

Phillips Exeter Academy  
Exeter, New Hampshire



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# The Exonian

The oldest continuously running preparatory school newspaper in America



## SENIOR OF THE WEEK

Read about the Senior of the Week, Defne Koyluoglu, on page 6.

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The Exonian is excited to announce the launch of our YouTube Channel on Sunday, April 28. We will be producing a variety of weekly community and event-based videos. *Read more on page 8.*

# Sexual Violence Activist Chanel Miller Shares Her Story at Morning Assembly

By JILLIAN CHENG and LILY RAMPE

On Friday, April 12, writer and artist Chanel Miller spoke at the Academy's Assembly Hall, providing insight on her experience with sexual assault and the American court system, describing how she faced her pain, and introducing the themes of her acclaimed book "Know My Name: A Memoir."

Miller was once anonymously known as "Emily Doe" for a sexual assault case against swimmer Brock Allen Turner, who assaulted her on Stanford University's campus in 2015. Four years later, she decided to go public with

her identity, and she used writing and art as a platform to share wisdom in healing from traumatic experiences.

The assembly opened with a video outlining her 2020 exhibit at the Asian Art Museum in San Francisco, CA, titled "I was, I am, I will be." The piece, which was printed across a wall in the museum, involves figures depicting each phrase: one clutching itself in a fetal position, one sitting cross-legged, and one rising from the floor. The piece represents how she processed and healed from her trauma. In the video, Miller explains, "Art requires imagination. And imagination is the key to

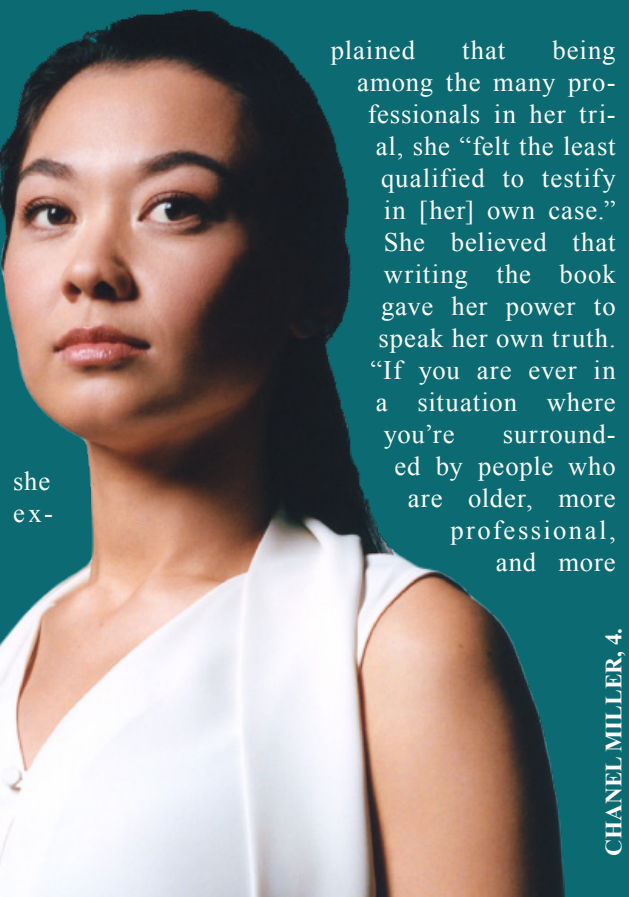
empathy."

After the video finished and the projector flickered off, coheads of Exonians Against Sexual Assault (EASA) Gigi Lannon, Nupur Malhorta, and Stacy Chen took the stage. Following them was Miller herself. The coheads introduced Miller to the sea of students, detailing her impactful story and memoir.

Miller then read a passage from her book through which she had decided to reveal her anonymous identity, and described the following consequences. She expressed her frustration with interviews, which seemed like "interrogations" and described the

hostility of the courtroom. "For so long, I worried that to be known meant to be undone," she read. "The more they see you, the more they can use against you." However, she concluded, "My purpose will always be greater than my fear." As told in her book, Miller now unabashedly shares her story to the public and advocates for sexual assault awareness.

Following her reading, Miller began answering questions presented by the EASA coheads. When asked why she wanted to write the book,



she ex-

CHANEL MILLER, 4.

# Academy Hosts Experience Exeter Students, Garnering an Exceptional 79% Yield



Photos Courtesy of the Exeter Communications Department

By CARLY CANSECO, JINMIN LEE, and FORREST ZENG

The Academy recently hosted its annual four days of Experience Exeter, a revisit day for newly accepted Exonians. Following a successful Experience Exeter, the Academy's accepted class of 2028 had a remarkable yield of 79 percent, an increase from last year's 72 percent.

Current students signed up to host prospective students and were matched with students with similar interests and backgrounds. The responsibilities entailed greeting prospective students, taking them to classes, and generally presenting life at Exeter to them. Prospective parents were also given the opportunity to participate in informational and panelist events that included current students and faculty. Because students and parents often have questions about coming to Exeter, it is important for the current students to engage with prospective students. "These visit days are extremely important to new families as they allow them to fully understand

the uniqueness of Exeter and help them to make an informed decision about their school choice for next year," said Director of Admissions William Leahy.

Associate Director of Admissions Julia McPhee agreed: "Being able to create a program that celebrates the students' acceptance and allows them to ask questions and determine if Exeter is the right match for them is incredibly rewarding."

The admissions team overcame logistical barriers to best accommodate prospective and current students. "The preparations for Experience Exeter started almost a year ago to manage multiple factors. We had to consider spring break and major holidays while offering a variety of dates that would be convenient for visiting families," McPhee continued.

Leahy emphasized the importance of selecting the best current students for each incoming student. "A lot of time goes into the revisit-host matching process with hundreds of students volunteering to serve as revisit hosts," he recalled.

Yet, despite the intensive preparation, the admissions staff found the

process gratifying. "This year's planning was both exciting and challenging," recalled McPhee. "It was exciting because it's fun and joyful to create a program for newly admitted students and their families to come to campus and become fully immersed in our community."

"The admission team is immensely grateful to our current students who served as revisit hosts, participated in panels, and attended in-person and special programs online," emphasized Leahy.

Current students eagerly volunteered to be Experience Exeter hosts. Preps, especially, were reminded of their revisit days and jumped at the chance. "I chose to host because I wanted somebody to have the same experiences that I had last year," prep Shiloh Ffrench explained. "My revisit day was the reason that I came to Exeter, so I wanted somebody else to have that same experience."

Prep Han Yan felt similarly. "When I was at Experience Exeter, I found that everyone was really helpful," he described. "My tour guide, Leonardo Chung, was really helpful in accommo-

dating me and answering all my questions. I tried to portray that same level of helpfulness to the kid I hosted."

"A lot of core memories that I have of my revisit day came back," prep Hugo Shinn said. "I really wanted to show Exeter as a community."

For many hosts, Experience Exeter was a great opportunity to express their passion about the school. "I really like talking about the school and getting people to be a part of it," prep Drona Gaddam said. "I love the school, and I think it's great that other people are interested as well."

Shinn reflected a similar sentiment. "I found Experience Exeter to be a really big selling point for me," Shinn described of his own revisit day. "I really wanted to meet new kids and convince them that Exeter is the right choice."

Hosts formed great camaraderie with prospective students. "It was really fun showing my person around and answering all the questions. I could really sense their enthusiasm for coming and it was really fun seeing a fresh face," Yan

EXPERIENCE EXETER, 3.

# StuCo Holds Annual Spring Formal

By ADELLE PITTS, KEVIN THANT, MARVIN SHIM and HANNAH WEI

As the clock ticked 8:30 p.m., Thompson Gym was flooded with crowds of students attending the Spring Formal. "The Lion's Den," hosted on April 13, was Exeter's first formal event since Fall Formal two terms ago and the first major event under the new Student Council Executive and Recreation Committee boards. The formal was a joint project between the old and new board, a farewell to the old and a welcome to the new. By the end of the night, many of the attendees found themselves having enjoyed the Saturday night, while others emerged with mixed feelings about the event.

"I'm just trying to please the people," said Upper Quinn Smith, co-head of the Recreation Committee. Smith tried to create a nightclub vibe

for the dance but disdained that it had to be in the Thompson Gym rather than in places like Grainger.

Lower Kyle Kennedy's, Co-Secretary of the Executive Board, echoed this sentiment, "We wanted to make sure this dance would be fun, and that people would feel incentivized to go. I think it went very well and was very successful as the first major event for StuCo's new Executive Board and am looking forward to what is next to come."

Upper Advika Verma stated, "I felt like after having the past few weekends of Saturday classes, I wanted this weekend to be a weekend of relaxation." She further said, "I'm not a fan of the location, Thompson Gym. I think the Wrestling Room is a top-tier dance location. We've had so many dances like this—Thompson Gym, DJ, music. Sure, this time, the

SPRING FORMAL, 4.



Photo Courtesy of @pea.stuact



# Exeter Holds First Interscholastic Sexual Violence Awareness Summit

By **CARLY CANSECO, ERIN HAN and ANGELA HE**

On Friday, April 12, the Academy, led by the clubs Exonians Against Sexual Assault (EASA), Transitions, H4, and Exeter Feminist Club hosted the Sexual Violence Awareness Summit. The Eight School Association, including Choate Rosemary Hall, the Lawrenceville School, and several other New England preparatory schools were invited. Notable speakers included author and activist Chanel Miller, who spoke at the past week's assembly.

The conference aimed to unite students and adults from the respective schools, regardless of age, race, gender, sexual orientation, or identity, in a collective effort to understand the impact of sexual violence on campus culture and to drive positive change within their communities.

The event began at the Hahn Wrestling Room early Friday morning with intermingling between the different communi-

ties. Senior and EASA co-head Nupur Malhotra reflected by saying: "It was really nice to meet all these people because we all shared the common goal [of creating] a community that works to prevent sexual assault and support survivors."

Attendees had the opportunity to participate in challenging discussions and network with fellow participants and speakers. Senior and co-head of EASA Gigi Lannon recalled, "We had a range of speakers come and I felt that there was representation for just about every kind of person. The speakers talked about the healing process, toxic masculinity, solutions and data, college campuses, the disproportionate effects based on identities like race and orientation, what it means to be a survivor, and consent." This platform of shared ideas and meaningful discussion fostered a deeper understanding of the complexities surrounding sexual violence, while also creating a safe space for dialogue and reflection on such difficult topics. This not only raised

awareness, but also generated a sense of community in the fight against assault.

The summit took almost a year of preparation, requiring dedication and collaboration between PEA faculty and students. Co-heads of EASA and the Feminist Club constituted the event's student advisory board. Regarding the extensive time for the construction of the event, Malhotra noted, "The purpose of this type of event was to further normalize conversations and show that they're something that people care about."

She continued, "The more we have these conversations, the more people feel comfortable speaking up about them, and if something has happened to them or if they have some complaint, the fact that the school is saying that we care enough to put on a whole summit—maybe it'll make them just a little bit more inclined to tell a friend or tell an adult."

Lannon highlighted the significance of Exeter being the trailblazer

of such an event. "This was supposed to be the first of this annual event," she said. "It will hopefully move from school to school, and each institution can have their take on how to run it. I think Exeter had the resources and means to host this event because of the effort put in by the administration to educate students, as well as the push from the student body to feel safe on campus."

The attendance of several boarding schools all gathered at the Academy this year also showcased the rise in awareness of sexual assault cases and the importance of realizing the potential damage it could have in the scholastic community. "The truth is that sexual assault impacts every educational institution. It is a societal issue that cannot be combated by one campus alone," said Stacy Chen, a co-head of both EASA and the Feminist Club. "Collaborating with these other schools allows us to share experiences and stories in hopes of developing a greater community for change. Our objective is to let people know

they are not alone, this event demonstrates that sentiment."

Malhotra added, "Sexual assault on campus is an issue that not just Exeter faces, but boarding schools face. I think Exeter can sometimes get stuck in a bubble, but when we're talking about this topic, we're not alone in it. And I think being around people from different schools showed me that there are people everywhere that are working towards issues like this, and that this knowledge isn't just for us alone, it's for everybody and it's for the benefit of everyone."

Thus, as a gathering of Northeastern boarding schools, the summit proved to be an experience of mutual learning, in addition to finding insight through shared experiences. "I think that learning what it's like to live on another campus and going through the same experiences of growing up at a boarding high school but then also being in different environments with other cultures [was an important aspect]. I had never even heard about residential life at Hotchkiss or Lawrenceville," noted Lannon. "Being able to digest the information we'd heard with other schools and conceptualizing it to our own experiences and

being able to hear and share with others was very helpful and interesting for me."

Overall, the event aimed to serve as another beacon of inspiration in the ongoing fight against sexual violence on boarding school campuses, as many hold a positive outlook for the future "I hope students left feeling prepared or inspired to enact change at their institutions. As many of the speakers said, this type of work is not easy, and it requires tackling the issue from a systemic approach," said Chen. "These are students that care and are passionate about this work, so I hope they leave with some more tools to bring our communities into a better place."

Highlighting Miller's appearance at Friday's morning assembly, Malhotra reflected with a similar sentiment, "I think the Chanel Miller assembly was a highlight for sure, being in the assembly hall where all Exeter students had gathered was so powerful," she continued, "Overall I loved the event, honestly. Being able to talk to these speakers and hear their thoughts—it brought together a lot of different perspectives on an issue that isn't talked about nearly enough."



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# Artist and Entrepreneur Michael "MK" Kim '15 Shares Unpredictable Life Story at Assembly

Art by Bella Jin / *The Exonian*



By ELLEN JIN, ALLEGRA LAI and LAUREN LEE

On Friday, April 5, alumnus and acclaimed artist Michael "MK" Kim '16 visited the Academy to share his story and give life advice to students. MK sat in a wooden chair, alone in the center of the Assembly Hall stage. After a brief narration of his unpredictable personal and professional journey, he opened the floor to student questions.

MK was born in Honolulu, Hawaii, and grew up in Orange County, CA. In middle school, his mother fell sick and his family fell short on money, so they moved to another town, moving between hotels. MK attended one year of public high school before being admitted to the Academy as a repeat prep, but after a year, he decided to leave Exeter because of his family's situation. During the rest of his high school years, Kim's family was homeless, living out of their car, but eventually was able to get the support they needed for housing.

MK received the opportunity to return to Exeter as a post-graduate to pursue his dream of playing golf at a Division I school. He attended Davidson Col-

lege, but decided after a few months that being a golfer was not truly his dream. He began studying investment banking and finance in order to help support his family financially, but after his sophomore year of college, he left and decided to explore his creative side with clothing and art interests instead.

Students were impressed by Kim's vulnerability throughout the talk. "I think the highlight of this assembly was learning about how he juggled his own personal life back home with his Exeter life," said upper Miyu Nakamura.

"I really appreciated MK's willingness to be vulnerable about the full breadth of his journey, both the highs and the lows," added upper Rishi Gurudev. "We often hear solely about the successes and accomplishments of many speakers. It was a breath of fresh air to hear from someone who chose a path unconventional for an Exeter student and the honest range of risks and rewards associated with such a choice."

MK intended to convey not only technical knowledge but how he learned to best understand him-

self and communicate his thoughts. "The main point is you need to experience things to figure out what your style is, then you need to experience more things and learn to express it yourself," said MK.

Though MK is a well-established professional, he wanted to emphasize the fact that he himself is still on a journey of self discovery. He added, "I'm still trying to navigate growing up as a human being. I'm trying to navigate my relationship with my family. I'm trying to navigate my relationships with my friends. In my speech, I really tried to make it clear that these people play key roles in me being able to get to where I am."

In contrast to other speakers, MK allocated the majority of his speech time to an interactive question-and-answer portion. "I don't know how often you guys get to have conversations with people who are in their early to mid 20s or even late 20s, so I wanted to come and kind of provide that perspective and say, 'Okay, here's somebody who on paper has done a lot, but I think developmentally still has more to accomplish,' and bring that conversation to you guys.

Hopefully you guys can have the same conversation with yourselves," MK explained. "You guys are all different, both personally as well as where you guys are within Exeter, how you guys view Exeter, where you're going to college, etc. So there's no way for me to be able to give one speech that I think applies to everybody. Instead I said, 'Okay, let me just have a much more personal, human conversation about topics that I feel like Exeter doesn't do a very good job talking about.'"

Upper Sophia Jia touched on the Q&A format of the assembly and the opportunity it presented for students to connect better with the speaker. "I think someone asked a question about if he believes that traditional education will well equip you for a creative job, and his answer was really good. He talked about how there are obviously aspects of traditional education, a four-year high school, a four-year college education that are really valuable. But also for the creative field, what really matters is human interaction and life experience."

MK also spoke to the importance of his life experiences, and how those aspects of himself contributed to the uniqueness of his art. "I am the product of my experiences, right? I think the more experience that you have, the more comprehensive idea you have of who you are as a person. The more comprehensive idea that you have of who you are as a person, the more likely you are to be able to communicate that through your creative outlet. I think you need to take that time to explore, figure out who you are, what you like, how you like to communicate it, and what that looks like in real life to other people."

