

18TH ISSUE

VIEWPOINTS

2021 - 2022

**WESTERN RESERVE
ACADEMY**

Viewpoints

Volume XVIII

2022

**A nonfiction literary magazine produced annually
by the students of Western Reserve Academy**

Hudson, OH

***Viewpoints* Staff**

Lauren Jacot, *Chief Editor, Nonfiction*

Stella Lee, *Chief Editor, Art*

Annie Nguyen, *Associate Editor, Nonfiction*

Bob Wang, *Associate Editor, Nonfiction*

Ms. Bunt, *Faculty Advisor*

Mr. Campbell, *Faculty Advisor*

Mrs. Raymaley-Hoffman, *Faculty Advisor*

Editorial Policy

Students at WRA submit works of nonfiction and art for consideration for the publication of *Viewpoints*. Submissions are electronic: viewpoints@wra.net. We aim to showcase the broad range of talent, thought, and opinion here at the Academy.

Cover

The cover was designed by Stella Lee.

Survey

Annually, *Viewpoints* conducts an online survey of the WRA community – students, faculty, and staff. The questions range from the personal to the political and fanciful. Results of the survey are introduced in this volume. Full results are available online at <https://tinyurl.com/2p82etka>

Note

The opinions expressed in this journal do not necessarily reflect the views of the editors, faculty advisors, or Western Reserve Academy. The viewpoints contained herein belong exclusively to the individual authors and artists responsible for presenting them.

Table of Contents

Introduction to Volume XVIII	1
Lauren Jacot	
Personal Essays and Other Viewpoints	4
Logan Amos	
Chloe Bright	
Anna Eisaman	
Isabella Folio	
Elba Heddesheimer	
David Hu	
Lauren Jacot	
Hannah Ma	
Anya Mathur	
Peter McGinnes	
Ela Mody	
Annie Nguyen	
Danielle Patterson	
Tanvi Shah	
Sierra Shapiro	
Bob Wang	
Omar White-Evans	
Jenny Williams	
Senior Speeches	84
Isabella Folio	
Carter Frato-Sweeney	
David King	
Ben Sindell	
Gallery	99
Tanzin Danzhen	
Phoebe Dix	
David Hu	
Addie Lewis	
Anya Mathur	

Bob Wang

Viewpoints Survey

116

Introduction to Volume XVIII

Introduction by the Senior Editor

Once again, the once dispersed Reserve community was able to regather for the 2021-2022 school year. All of the “piofars” traveled back to campus, their second home, for the full in-person experience. Pioneers gathered for live classes, Morning Meetings, sports, and extracurriculars. This was considered the first “normal” year for WRA students post-pandemic. For the majority of the year, students wore masks. Reserve became mask-less thanks to the low number of Covid cases on campus and the advancements in the vaccine. The students were grateful for many wonderful and normal events such as Homecoming, Fire and Ice, Bicknell Bonanza, and Class Olympics. The WRA community has embraced the opportunities to engage in a fun activity and school spirit that was lost during the pandemic.

This year’s edition of Viewpoints is reflective of all the dedication and hard work the students have demonstrated during the in-person school year. Students thrived in the full-blown year, producing many scholarly papers, stunning photographs of nature, and student speeches given in-person in the chapel, as you can see throughout this issue.

The majority of the staff was new to Viewpoints this year, making it a fun experience yet a difficult one. Putting together the issue last year raised many challenges; many of the members could only be connected via laptop, losing the in-person interactions. Last year gave all the editors a very unique and irregular experience editing and formatting the issue; there was no role model year to follow for all of the editors. For the first time in two years, putting together the final issue was done in-person, along with all of the meetings and gatherings.

I joined the Viewpoints staff during my junior year and am very grateful I was afforded the opportunity to become a part of the staff. Reserve has gifted me with countless memories that I will forever cherish and connections that I would have never deemed possible. I would like to personally thank the Viewpoints mentors, Ms. Bunt, Mrs. Hoffman, and Mr. Campbell, for their advice and support throughout the entire process. I am very grateful for the editors I have been thankful to work with, Annie Nguyen ’23, Stella Lee ’23, and Bob Wang

'24. Thank you for all of your hard work this year, and it has been a pleasure working with all of you! Finally, I would like to thank everyone who submitted to Viewpoints this year and completed the survey. This year's issue was a success through the help and support of faculty, students, friends, and Viewpoints staff!

Now please enjoy this wonderful collection of work from students here at your second home, or formally known as Western Reserve Academy!

Best,

Lauren Jacot '22, Chief Editor

Personal Essays and Other Viewpoints

The Appropriations of Native Americans

Logan Amos

Growing up as a black child in America, I always thought I knew racism: I knew it was wrong to make fun of Asian people's eyes or other black people's skin, and I knew that it was wrong to draw people as exaggerated stereotypes--whether they are true or not. I thought I never had to learn racism because I lived it every day. But the shocking truth is that I was never really able to identify racism because even when I was presented with something racist, I never saw it that way. As a child, I read books about Thanksgiving that showed Native people as the kind savages that lived alongside pilgrims and saw those images as truth. When I grew up, My teacher told me to do a class assignment where we each spoke from the perspective of an "Indian" and got extra credit for "dressing up in character," aka dress up Indian. Students came to class in full Party City "native" outfits, and I realized I was looking at overt racism.

Recently, companies and sports teams have begun cracking down on racist caricatures. Sports teams have changed names and mascots, and businesses have changed logos to not stereotype or insult any race, culture, or religion. When it comes to disturbingly racist images of East Asians and people of African descent shown in Dr. Seuss's books, people tend to act with similar contempt of the images. Most would agree that these obviously racist caricatures have no place outside of educational spaces. But for some reason, when it comes to symbols depicting Indigenous peoples, Americans suddenly change their attitude.

When the Cherokee Nation Chief asked Jeep to stop using the Cherokee name, the company responded by stating that the model "honor[s] and celebrate[s] Native American people for their nobility, prowess, and pride" even though the Chief specifically stated that the name did not honor the Cherokee Nation. Until recently, an NFL team who proudly used a racial slur as their team name finally made the decision to change their name after years of controversy sparking outrage

among many football fans. A multitude of articles were published citing reasons to keep the name like history, tradition, Native support, and even saying that the name kept Native history alive. Yet, when we explore these representations, we are met with false truth: The children's movie Peter Pan depicts Natives as dumb savages while Pocahontas sexualizes and romanticizes a story of kidnapping and rape that ended in the title character's death thousands of miles away from home.

While a non-Native like myself does not have the right to define the examples listed above as racism, they represent a clear trend in how non-Native people regard Indigenous peoples within America. We ignore racial stereotypes and the disrespectful use of native images and even go as far as to use them for profit without acknowledging where they came from. People treat Native Americans like artifacts of the past that we once destroyed and now have the right to take from. Non-natives like myself need to treat Native people as a minority group, just like Black and Asian people, but more importantly, a living community of real people that deserve equal treatment. As non-Natives, we do not have the right to use their names and symbols under the guise of honor or to treat racism against them differently than we do racism against other POC communities.

One recurring argument for using Native stereotypes, specifically in sports, is that the images "honor" or pay homage to Native people. That sports team names like the Braves or Warriors should be taken as a compliment because those terms are noble and not at all disrespectful. Warriors bravely fight their enemies to protect their people; I would never be insulted by being called a warrior. But these terms are what is called a positive stereotype. Other examples of positive stereotypes include: Asians are good at math, or Black people are good at basketball. While these could be spun as compliments, they harm the community just as much as negative stereotypes. Others expect everyone to fit the stereotype making those who do not fit the stereotype feel like they don't belong to the group. By labeling all natives as warriors, the stereotype creates the idea that all natives must be warriors in order

to be native. It also causes people to dismiss their contemporary struggles because the stereotype says that they can brave through anything no matter how difficult. Just because you perceive “warrior” as a compliment does not mean that it’s not a stereotype and therefore harmful.

For some reason, imitations of Native dress are used as costumes at schools, sporting events, and Halloween without a word about cultural appropriation or insensitivity. Some might say that these are historical representations, akin to dressing up as George Washington. But that isn’t true simply because Native people are alive and George Washington is not. When you put on a Native costume, you mock living people, but when you dress up as George Washington or any prominent European-American historical figure, you dress as someone that is dead and cannot be hurt or offended. The native costumes also tend to be wildly inaccurate and lump many separate cultures into one outfit, which misrepresents individual Native American tribes’ cultures.

Additionally, Native caricatures are regularly used in children’s books and movies. Authors portray them as stupid savages, sometimes kind, but never on the level of white characters. For some reason, society treats these offensive images as if they are commonplace. I would argue that there is no difference between caricatures of Black or Asian people and caricatures of native people except how the public treats them. These images do not represent the Native community. They only serve to force them into the past and perpetuate the belief that Native people just don’t exist outside secluded reservations where they continued to live as they did in 1492. They only serve to harm Native peoples just as they harm other POC communities.

Treating Native Americans as if they can’t experience racism like other racial minorities invalidates their experience and allows non-Natives to continue ignoring the numerous problems facing Natives today. European-Americans forced them onto reservations to die, not only physically but to die off in the minds of society. To make people think that Native people don’t exist because they have never seen an actual Native person. It’s easy to ignore people you’ve only seen in history

books. But there are almost 5 million Native people directly affected by the racist images, cultural appropriation, and harmful stereotypes that go unnoticed by non-Natives. Those 5 million people deserve both respect and equal treatment. But more importantly, they deserve to be able to tell their own stories and be heard, not spoken for, and as non-Natives, it's our responsibility to listen.

The Dilemma in Regard to Faith

Logan Amos

The longest time that I've ever spent in the church was probably for 4 months when I was 9 or 10. After my Dad passed away, my mother felt we, my sisters and I, needed religion. I didn't think I needed it at all, but children tend to have very little choice in the matter so I went to Unitarian church anyway and can now honestly say that I learn 2 important and immutable truths about myself:

1. I enjoy learning about religion and respect those who practice it (even if I think they're all brainwashed, which we'll get into later)
2. I will never be religious, mainly because I don't understand what "Faith" is

Faith (/fāTH/): complete trust or confidence in someone or something

A literal definition that will never encapsulate the depth of such a widely used word. How does one "have faith"? I have faith that the ceiling won't fall on me at even a given moment. But is that really the same faith the Christians and Muslims refer to whenever they're asked why they practice? How does one "have faith" in something that not one person has even made contact with?

Faith (/fāTH/): strong belief in God or in the doctrines of a religion, based on spiritual apprehension rather than proof

Faith, in the religious sense, does not require proof; rather it, by definition, lacks any form of proof. People say, "As a scientist, I require proof" as a way to contradict religion, yet many scientists are religious. They build careers off of the search proof yet put faith in something that completely lacks it. I myself am guilty of using this as an excuse for my lack of faith:

"I'm a woman in science"

"I believe in science"

As if they are mutually exclusive. But even when faced with the lack of proof, faith never wavers.

Children believe in Santa. Their parents tell them that he is the one bringing the presents even with no logical proof that Santa is real.

Saturday, December 24, 2011, 8:47 P.M.

For the sake of my parents, I baked cookies “for Santa”, peppermint and chocolate chip; left cookies out “for Santa”, tragically leaving an entire plate of cookies for an obviously overweight man; turned off the fireplace so that “santa” can come down the chimney, which we literally don’t have. It was fun. But I was going to eat these cookies tonight. There was no doubt about that. I could smell them even in my room. I just have to beat Dad.

All the Best,

Logan Amos, 6 years of age

I never thought Santa was real. Never once had faith in his existence because it made no sense. The act was fun, but I did not continue to act as if I had faith in him when no one was watching. Yet, this acting faithful is the closest I’ve ever gotten to faith in an unproven story. No one over the age of 10 believes in Santa yet people die believing in God. People discover that Santa is a story and there is no way that he could possibly exist, yet they may believe in God until the day they die. How is one thing normal and the other childish and weird? And how could I never truly experience faith, even as a child?

This kind of mindless following is something I can only rationalize as the most acceptable form of brainwashing. When asked most religious people can never tell you why they practice religion or more specifically, why they practice THEIR religion over the many others without using the term ‘raised this way.’ If you weren’t raised with some form of religion, it’s unlikely that you’ll ever end up practicing in the future.

I am a pessimist. I always have been. In 1st grade, my Montessori school teacher, Ms. Diana, asked me if the glass was half full or half empty. I answered, empty. No hesitation. My teacher just looked at me. She had brain cancer, lost her hair. She always smiled. I reasoned that she had to keep the glass half full because she was going to die. But her cancer went away after surgery at UNC.

Ms. Diana died before the start of my 2nd-grade year.

Being a pessimist means a lack of hope for the future, almost like a

stoic. Disappointment will never occur so faith lacks a reason to exist in my life.

Faith also requires a level of care for understanding the past or future, and I simply don't care. I make the choice to not overthink either the past or the future. I don't have to come to terms with my actions or the incalculable nature of the future because I really just don't care and I never will. I don't think about death because I'll know it when it comes. Spending countless hours praying to set yourself up for a place in a reality that you don't know exists wastes hours where you could be focusing on life now. Sure, I meditate on the present but never the past or the future.

It will never make sense to me.

Faith and I are diametrically opposed.

Different to the point where I will never understand its function, use or purpose to any degree above knowledge.

It's useless to try because it's useless to me.

How Men Use and View Women Within *The Things They Carried*

Chloe Bright

Literature memorializes the thoughts and feelings of the general public during a particular moment in time. Within Tim O'Brien's *The Things They Carried*, the notion that women are subservient to men will forever remain. The fictional novel, a collection of stories from the Vietnam War, follows Tim O'Brien and the rest of the Alpha Company unit. Despite having a lengthy list of characters, very few women exist, which include Martha, the love interest of Jimmy Cross, Mary Anne Bell, the girlfriend of Mark Fossie, and Kathleen, Tim O'Brien's young daughter. They all play into O'Brien's definition of masculinity, which is possessing the qualities of independence, insensitivity, courageousness, assertiveness, and strength, both physical and emotional. Throughout the text, women function as props to develop themes of masculinity, with Martha existing only as Jimmy Cross' distraction from war, Kathleen providing the perspective of an innocent outsider to Tim O'Brien, and Mary Anne displaying the transformation that soldiers undergo at the start of their deployment.

Jimmy Cross relies on Martha to exist as his distraction from war and as someone to blame for his own failures. Jimmy constantly thinks about Martha and what he wants from her in order to allow his mind to escape Vietnam, even if just for a moment. The narrator reveals "[h]e had difficulty keeping his attention on the war. On occasion he would yell at his men to spread out the column, to keep their eyes open, but then he would slip away into daydreams, just pretending, walking barefoot along the Jersey shore, with Martha, carrying nothing"(O'Brien 8).

Cross thinks about Martha and returning home to her instead of taking care and watching over his men. He uses her as an excuse to mentally leave the war, leaving the boys he is in charge of alone. Jimmy, also just a young man, cannot handle the pressure of being responsible for the lives of so many boys, so his mind wanders away. He then places

the blame on Martha, despite her living thousands of miles away and having no way to control his thoughts. Jimmy uses Martha and the lack of her presence to place blame for his own failures upon anyone but himself.

Shortly after the death of Ted Lavender, “Jimmy Cross crouched at the bottom of his foxhole and burned Martha’s letters. Then he burned the two photographs... Lavender was dead. You couldn’t burn the blame... He hated her”(O’Brien 22-23). After the death of one of his men, Jimmy cannot handle the blame and pressure from both himself and his men, so he takes it out on Martha. Though she did nothing herself to impact the fate of Ted Lavender, she had consumed Jimmy’s thoughts, and for that he assigned her all the fault. The girl had never even stepped foot into Vietnam, yet because she is an absent woman, she must face the consequences in order to preserve Cross’ masculinity.

Similar to Martha, Kathleen has little autonomy, only playing the role of the innocent outsider to contribute to her father’s character development. Kathleen’s initial introduction occurs in ‘Ambush’ in order to allow O’Brien to look into the past. He recounts a time when she asked if he had ever killed someone, and he reveals that “[s]omeday, I hope, she asks again. But here I want to pretend she’s a grown-up. I want to tell her exactly what happened... [t]his is why I keep writing war stories”(O’Brien 125). Tim uses his daughter as an excuse to continue to write stories about the war to a different perspective, even while “[she was] behind [him]... The interpreter was showing her magic tricks”(O’Brien 176). Kathleen has little involvement with O’Brien, off in her own world while he struggles internally. As a young girl living in America in the late 80’s and 90’s, war has not directly affected Kathleen, and she remains innocent to the atrocities of humanity, similar to much of the audience of the novel. This innocence provides O’Brien an outlet to reexamine his feelings and memories of war and to explain them in simpler terms. For Kathleen’s tenth birthday, O’Brien takes her with him back to Vietnam, and the two go to visit Quang Ngai, the marshland where Kiowa died. After Tim goes into the marshland to return Kiowa’s belongings to him, he makes eye contact

with an old man, and recounts the following series of events, “[t]he man’s face was dark and solemn. As we stared at each other, neither of us moving, I felt something go shut in my heart while something else swung open... I pulled on my shoes, took my daughter’s hand, and led her across the field toward the jeep”(O’Brien 179). While the old man represents the past, Kathleen represents the future, and her presence with him in Vietnam helps to pull O’Brien out of his memories and trauma, and come to terms with what occurred. When Tim takes her hand, he also chooses to move on from the war and take on a role as a more active father, after leaving her alone while he struggled silently by himself for so long. If O’Brien did not have Kathleen as his daughter, he would not have had an innocent perspective to tell his story to, and he would have also become stuck in the past, no longer healing from the trauma of the war.

Though Mary Anne Bell possesses the ability to control some of her own decisions, she exists to display the shocking changes that war causes men to undergo. Shortly after arriving in Vietnam, she begins to change her appearance. At first, Rat Kiley describes her as having “long white legs and blue eyes and a complexion like strawberry ice cream. Very friendly, too”(O’Brien 89). Mary Anne initially epitomizes the American girl, supporting the war from afar. She has a feminine physique and fits the standards of beauty, and stays within the feminine realm. But later, “[s]he stopped wearing jewelry, cut her hair short and wrapped it in a dark green bandana. Hygiene became a matter of small consequence... [t]here was a new confidence in her voice... [t]he burliness was gone”(O’Brien 94-95). Many Anne’s feminine traits disappear, and she grows to be hypermasculine, just as the men do. This transformation remains unnoticed in men because the definition of masculinity implies that they should already behave and dress in such a manner. Mary Anne’s transformation shocks the general public because the damage that war can cause to a person is rarely perceived, and she also breaks societal expectations of how a woman can act. When Rat Kiley describes her right as she begins to transform, he tells the others that “[Mary Anne is] A girl, that’s the only difference, and... it didn’t amount to jack. I mean, when we first got here—all of us—we were young and innocent, full of romantic bullshit, but we learned pretty damn quick. And so did Mary Anne”(O’Brien 93). Both men

and women undergo the same transformation after arriving in Vietnam, but Mary Anne's transformation seems so much more drastic because of her femininity. The definition of masculinity that soldiers are expected to live up to toxically infiltrates the minds of many Americans, which prevents many people from acknowledging the cruelty of war and the unhealthy transformation it causes in so many men. Mary Anne only exists within the text to develop the masculine theme of how war causes a transformation in a man, and to show the destructive nature of war on the identity of men.

Women do not exist for themselves, but instead for the development of male characters within *The Things They Carried*. Martha functions as Jimmy Cross' escape from both Vietnam and his responsibilities, Kathleen serves as an innocent perspective for O'Brien to tell his stories to and develop as a character, and Mary Anne exists to display a masculine transformation due to war in a way that the audience will be able to notice the severity of the change. Only Mary Anne has a real, autonomous role within the text, but it is only to allow the audience to understand men better. The real American women of the war, though living at home, went through unbearable pain and suffering, yet still offered so much support to the American cause, though they may never receive the recognition that they deserve.

Works Cited

O'Brien, Tim. *The Things They Carried*. Mariner, 2009.

Turning Over a New Pack of Pills: Is There an End to the Female Athlete Triad?

