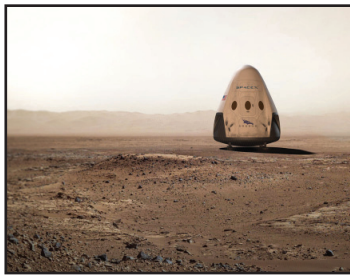


### Camp X-Ray Review

Kristen Stewart confronts dehumanization in Guantanamo Bay.

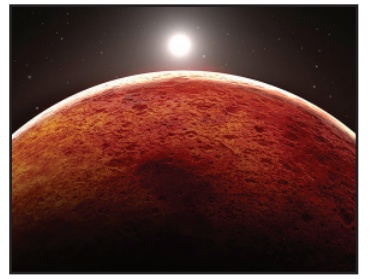
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# The Spectrum

◆ e cineribus et ad abstra ◆

APRIL • VOL. 36, SPRING ISSUE

ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL

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Photos from this year's Science March in Boston.  
NALA WU / Correspondent

## Trump's Budget Against the Environment

By JASMINE MANGAT  
Editor-in-Chief

In 1916, Congress created the National Park Service. In 1970, President Nixon created the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Earth Day was celebrated for the first time. In 2016, then-presidential candidate Donald Trump tweeted that the idea of global warming "was created by and for the Chinese."

Regardless of President Trump's blustering tweets, there is a great deal of evidence that the Earth is warming and that the cause is human activity. Many organizations have been working to clean up the environment and create a safer future, but it ultimately falls to Trump, as commande, to shape policy on global warming.

Donald Trump's 2017 budget proposal for Congress fails to address this issue: it seems he wants to take a step back in global efforts to prevent further damage to the climate. The proposal focuses government funding on the Departments

of Defense, Homeland Security, and Veterans Affairs. Budget cuts would take 54 billion dollars away from other programs, including the EPA and similar initiatives that raise awareness and take action against climate change. Further, the budget cuts halt former President Obama's deal with the United Nations, in which the US pledged 3 billion dollars to the Green Climate Fund to aid poorer countries in controlling rising temperatures.

Not only will the budget stop agencies that spread awareness and take actions to stop climate change, but it will also prevent funding for research. Research facilities such as the Department of Energy, which helps programs develop advancements in clean energy, are the unfortunate victims of these cutbacks. In addition, smaller programs such as the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative and Chesapeake Bay cleanup efforts will suffer a severe decrease in funding—the allotted spending for the cleanup of the bay, formerly 73 million dollars, will decrease to 5 million dollars.

In the budget report, Trump

claims that these agencies are "lower priority," but they are in fact of critical importance. According to NASA, there is a 97% consensus amongst scientists that global warming is a phenomenon caused by humans. The EPA says that climate change has major effects on precipitation, crop conditions, health, and ecosystems. These consequences of climate change will impact many parts of the economy. For example, with an increase in temperature and natural disasters each year, there will be a greater amount of structural and environmental damage, affecting infrastructure and the safety of citizens. Without sufficient government funding, efforts to prevent further damage from climate change will have limited success.

The proposed budget cuts to major environmental programs are not a surprise from the Trump administration. However, the budget is still only a proposal. Congress ultimately has the power to decide where government money goes, and many Democrats and Republicans have criticized the proposal

for not living up to the administration's promises. Yet the proposal exemplifies how one leader's efforts could slow down the fight to prevent a potential catastrophe. Among Americans, 70% believe global warming currently exists and 55% believe that it is mostly caused by humans. Considering that most Americans are concerned about climate change, these budget cuts go against not only science itself but also the beliefs of citizens. During conflicts in which the leader of the government's beliefs do not align with those of the rest of the country, it is hard to imagine where a citizen's role in democracy lies as they are unable to overrule the administration's priorities. With an administration that does not support the EPA and a president that deems global warming to be a Chinese hoax, the onus is on all of us as citizens to protect the environment, and, equally importantly, to vote in the next elections.

See Awareness / page 4

# Intro

## Letter from the EIC

By POOJITHA JONNAVITHULA  
Editor-in-Chief

Ahhh, spring. A time of re-birth, renewal, and runny noses. I think *The Spectrum* has grown the most this season, and I've never been more proud. As I write this letter during our final layout day, I'm shocked at the numbers we've pulled in. The publicity and finance team is giggling and planning away, the layout editors are stress-eating, the copy editors are going through every. single. article. And the new Editors-in-Chief are doing a phenomenal job of managing the entire crew.

The new staff is tremendous—each member is so unique, talent-

ed, and dedicated, and there are so many of them! When I walked into the Mac Lab today, I genuinely thought another club had beaten us to the computers. Yet, this is *The Spectrum* now; we have members who care about the paper and its success, and that alone makes me happy.

This issue's theme is Awareness, discussed in articles about race, the role of media, fashion, and the environment. Each article tackles a different aspect of the world around us and how we all can make a difference. I've truly enjoyed seeing new and old staff work together to create a nuanced and balanced issue. We hope you enjoy this spring issue and learn something new!

## The Spectrum

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*e cineribus et ad abstr*

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## Good News

By Olivia Marble  
News Editor

**Ban on Outdoor Advertising**

The French city Grenoble will become the first city to totally ban outdoor advertising. The Green Party mayor, Eric Piolle, plans to replace all of its billboards with trees and art. He made a public statement that the billboards did not “[correspond] to the expectations of the inhabitants who want to reclaim public space,” according to the *Telegraph*. About 326 advertising signs will be removed, and local cultural and social groups will be offered the free space.

**Back from Extinction**

After nearly half a century, a wild dog thought to be extinct was spotted in New Guinea. Dr. I. Lehr Brisbin of the University of Georgia conducted a rapid assessment survey of isolated locations in the mountains. He found that there are still at least fifteen of these wild dogs, and he even caught a picture of one of them.

**Cats Love You**

Articles such as “Your cat might

not really care about you” by the *Washington Post* have left cat lovers devastated, but a new study published in *Behavioral Processes* may give them hope. The study showed that, when given the choice between social interaction, food, scent, or toys, cats were more likely to choose snuggling with their human.

**Birds for Peace**

In times of division, nature can bring us together. Farmers in Israel, Palestine, and Jordan were using poison to kill rats, not realizing that this poison was also killing predatory birds such as owls. Yossi Leshem created a project called “Birds Know No Boundaries” with the purpose of both protecting these birds and encouraging communication between people. Over the years, members of this organization have become good friends, a sign that there is hope for peace in the Middle East.

**City Forests**

Chinese cities have found a creative solution to their smog problem. Architect Stefano Boeri has revealed that his plan for two tow-

ers in Nanjing will feature a vertical forest. Over 2,500 plants and 1,000 trees will grow from the buildings. The greenery will absorb carbon dioxide, therefore reducing the amount of smog.

**Building Solar Panels**

Soon-to-be graduates, take note. Over 200 college students from fifteen schools spent their spring break volunteering for Grid Alternatives, an organization that installs over 200 solar panels annually for low-income families. The solar panels save each family about 80% on their electric bill.

**Sweaters for Chickens**

Local retirees knitted sweaters for chickens who struggled against the winter cold. Erica Max of the Mary M. B. Wakefield Charitable Trust stumbled upon women from the Fuller Village retirement home in Milton selling their knitted goods at a local fair. She asked them to knit sweaters for the Malaysian chickens at the Wakefield Estate. The result? Fashionable, snuggly chickens, and a fun pastime for the ladies.

**Squibbler**

Trump Conquers the Presidential Agenda

And now, we see Donald Trump and his trusty elephant steed, Paul Ryan, approaching the 1st hurdle!

And he nails it! Shatters it! A big win for the Trump Team!

Up next, the highly anticipated Healthcare hurdle! Will ol' Donald make it?

Ouch! Paul Ryan slams to a stop! Look at Trump go!

Asand he keeps going! What a trooper!

Wow, he slides right through it! Dang, Donny! Nice maneuver!

Wow, I'm so good. No one's more competent than me. Fantastic!

# Forum

## Appropriation: When is it Appropriate?

By ANJALI RAMAN  
News Editor

There is no denying that a multitude of cultures exists on our planet. As a melting pot of traditions and ideas, the United States empowers and embraces other peoples and nations. However, in a time when many consider themselves “aware”—especially pop culture icons—people often take on or appropriate aspects of culture without fully understanding them. They display a lack of education at best; otherwise, they exude disrespect. Though some equate this appropriation to acceptance, its message to those who idolize these “aware” celebrities creates undeniably stereotypical visions of global cultures.

