

MOCK TRIAL NATIONALS

Read about Exeter's 10th place win, 3.

SOTW: OLIVIA DOCKERY

Click! Read about the moments Olivia Dockery captures, 10.

DO PEOPLE REALLY CHANGE?

Read about if lower Diya Sandeep believes people can truly change, 15.

Academy Building Renovations Progress Quickly



Miles Turner / The Exonian

By ADRIANCHAN, JOHANNA HILLMAN, CAROLLEE, and ELEANOR PONTZ

As Exonians returned to campus for the 2025-2026 school year, they were met with construction vehicles and closed paths. Due to the renovation of the Academy Building, history, math, and religion classrooms to which the students commuted were scattered across campus. Many classrooms in Phillips Hall and the Phelps Science Building were shared between teachers from different departments. The fourth floor of the Academy Library was converted into classroom space, and

meeting rooms in Elizabeth Phillips Academy Center and the Hahn Center were made into classrooms. In October, the academy purchased the Red Brick Church on Front Street and converted it into classrooms for use by the math department. Assembly was moved from the Assembly Hall to Love Gym. The renovation is a huge undertaking and is the building's first major renovation since its dedication in 1915. In addition to the refurbishment of classrooms and other spaces and the installation of better heating and cooling systems, the Assembly Hall will also be enlarged to fit the entire student body, the physical footprint of the build-

ing will be extended further into EPAC quad, and the school will add a design lab on the first floor. The renovations were originally planned to be finished by the beginning of the 2027-2028 school year. Construction on classrooms has progressed faster than expected. This is in part due to the fact that no classes have been held in the building this term, though the academy had originally intended to continue using some classrooms. As of now, both the history and math departments are predicted to hold their classes in the academy building in the fall. How

RENOVATIONS, 2.

In-Depth: Disciplinary Review Committee

By LYDIA KUHNERT, ELEANOR PONTZ, and ARISA YOSHINO

"...Former Dean of Residential Life from 2018 to 2025, Carol

Cahalane, explained, 'It's usually a bubbling up of, 'okay, thinking in the community has shifted, or the committee has for some time struggled with what

to do with this kind of thing, they haven't been able to resolve this question within that group, and they feel they need input from a larger community.'"

Read more on page 8.

In-Depth: Club Funds

By TIAGO BILYK, JAYDEN LU, DIYA SANDEEP, and TONY ZHU

"...some clubs

Read more on page 9.

seamlessly secure the budget process funding for frequent trips and specialized equipment, other clubs frequently find themselves stalled by which favors some clubs more than others."

Jan Woodford Receives Founders' Day Award



Woodford served Exeter for more than four decades.

Sean Ricard / The Exonian

By AUDREY KIM, SEAN RICARD and ANNIE ZHU

The Love Gym was rather busy as students trickled in for Friday assembly. On Friday, May 15, the annual Founders' Day was presented to Jan Woodford, longtime member of the PEA community. Trustees, visiting alumni, and previous recipients of the award

eagerly awaited Jan Woodford, honorary member of 13 classes, more than any other individual, served the Academy for nearly four decades, starting in 1987 in the office of alumni relations and steadily growing the department during her tenure. She served in the Air Force prior to starting at the academy, and was later instrumental in the inception of Exeter Salutes, a program

that honors Exeter alumni in the armed forces. Woodford formally retired in 2025, but continues to work part time as a building monitor with campus safety.

The Founders' Day award is presented by The General Alumni Association to an individual who has "shown exceptional service to the Academy," according to the email that

WOODFORD, 3.

Rawson's Last Principal's Day

By DIYA SANDEEP and ANNIE ZHU

By all accounts, it seemed like a typical Monday; schedules remained typical, teachers still met with students, and debates and guesses continued to be heard at nearly every Harkness table over one subject only: When is Principal's Day? The answer was finally officially announced as students walked out of classes that afternoon. As students and staff alike gathered in front of J. Smith, a banner strung on the balcony proclaimed: "Principal's Day is Tomorrow!"

Held on Tuesday, May 12th, all required appointments until 6pm were canceled, giving students a chance to enjoy the day off. An outdoor barbecue was held on the Phillips Hall Quad at 5 pm, complete with beverages and desserts.