Anna Eisaman

Sunday to Monday at 7:30 PM on the dot, not one but *two* computer programs, an alarm and a written reminder, gently nudge me to take my birth control pill. These algorithms heed not to my whereabouts nor the happenings in my life each evening. The reminders have interrupted soccer practices with my team, dinners with friends, and movies with my boyfriend, but most recently the alarm's characteristic drone resounded through a mandatory Socratic seminar, completely disregarding academic etiquette. The programs, of course, do not care about academic etiquette, where I am, nor what I am doing because they are not programmed to care; they are programmed to remind me to orally ingest my prescription-grade combination Ethinyl estradiol and drospirenone capsule to artificially simulate the period I lost just four months after my very first. My pill assumes the more user-friendly alias "Yasmin." Her unassuming name disguises the fact that she is a capsule supplying my body the hormones it has failed to produce, not a friend whom I eat lunch with at school. The pill's name, I conjecture, was selected by some male scientist to bring solace to those whose lips tighten to hide expressions of horror when my daily alert flashes across the screen—"time to take your oral contraception pill!" Yasmin's 7-page manual of disclaimers and side-effects that I hastily tossed on my desk immediately after receiving my first pack of pills sometimes catches my eye. Am I exercising my rights to reproductive medical care? Or am I being poisoned like so many before me?

Harvard-educated Dr. Gregory G. Pincus, inspired by sexual freedom activist Margaret Sanger's research on contraception, didn't even consider women's sexual freedom when he developed the first birth control pill in the 1950s and 1960s. Ironically, Pincus maintained that he was "against women having sexual freedom" and that he developed the drug strictly to resolve his own scientific curiosities re-

garding mammal reproduction.¹ Examining the testing of Enovid, the first commercially available oral contraceptive, unveils its mangled roots in eugenics and colonial exploitation of Puerto Rican women. Strict Massachusetts legislature against scientific exploration of birth control barred Pincus from revealing the true nature of his research, so he transplanted his testing offshore to Puerto Rico. Pincus deemed Puerto Rico the perfect testing environment because the nation was growing exponentially and overwhelmed by poverty. Before Pincus entered the scene, Clarence Gamble of Procter & Gamble funded and operated many birth control clinics in Puerto Rico's most destitute communities, sterilizing impoverished women to make room for more "fit" members of society.² With Gamble's help, Pincus enrolled many Puerto Rican women, most of whom were uneducated and desperate to avoid either pregnancy or sterilization, as participants in clinical trials of Enovid.

With many times the potency of modern pills, Enovid packed a dangerous concentration of hormones far in excess of the threshold necessary to prevent pregnancy. Due to extreme estrogen levels, 17 percent of the first cohort experienced significant unpleasant side effects, including blood clots, nausea, vomiting, and even strokes.³ Pincus, however, was blinded by the drug's success; Enovid prevented nearly 100 percent of pregnancies in the clinical trials. When Dr. Edris Rice-Way, the scientist conducting Enovid's first clinical trials, suggested that the presented cost to the women's health appeared

1 Drew C. Pendergrass and Michelle Y. Raji, "The Bitter Pill: Harvard and the Dark History of Birth Control," *Harvard Crimson* (Cambridge, MA), September 28, 2017, accessed March 3, 2022, <https://www.thecrimson.com/article/2017/9/28/the-bitter-pill/>.

2 Erin Blakemore, "The First Birth Control Pill Used Puerto Rican Women as Guinea Pigs," *History*, last modified May 9, 2018, accessed March 3, 2022, <https://www.history.com/news/birth-control-pill-history-puerto-rico-enovid>.

3 Planned Parenthood, "The Birth Control Pill History," last modified June 2015, pdf.

to outweigh the benefit of pregnancy prevention, Pincus dismissed her concerns and accused the participants in the trial of being hypochondriacs.⁴ Today, a watered-down relative of the substance used to exploit young women lacking education and legal representation lives in a shiny plastic case on my vanity, only now she's changed her dosage and her name. Just how Pincus and Gamble sold young, impoverished Puerto Rican women on Enovid, my doctors insisted that only Yasmin could mend my constant cramps, unexplained weight loss, and lack of a natural period. No medical professional bothered to inform me that some women lose their menstrual cycles because of malnutrition and overactivity, or that dwindling down to 115 pounds at an above-average height during the apex of my athletic career might not be a strictly hormonal issue. I sat in the backseat of a school shuttle headed to my doctor six times during the first six months of my junior year. No number of tests, dynamic blood pressure readings, or blood samples could substantiate my dizziness, nausea, and still-shrinking body mass.

At the peak of my recruiting season, other girls started to push me off the ball as I bobbed in-and-out of play with illness and knee injuries. Women's soccer has traditionally been dominated by male coaches, and the collegiate level is no exception. College coaches at showcases and ID camps (all male) shrugged me off in their evaluations of my play; they wrote that while I was a consistent, solid soccer player, I was "too small" or "needed to get bigger to play in the center of the field." Yasmin might have delivered me a mock period for each week of sugar pills I took, but all the other maladies my doctors convinced me that birth control would solve persisted. As my dizziness and lack of energy worsened to the point where my doctors deemed me ineligible to play in an ECNL⁵ showcase, I worried that my primarily male club coaches believed I was exaggerating and that I should just push through the pain. I began to understand just a sliver of what the women participating in Enovid's clinical trials experienced—the stigma and lack of understanding within a masculine-dominated community making decisions on behalf of women's

4 Planned Parenthood, "The Birth."

5 Elite Clubs National League, regarded as the highest level of club soccer in the youth soccer community

health. In a vastly more progressive era of bioethics, professionals still persuaded me that hormonal birth control would relieve me of myriad physical and mental infirmities; how much has changed?

In the past few months, my educated female coaches who have experienced many of these same ailments in their careers as elite soccer players have enlightened me about my body chemistry and the importance of nutrition and a balanced training schedule; as it turns out, amenorrhea⁶ is concerningly common among young female athletes. While the birth control pill did not directly cause my health concerns or cause me significant side effects, it was a band-aid solution that medical professionals assured me possessed remedial capabilities that it simply did not. In my search for answers, I uncovered that the physical depletion I was experiencing had a name—the Female Athlete Triad. The term encompasses the intersection of menstrual dysfunction, low energy, and decreased bone density too often present in elite female athletes.⁷ The condition is closely linked to anorexia, bulimia, and other eating disorders. My search history overflowed with names of girls just my age or a few years older who had been physically and mentally pushed to the brink in their respective sports. This list included decorated athletic champions like track runner Mary Cain, figure skater Gracie Gold, and soccer goalie Katie Meyer. In 2013, 17-year-old Mary Cain earned a spot as the youngest World Championships team track and field athlete and signed with Nike’s Oregon Project, which was considered the best track team in the world. Instead of furthering her career, however, esteemed Oregon Project coach Alberto Salazar subjected Cain to regimented diets that urged her to shrink thinner and thinner. From her training with the Oregon Project, Cain reports losing her period for three years and breaking five bones. Cain attributes this physical breakdown and descent into suicidal thoughts to being pushed to athletic standards aligning with male development.⁸ Reading Cain’s story resonated

6 The absence of menstrual periods, consecutively and/or frequently, in pre-menopausal women.

7 Taraneh Gharib Nazem and Kathryn E. Ackerman, “The Female Athlete Triad,” *Sports Health*, July 2012, accessed March 3, 2022, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3435916/>.

8 Mary Cain, “I Was the Fastest Girl in America, Until I Joined

with me because female athletes are expected to meet a male standard of performance and physicality that becomes less and less attainable as the athlete's career progresses. Whether an athlete is subject to outright restriction from proper care and nutrition for her body like Cain or whether she is simply ignored in an athletic environment where masculine rhetoric makes no room for her health concerns, the Female Athlete Triad drains entirely too many young girls of their physical health and love for the sport.

Misinformation and stigma surrounding women's health remain a staple of American medical and athletic culture, despite many decades passing since Enovid's first trials. Access sets apart a modern young woman like me from the women who participated in the first clinical studies of Enovid in Puerto Rico. I have been granted many resources to exercise my volition over my own body, enabling me to hold accountable the doctors who embellished the powers of birth control and the coaches who downplayed how much I was struggling. Certain female professional athletes and the first participants in the Enovid clinical trials alike have been overtly taken advantage of by authority figures and remain defenseless in the face of injustice because of deep-rooted power imbalances that dismiss women's health. Much like scientific advancements in reproductive health, strides made in women's athletics have cost a heavy ethical price. Acknowledging these moral concessions, however, presents an important lesson; understanding society's historically inequitable treatment of women's health informs us modern young women of our rights and when they are infringed upon. I have lived the majority of my life in an age of social justice and "progress", yet my well-being has continually been overlooked by an uncompassionate, male-dominated system that belittles female suffering to achieve its own avaricious ends. This spring, coroners pronounced Stanford soccer star Katie Meyer dead from a suicide in her Stanford dorm room, just months before her graduation. In light of her daughter's suicide, Katie's mother attributed part of the tragedy to "anxiety... and stress to be perfect,

Nike," The New York Times, last modified November 7, 2019, accessed March 3, 2022, <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/07/opinion/nike-running-mary-cain.html>.

to be the best, to be number one”.⁹ True equality and an end to silent female suffering will require not only recognition but also firsthand understanding of the female condition. Without a significant female presence at the bartering table, the masculine system proposing “solutions” on behalf of women will maintain a safe distance from the repercussions of its influence.

The rambling list of tragedies in women’s sports does not thwart the corporate machine, which plasters advertisements depicting young girls decked in activewear as bright as their ear-to-ear grins. The girl could be dribbling a basketball, juggling a soccer ball, or pirouetting across a dance studio. In each case, however, she conveys the same message; sports are fun! An advertising team, of course, has meticulously curated the image I see of a smiling blonde girl taking a corner kick to sell me Nike soccer cleats. In many cases, this propagation of a sunny, incomplete narrative of girl’s sports for a corporate gain mirrors Gamble and Pincus’s actions in Puerto Rico so many years ago. Yet by disregarding the image’s mercenary societal implications, therein lies a simple, hopeful message. Sports *are* fun. I can glance up at the blown-up billboard and hope that the blonde girl with the pink-and-white cleats will one day play the beautiful game for a system that exercises everything in its power to nurture the fire behind that smile.

9 Julia Prodis Sulek, “‘There is stress to be perfect’: Friends, family struggle to understand suicide of Stanford soccer star Katie Meyer,” *The Mercury News*, last modified March 4, 2022, accessed March 9, 2022, <https://www.mercurynews.com/2022/03/04/there-is-stress-to-be-perfect-friends-family-struggle-to-understand-suicide-of-stanford-soccer-star-katie-meyer/>

Bibliography

- Blakemore, Erin. "The First Birth Control Pill Used Puerto Rican Women as Guinea Pigs." *History*. Last modified May 9, 2018. Accessed March 3, 2022.
<https://www.history.com/news/birth-control-pill-history-puerto-rico-enovid>.
- Cain, Mary. "I Was the Fastest Girl in America, Until I Joined Nike." *The New York Times*. Last modified November 7, 2019. Accessed March 3, 2022.
<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/07/opinion/nike-running-mary-cain.html>.
- Nazem, Taraneh Gharib, and Kathryn E. Ackerman. "The Female Athlete Triad." *Sports Health*, July 2012. Accessed March 3, 2022.
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3435916/>.
- Pendergrass, Drew C., and Michelle Y. Raji. "The Bitter Pill: Harvard and the Dark History of Birth Control." *Harvard Crimson* (Cambridge, MA), September 28, 2017. Accessed March 3, 2022.
<https://www.thecrimson.com/article/2017/9/28/the-bitter-pill/>.
- Planned Parenthood. "The Birth Control Pill History." Last modified June 2015. pdf.
- Sulek, Julia Prodis. "'There is stress to be perfect': Friends, family struggle to understand suicide of Stanford soccer star Katie Meyer." *The Mercury News*. Last modified March 4, 2022. Accessed March 9, 2022.
<https://www.mercurynews.com/2022/03/04/there-is-stress-to-be-perfect-friends-family-struggle-to-understand-suicide-of-stanford-soccer-star-katie-meyer/>.

Can One Size Fit All? An Exploration in Dress Code

Isabella Folio

HUDSON, OHIO — When Olivia Thomas '22, an exchange student from Great Britain prepared for her impending journey to America, she spent time carefully negotiating her possessions into two suitcases.

“I come from Britain, and in every school, public or private, everyone wears a uniform,” Thomas explains. After thoroughly reading the school handbook, she visited the website to purchase the clothes she would need. Alongside the standard uniform displayed, Thomas found several other skirts.

“We were like, ‘do we have to buy these as well?’ We actually got a bit confused by that, and there wasn’t really an answer for that kind of thing in the handbook, so I just sort of had to guess and bring skirts,” Thomas remarks, adding that she found parts of the handbook unclear. While the skirts she bought fit dress code standards, as the winter set in, she began to wish she had brought pants, an item mostly excluded from her luggage while prioritizing clothes she thought would be more acceptable.

Thomas’s struggle with the 2021-2022 version of WRA’s dress code mirrors that of other students and faculty as they grapple with the rules. Both proponents and critics of the dress code must confront the challenge of simply understanding the policies, as well as the various challenges persons of different backgrounds experience. When this careful examination does not occur, the result is an often-seen image: inconsistent enforcement and compliance and hard feelings all around that result in tension and discontentment within the WRA community.

Four-year senior Norah Woods '22 has experienced such turmoil. When asked her opinions on the school’s policy, she admits that “it’s kind of fun [to dress up]... you feel like you’re someone.” However, earlier this school year, Woods encountered a discrepancy between written rules and enforcement.

Even though she felt sure that she broke no rules, she found herself

accused of violating dress code. Clad in a form-fitting dress, she double checked the handbook to ensure her outfit met fingertip rule and possessed a high neckline. Eventually, after speaking with the Student Life Office, she was told her skirt length did not meet standards because the skirt rode up when she was seated.

Originally, the conversation evaluating Woods's infraction seemed straightforward—after all, the rules are there in the handbook; however, according to Woods, the discussion took a nebulous turn, and she could not decipher exactly where her infraction rested in the handbook guidelines. Woods left the conversation self-conscious about a discussion surrounding the tightness of her clothing.

“That was the first time I have ever felt truly disgusted in my skin. I took a shower and kept scrubbing and scrubbing.”

The Student Life Office doesn't enjoy settling these infractions. They try to strike a balance between enforcing dress code and honoring each student's individuality. As Student Life Office Assistant Ms. Forhan explains, “self expression is very important, but [the dress code] is also mutual respect.”

Woods's experience reveals how confusion and inconsistency lead to difficult situations, even with the handbook readily available. Similarly to other students, she does not outright dislike the dress code.

During her time as a student, Mrs. Anzaldi '13 says, “Reserve Green I really liked because it was easy... I already cared [about WRA and myself], but I think it was a visible representation of how much I cared.”

Anzaldi explains that seeing the students today wear the same thing she wore fosters a bond of connection between all generations of students. She adds that enforcing dress code can be uncomfortable, and she focuses less on the minutiae of the code and more on its spirit.

“When I'm enforcing it, I feel that I'm helping the students to be their best selves. I see it less about getting them in trouble and more about

helping guide them.”

Gisa Karamaga '22 agrees the focus should be on the spirit of the dress code. An advocate for promoting inclusivity for nonbinary students, Karamaga explains current policies “force children to choose between masculinity and femininity.”

He adds that enforcing the spirit of the dress code does not mean totally disregarding the rules because there are “other things enforced by teachers that aren’t in the dress code... a lot about body type,” something Karamaga sees as problematic. He aims to ensure safety and inclusivity in both the enforcement and the letter.

Karamaga’s points highlight a delicate balance that must be struck between hard dress code and its enforcement. This juggling act is further complicated by the varying emotions and perspectives each person brings to the table.

Mr. Butensky-Bartlett (Mr. BB) knows this conundrum well as an eight-year faculty member at WRA. He explains, “when you’re an authority figure, you’re by-the-book with everything because you’re a role model.”

The pressure to dress code correctly and exemplify good behavior can be intimidating. BB admits that he even keeps an extra tie and blazer in his office in case he forgets. He adds that having a classroom right above the SLO helps because when a student is out of dress, he can direct them to stop by.

BB acknowledges that teachers are not infallible. Since he focuses on teaching, he often does not notice out-of-dress students. This has become more apparent recently because it has “been tough this year especially [because] last year was covid casual.”

Mrs. Anzaldi echoes this statement, explaining, “we are rebuilding culture and tradition, and last year we didn’t really have a dress code.”

For newcomers like Sehar Mahesh '25, the impact is different. Mahesh

explains, “If you’ve had previous experience with a strict dress code, then it’s pretty obvious what you can and cannot wear... [otherwise] it’s a little harder to understand the concept. ”

She also believes that the parameters need to be better explained. Additionally, Mahesh mentions that, from her perspective, boys must conform to a stricter dress code than their female counterparts, and enforcement varies.

“They need to put more effort into practicing discipline with dress code or make the rules more lenient,” she opines.

BB echoes this statement, saying, “I’m glad that [the dress code] evolves.”

Anzaldi offers that supporting dress code “doesn’t mean there can’t be alterations [to policy], but that they should be done with care and purpose.”

Thomas suggests the use of more examples to use as references from the beginning and clearly and succinctly stating dress code rules so students can better prepare for and understand the dress expectations.

“I mean, I was coming across an ocean,” she states, referencing how her confusion led to her choice of attire. “I didn’t want to get dress coded for dressing weirdly.”

She provides important insight, saying, “it’s important to eliminate doubt, while still allowing students to understand the scope of their choice.”

Judicial Selection Method: Merit Selection

Elba Heddeshimer

When considering every method of judicial selection there is clearly one superior choice; merit selection with a retention election after a period of time. This judicial selection process operates in a manner that selects the most qualified candidates while still allowing citizens to hold judges accountable by hosting retention elections. A nominating committee made up of people holding multiple positions such as lawmakers, private lawyers, and people appointed by the governor, select the most experienced candidates, screen them, and then send their names to the governor. By allowing this informed committee to select the judges instead of voters, there is no room for political influence, such as having a well-known last name or the funding of a millionaire. Through this process, there is more of a focus on the candidate's professional qualifications rather than the political party they belong to, the "fame" they have, or the amount of money they have because the retention election would not mention a political party. Since candidates do not rely on campaign contributions, there is less room for meddling in the results of court cases based on politics and therefore more transparency around the court's rulings.

Some argue that these committees, which consist of public officials, lawmakers, and people appointed by the governor, remove the ability for citizens to have a say in their judges. Although it is true that judges chosen through the merit selection process are not elected by fellow citizens, they are able to vote in the retention elections. The issue with citizens voting in elections is that most are unable to extensively research the candidates running for judge. By having a nominating committee designed only for the purpose of selecting judges, this committee is able to select the most qualified, educated, and diverse group of candidates.

After the committee chooses its candidates, the governor can then choose an individual from the names forwarded. This selected person then serves as a judge for some time. After serving for a period of time as a judge, in order to be reelected as judge, the candidate must be reelected by voters in a retention election, where voters vote "yes" to keep them or "no" to get rid of them. These retention elections allow for a judge's performance to be evaluated, while also holding them accountable by the citizens. Although the merit selection process has its imperfections, this process is arguably the most appropriate form of judicial selection.

Person Profile of Aung San Suu Kyi David Hu

Pictures:
Determined



Sincere



Background:

Aung San Suu Kyi was born June 19, 1919 in Yangon, Myanmar. She attended schools in Burma until 1960 when her mother was

appointed as ambassador to India. She kept her further education in India and later attended University of Oxford. In 1988, when she went back to Burma to nurse her dying mother, the brutal military government of U Ne Win led her to speak out and start a non-violent struggle for democracy and human rights. However, what she faced was the persecution from the government. Since 1989, she had been repeatedly under house arrest and travel restrictions. One time, she was nearly put into prison. However, these all could not stop her determination to bring true democracy to Burma. She led her own party “National League for Democracy” to win most of the legislative seats in 2012, hence defeating and overthrowing the corrupt and brutal military government.

Role in the history:

The most rewardable achievement of Aung San Suu Kyi is liberating the Myanmar people from the cruel and corrupt military government. To end the military government, she entered politics and founded the National League for Democracy(NLD). She led the NLD to win the parliamentary election and opened the first openly contested parliament. After being elected as state counselor, she and her party overthrew the military government and brought democracy and human rights to Myanmar. Moreover, after freeing the country, she was elected as the state counselor but kept fighting on the frontline of human rights. Her most recent focus was on the care and treatment of ethnic armed organizations in Myanmar and a solution to create a multi-ethnic Myanmar.

Integrity Profile:

The main criticism of Aung San Suu Kyi was on her treatment of Muslim Rohingya people of Myanmar’s Rakhine state. Between 2016 and 2017, some Rohingya militants attacked the police station in Rakhine state. Later on, the military and police initiate a huge brutal campaign against the whole entire group. Aung Suu San Kyi, as the state counselor who promised to work on Myanmar’s ethnic problem on her referendum, was accused of incompetency on allowing the Myanmar military’s attack on Rakhin people and abuse on human rights. People criticized her being ignorant about this event and

inaction on condemning the military who caused this tragedy. Several human rights organizations also revoked the honor bestowed to her because of the protests on Aung Suu San Kyi's negligence.