The *Sydney Morning Herald* defines cultural appropriation as “the adoption of or use of the elements of one culture by members of another, resulting in the loss or distortion of elements of the culture’s portrayal.” Nobody discourages cultural appreciation. However, critics discourage the unintended negative consequences of these acts of appreciation.

In the March 2017 *Vogue* shoot for the main spread of the “diversity” issue, international supermodel Karlie Kloss dressed as a geisha—a Japanese hostess trained to entertain men with conversation, dance, and song. While some applauded *Vogue* for their “inclusion” of other cultures, many felt offended that Kloss, a white woman, took on the role. Her depiction contributes to the overly sexualized and white-washed image Asian women hold in Western culture. The *Chicago Monitor* stated that “when [Karlie Kloss] abuses her societal privilege as a white woman and associates geishas with unconditional love, she reinforces the patriarchal and Orientalist idea that Asian women are passive, docile, and childlike in their servitude to men.” There was also outrage that no Asian women were included in the spread, especially in a diversity issue. Supermodel Liu Wen, though not Japanese, did appear on the cover, which led readers to question why she was not offered the photoshoot.

In 2013, *Dancing With the Stars*’ Julianne Hough used Crazy Eyes, an African American from *Orange Is the New Black*, for her Halloween costume. Hough’s costume included blackface, a means of darkening the skin. The costume appeared comical, yet it was offensive in

nature because she ultimately “dressed up” as an African American for a day. Being black is not a costume for African Americans: it is an identity. Non-black celebrities, on the other hand, who choose to do blackface can simply become “un-black” again. Blackface not only demeans African Americans: it minimizes black experiences to a mere costume. In today’s day and age, African Americans still face the prejudice of centuries of racist legislature and ideology, from police brutality to institutional oppression. While the richness of African American culture should be celebrated to the fullest extent, the issues faced by the black community cannot be ignored. A culture can’t be understood and properly celebrated without an understanding of the issues its people face.

Lady Gaga received tremendous amounts of backlash for her song “Aura” from the album *ARTPOP*. The lyrics heavily sexualize Islamic women who wear a veil. Such lyrics include, “Do you want to touch me...behind the burqa?” Many Western lines of thought interpret the veil as a means of dehumanization. However, the burqa is a garment that women choose to wear; it is neither a sign of oppression (unless enforced against the will of the wearer) nor a sign of sexualization. The burqa and other veils celebrate a private intimacy and faith. Additionally, after the 9/11 attacks, many Islamic women faced threats because of their coverings and their associated religion: examples of a culture that is unfamiliar to Westerners. This ignorance leads to stereotypical misinterpretations and blanket statements of Muslims. In this way, misunderstandings are created, which is equally as harmful as a photo shoot or a Halloween costume.

Celebrities often have a privilege that many minorities do not—they can draw on an aspect of another culture and abandon it when they see fit. Close-minded ideas about culture, like those propagated by *Vogue*’s “diversity” issue, Hough’s Halloween costume, and Lady Gaga’s “Aura,” create misinformed opinions of those who must already deal with preset obstacles. Therefore, the manner in which appreciation occurs must be examined. To be able to celebrate the world’s multiculturalism is to be respectful and educated about different cultures’ practices; our world can become much richer in this way.

## OMG You’ll NEVER Believe This!!

By ALICIA WONG  
Correspondent

Since President Trump’s astounding victory, the media has been abuzz. Sensational political scandals light each page while his Twitter feed explodes. It seems like the end of the free world is coming as each story flashes before our eyes. “Gag order placed on the EPA!” “ACA to be repealed!” “Russians hacked our election!” “Wall to cost over 25 billion!” “Travel Ban issued!” “National Security Advisor a threat to national security!”

In the first few days, there were huge protests, highways were blocked, people called days off in protest: it was simply despair. This apocalyptic gloom that hung over the Democrats who voted for Clinton seemed to magnify. These events became the central focus of the media, and it has only just begun to die down.

Yet, when all the tears and screaming finished, and the protesters went home, what happened? Many people seemed exhausted. It was a cycle, and everything seemed hopeless. More titles from the media continued to flood us. We were told the Secretary of Education had never so much as been in a public school, the advisor of the White House disgracefully had her feet on the couch, and also that our President accused our former President of wiretapping.

Something we forget is that media, and all other news sources, are businesses. They have employees and directors that need to make money. Our media delivers what sells, and today with the polarization of parties, it consists of two things: ideas that we can agree with or those that make us outraged. In

Massachusetts, that’s not particularly a hard sell either. As of February 2016, excluding the unaffiliated, the majority of Massachusetts is aligned to the Democratic party—a whopping 1,490,335 compared to 468,295 registered Republicans (Commonwealth of Massachusetts). Essentially, we are mostly a like-minded socially progressive, democratic flock.

Therefore, the titles that attract us are those of Tufts University’s EPIIC symposium, “The End of the Liberal World Order.” Even the introductions of the event “Order and Chaos” were clearly outlined with the new populist movements as the chaos the world is currently facing. Attending this event, I remember a student saying that “[it’s scary] that other people are seeing such a different America than reality.”

*BreitbartNews*, pulled out of the fringe by Trump’s election, panders to its own audience. They put out titles saying that if Obama had issued the travel ban, it would be constitutional, and that the refugees in Europe are all Muslim, and therefore rapists. Yet, some are still supported by legitimate interviews or other news sources. These articles, or news stories however, would never appear on another site, such as CNN or MSNBC. I would bet the latter two are frequented news sites by many of you, while few of you would even think to visit *Breitbart* or *Fox News*.

After all, no one wants to hear rationale regarding the other side: we want to hear about what we fear. Our news sources play to this, and while it may profit them, it slowly wreaks havoc on the population. We become locked in our own echo chambers of sensationalist news,

demonizing the other side and exaggerating the story to fit the liberal or conservative bias each site panders to.

But really, sensationalist yellow journalism like this has been around since World War I. Do not let it fool you now. Many of those lost protesters are now asking what they can do. Many do not have a niche role, such as the lawyers that now camp at airports to help inbound travelers stopped by the travel ban. So, they sit, glued to the screen, reading headline after headline of overblown news. Here is what you *should* do.

We must realize that sensationalist news is what takes up space from actual, important information. To simply name a few, while Trump was blasting away on Twitter, and all major news sources eating up stories of it, while Conway sat awkwardly on a couch and the internet blew up, the real legislative power in the government, our Congress, passed over twenty bills in a few short months over controversial issues without any major news coverage. From the defunding of Planned Parenthood, to the disbanding of the Department of Education and the EPA by 2018, there have been major changes that are not well covered in the media because no one wants to read about it.

As media stays biased and fulfills its role in feeding us information it believes we, the consumers, will buy, we must consult multiple sources before making any judgments and visit news stations that are either mostly impartial, or two on extreme ends. Most importantly, we need to stop being the kind of audience that makes it profitable to sell such inadequate journalism to; we need to start investigating the complete picture from all angles.

## Camp X-Ray Movie Review

By ANA ESCOBEDO  
Entertainment Columnist

“I don’t know why you guys - You don’t like to talk with us. You and us - we are both stuck here.” - Ali Amir

I was only two years old when the planes crashed into the Twin Towers. Despite not remembering the event, I’ve been raised in a time where issues surrounding immigration, terrorism, and Islam are the forefront of American policy and media. Even with all the attention dedicated to terrorist groups, I know Middle Eastern terrorism only as a group of unidentifiable faces. By focusing on an often forgotten war zone located in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, the film *Camp X-Ray* forced me to remember that a member of Al-Qaeda or ISIS is as human as I am. Kristen Stewart plays Amy Cole, a fresh recruit shipped into the detention camp to guard the inmates that have been cut off from the surrounding world for years. We quickly get a sense that Cole is almost as isolated as the people she’s guarding.

The movie opens by juxtaposing video footage of one of the Twin Towers on 9/11 with a Muslim man peacefully praying before being abducted and forcefully taken to Guantanamo. Within five minutes of *Camp X-Ray*, director and writer Peter Sattler has reframed our ideas of who is terrorizing whom. The rest of the film continues in this sense, focusing on how the deten-



*Camp X-Ray* is a film based on a detention facility in Guantanamo Bay.  
ONLINE SOURCE

tion facility operates in a moral gray area by keeping suspected terrorists in tiny cells indefinitely without trial. Payman Moaadi plays a detainee, Ali Amir, who has been imprisoned for years. He catches Cole off-guard by explaining that he was a university graduate in Germany, and that after being taken to Guantanamo Bay, the only thing he has looked forward to is the release of the final Harry Potter book. Both Cole and Amir suffer from their own kinds of isolation, and they find a human connection with the person standing on the other side of the chain-link fence. The film aims to show the conflicting sides of the war in the Middle East by casting the enemy in a different light. How can we be “[h]onor bound to defend freedom,” as Cole says each morning, when the camp not only strives to strip away the detainees’ rights but their humanity itself?