As an artist, MK emphasized the importance of giving himself breaks and the space to creatively explore. This led him back to his original tenor, where he openly embraced his still-developing artistic journey and career. To him, these breaks not only prevented burnout, but provided him with the time to spend with his loved ones, while also creating the space and mentality to make the best products

possible. "It sets more realistic expectations. No matter how good I thought I was, or how talented, or how many things I had experienced, the reality is I've been meeting people and doing this for 20+ years. They're sharing their perspectives with me, which makes me understand the journey's a lot longer than I thought. If anything, I should enjoy the fact that I was in a situation where things were going well and go from there," MK said.

"So I think once I realized that and I gave myself that room to say 'You know what? I don't have to have everything figured out. I can figure some stuff out now, I can figure some stuff out later. And I've already figured some stuff out that other people are working on,' it just took the weight off," MK continued.

"The second thing is I think it helped develop space creatively. Before that, I think I was still in the mindset where I needed to make it seem like I had everything figured out all the time. I think that translated into my work. I felt like everything I made had to be perfect. That's not realistic. It's also not good for my mental health or my creative process. I just don't think it led to the best product," MK said.

The breaks were also a healthy way to reconnect with the people in his life. "It is also important because it helps you understand how to prioritize your time. For two years, I wasn't really connecting with my family, or my friends and it was just all work all the time because I wanted to figure it out. Now that I'm a little further along in my journey, I understand that I have to accept I'm not going to be able to control everything. Instead, I give myself the room to go and do things unrelated to work. Eventually the imbalance catches up to you and you'll pay the cost for that. These realizations have given me more comfort in intentionally creating a work-life balance and understanding I can still accomplish all the things I want, and get to where I want to, but in a more sustainable way," MK added.

On his breaks, MK allows himself the space for creative reinvention and

perfecting his craft. The journey is a continuous line that reflects MK as a person and his growth. "That's where there is a difference between a project versus what your style is. Your style should be consistent through all of your work, but if you keep trying to do the same thing over and over again, that's where you're gonna run into a block," MK said.

"Say, I'm a music artist, I just dropped the album. The likelihood of me wanting to make the same exact album again, just better, is pretty low. As a creative person, I probably want to make something new, right? The break process allows me to start something new, but also figure out how my style translates. The goal is to figure out how to make it one continuous body of work. This allows the fan that's following to understand it's still me. It's still the artist that they fell in love with, just expressed in a new way," MK expanded.

With his inspiring story, MK was able to captivate the audience, and his providing of an open Q&A format was well received by students. "I know that definitely when he was doing the Q&A, there were a good amount of people participating. If we have more speakers that kind of do that for the next couple of assemblies, there will be more comfort and confidence from the students to participate even more," added Nakamura.

Students also reflected on the need for diversity amongst assembly speakers. "I think it was really nice because he was in his late 20s. I feel like a lot of the assembly speakers we have are 50 to 60 years old and it's significantly harder to relate to them when they say something to the effect of, 'Oh, I made my first million by the time I was 30.' It was a bit more relatable to have someone who was closer to our age. He talked about an unconventional path to success, which was very inspirational," said lower Asha Masoudi.

Jia agreed: "My general takeaway is that you can be successful even if you take the non-traditional way of education."

## Experience Exeter cont.

said.

"One of my visitors had already committed to Exeter," Shinn described. "So I really wanted to make him feel at home."

Others thought about ways to present the school in a good light. "At the beginning, I was thinking about how I could be a better host. What should I show them? What should I not show them? There's some parts of the school that new viewers might find strange or unexpected," Gaddam explained. "You don't want to show them all the homework that you do, the test that you study for. But you do want to show them the fun

things like going to Grill, talking to your friends, and fun Harkness classes."

After hosting their first student, hosts felt more prepared to host a second visitor. "There was definitely a little bit of learning during my first hosting," Gaddam said. "Sometimes, I didn't know what to do, but we figured it out and had a great time. By my second guest, I was pretty prepared."

Some hosts and visitors found certain classes awkward when visitors were unfamiliar with the contents of the class. "As soon as you get them in that classroom environ-

ment, if they don't know the material, they're just gonna sit there awkwardly," lower Ian Rigg noted. "My student didn't feel like it was very interactive for the students, and didn't really feel a real opportunity to ask questions that he may have had."

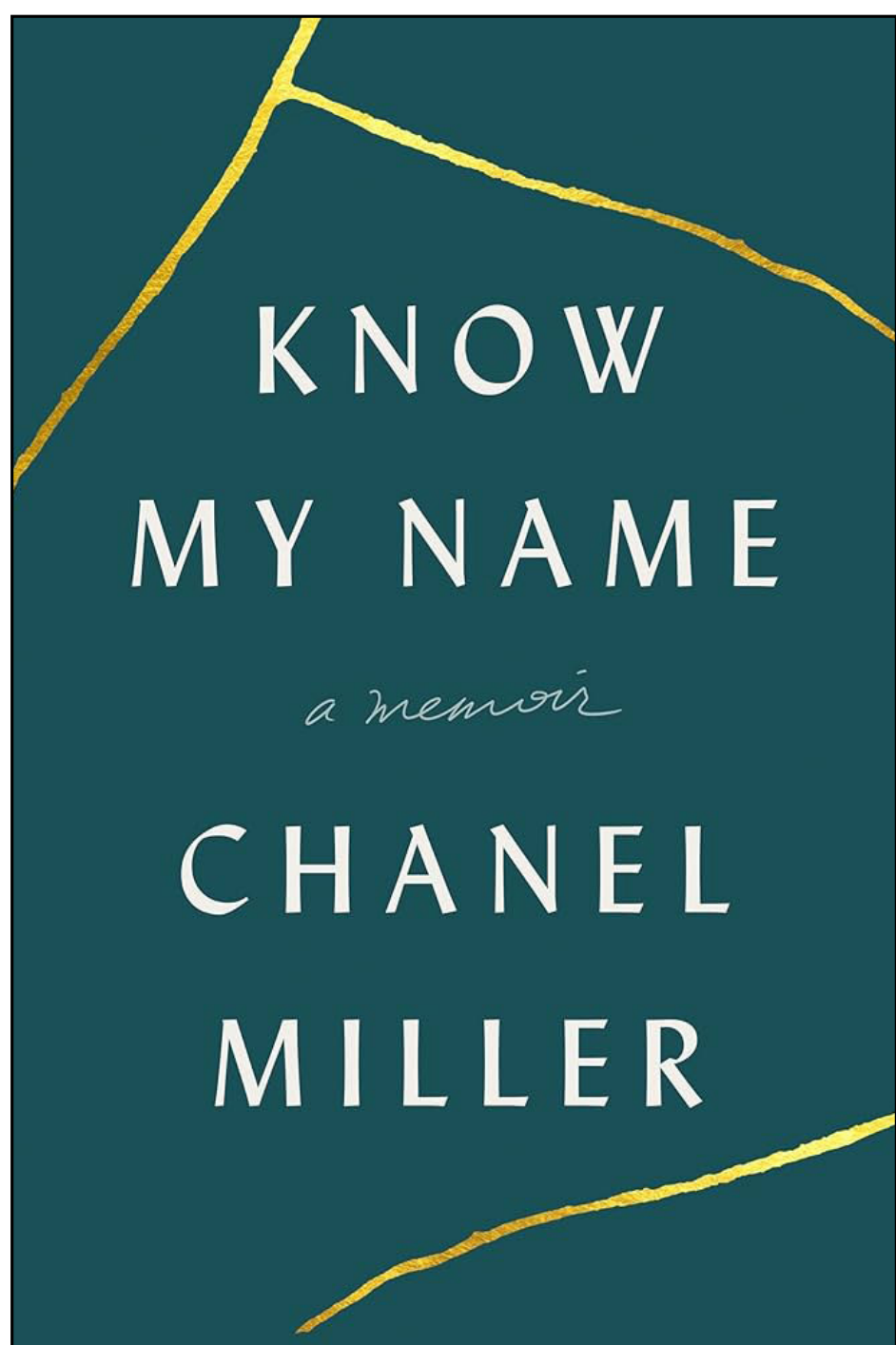
Overall, Experience Exeter was a flying success (except for perhaps the weather). "When our new Exonians arrive, they will be excited and nervous and our returning students always make them feel welcomed from their first moments on campus," concluded Leahy.



Photo Courtesy of @exeterathletics



# Chanel Miller cont.



Chanel Miller's memoir, *Know My Name*, describes her memory of her assault and the aftermath in the U.S. Court System as she fought for justice in *The People of the State of California v. Brock Allen Turner*.

Courtesy of amazon.com

established, even if you feel like, 'I don't know how my voice will ever emerge on top,' it doesn't have to. You have every right to still provide a counterweight."

In the process of writing the memoir, Miller felt more in control. "When I was in court, it was this really oppressive environment. I felt like I was two inches tall. But as soon as I started describing it, I found that I really enjoyed it because I went from being this figurine that was trapped in this courthouse to being the writer that built the courthouse from the ground up." The memoir shed light on not only what had happened to Miller, but the emotions within her. "I got to give nuance and texture to my grief and turn ordinary, 'bad' feelings into something rich."

To close out the assembly, Miller left some words of wisdom. "You may think that this sexual assault has nothing to do with you, but I promise you there are people in your life who are... trying to gauge who they can trust. The more you educate yourself and go to things like this, the more you're signaling to people that you're ready to receive a story like this."

Reflecting on the assembly, Chen said, "I might be biased, but I was extremely proud of the assembly we put together. It's always an honor to hear from our visiting speakers – but getting to actively converse and learn from them is something else. It's funny, her book 'Know My Name' was one of the first ways I became involved in this work, and it feels like a full circle moment to interview her at the end of my career here at Exeter. It's wild because I heard

her voice in the audiobook, so when I spoke to her in person, it was like speaking to someone I already knew."

Upper Katherine Lopez added, "I think she was a very engaged speaker; she knew what message she wanted to get across. In the end I didn't see her as a victim but as a force. She exposed her anonymous identity, despite the possibility of being shamed or facing unwanted pity, and she used her story to demonstrate how she regained power in her life."

Lannon agreed with both Chen and Lopez by stating: "I thought the assembly was very inspiring. I liked her responses, but I wish that we had gotten to hear more. I thought the passage she selected to read said a lot about the book and the type of story she is trying to tell. She spoke about strength and about how each time she told her story she was less affected by the undertow and now she stands only ankle deep. I also thought she was funny and an engaging speaker."

Some students took away a strong reaction and feelings towards the assembly. Lannon said, "I took away how strong she was. Having read her book, it is even more incredible to have met her and spoken to her face to face. I think a lot of the students were less versed in her story and didn't realize how insane it was that she came to speak to us. She has made an incredible impact in the world of sexual violence and assault and I think a message I took away was how much farther there is to go, but knowing that one person can make such a big impact."

Despite the important message Miller was

trying to convey, Lopez noted the unserious reaction from the student body, saying, "At the end of the assembly, after Miller finished talking about one of the most traumatic experiences of her life, Dean Weatherspoon decided to sing about mud. The whole student body laughed and we seemingly lost time to ask questions or reflect on what the speaker had just poured her soul into."

Lopez continued, "And during the assembly I saw many people on their phone playing the Wordle, doing their homework, et cetera. This makes me angry because we're already so out of touch, being the privileged community that we are, and when serious topics like this come up no one seems to really learn anything about it. It's hard to sit in class with people and talk about these serious subjects during Harkness and then watch them not care at all outside of class. We need to get better at actually teaching our students how to care about these topics, not just throwing different stories at them waiting for one to stick."

Chen spoke on what she hopes students take away from Miller. "I hope everyone leaves feeling a little more compassionate and inspired to advocate for each other," she said. "There's so much going on in the world, and Chanel Miller is one of those people that truly brings some light to those who feel very in the dark. So, I hope people leave with a sense of love for those in their community and especially for themselves."

# SpringFo cont.

dress code was formal, but what's different about this dance compared to other dances? It's like, 'I've been to one of these; I don't need to go again because it'll be the same thing.'

"It was very fun. I wanted to go because I thought it would be fun to go with my friends and it's something to look forward to in Spring. My favorite part was jumping up and down close to the speakers," prep Alyssa Wang stated.

Verma continued, however, "I think, also, generally, dances here are just the same music, the same people jumping up and down."

Adding on to Verma's belief, upper Hemani Stallard explained, "I think it had so much potential—if they had just hired a better DJ. The music was horrible. It's always really awkward when they play a good song, and then they follow it up with five more bad songs, and you're kind of just sitting there waiting."

"I didn't go to the Spring Formal because I had an event earlier in the day, so when I got back on campus, I was really tired," lower Sophia Qiu expanded, "I've been to previous dances, and they were all about the same, so I thought I'd skip this one and get some rest instead."

Upper Aymeric Dauge-Roth summed their words up, "I love how the music is random and unpredictable. Some-

times it's good, sometimes it's bad."

"Everything we do with our time comes at a cost. I can go to the dance, but what am I missing instead? In this case, especially at Exeter where the academic train keeps on coming, you have to pick your battles," lower Sam Altman stated. "Personally, I don't have a lot of friends that [went] to the dance...so I chose to instead spend my free time doing things with people that I know. Just earlier this evening, I spent twenty minutes going to Stillwells with my friends. It took a lot less time, and for me, it was a lot more fulfilling. With the dance, there are lights, there's 'dancing,' but oftentimes those things are not very fruitful—you kind of just wait around for an awkward social encounter to begin. At a place like Exeter, I'm fairly confident that I can use my time in better ways."

However, despite the Spring Formal being disappointing to some individuals, others still appreciated the thrill and entertainment of the dance.

"I went because there was really nothing to do lately, and because we had Saturday classes the last week, I wanted to do something fun and to depart from the regular, go see some friends. I got to see my friends, which was nice, but it was really hot inside and people were just kind of crowded together," upper Claire

Han explained.

Prep Chloe Lind said, "I went to the Spring Formal tonight because I wanted to de-stress and relax after a very busy week. I thought that the food and activities were really good; also, we hired a DJ from elsewhere and I liked the music. It was just a great way to bond with my friends."

"It was a fun way to spend the night," agreed lower Asha Masoudi.

"I went to spring formal because it's fun being with my friends and also the vibes [are good]," prep Crane Lee stated.

Prep Oluwajoba Okeremi continued, "I wanted a chance to dress formally, which is an opportunity we don't get a lot at Exeter, and I also wanted to spend time with my friends and eat delicious food."

Upper Roy Liu expounded, "I went to the dance because all of my friends were going. I feel like because it was a formal dance, there was a lot more hype about it, a lot more energy."

Dances at Exeter always have the stigma of being either having bad music, bad location or just boring in general. "We're trying to expand our outreach towards the community of Exeter and improve the dances by being unique" Smith said. Coming off of an energetic ending towards the spring formal the future certainly seems bright for the new Recreation Committee.



At the dance, many students posed with friends for polaroid photos to keep as mementos of the special night.

Courtesy of @pea.stuact



Students dance in Thompson Gym to music as the room explodes with flashing lights.

Courtesy of @pea.stuact



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DeSisto's documentage and  
Forrest Zeng's narration, 9.

## Faculty of the Week: Chris Matlack



**Instructor in Science Christopher R. Matlack poses by the steps to the Assembly Hall.**

*Photo Courtesy of Exeter Communications*

By **ISHAANSINGH, ALLEGRA LAI, CHLOE LIND, and MARVIN SHIM**

Christopher Matlack has served as a biology instructor and former department chair of the Science Department since 1984. During his long and illustrious career, he has taught biology, ecology, and ornithology, and serves as a coach for the boys' junior varsity hockey team. Matlack has enjoyed organizing and participating in educational outreach in Ghana, Chile, India, and Canada. He enjoys bird-watching as a hobby. Matlack is respected and admired by faculty and students alike, having proven his dedication to biology and the enlightenment of his students in his long tenure at Exeter.

"I have had many epiphanies because of the genius of Mr. Matlack," upper Aveen Burney said. "He really plans everything out and I will carry his lessons, tips, and jokes with me forever. He is one for the quote book. I am now a fervent birder and tree lover because of him and we often joke about what's happened to me."

"He cares about the quality of his teaching, his coaching, and his relationships with colleagues and students, but he doesn't take himself too seriously. That Matlack sense of humor is rightly famous," Instructor in Science Townley Chisholm, Matlack's teaching colleague for thirty years, described.

Instructor in Science Summer Morrill recounted a funny memory from last year's Faculty Follies. "He just comes over to my classroom and asks me how to film a video," she said. "We just sat for a whole afternoon, thinking about how you would do this Faculty Follies video, and he had a silly little flamingo hat. And I had to teach him how to screen-record with something behind him. He pointed to a map of where

the birds are migrating, but he couldn't figure out which direction and we just had so much fun. The fact that he spent a whole afternoon—maybe multiple afternoons—figuring out how to do this for the faculty and kids says a lot."

Upper Ava Helbig explained, "He likes to tell stories and it makes him very relatable and gives us a good laugh. Personally he's one of my favorite teachers because he wants to connect with students. In my experience, when he tells stories, it's heartwarming, because he's lived a fulfilling life and he's not afraid to share his experiences."

"The most enjoyable part of Exeter is the discussions I have with students around the Harkness table," Matlack said. "There is no question about it."