Assessment of Individual:

In conclusion, Aung San Suu Kyi is a great fighter for human rights and democracy with unbreakable determination. In her rough and rugged life, she has faced countless challenges such as persecution from the military government and the death of her beloved husband. Nevertheless, none of these could stop her from protecting the democracy of Myanmar. She established the National League for Democracy to better serve the people. She overthrows the military government to free the Myanmar people and opens the public contested parliament to bring true democracy to Myanmar. Even though Aung San Suu Kyi's weak response to the military's campaign on Rohingya people is disappointing, it is a difficult task for her to govern a multi-ethnic country with a complex history. It is not enough to be the main reason to describe her as a weak and disqualified politician. In the history book, Aung San Suu Kyi should be recorded as the spiritual leader of Myanmar people and the second greatest people in the whole Myanmar history for her achievements on subduing the military government and founding the democracy of Myanmar.

Source:

<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Aung-San-Suu-Kyi>
<https://www.thefamouspeople.com/profiles/aung-san-suu-kyi-11.php>
<https://awpc.cattcenter.iastate.edu/directory/aung-san-suu-kyi/>
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/nov/23/aung-san-suu-kyi-fall-from-grace-myanmar> <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-pacific-11685977>

Common App

Lauren Jacot

The massive wooden doors fought with the students as they flooded the doorways of middle school, squeezing themselves through the small opening. I dodged students with their overstuffed backpacks swinging at me after exiting the school bus; this daily event was the prerequisite to most mornings. Even when the hallways were occupied by only a few students, I still blended with the crowd. I possessed many similarities in morals that did not differentiate me from the others—I shared mutual views with the majority of my friends such as religious ideologies and political learnings. I yearned for something different; I desired to be immersed into different cultures. My middle school did not settle my appetite for learning.

The dynamic of my life transformed when I began my academic endeavor as a freshman at Western Reserve Academy; I went from being identified as a lunch code in a large public school to being addressed by my name and recognized by nearly all in a small international boarding school. Reserve put my passion to explore the world into motion. I formed friendships with students from various countries such as Russia and Germany. I had never been out of the country before, and for most of my life, that minute fact did not ring with any significance to me. My exposure to their religious values, traditions, politics and culture ignited my infatuation to travel and experience adventures out of the United States. I enjoyed engaging in conversation with my international friends on serious topics, or more lighthearted ones like when my friend Olivia from the UK corrects me everytime I say “scone” when I order at the local cafe. My curiosity of the outside world blossomed into an unbearable desire to experience the unknown.

At times, I felt I was slowly drifting away from any opportunity of traveling abroad, but that feeling gave me a window of time to discover the simplicity and happiness in my current situation. The hour commute to school was a monotonous task and distanced me from Reserve in ways that my friends did not understand. When I began driving myself, I struggled to find an efficient way to cut out two hours out of my day to drive to school— I sacrificed sleep, and time for myself in order to compensate for the time I lost. During my drive, I

often saw a particular truck that stood out from the other bland semis: this yellow truck had a cute cow on the side with dark lettering, spelling out “Borden.” My eyes would scan the other side of the highway, peering through the precipitation of all four seasons, and being Ohio, sometimes driving through weather of all four seasons in one week. As the days progressed, I looked forward to the commute due to the simplicity of spotting a Borden truck, and it gifted me with an instant smile. They were like an omen; a form of a guardian angel or a God’s reminder to keep going. I became less swallowed into the frustration and anxiety associated with my drive, and I appreciated the opportunity to attend Reserve. I learned to enjoy the drive because I loved the destination.

Reserve helped me envision myself traveling. The opportunities I would have seized to study abroad through programs were no longer an option due to the pandemic. I hope that in the future I will smile upon the time when I had to go through the monotonous motions to reach the point where I will travel abroad. My future is not predestined, but I do know that I will no longer be entertaining commutes with daydreams of unknown places because I will be living that goal, that future, that dream, I have driven towards for many years. I look forward to discovering the next Borden truck on my future roads in life.

Songwriting and Storytelling Combine Breakups and War

Hannah Ma

The Things They Carried by Tim O'Brien is a novel composed of various stories from the Vietnam War relating to a group of soldiers called Alpha Company. O'Brien manages to incorporate the concept of storytelling in order to reflect on the elements that make up a war story. Meanwhile, Taylor Swift is a famous singer-songwriter known for her ballads about breakups and boys. Although the topics Swift sings about may seem shallow and far from the complexities of war, these two contrasting art forms hold a surprising amount of parallels. In fact, a number of Swift's songs appear to be written about certain characters in O'Brien's book based on lyrical applications. The similarities between *The Things They Carried* and Swift's songwriting prove the extensive relevance of the discussed concepts as they are ones to which everybody can relate.

During the war, Tim O'Brien serves alongside a man named Norman Bowker, and both of them survive and return to society, leading to another set of obstacles. Norman Bowker finds it difficult to adjust to life back in his hometown. The chapter's first sentence describes it best: "The war was over and there was no place in particular to go" (O'Brien 131). Everywhere he looks, Norman Bowker witnesses people's lives moving on without him while stuck. Similarly, Swift's song, "right where you left me," tells of a girl who can not seem to leave the location of a break-up. Both of these characters replay memories of the past due to their inability to move forward. In the chorus, when Swift sings, "You left me no choice but to stay here forever" (1:20-1:23), she reflects the same emotions Norman Bowker possesses towards the war. He picks up his life to go to Vietnam, and he returns only to realize that everything has changed: one of his close friends who drowned is now "just an idea" (O'Brien 133), his other friends are living elsewhere, and his high school girlfriend "had her house and her new husband, and there was really nothing he could say to her" (O'Brien 133). In addition, the main girl from "right where you left me" is in an alike situation with a previous relationship:

I'm sure you got a wife out there

Kids and Christmas, but I'm unaware
'Cause I'm right where I cause no harm
Mind my business
If our love died young
I can't bear witness. (Swift 3:06-3:21)

Both this girl and Norman Bowker are expected to move on and smoothly transition back into their regular lives after they have suffered traumatic events. In reality, though, the girl can not move and Norman Bowker is fixated on driving circles around a lake in his town. When O'Brien writes, "Turning on his headlights, driving slowly, Norman Bowker remembered how he had taken hold of Kiowa's boot and pulled hard" (147), he reveals that Norman Bowker may be away from the war physically but still there mentally. His mind replays memories while driving aimlessly, parallel to the girl who feels pressure to "find somewhere, some perspective, but [she] sat and stared" (Swift 1:01-1:08). Norman Bowker and the girl in Swift's song relate to each other on a multitude of levels even though their stories are vastly different. They portray the shock and pain of recovery, and the feeling of falling behind everyone else; as the rest of the world moves on, they are frozen.

Although Norman Bowker's story is about his homecoming, most of the book takes place in Vietnam, and even though it has no clear villain, a character named Azar presents a demeanor that makes the reader uneasy. He often comments on the cruelties of war in a tactless manner and fails to show sensitivity in cases of death—even those involving his fellow soldiers. While O'Brien makes it easy to dislike Azar, he also provides instances that hint at Azar being misunderstood. He is trying to push through the same difficulties as the rest, and he gives a glimpse into a different, albeit cruel, coping mechanism. While a group of men, including Azar, is out in a river looking for a soldier named Kiowa's body, Azar initially cracked a few jokes that fell flat with the others. However, later on, when they finally discover Kiowa, Azar is unusually quiet; Norman Bowker sarcastically asks Azar for a joke, to which Azar simply replies, "No joke" (O'Brien 166). He finally displays a little remorse for his actions when face to face with the harshest of realities. In Taylor Swift's "mad woman," she describes a character who seems crazy to everybody else; she has accumulated so

much rage that her ruthless deeds horrify others. The woman's anger is the direct result of others' actions, just like Azar's jarring personality is amplified by the war. The lyrics, "No one likes a mad woman; you made her like that" (Swift 1:07-1:12), are also fitting from Azar's perspective towards the war and his rift with his platoon mates. Azar's role as the group's unsympathetic soldier sets him apart from the rest, and in a way, he relishes it. Although the men clearly demonstrate their distaste for Azar, he never breaks from his unyielding facade outside of Kiowa's death; it even seems as if he draws from their discomfort with his jokes. In one case, Norman Bowker tells Azar, "I'm serious, man. Zip it shut" (O'Brien 158), and Azar smiles and continues firing off his jokes in return. Azar's usage of other people's insults as fuel perfectly relates to Swift's pre-chorus: "Every time you call me crazy, I get more crazy; what about that? And when you say I seem angry, I get more angry" (0:48-0:59). Azar and this woman have been separated *because* of the way they face their hardships, and it has led them even farther down that road, causing the divide to grow.

Kiowa's death not only affects Azar deeply, but the rest of the soldiers as well. Unlike Azar, Kiowa is well-liked and one of Tim O'Brien's closest friends. He personifies a balanced moral compass and patiently guides the other soldiers through scarring experiences. Kiowa's noble nature makes his death all the more devastating, especially for Tim O'Brien who later reflects, "In a way, maybe, I'd gone under with Kiowa" (O'Brien 178). He feels like he lost a piece of himself to the field Kiowa died in, listing: "My best friend. My pride. My belief in myself as a man of some small dignity and courage" (O'Brien 176). Tim O'Brien manages to recover a majority of these lost pieces years after the war. He revisits the exact river that drowned Kiowa and places Kiowa's signature moccasins at the bottom of it, allowing them to get swept away by the current. After doing so, Tim O'Brien realizes that "now after two decades [he]'d mostly worked [his] way out" (O'Brien 178). It is this moment of clarity that eerily resembles Taylor Swift's song "Clean" from her album *1989*. With "Clean" being a song-long analogy between letting go of someone and rain cleansing a drowning person, there are the obvious parallels to Kiowa's drowning. However, deeper than that are the feelings of turmoil before peace. In the first pre-chorus of "Clean," Swift sings, "Hung my head as I lost

the war, and the sky turned black like a perfect storm” (0:55-1:03). While she may be initially speaking of a break-up, her words also articulate Tim O’Brien’s state when Kiowa dies. In order to relieve his pain, Tim O’Brien returns to the precise place where he lost himself; it is a painful process similar to Swift’s description: “When I was drowning, that’s when I could finally breathe” (1:10-1:14). The very thing that is causing pain—the rain—is helping her reach moments of resolution, much like Tim O’Brien’s journey back to Vietnam. Taylor Swift and O’Brien’s choices to use water in their storytelling is no coincidence as it symbolizes purification; however, both also choose to use water as the cause of the pain, too. As a result, their two characters who hold onto distinct struggles from water also share the feelings of relief and tranquility brought by water.

Tim O’Brien’s trip to Vietnam is a gift to his daughter Kathleen to present the period of his life at war. Since she never experienced the war first-hand, Kathleen depicts an outside perspective out with a sense of naïvety, and even though Tim O’Brien wishes to share stories from the war, he resists doing so to protect Kathleen’s innocence. When Kathleen poses a difficult question, asking if he had killed anybody, Tim O’Brien recalls, “I did what seemed right, which was to say, ‘Of course not,’ and then to take her onto my lap and hold her for a while” (O’Brien 125). Tim O’Brien’s preservation of Kathleen’s youth is portrayed in Taylor Swift’s “Never Grow Up” as well. As the song’s title suggests, it urges children and teens to savor the present. The first verse is written from a parent’s perspective while holding a new-born and crooning, “You got nothing to regret; I’d give all I have, honey, if you could stay like that” (0:35-0:45). Parenthood is a unique position: with bringing new life into the world, it is almost a reflex to reflect on one’s own life. Tim O’Brien brings his own emotional weight to it as he carries the guilt he feels from Vietnam, and by inserting Kathleen during Tim O’Brien’s most remorseful moments, O’Brien—the author—provides a striking contrast between war’s darkest moments and purity of children. Swift’s lyrics, “No one’s ever burned you, nothing’s ever left you scarred” (2:20-2:27), compares to Tim O’Brien’s moment in Vietnam when he realizes “the war was as remote to [Kathleen] as cavemen and dinosaurs” (O’Brien 175). Children and war are complete opposites, and O’Brien’s incorporation of both of them into Tim

O'Brien's life reveals the schism between his past and present and if and how he chooses to bridge them. In the future, Tim O'Brien hopes to "tell [Kathleen] exactly what happened, or what [he] remember[s] happening" (O'Brien 125), but for now, he is content in hoping she never grows up.

"Never Grow Up" is not the only song of Taylor Swift's to engender the feeling of nostalgia; on her Grammy award-winning album *folklore*, track seven, fittingly called "seven," possesses a similar sentiment. However, it differs from "Never Grow Up" by an important aspect: it is told from a child's point of view, speaking to another child. It evokes memories similar to those in the last chapter of *The Things They Carried*. Both tell of a relationship between two kids and all of their thoughts and feelings. Tim O'Brien describes his own childhood memories, focusing on his girlfriend from fourth grade named Linda. On their date and at school, he recognizes that he loves her with all of his nine-year-old heart; unfortunately, Linda contracts a brain tumor and dies. With a love that strong, Tim O'Brien inevitably feels the loss to the same degree, and in order to deal with it, he uses his imagination, as children do, recalling, "I willed her alive. It was a dream, I suppose, or a daydream, but I made it happen" (O'Brien 225). The children in "seven" think in the same manner when confronted with what sounds like domestic violence:

I think your house is haunted
Your dad is mad and that must be why
And I think you should come live with me
And we can be pirates
Then you won't have to cry. (Swift 1:25-1:43)

After dealing with harsh matters at a young age, people are affected by it forever because those are the memories that stick. O'Brien writes about Linda decades later because he believes he can "[keep] the dead alive with stories" (226). In this sense, storytelling is akin to songwriting which also preserves emotions and details of an event, as acknowledged in the lyrics, "passed down like folk songs, the love lasts so long" (Swift 0:56-1:04). The chapter "The Lives of the Dead" and song "seven" tie together the relationship between a child's imagination, storytelling, and songs; they all capture bits of life to hold on to them forever—something that is priceless.

Linda is the last character the reader meets; in contrast, at the very beginning of *The Things They Carried*, the first character introduced is First Lieutenant Jimmy Cross. Being the leader of the Alpha Company, he is expected to be strict and decisive, but one look into his thoughts proves otherwise. Jimmy Cross is often second-guessing himself and lost in thought, much like the speaker in Taylor Swift's "The Archer." Starting with Jimmy Cross's backstory, O'Brien pointblank writes, "Jimmy Cross did not want the responsibility of leading these men ... He did not care one way or the other about the war, and he had no desire to command" (160-161), pointing towards the fact that Jimmy Cross's heart is not in the war; he is detached from it even though he is physically there. This mentality is much like the role of an actual archer who engages in combat from a distance. It makes sense, though, since Jimmy Cross is only twenty-four years old when he is thrust into war as a lieutenant. Another hindrance between Jimmy Cross and the war is his love for Martha, a girl back home. He thinks about her so much that after the death of one of his men, "Jimmy Cross crouched at the bottom of his foxhole and burned Martha's letters. Then he burned the two photographs" (O'Brien 22). Both his age and broken heart prevent him from being the lieutenant he wishes to be. Tim O'Brien describes him as "just a kid at war, in love" (O'Brien 11). These characteristics of Jimmy Cross match the lines in the song, "I never grew up, it's getting so old; help me hold on to you" (0:41-0:48). He lacks the wisdom that accompanies age to lead the Alpha Company while also being distracted with thoughts of Martha. Consequently, Jimmy Cross pushes himself to change his methods by depersonalizing his men, reminding himself that "his obligation [is] not to be loved but to lead" (O'Brien 25). In "The Archer," Swift sings about the same need for remoteness in order to prevent herself from getting hurt: "'cause cruelty wins in the movies" (0:19-0:25). Though Jimmy Cross tries this technique, his true character shines through because he cares. After Kiowa's death, he treks through the same internal struggle and guilt. As the Alpha Company wades in the river, searching for Kiowa's body, Jimmy Cross repeatedly writes and rewrites a letter to Kiowa's father in his head. He debates between a straightforward approach or an apologetic take or an impersonal explanation. No matter the front Jimmy Cross chooses to put up, though, his restlessness gives away his an-

guish. In addition, the other soldiers blame Jimmy Cross for his questionable choice that led to Kiowa's death and realize their lieutenant is just as prone to human error as them. Jimmy's exhausting efforts to maintain a tough exterior are outlined in "The Archer" too: the lines "I've got a hundred thrown-out speeches I almost said to you" (Swift 0:26-0:32) and "they see right through, can you see right through me?" (Swift 2:10-2:14) represent his overthinking and his relationship with his men, respectively. Jimmy Cross personifies the pressures of war, even someone who does not necessarily care for the role, and "The Archer" elaborates on the underlying torment of a person, like Jimmy Cross, putting on a brave face.

One of the most memorable chapters from *The Things They Carried* is called "Sweetheart of the Song Tra Bong." Tim O'Brien hears of this story by his friend Rat Kiley from his time with a different company. Rat Kiley tells of his friend, Mark Fossie, who brings his girlfriend, Mary Anne Bell, to Vietnam. Surprisingly, Mary Anne falls in love with Vietnam and living in the wild; as she describes it, "When I'm out there at night, I feel close to my own body, I can feel my blood moving, my skin and my fingernails, everything" (O'Brien 106). Eventually, Mary Anne transforms into a person Mark Fossie no longer recognizes, a blow to his mental health, especially since it happened shortly after their engagement. He desperately tries to hang on to Mary Anne, whispering, "I can't just let her go like that" (O'Brien 107), but she still slips through his fingertips. The song "Haunted" tells the tale from Mark Fossie's perspective; the chorus starts off desperately, singing, "Come on, come on, don't leave me like this; I thought I had you figured out" (Swift 1:00-1:06), resembling Mark Fossie's confusion at Mary Anne's new persona. When Rat Kiley and Mark Fossie first see the alternate Mary Anne, Rat Kiley remembers, "It took a few seconds to appreciate the full change" (O'Brien 105); it must have been stupefying for Mark Fossie to see his childhood sweetheart in this light, throwing away their plan to spend the rest of their lives together. One line in particular from the song is strikingly similar to a phrase from the book; Swift sings, "something's made your eyes go cold" (0:55-1:00) and O'Brien writes, "In part it was her eyes: utterly flat and indifferent. There was no emotion in her stare, no sense of the person behind it" (105). While "Haunted" reflects Mark Fossie's take on

events, “Champagne Problems” adopts Mary Anne Bell’s views. The beat of “Haunted” is fast-paced, causing the song to have a distressed tone, while “Champagne Problems” is much more slow and steady, causing the song to have a reflective and almost remorseful tone. The latter tells the story of a girl who shocks everybody by refusing a proposal; since no one understands her actions, the town gossips imply that her history of mental illness is at fault. Considering the summary of “Champagne Problems,” a clear parallel forms with Mary Anne Bell. While Mary Anne chooses the path she goes down, she feels it is simply who she is, and there is no changing that; unfortunately, Mark Fossie does not fit into that lifestyle. Mary Anne is not cruel; in fact, she even seems doleful when O’Brien writes: “‘You’re in a place,’ Mary Anne said softly, ‘where you don’t belong’” (106). Additionally, Mary Anne is aware how crazy she appears, telling Mark Fossie, “I know what you think, but it’s not...it’s not *bad*” (O’Brien 106). Similarly, Taylor Swift’s song quotes the public’s view of the girl: “‘She would’ve made such a lovely bride, what a shame she’s fucked in the head,’ they said” (2:58-3:03). Viewing Mary Anne, it is easy to judge her choices, but she makes sacrifices to get there as well. Before she leaves the soldiers, she truly fit in with them; they would all dance, swim, explore, and play volleyball. She even told Mark Fossie, “To tell the truth, I’ve never been happier in my whole life. Never” (O’Brien 95). The same goes for the girl in “Champagne Problems”: “How evergreen, our group of friends; don’t think we’ll say that word again” (Swift 2:36-2:42). Evergreen trees symbolize immortality because they last through even the worst seasons, and its usage here provides context into how Mary Anne thought their relationship and consequential circle would stay forever. Thus, after leaving, she not only lost her childhood sweetheart, but friends too. The extent of the relationships destroyed for Mary Anne testifies her commitment to her reason for abandoning Mark Fossie and the group. Although Mary Anne’s actions cut Mark Fossie sharply, she does not make those decisions lightly; she chooses that path *despite* its negative affect on her image and loneliness.