As Cole continues to connect with Amir, she drifts further away

from her fellow soldiers. One day, Corporal Randy Ransdell, Cole’s superior, forces her to watch Amir shower, violating Standard Operating Procedure and Arabic social norms to make her uncomfortable. After Cole reports Ransdell, she finds that she has become the victim of the dehumanization. Her commanding officer ignores Cole’s report of the breach, asks her, “Are you a soldier, or are you a female soldier?” and moves her onto the night shift as a form of punishment. Cole realizes that she has been denied justice as well and that in order for the camp to run smoothly, everyone has to see themselves as a soldier first and a human being second.

*Camp X-Ray* is supposed to make the audience uncomfortable. It forces us to face what we’ve been ignoring: the side of the war that is hidden away. The film has no answers for us. It makes today’s issues more complex and some of America’s past actions harder to defend.

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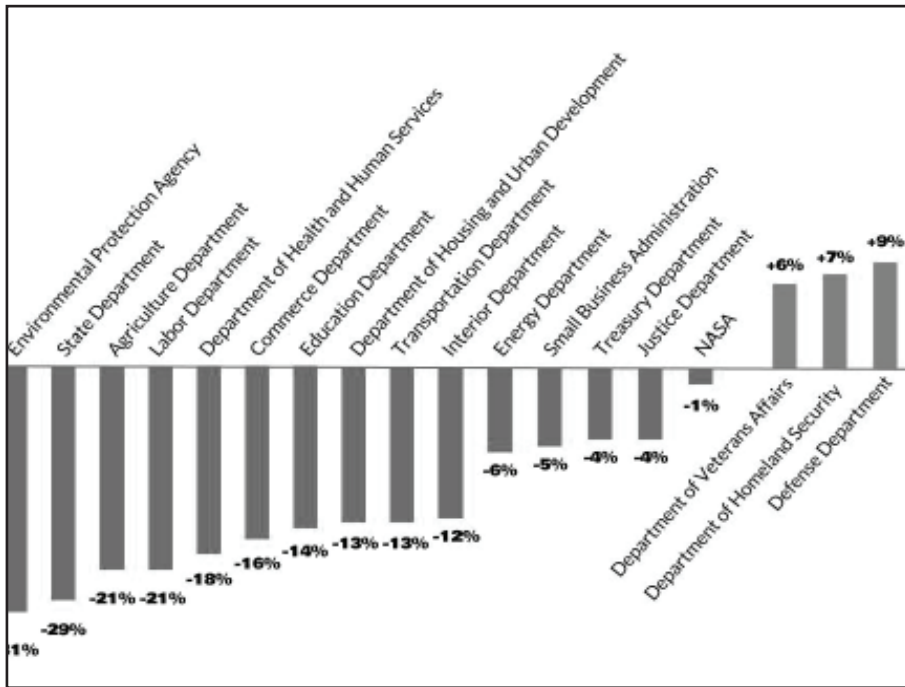
# Awareness

## Trump's Budget Against the Environment (Continued)

Frontpage/ from page 1

The graphic to the right shows the departments cut and the departments with increased funds in Trump's budget proposal.

Considering that the US already allocated a large portion of its funds to Defense and Homeland Security and only 1% to Energy and Science, it is surprising that Trump wants to increase defense funding and further cut departments which assist with environmental development. This matter reflects the flaws of Trump's proposal, which many feel does not reflect their needs as the American people.



Trump's overall budget proposal. ONLINE SOURCE



President Trump's flawed environmental policies. Annabella Chen / Cartoonist

## A So-Called War on the Press

By NITHYANI ANANDAKUGAN  
Editor-in-Chief

"The leaks are real, the news is fake," claimed Donald Trump in his February press conference. Trump condemned the media with the hostile rhetoric typical of him since his electoral victory. As Trump perceives dishonesty in reporters, his distaste for the news has grown. He has labelled *The New York Times* as "failing" and called the media "the enemy of the people." He has damaged its reputation. In short, he has launched a war on the press.

Donald Trump has repeatedly taken to Twitter to berate reporters, particularly those who criticize him. His anti-media attitude threatens the free press. US government depends on an educated public; without democratized access to the news, Americans cannot participate in their society because they

lack the necessary information and education. To this end, the press informs the public. Its obstruction robs Americans of the ability to contribute effectively to their nation: a hindered press limits the government's full potential. Thus, the press must remain free to preserve a functional democracy.

And so it has. Standards of free press have evolved through history. The majority opinion of *New York Times v. Sullivan*, for instance, expanded the media's rights and favored more liberty in reporting. In this landmark case, Officer L. B. Sullivan sued *The New York Times* for an advertisement that suggested that Martin Luther King Jr.'s arrest was intended to deter his efforts in the Civil Rights Movement. Sullivan argued that the *New York Times* piece attacked him personally, and Alabama law allowed him to assert these claims without proof. Upon

reviewing the case, the Supreme Court decided that the Constitution protects even false statements under the First Amendment, so long as no intent to harm exists. The Court subsequently developed standards of actual malice in press: defamation and libel are protected under the presumption that the writer intended no harm and showed no "reckless disregard" of evidence. This development lifted restrictions on the press, thus encouraging reporters to inform the public more freely.

Today, the press is essential to American democracy. With rising tensions between national leaders and reporters, the media suffers threats to its credibility. Although President Trump condemns and undermines the media, it must persist in its purpose—to convey news and educate the public. The increased presence of falsehoods and "alternative facts" has added new depth to the media. It becomes the only filter to public understanding of current events and social issues.

The free press is key to a functional society: it must prevail.



The free press is key to a functional society. ONLINE SOURCE



"Why... did [Brazil] fail to live up to its potential?" ONLINE SOURCE

## Awareness of Brazil

By MATTHEW JARVIS  
Spectrum Staff

Every force has an equal and opposite reaction. However, the realm of politics is an exception to this rule. There is no counterweight to the United States' power and global reach; it exists as the center of the global system. Was this inevitable, or was there a dark horse that could have overtaken the United States? One must only look southward to find the answer.

Brazil is the result of several hundred years of Portuguese colonization and rapid settler expansion. It had issues with slavery—the South was industrial and the North was slaveholding—and with native Brazilians on the frontiers. In many ways, it is a richer country than the United States. The average climate is warmer, allowing cultivation of a wider variety of crops. The Sertão, the hinterlands between the jungle and the coasts, are rich in mineral resources. In short, Brazil has a similar past to the United States and it is richer in natural resources. Why, then, did it fail to live up to its fullest potential in terms of modern-day power?

People came to the United States out of a desire to start fresh and build a new society, so the colonies prospered. Despite its resource-poor location, Boston eventually became one of the largest cities in the British Empire. In contrast, Jamestown in Virginia emerged because of a profit motive. It quickly faltered and had to rely on Native Americans' help to get by. Today, Boston is one of the most important cities in the United States, while Jamestown is superseded by the nearby suburban city of Hampton, a strip-mall-studded wreck.

The fundamental difference between settler colonies and profit-driven colonies is that the former looks to the long term, while the latter seeks to exploit the land as much as possible. The profit-driven colony was the primary method of

settlement used by the Iberian nations, with the Spanish pillaging the Mesoamerican and Incan empires for all of their riches and the Portuguese implementing brutal exploitative policies in Brazil, Africa, and the Eastern Indies.

Brazil was founded as a series of captaincy colonies—disorganized operations characterized by rapacious exploration and feudal "captains"—solely to enrich the ruling families of the era. In the north, brutal taskmasters controlled vast plantations and killed slaves with impunity. The scale and brutality of these operations make the slavery of the United States look like child's play. The southern economies relied on the mining economy of the state of Minas Gerais, and "Cafe com Leite" politics dominated, with coffee and milk production making up the remainder of the regional economy.

Notice here the lack of settler economies in any region of Brazil. All who came to Brazil were driven by reasons of personal benefit or wished to advance Portuguese interests. The motive for settlement was fundamentally short-sighted and failed to consider the future of the burgeoning country. The American colonies were envisioned as places to be settled and lived in, whereas Brazil was fundamentally a money-making scheme for the Portuguese Empire.