A special event was also held in Davis Hall from 6 pm to 7:30 pm on Monday, May 11th, disclosed in an email written by Principal William Rawson to all students on campus. "Tonight, I invite you to visit me in W.K.Rawson World for a treat that will surely de-



Sean Ricard / The Exonian

light any Willy Wonka fan!" Rawson wrote.

As the last Principal's Day of Rawson's leadership at Exeter, the celebration was unforgettable. The event featured a selection of candies including lollipops, jellybeans, and even Rawson-branded chocolate bars that the Principal signed himself. "We wanted to make sure that it was a truly memorable experience for students," Assistant Principal Eimer Page said. "Principal Rawson has really focused on the student experience, his whole time as principal, and he just wanted to bring a smile to everyone's face for his final Principal's day," she added.

Mystery was key to this delightful event. "[The most challenging part was] keeping everything a secret," Leigh Drapeau said. "My office was overcome by a lot of stuff," she added. To create the uniquely-wrapped chocolate bars, Drapeau and others made an incredible effort. "We had a bunch of people in J. Smith, and we had lunch on Friday. We got pizza and we wrapped 1000 chocolate bars," she said. To procure the rest of the goods, the Dining Hall Staff drove to a candy warehouse in Massachusetts. "Without them, none of this would have been possible. They're the

PRINCIPAL, 8.

News

» MATH CHURCH INTRUDER

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» TRACK DEDICATION

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» CLUB FUNDS

Read about how club funds are allocated, 9.

Mock Trial C-Team Places 10th in the Country

By VALMIK DANGAYACH, KAYLEE GONG, MAGGIE KOTKOWSKI, and ARISA YOSHINO

Note: Introduction is written in the form of a Mock Trial Opening Statement with a Case Theme: "C-Team, Community, Congratulations." The bold formatting is how lawyers often structure their work for emphasis when reading.

C-Team, Community, Congratulations.

Your honor, opposing counsel, and members of Exeter. On Wednesday, May 6, PEA Mock Trial's C-Team — led by seniors Forrest Zeng and Ethan Benenson — travelled to Des Moines, Iowa for the National High School Mock Trial Championship. After winning the New Hampshire state championship in February, the team had only a month to prepare once the national case packet was released. A month before leaving for Nationals, they received the court case and spent numerous hours each week preparing material, running cross-examinations, and refining their performances to near memorization.

The defense included Zeng, and lowers Ellina Kim and Larry Lyu as attorneys, with Benenson, lower Hannah Ren and prep Aanya Shah as wit-

nesses. For the plaintiff, Zeng was an attorney with lower Eilena Ding and prep Claire Puchalski; Benenson, Shah, and lower Emi Southgate were witnesses. Alternate prep Willem Vaischville traveled with them, and alternate lower Ben Lewis supported from Exeter. They were all driven by a **community** love for Mock Trial and for each other. After two days of competing, the **C-Team community** finished 10th in the nation. **Congratulations.**

Preparation for Nationals was compressed into an unusually short timeline. Because the case materials were released only a month before the tournament, unlike any of their other tournaments, the team met two to three times each week for intensive two-hour practices, continuing revisions until days before competition. "Given the compressed timeline, it forced us to really focus on keeping our case theory simple and clean," Benenson said. Having attended Nationals twice before, he was integral in helping the team identify the key winning points for both sides and streamline the writing process.

The team's preparation was also slightly complicated by the fact that Zeng was in Washington, DC for the spring term at the Washington Internship Program (WIP). He would call in on Zoom, but often from un-

usual locations: "He was so busy, but sometimes he would call in at restaurants with his friends and with all of the WIP people," Ren laughed. "It was really funny because we all really missed him."

Zeng and Benenson also fielded advice and suggestions from alumni of PEA Mock Trial who had gone on to compete in college, including Anderson Lynch '23 and Colin Jung '24. They also ran scrimmages against the New Jersey, Massachusetts, and Texas teams. "That was how we prepared — by constantly running things," Zeng said.

For the team's members, who were all new to Mock Trial this year, Nationals was unfamiliar territory. As the first C-Team — the novice team in the club — in PEA Mock Trial history to qualify for Nationals, the stakes felt high. "I feel like there was a lot of pressure on us," Ren said. "It felt like we had to prove ourselves, that we didn't just make it to Nationals by mistake." The team aimed for a top-ten finish, which would earn them a trophy.