Rat Kiley may only narrate the Mark Fossie and Mary Anne Bell fallout, but he has no shortage of his own hurdles to add to that. The chapter called “Night Life” recounts a period when the Alpha

Company has to sleep through the day and march through the night. It is a rough time for all of the soldiers, but in particular, “the strain [is] too much for [Rat Kiley]. He [can’t] make the adjustment” (O’Brien 208). Ironically, the opening two lines to Taylor Swift’s “[Dear John](#)” are “long were the nights when my days once revolved around you” (0:24-0:31). Swift’s own play on words and time takes on a quite literal meaning when combined with the context of Rat Kiley. However, her usage of “you” is referring to singer-songwriter John Mayer while Rat Kiley’s life is revolving around the Vietnam War. One of the biggest difficulties for the soldiers was the darkness; at night, they can not even see themselves, let alone the rest of the platoon. Experiences like that every day create an overwhelming sense of fear, akin to Swift’s daily struggles, “counting my footsteps, praying the floor won’t fall through...again” (0:36-0:47). Taylor Swift and Rat Kiley share the same uncertainty while at someone—or something—else’s behest. Needless to say, at only nineteen years old, Rat Kiley could not handle the mentality that the war required, and Taylor Swift, at the exact same age, felt the same way as she asks Mayer: “Don’t you think nineteen’s too young to be played by your dark, twisted games?” (3:46-3:54). When Rat Kiley finally can not take anymore of the war, he removes himself from it by shooting his own foot; in order to receive medical attention, he has to fly out of Vietnam to Japan. Not much background information is provided on Rat Kiley, but it can be drawn that he regrets at least some of his time at war, particularly the last moments that will scar him forever. Swift reminisces on her relationship with the same mindset, singing, “And I look back in regret how I ignored when they said, ‘Run as fast as you can’” (2:59-3:11). O’Brien’s writing and Taylor Swift’s lyrics are analogous to each other when it comes to the torture whether at the hands of a boyfriend or war. They capture the stages of nervousness and misery and despair that ensue, especially at such a young age.

Perhaps the one song by Taylor Swift that best encapsulates *The Things They Carried* by Tim O’Brien is “[epiphany](#).” Swift explains that the song is inspired by her grandfather who fought in World War II and resulting post-traumatic stress disorder. It introduces the relationships formulated between soldiers with the line, “with you I serve, with you I fall down, down” (Swift 1:13-1:22) and touches on

a prevalent theme throughout the book: talking. Swift often wonders about the trauma her grandfather went through because of his silence, leading to the line, “And some things you just can’t speak about” (1:04-1:09). The same concept appears when Tim O’Brien is overcome with guilt after murdering a man; Kiowa urges to talk about but is met with silence. Norman Bowker has a similar experience during the aftermath of the war: as he is driving around the lake all alone, he thinks “it would [be] a good time to talk” (O’Brien 134), but he believes he has no one to turn to. Instead, he continues on his endless loop around the lake, weighed down by the words he wishes to say. Swift also outlines the same feeling in the current pandemic. She beautifully recognizes the battles of the past and present as healthcare workers are currently surrounded by copious amounts of death and hours of painstaking work. The “sir, I think he’s bleeding out” (0:59-1:02) from verse one becomes “doc, I think she’s bleeding out” (2:01-2:04) in verse two. This comparison between soldiers and medical and the comparison between Swift’s songwriting and O’Brien’s writing prove the universality of the human experience. Each person in *The Things They Carried* holds their own trials, yet numerous parallels can be drawn with the tales sung by Swift. By extrapolating this conclusion to the general population, one realizes that though individuals’ hardships are their own and unique to that person, emotions can be shared, and through these shared emotions, people as different as Taylor Swift and Tim O’Brien can be bound together.

Works Cited

- O'Brien, Tim. *The Things They Carried*. New York, Mariner Books, 1990.
- Swift, T. "The Archer." *Lover*, Big Machine Records, Taylor Swift, 2019. *Spotify*, <https://open.spotify.com/track/3pHkh-7d0lzM2AldUtz2x37?si=kUfeFkOmRM2g2on9vKXT1A>
- . "champagne problems." *evermore*, Taylor Swift, 2020. *Spotify*, <https://open.spotify.com/track/0sY6ZUTh4yoctD8VIX-z339?si=4i1SmtlcR6SL8iL6NwivgQ>
- . "Clean." *1989*, Big Machine Records, 2014. *Spotify*, <https://open.spotify.com/track/06WgOCf0LV2h4keYXDRnuh?si=BE-5hCnuhQIiu36SDfd4CyQ>
- . "Dear John." *Speak Now*, Big Machine Records, 2010. *Spotify*, <https://open.spotify.com/track/7hZuICN5ea-CuQyp443RCt6?si=6Z8cOkqdQz-oaaTP8g1nAQ>
- . "epiphany." *folklore*, Taylor Swift, 2020. *Spotify*, https://open.spotify.com/track/08fa9LFcFBTcilB3iq2e2A?si=Yc-g_7XuAT0uNxTqRlXN8Uw
- . "Haunted." *Speak Now*, Big Machine Records, 2010. *Spotify*, https://open.spotify.com/track/28M2gifMU282QBM3fKa-jIS?si=pUYuGqE3Q_6ZD8whC-SjIg
- . "mad woman." *folklore*, Taylor Swift, 2020. *Spotify*, <https://open.spotify.com/track/0RP1kqoSPkVXsKiQNhMKzV?si=ag-bhq6ywRx6L7DS9imwf9A>
- . "Never Grow Up." *Speak Now*, Big Machine Records, 2010. *Spotify*, https://open.spotify.com/track/1wJL1A0QUHJP-f2cm7tsrdw?si=qVxMLqolQnOFF_npgYnDtg
- . "New Year's Day." *reputation*, Big Machine Label Group, 2017. *Spotify*, <https://open.spotify.com/track/7F5oktn5YOsR-9eR5YsFtqb?si=mQeCvJnDQambfHYKme4gOw>
- . "right where you left me." *evermore (deluxe version)*, Taylor Swift, 2020. *Spotify*, <https://open.spotify.com/track/3zw-MVvkBe2qIKDObwgXw4N?si=0MOGpr3tTIKiOrtoyGPhSA>
- . "seven." *folklore*, Taylor Swift, 2020. *Spotify*, <https://open.spotify.com/track/76mOLcXOjOEhyY4mMF1l3r?si=zB-yc-CvZRGqcJtM36aGl-Q>

Body Positivity

Anya Mathur

There is no one way a body *should* look. Because there are infinite possibilities of what a body *can* look like, it's simply impossible to narrow it all down to one. There is no perfect body, there is no standard that should need to be met.

Still, there feels like one.

Look at almost any magazine, on any social media, on any tv show, you will see people with one kind of 'attractive' body type.

Yes, these people have beautiful bodies but it's all we ever see. There is almost no variance in what is considered 'beautiful' according to today's standards. Everywhere is the same girl with the same look setting the same expectation that shouldn't be there.

When you see the same look over and over it sets the idea in your head that that is what is normal.

Most of what you see on social media or in the modeling industry is simply unhealthy and impossible. You have no idea what a person is eating or doing to maintain the body that they have. You have no idea if their body is sustainable and keeping them healthy. It's not realistic and the average person doesn't even look like that.

The negative stigma surrounding different looking bodies is extremely detrimental to mental health. 28 million Americans will suffer an eating disorder at least once in their lives. Body dysmorphia has been on a steep rise amongst adolescents.

Fast-changing trends where only one kind of body type exists is impossible to keep up with on the internet. One minute is a BBL everybody wants, the next it's all about how visible your abs are. Trying to keep up with the quick-changing trends on what a body should look like is literally impossible because every body is different and will look different too.

I can remember once seeing a k-pop idol on social media with thousands of comments complimenting her body. I was amazed at the way

she looked and curious as to how she did it. I knew I didn't look that way and I suddenly wanted to.

I googled what her diet was. What I saw shocked me. This k-pop star, IU, limited herself to a single sweet potato a day.

Yes, *one* sweet potato a day.

112 calories.

A day.

I honestly wondered to myself how she was still alive. People need at least 1,200 calories a day to survive. She wasn't eating half of this, she wasn't eating one third of this, she was eating .09% of what she needed to survive.

And yet, her body seemed ideal. Everybody was complimenting her and she appeared to be healthy and happy in her appearance. It felt like she was doing something right and I was doing something wrong.

That day I went out and bought some sweet potatoes.

It's amazing what a single picture can make you do.

But it shouldn't!

Movements to spread body positivity and end toxic standards have been on the rise. Anybody can take part in body positivity because everybody has a body.

Popular stars such as Serena Williams, Demi Lovato, Anne Hathaway, and Simone Biles all work to support body positivity. They each embrace their bodies however they may look because they keep themselves healthy.

Each of these strong role models push to end stigma around different body types by embracing their own unique bodies. You can have short legs, you can have a wide waist, you can have a long torso, you can look however you look without overthinking it.

It is important to have good examples of a healthy body like this so that we can break the standard. The less we see unreasonable stereotypes for our bodies, the less we will start letting them affect us.

Introducing the concept of a variance in appearance to social media or the modeling industry is completely changing body positivity. There is less stigma surrounding different shapes and sizes because people are starting to see how normal it is.

The Rotary Four-Way Test is the perfect method to see how body positivity can benefit us all.

Is it the truth?

Yes, every body is different. Take a look around you, at REAL people, anytime you can. You will never see two people with the exact same look. Because, yes, every body is different.

The misconception that there is only one way to look good and healthy is WRONG. The TRUTH is you can look a billion different ways and still be attractive and confident and as healthy as ever.

Absolutely nobody is perfect. You can find a flaw in your body but that doesn't make it any less ideal than the body of anybody else. Only you can decide how much you love your body. This is a fact.

Your self-image affects your physical and mental health. Poor self-image from unreal ideals are the root to many mental struggles such as body dysmorphia, anorexia, and bulimia. This shift in mental health also affects physical health. Reaching impossible expectations is literally just that. Impossible. Trying to make a body into something that it simply isn't feeds into unhealthy methods such as overeating or over-exercise. Body positivity would help bring an end to these health issues. This is a fact.

Body positivity will help people see what is healthy. You can absolutely love the way your body looks but still not know how to take care of it. By seeing diversity in bodies it becomes easier to find what can help your body. Every body has different needs and it is difficult for these needs to be met if only one type is getting representation. Body positivity will assist with the spread of knowledge. This is a fact.

Is it fair to all concerned?

Absolutely.

Body positivity is all about fairness. It's about time that equality is served in the media when concerning body appearance.

What is unfair is what is going on right now. Only one kind of body, commonly unachievable for the average person, being put on display over and over and over again. Only one kind of body, often unhealthy to reach, being an expectation for everybody everywhere.

It's time for this unfairness to end and for everybody to be appreciated as it is. It's time for each body to receive fair treatment.

You are who you are, you look how you look, and that is all that is fair about that.

Will it build goodwill and better friendships?

It's unfortunate but true that some relationships are hurt or even ended over lack of body positivity. How does it feel when somebody, especially somebody close to you comments on your body?

Body positivity helps to foster environments where there is no more body shaming. No more fear or worry about what other people think about your body because it is YOUR body.

By taking away this fear and worry, stronger friendships based on less superficial subjects can take form. Friendships can start to feel safer.

Every relationship will start to feel safer. You can walk around freely knowing that absolutely nobody is judging you on the way you look because the way you look is perfectly fine.

There can be more goodwill amongst one another because there is no animosity over surface-level problems. Look past the outside and everybody can be happier.

If the people you share good relationships with support body positivity, you are surrounding yourself with people who can help you with several things such as confidence and self-esteem. You can help them in return, making a perfect bubble of better mental and physical health.

Help each other by staying positive.

Will it be beneficial to ALL concerned?

Undoubtedly, yes.

It is time for every person of every body type to get representation. Instead of targeting the push of one kind of body ALL will be able to love who they are.

Seeing a variety of bodies with body positivity benefits all concerned because all concerned will finally be given a platform.

Nobody will be left out anymore because all concerned can feel happy as they were. Providing body positivity for any and all shapes is beneficial to each and every shape.

Nobody is losing anything by sharing representation, the only change being made is normalization of normal bodies. Something that should have been done from the very start, something that everybody needs.

Every aspect of the Rotary four-way test perfectly applies to body positivity, making it the perfect solution.

Together, let's all resolve issues in the media and within society as a whole by supporting and spreading body positivity.

You have a body? You can do it!

Thank you.

Is Victor Frankenstein a Homosexual?

Peter McGinnes

In the early 1800s, some authors were centuries ahead of their time by implementing the theme of homosexuality in literature, a crime punishable by a torturous death. In Mary Shelley's 1818 novel, *Frankenstein*, Dr. Victor Frankenstein becomes obsessed with the idea of bringing life back from the dead. This fascination results in Frankenstein constructing a creature out of human corpses and giving it life via electric shock. The remainder of the story follows Frankenstein's life as he observes his creation develop into a murderer. This pressure drives Victor into a deep depressive state. Despite this, he always has his best friend, Henry Clerval, by his side to keep his spirits up. In literature, sexuality is not commonly stated directly. However, a reader must read between the lines to attempt to analyze what the author is alluding to. In this novel, it is evident that one of the hidden themes is homosexuality. Victor Frankenstein's desire to fulfill his repressed homosexual desires is shown through the obsessive chase between Victor and the creature, Frankenstein's relationship with Henry Clerval, and Shelley's sexual orientation.

Ever since Frankenstein constructed the creature, it has been evident that they have had a shared obsession with each other. In Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, Frankenstein proclaims, "Never will I omit my search, until he or I perish" (Shelley 147). After explaining how the creature would leave messages etched into trees for Frankenstein to find, he stated how he would never give up the pursuit of the creature until either one of them dies. This demonstrates how Frankenstein was willing to devote his whole life to the creature. This obsession far exceeds the boundaries of a shared hatred or even a friendship. Their bond was built on a foundation of love. Again from *Frankenstein*, in a conversation with his friend, Robert Walton, Frankenstein proclaims, "...call on the manes of... Victor, and thrust your sword into his heart" (Shelley 150). Here, Victor promises Walton to help him from the afterlife to ensure that the creature perishes. This shows how Frankenstein still thinks about the creature even in his last breaths. He does not want the creature to know a life in which Frankenstein is not present. It is also probable that

Frankenstein says because he desires to reunite with the creature in the afterlife as soon as possible. This desire is caused by the fantasy that they can continue to build their romantic relationship. Frankenstein and the creature become so infatuated with each other that they center each of their entire lives around the other, eventually leading to each of their deaths being caused by the other.

As if Frankenstein's infatuation with the creature was not enough, he also falls for his best friend, Henry Clerval. Again from Shelley's *Frankenstein*, Frankenstein describes Clerval's soul as "...overflow[ing]... with ardent affections" (Shelley 112). In other words, Frankenstein receives passionate affection from Clerval. According to dictionary.com, "passionate affection" is defined as "feelings or experiences of strong sexual desire." This shows the type of bond the two men have: a romantic relationship. Additionally, Frankenstein even admits to the shared love between him and Clerval by exclaiming, "How sincerely you did love me, and endeavor to elevate my mind until it was on a level with your own!" (Shelley 45). To put it simply, Frankenstein describes Clerval's feelings of "love" towards him. Although the word "love" can be used when referring to platonic relationships, at the time in which this novel was written, that was much less common than it is today. Therefore, it is most likely that Shelley used the word to describe the romantic feelings between Frankenstein and Clerval. With many contextual clues, the relationship between Frankenstein and Clerval is much more intimate than just a friendship.

There is much more to this novel than solely bland words on a page. Shelley poured an immense amount of her personality into the story and, when analyzing the text, it is necessary to look into what was happening in her life behind the scenes. In 1835, Shelley wrote in a letter to her friend, Edward Trelawney, "I was apt to get tousy-mousy for women." The phrase "tousy-mousy" was a popular slang phrase for "vagina" in the 19th century. In the letter, Shelley's statement was rather blunt, meaning that she was ready and willing to have intimate relationships with women. Therefore, displaying homosexual desires. In fact, Shelley was in a polyamorous relationship with a woman and a man. In a blog post, Laura Boyle

proclaims, “Over the years, she lived in what today would be a V with Percy and Jane Claire.” This quote refers to the relationship between Mary Shelley, Percy Shelley, and Jane Claire. According to the same blog post, Mary Shelley had been exposed early on to the idea of a polyamorous relationship by her progressive parents. They instilled the idea in her mind that marriage was unimportant and a waste of time and effort. Nevertheless, this relationship shows how Shelley had a romantic relationship with another woman. Because of Shelley’s bisexual behaviors, it is easy to imagine that she would have wanted to express the topic of homosexuality by writing about it. However, she felt it was too taboo of a topic to blatantly state, so she knew it was necessary to keep it hidden between the lines. After viewing this novel through the lens of Shelley and her bisexual behaviors, one can see the intense will she would have felt to express her sexuality through writing.

Victor Frankenstein’s eagerness to fulfill his repressed homosexual desires is shown through the obsessive chase between Victor and the creature, Frankenstein’s relationship with Henry Clerval, and Shelley’s sexual orientation. Even though Frankenstein and the creature each try to live their own lives, their romantic attraction to each other always ends up bringing the two together. It went so far that they even died because of each other. Additionally, Frankenstein’s relationship with Henry Clerval was far too intimate to have just been platonic. Finally, Mary Shelley’s sexual orientation must have played a large part in many decisions while writing the novel. It is essential to analyze texts to find glimpses of hidden sexuality because, when looking at the time period in which this book was written, there was a stigma against homosexuality, so many authors did not feel comfortable addressing it directly. As a result, *Frankenstein*, has glimpses of homosexuality scattered throughout, and that is an unarguable fact.

Works Cited

- Ball, Siobhan. "Famous Bis: Mary Shelley." *bi.org*, 11 Mar. 2020, bi.org/en/articles/famous-bis-mary-shelley. Accessed 16 Dec. 2021.
- Boyle, Laura. "Mary Shelley Would Have Been Happier If She Had a Polyamorous Community." *Ready For Polyamory*, 1 June 2020, www.readyforpolyamory.com/post/mary-shelley-would-have-been-happier-if-she-had-a-polyamorous-community. Accessed 16 Dec. 2021.
- Shelley, Mary. *Frankenstein*. 1818. New York, W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2012.

English Final Project

Ela Mody

In my lifetime, I have witnessed many conflicts. Political, religious and ideological conflicts populate the news, both in America and abroad. I have never been at the front line of any of these conflicts, and never dealt with the direct ramifications. My childhood and formative experiences were characterized by stability not displacement. I can't imagine being forced away from my home because I wasn't safe there.

I have heard briefly about the Partition, and knew that it happened where my family is from, but I never thought about the effect it had on my relatives. I never knew that someone in my family was deeply affected by this.

During the Partition of India, British India was divided into India, East Pakistan and West Pakistan. The British were leaving India at the end of their colonial reign, but right before they left, they divided the country. During the time of colonialism, the British fueled religious conflicts and tension between Muslims, Hindus, and Sikhs. The Partition was to separate these groups and break apart India. Someone who had never been to India came from Great Britain to draw lines to separate the Muslim majority areas from the Hindu majority area. Wherever they go, the British draw lines. These lines in India didn't even fulfill their purpose of dividing the religions. These borders didn't solve problems, they just displaced people.

It goes to show how much of life is shaped by political forces and arbitrary borders.

My relative doesn't talk about this much, which is why I never knew... I thought I knew her... But I was unaware of the biggest events in her life. I learned from my aunt. My aunt gave me the phone number of my relative and I called her. I felt awkward asking her to share her story because I didn't want her to relive her trauma. How does one decide what is appropriate to say in this situation? So I didn't ask too many details, I treaded lightly. Maybe I was afraid to hear it or maybe I was concerned for her.

But still, I had so many questions. Why did she have to move?

What was the experience like? How did she get there? How did she set up a new life? I had the opportunity to hear my elder's story. I have a chance to give memory to this seemingly forgotten tragedy. Having her story is my resistance against the erasure of the plight of my ancestors. She gives a human face to something which in history has been written in terms of numbers. One of the largest migrations of millions of people across the border, millions of people crossed the border, and she was one of them.