In a place where there are vast natural resources, a people powerful enough to exploit them, and no effective opposition, settlers can reap the benefits of the institutions created across the sea in their homelands to dominate the new land. The United States combined the political and cultural heritages of England and other European nations with the resources needed to build the most powerful empire in the history of the world. Brazil had all the resources of America, but was not settled to exploit them to a maximal effect. Therefore, Brazil could never reach the commanding height of the United States in terms

# Awareness

## Modern Inclusion in Fashion

By OLIVIA OLAYIWOLE  
Fashion Columnist

“As you know in fashion, one day you’re in, and the next day you’re out,” says Heidi Klum in pretty much every episode of her show, *Project Runway*. It’s a quote that testifies to the fickle and capricious nature of the fashion industry. The fashion industry is, in fact, fickle, and it’s always been known to be a hard industry to get into. However, recently that has begun to change. Even though 2016 may probably be remembered as a horrible year by a majority of people, many good things have come out of the year as well, one of them being inclusion in the fashion industry. Over the last few years, and in 2016 especially, more people of varying color and sizes have participated in fashion shows than ever before. This is socially progressive because the true state of diversity is overlooked too often, and historically, people with “typical” qualities are made to be presented as more beautiful than others. In the most recent New York Fashion Week, every show included at least one person of color as a model. This is a first in the history of runway shows. While this is a sad fact, it shows progress, awareness, and increasing inclusion in the fashion industry.

In addition, many more designers of color are designing and exhibiting at Fashion Week, such as



Natural hair appreciation in mainstream media.  
ONLINE SOURCE

with Balmain’s Olivier Rousteing, Cushnie et Ochs Carly Cushnie and Michelle Ochs, and Hood By Air’s Shayne Oliver. This also includes celebrities like Kanye West with his Yeezy line and Rihanna with her partnership with Puma, FentyxPuma. Models have been able to change the fashion industry as well. Ashley Graham became the first plus-sized model to be on the cover of *Sports Illustrated*, and Liu Wen became China’s first supermodel. In the NYFW show for Gypsy Sport, 87% were models of color. Maria Borges became the first woman to walk a Victoria Secret Runway with her natural hair. For as long as anyone can remember, genetically African hair has experienced discrimination as well as cultural appropriation, and it still

does today. It has never been considered beautiful because it does not always appear long and straight, as a majority of other ethnic hair types do. I remember as a young girl feeling fear of being judged every time I wore my natural hair to school, but thankfully, things are moving forward. All of this shows incredible change in the fashion industry, change that many have been proud to see.

While this is amazing progress, there’s still quite a long way for the industry to go. In the New York Fashion Week, there were only 60 shows out of 260 shows with designers of color and 4 major brands out of 260 with black designers. That isn’t enough. Hopefully, in the future we can expect more change and more diverse fashion shows.

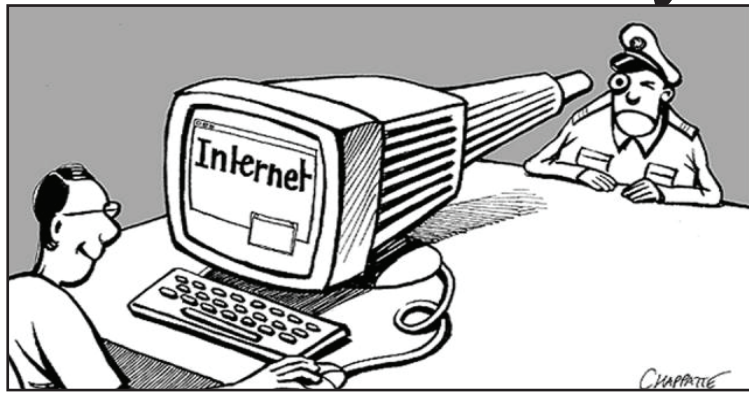
## The Internet & Our Democracy

By SERENA HAN  
Publicity and Finance

The internet provides a wide platform for citizens to freely share information. As a library of information with practically everything we know, the internet encourages democracy: the more knowledgeable the general public, the more it can challenge or criticize its government. Many dictatorships prevent free access to the web, while others censor information that could lead to potential uprisings. Under Obama’s presidency, the Federal Communications Commission created laws that enforce net neutrality, the principle that Internet service providers should enable access to all online information. Though the Obama administration pushed for an open internet, social media continues to manipulate our “free” access to information.

Early developers designed the network to be a “dumb net,” completely ignorant of what its netizens did. The idea was to encourage free expression, but companies like Google, Apple, and Facebook now hold immense control over the web. In order to maintain their power, they promote certain products and try to keep users on the sites, acting as barriers between messages the users can receive. Although these companies’ efforts to entertain users are justifiable, they can shape the public’s general knowledge by tweaking a few lines of code.

Facebook has an ever-changing algorithm to keep its users. To determine what people see on their feeds, Facebook notes what a user and their friends “like” the most and uses that data to anticipate what that user will “like” in the future, so it can show you similar content. Because nearly 50% of adults report using Facebook as a news source, this simple algorithm es-



“Social media outlets do all they can to maintain power.”  
ONLINE SOURCE

entially manipulates the news perceived by the public. Political posts mirror your and your social circle’s views. We gravitate toward people with similar interests, so the same biased articles circle among the same group of people. Facebook further divides social groups: Democrats and Republicans, Christians and Muslims, the poor and the rich.

After Barack Obama left the White House, we’ve gone backward in the net neutrality effort. Trump recently signed a bill that will allow internet service providers to sell private data to the highest bidder. They no longer need customers’ permission to use data like browsing history and medical information in targeted ads. By breaching internet users’ privacy, these providers will join social media in tailoring what users see in ads and even search results.

As more users rely on Facebook for news, their political knowledge grows distorted. Facebook users are already surrounded with opinions that reinforce their own. Under conditions where their ideals fail to be challenged, there is potential for an echo chamber of extremist ideas to emerge. Instead of protesting Trump’s new legislation, many users are distracted by more minor controversies. His accusation that Obama wiretapped his microwave

received more social media coverage than news like this, which threatens our steps toward net neutrality and democracy offline.

Social media outlets do all they can to maintain power. In the ever-competitive internet market, even Twitter and Instagram switched from chronological feeds to ones that resemble Facebook’s as of 2016. Due to how easy it is to scroll down newsfeeds, this algorithm distracts users from interpreting the sociopolitical landscape for themselves.

Our actions seem rather absurd when we find ourselves reading Trump tweets at 1 a.m. on a Saturday night. Social media engineers should be applauded for their ability to keep you on the site. But as writer Zeynep Tufekci stated, “it really feels like a waste to have this much intelligence and smarts being used to figure out how to keep you clicking on ten more . . . videos.”

Every source has a bias. Easily-manipulated social media only causes a user’s news to gravitate toward his or her own end of the spectrum. We need to reconsider how we retain news, and how heavily we rely on social media to learn about it. The internet grants us the power to maintain and improve our democracy, but it gives us no direction toward that ultimate goal.

## Orchestra Group

By MICHEAL XU  
Off Topic Editor

The AB Orchestra—the startup group of eleven students and a new teacher as a conductor—has performed at two exhilarating venues thus far. This new elective class was created when the superintendent requested a string group based on the feedback of students and parents who played string instruments. When there was no immediate action, the students took charge and created the club Eat, Play, Love. As a member said, “It was a big factor showing that there were students at AB that wanted to play together. It basically showed that we needed an orchestra.” Eat, Play, Love was started by a former senior who wanted to play music with others that would also enjoy it. Those who participate in the orchestra and Eat, Play, Love are examples of the dedication and the amount of hard work that students are willing to go through to do something they love. Schoolwork may be challenging and midyears may be stressful, but ultimately, people just want to do something that makes them happy.

In prior years, the music department was flooded with band students wanting to participate in the well-known marching band and band class. The instructor for the music program, Mr. Hickey, also leads the band program, but the new string program has introduced a new conductor, Ms. Greene. This is her fifth year teaching strings,

including her experience at R.J. Grey. But she has more than just a passion for strings: “I’m a mom, a triathlon and race enthusiast, and I love sailing and skiing” is her description of herself. One of her hopes for the future is “to grow the program and expose string players to a variety of quality music so they love it for their whole lives.”