"He has this half-hockey stick that he uses for various stuff and was constantly making jokes with another hockey athlete about the hockey stick and trying to get everyone to understand them. I just thought it was funny and cool how he would try to lighten up the class," prep Ryan Wang said.

Prep Griffin Breault added, "He just gives off an air of positivity. He's always smiling. He is always very kind, but he's also a good teacher."

"He makes it easy for the students to ask questions," prep Artur Ferreira said. "A student can get to know him very easily; he makes jokes once in a while to make sure the class is in a comfortable environment."

Helbig fondly recounted a memory with Matlack during her lower winter class. "In class he was trying to teach us about proteins and he was like, 'what do I not have?' because he was talking about keratin. And then Xavier, who was sitting across from me, said 'hair.' And then everyone started laughing because Mr. Matlack is bald."

Instructor in Science Tatiana Waterman, who volunteered to chauffeur

ornithology field trips during Covid for Matlack's course, reflected on his presence both as an instructor and as a person. "It was a great professional development experience for me, not just because I learned all kinds of things about birds and ecology—which I could not learn from a book—but more importantly, I could watch Mr. Matlack teach the 'whole student' with caring and wisdom, at a time when we all were scared and unsettled."

Senior Teddy Capozzi also shared his memory from the ecology course with Matlack, which captures Matlack's enthusiasm for the subject. "Mr. Matlack is an early riser," Capozzi said. "During a 6:30 a.m. ecology field trip, everyone getting on the bus had bloodshot eyes and was not very happy to be there, but Mr. Matlack was sitting up in the front, saying, 'Isn't this the greatest?'"

Matlack expounded

upon his incredible passion for bird-watching. "It's all the birds I had seen in Africa," he said. "I've gone to Costa Rica seven times and I've gone to the Amazon once. When you are in the jungles, there's just so many birds and I want to know their names. I've always been interested in animals from an early age as a kid. I was always going to be in biology, and I ended up majoring in wildlife management and biology."

Capozzi continued, "He is probably more passionate than most teachers you will find. From what he tells us, his life and interests in and outside of class are essentially one. In our ecology class, he could give so much information about a seemingly random location. He would tell us about the history of certain areas by looking at overgrowth or undergrowth, examining various tree species, looking for signs of animal, et cetera. His deduction skills are

quite good and something his students should be able to bring into other classes or facets of life outside of school."

"I met him at the beginning of winter term, as my BIO220 teacher here," Prep Owen Cosgrove said. "He's very open. He doubles down, makes sure we know every little part of every little thing. He has an environment where anyone can ask any question and we can discuss until we're all confident."

"When I went to Mr. Matlack to ask about my lab report, I felt that he was really willing to listen to what I was confused about, and genuinely wanted to help me understand," Wang said. "We talked for a long time, but he wasn't even paying attention to the clock. He was just really focused on explaining the material."

Similarly, former Instructor in Science Rich Aaronian had nothing but positive remarks about Matlack. "I don't know anyone that puts in as much time with students and helps them along," he said. "Someone asked him to teach an extra course or be on a committee, and even though he was loaded, he never said no. That's really admirable."

Chisholm continued, "He doesn't take shortcuts; he cares about challenging his students and about teaching them how to study effectively and to love and appreciate the natural world."

"He cares about his students in the classroom, in advising, in the dorm, and on the ice-rink or the baseball diamond. When he was doing dorm duty in Bancroft, we were all jealous of how popular he was. At about 10 p.m. he would drink a soda to stay wide awake; he sacrificed his health to do his duty to his best and to the last minute," Waterman added.

Breault reflected on Matlack's special presence at PEA. "Matlack is a staple of the Exeter community," he said. "I had Mr. Trafton for Spanish in the winter, and he was just giving all these anecdotes about him

and Mr. Matlack."

Instructor in Science Anne Rankin, who herself had Matlack as a teacher, commented, "I guess the words that come to mind in no particular order would be dedicated and genuine. What I mean by that is I think he's the kind of person who does the right thing. Even when no one is watching and will ever know."

"Chris is a great role model for younger teachers as he was for me back in the day," Instructor in Science A. J. Cosgrove said. "He is fully committed to his students and doing the full job that is required of teachers living in a residential community. He is a hard worker who never complains for a simple reason—he loves what he is doing."

When asked about Matlack's legacy, Aaronian said, "I just think of the friendships he's made with adults and students, and the courses that he's invested in ecology class. He taught AP Bio that I never taught, so he could teach a whole variety of different levels. I think it's just really playing a role in important search committees, and having the trust of colleagues in the science department."

"He has been a father figure to countless Exonians," Waterman said. "He takes care of every responsibility on his schedule, no matter how hard he has to work, and how long the hours will be. He gives up his time to anyone and any matter that needs attention. And he is very forgiving and understanding when others cannot accomplish as much."

"He is deeply honest, and he cares about the common good," Chisholm said. "Mr. Matlack is all about service: service to the school, service to the science department, and, above all, service to his students."

Alumna Sami Smith '23 shared, "He is just a true light on campus, and the amazing thing about him is that once you meet him and see that light, that light and joy will be with you for the rest of your life."



*Photo Courtesy of Aveen Burney*



# Senior of the Week: Defne Koyluoglu



Senior Defne Koyluoglu sits on a bench in front of the Goel Center for Theater and Dance before returning to her Wednesday dance practice.

Photo Courtesy of  
Exeter Communications

By GRACE YANG, JADE YOO and SOPHIE ZHU

Whether it be in the halls of Dunbar Hall, before the studio mirrors, in the ebb and flow of daily life, one figure stands out, not only as a proctor or dancer, but as a beacon of warmth and care for all who cross her path. This is Defne Koyluoglu, a senior with a radiant presence.

Koyluoglu plays an important role in her dormitory as a proctor, extending genuine care to everyone around her. “She really cares for our entire dorm,” senior Anna Kim said. “She makes everyone feel welcome in the dorm, she makes me feel welcome. She makes the dorm feel like a home.”

Koyluoglu herself conceded that she takes this responsibility even outside of the dorm setting, saying that her friends often joke and “call me the mom friend or the aunt friend, or call me mom or mother.”

“I feel like she’s one of those people who, no matter how busy they are, will always listen to you or say hi,” Kim said. Koyluoglu’s willingness

to prioritize connection underscores her empathy and dedication to building an inclusive community. She is, in short, the compassionate cornerstone of the Dunbar community.

Upper Minjae Suh described her journey in watching Koyluoglu grow. “I think I’ve seen her take on more of a motherly role, at least to me and other younger students in the dorm. Especially as a proctor, she’s known as the mother proctor.”

Defne inspires younger students “mentally and emotionally,” Suh continued. “I think she tends to handle situations very maturely. As a senior next year, I think I would want to have that quality to give or to help younger students.”

Koyluoglu’s maturity has been recognized outside her community, by adults and Academy faculty. Instructor in History Troy Samuels admires “the way she communicates with adults,” he said. “It can always be a weird and challenging relationship, but both as an advocate for other students and as an advocate for herself, she manages to communicate with the

adults on campus in a really effective and genuine way.”

Many of Koyluoglu’s friends mention her humor as her most defining personality trait, drawing people in with laughter and joy. “She doesn’t give herself enough credit for her sense of humor,” upper Van Ledtje said. “She always says, ‘I have such a dry sense of humor.’ She really doesn’t. She’s plain funny.”

“She’s very breezy, if that makes sense,” Suh said. “And has the kind of personality that reminds me of a forest on a nice spring day—trees on a nice spring day.”

Senior and fellow dance company member Hope Gantt described, “I think she’s always known what she wants, at least vaguely. But now she’s not ashamed to go after it. She doesn’t really care about other people’s opinions, in a good way, which is especially important at Exeter, when sometimes it can feel like 15 different people are expecting you to do 15 different groundbreaking things with your life.”

Sophie Zhu, another senior in the dance company, also mentioned how

Koyluoglu inspired her to try something new. “I think she was the one who had told me to pick up crocheting, and now it’s one of my favorite pastimes,” Zhu said.

Many brought up her calmness and stability as some of her greatest strengths. Upper Advika Verma, also in dance company, shared, “I admire that she has a level head and doesn’t seem to let little things affect her too much. I really enjoy her calming presence.”

When Koyluoglu’s advisor, Instructor in Mathematics Panama Geer, recalled her favorite memories with her, they were all laced with signature humor and charm. “She went through a phase of coming in and erasing my white boards each day because she found it satisfying,” Geer said. “That was amusing!”

“There was also the time when Defne and Solei squealed with delight when I brought Fruit by the Foot to advisory, so that they could have a race to see who could eat one fastest,” Geer said. “During Covid, my advisory had fun sending photos of their assembly check-ins, and that tradi-

tion has stuck and gotten even more goofy.”

After being exposed to humanities research projects in upper year and a consecutive summer program at an art conservation, Koyluoglu discovered her passion for art history. When examining Byzantine frescoes, she realized that she closely resembled the piece she was looking at, deepening her connection to the study. “That kind of deep ancestral history interested me,” Koyluoglu shared. This tangible and personal connection drew her into her newfound community of New York museums and art teachers at the Academy.

“She really loves art history and she could talk for hours about how to save old paintings,” Ledtje said. “And I remember I just asked her about it and she went on a 15-minute tangent, and it was the most interesting thing I’ve ever heard. How meticulous the process is, how you have to paint over with certain layers and scratch things off, and how tedious it is.”

Koyluoglu also has a deep passion for dance. “She brings a level of artistry that is really won-

derful to see,” Instructor in Dance Samm Wesler said. “I would have to say she is an incredibly intelligent dancer. When Defne approaches technique or choreography, you see the thought process, and that Defne is looking at everything: aesthetics, technique, and how our body functions and moves. Defne’s choreography is so layered and nuanced, and I feel like I have to watch it 18 times because I pick out different things every single time.”

“We’re gonna miss her so much,” Instructor in Dance Allison Sarage said. “She’s definitely left a legacy on the dance program.”

At the end of the day, Koyluoglu is a senior who has left a profound impact on a great many people and touched a great many number of lives throughout her time at Exeter. Her calm and stable personality mixed with her witty sense of humor has made her an amazing friend, valuable dance company member, and incredible student. Koyluoglu will be missed by many as she continues her journey beyond Exeter.

## Exeter’s Economic Association Triumphs At Northwestern Economics Tournament

By ERIN HAN and FORREST ZENG

On April 7, Exeter’s Economic Association (EEA) took home a one-two sweep at the prestigious 2024 Northwestern Economics Tournament (NET) in Chicago.

EEA’s A team and B team competed against 52 teams in multiple quiz-bowl style rounds covering various topics in economics, taking home first and second place respectively. The results mark a significant achievement in EEA’s economics quiz bowl program—especially having only attended the competition once before their dominant sweep.

“I was extremely proud of our team,” upper EEA

co-head and team captain Dhruv Nagarajan said. “This victory has been years in the making. It was just our second year competing in this specific tournament, and the team blew past everyone’s expectations with a dominating sweep over the rest of the field.”

The tournament was structured with four quiz bowl rounds in the morning to seed the teams for the afternoon rounds. After four afternoon quiz bowl rounds, the top four teams proceeded to semifinals. Along the way, there were some tense moments. “In the morning, A team went 4-0 with relative ease, but B team went 3-1, losing one match,” upper and B team member Tanay Nandan said. “We won our first afternoon match in a sweep, so it gave

us the confidence to make it undefeated through the next three games.”

“One thing with quiz bowl is that there will never be certainty,” Nagarajan said. “There’s always a little bit of uncertainty that can sway sentiment. You can be as prepared as possible and still potentially lose a match. You can only control so much.”

“So when A team lost one of our afternoon games, it threw us off a little bit,” Nagarajan continued. “We realized, though, that it was all part of the competition. We needed to win the next two games in order to qualify for the semi-finals, and we ended up doing that.”

Securing wins in several of the round-robin matches proved to hinge on speed.

Upper and B team member Elle Perry explained, “In the closer matches it really came down to who could buzz faster, which we did a good job of.” Both A and B teams won seven out of their first eight rounds and proceeded to the semifinals.

“We were stressed before our semifinals against Farmington, who had put up a close fight against A team,” Nandan described. “Every team member went to the bathroom to calm down and mentally prepare. Thankfully, we were able to create a gap within the first five questions and maintain it until the end.”

Eventually, Exeter’s A and B teams emerged victorious from both semifinal rounds and faced each other in the final round.

For many competitors, the final round felt like a typical practice scrimmage. “A team against the B team on the big stage with everybody watching was really fun,” Nandan said. “It was awesome to be up there, with no pressure, just showing the audience what we knew. A team won, which was to be expected, but it was relatively competitive, which was great to see.”

“The finals were so much fun because it was Exeter versus Exeter, so it was a win-win scenario,” Perry said. “It was fantastic to have an Exeter sweep.”

Nagarajan felt similarly. “We were joking that the finals was like another Monday practice session in EPAC, just this time on the big stage at Northwestern,”

he said.

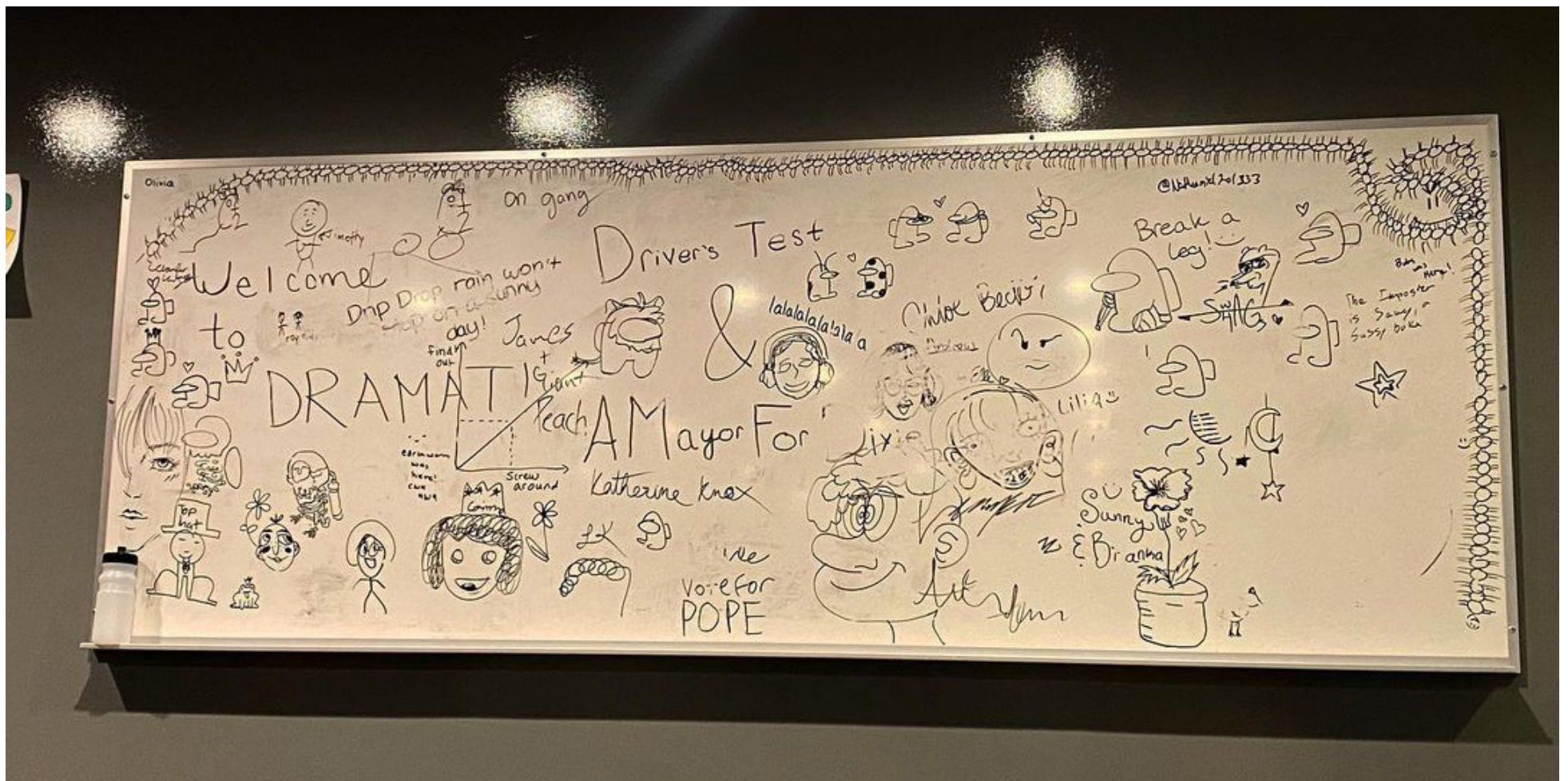
Indeed, practice has made perfect for both teams. Nagarajan described the rigorous preparation for the tournament.

“This year, we have really honed in on understanding the intricacies behind each of these tournaments,” Nagarajan said. “We created a database with more than 2000 past questions, a quiz bowl website to practice buzz timing, an advanced textbook of over 60 pages, and a novice curriculum that teaches the AP material in a way that’s easily digestible for new students.”