She lived in Karachi, British India. She was a little girl, 7 years old, when they divided India and Pakistan. Karachi is situated in current day Pakistan, and because she was Hindu, she had to move across the demarcation. She said that it was very rough in Pakistan so they had to leave the country immediately. When I asked about the violence, she exclaimed, "Your neighbors turned against you!" Much of the country was moving out of Pakistan. At first they traveled on foot, but eventually got on a ship. "Myself and my oldest sister, two of us came together, there were no places, no seats, no nothing. You just sit on the floor, put some sheets or something, you want to sleep, you sleep there. There were no seats, no rooms, no cabinets, Nothing. The people were so many on the ship that we have no place to sit... And I remember I was so sick." She was sick from traveling on the sea, and was, "Vomiting and vomiting, those days sea traveling was very bad!" This journey on the sea, which took 3 days, brought her and her sister to Bombay.

All due to the haphazard, meaningless borders implemented by the British. It's almost like someone scribbled some lines on a map, I can do that. Does that mean I could control the world?

Many times I had to interrupt, and ask for clarifications because of her accent, which muffled through the phone with her broken English. I recorded the call, and as I am listening to it, I still struggle to understand what she is saying. Why is communicating so hard, why do I struggle to connect with my family, why do I feel guilty? I want so badly to give an accurate account of what happened, but I can't seem to piece together everything.

Her older brother went to Bombay before she and her sister. After she left, most of her family stayed in Karachi and came to Bombay later. "They came separate, everybody came separate, we were separate." When they arrived in Bombay, they realized their cousin lived there. "We went to his house and stayed there, uh... about um 10 days or something like that, and my family came one by one, one by one. And then after that we have to move to the camp. They had built the camps so we lived in those camps." I said, "Like a refugee camp?" She responded, "Refugee camps?... Oh yea." Everything was communal, there were no borders here. All the people there shared the same space, the same toilet, no houses. "We were all the time so sick, the camps, the food was no good, we got infections, everybody, it was a.. uh very bad uh... situation." She was there a long time, 2 years maybe. They put them in school but it was 2 miles away so they'd walk in the morning and come back walking. "We had no other way. We used to go to school, walking walking walking. Everybody used to walk together. And then, after a year and a half or 2 years we moved to another state." This state was Maharashtra.

I found out from my aunt that my relative is Sindhi. After the partition in 1947, most Sindhi Hindus and Sindhi Sikhs migrated to the new India. It was the displacement of an entire group of people. All of a sudden you wake up and you're in the wrong place, on the wrong side of the border because of your religion and then you have to leave everything behind. Why do we live in a world where there are refugees?

Flowers grow across borders, for they don't know them. There are some things, some forces that transcend borders.

"In Maharashtra we moved to Kolhapur [and got a small place], and their language was *muffled*, wearing the different clothes... everything was different then we had, completely different culture. And then they put me in my school where I didn't know a word of their language. Absolutely I didn't know a word of that language... And you can, you can imagine the fear... going to a school where you can't even say hello to anybody, but somehow I survived."

She learned the language and ended up finishing the school. But I emphasize, she had to learn an entire new set of languages.

During this time, her family was again separated in different states. Half of her family stayed in Bombay, while she was in Maharashtra. Later she moved back to Bombay.

She could never go back to Karachi. She has never returned. She said that Muslims killed so many Hindus in Pakistan and vice versa in India. Both communities are responsible for this violence. She was scared of the continuous tension. I asked if she'll ever go back and she nearly shouted, "No way!" The religious conflict still exists because, "Each one thinks their religion is better." In 70 years it has gotten worse.

It is a funny concept to me that she went from living in India to living in India. She left her own country to go to her own country. She became a foreigner where she grew up. It is not lost on me that after moving, she was a Hindu in the new India where she "belonged" and being displaced moved her to her "home". Even though she was a refugee she was welcomed into India. She easily became a citizen, became part of the majority, yet did she belong? She was moved to be surrounded by people the British thought were just like her. But all Hindus don't share the same culture and language. The British thought they were the same people even though they have so many differences. Borders don't define home.

After my interview, I needed to process this story so I called my aunt. My aunt gave me further explanation, "Fear has never left her. She lives very simply due to being in a refugee camp because those are really formative experiences. She doesn't use a dishwasher and dryer, if you open her drawers there are saved plastic utensils because she collects things." At the age of 7 she was ingrained with resourcefulness. She had no choice.

Here I am, writing this story, creating art. Art is about reclaiming stories. Reclaiming the past, reclaiming pain, reclaiming trauma. And expressing hope. Art fosters connection and opens conversation. I opened a conversation that I will never be able to close because now I know.

Tradition

Annie Nguyen

The girl's parents told her on her 9th birthday that the family would move cross-country to a new house and town. As a self-proclaimed *city girl*, she thought her tastes were too refined and exquisite to inhabit such a rural place, and even now she claims she lives in the "good" part of the area. The town is quaint and religious, but not one where people seek to live or visit out of their own free will. No, this is a town that is the beginning of the upward mobility journey. The youth graduate or find jobs, yearning to get away from the town and their families and the generational trauma that root them to the place.

They hope they can escape and raise their own children somewhere else to escape this trauma.

This is just one of the many traditions that carry the town. The others, like the ice cream social held every July to celebrate and fund-raise the volunteer firefighters, are set by the families that have lived in the town for the generations since it was founded. These are the only families that willingly stay in the town. There are now more churches than people.

Occasionally, an outsider joins. Or a family. To interrupt the stable flow of the town.

The girl's parents, in an attempt to explain their decision, said, "A new school and new friends? And you get to decorate your room!". Secretly, she did not mind. The girl had gotten bored of the city where she lived, her house, but especially the people. The kids at school were nice but her reserved nature cast her as a loner amongst the others. When her mind entertained her the most, she truly had no desire to interact with her peers. A new town did not seem that bad, even if it meant taking a step back from the metropolitan environment to a slightly more conservative and outdated community. Gazing at the dilapidated banner that reads "1988 State Football Champions" in the car ride, the girl felt no nerves twist in her body. She was used to being an outsider already.

And it was clear that the family seemed like the outsiders when they arrived. The house of theirs was much like the others (everyone had the same ranch houses in this town), but when the interior was

filled with couches that cost more than the neighbors' cars. Some people in town simply chose to ignore what the family said, even if they could comprehend the conversation until the family shifted their sophisticated articulation into a homey accent. As much as the family wanted to be like a breath of fresh air that entered the community, the people in the town regarded them more like a cold chill that commenced autumn. The family's "urban" way of life antagonized the family among the working-class community, and although no one in this town dared to be impolite, whispers of cold resentment surrounded the family when they went about their business.

With her very sensible mind, the girl was a loner among her peers but she loved to be in the company of adults. This was the only true time she could open up to others. So when her parents were busy with setting up the house and renovating the bathroom, the girl knocked on the next house's doors and asked if she could watch television with the occupants- a couple past the age of 70 with impaired vision and weak ears who were sweet enough. The couple had the same ideals as the community but did not actively seek hatred in the family because their age left them little care for the world. The girl sat on the floor, holding the Maltese dog with her eyes plastered on the screen, occasionally interrupting the silence with a sentence or two between the shows. But there was a sense of eerie familiarity that she detected from this couple. With them, she was no longer an outsider. On the contrary, spending time with them felt like reuniting with old friends.

On the third day of the routine, her curiosity compelled her to ask about this peculiar sentiment. The girl leaned back during a commercial break and cocked her head to raise the question.

"Isn't it strange that we seem to know each other so well?" The old man slowly answered, "Why wouldn't we? Your parents grew up here for twenty years before they left."

Tradition really does carry the town.

Mosaics

Danielle Patterson

“Where are you from?”

A simple question, one that’s asked everywhere, one that has a simple answer. You ask

this question to get to know someone, to make small-talk or be polite, to fill space with words.

But how do you respond if you don’t know the answer? Do you announce the place you were born, or the country you’ve lived the longest or liked the most, or where your parents were born and raised? Or do you trace your bloodline and identify with your grandparents’ parents? For some, home is an unchanging place they have known their whole lives. For others, it’s more difficult to define.

Moving around has put me in plenty of situations where I am asked where I’m from.

I just moved here from...

Is my go-to answer. It satisfies the question and there’s no debate on which country I should

answer with because there’s only one possibility: the place I lived most recently. Since the first time that question was asked, I have thought

about the answer. A lot. Sometimes, I want to

answer *Brazil*. I was born there, I lived there, I’m a citizen of the country. But I

don’t *feel* Brazilian. I don’t speak Portuguese or celebrate their traditions, or even remember

much of the place I lived in. There will be moments in time when I find a song about the Favelas

or a movie set in the Amazon and wish that I was more Brazilian

—that I had kept up with the language and culture and customs so when people ask where I’m from I could answer *Brazil*. Sometimes, I want to tell them *South America*. If I don’t feel connected with the

place I was born, maybe a combination of the countries I lived in will do. Although I was young, I remember things about my years living there: hiking Machu Picchu, climbing the steps of the Chichen Itza pyramids, trying to catch a macaw in my backyard, or petting alpacas while wearing a traditional cotton poncho. Perhaps the colourful stones I collected from a neighbour's walkway or a tapestry of the Amazon with a message on the back I cannot read will help me stay connected to these places. But it is not enough. I am told I cannot be Brazilian because I am white, that my blonde hair doesn't belong in Peru, or that my forgotten Spanish wasn't learned in Mexico.

Sometimes, I almost say *the U.S.*, the land my parents were born and raised, the place I've lived in the longest. I am most fluent in English, my family celebrates Thanksgiving, and we go on vacation for the Fourth of July every year. Despite these connections, I don't *feel* American. I was not born in this country, I don't aggressively defend our right to bear arms or hang an American flag in my room. I don't like to pledge allegiance to a country that praises God and his love, but whose citizens refuse to love their neighbours. However, I am a citizen because my my parents are, I am white, I speak English, so it's easy to answer *American*.

Sometimes, I want to tell them *I'm from China*. But that's absurd. I'm not Chinese. But I I lived in its biggest city for the most memorable years of my life. I speak Mandarin and know the holidays, I wish my friends a 'Happy Lunar New Year' and travel to the nearest Asian market to eat moon cakes in celebration. I traveled the far corners of the country, learning about Chinese cultures firsthand, taking the required "Asian History" course in school. But I cannot be *from* China. My skin is too white, my hair too blonde, my eyes too blue to tell them that. So I forgo that major part of my identity when asked where I'm from.

Being asked where you are from is meant to be an easy question, asked to ease tension hanging between people meeting for the first time.

The easiness of answering that has always eluded me. I don't have a response that represents me, so I am left grasping for straws. It is difficult to define where I am from, since I come from so many places, but just as I am a combination of the countries lived in, I am a—

mosaic of everyone I've ever loved, even for a heartbeat.

I make my ramen a certain way because a friend showed me how she does it. I listen to a playlist of songs that were crafted for me by my best friend. I take a picture of the sky every time there's a pretty sunset because my friend always loved the colours. Who are we, if not a medley of everyone that we've crossed paths with? We pick up small habits and phrases from the people we love and by doing so, we keep them in our lives. Even after they're gone, pieces of their personality stay with us as we become a partial reflection of the people we care about.

Regardless of birthplace or hometown, identity is shaped and can be traced back to the people you came in contact with at various points in your life, whether it was a brief, one-time meeting, or a friendship that lasted years. Nothing about myself is truly original, I am the culmination of everyone I have ever known. My birthplace and respective countries I have lived in all have an impact on me, but that is because of the people I met there. We are forged as we go through life, coming from the relationships we form and the habits we pick up. We are mosaics, perpetually unfinished as new people continue to add pieces, our beings forever in progress.

A Journey to Remember

Tanvi Shah

“Papa, I don’t understand how you expect me to handle everything. I am trying my best to do as much as I can, but I’m not a robot. I am a human being, who deserves to relax.” “Tanvi, when I was your age I was thinking about how I can save money for my future. There is more to the world than school, my dear. I am not saying that you aren’t working hard, but I want you to realize that this is a small amount of the real struggle that you will go through in the outside world.” “Ah! You always compare me to you, stressing me out even more. I am leaving, Papa.”

“No, Tanvi! Wait! You are going to sit here, and listen to me. I met your mom in college. She was doing her bachelor’s in medicine, and I was doing mine in engineering.” “Why do I need to listen to this?” “Shut up! God gave you three mouths and two ears, I swear.” “Fine! I’ll be quiet.” My father always had a stern attitude with me, as I matured I got used to it, and knew how to deal with it. “Your mom and I truly believed that it was important to start making a living for ourselves, before we married each other. She practiced at a home clinic, and I started my computer hardware business in the year of 2000. Also known as Y2k year, it was supposed to cause havoc in the computer system world wide. Due to this, I was selling many computer hardwares. At the same time I started working for a construction company because they offered me to maintain three hundred computers. I was making cash in both directions, this continued for three years, and then I got married to your mom in 2003. Never forget, I paid for my wedding with my own personal savings.” No wonder why my mother repeatedly told me to be grateful for what my father did for me. My mother acted like my father was God himself. She was willing to do everything and anything for him. “Then, I took your mom on a honeymoon. A gift of a lifetime. We went to Switzerland, Paris, and Dubai.” “Wow! I wish I was alive during that time. Then, I would be able to travel, unlike now.” Being born in India, almost never was a positive. It was a negative in most situations. “Me too, but let me keep talking. After traveling abroad, we dreamed of a lifestyle outside of

India. Though at that moment I purchased an apartment in India for my parents, your mom, and myself using most of my savings. Then I started applying for a work visa, this process was difficult and long, but I finally got my work permit visa a few months later to come to the States. This was the first step towards my path of success. Later, a job opportunity in a mortgage company in New York was available. One of the key members in this company was your mom's uncle."

A dream of mine is to work in New York, in those tall buildings, feeling powerful, and making my father proud. Though, I doubt that will occur because nothing I do is ever enough to satisfy him. "For a couple months I was working here, and your mom and I were living in the house of your mom's uncle because I wanted to save the rental expense. It was humongous and was being renovated. During this time your mom was pregnant with you, and we were both scared because the lifestyle here is much different from India. This is why you were born in India, Tanvi." "I've always wondered how I was born there. Everyone thinks I was born here." "I tried to convince your mom to stay for a little longer. Then you could have been born here. Saving you from all the immigration troubles, but fear overpowered this idea and we went back to India. I will never forgive myself for this." "It's ok, Papa. It is what it is. We can't change the past." Obviously, I craved to be born in America. I could have been an exchange student in a different country, so many interesting opportunities could be possible. Though, I did not want to show him that I am disappointed because I should be thankful for the life he has provided me with here.

"Then in India, I started working at the same company I used to work at. Coming back made me miss America a lot. It might have just been the Statue of Liberty or the Brooklyn Bridge, but whatever it was it was pulling me back. When you were around four months old, in New Jersey, a granite company needed a business analyst. Your grandfather was working in the same company as a purchase manager, and inspired me to come to work with him. I decided that I will go alone, and get settled before I call you and your mom to come. I only came with \$1,500. This was all of my savings, I had nothing else. "What! That's impossible! People can spend that much in a second!" "I know, that's why I always tell you to be cautious of what you are buying! I trained for three weeks in New Jersey, and then the manager needed an

employee to work in Michigan. I went, of course.” It was unusual to hear my dad saying he was desperate for money because he has always told me that if I was the underdog in any circumstance, never act like it.

“I was completely transferred, and introduced to the branch manager. He was Indian, and with his good nature he provided me assistance in getting situated in the way of living here. For instance, for the first couple days after my arrival he let me sleep on his couch because I had nowhere else to go, I was able to start driving properly within two months, and began to search for a place of my own that I could call home. The problem was that my credit history was not built, and I needed this to purchase an apartment. Another way I could have bought the place was if I had a co-sign, but nobody was willing to do that for me. “Not even, family?” “Not even. I ended up giving the \$1,500 I came with, leaving me with no money. They gave me the apartment because I showed them that I have a job, and will pay slowly but surely.” “I thought someone from our family would have helped you.” “Asking for money from anyone is a lost cause. The apartment had two bedrooms, one bathroom, and nothing else. I patiently waited for my first paycheck. As soon as it was in my hands, right after I went to Walmart to get basic necessities for my home. This included my first purchase in America, it was a futon couch. “What’s a futon couch?” “It’s a couch combined with a bed, the one I had was made out of iron.” “How did you sleep on that?” “It was what I could afford. The next door neighbors were going to throw out a table that was perfect in my eyes. I asked them if I could have the table, and they gave it to me for free. With saving the expense of a table, I bought a small television box. Now, I believed it was time for you and your mom to come here. After you came, I was delighted to have my beautiful wife and little girl with me again. You were around six months old, and I still didn’t have my own car. I was using the office vehicle with my boss’s permission. It was a red colored Chevy, the smallest car in town. Continuously for a year I was working non-stop, and bought my own car. It was a silver Honda CRV, it already had 92,000 miles on it. Regardless, I was feeling very proud. I was ecstatic to buy this car because it satisfied my insecurity of my dedication failing.” My father always told me giving up is never an option, despite how many obstacles there are.

“At this moment, my life had truly begun. I started making a few friends, we celebrated your first birthday with them.” My first birthday was a faint memory. I remember one of my dad’s friends lifting me up, and throwing me high in the air. I hated the attention I was receiving from everyone on that day. “If anyone other than your mom tried to touch you, the loud crying would start. You were attached to your mom, and would never leave her alone.” “That’s so interesting because now I barely see you guys.” I am a full time day student at a boarding school. I’m either taking classes or at track practice. “You grew up too fast, Tanvi. Anyways, because of my tremendous progress working in the company my boss offered me a proposition to expand the business in the state of Ohio. First, I traveled to Ohio a few times. I was trying to find a location for the company, and for us to stay at. Your mother wanted to have an apartment with a private entry. “Of course, she did.” “Why was this comment necessary? If you have something negative to say about the person who spends most of her time taking care of you, don’t say it to me.” Shoot, why did I say that? Sometimes, I feel as if I don’t think before I speak anymore. “I’m sorry, you can continue.” “Luckily, we had enough money to purchase this special apartment. I was delighted because my credit history was built, and I didn’t need a co-sign. By the middle of 2007, the branch was set up and running. I recruited and personally trained employees for each department of the company. Not only was this a learning experience for them, but for me too. During this time I was acting as if I’m the owner, but in reality I was still the employee. For the next two years, the business kept getting stronger. Then, your grandfather left his job as the purchase manager of this company in New Jersey, and opened a granite business of his own in Florida.”

My grandfather is extremely headstrong, he always gets what he wants, even till today. In that way, me and my grandfather share similar traits. On the contrary, my father realized later that it’s essential to be dominant to achieve his goals. “The heads of the company were becoming suspicious that I was involved with your grandfather, but I clearly told them I was not. By the beginning of 2009, I resigned from the company because the environment was becoming too toxic to handle. “I would have never thought you would leave.” “It was impacting my mental health, and I realized that it was important that I

stand up for myself. Afterwards, I called your grandfather asking him if I could work with him in Florida. Your grandfather advised me to open a branch of his company in Ohio because I am already here and accustomed to the granite industry. In 2009, I opened the business. The sales were really secure, I even purchased a nice house, and in 2012 I started EMBA at Kent State University. My classes were on Saturday and Sunday. I was working and studying at the same time.” “This sounds familiar.” “Very funny, but I was in college and managing a business at the same time.” “I get it, what I’m doing is nothing compared to you.” Everything was a competition between us, or at least I felt like it was a competition. “It’s not nothing, it’s definitely something. Regardless, the company in Florida claimed bankruptcy. There was a loss of \$660,000, and this highly affected my branch. Somehow your grandfather was able to manage this company for one more year, even with the horrendous inventory and sales. A few months later your grandfather called me for a meeting at his residency, he told me that he can not take care of the company any more.”

Little did my father know, that was the day not only his life would change, but his family’s life would change completely as well. “What?” “You heard it right, he said that if I wanted to run this business it’s all mine. I felt obligated to say yes because I did not want my nine years of work I put into this industry to go to waste, and I wanted to show him that I don’t step back from challenges.” My father was trying to show his father-in-law that he can push through whatever obstacles come his way, as I am doing with my father right now. “The first thing he did was hand me the accounts payable record, most of them were suppliers. I had to pay a total of \$700,000 to them.” “This is crazy! How were you supposed to come up with that type of money quickly?” “I started with calling and promising all the suppliers that I will pay them eventually if they support me right now. They did, by supplying me the product I needed.” Thank God, I was young during this time. I would never want to remember this. “Since I was doing EMBA at the same time I met a professor who was a finance teacher, and a part of the banking world. I thought that if I shared my company’s issue with her, she could possibly give me guidance. Though I’ll be honest with you, I was embarrassed.” My father, embarrassed? That’s weird to even think about. I guess we all have flaws. “Well

you must have spoken to her because we wouldn't be here right now if you didn't." "Yes, I took a chance and it went well. My professor told me that she wants me to meet with her to discuss this in detail. In our conversation she recommended that I consider taking a loan. She connected me to a banker, who came into my facility, interviewed me, and told me that to get the loan I need to remove the tax liens. I didn't see this coming, so I asked my close friends for money and paid them back with interest." I was surprised that his friends helped him, and his family could not. I am hopeful that I have friends like he had in the future, so if I were to be in any trouble they would comfort me. "He also took note that we had a loan from a private lender, so I asked the bank if they could clear this loan by giving me capital in hand and a line of credit to enhance my business." "Oh my gosh, did they approve it? That's a lot to ask for." "I was thinking the same thing, but the banker was impressed with my strategy and is going to see what he can do for me."