Ms. Greene currently leads the orchestra group and the middle school group over at R.J. Grey. Although the group is small now, participation and overall awareness will surely grow. String instrument lessons begin in middle schools, and usually participation decreases each year, but AB has begun to embrace the string program. Sarah Jackman, a current senior at ABRHS, said that music usually “starts from younger kids,” and the new program encouraged those who admired the middle school program to convince the superintendent to invest in strings. Sarah said that “it shows the impact that students can have,” and the fact that students could make such a significant change brings hope for the future. When she heard the announcement that there would be an orchestra, she stated, “I was really happy. I texted my private lessons violin teacher and she said that she was really happy for me.”

The orchestra club provides a stress-free environment for students who love music, and it all sparked from the club Eat, Play, Love. To those who are now part of the orchestra and the club, it is clear that anything can happen as long as you

## French Elections

By MICHEAL CHENG  
Correspondent

French politics is under a great deal of stress due to the upcoming election. Populism is now prevalent in Western politics and is supported by many radicals that destroy the traditional liberal approach to government. The new form of campaign promises are an attempt to attract dissatisfied working class citizens towards an extreme political view. While it may seem ridiculous, this is now the reality that we live in. The citizens are not pleased, and are attempting to change the political atmosphere. Unfortunately, change usually comes in shocks to the system as opposed to gradual changes in this age of political chaos.

Most of Western Europe has recently seen or is seeing right wing politicians running campaigns on anti-immigrant and nationalist platforms, threatening international cooperation and endangering the EU in the process. Stability may exist in Germany due to Chancellor Angela Merkel’s calm administration, but in France this is not the case. Allegations of corruption and mistrust have resulted in startling developments. Current Republicans leader François Fillon is facing charges for embezzlement. The politician is accused of illegally taking taxpayer money to pay his wife and children hundreds of thousands of euros for work that was never done. Previously favored to win reelection, these claims tanked Fillon’s chances and created a competitive election season with several popular candidates.

Marine Le Pen of the National Front and Emmanuel Macron of the independent party En Marche! led the subsequent polls. Le Pen’s

manifesto focuses on French citizens over foreigners; however, her view is the opposite of EU policy. The National Front is suspected by the media to be anti-Islamic and anti-semitic. However, the recent attacks in Paris and Nice have in fact led to chaos, increased anti-Islamic sentiment, and augmented greater support for Le Pen. Along with the recent election of Donald Trump in America, this election may set a precedent for the rest of the western world.

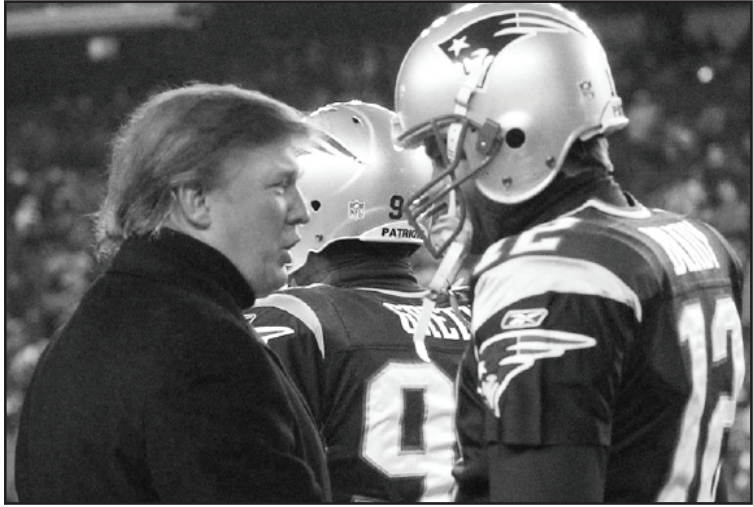
Victory is possible for Le Pen because public approval of the current government—President Hollande’s party—has drastically sunk, causing it to fall into disarray. Hollande is the first president since the World War II to not seek reelection; only 4% of French citizens reported to be satisfied with his leadership, it seems a wise decision. Accordingly, party leaders have decided to boycott their own primaries and support former economic minister Emmanuel Macron instead. Macron is campaigning as an independent and is one of the few candidates unaffected by controversy. However, he has never won an election for public office, raising concerns about his ability to rally voters.

Despite that lack of experience, he has won the first round of voting, along with Marine Le Pen: as no candidate captured a majority of the popular vote, the two will face off in a runoff election on May 7th. Most polls have Macron winning the presidency.

After the April 20th Champs-Élysées shooting, Le Pen advocated for the closing of all “Islamist” mosques in the country. If she is elected, it will cement the recent rightward shift in global politics and make nationalist policies the new norm.

# News

## Patriots and President Trump



History: Trump and Brady before a game at Gillette Stadium in 2004.  
ONLINE SOURCE

By NIRAGI SHAH  
*Sports Columnist*

By the end of the first half of Super Bowl LI, it seemed clear that the Atlanta Falcons would take home the coveted ring. The Falcons had a score of 21, while the Patriots only managed a single field goal. The game continued that way for three quarters: Tom Brady couldn't connect with Julian Edelman, and their first touchdown was scored without Stephen Gostkowski's extra point. When the Patriots seemingly started to recover, barely six minutes were left in the game. Brady and his offense took every opportunity to strike, inching closer to their opponents. It almost appeared as though they used magic to stop time and make the necessary plays to pull off an unexpected victory. Although New England was favored going into the game, a comeback, especially after lagging behind several touchdowns, was not what people expected. But a touchdown after the two-minute warning led to a two-point conversion. With less than a minute left, Super Bowl LI was tied and on its

way to the first overtime in the history of the NFL championship. Brady and the offense kept it up in overtime, scoring a touchdown on the team's first drive. That was it: the end. The New England Patriots executed a comeback for the ages, and Belichick and Brady received their fifth Super Bowl ring.

President Donald Trump echoed the sentiment of many Americans after the New England Patriots pulled off this stunning upset, tweeting: "What an amazing comeback and win by the Patriots. Tom Brady, Bob Kraft and Coach B are total winners. Wow!" In an interview with Bill O'Reilly, Trump predicted the Patriots would win by eight points. And he was shockingly close—New England won 34-28, a six point difference. "I like [Patriots owner] Bob Kraft... Coach Belichick and Tom Brady is my friend," Trump told O'Reilly. The president repeated his praise for the three men after the Patriots pulled off the greatest comeback in Super Bowl history.

Patriots quarterback Tom Brady's relationship with President Donald Trump has occasionally

come up for discussion over the last few years, and it happened again in mid-January when Trump said that he received a call from Brady before Inauguration Day. Brady responded by expressing his inability to understand why people are interested that he and Trump have called each other in the past. People are interested in Trump and Brady's friendship because it could cause backlash from New Englanders who support Hillary Clinton but cheer on the Patriots. This outlook may not be as black and white as it seems: some people believe that their favorite athletes should share the same beliefs as them, solely based on the fact that they support, or play on, the same team. Considering that New England is one of the more liberal areas of the US, this ideology has caused tension among fans of the Patriots.

Six members of the New England Patriots said they wouldn't make the customary trip to the White House. Those Patriots are tight end Martellus Bennett, safety Devin McCourty, linebacker Dont'a Hightower, defensive end Chris Long, running back LeGarrette Blount and defensive tackle Alan Branch. Bennett realized that they do not need to "bring [different political views] to work" and they should instead "accept people for who they are." Two others felt that the President's "opinions and prejudice" prevented them from feeling "accepted in the White House" (McCourty) or "welcome [there]" (Blount). The last three believed the visit would not be the best use of their time. Nevertheless, Robert Kraft dismissed certain players' reactions: "Every time we've had the privilege of going to the White House, a dozen of our players don't go. This is the first time it's gotten any media attention."

## Varsity Basketball

By Michael Cheng  
*Spectrum Staff*

The fans in the parking lot before the basketball game reminded us of the "glory days" when AB culture revolved around sports. Everyone came to support them. Even though Franklin was a highway's drive away, people showed up. For pizza or other reasons, the Colonials were crazy, at least for one night.

And what a game we saw. We as fans and AB students were able to witness what comes by once every so often—a season for everyone to cheer for. This team was led by a great group of seniors, with captains DCL All-Star and team MVP Luke Rogers, who gave the Colonials' season late life vs. Franklin with an 8-0 in the final quarter of the season, and Jack Maddox, a consistent shooter and player who gave everything he had every night. Overall, it was ultimately the fans, cheering for a team that was playing its best ball late in the season, that made it a season to remember.