“Another key component of our success has been our cohesive, fun, and



# Club Spotlight: DRAMAT



By SAMUEL ALTMAN  
and WILLIAM INOUE

Exeter is renowned for its extensive theater programs that host a wide range of high-quality opportunities for the whole campus. Dramat is a fully student-run theater club on campus. Each term, students take turns directing and performing short plays, and sometimes even writing their own plays.

Advisor and Instructor in English Sahar Ullah commented on Dramat's unique role on campus. "Dramat gives PEA students an opportunity to be part of a theater-making community in addition to PEA's theater and dance department's amazing programming," she said.

"Dramat is the drama club on campus where students can direct, write, and act in shows and it's very helpful for beginners to get into theater, especially if you've never done it before," prep Jillian Cheng reflected.

Upper Jacques Leleux echoed this sentiment. "Generally, Dramat is a lot more low-key and relaxed than the main stage productions," he said. "I think that's really good because you can focus on specific skills you want to hone. In a way, it's a stepping stone for the main stage produc-

tions because you have the opportunity to build up experience with less of an audience and less pressure. From there, you can have a very seamless transition to main stage productions."

Senior and cohead Nora Sharma described the day-to-day activities of the club. "We have director applications and auditions at the beginning of each term. Anyone can apply to direct and anyone can audition for shows that are selected for the term. We have a 100 percent casting policy too! So, once shows are cast, it's up to the directors and casts to find a time for their shows to meet weekly to rehearse. At the end of the term, these shows perform during a show weekend."

Upper and cohead Emma Sordi discussed the job of the leaders of Dramat. "As coheads, we both facilitate making casts and we help them put on their show," she said. "That could mean doing lights during the show, it could mean helping with blocking, helping them to get people to show up, etc. Right now especially, we are really focusing on a commitment to put on student-written pieces. Andrew Gould is working on one right now, which is really exciting."

Sordi continued,

"Having that student-written element leads us to being able to do plays for free and it also allows us to have a workshopping process, which is something that a lot of other places don't really offer."

Leleux discussed how students are chosen for their respective roles in Dramat. "You're allowed to rank your priorities into what play you'll get sorted, but ultimately it's the director's decision."

Cheng explained, "There are different plays that students choose to direct and it's up to those directors to schedule when you want to meet. For example, I did a play in fall term and we met weekly for rehearsal. So, in every rehearsal, we would work on the script and the director would tell us how to act, where to move. Over time, we memorized the script and we ended up putting it on at the end of the term."

At the end of the term, Dramat hosts its own performance weekend wherein students can show their creations to the community at large. "It's in the black box room," lower Lilia Fecteau said. "All the students are invited down to the basement of Goel, and I think they advertise it on Instagram. Usually, they're roughly an hour long each, and there are often two or three pro-

ductions."

Sharma reflected, "I remember during my lower fall, I was in a show where lines had to be memorized. One of my scene partners forgot his lines, and so we had to improvise. I think this was the opening night, but it essentially became what Dramat calls a 'Sunday show.' They don't necessarily happen on Sunday, but essentially the last performance of a show is allowed to be sillier. There were lots of laughs from the audience, and I was really proud of our ability to get through that scene."

Lower Izyaan Burney discussed his experience in performing in Dramat. "I was in the play 'Help Desk,' directed by Kenza Madhi, in my prep fall. Being new to the school, it was a great opportunity for me to get familiar with the theater spaces on campus and to find people with similar interests."

Burney continued, "More recently, now that I've become more experienced in Dramat, I directed a show called 'Post-it Notes: Notes on Marriage' by Winnie Holzman this past fall."

As with any club, especially with one that relies heavily on student participation, it can be difficult to keep everything in line. "The biggest challenges are

honestly scheduling and commitment issues," Sharma commented. "Especially when there are large casts, it can be hard to find a time that works for everyone. Successful shows require everyone involved to show up to their rehearsals, and it can be really unfair to everyone involved when people flake. It's a risk we take though, so that we can maintain our 100 percent casting policy."

Sharma continued, "One challenge for the board and coheads is getting the rights to perform the shows we are doing. It's not difficult per se, but it's really important because that's how most of our shows get their scripts. However, some directors write their own shows, like the shows running this trimester!"

Ultimately, Dramat is beloved by all sorts of Exonians, representing all types of interests within the space of theater. "My favorite part of Dramat is the sense of community," Leleux said. "It brings students together to do what they love. There's a shared sense of vulnerability in acting in front of an audience and practicing it day-in and day-out, which really creates a bonding experience and fosters new friendships."

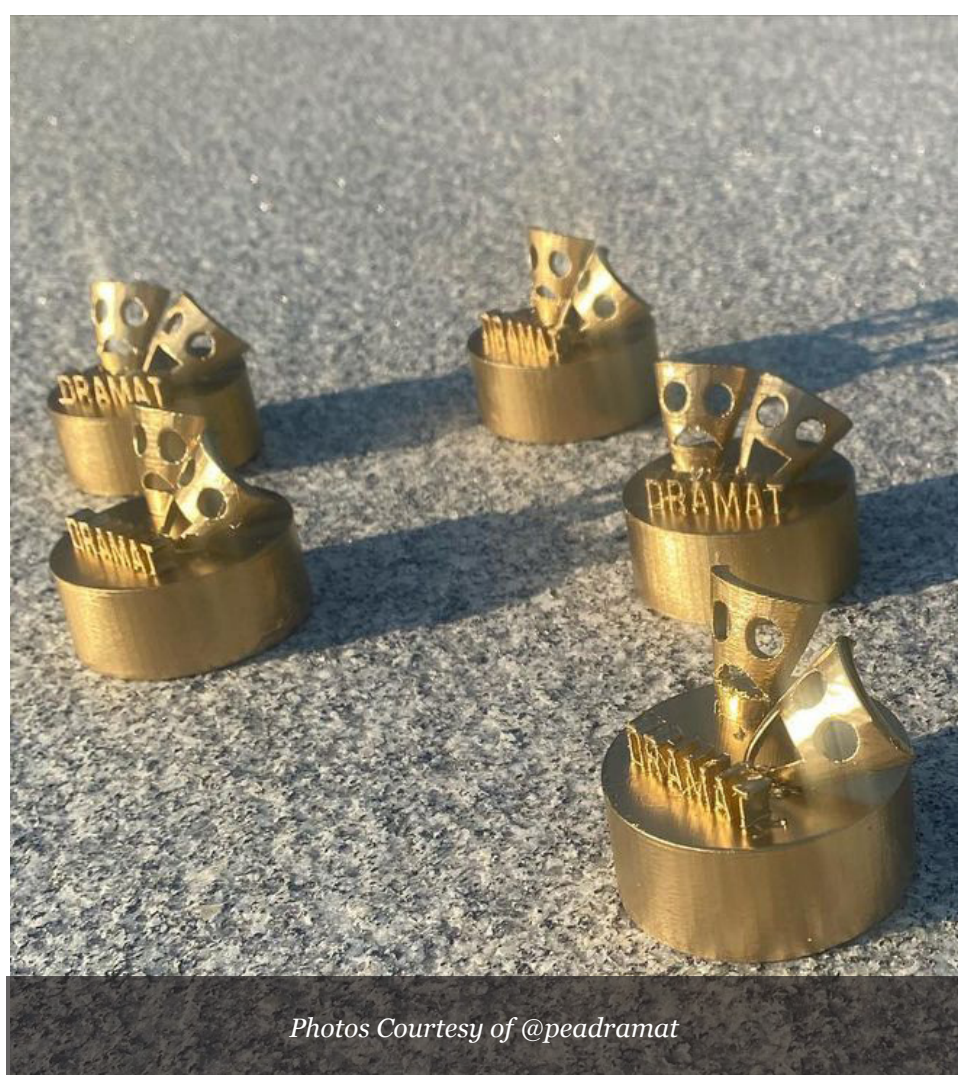
"It's the club where you can explore any aspect of theater—tech, directing, acting, licens-

ing, and even box office management," Sharma said.

Sordi reflected, "Theater has always been very important to me. I think what Dramat offers is a vehicle to do theater that isn't constrained to the sports block. You also don't necessarily have to sign up for a main stage production, which is a larger commitment. It's something completely student-led that allows each student to access their creative dreams in a club completely separate from their day-to-day classes."

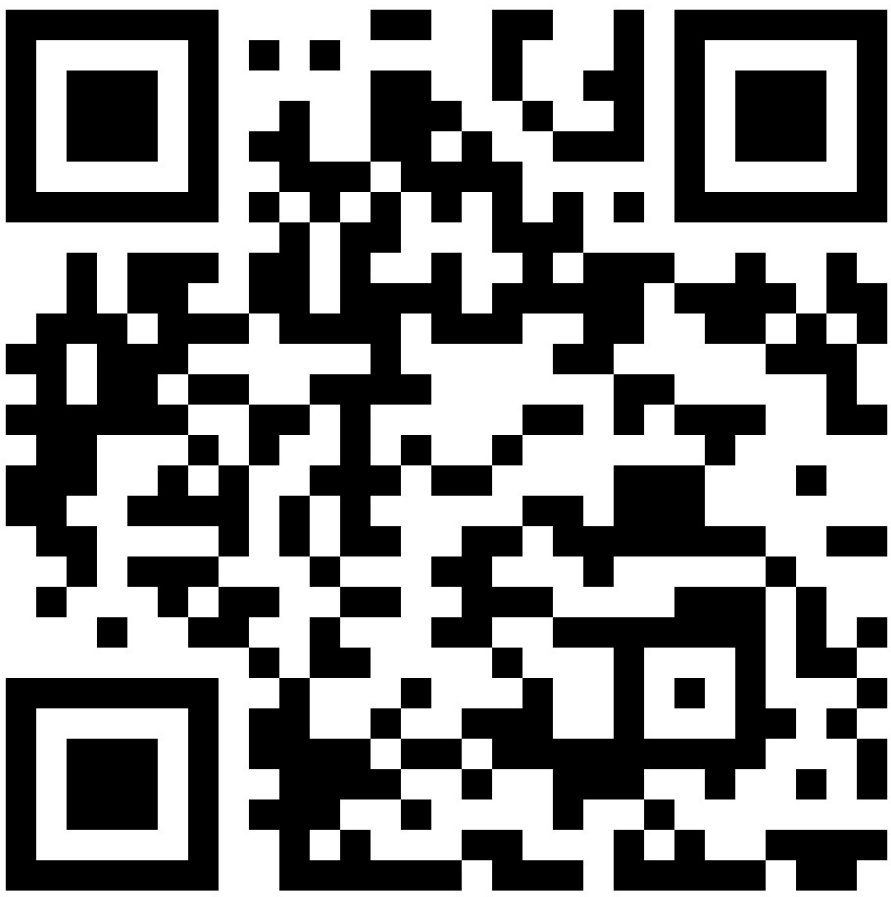
Leleux continued, "In a way, it's just like Harkness. Dramat is about putting yourself out there and being brave and having a presence. You simply have to work together with your fellow students to collaborate to reach a common goal. Building up the courage to voice your criticism and unique creative ideas is just as applicable to Dramat as it is to our everyday lives."

Sharma concluded, "Later in the year, we'll be planning the 'Dramademy's', Dramat's end-of-year Oscars-like award show, which we're really excited for! Anyone on the email list has the opportunity to vote for the winners and everyone is invited to watch the show. Also, remember to follow us on Instagram @peadramat!"




Photos Courtesy of @peadramat





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*The Exonian is launching a*



# YouTube

Our content will spotlight everything from dorms to sports teams to clubs and affinity spaces, all in an effort to foster community involvement. Viewers will get to know a variety of people on campus, including members of the administration, student council, and major clubs. We'll also cover Academy events throughout the school year—festivals, dance shows, concerts—and feature responses to fun campus questions from students and faculty.

Keep an eye out for our first video on  
**Sunday, April 28!**

## Economics Cont.

electric team dynamic,” Nagarajan continued. “Each one of us shows up to practice looking forward to learning and getting better.”

Nandan mentioned the influence of the club’s homegrown textbook. “Because Northwestern was less AP micro/macro, and placed more emphasis on external economics knowledge, we routinely drilled the Exeter Advanced Economics Textbook—it’s a textbook created by Exeter students (including Jack, Dhruv, Will, and Steven) that contains a majority of high-school-level economics concepts,” Nandan said. “It’s a great tool that the economics club uses to enrich our experience in the club, and it gets us prepared well for competition day.”

Co-head and senior William Grewal spoke about the scope of the club’s meetings, and the commitment that this win required. “Econ club holds curriculum meetings to go

over micro and macroeconomics is about 60 percent of what the competitions are. And then we also host a ton of curricular development and competition development on what we term the advanced side, which is more so economic history and a more thorough application of economic theory.”

Grewal continued, “Especially in the spring when most of the conferences are held, depending on your commitment level to the team, we’re meeting between a few hours to obviously a couple more hours each week.”

Club adviser and Instructor in History Aykut Killinc said, “They have been going through a pretty rigid, highly disciplined preparation process. I’d like to credit our co-heads, who have been working with junior members and preparing them for competition.”

For the competitors, this rigorous training began well before the first day of spring term. Perry

recalled, “We met every week leading up to the tournament, including throughout spring break over zoom, to practice quizzing each other.”

“While other people were enjoying their spring breaks, our team was studying economics,” Nandan said.

EEA’s broad and deep curriculum seems to have paved the way for a great future. “I really think we’ve created a formula for success here, which will allow us to maintain a strong advantage in future competitions,” Nagarajan described. “Northwestern is just the first accomplishment in what I’m confident will be a great season ahead.”

“It was a well-organized competition on a beautiful campus, with very solid and competitive students,” Killinc said. “At the end of the day, everyone was very happy and satisfied.”



From left to right: Adrian Mittal ‘25, Tanay Nandan ‘25, Jack Gordon ‘24, Eli Orbach ‘27, Dhruv Nagarajan ‘25, William Grewal ‘24, Steven Chen ‘25, Elle Perry ‘25

Courtesy of @exetereconomics



Photos Courtesy of @exeterkirtlandsociety



### Granite State Certamen Competition

On April 11, 2024, 14 members of Exeter’s Kirtland Society traveled to Southern New Hampshire University to attend the annual Granite State Certamen competition in Manchester, NH. The competition was a resounding success, with Exeter’s Novice Team winning second place and the Intermediate and Advanced Teams both winning first. In addition, lower Cecily Reed and upper Rishi Gurudevan both won the Most Valued Player (MVP) award in their respective levels.

**Novice Team (from left to right):**  
Jade Yoo ‘27, Han Yan ‘27, Leon Xie ‘27, XXX

**Intermediate Team (from left to right):**  
Ella Fang ‘27, Forrest Zeng ‘26, Cecily Reed ‘26, Jacques Leleux ‘25, Drona Gaddam ‘27

**Advanced Team (from left to right):**  
Sam Altman ‘26, Rishi Gurudevan ‘25, Jasper Chen ‘24, Jinmin Lee ‘26, Laura Saldarriaga ‘25

*Note: Jade Yoo, Forrest Zeng, Sam Altman, and Jinmin Lee are staff writers for The Exonian.*

### Worlds Individual Debating and Public Speaking Championship

On April 19, 2024, upper Emma Sordi placed second at WIPSC in the category of Impromptu Speaking. The competition was hosted at the Canberra Girls Grammar School in Canberra, Australia, and Sordi was a finalist of more than 100 competitors from different countries.



Photo Courtesy of @debaters.of.exeter

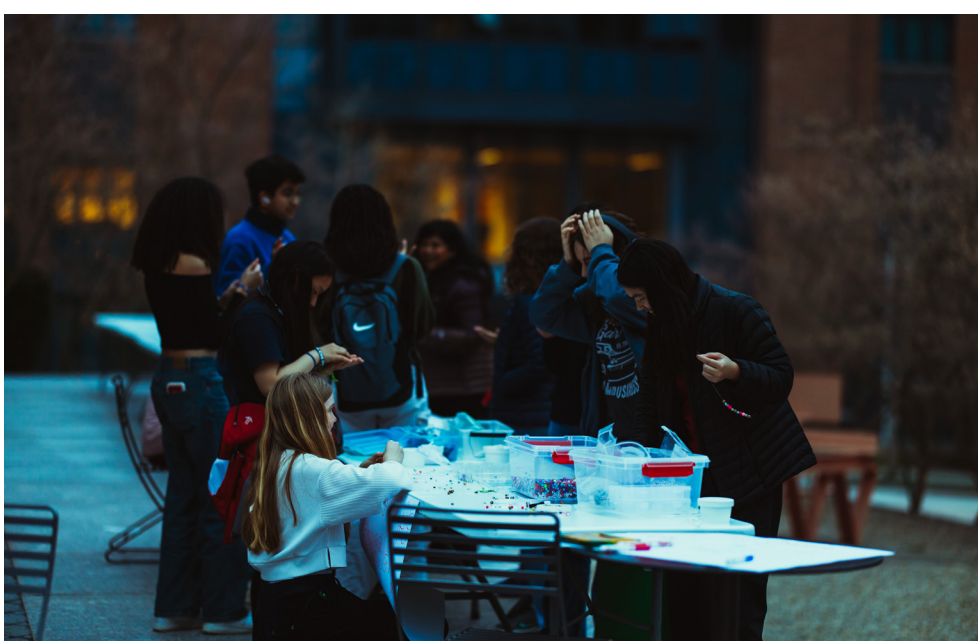
**Student Wins Around the World**



# TAKE BACK THE NIGHT

## April 12, 2024

Photography by  
AUSTIN DESISTO



By FORREST ZENG

On Friday, April 19, the Academy hosted its annual “Take Back The Night” event, dedicated to raising awareness and solidarity with survivors of sexual assault.