My father is a people person, he knew how to captivate anybody's attention immediately. A quality I desire to have. "Three weeks later, I got a call from the banker saying that I need to come to the head office in downtown Cleveland to sign the loan papers. I sprinted to my closet, and put on my most formal outfit. The banker introduced me to the vice president of the bank, we shook hands and I signed the papers. I felt like this moment was in slow-motion. I couldn't believe it was happening, it was the best day of my life. "This really was the best day of your life." "It was. Even better, they gave me double the line of credit and the money was transferred to the private lender."

I want to make my father as happy as he was at that moment, when I start working. "I promised him that I would pay him back quickly, and he had full faith that I would. My only focus now was how I can grow the business. I bought good material, and gave this material to my loyal customers allowing me to make a good profit. By 2016, I paid the full amount back. The banker was surprised to see this, and he said if I were to buy my own building they were ready to finance it. A year and half later I was sitting in the new location, as I am currently, doing better than ever.

"Woah, time flies, doesn't it?" "It does, especially when you're having fun. Now, tell me this, Tanvi. Do you know why I recently

bought the red color Range Rover?” “Isn’t it because red is your favorite color, Papa.” “No it’s because it reminds me to work harder every day because if I don’t, that red color Chevy isn’t too far away.”

Home

Sierra Shapiro

It might be useful to resolve the definition of *home*. But maybe everybody does this without thought, and only I am lost in the meaning. Many people seem to feel that a home is simply where you live. And at one point, I felt this too. Now, if you ask me what the definition of a home is, I'm not sure if I'd even be able to form a response. It is not at all evident to me how we should put a clear definition on such a complex word. My experiences prove that this is such a difficult word to define.

Perhaps the first thing to say is that my definition of a home has been altered several times in my life. I wonder if this is common for other people, too? Or is it just me who thinks so intensely about a word that could be viewed with such simplicity?

At twelve years old, I didn't know much outside of the small town I lived in. So to me, without consideration, my home had always been at 70 Winding River Trail, Chagrin Falls, Ohio. It wasn't until my family packed up and moved to Canada that the simplicity of the word 'home' became a lot more complex. The numbers I considered to be my home had been altered; this concept was harder to grasp than I could have ever imagined. I was accustomed to believing that where I slept at night was home. My idea of a home was simply the walls in which you lived.

After living in Canada for several months, I found myself incredibly lost. I was able to grasp the concept that 11 Misty Crescent, Toronto, Ontario, was 'supposed' to be home now, but it just could never feel right to me. And so, 12-year-old me went into complete denial. I thought no way it could be permanent. All I wanted to do was return *home* to Cleveland.

After 7 and a half months of living at our new house, my family decided to go back to Ohio for a visit. I was stoked; I'd thought I would

finally be able to return *home*. However, after pulling up the long and winding driveway, I recognized that it didn't feel the same as it used to. A white picket fence was blocking the path we made to the river, a garden was bearing upon the space we used to set up the slip n' slide, and the basketball hoop was removed in space for more parking. I glanced up to my old bedroom window to see what used to be a ballerina pink room covered with butterflies of all sizes. Now, however, all I saw was a glimpse of a plain grey room (lacking in the use of butterflies). I asked my parents if we could go inside and see everything; my mom responded with, "No, Sierra, it's someone else's home now." And that... is when it hit me. I no longer had somewhere to consider my *home*. I had been telling myself that Cleveland was *home* for months while I was in Canada, but now I was back, and I could not have felt more misplaced.

Moving houses was troubling in itself, but in combination with my family gradually falling apart, things only continued to worsen. Our family dynamic grew tenser. Usually, we kept it real at our house, but sometimes, it'd feel like we were in some sort of a simulation; everyone trying to convince themselves things were okay. I don't know which was worse. There was no point in ignoring the obvious; I knew that. But sometimes, I would find more satisfaction in imagining our family as a whole.

Our house in Toronto was big and modern. It was just like the houses you'd see in the magazines, but that was exactly what was amiss about it. Sure, it was big; it was modern; it was fancy; it was slick, but it felt nothing but empty to me. Our picture-perfect furniture was for nothing more than a visual. Truthfully, our house felt like a "show" home. Growing up, I had always wanted to live in a place like this, just like every kid fantasizes until they have it (well, for me, at least). But our house always felt cold and lonely, and that satisfaction of living in a big house never came to me. I had forgotten what it felt like to walk into a house and feel relieved to be 'home.' Frankly, I felt quite the opposite when I would return 'home.' And it didn't take long for my house to end up being the last place I wanted to spend my time.

The following experience in my life was what I would like to believe was the most altering to my conception of a *home*. My parents were separated for about a year before moving into their own houses. That year was filled with some of the most adverse periods of my life. I went from searching for *my* home to giving up and accepting the idea that I didn't have a place to view as *home*. My main focus was just on surviving, and for a while, I couldn't see the light at the end of the long and opaque tunnel in my life. However, that all changed when I eventually moved in with my dad.

After moving in with my dad, I realized I was starting to feel more at home. I felt more comfortable and began to find myself again. It was odd, though, because it was yet just another house, and this time, a smaller townhouse. Though it didn't matter. I was at peace. My dad respected and cared about me, and the more I could develop a relationship with him, the more I realized what *home* really was to me.

Home to me is no place or location. Home to me is a feeling. An emotion so strong that it propels my ability to be content with myself. Home is a sense and a class of comfort to me. I'd realized that no size or superficial concepts in a house would be capable of providing me with that same sense of home. The sense of *home* I felt when I was with my dad. That feeling was more significant than any emotion I'd felt within a house before. When I was with my dad, I felt at home. And growing up was realizing that that wasn't always where I wanted to be, but rather, who I wanted to be with.

It may seem like I have it all figured out now. And partially, I may. I know my connections with people are more valuable than wherever I may be on a map. Still, I don't think I would be capable of defining the word. My definition of a *home* has undoubtedly begun to develop. And who knows, maybe one day, if you ask me what the definition of a *home* is, I'll be able to finish my response. But for now, I think there's power in leaving the remaining unknown.

Writing Systems

Alex Shi

There are thousands of languages around the world, which humans have passed down through many generations. With many of these languages come writing: a way to record information easily for others. Over millennia, many different writing systems have been invented and spread around the world. In this article, we will look at the various writing systems that exist today.

Alphabet

The most widespread type of writing system used today is the alphabet. Examples include the Latin alphabet, which is used in most European countries as well as many of their former colonies; Cyrillic, used in Russia and many nearby countries; and the Greek alphabet, used by Greek. Although it might not look like it, Korean Hangul is also an alphabet.

In alphabets, each character (called letters) represents phonemes (single sounds) in the language. For example, the English word “yes” represent the phonemes /j/ followed by /e/ followed by /s/. Multiple letters can also be used to represent one phoneme in some languages, such as the English word “chair” which represents the phonemes /tʃ/, /e/, and /ə/. In Hangul, the letters of a word are written together: $\overline{\text{c}}$ /h/, ㅏ /a/, ㄴ /n/ written together is $\overline{\text{c}}$ ㅏㄴ /han/.

Logograph

A logograph is a character that represents a whole word or a morpheme (meaningful word part). The only widely used logographic

script today is the Chinese script and its derivatives in other languages. Other languages that have a logographic script include Maya glyphs and Egyptian Hieroglyphs.

Logographs may represent any number of phonemes. 魚 (yu²) in Chinese represents one phoneme, 妈 (ma¹) in Chinese represents two, 百 (ひゃく, hyaku) in Japanese represents five.

As mentioned before, logographs can represent a whole word or a morpheme. 花 in Chinese represents the word flower. The characters 蜘蛛 together represent the word spider, but 蜘 by itself does not mean anything.

Syllabary

Written characters in syllabaries represent the syllables or moras in a language. These characters are put together to form words. Examples include Japanese (kana) and Cherokee. For example, the Japanese word for squid, いか, is made up of the kana い (i) and か (ka). Like alphabets, the characters (usually) only represent sounds and can be used to make other words, such as いぬ and ばか. Unlike alphabets, each character usually represents two phonemes, one consonant and one vowel (in Japanese, there are only 6 characters that do not represent one consonant and one vowel: あ /a/, い /i/, う /u/, え /e/, お /o/, and ん /n/).

Abugida (Alphasyllabary)

Abugidas are very similar to syllabaries. In abugidas, each character also represents one consonant and one vowel (or just a vowel). However, the characters are constructed from a part representing the consonant and a part representing the vowel. Languages that use abugida

include many South/Southeast Asian and Ethiopian languages.

In Devanagari, used to write Hindi, the sound /a/ is inherent to consonants, such as in क /ka/. By adding diacritics to क, other syllables can be made: कि /ki/, कु /ku/, के /ke/ are just a few ones in Devanagari. The diacritics can be added to other consonants to the same effect.

The greatest difference between abugidas and syllabaries is that there are no similarities to indicate the similar consonant sounds in syllabaries. Japanese き /ki/, く /ku/, and け /ke/ have no similarities despite all having the /k/ sound.

Abjad

Abjads are similar to alphabets in that each character represents a phoneme, but they do not have any vowels. Hebrew and Arabic are abjad scripts used today.

In Arabic, templates can be used to create words. The template ma __ a __ (place) plus the root ج ر خ (something to do with leaving) forms the word جـورخ (exit). Recognising the template can help people identify which vowels are used. Templates are also used for verbs, the template _ a _ a _ a (third-person singular masculine past tense) plus ج ر خ forms the word جـرخ (he exited).

Metaverse: A new era of fostering creativity

Bob Wang

With Microsoft acquiring Blizzard for \$68.7 billion to aid its development of “the next internet” in January 2022, we are becoming increasingly close to witnessing the birth of “Metaverse,” digital cyberspace where people engage with each other as virtual figures. In Metaverse, people can do pretty much anything they can do in real life: Buy a virtual house, go skiing with friends, or even attend a virtual work conference where you can have eye contact with your boss’ virtual figure.

It’s easy to see how Metaverse would be a perfect resort for people seeking entertainment. However, as deputy president of Sony Electronics Tyler Ishida points out, Metaverse is equally likely to be applied in the education, research, and industrial realm. Metaverse would be a universe where elements of the physical world could be replicated digitally: images, sounds, or even the texture of an object. With the maturing of digital twins, namely the technology to replicate and represent a physical object digitally, Metaverse would be a perfect place to conduct experiments or produce artworks using VR or AR equipment. Demonstrating the virtual world’s enrichment of the aviation industry, Boeing is currently creating 3D digital replicas of their jets to refine their designs.

Metaverse’s thirst for creativity has redefined the purpose of the Blockchain. Originally, the Blockchain mainly recorded the transaction of digital currencies such as Bitcoins and Ethereum. In recent years, the Blockchain’s unique property of unchangeable accounting has been used in tandem with Non-Fungible Tokens to keep track of transactions of virtual properties. Before Non-Fungible Tokens came into existence, all contents on the internet were untradable as there was no transaction of ownership. Now, Virtual contents are being marked as unique by the NFTs, which much like their name suggests, are unique tokens used to prove the ownership of digital assets. In other words,

digital contents as simple as a picture can be made into transactable assets by NFT with universal recognition. People will be able to trace the trades of an asset as well as the current owner of it. Guaranteeing peculiar ownership of a digital product, NFTs and the Blockchain make creations in the Metaverse significant because digital products produced in the virtual world are for the first time bestowed upon the uniqueness and potential to gain value on the internet.

Currently, the NFT empowered Blockchain enables people to purchase unique 2D images through transaction platforms such as OpenSea. Half a year ago, a white-haired, green-eyed pixelated character known as CryptoPunk 9998 was sold on OpenSea, the largest NFT marketplace, for \$532 million. In the future, NFT is expected to mark the uniqueness of all kinds of projects produced in the Metaverse such as Design Papers, 3D Engineering Models, and Virtual paintings.

As technology progresses, physical manufacturing and mass production of goods would become significantly easier and less costly; that is when creativity would become increasingly important. With NFTs becoming a protector of originality, Metaverse will lead a brand new era of creating culture.

Works Cited

- Hayes, Adam. "Blockchain Explained." Investopedia, Investopedia, 23 Feb. 2022, <https://www.investopedia.com/terms/b/blockchain.asp>.
- Baker, Nick. Bloomberg.com, Bloomberg, 29 Oct. 2021, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-10-29/here-s-a-532-million-nft-trade-that-wasn-t-what-it-appeared>.
- Johnson, Eric M., and Tim Hether. "Boeing Wants to Build Its next Airplane in the 'Metaverse'." Reuters, Thomson Reuters, 17 Dec. 2021, <https://www.reuters.com/technology/boeing-wants-build-its-next-airplane-metaverse-2021-12-17/>.
- Barbaro, Michael, et al. "Microsoft and the Metaverse." The New York Times, The New York Times, 20 Jan. 2022, <https://www.ny-times.com/2022/01/20/podcasts/the-daily/metaverse-microsoft-activation-blizzard.html>.
- Sullivan, Mark. "What the Metaverse Will (and Won't) Be, According to 28 Experts." *Fast Company*, Fast Company, 26 Oct. 2021, <https://www.fastcompany.com/90678442/what-is-the-metaverse>.

Personal Essay

Omar White-Evans

Throughout my life, other people's opinions have terrified me. I would always think: does this mistake make me look gullible or unintelligent? Are people going to look at me differently? Are people saying bad things behind my back? But I've always been self-aware: I'm not the best athlete; I'm not a straight-A student, and I'm definitely not a perfect person. These personal observations and fears would consume my mind as I weighed the different possibilities of what the outside world might be plotting.

During my sophomore year, I was the starting cornerback for the football team in our last home game of the year. As the clock was winding down to the last seconds of the game, the receiver I was guarding caught the ball and scored a touchdown to win the game. Not only was I disappointed in myself, but the majority of the team was disappointed as well. I was devastated and many of my senior teammates were not talking to me; as a result, I called my mother about what was happening. First, she told me I had to forgive myself and move on. Nonetheless, what I did not know was that she would give me advice that would eventually change my thinking forever. She told me, "Other people's opinions did not have to become your reality". I did not understand it at first, but I would later realize what she meant. People's comments and judgments did not have to change my perception of myself.

As I looked back on that game, I began to see for myself what it truly was. It was a big game where everybody made mistakes, but my mistake just happened to be during a very crucial moment. However, what I should have done was forgive myself, move on, and not allow the words of others to ruin my day. Without my mother's words of wisdom, I probably would have never gotten to this place of understanding. Afterwards, I would help my team achieve a 6-3 win-loss record for the season and get an interception in one of our biggest wins of the year.

That game and my mother's words challenged my belief that I had to take other people's opinions personally and chastise myself for my own mistakes. During my junior year, I took steps and made

decisions that allowed me to become the student-athlete that I wanted to be. This included wrestling year-round and applying for leadership roles within the school community.

Now, as a senior, I am now a Black Student Union (BSU) leader, Wrestling Captain, and Chief Ambassador for my school. In addition, I am also on track to achieve my goal of becoming an All-American athlete for wrestling. Becoming more confident in myself as a leader and athlete has shown me how much power I had over my own life. I've earned a certain amount of respect and value for myself that is not easily compromised. I can now honestly express that others' opinions do not bother me as much because I understand the value I bring to the world and my community.

As I have confessed earlier, I am not the perfect student and I will not pretend to be. However, I am a student-athlete of character, determination, and passion who has put in the hard work to challenge and remove one of my most debilitating patterns of thinking. I am a person who wants to explore and expand my own abilities by testing my own capabilities. The outcome of an unexpected loss during football season is that I no longer want to become the perfect individual that everyone loves. Instead, I want to be a young man who strives to become the best version of himself while making decisions which no longer fall under the dominion of others, but under the control of my own heart, mind, and soul.

Douglass' Tour of the British Isle and American Hypocrisy

Jenny Williams

After much success with his first narrative book tour in America, Frederick Douglass made the decision to take his book tour to the British Isle between the years 1846 and 1847. In the British Isle, he would present his narrative and give speeches to what he would find to be a more captive and eager audience. Douglass began his tour of the British Isle, on a ship headed towards what used to be England's largest slave port. On the boat Douglass was surrounded by a diverse group of people in terms of nationality, religion, worldview and class¹⁰. As Douglass prepared to give his first speech of his tour on the boat, discussion of anti and pro slavery ideas arose among the boat's passengers. This speech on this boat would be his first speech off of American soil and would set a tone for the rest of his tour. He heavily criticized and exposed American hypocrisy, in an area that not too long ago was a symbol of oppression and tyranny towards America. Britain's tyranny acted as inspiration for America's founding ideals: the very ideals that Douglass used to exemplify America's hypocrisy. His speech was met with abrasive comments and actions that Douglass described as "a mob — a real American, republican, democratic, Christian mob"¹¹ which he stated made him ashamed he had "run away from such a country". This speech would mark one of the last times for a year and a half that Douglass' speeches were met with violent threats and the direct reactions of American slaveholders. From the beginning of his tour on the boat, to the very end of it with an impassioned farewell speech Douglass discusses American hypocrisy. The tour of the British Isle is one that unveils truths and ideas of contradictions between American and British society, which provides a deeper understanding of American hypocrisy.

In 1833, years after the American revolution and years before

10 Frederick Douglass, *Frederick Douglass: Selected Speeches and Writings*, ed. Philip S. Foner and Yuval Taylor (n.p.: Chicago Review Press, 2001), 15.

11 Douglass, *Frederick Douglass*, 15.

America would pass the emancipation proclamation, England had abolished slavery¹². Douglass and other prominent abolitionists were inspired to see a western, predominantly white country where abolition was successful. The freedom and rights of Black people in England were in direct opposition to the common-American view of England as a place lacking liberty. On his tour Douglass experiences a distinct “spirit of freedom that...contrasted so strongly with my long and bitter experience in the United States.”¹³. Despite these ideas of freedom being central to American ideals especially in the post revolutionary war period, Douglass accounts his increased freedom in the British Isle. These contrasts between Douglass’ experience in the British Isle vs. America lead him to make deeper connections when it comes to American hypocrisy. In his Farewell speech Douglass outlines how in the Declaration of Independence, America’s founders “made the loudest and clearest assertions of the rights of man”¹⁴ while at the same time partaking in the trafficking of human beings. He states that since the constitution “everything good and great in the heart of the American people everything patriotic within their breasts—has been summoned to defend this great lie before the world”¹⁵, in reference to slavery. Douglass points out this hypocrisy of American slavery to paint America’s central documents and basis as a nation, as something heavily corrupted with hypocrisy; A nation that protects the rights of some individuals, and violates the rights of others.

Through the role of Christianity in American slavery and the nature of the slavery institution, hypocrisies are uncovered. The intertwined nature of Christianity and slavery is an issue that Douglass speaks of often, and draws contrasts once again in England between American Christianity and English Christianity. Christianity plays a role of “protection” for slavery in America, which “has its own

12 Natasha L. Henry, “Slavery Abolition Act,” Britannica, accessed October 22, 2021, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Slavery-Abolition-Act>.

13 Douglass, *Frederick Douglass*, 18.

14 Frederick Douglass, “Farewell to the British People: An Address Delivered in London, England, March 30, 1847.” (speech, London, England, March 30, 1847).

15 Douglass, “Farewell to the British.”

standards of morality, humanity, justice, and Christianity”¹⁶. These standards are intertwined with American society and its institutions. Through creating new standards, the truth of the institution is hidden, and its existence is justified. “God says thou shalt not oppress: The constitution says oppress: Which will you serve God or man?”¹⁷ Douglass demonstrates how Christian justifications of slavery and the constitution opposes the true ideals of Christianity. In actuality, slavery and its justifications are not based in the reality of religion, but were created to support the slavery institution. Further the hypocrisies of American Christians are exemplified when you compare them to English Christianity. In Douglass’ letters he discusses how the hypocrisy of the church was not as prevalent in the British Isle as in America. Specifically, he reflects on the ways he was welcomed into every church during his time in Ireland, regardless of denomination and his race playing no role¹⁸. Slavery contrasts with not only the values of liberty in the Declaration of Independence, but also the true values of Christianity.