In the first game of the season, I asked a friend and one of the team broadcasters (for Acton local cable TV) in the stands of East Boston high school whether this would be a "bridge year." I was proven wrong. From the first defeat there at the buzzer at Newton South, followed by the Triple OT slog that was the Waltham game the next night, this team won me over with their determination. They closed the season in a favorable position and went into a road game in the playoffs, beating the team with pure 50/50 hustle plays. We all saw them claw for it, and that's why, when they had three minutes left, the fans still hadn't left. We believed they could still fight for it. The only problem was that, for a 19-2 team, Franklin had a lot more pure ability than AB could muster

up. AB was a daring contender, but for this spectacular feat, AB needed a miracle that did not materialize. Despite this ending, the players and the crowd will be ingrained in memory as a symbol of what the AB community can be in the future if we come together.

With the amount of seniors leaving, next year will be painful in some respects, but the team will still be intact. Returning sophomore starting point guard Austin Zhou will be asked to take on a leadership role that is left by Giaconia, Maddox, and Rogers in particular. Size up front will become a problem next year as all three forwards on the varsity squad this season are gone—Rogers, Maddox, and Didi Mathelier—but the crowd is coming, and it could be here to stay. I was not at that penultimate game, but I wish that I was, because it had the sports fan's dream community. A team that you could believe in that responded to adversity: what more can you wish for?

In a game of this magnitude, a community emerges from a place where the fortunes of the team and the fortunes of the fans are linked and become one. There was a collective AB, not divided by an idea or a grouping of people. And in the wake of that experience, the fans can grow and bond, because in this era of AB social life, dances are cancelled due to lack of interest, niches are carved out instead of groups, and in reality we would all rather be anywhere else than sitting around and trying to be cordial with people we have never truly cared about.

Though the team lost and the crowds left shaking their heads at what could have been, AB became, for one night to remember, something greater than a collection of clubs, coalitions and sports teams—a school with a community.

## Developments in Space Travel

By SRIJA NAGIREDDY  
*Spectrum Staff*

The Mars trip will be delayed. After all, Elon Musk's projections were extremely optimistic, and humans and space are not exactly compatible. But humanity is closer than ever before to achieving some of its most out-of-this-world dreams, and, according to Musk, we could make major progress by 2018.

The official website claims that SpaceX is an independent space travel company "with the ultimate goal of enabling people to live on other planets." Headed by Elon Musk, this company has made ambitious plans to eventually send humans to colonize Mars, and they are now planning to make the first step. The plan of sending customers past low Earth orbit for the first time in more than 40 years would also be a first for a private company. In a recent conference call with reporters, Elon Musk announced plans to send two paying tourists around the moon and back next year. The customers would be carried by SpaceX's Falcon Heavy rocket, traveling in one of their Dragon 2 capsules. While the capsules are automated, the tourists would still be trained in basic emergency procedures for safety. As amazing as this may seem, SpaceX has a history of not staying on schedule. The Falcon Heavy journey was first an-

nounced to take place in 2013, and its maiden flight is now scheduled for this summer. Additionally, the rocket has not been deemed safe for astronauts by NASA.

SpaceX is not the only organization with goals of getting humans on Mars in the near future. NASA has plans to send astronauts on expeditions to the red planet in the 2020s. These expeditions will be conducted to determine human readiness for colonization. The astronauts will be carried by the Space Launch System (SLS), which

will be the most powerful rocket ever built by NASA. Currently, the SLS is scheduled for an unmanned flight in late 2018, but the possibility of having a crew on it has arisen, which would push back the launch date.

Space travel is rapidly revolutionizing. Milestones like journeying to Mars are now just within our grasp. With the work of both private companies and the government, the future of humanity is not simply limited to Earth, but rather it also expands to planets previous-



The end goal of the SpaceX program is to colonize Mars.  
ONLINE SOURCE

## Food Extinction

By MILA RUSHKIN  
*Food Columnist*

When was the last time you had your favorite chocolate bar or ate avocado toast for breakfast? Watch out—in a few years you might not be able to eat chocolate chip cookies anymore because of how difficult it is to farm chocolate. Even your favorite morning smoothie may require new ingredients, as fruits like bananas and strawberries are becoming scarce.

Global warming is the major factor causing this food epidemic. Although this is a term many have heard before, few consider its major effects on the food industry. Due to the specific temperatures needed to grow most food products, global warming has caused many problems. Rising temperature especially affects crops in colder climates, as it reduces the amount of pests killed by the cold. Droughts are also a problem that comes hand in hand with global warming—farmers who usually depend on rainfall to provide water for their crops now may have to pay for irrigation systems. Some farmers may not be able to afford an irrigation system and will suffer an overall decrease in crop production. In turn, for the food industry, the prices of foods that are affected by global warming will increase, and you may have to pay a lot more on your next trip to

Roche Brothers. So, what should you expect?

First of all, your favorite elementary school lunch is now in danger. Peanuts are one of the most picky foods when it comes to temperature and the water needed to harvest them: they need a consistent temperature over the course of five months and an average of 20-40 inches of rainfall. With global warming, temperatures and rainfall have become inconsistent, which puts peanuts at risk.

Also, what's better than some chips and guac? Guacamole is a party essential and probably one of the best appetizers of all time, but avocados are yet another food at risk because of extinction. California is the main avocado producer in the world, but due to the recent drought and overall decrease in rainfall, the production of avocados has been reduced.

Additionally, there is nothing like a good trip to Dunkin', but coffee businesses like Dunkin' and Starbucks may not be around for too long. Due to changing weather patterns, pest infestations, and deforestation, coffee may cease to be an everyday drink.

Even though your favorite foods may be endangered, if the global community works to counteract global warming, we can prevent extinction and ensure that your beloved PB&J sandwiches will sur-

# News

## Qualified Immunity

By KATHERINE CHEN  
*Politics Columnist*

Police brutality is not a new issue, but amidst the contemporary social, political, and cultural climate, it is one that has recently drawn heated controversy. Countless incidents of police violence have deeply affected the United States at a national level. There are clear underlying issues linked to police brutality that extend beyond its devastating aftermaths. To understand these issues, we must consider the experiences and influences that shape the officers behind the gun.

The direct link between police discrimination and minority oppression has been proven time and time again. Practices such as stop-and-frisk grant police the right to detain those who they believe are armed and dangerous. Although the practice is reasonable at its core, the fundamental problem is the inherent bias against racial minorities: such privileges empower police to detain individuals based on their race. *The New York Times* presents statistics that indicate the disproportionate targeting of racial minorities; it further reveals the highly problematic correlations between the police force and structural oppression. Despite Chicago's equal white, black, and hispanic populations, 74% of people shot by the police from 2008 to 2015 were black. In addition, 46% of people stopped at traffic in 2013 were black as well.

Solutions are being proposed to combat such conflicts in the police force, including limiting qualified

immunity for police officers. By Cornell Law definition, qualified immunity "protects government officials from lawsuits alleging that they violated plaintiffs' rights, only allowing suits where officials violated a 'clearly established' statutory or constitutional right." Many argue that maintaining current standards of qualified immunity for police officers is essential to an effective police force. Fearing the burden of potential legal issues, many police would be more hesitant to act with force, even if it would be effective in the particular situation. However, allowing for spontaneous action comes with clear downfalls. Many are advocating against the police's "safety cushion," believing that doing so would minimize irrational decisions by holding police officers accountable for their actions.

Movements regarding contemporary police brutality have arisen to challenge current standards of discriminatory police violence. Amongst these is Black Lives Matter, which promotes recognition of the broken police-citizen system and exposes accompanying discrimination towards people of color.

With many successful movements and campaigns comes backlash, and Black Lives Matter is no exception. Counter movements such as "All Lives Matter" or "Blue Lives Matter" are built upon a foundation of misconception. Black Lives Matter does not deny racial majorities rights, but rather, focuses on creating equal treatment for people of color and fighting for equality.

## Trade Protectionism

By ETHAN MURPHY  
*Correspondent*

These days, it is hard to venture into the world of politics without encountering debates over trade policy. Some people, known as globalists, endorse free trade among all countries with the philosophy that a global market will lower prices and increase quality worldwide. Others, known as protectionists, seek to create trade agreements that allow their economies and workers to come out on top. Donald Trump's campaign promised greater protectionism as one of its core principles. Naturally, there has been controversy over what America's stance on global trade should be, but one thing remains clear: the USA is losing on the trade front and our policy needs to change.