Benenson focused on preventing the team from getting in their heads. "My most important job as a leader is to keep team morale high and make sure the kids are having fun," he said. Thinking back to his younger years on the team, he wanted to be a



Group picture of Mock Trial C Team.

Courtesy of Lori Novell

source of confidence and also emphasize that academics always came first. "We want to sprint through the finish line, not come out of the race drained and burnt out," he said.

Lyu believed the team's success came largely from its balance between rigor and camaraderie. "We met rigorously, but we didn't take ourselves too seriously. We were just a family and working towards a common goal, and I think that's why we succeeded so much."

Lyu continued and cited the main aspect that all members highlighted as the crux of their experience and results: "Our chemistry in the courtroom, our collaboration,

and strong leadership from Forrest and Ethan brought us to success. As C-Team, we realized that it's not too much about your experience — obviously we're a skilled team — but it's more about community and dedication."

The team left campus early on Wednesday, May 6 for a flight from Boston Logan International Airport to Des Moines International Airport. On their flights, the team endlessly continued to practice and run their material. During their layover in Chicago, Illinois, they reunited with Zeng.

The following day, they ran a scrimmage against Wyoming. As one last practice day before

the final competition, they further refined their material. In the afternoon, there was also a pin exchange event — when each state has their own pins to trade with each other. However, Benenson accidentally left the New Hampshire pins behind. Instead, the team spent the afternoon collecting pins from other states and pretending to represent them instead. Many other states followed suit and Kim laughed, "It was so funny. I don't think I ever laughed that hard."

Beyond the pin exchange, there were also dinner parties, dances, and carnival events throughout the week. Because

MOCK, 6.

Professor Robert Mundheim '50 Reflects on Leadership and Exeter



Courtesy of Sean Ricard

By MARYN BOWMAN, KAYLEE GONG, and LEVISTOLL

On Monday, May 11, upper Eli Orbach stood on the stage and introduced Professor Robert Mundheim '50: Harvard Law School graduate, General Counsel of the U.S. Treasury Department under the Carter Administration, negotiator of the release of American hostages from Iran during the Iran Hostage Crisis, Dean of University of Pennsylvania

Law School, Co-Chairman of the Fried and Frank law firm, General Counsel of investment bank Salomon Brothers, and now, professor of corporate law and finance at the James E. Rogers College of Law at the University of Arizona.

"With that introduction, you're thinking why did they invite a guy who can't seem to hold a job?," joked Mundheim.

Mundheim began with a reflection on his Exeter experience—he had come to Exeter from New York

public school as a new upper after taking summer classes to avoid reclassing and ended up graduating as valedictorian. "I always think back on my Exeter education as the best [education] of my life... The Harkness table emphasized interchange, listening, asking questions, telling your opinion, and listening to what people thought about it... Exeter was an early introduction to negotiation for me."

Thus in November 1979 when Americans

were taken hostage by Iran and President Jimmy Carter called for help, Mundheim answered. He worked for years to help with negotiations, but no methods seem to work. Mundheim even had to quit as General Counsel of the U.S. Treasury for the sake of supporting his family, as he explained. However, in early January of 1981, the Deputy Secretary of the U.S. Treasury called Mundheim about a new possible path towards

MUNDHEIM, 7.

Renovations Cont.

be complete; thus, some teachers will need to share classrooms.

"We have hope that we can share in the academy building as opposed to being spread out," said Alexa Caldwell, the Chair of the History Department. If this is not possible, some teachers will remain in Phillips Hall. Additionally, Caldwell mentioned that some classes might face challenges due to the noise caused by the construction.

While the construction on the classrooms has been progressing faster than expected, construction on the Assembly Hall will take longer. It is unclear exactly when the Assembly Hall is projected to be finished, but it is unlikely that it will be completed during the calendar year of 2026. "The Assembly Hall is one of the most time-consuming parts of the project," explained Panama Geer, the Math Department Chair.

Geer expressed relief at the idea of moving back into the Academy Building. "The school has been bending over backwards to try and make it [the Academy Building's renovation period] work for the math department," she acknowledged. "But it's hard to coordinate and

find cohesion when we're spread out across different buildings. It is like a family living out of boxes while also living in different buildings."