The way Douglass views himself as an American and a man changes throughout his tour in the British Isle, he states he “came here a slave”, and “he comes back a free man”¹⁹. The change in his viewpoint can be attributed to the ways he is treated with more humanity in the British Isle than America. Rather than living somewhere bound by his country’s willingness and ability to “assert a right to property in my limbs—my very body and soul”²⁰ Douglass lived in a place that treated him as a man of value. Repeatedly in his Farewell Speech, Douglass discusses how America views him as “a chattel”²¹, an object, something that can be owned, bought, or sold. This view of Douglass as an

16 Douglass, *Frederick Douglass*, 20.

17 Douglass, *Frederick Douglass*, 14.

18 Douglass, *Frederick Douglass*, 19.

19 Douglass, “Farewell to the British.”

20 Douglass, “Farewell to the British.”

21 Douglass, “Farewell to the British.”

object exemplifies the extent to which Douglass was oppressed and his freedoms were restricted by America, until his personhood was taken from him. The increased liberty and humanity he enjoyed in the British Isle was a factor that led him to discover his identity and personhood outside of being an American fugitive slave. Douglass found this liberty in England, a place that was, since the Revolution, viewed as tyrannical and inferior to American democracy and ideals. When in reality, the American democracy as laid out in the constitution's protections of slavery attempted to strip Douglass of his identity and personhood, leading him to find freedom and humanity within British society and government.

As Douglass goes through his British Isle tour, giving speeches, and calling out the inconsistencies of America to more heavily abolitionist crowds he contrasts American society's hypocrisies with British society. Though America's founding documents outline inalienable rights and equality as key components in its independence from Britain and the goals of its future, these ideals are in no way awarded to all people, especially slaves. American Christianity's protection and justifications of slavery, its influence in American government, and Douglass' identity as an American effectively display the hypocrisies in American institutions. Douglass is a heavy critic of these hypocrisies, painting America as a place based in lies with inconsistencies and corruption ridden in its system. Although these are harsh criticisms of America, Douglass believes America is not devoid of the opportunity or potential for it to fully embrace its values. In a letter to William Lloyd Garrison about his visit to Ireland, he provides a semblance of hope for America: "May god give her repentance before it is too late, is the ardent prayer of my heart. I will continue to pray, labor, and wait believing she cannot always be insensible to the dictates of justice, or deaf to the voice of humanity"²². Despite this being one of the few

22 Douglass, *Frederick Douglass*, 18.

times Douglass displays this level of hope for America, it is nonetheless impactful. Douglass believes that the values laid out in The Declaration of Independence and reiterated by founding fathers can become a reality, and he will continue to work in hopes of all of America being freed from its hypocrisies.

Bibliography

Douglass, Frederick. "Farewell to the British People: An Address Delivered in London, England, March 30, 1847." Speech, London, England, March 30, 1847.

Frederick Douglass: Selected Speeches and Writings. Edited by Philip S. Foner and Yuval Taylor. N.p.: Chicago Review Press, 2001.

Henry, Natasha L. "Slavery Abolition Act." Britannica. Accessed October 22, 2021. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Slavery-Abolition-Act>.

Senior Speeches

Senior Speech by Isabella Folio

When I arrived at Reserve, laboriously lugging my luggage up the uneven steps of Ells, I knew exactly how my life was going to turn out. I would earn straight As throughout high school, sign up for only three extracurriculars to allow time for studying, graduate with honors, go to a decent college, and become an aerospace engineer working for NASA. And, no matter what happened, I would stick to this blueprint plan.

If I said this to my friends today, they would probably ask me if I had accepted any food from strangers recently. Not because these aren't worthy goals—they are—but because they aren't *mine*. Allow me to explain.

After my first year at WRA, my life felt mostly on track. Then: sophomore year. Emboldened by my avoidance of total death the previous year, I signed up for more difficult classes, took on more responsibilities, and vowed to make more time for friends. While, individually, these are admirable goals, the combination quickly made its weight apparent. Despite spending excessive hours studying for Honors Chemistry, I struggled on tests. I couldn't seem to improve my Quiz Bowl game quickly enough, and then the coronavirus pandemic exploded. Slowly but surely, stress began seeping into my life. Although I failed to realize it, I grew more tense and on edge, snapping at the slightest inconvenience or remark.

With my junior year, I felt sure that things would improve. And they did, but not for the reasons I expected. After struggling through pre calc and physics for half a year, I realized that, while I found these concepts interesting, I lacked the true passion for the subjects which, according to my plan, I would spend the rest of my life studying. I had neglected sources of passion—reading, writing, music... I'm not going to list them all—in favor of a vision that no longer excited me, but I felt obligated to commit to. This was not the fault of my teachers—my instructors of that year were some of the best I have ever had the privilege of learning from. I had changed—or rather, I discovered what I actually wanted.

As of this moment, I *love* English and language. This is a problem because saying you're getting a degree in creative writing

or comparative literature isn't a "safe" option, and, if you know me, you're aware that I do *not* enjoy taking risks. I like to have control over the things in my life, a desire that manifests in how I religiously complete my homework the night it's assigned, my unfortunate micro-management of group projects, my repeated hesitation in pretty much any fencing bout... you get the idea. It is the reason I struggle to let other people in, truly in, because vulnerability is a risk.

I like things to be planned, and a life in which I follow my passions is not a life in which I can do so easily. But, upon further reflection, I realize that all the best parts of my life have arisen from risk taking. My decision to leave the small village generations of my family had called home to pursue better education at Reserve was a risk. My decision to let in all the people close to me that make my life worth living was a risk. Even something as small as climbing up in front of you all today... that is a risk, and there are many more.

So this I believe: life is not meant for comfort. Yes, this journey may seem downright terrifying at times, but that suspense is the very quality that makes it worth living. If you don't push yourself in pursuit of what you want in this world, then you can never succeed, no matter what your definition of success is. And regardless of what path you decide upon, if these past couple years have taught us anything, it is that the world will always find a way to throw a wrench in even our "safe" plans.

I have heard so many people mount this stage to say "step out of your comfort zone," and that doesn't just mean speaking to someone new or signing up for a new class—though it can—it also means taking the time to truly consider where you are headed and where you want to go next.

To those of you who have stood by me on this journey, I thank you. There are too many of you to name, but if you're seriously wondering if I'm referring to you, I am. To those of you who I have not crossed paths with, I hope that you can take something away from these simple, yet honest words.

Most of us, God willing, have the rest of our lives ahead—that seems like an awfully long time to not at least try to reach our dreams, and our dreams, our values... those are the things that define us and our time on this Earth. So, sometimes, exercising good judgment, we all need to take a leap of faith and risk-take.

Thank you.

Senior Speech by Carter Frato-Sweeney

It's funny to think, but until junior year, I can't remember a time I faced a challenge head-on in my life. Unless you count the time where I had to choose between plane tickets to fly my brother and sister home or limited edition Joe Burrow glasses. This was a hard decision for me, but I went with the sensible choice. *Pulls out Joe Burrow Sunglasses and puts on face* I don't think not facing these challenges was out of fear, but rather I had the most amazing family one could possibly ask for growing up. I was so secure. I was living the dream. But, I was a fish holding onto my mother's fin for too long. I was so safe that I became addicted to comfort.

I kept blaming the addiction on different things. First nerves, then it was my lack of creativity (which is crazy, everyone's creative). And then it stemmed down to one word: failure. In English class my freshman year, we all wrote words down on the board and deciphered whether they had a positive connotation or a negative connotation. In the end, we made a chart with all the positive words on one side and all the negative words on the other. The positive side had words like "bright" and "courageous" while the negative side had words like "distasteful", "stubborn", and "Cleveland Browns". But "failure" was also in the negative column. As a 14-year-old, I brushed it off at the time, but 3 years later, I have to give it a closer look.

"Failure is a part of life". Everyone's heard that at least once, right? And if you're like me, you might remember the quote, but I don't know if it's anyone's home screen and I don't think it's been used in a lot of Instagram captions. Why? People don't like that word. I didn't like that word. I was terrified of that word. When I went to the gym, I wouldn't even do exercises that said: "go till failure". But now, I've realized, the use of the word is what really turns people off. The phrase "failure is a part of life" downplays how pivotal the idea of failure really is. My new phrase? "Failure is life". And before you refer me to a counselor, let me explain. I don't mean it in a negative way. But failure surrounds us. Failure is in our everyday lives. Failure is accidentally not completing the homework assignment; failure is getting a 60 on your math quiz—I'm sure everyone has experienced that— failure is trying to open the MAC entrance door for 40 seconds

in the blistering cold, *even though the light turned green*. But there are two sides to failure, and not enough people care to look at the other side. To me, the other side serves as the best stepping stone, or the big brother you've always wanted. Because yes, he knocks you down, but then he picks you right back up. *He wants you to succeed*. To the people who lose hope after failing, that's caused by you. Realize failure merely takes you from one place to a higher one.

Throughout my Reserve experience, I fell into various ruts — doing all the same things, the same routines — because I didn't even give failure a chance. (Side note: if you're feeling like the days are becoming monotonous, make it a point to try a new routine every day for one week. Do something you find exciting. Jumpstart your willingness to take on the day.) I'm extremely lucky to go to Reserve, and yeah, my time was special, filled with accomplishments. But did I reach my full potential? Absolutely not. But "If I had the chance to do it again"-stop. You don't; not possible. So, live every day like it's your do-over.

This I believe. Before even facing failure, know your worth. Take time out of your day to reflect. You've heard this phrase before, I know, but please do it. Take risks, but more specifically, do not be turned off by the idea of risks. Jim Rohn — an entrepreneur, gave thousands of lectures — he says "It's all risky. I'll tell you how risky life is. You're not gonna get out alive." Truly, one of the worst feelings I've felt at this school is regret. No matter your grade, no matter your age, you have time to make lasting memories. You have time to make new friends. You have time to take risks. And, when it comes to failure, if you instill respect and some level of enthusiasm in your mind, you will make it. You will definitely make it. And if I fail enough, maybe I can finally open that door to the MAC. Much love.

Senior Speech by David King

As a kid, I was never one to *naturally* rely on others. I typically preferred getting things done on my own, and only chose to work with others if the choice wasn't there at all. Looking back, maybe it was my fear of not being in control, or possibly my reluctance to accept that teamwork does in fact make the dream work, but for as long as I can remember, I've approached virtually every facet of life with a self-sufficient mindset. Part of the reason I decided to come to Reserve was the natural independence boarding school kids live under. When you enter the Reserve bubble, you truly learn how to absorb the college-prep mentality we pride ourselves on. I've always felt inspired by our professional, spirited, and ambitious student body as the son and sibling to WRA Alumni. So when I was applying in eighth grade, I would spend countless hours exploring the WRA website, spellbound by the seemingly limitless opportunities Reserve marketed. Though there were surely both good and less-good aspects of this school I wasn't yet to be aware of, I was convinced that I could achieve as much as humanly possible once I got to — what I can now confidently call — my second home.

Finally slipping on my oversized Reserve Green blazer twice weekly, I instantly began replying with an enthusiastic, “yes!” to almost every opportunity presented. “Yes, I'll apply for Service Leaders!” “Yes, I'll cancel my dance practice to set up for Sadies!” “Yes, I'll run for Student Body President!” To you, it likely seems that this “yes man” outlook has led to general success at Reserve, but my naturally self-reliant nature sometimes leaves others reliant on me to the point that — despite my eagerness to do so — I simply can't do it all.

It would be selfish not to acknowledge how genuinely honored I am to be seen as someone who can get you something done, and I recognize that this is a position of privilege, but still, over time, three yeses turned to four, then to five, then to six. Eventually, those three letters held a vice-like grip on my life. My fear of not being in control shifted to a fear of letting others down, and my ignorance of accepting teamwork prohibited me from reaching out for needed help. Freshman through junior year, I was oblivious to the emotional damage I inflicted

upon myself. Though I was convinced I should keep saying yes, when senior year came around, the ticking clock on my mental stability slowly, but inevitably approached its end.

Something my close friends know about me is I've been dealing with anxiety since I was nine years old. During that time, I had extreme stomach issues that resulted in a 2-month break from Irish dancing — the thing I love most — and never-ending doctor visits that made me miss several class periods. After finding out the root of my medical issues weren't as physical as they were mental, we had finally discovered a solution to the physical repercussions, but never fully addressed the mental impact. In all fairness, I was an anxious nine-year-old, as so many others were — scared of growing up and scared of future unknowns. It was a completely fair assumption that if I wasn't feeling physically unwell, I likely didn't feel my anxiety either. And until last October, I convinced myself that was true.

When the responsibilities of my main leadership position shifted, my anxiety awoke me from years of emotional suppression. I finally recognized the overbearing extracurricular commitments I'd subjected myself to, and my inability to say no — even if I needed extra time to finish schoolwork or decompress with friends. I began noticing the small feats anxiety held over me in my everyday life. I caught myself re-thinking everything I'd say in casual conversation to the point of feeling uncomfortable talking to close friends, I'd skip lunch and spend too much money on fueling my caffeine addiction in place, and I tore myself apart after leaving any social setting. Quite frankly, it felt like my anxiety got worse with each hour that passed. Which takes us to my eighteenth birthday. After a few months of observing these mental obstacles, I had finally reached my breaking point. I remember waking up on my birthday, and for the first time in my life, actually feeling older. I sat in my bed, dreading my morning routine, seemingly paralyzed. There was literally nothing in the world I wanted to do less than go to school. Days before, I purposefully turned off my Snapchat birthday feature in spite of unwanted attention and hoped my day would go on without the continuous birthday wishes. And for first period, I was in the clear. Then came Morning Meeting. To my surprise, one of the people that remembered — and was unapologetically enthusiastic about it — came Mrs. Buck. Conflicted, I sat

in the, then empty, Chapel as the small group of students sang happy birthday, broadcasted in front of the entire school — making it abundantly clear that today was not just another Friday. The school day went on as normal, now with a few birthday wishes to each class that passed. And during my free period, I had a long-awaited meeting in the Counselors Office with Mrs. Susany — admittedly, a strange place to spend my birthday free period, but nothing stops Mrs. Boesch from scheduling me with Susany the moment she senses something is off. During our meeting, we came to the conclusion that it might be time to start taking prescription meds to treat my anxiety and newly developed depression. For the rest of the day, I couldn't help but think of myself with a piercing tone of disdain. I didn't want to accept that something could be so fundamentally wrong with me — so my mind wandered and latched onto any negative aspect I could think about myself as an explanation to why I felt so miserable. My depressed, emotional mood carried on after school and into my birthday dinner. Three of my closest friends, Liam, Jimena, and Annie took me out to eat, but despite knowing the attention would be focused on me, I was basically unresponsive the entire night. Driving myself home in a car flooded with guilt, I could feel myself drowning in the tears that ran down my face. So sensing something was off at dinner, Annie FaceTimed me once I got home. And for the first time, I just let the floodgates open. I sat there, physically drained and teary-eyed, just letting my thoughts out — eventually, even bringing Annie to the point of tears; nonetheless, that conversation showed me the silver lining to my terrible birthday. Annie's Ex-Student Listener skills really came in handy. She told me “I remember when I went through a slump like you sophomore year. I know our situations are very different, but your true friends will always be waiting on the other side.”

Though I've come a long way since then — finally on some helpful meds and happy with my classes and extracurricular load — I still have a lot of growing to do. Handling my anxiety is a struggle but I'll be riding for some time to come, but while navigating all the chaos — one thing persisted, even when I couldn't see it. The people you meet and the relationships you form at Reserve are truly an emotional safety net like none other. Regardless of how I came across or was feeling in the moment, my friends— rather my family — always detected when something was off and ensured I had a safe environment to fall back on. Reserve is a bubble that's difficult to navigate. For you, that may be in a challenging class, finding a club that excites you, or trying to not get excited by every club, but no matter what form

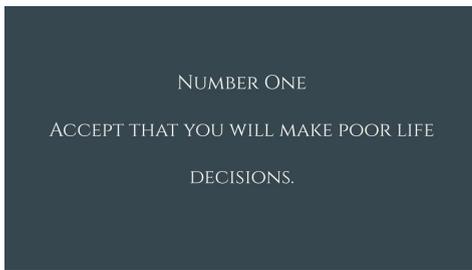
it takes, I'm confident when I say the people in our community care about one another and will serve as your compass along your voyage. Without the bonds I've formed during my four years here, I certainly would not be the person I am today. So as I prepare to pop my bubble and venture out into the real world, no day will pass where I'm not grateful for the diverse, unique individual backgrounds I've encountered in the people around me. Without coming to Reserve, my perspectives would be narrow, my appreciation for life would be dismal, and my heart would be a whole lot smaller.

I want to thank my mom and dad for allowing me to accept Reserve for all that it is, even if that means only getting to see me for like ten minutes a day because I'm always at school. My siblings for keeping me in my place, especially Julia for showing me how to embrace the Reserve community during our shared year on campus. To my advisor, Mrs. Boesch and her entire family for taking me as one of your own and always providing a shoulder to cry on or couch to nap on. Mrs. Boesch, I mean it when I say you've played the most influential role in my four years, and I cannot thank you enough for all your unconditional love. Jimena for being my best friend since day one and finding time to fit me into your TV watching schedule. From my freshman years friends who have grown with me and accepted me regardless, to the friends I've grown close to this past year, but whose friendship will last a lifetime, from my nightly library talks with Zia, Maddie, and Bella, to Sunday Night *Euphoria* premieres in Benji and Art's room, from Ming's Bubble Tea runs with Pritam and Hannah, to a quarantine with Liam that left me with tons of antibodies and a new best friend — thank you to all the people that played a part in this journey, and for trusting me with the gift of our memories. Whether you know me as the guy from Morning Meeting, el Presidente, or plain and simple Dave, thank you for giving me the chance to express my love of Reserve every week as your President — there's no other community I'd rather fight for with my entire heart.

So, I guess keeping with tradition... this I believe: You may see me up here at this podium each Monday and Friday with a smile peering out behind whoever's giving an announcement, and though I cannot in my conscious admit that each one was genuine, not a minute goes by where I don't think of the support system that has accepted and my flaws — always just a stroll across brick row away. Please remember to check up on one another. Thank you.

Senior Speech by Ben Sindell

Being the first to give my senior speech wasn't part of the plan, but hey I think it's a great Reserve tradition and if this motivates anyone to give one, After listening to dozens of senior speeches, I've realized I wanted my senior speech to reflect exactly who I am: straight to the point but genuine, and maybe a little funny on the way. With that in mind, I've formulated this senior speech to be what it's meant for: advice from a four-year senior at WRA for students at WRA. So here goes my Reserve for Dummies composed of 3 pieces of advice.

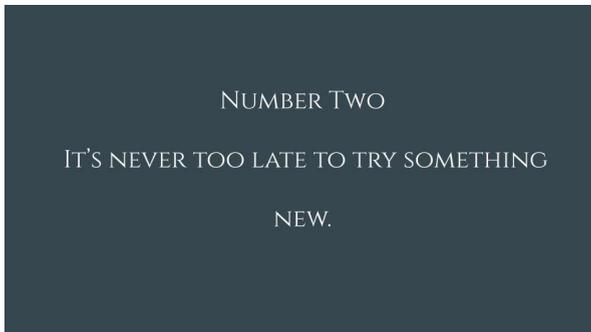


Number One: Accept that you'll make poor life decisions. I'd like to take you all back to my freshman year in Wood House: A personal anecdote of where it all started. It was in the middle of the dead Ohio winter when I looked at myself in the crusty Wood House mirror and realized I desperately needed a haircut. Being the clever freshmen I was, I immediately bought an electric razor on Amazon and had allegedly top-tier barber Sammie Tevenal line me up and give me the cleanest fade. Was it a severe lapse of judgment? Well, that's for you to decide.



Now, certainly if that wasn't enough Gilbride Kaplan gave me a hickey on my forehead right after my haircut after I lost a meaningless bet I can't even remember making. The next morning, I casually walked into Dr. Pethel's biology class feeling bad for myself and she asked me what happened to my head. At first, I thought she was referring to my lack of hair but she quickly pointed out my hickey. Instead of telling her that Gil happened to give me a hickey on my forehead, I said it was a bruise I had gotten when I was hit by a lacrosse ball during a wall-ball test. Pretty believable right? Well, unfortunately, she believed me. I spent the rest of the period in the health center while the nurse made sure my quote on quote head injury didn't result in a concussion. This was the first time I realized that I was destined to make mistakes.