The event was inspired by the worldwide Take Back The Night movement to support those who have been harmed by sexual violence. Students could be seen on Friday evening attending the event on the

EPAC patio, where several clubs and athletic teams set up activities and booths. All boarding students were given tea lights to place in their windows as a symbol of collective solidarity. The Lamont Gallery additionally displayed the Clothesline Project, an exhibit of hung shirts with statements written on them by event participants.

From the Take Back The Night website, the movement “is the oldest worldwide movement to stand against sexual violence in all

forms.” The movement later spread to college campuses and to high school campuses such as the Academy.

“Take Back the Night is an annual event that Exonians Against Sexual Assault (EASA) has assisted in hosting for a few years now,” EASA co-head and senior Gigi Lannon said. “It is part of the schools celebration or acknowledgement of Sexual Assault Awareness Month.”

Participants were invited to contribute to the Clothesline Project, an organization

dedicated to raising awareness to sexual violence. Students created T-shirts in response to prompts that would be hung on a clothesline as a part of the Clothesline Project.

“This year is special because we have our own exhibit in the Lamont Gallery for the Clothesline Project,” Lannon described. “The Clothesline Project is something Exeter has done for a few years, where people can design their own shirts and then they are hung up. All of the coheads have state-

ments pasted in the gallery that describe why they like the event which I thought was cool.” The project is currently on display in the Lamont Gallery.

Various clubs and on-campus organizations contributed to the on-campus event. The event came a week after the Academy welcomed attendees to the Sexual Violence Awareness summit on April 12. “This year, we focused more of our time on the summit, but still had a bunch of clubs set up booths and people came

and walked around,” Lannon said.

“The booths were very low key, and to me, it felt like they were able to communicate people’s struggles with sexual violence in novel and interesting ways,” lower Truman Yee said. “I appreciate any chance to learn, especially when it puts victims’ voices at the forefront of discussion. Showing my support for this event was a no-brainer.”



## » SOCIAL MEDIA

Read lower Alex Lim and prep Julia Zhou's commentary on social media, 11.

## » STUDENT GRAFFITI

Read lower Sam Altman and Jinmin Lee's interpretation of graffiti, 12.

## » ECLIPSE DAY

Read prep William Inoue's opinion on students' eclipse prophecies, 12.

## How Was Marx Wrong?

By FORREST ZENG '26

The title of this piece might seem strange. It's normal to ask why someone is wrong. But how? It's a different question, how someone is wrong. You can be wrong in many different ways. Maybe you are wrong due to a logical fallacy. Maybe because of personal bias. Or maybe due to something benign, like an accidental typo on a data sheet.

The way Karl Marx was wrong is much more sinister. Marx fell victim to a tantalizing psychological

trap. Marx's simplification of history, Marx modified Hegel's ideas slightly, but kept the core elements of his philosophy the same. Like Hegel, Marx believed that history had an endpoint—except Marx believed material factors influenced history. Marx was a historical materialist who reduced history to the conflicts and compromises between material factors. He concluded that history would end with all material resources, including the means of production, distributed equally among all people. And Marx's argument

was not a Marxian revolution, but a progressive revolution. Just like Hegel, he believed history evolved towards an endpoint. But even though Fukuyama's end was different from Marx's end, he still fell into the exact same trap. Modern philosophical discourse has found doubt in liberal democracy's stability and strength. For example, although it has faced challenges, China's bureaucratic political system is as effective as America's liberal democracy. However, the topic of whether Fukuyama is correct is a larger discus-

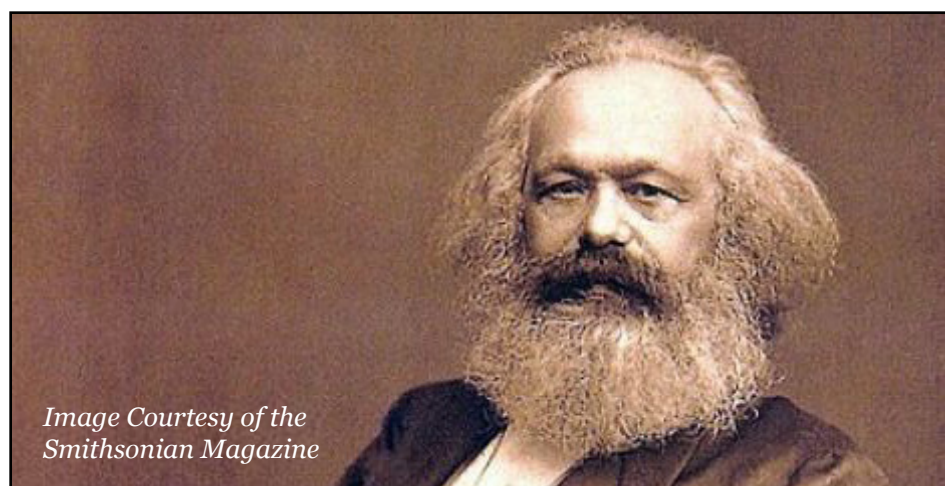


Image Courtesy of the Smithsonian Magazine

trap. I will show you that Marx is not the only victim of this trap. In fact, every thinker will eventually face this philosophical pitcher plant. This is the trap of historical reductionism.

"A specter is haunting Europe—the specter of Communism" were the chilling words that opened Karl Marx's and Friedrich Engels' "The Manifesto of the Communist Party," more commonly known as "The Communist Manifesto." Written in 1848, the manifesto was not a philosophical treatise as many believe—but a history book describing events that had not yet actually happened. See, the "Communist Manifesto" was written as a prophecy, a prediction of an inevitable, world-shattering proletariat revolution that would bring an end to all class divides, once and for all. But although Marx and Engels were so confident in their prediction, they were just as wrong.

Marx was deeply inspired by the German philosopher George Hegel. Hegel is what philosophers call a historical idealist. In other words, Hegel believed that historical forces were primarily the confluences of popular ideas. From this viewpoint, he developed a historical theory called Hegel's Dialectic. In Hegel's Dialectic, the interaction of popular ideas forms the bulk of the historical process. In other words, the conflicts and compromises of different ideas are what make up history. He called this complex mesh of ideas "Geist," German for "thought."

Hegel believed that eventually, "Geist," ideas and anti-ideas, would converge into one, singular stable point. At some point, there will be enough division, enough compromise, enough of history itself. Hegel argued that it was only a matter of time until history itself ended in some perfect, stable state.

This is where Marx comes in. Inspired by He-

gel's simplification of history, Marx modified Hegel's ideas slightly, but kept the core elements of his philosophy the same. Like Hegel, Marx believed that history had an endpoint—except Marx believed material factors influenced history. Marx was a historical materialist who reduced history to the conflicts and compromises between material factors. He concluded that history would end with all material resources, including the means of production, distributed equally among all people. And Marx's argument

makes great sense: a classist economic system like capitalism is necessarily unstable. So, capital would eventually spread out, and class divides would disappear. This is what Marx and Engels outlined in their manifesto. But Marx and Engels were wrong. See Hegel's dialectic is a brilliant device—for framing history, not predicting it, as Marx and Engels did. This is because Hegel was a reductionist. Reductionism is the practice of reducing complex phenomena into simple, broad systems. Hegel reduced history to a "dialect" of ideas, as if history was a math problem. By extension, Marx reduced the metaphysical (history) to the physical (material wealth).

It's clear that Marx and Hegel were wrong. There has been no lasting communist utopia, and there probably will never be. Plenty of ink has been spilled explaining why Marx was wrong: all explanations center around the factors Marx neglected: human ambition, non-materialist influences, to name a few. The world is a lot more than what Marx's beautiful theory made it to be. Marxism is a fantasy in the face of the world's true complexity.

Any reductionist risks falling into a trap. Reductionism is like the beautiful red pitcher plant, which uses sweet nectar to tempt insects into a deep cavity, where they are digested. Similarly, reductionism makes for a beautiful philosophy. Who doesn't want to believe that history is as simple and beautiful as math? Which philosopher would shy away from the mystical, the mesmerizing and the poetic? Few, I suppose.

It's fair to say that historical reductionism is not limited to Marx and Hegel. In the book "The End of History And The Last Man," American political scientist Francis Fukuyama argued that the end of histo-

ry was not a Marxian revolution, but a progressive revolution. Just like Hegel, he believed history evolved towards an endpoint. But even though Fukuyama's end was different from Marx's end, he still fell into the exact same trap. Modern philosophical discourse has found doubt in liberal democracy's stability and strength. For example, although it has faced challenges, China's bureaucratic political system is as effective as America's liberal democracy. However, the topic of whether Fukuyama is correct is a larger discus-

sion. The point is that history is much more complex than Marx or Fukuyama make it to be.

In fact, philosophers and historians love making dramatic claims about the end of history. Every time, they say that all previous predictions were wrong. They promise that this time, history really is ending. Marx predicted that communism was the end of history. When that failed, Fukuyama predicted that liberal democracy would be the end of history. Now, some scholars argue that there is only one more step beyond progressive democracy. The philosopher Yuval Noah Harari, for instance, argues that the "true" end of history will be when humans lose "relevance." He argues that technology, such as artificial intelligence, will eventually know humanity better than humanity does itself. Only then, will history actually end. I have even been a reductionist. I recently wrote an article ("Creativity After AI") about the advent of artificial intelligence, and made a reductionist claim that AI would destroy all human creativity. To the edge of the reductionist pitcher plant and you'll risk getting caught by the tantalizing philosophical promises it provides.

Let's pause for a minute. I just proposed that all historians and philosophers are reductionists, and that reductionism is always a negative thing. An astute reader might realize that that claim about reductionism is actually reductionist in itself! My meta-analysis of philosophy is no less reductionist than Hegel's meta-analysis of history! Should this ironic and paradoxical article belong in the humor section instead of in the Op-Ed section? That's up to the reader to decide.

The conclusion is clear, though. Reductionism might be a good way to analyze a complex phenomenon such as history. It might not be the best way to predict it.

## Can We Cooperate with Russia?

By JOSEPH KIM '26

It is no secret that Russia and the United States have been rivals for decades. However, upon the growing threat of hostile Chinese economic and military actions around the world, some Americans, including many prominent politicians, have begun to advocate for conciliatory relations with the Russian Federation in order to focus on our greatest rival, China. Former presidential candidate Vivek Ramaswamy said in his speech at the Nixon Presidential Library in August that "the Russia-China alliance represents the single greatest military threat that we face in the U.S. today." He suggested giving Russia portions of Ukraine and resuming economic trade with Russia in return for removing nuclear weapons from Kaliningrad and ceasing their partnership with China. In a rally in South Carolina in February, Donald Trump declared that NATO members who do not meet the quota of 2 percent of GDP on their military would not be protected by the United States and that he would even encourage Russia to "do whatever the hell they want." In other words, a Russian invasion may become the punishment for failure to contribute fairly to the alliance's collective security. In light of these statements from prominent politicians, an obvious question comes to mind: Would cooperation with Russia advance American interests? In what situation could the United States reasonably take a hand off of Russia and

mere starting point in amicable diplomatic relations between Russia and the United States. Cooperation can only begin if both parties no longer conceive of each other as a national threat.

Russia's military buildup in Eastern Europe and a potentially dangerous arsenal of missiles and nuclear weapons (Russia possesses more nuclear weapons than even the United States) naturally cause distrust from neighboring European countries. If Russia desires to rebuild European and American trust, the Russian leadership must agree to reduce military presence in outreaching stretches of its sphere of influence. Perhaps the most threatening piece of Russian territory is Kaliningrad Oblast, a slice of Baltic land between Lithuania and Poland. The Russian Army, Navy, and Air Force have developed a strong presence in this enclave. There are many more Russian troops guarding the borders of Kaliningrad with Lithuania and Poland than there are NATO forces along the same borders. Ramaswamy's call for the removal of nuclear weapons from Kaliningrad previously mentioned is meaningless. In the regrettable scenario of a global nuclear war, Russian nuclear capabilities reach over 10,000 miles, meaning that Russia can already target any location in the Northern Hemisphere, regardless of Kaliningrad. Rather, the demilitarization of conventional forces in Kaliningrad would make a great difference in alleviating European fear and distrust of Russia. Demanding general demil-

move its military forces from Ukraine, Georgia, and Kaliningrad, and allow democratization of neighboring Belarus. Only with these minimal concessions can the United States and its allies develop enough trust in Russia to enter an alliance with it. In return, Russia could resume normal trade with the United States and its allies. These are not extreme demands. These bare necessities do not aim to make Russia vulnerable; the purpose of these demands is to secure the safety of NATO republics, which would immediately improve relations between Russia and the Western world.

However, Putin and the Russian government are no fools; they will not freely hand over influence to the United States and its NATO allies. Agreeing to any one of these peaceful demands loses Russian leverage on the United States and NATO, which Putin desperately needs. Putin prioritizes power over the West over partnership with the West. The only way the current Russian government would agree to enter cooperative, cordial relations with the United States and its European allies is if Russia turns all ex-Soviet republics into buffer states by establishing diplomatic and military dominance over the region. As Secretary of State Antony Blinken stated, "Putin, for years, sought to divide the West from the rest, claiming that Russia was advancing the best interests of the developing world." The United States must not be fooled by this old Russian lie. Although collaboration with Russia would theoret-



Image Courtesy of the U.S. Embassy and Consulates in Russia

build friendly relations?

In the next several years, I believe that the United States should only cooperate with Russia under conditions that significantly reduce the Russian threat to international stability. This goal can only be achieved if the Russian government agrees to certain criteria that put them in a less threatening position. The most threatening Russian actions are those of foreign military occupation. First and foremost, Russia must agree to fully withdraw from occupied territories in Ukraine and Georgia as a baseline for discussions of friendly bilateral relations with the United States. Russian violation of Ukrainian sovereignty with the annexation of Crimea in 2014, support for separatist groups in Donetsk and Luhansk, and the flagrant full-scale invasion of Ukraine are more than enough to scar American-Russian relations. Russian occupation of Abkhazia and South Ossetia also threatens the sovereignty of a potential NATO and future EU member state, thus further alienating Russia from the United States. However, a withdrawal from Ukraine and Georgia is a

itization of Russian land, naval, and air forces in Kaliningrad Oblast would bring Eastern Europe a step closer to peace, as Russian forces would no longer threaten the land connection between Poland and the Baltic republics or threaten the security of the Baltic Sea.

Another consistent trouble for American allies in Eastern Europe is the Lukashenko dictatorship in Belarus. In addition to numerous scandals, false elections, and international incidents, the Belarussian government has aided Poland by intentionally creating a migrant crisis on their shared border and has served as a staging ground for the initial Russian attempt to capture Kyiv. In order to secure European security and the freedom of the Belarussian people, Russia, as Belarus' primary partner, must agree to restore Belarus to popular order—or more realistically, to a somewhat democratic government. Although direct Russian cooperation against Lukashenko would not be necessary, Russia should at the very least not militarily inhibit NATO efforts to return free elections to Belarus.

In all, Russia must re-

ally allow a concentration of American efforts against China, the risks of a stab-in-the-back from an untrustworthy ally are too significant to undertake. Because of the unfortunate reality of the differences in national interests of NATO and the Russian Federation, the two powers cannot be allies in the current world.

As President Biden declared on NATO's 75th anniversary, "Now, like generations before us, we must choose to protect this progress and build on it. We must remember that the sacred commitment we make to our Allies—to defend every inch of NATO territory—makes us safer too, and gives the United States a bulwark of security unrivaled by any other nation in the world." Americans must understand that any alliance with the United States is a privilege. Rather than the United States appeasing and giving in to demands, Russia must take the initiative to establish friendly relations with the United States by offering reasonable concessions in good faith.



# How Humor on Social Media Pushes Moral and Social Boundaries



Image Courtesy of FE News

By ALEX LIM '26 and JULIA ZHOU '27

Physical attractiveness is a social construct that has long shaped the way we view ourselves and others. The aesthetic beauty of one's appearance has always been a defining factor that drives feelings in life like love, trust, and happiness. Now, with modern emphasis on social media, people with conventionally exceptional levels of beauty have experienced patterns of being catapulted into extraordinary levels of fame and wealth thanks to their appearances. Especially in the age of platforms like Instagram and TikTok, where content can be launched to screens all across the planet, it's so easy to amass an enormous following or a great deal of affluence due to an appearance.

Just recently, a number of young women have experienced this phenomenon of gaining a great deal of attention due to their aesthetic appeal. For example, 23-year-old Leah Halton was recently introduced to fame after a TikTok video she posted of herself lip-synching to YG Marley's "Praise Jah in the Moonlight" went viral, amassing nearly 600 million views and nearly 50 million likes as of April 14, 2024—numbers uncharacteristic even for TikTok's over one billion monthly active users. In the same vein, 16-year-old Anna Frey was recently thrust into fame by her beauty and resemblance to 49ers quarterback Brock Purdy, and has gained two million followers on TikTok following a series of TikTok videos on user @kitch\_mimball's account. Eight out of the user's top nine most popular videos feature Frey, the most popular of which has been

viewed 25 million times and features over two million likes.