Last year, the USA's net trade deficit was over \$500 billion. Over half of this deficit came from importing consumer products, because of US-based companies manufacturing overseas. Due to less strict factory safety guidelines and lower minimum wages in countries like China and India, it is cheaper for companies to buy raw materials overseas, have them assembled by low-wage workers, and then ship the final product into the US to be bought. This system may keep costs down for the company and the consumer, but it also shifts the labor market overseas, taking jobs away from the US.

Theoretically, free trade should be a good thing. It is touted by economists as profitable for the global economy. With free trade, the best quality manufacturing will

make products for the best companies, to ship to the highest consumers, without threat of tariffs or other taxes. But this is not true. Even though the US started to trade openly with China in the 1970s, the opened Chinese market still affects American workers today. According to a study published last year in the *Annual Review of Economics*, the low-skill labor markets influenced by job outsourcing has yet to stabilize decades after the initial job losses. Because most companies outsourced some jobs to the Asian markets, workers that would normally find jobs at other factories are left jumping between temporary jobs to make ends meet, putting a strain on the federal welfare system. Not only does free trade only impact the livelihood of individual workers, but the entire country is affected by its impact on the federal debt.

The tariffs that the Trump administration has proposed might not be the answer to the problem of free trade. They will raise the prices of consumer goods that are imported and create rifts with our partners in the economy. However, it is clear that free trade causes problems for the American worker. Manufacturing jobs are moving overseas, leaving people out of work. Trump has suggested tax breaks for companies that move factories back into the country as well as for companies that opt to invest in the US. But before trade imbalances can truly be fixed, companies must stop shifting jobs to other countries. Once that happens, new jobs can be created and the lost workers of America can find work again.

## The Demise of Uyghurstan

By DAVID DAMIANO  
*World View Columnist*

To what extent is terrorism justified? Even posing this question is taboo. Yet asking if it is justified for one to fight for their country's independence would never have such a connotation. We naturally consider these concepts as unrelated—independence is a noble cause for the liberation of those under oppression, while terrorism is intended to harm others. In East Turkestan, however, the distinction between these two concepts is less clear. East Turkestan is the largest and easternmost region in China. Perhaps because of this, Xinjiang province—as it is called by the Chinese—has very few similarities with the rest of the country.

The natives of East Turkestan are the Uyghurs (pronounced wihgerz), a Turkic people that practices Islam. Their inclusion in the People's Republic of China can mostly be attributed to their proximity rather than any cultural affiliation. Consequently, the population is still bitter about its annexation into the Republic in 1949 and the subsequent actions taken by the government that have been perceived as a sort of ethnic cleansing. In 1955, Uyghurs composed 71% of the population, while today they make up less than half of the population and only 12.8% of the capital, Ürümqi.

The importance that Xinjiang holds for Beijing increased following the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, which was perceived as an attempt by the Russians to encircle China. In order to reduce the chance that the Russians could stir the sympathies of the Uyghurs in the region and gain control over Xinjiang province, the government has attempted to change the demo-

graphic of the province, incentivizing Han Chinese to migrate to the border state. The government's programs seem to ostensibly benefit Xinjiang, as they have implemented some of the most liberal reforms in the country to attract technically talented and economically prosperous Chinese. Yet many see the reforms as an attempt to methodically eradicate the Uyghurs. As it currently stands, the Uyghurs make up the majority in South Xinjiang, while Han Chinese are the majority in the more urban North Xinjiang. James Leibold, an associate professor and expert on Chinese ethnic relations at Australia's La Trobe University, believes that "[the] hukou reforms are about trying to encourage Han migration to southern Xinjiang, even though it's not phrased in that way," and that "[the] idea behind that is to encourage more inter-ethnic mingling and hopefully by bringing more Han, the quality and the civilisation of southern Xinjiang will increase."

These reforms, while veiled by the promise of prosperity, are ominously congruent with more blatant examples of ethnic cleansing. Regardless of how often or how firmly the government denies this accusation, many Uyghurs perceive themselves as the victims of Chinese aggression and have taken it upon themselves to see East Turkestan free of China. However, this group's (the East Turkestan Islamic Movement, ETIM) methods are hard to condone, and it has consequently seen itself labeled as a terrorist organization. In a video put out by ISIS, a Uyghur militant vowed to return home and declared, "In retaliation for the tears that flow from the eyes of the oppressed we will make your blood flow in rivers, by the will of God."

Such statements are quite harmful to the ETIM's cause and thus give legitimacy to President Xi Jinping's calls for a "great wall of iron" to combat the ETIM.

The Uyghurs' grievances are not unjust and are worthy of discussion. The label of terrorism, however, serves the Chinese well as it halts any further discussion on the subject. Yet how else will the Uyghurs gain attention to their cause? Their land is remote and insignificant to the western world and is unlikely to ever garner significant international attention from the United States or Europe. Furthermore, China's government has complete control over the media and society, rendering null any potential for news on this subject to spread throughout China. The government will never yield to the ETIM's demands and it will never be challenged on this matter.

A more academic approach to this dilemma does provide some positivity. Conflict is always derived from differences amongst two or more groups—whether differences of religion, political ideology, or race. Culture is by far the most common source of conflict and is the reason for the splintered and jagged world map we have today. As morbid as it may sound, having an excess of different cultures has never been beneficial to humanity as a whole. There are only two paths that a culture can take when it is under threat of extinction: synthesis with the dominant culture or eradication. The strength of nationalism often pulls most towards the latter and more violent path, as it has done with the Uyghurs. It remains to be seen if the Uyghurs and ETIM can salvage their culture, or if they will eventually fade into history.

## Aleppo: Syrian Refugee Crisis

By VERA TSANG  
*Forum Editor*

On September 8th, 2016, Libertarian presidential candidate Gary Johnson was interviewed on the *Morning Joe*, a morning talk show well known for discussing political issues. Everything was going well until a question was asked regarding Aleppo. Instead of giving an articulate, confident answer, Johnson stared blankly before popping the question: "What is Aleppo?" Such a response sparked a great amount of criticism and concern. The refugee crisis in Syria is so serious that, according to the United Nations, Syria now has the world's largest refugee population, the largest number of people fleeing the country. The fact that not even a presidential candidate was aware of this issue is more serious than people think.

Aleppo is a city located in Syria. It is the most populated city in the country and is considered to be Syria's "economic capital." However, Aleppo is now toppling due to being the battlefield of the Syrian Civil War.

The Syrian Civil War is an ongoing battle between the rebels and the Assad government that began in 2011. The rebels were disappointed with the way Bashar al-Assad, Syria's president, was governing their country. His dictatorship cre-

ated such a huge gap between the wealthy and the poor that citizens protested. They wanted social justice, political reform, democratic representation, and more freedom. The government didn't respond positively. In fact, those who dared to speak out were publicly tortured or even executed. In a well known case, a 13-year old boy named Hamza al-Khatib was captured and tortured by the Assad-regime before being killed with three bullets. Slowly, the violence between civilians and the government grew, which ultimately led to the Syrian Civil War.

Many of the rebels grouped together and formed the Free Syrian Army while taking over the eastern half of Aleppo, the Assad-regime taking the west. During their fight, many countries joined the fray. The United States, United Kingdom, Turkey, Jordan, France, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia supported and supplied the rebels with weapons as well as training. But others like Russia, Iran, Venezuela, North Korea, Iraq, and Lebanon fought with Assad. Groups like ISIL joined as well, but weren't paid much attention by Assad, as his main goal was to defeat the rebels.

From the battle, reports emerged of women, children, and men being raped by government forces. According to British newspaper *Daily Mirror*, a female nurse wrote a suicide note, calling members of the

Assad regime "animals" before killing herself in order to avoid rape. Buildings are being bombed, citizens are killed or severely injured, and many cannot find hospitals or afford anaesthesia for surgery. Often, civilians lose their homes, becoming refugees as they seek shelter.

The number of refugees from Syria began to quickly increase. As of 2016, about 11 million Syrians have left their homes, and 13.5 million who remain in the country still need help. Countries such as Lebanon, Jordan, and Turkey hold the highest proportions of refugees. Other Middle Eastern countries such as Iraq and Egypt also accepted refugees, as do places further north in Europe. Germany, the United Kingdom, France, and Sweden hold about 7,000-100,000 refugees, half of them under the age of 17. The United States also let refugees in, reaching the goal of admitting 10,000. Despite many countries accepting refugees, citizens have protested against it, calling the refugees "terrorists" for being from the Middle East or simply being Muslim.

