional a group as I've had the good luck to work with. Grace Gong, as Forum editor, serves as part of an outstanding team of leaders on the writing side of the operation. Articles in her section are always thought-provoking, well-reasoned, and relevant. It's easy to have an opinion or be cranky about something, but our opinion articles always back up those opinions and more often than not, try to offer solutions to the problems they raise. Hats off to Grace for that.

E cineribus et ad astra: out of

the ashes to the stars. This is the motto of The Spectrum, adopted just a few years ago, after a genuine rebirth of the paper. Following some lackluster years of waning interest and funds, new student leaders helped put the paper back on its feet. At first, this involved reorganizing roles and focusing on fundraising, but in the last two years, since Nithyani and Jasmine have been in charge, it has come to mean a rebirth of ideas and aspirations for the staff. Under their leadership, a robust reporting team has started to look hard at critical issues affecting our students and community; most recently, a front page story examined the affirmative action case at Harvard, discussing frankly the potential it has to fracture solidarity in the Asian community. They have led the way to research housing and education policies here in Acton and Boxborough, interviewing long-time residents, AB alumni, and others. In the cliched phrase, Jasmine and Nithyani both speak softly, but each carries a big stick. Their intellectual ambition is exemplary, and the kindness, maturity, responsibility, and very good humor they bring to their work even more so. I can't even say how much I will miss them, and I definitely don't even know where to begin to thank them for setting such a stellar example for the students in their wake.

Finally, we must also say farewell to Mr. Brusie, AB and Spectrum alumnus and model of a real-life journalist. He's not leaving the school, just the paper, so we know we'll still be able to rely on him for advice and insight. But we'll miss him just the same, and thank him for his time and commitment.

Staff Superlatives

By SPECTRUM STAFF
2018–2019

"Most likely to watch Pokémon instead of finishing her article." —Sophie Zhang '22

"Most Likely to Send 5 Emails Out at Once" —Serena Han '20

"Most Crazy Article Commenter" —Jasmine Wu '22

"Most likely to be hired by francesca" —Amelia Kim

"Anjali told me I had middle-aged adult energy..." —Nithyani Anandakugan '19

"Most likely to write an expose about the magic bullet that killed JFK" —Emily Zhao '20

"Least likely to embezzle Spectrum funds" —Kirtana Krishnakumar '20

"Most Likely to Spontaneously Combust" —Anushka Wani '21

"Writes the Most Food Reviews" —Grace Gong '19

"Most Likely to Overthrow Nithyani When She Becomes President" —Jasmine Mangat '19



The Spectrum Family!
Anna Charisse and David Tsitrin / Spectrum Staff



Who are the real Editors-in-Chief?
Anna Charisse and David Tsitrin / Spectrum Staff

Spectrum Staff

Our Farewells to Graduating Spectrum Staff

By CHIEF STAFF
2019-2020

Dear Nithyani,

Oh, Lil Yani, how we'll miss you. What will we do without our very own Spectrum mom? Even after you graduated, you came to layout meetings to help us with the mock-ups, to hang out, and to write articles. It has been an absolute pleasure to cup the back of your neck, marvel at your unusual posture that resembles a 30-year old woman, and watch you fail at pretending to be angry with Jasmine. You are the literal definition of a ball of sunshine (except you can give fantastic hugs), and we'll really miss being able to talk to you about anything and everything. For that and so much more, we are so so grateful. We wish you the best of luck in college next year, and don't forget to get us those sweet sweet printing deals at *The Crimson* that we were talking about! We will always be on your team :)

Dear Jasmine,

We cannot imagine a meeting

without your mention of a Chief Staff's *The Office* documentary (some day, it will happen), your very long hair (that sometimes pretends to be Nithyani's hair), your perfectly composed answers to our frantic questions, and your eagerness to replicate Spiderman memes (even if you forgot them). In all seriousness, thank you for your unwavering enthusiasm and support; despite already having fulfilled your EIC duties, you attended every meeting to offer your wisdom and encouragement through all of our mistakes. We will miss you, so please visit so that we can make our podcast about the history of Acton in ASMR. While you are off doing big and bright things, remember this one thing: mutualism leads to economic suppression. On that note, good luck in college!

Dear Somya,

Whether you're claiming the em-dash as your favorite punctuation mark or arguing over the usage of a comma, we are always in awe of your superior command of grammar. You are the epitome of the rational, effi-

cient Spectrum member. Always working intently with Nithyani and Jasmine at the Chief Staff table, you took your job as the final line of editing seriously. Your calming presence and spontaneous hugs grounded us, and we'll miss you so much next year! We have no doubt that you'll blow people's minds with your grammatical skills in college; meanwhile, we, at *The Spectrum*, will be grinning with pride. Come visit us when you can, and good luck!