The newfound stardom experienced by these young women has manifested in a variety of ways: Frey was invited to the Super Bowl in February, and Halton has grown an audience of over seven million users—each of her videos gaining millions upon millions of views overnight.

Another less positive facet of their celebrity status seems to be the immense amount of jealousy and hate that plagues their comment sections. Responses to Halton's video are filled with comments like, "She's not even that attractive" or "She doesn't deserve 50 million likes based on her looks alone." Disturbingly, recent trends on social media have revolved around comparing oneself or other female celebrities to Anna Frey, often in a derogatory manner, often labeling Frey as "average" or "mid" in comparison. Additionally, a troubling trend in comment sections involves elevating the appearance of one teenage girl with remarks like, "she's way prettier than Anna Frey or that other girl who went viral."

It's disheartening to witness the rise of a culture that supposedly celebrates the appearances of these women while simultaneously tearing them down based on that same appearance following their ascension to fame. The comments sections of these platforms have become breeding grounds for jealousy and negativity. This not only perpetuates harmful beauty standards but also fosters an environment where women are encouraged to compete with each other rather than support and uplift one another. There seems to be a double standard that cel-

brates women for their beauty but also tears them down for not being notable for another reason other than their appearance. Women never seem to be seen as deserving of fame or a platform.

What's particularly concerning is the normalization of this behavior. Trends that involve comparing and ranking women based on their looks only serve to reinforce the damaging notion that a woman's worth is determined by her physical attractiveness.

If we truly want to empower women, let's reject this pattern of comparison and instead focus on celebrating the diverse strengths that women bring to the table. More attention should be brought to the platform Halton has created on YouTube, gaining over one million subscribers thanks to her devotion to her content creation. More attention could be brought to Frey's talent as a tennis powerhouse.

We must recognize that every woman is worthy of respect, regardless of how closely she conforms to society's narrow standards of beauty. In addition, the idea that it's shameful for a woman to gain fame solely for her appearance is harmful, because it perpetuates the idea that women are nothing more than pretty faces. We can refute the idea that someone's appearance isn't all that special by recognizing how special every single woman is.

Rather than tearing each other down, let's build each other up. Let's support and encourage one another with respect to our passions and potential. Let's celebrate the beauty of every woman. Let's find joy in the spotlight being pointed on others.

# Faith, Fashion, and the Coquettification of Catholicism

By ADELE MAMEDOVA '25

Over this past Christmas break, I got baptized.

Growing up in a household with divergent religions—my mom an Orthodox Christian, my dad a Muslim—I was naturally raised agnostic. Religion was a topic rarely broached in our family discussions, up until recently, when my mom found her way back into spirituality and began deeply reading the Bible. So there I was, recently flown back home on Dec. 18, when, in conversation, my mom asked me: "Adele, what do you think about getting baptized?" At first, I laughed, thinking it was a joke. I wasn't Christian, so why would I consider baptism? But as the idea percolated in my mind, I began to see it in a different light. I didn't have anything to lose, at least by Blaise Pascal's standards, anyway. At best, I would finally be cleansed of my original sins (and all the ones I'd racked up in my seventeen years), and avoid Limbo. With this in mind, I went to the Church with my mom where I spoke to the pastor and assured him I wasn't being forced into baptism and I memorized Matthew 6:9-13.

Then, I got to go shopping. First, I needed a cross necklace. I wanted something simple and beautiful—a piece I could wear everyday. One cross had small purple gems, and although it was pretty I didn't think it would go well with a red shirt, and another with green gems would look ridiculous if I decided to wear yellow despite the color clashing with my color palette. I ended up going for a small but ornate silver cross on a pastel blue rope. At first glance, it appears simple, but a closer squint reveals Jesus with his arms pinned to the cross. Next, I needed a new white dress to symbolize my new, sin-free beginning. After two shops and dozens of aisles, I finally spotted a dress that was both cute and passed the fingertip rule (a rare find!), and was already thinking about how perfect it would work as a beach coverup in the summer.

Subconsciously, I think I got baptized for the Lana Del Rey Christian Coquette Girl aesthetic. But at the time, my reasoning for the baptism was rooted in my belief in Christian values—love, forgiveness, honesty, and more. I had never truly practiced Christianity, so how could I know if it was right for me without giving it a try? And so, I did try. I read Bible verses with my Mom, prayed occasionally, forgave some people who probably didn't deserve it, and tried to love my enemies. Yet, when asked if I be-

lieve in a God, I still find myself uncertain.

But questioning my spirituality is something I can do on my own time. I want to discuss this Lana Del Rey Christian Coquette Girl aesthetic. What is it? Where did it come from, and why was I, along with thousands of others, drawn to it? This aesthetic is a blend of Catholic symbolism and coquettish charm, a style that is characterized by the appropriation of Catholic icons like crosses, rosaries, and imagery of saints. This style began gaining prominence back in the late 1980s, when Madonna released her "Like a Prayer" music video, which used plenty of religious imagery, and played on themes of sexuality and redemption. Women at the time loved Madonna for her fierce unapologeticness, and many wanted to emulate her style. The modern version of this aesthetic gained momentum following the 2018 Met Gala, themed "Heavenly

hibited the most religious accessories in the history of high fashion, including baroque shoes and cross earrings. Most high-end designers like these are Italian, and there is a certain aspect of sincerity in making these collections with beautiful religious imagery.

Fast-fashion's adoption of this #catholicaesthetic, however, often feels cheapened, bordering on trashy. "Praying" is a clothing label run by two men, which makes mainly designs with this aesthetic in mind. From their Father, Son, and Holy Spirit bikini to their Hail Mary dress, this brand makes clothes that sexualize women, and particularly preys on the theme of women's innocence. The #catholicaesthetic is all about softness, sexiness, and submission, which is why Lana Del Rey is often tied to this Catholic aesthetic, as her music holds a tone of docility. Starting with 2021 and going into 2024, anything from pas-



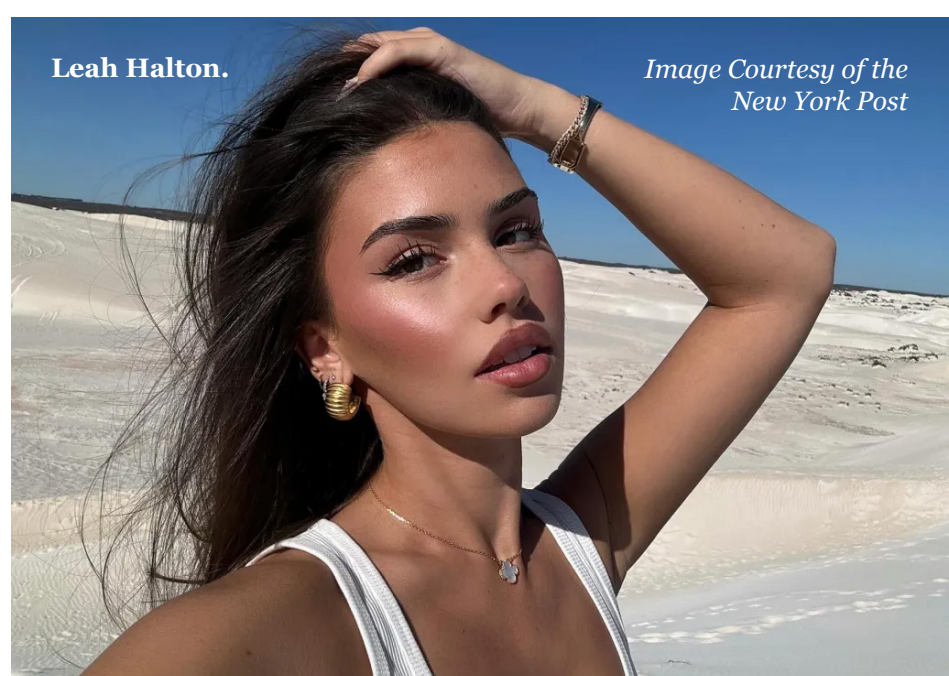
Image Courtesy of etsy.com

Bodies: Fashion and the Catholic Imagination," and most recently, the rise of figures like Lana Del Rey and Bella Hadid have further fueled this strange, almost fetishization, of Catholicism.

The allure of Catholic iconography has found its way into the wardrobes of many who may not subscribe to the faith but find beauty and maybe meaning in its symbols. However, this is done on different levels. High fashion designers, such as Chanel, Versace, and Dolce & Gabbana have incorporated Catholic elements into their collections, but most of these designs pay homage to the beauty and opulence of the Catholic Church. Coco Chanel spent her youth in the Aubazine Abbey, and learned to sow while living in that orphanage. It has been noticed that she reused the slim straight cut of nuns' dresses in making the iconic little black dress, sometimes adding a white collar. Versace's 1991-1992 collection featured a biker jacket with a bejeweled Mary and an infant Jesus on the back, and their Fall 1997 show featured cross necklaces and Byzantine cross embellishments on clothing. In 2013, Dolce & Gabbana's Fall collection ex-

cel blues, lace, slip dresses, cross necklaces, catholic schoolgirl uniforms, rosary beads, ribbons, and baby tees with religious idioms on them, has become seen as "coquette." People have started to appropriate Catholic culture as a 'vibe.'

This leads me to my final question: is it okay to wear Catholic-inspired fashion? Some view that Christianity, being a dominant religion with a history of oppression, cannot be appropriated. Many Catholics, on the other hand, have expressed outrage over what I've described, labeling Madonna's music video as "blasphemous," and over 600 people gathering outside the MET exhibit to protest against their yearly theme in 2018. My own stance mirrors my uncertainty about religion itself. I'm torn between seeing this trend as a trivialization of deeply held beliefs and traditions, and viewing it as a form of appreciation that teeters on the edge of appropriation. In planning for my baptism, was it misguided to select a cross necklace adorned with white diamond-like gems, chosen not only for their spiritual significance, but for their ability to harmonize my wardrobe?



Leah Halton.

Image Courtesy of the New York Post



## What Student Graffiti in the Library Carrels Tells Us About Mental Health

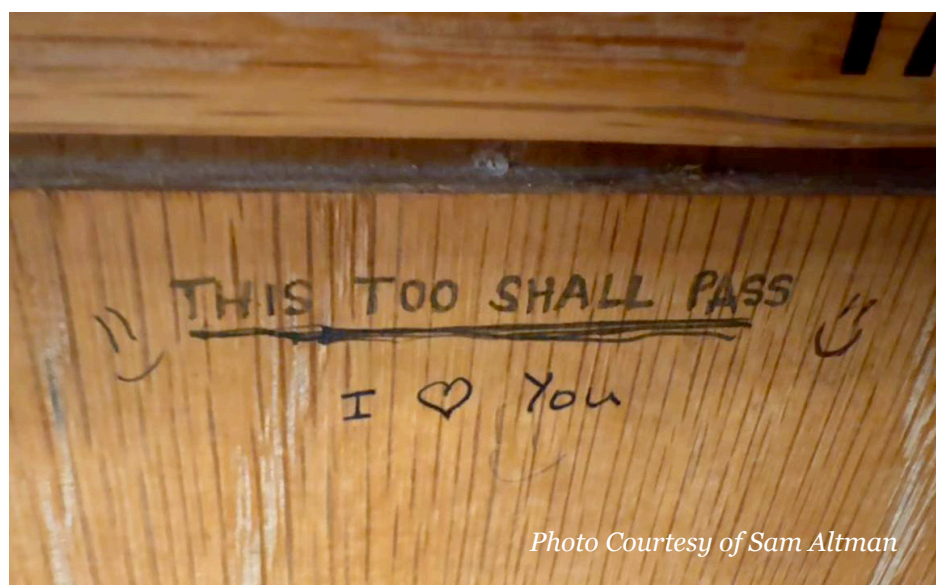


Photo Courtesy of Sam Altman

By SAM ALTMAN and JINMIN LEE

Many Exonians—day students and boarders—go to the library to study. As we all know well, studying often comes with anxiety, which culminates in desperate times of tests and papers and labs. How do Exonians deal with stress? Scrolling online? Talking to friends? Asking upperclassmen for advice? Or etching what comes first to mind into the library walls?

There is a myriad of student graffiti etched into library carrels; we pass over the fact that such harm to private property is vandalism and tackle these two questions. Are there any themes and patterns to what students say? Should the school make an effort to remove this graffiti? Because people inscribe words anonymously in times of most genuine revelation or desperation, examining the content on the walls gives insight into the unfiltered student mind.

As we walked through the corridors of floors 2M and 3M of the library, we noticed three notable recurring themes: self-affirmation (or lack thereof), self-identity (or lack thereof), and vulgar dumping.

**First, on self-affirmation.** Anyone who has been lucky enough to sit in the right sort of study carrel in the library knows that there are often words of encouragement inscribed into the wood. Common occurrences were “U r loved” and “You’re doing amazing,” often circumscribed by one or several red hearts. In some cases, phrases appear that simply encourage the reader to keep pushing. “Grind” appeared several times.

Still, many provide ominous words of warnings, usually referencing upper year. One inscription read, “Quit before upper year.” Another traced a correspondence between two separate people (presumably over a longer period of time): (Writer #1) “F\*ck you, upper year” → (Writer #2) “You’ll survive” → (Writer #1) “I didn’t.” Perhaps the most common engraving, though, had to do with simple and plain dejection. One read “depression,” another, “I’m lonely,” and

another, “I want to go home.” They were all followed (presumably by different writers) by an emphatic “SAME.”

Sometimes, we find much longer messages. One such message read, “I’m currently having a mental breakdown because 1. I have so much homework 2. I do not know how to do said homework 3. I like someone and don’t know what to do about it 4. I hate someone and don’t know what to do about it.” One can only imagine the lonely Exonian writing these things as they are weighed down by a thousand different stressors, connecting with letters on a wall, the only place on the whole campus, it can feel like, that echoes their true feelings.

These instances illustrate how, despite the teenage desire to shun such blatant positivity, Exonians need more positive reminders to continue with their lives. This pattern also demonstrates how the library’s effort to place big banners with positive affirmations such as “this too shall pass” and “I am valuable” are effective ways to support the student body.

**Secondly, on self-identity.** Exonians often write down their sports activities, dorms, and other communities they are part of. “Ewald,” “Amen,” and “Abbot Hall” were observed. What might have been the most common finding through our whole experiment were the many series of initials—some indicating a relationship—that were written down, usually accompanied by the graduation year of the student. These examples depict how being in communities is a reliable way students cope with anxiety. The impact of this understanding is that students should often be aware of how even the smallest dorm events, club meetings, and sports practices could be a stabilizing pillar for another student; don’t treat these activities so lightly.

**Thirdly, on vulgarity.** Students write random, unprocessed words containing profane language and insults. There are often references to sexual imagery or anger toward someone or something. Without being too vulgar ourselves here, many students sim-

ply used curse words to express their frustration with a specific teacher, class, or piece of homework. “Sports suck” and various verbal attacks against the famous 333 paper were found.

The most common transcriptions in this category, though, were phrases referring to sexual vulgarity or meaningless jokes you might read in an online article. This phenomenon is akin to what psychologist Sigmund Freud would call the id. Freud believed everyone had this id, an innate and powerful will to pleasure, which was the foundation for all human desire. This id, according to Freud, is often suppressed by the human mind, which is called the ego. For instance, many people choose to control their brutish, perhaps sexual language in public. Freud claimed this ego was controlled by the superego, which is a synonym for societal conventions or morality. [elaborate more]. Clearly, the ego breaks down in times of desperation and reveals the true id of students. For instance, the id could beg an Exonian to gossip about someone else or complain about homework. However, the id would be suppressed by the ego and superego that deem these qualities to be unfit. However, the id proliferates with flying colors in the library, which only happens if people are truly despairing, and if people are without shame (they are anonymous).

The Academy needs to note that students are actively struggling. These inscriptions are a frozen piece of history, a relic that provides a rare non-filtered student perspective. They are not the cause of a problem at the Academy, but a result of one. Indeed, the purpose of this essay is not necessarily to prescribe something for the Academy to do—we all know there are prevalent mental health issues—but rather, this phenomenon should serve as yet another wake-up call. We can only do so much to describe what it all looks like in-person, but if you ever need to remind yourself how all too many Exonians feel below the surface, you need only go to the library and read what everyone is too afraid to say out loud.