Number Two: It's never too late to try something new.



Trying new things has opened doors to new opportunities and mindsets that I never thought I'd be exposed to. I found myself as part of the WRA cross-country team as a first-time runner in my senior year. Joining cross-country is rare **period**, but your senior year? It's virtually unheard of, but I definitely don't regret it. Generally, cross-country is perceived as a sport fixated on each second that passes by, but in reality, runners are constantly setting goals: one more mile, just past the tree, and past the runner up ahead. I've grown a habit of thinking like a runner with every facet of my life and I cannot thank those a part of the community enough for convincing me to join: especially my running partner and co-captain David King. Reflecting on

the lessons I've learned from the hobbies, sports, and clubs has made me realize how essential diving into all aspects of our community is as a student here at WRA. You may only have a mere four years here at Reserve, (Unless you're Lee Frazer, then I guess you have five) but focus on what you want to accomplish instead of counting down on the days you have left.

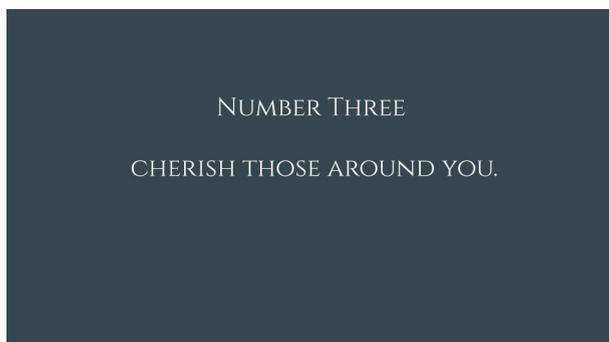
If there is one word I wanted to be described as after my time here at Reserve, it would be A Renaissance Man. To be a Renaissance Man is to be like Leonardo DaVinci: someone who is a well-rounded individual, gifted and skilled in many different areas. Certainly, I'm not trying to draw a parallel between me and DaVinci,



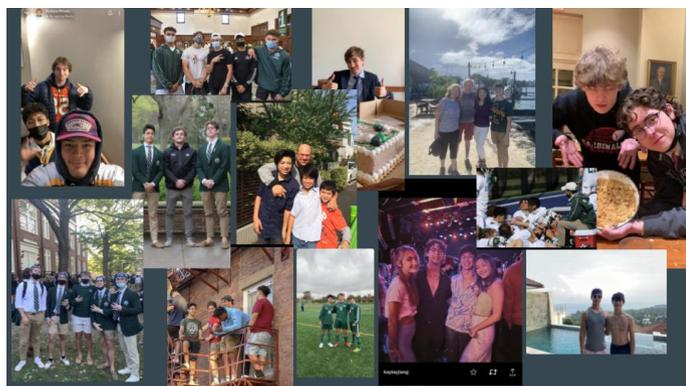
but from the beginning, I believed exposing myself to new sports, hobbies, and subjects would make me something like a Renaissance man, maybe another version of DaVinci. Admittedly, even after four years, I'm still not even close to being good at everything. The reason why I bring it up is because although I may not be the Renaissance Man I'd hope to become, I've been able to appreciate the passions and works of others because I've exposed myself to different interests, sports, and cultures: something I'm grateful to have learned to do during my time at Reserve. No, I'm not a talented lacrosse player, but I can without a doubt appreciate a cheeky 11 pm PLL film session with the boys in Bicknell. No, I'm not the fastest runner, but I can respect Mr. Zetzer when he runs a 3 hours 24-minute marathon and comes to teach our class the very next day. No, I don't know how to skate but that doesn't mean I can't break a smile seeing my math teacher win the Baron Cup after waiting so many years. No, I don't think I'm ever the smartest in the room, but neither did Socrates. I don't know if I will ever become a Renaissance Man, but after exposing myself to different cultures,

sports, and people at WRA I've come to accept that.

Number Three: Most importantly, cherish those around you.



In 7th grade, I visited WRA. I slept on an old mattress in Noah Frato-Sweeney and James Doe's Wood House room. The next morning I shadowed them for the day and finished my visit with an interview with Mr. Adams-Wall. He asked me, "So why Western Reserve Academy?" I responded with, "The relationships between faculty and students create an amicable environment for the highest degree of learning." I was undoubtedly capping to your face A-Wall. I don't even think I knew what amicable meant at the time. Looking back though I didn't realize that I was actually right on the dot, even though I may have not known it. If you've been here as long as I have, you know that Reserve has changed tremendously and will continue to do so, but the community and people you meet here are forever. All of my advice is contingent on one thing: the relationships that I've made at Reserve.



All of these relationships have become glimpses into foreign worlds that have shaped who I am today and who I want to become tomorrow. So if I can dedicate this speech on this special Valentine's Day to someone it would be to those that I love most. Of course, to start off, I want to thank my mother for raising me.



Baby keem put it best, “First order of business, dawg, I gotta thank my mama.” Don’t worry it’s just olive oil.

Along with my loving mother, I’d like to thank my dad for motivating me to embrace WRA... and of course, for funding my four years here. I want to thank the Borrmann’s for treating me like family, the lacrosse team for creating a fraternal community like no other, my grandparents for supporting me even from afar, my younger brother Adam for always being the nicest guy I know, my older brother Noah for being someone I can always look up to, and to the friends I made yesterday all the way to the friends I made four years ago, thank you for gifting me with memories that’ll last a lifetime.

Short and simple. That concludes my Reserve For Dummies, it might not be groundbreaking but it’s genuine. Of course, no good piece of writing ends without an epilogue, in the same way that none of the Marvel movies end without a bonus scene. If I can point out one person in the audience that has relished this speech the most, it would easily have to be Arthur Johnson. My roommate for almost three years and best friend for all four years at WRA. Without a doubt, Arthur and I have grown extremely close... emotionally and in weight.



Only 25lbs between us now. We have experienced just about everything together from traveling to DC, New York, or California to spending almost every waking hour as prefects together during the height of COVID in the basement of Wood House. Referring to Arthur as my brother would be a severe understatement for I've spent more time with Arthur than my biological brothers. In reality, I've spent more time with Arthur in the most important four years of my life than anyone else on this planet. I've reflected on the hundreds of thousands of minutes we've spent together and I can genuinely say I've enjoyed every single one of them. They say a good friend **knows** all your best stories, but a best friend has **lived** them with you. Arthur Johnson, thank you for being by my side since day one. Happy Valentine's Day and remind them how much you love them! Thank you.

Gallery



The sunset in Santa Monica (Los Angeles)
Tanzin Danzhen



A lighthouse near a hiking trail in Oahu (Hawaii)
Tanzin Danzhen



Dusk in Los Angeles
Tanzin Danzhen



Untitled
Phoebe Dix

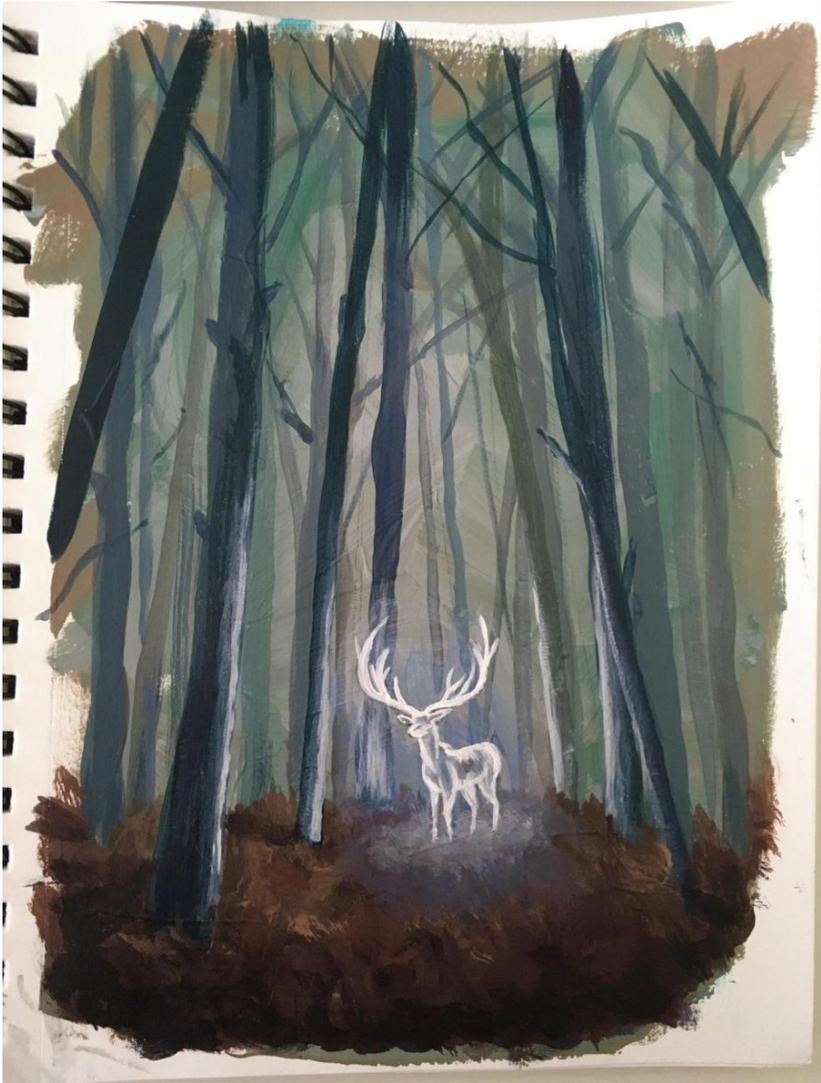


Title Undetermined

David Hu



Title Undetermined 2
David Hu



Untitled
Addie Lewis



Untitled
Addie Lewis



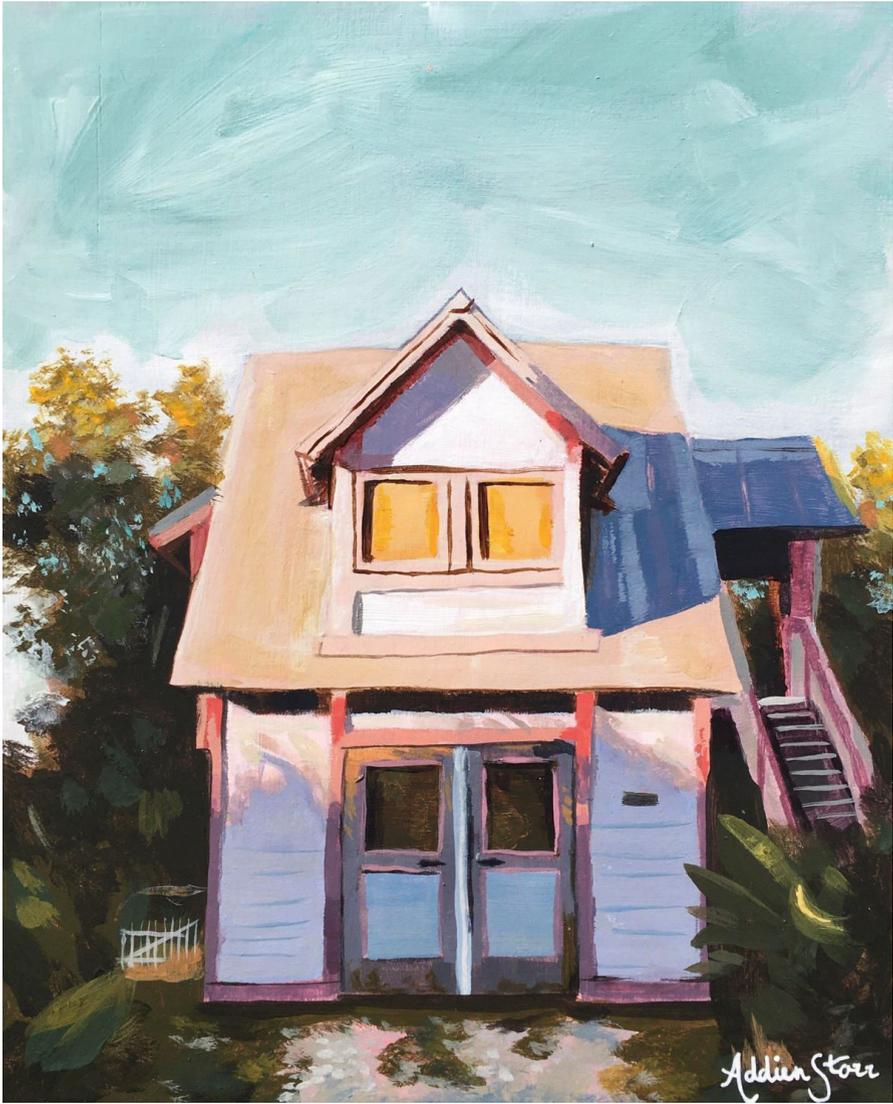
Untitled
Addie Lewis



Untitled
Addie Lewis



Untitled
Addie Lewis



Untitled
Addie Lewis



Untitled
Anya Mathur



bluegold
Bob Wang



Two Sided Victory

Bob Wang



Snow Blanket
Bob Wang

Viewpoints Survey

<https://tinyurl.com/2p82etka>



Introduction to Viewpoints Survey

Every year, the entire Western Reserve Academy community is surveyed on a myriad of topics, ranging from favorite Reserve traditions to hours of sleep to major school rule violations and everything in between. The results can be found at the end of every Viewpoints issue. This year, we also added a section covering the Covid-19 Pandemic and Ukraine conflict. Please take time to read through the following highlights, and if you would like to see the full results, scan the QR code or visit the link listed on the previous page.

Some Highlights

- This year, we had 212 people complete the survey. Of those, 54% were women, 40% were men, and 6% were non-binary.
- Out of the 149 students who answered, 48% were boarders and 52% were day students. We had 51 senior & PG respondents, 40 junior respondents, 40 sophomore respondents, and 16 freshmen respondents.
- Two years after the start of the Coronavirus pandemic, only 2 respondents emphasized that they feel fear towards Covid. There's light at the end of the tunnel!
- 58% of the respondents said that they have never had Covid. Your immune system is a true MVP.
- 17% said that Bicknell is the best dorm on campus, while 16% favored Cartwright.
- What will Mr. Gerber say when he finds out that 43% of the respondents say that they have no time to go to the WIC?
- While only 7% said that they value athletics the most, 68% believe that the school values athletics the most. *Ahem* lacrosse.
- 10 students answered, "Did you say 'enjoyable' really?", when asked which academic activity they find most personally rewarding and enjoyable. C'mon, school is so fun!
- 5 students find offense when teachers are late. We say enjoy the peace while it lasts!
- 53% said that they hardly ever have food delivered to campus. Must be the WRApotle or Mac and Cheeseology!
- Bicknell Bonanza wins the favorite school event of the year.

Yeah dodgeball!

- 11 respondents said that they are in the “weird zone” of a relationship. *sigh* Situationships are never fun.
- And the favorite downtown restaurant goes to... Chipotle!

Current Events

- 34% of respondents said that they were once stressed about Covid, but now they aren't, 22% said that they feel anxious, and 32% said that the pandemic has been around so long in their life that it no longer causes any emotions. Should we be happy that you are not stressed or concerned that you are numb?
- 48% are neutral towards the mask mandates, 28% are happy that places are no longer requiring masks, and 23% do not think it is a good idea that mask mandates were revoked.
- 38% have had Covid one time, and 4% have had Covid more than once. R.I.P. to your taste buds and sense of smell.
- While 18% considered themselves to be unaffiliated with a political category, 12% identified as a moderate/independent, 18% identified as a conservative/Republican, 40% identified as a liberal/Democrat, 3% identified as libertarian/anarchist, and 8% identified as a socialist/communist. None identified as a fascist/authoritarian.
- 7% answered “I don't care too much about, nor do I pay particular attention to, political issues at all”, 48% answered, “I am quite interested in political issues, and I try to read a news source whenever I have the time”, and 18% answered “I am extremely interested in the world of politics and current social issues, and I make sure to update myself daily on
- national news and current events”. Good for you!
- A year into the Biden presidency, 39% feel disappointed, 16% feel encouraged, 15% feel satisfied, and 30% are indifferent.
- 38% of respondents often follow the news regarding the Ukraine conflict, while 13% only read the headlines.
- 85% believe that climate change is occurring and is a result of human activity.

Facts About Freshman

- 100% of freshmen who responded have never used banned substances either on or off campus. Hats off to the 11 people who responded to that question.
- 91% of freshmen have not violated Reserve's academic honesty. Good for you all!
- 0% have violated transpo. Good model citizens of Reserve!
- 55% of freshmen are the first person in their family to attend WRA.
- 100% of freshmen claimed that they always check their emails. Good for you! You have the time to read them because it's not like you all are busy with homework.
- Majority of freshmen, around 59%, have not gotten Covid.
- 67% of respondents do not have an opinion on what the best dorm is. You all should leave your room more! (oh, and the right answer is Cartwright.)
- One freshman is unsure of the dress code. Clearly this student didn't read the handbook.
- All of the respondents know what a Green Key is, and 55% found them to be helpful. Hopefully, they knew we were talking about the people and not the place (teehee!).
- Around 55% of the students responded with Senior speeches being their favorite Reserve tradition. Do you all actually take the advice though?
- 0% said that Tik Tok is the app they spend the most time on. We don't believe that...

Stuff About Sophomores

- 39% of sophomores respondents said that they received between 7 to 8 hours of sleep per school night. Must be nice having enough free time to sleep. Some of us have lots of homework...
- About 82% of sophomores had a different teacher during the second semester for the same course.
- Approximately half of the respondents order food from Door-Dash and the other half do not have food delivered to campus at all.
- Around 40% responded with Homecoming as their favorite school event. We don't blame you, the music was actually okay

- this year. Hope you enjoyed it while it lasted!
- 73% would rather find \$10 million dollars instead of finding true love. Wow, you are some greedy children!
 - Around 73% of sophomores are not in a relationship. Spending time with friends is honestly the way to go!
 - To the 45% of students that have a secret crush, shoot your shot!
 - About 45% of the sophomores responded that they wanted to attend Reserve and have been satisfied with their experience.

Just the Juniors

- 20% of the juniors said they get between 5-6 hours of sleep a night. Gotta love CL Econ!
- While 13% of the juniors said that they read more than 10 books (not school related) over the course of a school year, 27% said that they read none. You are breaking the English teachers' hearts.
- When asked if leadership positions go to the right people, there is a tie between “sometimes” (28%) and “good intentions, but the process is flawed” (28%) for the answer with the most votes.
- More than half of the juniors replied that they love how music or research can count for one season as a sport. Let's go Biobuilder (and afternoon art and music)!
- To the 5 students who attend advisory lunch only once a month: check up on your advisors. They probably miss you a lot.
- About half of the junior respondents obey dress code, but “let things slip” from time to time. You could take a hint from the 28% of juniors who follow dress code every day.
- 44% of juniors find scientific activity and experimentation the most enjoyable academic activity. As STEM majors, we commend you!
- Around 3/4 of the juniors are the first in their families to attend Reserve.
- To the one person who did not want to come to Reserve but now loves it here, we are so happy for you.
- 72% support colleges being test optional for the SAT and ACT

tests “because those tests are stupid and meaningless.” We agree.

- None of the juniors use Grubhub or Uber Eats for food delivery.
- The favorite event this year goes to...drumroll please... Back to School Bash!

The Scoop On Seniors

- 70% feel that the Reserve has prepared them for college. I guess only time will tell...
- The most popular Hudson restaurant is Flipside. 29% of seniors responding that it's their favorite.
- 32.5% of seniors said they spend the most time on Instagram, while Snapchat and Tik Tok tied with each app receiving 22.5% of the vote.
- 0% of seniors said that their favorite WRA tradition is Reserve Green. The wool blazers during the summer are just not it.
- In terms of relationship status, 25% of respondents said they are currently in a relationship, 65% are not, and 10% are in that weird zone. High school relationships are not that important anyway...right?
- The seniors voted that the best school events were Bicknell Bonanza, receiving 45% of votes, and Back to School Bash, receiving 30% of the votes.
- 50% said that they do not care when teachers are late to class. That means less class time!
- 80% of seniors are first generation Reserve students. Yay, first gen students!
- Approximately 70% of seniors attend advisory lunch every week.
- 24% of seniors have visited over 10 countries. You are all well traveled!
- About 24% of seniors get 5-6 hours of sleep per night and another 24% get 6-7 hours per school night.
- Around 40% of seniors feel disappointed with Joseph R. Biden's presidency.
- Approximately 56% of seniors have not had Covid. You all have strong immunity!