Dear Grace D.,

Boss Du is an extremely smart and swag individual! We are so glad that you have graced us with your knowledge about layout and website; without you *The Spectrum* would have horrible graphic design. You have helped cultivate a large swath of 2020 layout editors to continue your legacy! We will miss your cheerful personality, your incredible whiteboard calligraphy, and your beautiful Bake Sale drawings, and we hope you continue to bring your swag to Rochester.

Dear Kaitlyn,

Boss Chen is very smart and

swag as well. You are incredibly wise and always have a solution for every layout problem. (For example: text too big, title too small, will not save, font is gone, picture is missing, too many words, too much color, who took picture?) Basically, we would not know how to lay out if not for you. We hope you continue your journey by bringing that swag to Cornell, and don't forget to come back to visit so that we can get more of your unfortunate cynicism, your unwavering wisdom, and your cool Photoshop skills.

Dear Grace G.,

You've definitely claimed the spot as the best Trader Joe's snack reviewer that has ever lived! We will miss you and your love for food, your calming presence, and your undeniable reliability with every responsibility given to you. Though you no longer live in this town, and soon you'll be going off to the big city, your impact on *The Spectrum* and on us will stay at ABRHS forever. Don't forget to visit sometime. (Yes, there will be snacks!)

Dear Ms. Hammond and Mr. Brusie,

Oh, where do we begin? Ms. Hammond and Mr. Brusie, you have been our rock this past year. From your wonderful email encouragements to your constructive counsel, you could not have been more supportive advisors. With your stories and your lessons, you have imparted invaluable wisdom to us, and for that we are very grateful. Ms. Hammond, thank you for allowing us to take over your room and raid your snacks. Mostly though, thank you for always supporting our writing endeavors. We are looking forward to sharing another year of Spectrum memories with you. And Mr. Brusie, thank you for an amazing two years. Your writing lessons have created a group of curious minds who now wield the skills needed to express their ideas. Your experience and company will be greatly missed next year. Thank you both so much for always believing in us and our journalism and for teaching us how to take basic writing and elevate it into something we can be proud of.

Thanks to Our Graduating Chief Staff and Advisors!



Grace Gong '19: Forum Editor
Aarushi Nohria / Correspondent



Jasmine Mangat '19: Co-Editor-in-Chief
Aarushi Nohria / Correspondent



Nithyani Anandakugan '19: Co-Editor-in-Chief
Aarushi Nohria / Correspondent

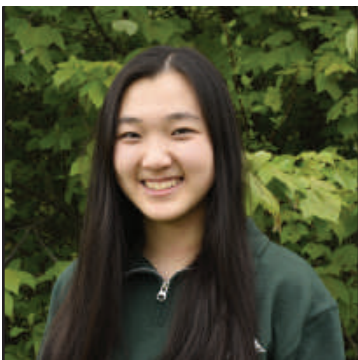


Kaitlyn Chen and Grace Du '19: Co-Chief Layout Editors
Aarushi Nohria / Correspondent



Ms. Hammond and Mr. Brusie: Spectrum Advisors
Aarushi Nohria / Correspondent

Hello, New Chief Staff!



Serena Han '20: Co-Editor-in-Chief
Anna Charisse and David Tsitritin / Spectrum Staff



Kirtana Krishnakumar '20: Co-Editor-in-Chief
Anna Charisse and David Tsitritin / Spectrum Staff



Anjali Raman '20: Co-Editor-in-Chief
Anna Charisse and David Tsitritin / Spectrum Staff



Michelle Gong '21: Chief Copy Editor
Michelle's mom / Correspondent



Teagan Smith '21: Mainspread Editor
Anna Charisse and David Tsitritin / Spectrum Staff



Michael Cheng '20: News Editor
Anna Charisse and David Tsitritin / Spectrum Staff



Neha Vijay '21: Forum Editor
Anna Charisse and David Tsitritin / Spectrum Staff



Prisha Dayal '21: Off Topic Editor
Anna Charisse and David Tsitritin / Spectrum Staff



Francesca Servello '22, Anushka Wani '21: Publicity and Finance Managers
Anna Charisse and David Tsitritin / Spectrum Staff



Amber Li, Emily Zhao '20: Co-Chief Layout Editors
Anna Charisse and David Tsitritin / Spectrum Staff