## Eclipse Day. What was all the hype about?

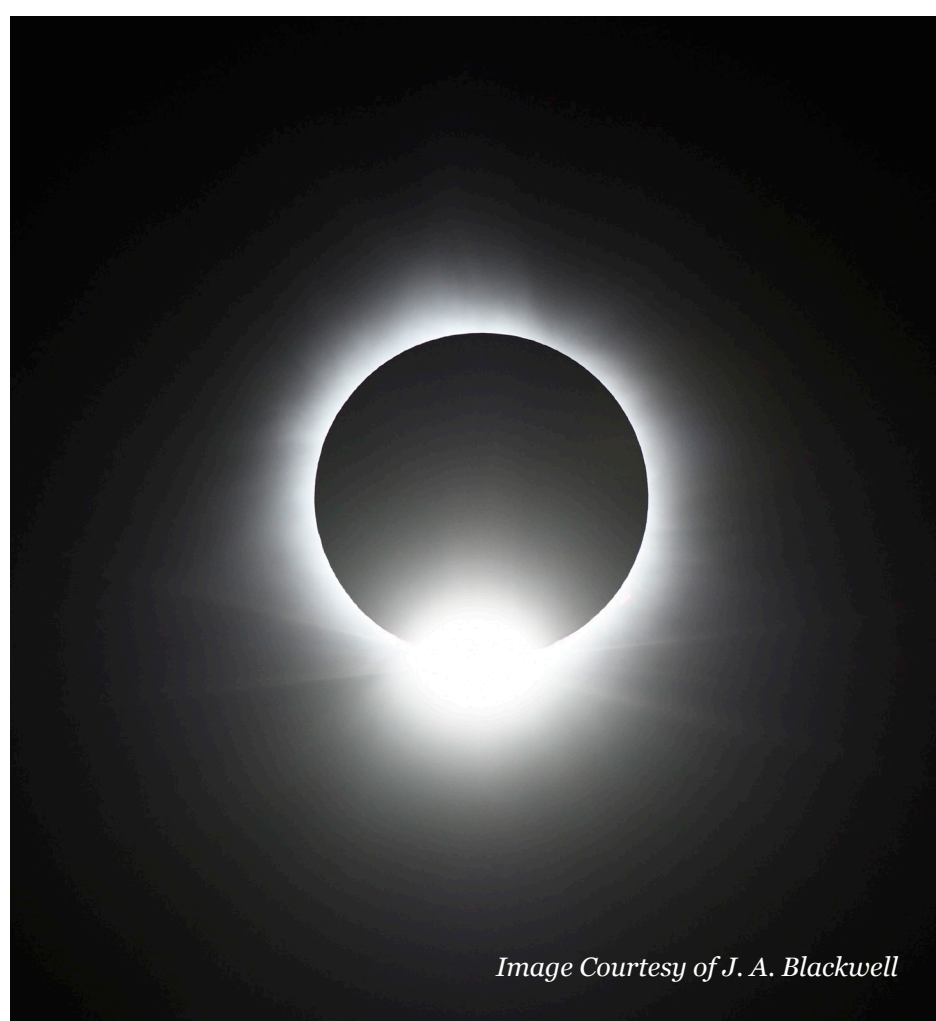


Image Courtesy of J. A. Blackwell

By WILLIAM INOUE ‘27

It doesn’t matter if you open Instagram or TikTok; the topic of the solar eclipse is always at the top. Throughout history, we have always regarded the solar eclipse in various ways. Some saw it as a curse bestowed upon them by god; others saw it as a blessing. Yet, what is consistent is the importance of the solar eclipse to people. On April 8, continental America was in the path of totality. The last time this happened was in 2017; the next would be in 2044. It is because the fact that the next eclipse will be in 21 years in the United States generated so much excitement around the eclipse that everyone, including their dogs, rushed into the path of totality. Some claim this is a once-in-a-lifetime event, while the next lunar eclipse is next year, and the next solar eclipse in two years, which will hit a large portion of Europe. Yet, this raises the question of whether the complication of attempting to view the solar eclipse in its totality is all worth it.

Schools from Texas to New Hampshire had early releases or an entire day off for the eclipse, citing many reasons: for example, it may be dangerous for students to commute as they expect heavy traffic and potential danger by looking directly at the sun. Phillips Exeter Academy chose to do none of that and remained adamant about its decision to persist in school. There was no reason for Exeter to cancel school as there was no danger of traffic or people injuring themselves. However, students were deeply disappointed about the decision. There were countless (91) petitions to the deans to leave campus to experience the totality, as on campus it only reached 96 percent. When the deans denied these petitions, numerous people discussed possible methods

to bypass it by fatiguing classes to travel. This strong desire to see this solar eclipse, although it would occur again in two years when most students would have much more freedom, is something we can all relate to.

The back-and-forth between students and the school continued, as no one had any luck organizing a legal petition to attend the total solar eclipse. Everyone thought the situation was out of luck until [the senior who is the former Student Council] forged a pseudoreligion, “Besselian Truth.” This was the winning card, as the senior found a way to email the entire school and gained momentum in his attempt to seek a legal loophole. He successfully made the school accept select petitions to join the mass, traveling to Vermont to see the totality.

Frankly, to me, this entire situation had no meaning. There should be no reason to stop school for a whole day for something that someone can experience more than once. If one were to have the day off for some reason, no one could dictate what they did with it. However, students’ duty is to attend classes and adhere to the school’s rules and guidelines.

What fueled this already raging fire was the pseudoreligion created by the senior. In his email to the entire student body, he wrote, “Become a believer in the Besselian Truth and argue for your spiritual freedom to observe the Day of Obscuration as was foretold by the Prophecy of the Eighth.” He would also claim, “Together, we can aggressively lobby the administration for freedom.” It is hard to find the religious claims serious when the senior claims that missing a full day of classes is our “freedom.” To add insult to injury, some parents would hop onto this bandwagon, claiming their spiritual right to view the solar eclipse.

It is not. While I am not religious, I am understanding and compassionate about others’ religions. However, creating the “Besselian Truth” was a malicious and deliberate act to take advantage of Exeter’s role in accepting all religious beliefs. It is a malevolent attempt by the senior to get what he wants by any means necessary. It is even worse that some parents do not see the disruptive nature of missing an entire day of class and supporting their child in this. It should be the adults’ responsibility to reason with the students and guide them to realize that the entire “Besselian Truth” only exists to take advantage of the school’s rules.

To Exeter, this issue may extend beyond missing a day of classes to safety concerns. A group of students in my dorm drove to Vermont to view the eclipse in its totality. They left the school at around 10:30 a.m. and returned at 3:00 a.m. the next morning. They spent almost 17 hours away from school, supervised and supported by teachers. I understand petitions and Orah passes allow the school to distance itself from the responsibility, yet as a boarding school, Exeter still values its students’ safety.

That being said, the eclipse was not entirely negative. I want to mention the surrealness of the eclipse while it was occurring. Everything that was supposed to be bright was dark, and the day felt strange. It was an interesting experience, even at 96 percent totality. Yet my argument still stands: we should not create legal loopholes through pseudoreligions, nor should we disrupt an entire day’s worth of class for the solar eclipse when it is bound to occur again in two years.



# Humor

» **BESSELIAN PROPHECY**

Read lower Sam Altman’s reflection on the eclipse drama at the Academy, 14.

» **KEVIN THANT**

Read prep Kevin Thant’s friends’ loving message to him, 15.

# The Crossword Corner

By **FREDDIE CHANG**  
and **SHAWNA JIANG**

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9		10	11	12	13
14					15						16			
17				18							19			
20				21							22			
			23					24	25					
26	27	28					29							
30						31						32	33	34
35				36	37						38			
39				40							41			
			42						43	44				
45	46	47						48						
49							50					51	52	53
54					55	56					57			
58					59						60			
61					62						63			

**ACROSS**

- 1 - the Barden Bellas love to \_\_\_\_\_-off
- 5 - group of eight
- 10 - taught in the academy building
- 14 - iridescent gem
- 15 - \_\_\_\_\_ Island (not actually an island)
- 16 - Australia Honduras: abbr.
- 17 - we have these this week
- 20 - parents can send in grad \_\_\_\_\_
- to the exonian
- 21 - what the crew team uses
- 22 - en \_\_\_\_\_ (all together)
- 23 - place to grow crops
- 24 - spicy vegetables
- 26 - “enough!”

- 29 - restaurant near dollar tree
- 30 - thing
- 31 - 17 syllable poem
- 32 - “\_\_\_\_\_ Fam!”
- 35 - Kim and Kourtney’s sister
- 39 - spherical lip balm brand
- 40 - a confused fight or scuffle
- 41 - “How silly \_\_\_\_\_!”
- 42 - ate at elm
- 43 - upper check in on school nights
- 45 - Dean Page is Dean of \_\_\_\_\_
- 48 - this is under your skin
- 49 - hip-hop group on campus
- 50 - French yeses
- 51 - our school
- 54 - a device, usually electrically

- powered, installed under a kitchen sink between the sink’s drain and the trap
- 58 - ‘Godzilla’ with some letters removed
- 59 - singer of “Rolling in the deep”
- 60 - “¿Qué \_\_\_\_\_?”
- 61 - 365 days
- 62 - oxidises
- 63 - texter’s sign-off

**DOWN**

- 1 - \_\_\_\_\_ Parks
- 2 - like a phone but bigger
- 3 - some are saturated
- 4 - illness
- 5 - “truth \_\_\_\_\_”
- 6 - they have lucky ones at Grainger
- 7 - Taylor Swift’s boy only breaks his favorite \_\_\_\_\_
- 8 - Mil. assistant: abbr.
- 9 - Lana \_\_\_\_\_ Rey
- 10 - chicken tikka \_\_\_\_\_
- 11 - “also” in French
- 12 - this and this
- 13 garden coils
- 18 - Lion noise
- 19 - equivalent of a 10 on the 11-point grading scale
- 23 - anxiety about exclusion
- 24 - scold

- 25 - Maori dance
- 26 - brand of our athletic gear
- 27 - Roman emperor after Galba
- 28 - Lemonade brand sold in the school basement of a Disney movie
- 29 - rowed
- 31 - older Dunphy sister
- 32 - what this Saturday’s relay is for
- 33 - AAMP
- 34 - memory: prefix
- 36 - \_\_\_\_\_ Kniestedt
- 37 - boarding school in Connecticut
- 38 - fine-tune
- 42 - dorm next to Webster
- 43 - you hear these
- 44 - \_\_\_\_\_ iration
- 45 - figs are

- \_\_\_\_\_
- 46 - wow
- 47 - Mrs Collins’ first name
- 48 constructed
- 50 - poems of praise
- 51 - exam in october
- 52 - not difficult
- 53 - F\_\_\_\_\_ alala-lalalala
- 55 - needlefish
- 56 - @exeter.\_\_\_\_
- 57 - choice format





# THE BESSELIAN PROPHECY

By SAMUEL ALTMAN  
‘26

*“Those with hearts brave and spirits untethered, listen; your path lies cloaked in the shadows of the Great Northern Fernweh. To the north, beyond the realms of known and into the embrace of the unknown, ye must venture. There lies your salvation from the impending doom, a sanctuary from the darkness that seeks to claim dominion.”*

So wrote High Augur and former Student Council President Kevin Treehan of the solar eclipse that happened on April 8 in his apparent revelation of “The Prophecy of the Eighth.” As students at Exeter, it’s difficult to decide whether we should be proud of the fact that our own elected leader started a surprisingly successful cult, or if we should instead be ashamed of the fact that the proud

Besselians tried to convince the administration to allow them to miss school with ploys like fear of the “Eight Year Blight.”

Whatever it be, the tenacity of High Augur Treehan was formidable indeed. It says something of our school that when such shenanigans began, hundreds of Exonians followed after faithfully, and it worked. So, allow me to explain to the uninitiated (pun intended) this story, which shall not be soon forgotten.

As it is recorded, on April 3, just after the sun had set, the High Augurs (an ambiguous group, only Treehan is known for sure) discovered their prophecy “wedged atop a set of books in the common room.” The prophecy spoke of many things, and I encourage the reader to read it for themselves, but most of all, the Besselian Prophecy spoke of the “Day of Obscuration,”

to take place five days after April 3.

The “Great Northern Fernweh” described the uncontrollable compulsion of all faithful Besselians to travel northwards. Those who follow it, so the prophecy said, may have to endure “The Unstoppable Dicking”—a high price, to be sure. As such, it was henceforth the duty of every Besselian to persuade The People of the Arches (Dean Weatherspoon and Dean Cahalane) to spare the Besselian pilgrims of the wrath of restrictions (not that such a fate could ever amount to that of the Eight Year Blight, of course).

For the average Besselian, however, the battle with the administration was only ever a sacrifice to be made. You could not count one among their ranks who would not endure the Unstoppable Dicking to follow their augurs into rural New Hampshire, into totali-

ty, that they might sate their Fernweh.

You see, their cause was larger than any single one of them. On the afternoon of April 3, Dean Weatherspoon reasoned that since the eclipse would still be 95 percent total in Exeter, the petitions to leave were being denied. In that first email, there was not even a hint of weakness or willingness to budge. But, after High Augur Treehan emailed all students at four in the morning, and (literally) hundreds of Exonians joined in the following days, it soon became a winning battle.

Early in the morning of April 5, the High Augur updated his website, displaying an email he had sent to Principal Rawson that detailed how many hundreds of students and tens of parents were burning to travel north, and how even our bitter rival, Andover, had canceled classes (despite being

much farther away and despite not having been granted the gift of the Besselian Prophecy).

Not long after this the administration changed their mind. On that very evening, Dean Weatherspoon sent an email out, stating that they decided to accept some petitions after new information on how far in advance these trips had been planned came in. He went on to emphasize how hundreds of thousands of strangers would likely be surging up to the north with the same zeal of the average Besselian, and that the eclipse would indeed reach 95 percent totality here, and that they would provide eclipse glasses (of course, such facts could never sway a Besselian).

Now, we could chalk up this change in events to legitimate reconsideration with the pressure from the student base, but I like to think that the High Au-

gur may have caused some within the administration itself to have a change of heart toward the Besselian cause.

In all seriousness, the underlying current of this movement, and what may have ultimately convinced the administration, is a concept of complete and utter “religious” (though it was claimed to be spiritual, and entirely secular) freedom. Whether he meant to or not, High Augur Treehan managed to manipulate the Academy’s multi-faith toleration and caused what might well be the largest sweeping conversion on a high school campus in a very long time. What conclusion you choose to draw from that, I suppose, should be left to the individual, but there is nevertheless something distinctly Exeter about not being able to walk down the paths without hearing “Hao Ni!” somewhere in the distance.

## An Ode to Kevin Thant

By ARYAN AGARWAL, ALEX LIM, HANNAH WEI, ANDREW YANG, GRACE YANG, and JULIA ZHOU

From the deepest depths of EPAC basement, a howl resounds across campus. It’s prep Kevin Thant, slamming his phone screen-first onto a table, raging about his Clash Royale loss. This is not a rare occurrence. Kevin is a vocal guy, known to all as “Big Gorilla” thanks to his constant hooting and chest-pounding.

“My crew split time is better than yours!” he cries, grabbing Crane Lee around the neck and squishing his cheeks in one enormous hand.

Crane yells back, “Cap!” In one swift motion, Kevin pushes Crane onto the ground in the EPAC Basement, hugging him tightly, wrapping his legs around Crane, defending his self-proclaimed title of being the best rower on the team.

It’s often wondrous to the average onlooker how Kevin even made it onto the Exeter’s boys crew team considering his inability to tread water for longer than two minutes. He helplessly grabbed the slippery tiles of the pool wall around the 1:47

mark, trying to stay afloat. The lifeguard, astonished by Kevin’s defenseless heavy breathing, called him out of the pool to retake the swim test another day.

Kevin’s self-proclaimed name of “Big Gorilla” is pretty accurate, to be honest, because he smells like one and loves big, long bananas. However, gorillas are extremely strong and muscular, and we all know Kevin isn’t. Kevin constantly blabbers on about his PRs and his “shining athleticism.” He’s bragged so much about his mediocre erg splits, that he’s managed to gaslight himself into believing he’s the best rower on campus. “Pretty sure I’m rowing on boat three tomorrow,” he says, tossing his hair back and smirking. He did not, in fact, row with the JV team that day. Or ever, for that matter.

“My lifting PRs are so much better than yours,” he barks at Oscar Zhu. Kevin does not actually lift. The only thing Kevin can be seen lifting in the gym is his phone to his face. His only workout is mass-snapping multiple girls dual-camera photos on the leg press machine. Kevin, please stop. We feel personally victimized. Please

formally apologize to women everywhere for this violation of their security and well-being.

One thing Kevin’s extremely proud of is his sharp jawline. Kevin talks so much about his jawline that girls start getting intimidated simply by how sharp it is. That’s the sole reason why no girls are interested in him. He loves supporting his friends by yelling, “You have no jawline!” Kevin, keep up with the positivity.

Boosted with confidence, Kevin often can be seen roaming around campus searching for a potential formal date. Kevin proclaims himself the Prince of Burma, advocating for his prestigious identity to attract women. Yet after several failed attempts, he ended up bribing Crane Lee with Cap Thai and Oba every term to go to dances with him. And of course, Crane rejects him. Wise choice, Crane.