Even though the war continues, a majority of the rebels have been evacuated, and Assad has claimed Aleppo as a victory. This huge event sparked controversy around the world. The major takeaway here is that the true enemy isn't the refugee, it's the one who made them

# Off Topic

## The Evolution of the AB Student

By DAVEN LAGU  
Spectrum Staff

Here at *The Spectrum*, we strive to go where no man has gone before. After much discussion and preliminary research, it is time to venture outside the safety of the Mac Lab—armed with a rolled-up newspaper, just in case—and investigate the local flora and fauna of the high school at large.

We start this quest in the wilds of AB by looking at the lowest species on the food chain: the freshman. Observing these critters presents many problems for our intrepid team of scientists here at *The Spectrum* because of their unpredictable and erratic behavior. When navigating our hallways for the umpteenth time, they still seem confused and tend to look around without moving, despite knowing that they are interrupting the flow of hallway traffic. Their biology is fairly complicated as well: they possess a large sack on their backs in which they hold the absurdly large amount of materials they think they need for their day, though we have observed that most of these materials are unnecessary. We call

these vestigial pouches ‘freshman backpacks.’ They serve only to further slow down the easily confused and illogical freshman.

After a summer period of hibernation, the freshman undergoes its first major growth and enters its sophomore stage. It loses the freshman backpack and gains an adaptation that greatly increases its camouflage skills. The sophomores become so adept at blending in that they remain unnoticed to any other specimen. They excel at remaining completely unextraordinary. In fact, the researchers of *The Spectrum* found that the sophomores are so dull and hard to look at that they instead chose to observe the next evolutionary stage: the juniors.

The juniors have undergone a severe transformation, reaching their maximum size and peak energy levels. However, the most noticeable change seems to be their mannerisms, as they are constantly annoyed at all non-juniors in their clan. They are easily agitated by the trials they must undergo called SATs, ACTs, and college visits, even though they knew these challenges were coming several years

in advance. After about a year of a stress-induced, rageful existence, these creatures transform into their final stage, becoming seniors.

Though the seniors appear physically similar to the juniors, a deep biological shift has occurred: their personalities are completely different. While the junior subspecies had an admirable work ethic, the seniors display a tiredness and lethargy that borders on being comatose. They have somehow lost all motivation, spending most of their free time sleeping, eating, or communicating to their companions how much they are sleeping and eating. The only real work they do is for a mating event called ‘prom,’ which seems to involve the fear of being or not being asked, celebrating the act of asking another specimen out and paying a ridiculous amount of money for a five hour ritual, all for the sake of having a date that they will probably never see or talk to again. That being said, these collective species are an interesting band of misfits that displays disfunction, awkward behavior, and antisocial tendencies—though not as much as the teachers.

## Crossword Puzzle

By OLIVIA MARBLE AND SAMANTHA WHITTLE  
Chief Staff

### ACROSS

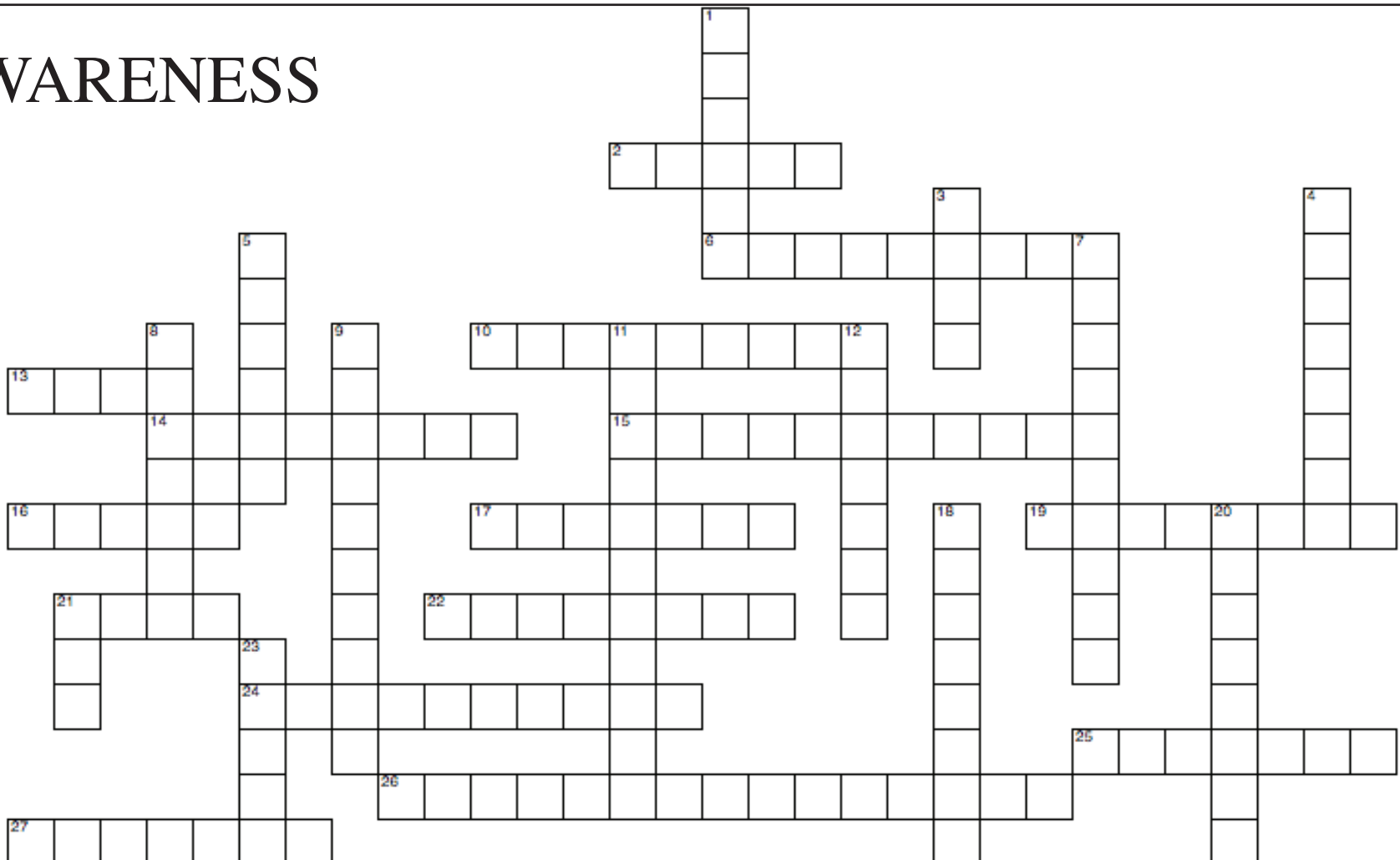
- 2 - A color that shares its name with three of AB’s teachers, at least homophonically.
- 6 - “Internet and Democracy” on page 4 discusses how Facebook uses this to keep you interested.
- 10 - The movie that won Best Picture at the 2017 Academy Awards.
- 13 - The Norwegian television show that has achieved great popularity in the USA.
- 14 - The Netherlands recently voted against this ideology.
- 15 - The star that has seven Earth-like planets orbiting it (two words, no space).
- 16 - What AB students need more of.
- 17 - A stool, but also, a recent

empire.

- 19 - The last name of Trump’s Attorney General
  - 21 - Two recent American presidents.
  - 22 - The website all juniors visit to attempt to organize their college search.
  - 24 - Some lucky seniors leave school three weeks earlier than the other seniors because they signed up for this.
  - 25 - Why dogs come to ABRHS.
  - 26 - British research submarine named by the internet (two words, no space).
  - 27 - The disgraced South Korean president (no hyphen).
- DOWN**
- 1 - A popular food chain that is missing from Acton.
  - 3 - The residents of last year’s prom locale.
  - 4 - The number of reasons why.
  - 5 - The mural at the bottom of

- the senior staircase features two of these.
- 7 - PC’s next production features three of these.
- 8 - Librarian Ms. Secino’s “official” job title is \_\_\_\_\_ of the Library Realm.
- 9 - “The Harms of a Two Party System” on page 3 argues that the US needs this system of government to prevent polarization (no hyphen).
- 11 - The belief that a nation should govern itself, separate from the common interests of all nations.
- 12 - The website that President Trump uses to communicate with the general public.
- 18 - AB’s science team will compete at the \_\_\_\_\_ National Tournament in mid May.
- 20 - The far end of the spectrum.
- 21 - Modern slang for a romantic partner.
- 23 - Who dies?

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