The Burmese Prince, Kevin, has often begged his friends to buy him food at Grill, promising to pay them back. His friends all wonder if his Grill points were spent as a date snack or a bulking meal. The following week, he once again runs out of points and begs

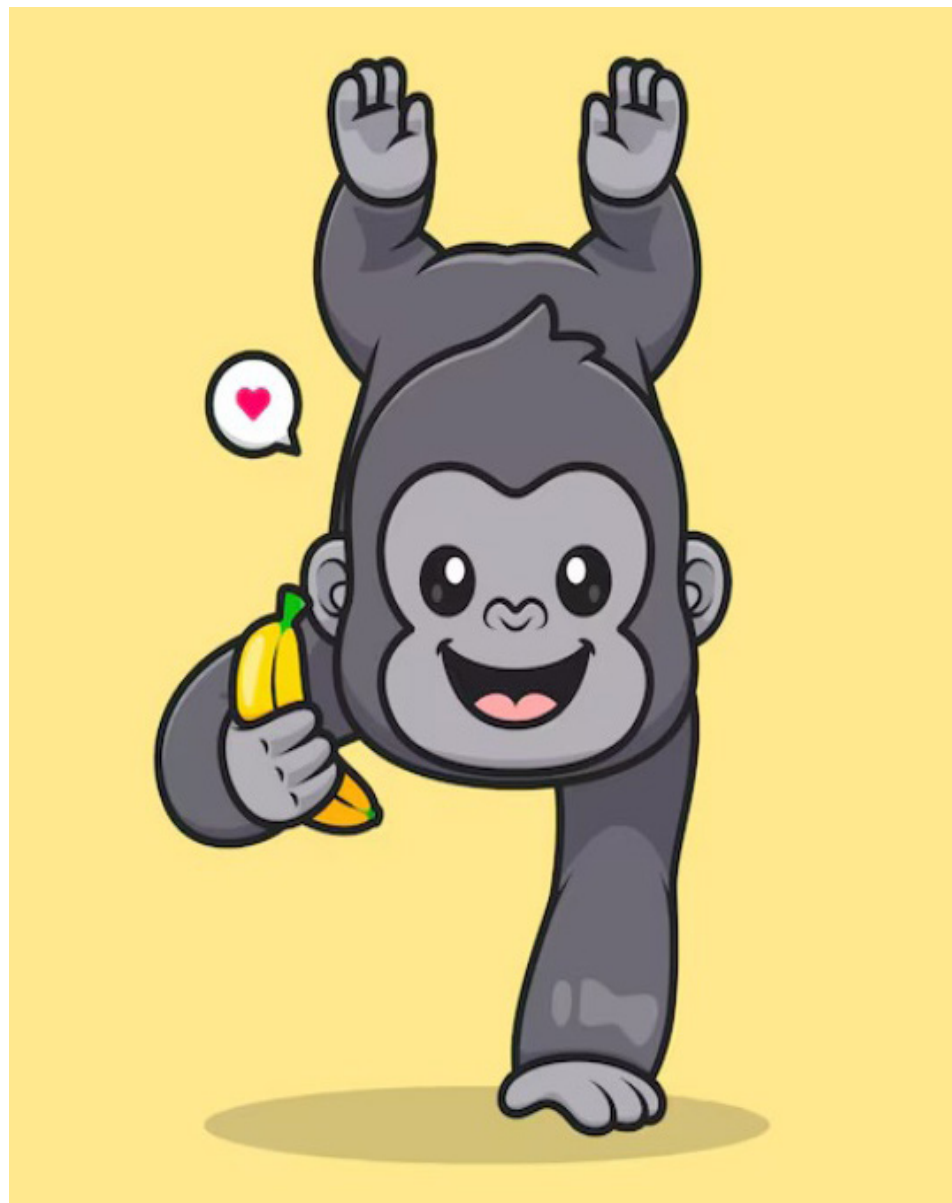
his friends by hugging them amorously, drenching his friends’ noses with the stench of his new cologne. Hiswfriends gag, but Kevin thinks that it’s because his hugs are so strong and masculine. Kevin, sometimes, it’s best to shift your gaze away from your own arms and legs. The only thing that you’re the prince of is your kingdom of unpaid Grill tabs and rejected formal dates.

Kevin Thant walks into the physics classroom, with baggy eyes, due to his late-night Clash Royale

Lumberloon Freeze grind. The class begins with an explanation of electric fields. Mr. Cosgrove reminds the class not to confuse an electric field with a magnetic field. Yet, Kevin, believing that his brain is as large as his hands, insists that an electric field is a magnetic field. Believing that a Van de Graaf generator produces magnetic fields, he bravely sticks his finger on the generator and afterward, touches a metal ball. A thousand volts shock his finger and Kevin yowls. He ex-

claims, “Wait, I just discovered a groundbreaking truth! Magnetic fields and electric fields are different things!” Very intelligent, Kevin.

From many sources, Kevin is the center of comedic jokes and humorous jests. Keep up your good work, Kevin. Keep flexing your legs and biceps through Snapchat, keep voicing your insights in physics, and keep asking us for Grill Points. This is what makes you you, Kevin Thant. We love you ;)



Loving Depiction Courtesy of freepik.com



# Sports

## » COTW

Read about this week's Captain of the Week: Ellie Ana Sperentsas, 15.

## » BASEBALL

Read about varsity swim's beat against Brunswick and Greenwich, 15.

## » LACROSSE

Read about the start to Big Red varsity squash's season, 16.

## Varsity Baseball Dominates Berwick 17-1

By SAM ALTMAN, ERIN HAN, MARVIN SHIM, and FORREST ZENG

On April 2, the Academy's boys varsity baseball team won 17-1 over Berwick Academy, scoring their third win of the season.

"The team played well and we were able to get everyone some good at bats and innings in the field," described Head Coach Timothy Mitropoulos. "In the middle innings, I am always curious how the team is going to respond and continue to play. The guys did that very well and expanded the lead, never giving Berwick a chance to come back."

Several of the players mentioned that the weather affected the game. "It was a little windy and chilly. And, whenever it's high up there like that, the wind is even stronger and throws

the ball around, making it more difficult to track," Postgraduate Mason Baldic described.

Nevertheless, assistant coach Panos Voulgaris emphasized how straightforward the game was for the team. "The tense moments that you find in close games weren't present," he said. "We were able to take advantage of errors made by our opponents and string together a number of base runners."

Mitropoulos added, "We got a lot of hits from everyone and Dana Mussulman had a multi-hit game, which was great. Pitchers threw strikes and Thad McConnell threw four solid innings for us."

Baldic also commented on the team's performance. "Chuck hit very well, and I remember Jake got a ball about 450 feet out which is really impressive, though it ended up being a foul."

Throughout the game,

the team changed their batting lineup to give all players an opportunity to play. "We cycled through our batting lineup around five or six times," Lower Dana Mussulman described.

"It was nice to see some of the younger and less experienced guys get some playing time. After we got up a few runs, they got put in the field, made some nice plays, and we actually no hit them, which was pretty cool," Lower Josh Dunn recalled.

This year, the boys varsity baseball team also has a strong post-graduate presence on the team. "We have a whole lot of post grads this year," Mussulman noted. "I'm really looking forward to getting to see all these older guys help us throughout the season. We have good competition in our league, so I'm excited to see how far we get this year."

Voulgaris also men-

tioned the team's strong pitching game. "In the first inning, Owen Tahnk was efficient at pitching. He was dominant," he said.

The team has been consistently practicing and working on small details in their game. "Practice is very important for staying at the top of your game," Mussulman said. "We are working on the small details, such as bunt coverage and pickoff plays, stuff that sometimes gets overlooked, but is very important for the game."

"Many game cancellations occurred before this game, so it was nice and exciting to get the chance to play," Senior Will Cooke continued, "We had a long string of practices before this game, so we had a lot of preparation. I'm looking forward to seeing how we continue to get better as a team because I think we're trending in the right direction."

Commenting on the team environment, Mitropoulos offered, "The players get along very well and there is always good energy at practices and the games."

"The team environment is strong this year," Cooke added, "Many guys came together from different sports, but we meshed well right off the bat."

Dunn spoke about how far he believes the team dynamic will take them. "We've had a pretty special group. I mean it's kind of been what we've preached since day one, but we've got a lot of good guys, a lot of hardworking guys, motivated guys." He continued, "I think we're just excited to play some tough competition, just excited to play some good baseball."

"We take it one game at a time. It certainly helped our confidence to win our game, but we also know we have to stay focused,

one step at a time," Baldic commented.

The game served as a strong jumping-off point for the team, as they move further into their season. "Coming up, we'll be playing a lot of good competition, so it's exciting to compete against some of the best teams in prep school."

"I see it as a great success, and it's obviously a confidence booster for the team," said Mussulman.

"It was a good bounce back from a tough weekend for sure. But we came out, played well, and got the win," said Dunn.

"We are playing a schedule of talented teams," remarked Voulgaris. "It will be exciting to see how we compete against those teams. We have some good players, and it'll be fun to see how they progress against the teams in our league."

## Big Red Season Records Since April 10, 2024

### Baseball JV

Dexter School: W 11-10  
Exeter High School: L 11-5

### Baseball V

Austin Prep: L 13-2  
Rivers School: L 8-6  
Dexter School: L 9-2  
Cushing Academy: L 3-0  
Cushing Academy (DH): W 2-1

### Crew Boys V/JV

N/A

### Crew Girls V/JV

N/A

### Cycling V

New England Road Cycling League: 1st Place

### Golf V

Andover: L 2.5-1.5  
Deerfield Academy: L 10.5-1.5  
Tilton School: W 10-2

### Lacrosse Boys JV

Proctor Academy: W 13-3  
Portsmouth Abbey School: W 10-4  
St. John's Prep: L 13-5  
New Hampton School: W 7-6

### Lacrosse Boys V

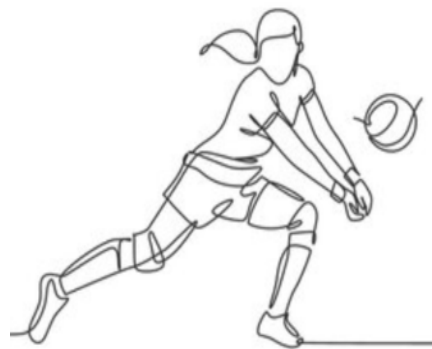
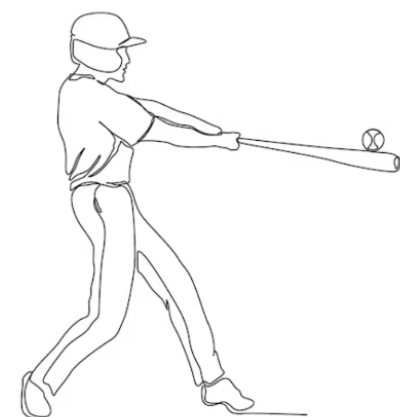
Deerfield Academy: L 9-7  
Portsmouth Abbey School: W 14-7  
Bridgton Academy: W 18-6  
Pomfret School: W 10-6  
Dexter School: W 14-2

### Lacrosse Girls JV

Governors Academy: W 12-8  
Northfield Mount Hermon: W 17-1  
Noble & Greenough: L 7-3  
St. Paul's School: W 10-9

### Lacrosse Girls V

Governors Academy: L 13-9  
Northfield Mount Hermon: W 16-0  
Noble & Greenough: L 14-6



### Softball V

Austin Prep: L 4-3  
Milton Academy: W 3-2  
Thayer Academy: W 4-3  
Northfield Mount Hermon: W 9-7

### Tennis Boys A V

St. Paul's School: W 6-1  
Choate Rosemary Hall: W 6-1  
St. John's Prep: W 4-3

### Tennis Boys B V

St. Paul's School: W 7-2  
Choate Rosemary Hall: L 6-3  
St. John's Prep: W 8-1

### Tennis Boys JV

Cardigan Mountain School: W 7-2  
Belmont Hill School: W 6-3

### Tennis Girls A V

Governors Academy: W 9-0  
Middlesex School: W 8-1  
St. Paul's School: W 9-0  
Northfield Mount Hermon: W 8-1  
Deerfield Academy: W 8-1

### Tennis Girls B V

Deerfield Academy: W 7-2

### Tennis Girls JV

Northfield Mount Hermon: W 9-0  
Exeter High School: W 9-0

### Track Boys V/JV

N/A

### Track Girls V/JV

N/A

### Volleyball Boys JV

Andover: W 3-2  
Northfield Mount Hermon: L 3-2

### Volleyball Boys V

Andover: W 3-2  
Choate Rosemary Hall: W 3-1  
Northfield Mount Hermon: W 3-0

### Water Polo - Girls V/JV

Andover: W 17-13



# Captain of the Week: Ellie Ana Sperantsas

By MEGHAN TATE ZEE, HENRY WISE, LOGAN LIU, ANGELA HE

Girls' crew, a very successful team throughout the 2024 spring season, is one of the largest teams on campus. The team, comprising many rowers from boat six to boat one, could not do what they do every day without the leadership and influence of their captain, senior Ellie Ana Sperantsas.

Sperantsas began her rowing career as a prep. From the start, she was enthusiastic and passionate about rowing. During her first year, she made the first boat that won NEIRAs (New England Interscholastic Rowing Association), becoming an integral member of the team.

Coach Becky Moore stated, "I loved seeing her enthusiasm as a prep, with all the world of PEA crew new to her and the joy that she took in trying out that new competitive world. Growing

more skilled as a rower and as a competitor, she has learned to be able to deal with both triumph and disappointment."

Senior Jane Park added on, describing Sperantsas as a captain who "brings a different level of work ethic to the team. Her work ethic is different from others because she is able to take the bad parts of practice and somehow turn them into the good parts."

"I've known her since prep year and she's always had that kind of energy and that just originally inspires me every day to keep going and getting better," Park continued.

Lower Kaitlynn Farkas echoed this sentiment. "Sometimes I'll have a bad row and I won't want to come the next day and I'll talk to Ellie Ana and she'll inspire me to come back and try harder every day because I know that she goes through the same thing."

"One of my favorite things about Ellie Ana is how personable she is,"

prep Bella Tyson Montgomery said. "She's always going out of her way to talk to someone she hasn't before and always makes an effort to get to know the entire team better." When asked to describe Sperantsas in one word, Tyson Montgomery said, "Dedicated."

While Sperantsas is a great captain, she is also a memorable and amazing friend. Senior Edie Fisher commented on a memorable moment with Sperantsas. "We went to see the Nutcracker in Boston last December, and we explored the city for hours looking for a good restaurant while she hobbled along in heels too tall for that amount of walking. Our phones were about to die the whole time, so it was really fun trying to conserve battery by not using Google Maps and trying to make our way around the city."

Park highlighted Sperantsas' character as a team captain versus as a friend. "She's a very jolly person I would say. She's



Photos Courtesy of Edie Fisher

very outgoing and she's very extroverted. But whenever she steps into the boathouse, it's time for her to take ownership of her rowing and to lead the team. She also has that very stern and very motivated side of her, which is so inspiring."

The girl's rowing team could not be at the level it is without the direction and authority of Sperantsas. "Ellie Ana inspires me as well as the rest of the team to be the best teammates possible," Fisher said. "She has worked very hard to

have lots of team bonding, so everyone can get to know as many others as possible." Sperantsas' leadership is one of the things that drives this team to have one of the best communities of all spring sports.

# Boys Lacrosse Demolishes Tilton and Cushing



Photos Courtesy of @exeterathletics

By ISHAAN SINGH, WILLIAM INOUE, HENRY WISE, LOGAN LIU

On Feb. 5 and 6, the boys' varsity lacrosse team played Cushing Academy and Tilton High School, respectively. Both games were blowouts, with final scores of 10-3 and 17-4. With only one day of rest between the two games, Big Red lacrosse brought their all and crushed both Tilton and Cushing.

The team was well prepared for back-to-back games after a week of tough practices. The boys worked on real game situations rather than conditioning. Head coach Bill Glennon commented on the preparation for the games. "We prepared hard for back-to-back games—a lot less full field and more six-versus-six."

On the topic of expectations, upper Quinn Smith

commented on what the team expected to happen, or what they expected the outcome of the game to be. "We knew that Tilton could have been a stronger opponent," he said. "However, we refrained from underestimating them and saw them as a team in yellow, neither good nor bad. This mindset is crucial when playing against any opponent as it helps us avoid playing down to their level."

"Our victory against Tilton on the road refreshed our players for the Saturday game against Cushing," Smith continued. "Last year, we had a challenging game against Cushing and prevailed by only one point. Our team was geared up for a dogfight this year and expected a challenging game."

Glennon added on to the team's expectations going into the game. "I thought that we would be the bet-

ter team against Tilton, and Cushing was a very athletic and skilled team," he said. "It was a close game throughout, and we were able to outplay them in the second half."

The team knew they would have to work hard for these wins, and that is exactly what they were able to do.

The game was an exciting match, featuring many amazing highlights throughout. In the game against Tilton, Smith shared some highlights. "Benny Petraco scored two goals, and John Griffin, a prep on the team, scored one goal," Smith said. "These goals brought a new energy level to our team and helped us extend our lead."

These exciting moments from the game helped give the team the hype and energy to continue pushing as hard as possible.

As for the exciting game against Cushing, senior Graham Harris shared, "We beat Cushing 10-3, and it was just a good win because it was close until the fourth quarter before we pulled away."

After the wins, the lacrosse team is set to continue the rest of the season in high spirits. "The main goal would be to beat Andover at the end of the year," Harris said. "But then along with trying to go undefeated, just because we know we don't have playoffs."

Glennon also added that their goals were to "play as a team, support each other on and off the field, and win them all."

At the moment, the boys' lacrosse team is among the strongest and most successful teams on campus, and it will be very exciting to see how they progress through the rest of the season.

## The Exonian

We would like to acknowledge the Squamscott/Penacook peoples who were the first peoples of this land. We would like to honor their ancestors, descendants and future generations for caring for this area and allowing us to be here

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