Geer is also excited for the changes that the renovations will bring, such as new projectors, better lighting, and windows with screens that can be opened. Additionally, at the suggestion of some math teachers, mathematical concepts will be integrated into the design of certain parts of the buildings. For example, some of the bathroom tiles will incorporate geometric ideas. "These are going to be incredible improvements that we're all really looking forward to," commented Geer.

In undertaking a huge renovation like this one, many aspects of the project and timeline were uncertain and are still unknown now. We do know, however, that due to the evacuation of all classes from the building, the construction work was fortunately able to speed ahead of its original plans. Faculty and students across campus are looking forward to moving back into the new and improved Academy Building sometime soon, likely in under a year.

Exonian Trustee Christine Weaver Shares Her Insights About A.I.

By SEAN RICARD '28

Amid the joys of Principal's Day, Exonians received a short, conspicuous email from Dean of Faculty Meg Foley, who invited students and faculty to an informal conversation with Trustee Christine Robson Weaver, '99, to share perspectives on the emergence of artificial intelligence. The conversation, held on Wednesday, May 13 from 3:30-4:30 p.m. in the EPAC forum, was hosted by Dean of Faculty Meg Foley and Assistant Principal Eimer Page.

Robson Weaver is a trustee member of the AI Working Group, formed in the 2025-2026 school year as a group of faculty, staff and trustees to be proactive about AI's rapid implications on the educational, professional, and global landscape. Robson Weaver, besides her service as a trustee, works as a Product Lead in Machine Learning at Google. This talk came amid continuing conversations, excitements, and concerns about the emergence of Generative AI and its implications on campus life.



Courtesy of Patrick Garrity

The conversation, which drew about 30 faculty and students attendees, was informal, off the record, and largely question-answer based. Students had the opportunity to ask a total of a dozen questions, to which Robson Weaver expanded and gave her background.

Foley, who organized the conversation, commented on the rationale, sharing, "I have been a teacher of economics for many years. I am always interested in how people arrive at their decisions. We live in a world of tradeoffs, [and] I'm curious how people integrate

information and preferences to choose their actions."

Robson Weaver, Foley explained, comes with insight on how decisions are made, given her unique background. Foley went further, "Dr. Robson Weaver has a very high degree of information about technology and generative AI. Far more knowledge than I have. So, I love hearing how a person with that much information weighs the pros and cons from cognitive, ethical, sustainability, equity, and other perspectives."

The value that Foley and many others took from

Intruder Disrupts Class in the Math Church Building

By GARY GUO and ANNIE ZHU

On May 11th, an unexpected guest interrupted Dr. Chelsea Drescher's math class in the new math building at the corner of Front and Spring Streets, the former First Baptist Church. He asked students to call the police so he could turn himself in "for a crime," allegedly for breaking two windows at the Exeter Historical Society Building next door. Dr. Drescher called Exeter Police while a student contacted Campus Safety. The man stayed in the building until Exeter Police arrived and took him into custody.

Lower Abbe Sarpong was among the students who were with Drescher when the stranger entered. Sarpong initially realized the danger of the situation when she heard a crash by the entrance. The man then walked into the classroom, where students were in the middle of their math

class. "It just got really silent, and we just hovered around Dr. Drescher," Sarpong said.

Sarpong remembered that she and several of her classmates were initially very alarmed. "My heart dropped when he walked in because I thought that it was gonna end up really badly, just because of things I'd seen in the news," she said. "The room was really small, and there was no escape."

The appearance of the intruder was intimidating for most students. Sarpong recalled that the man was covered in facial and body tattoos, which startled her. "He had so many face tattoos that I really couldn't make out his face," she said. "...that's the most distinct thing I remember from him."

Drescher was able to de-escalate the situation, calling 911 as the man had asked. "Dr. Drescher was really calm through it all," Sarpong described. "That's what

made me still feel calm, even though I was freaking out." After staying in the foyer, the intruder eventually returned to the classroom and asked for cookies, and Drescher gave him muffins from one of her colleagues.

While the intruder was still in the room, Sarpong called campus safety, attempting to reach into the pile of phones originally stacked in the center of the Harkness table to avoid distractions during class. Sarpong was concerned by the amount of time spent before campus safety arrived at the scene. "I was scared, since campus safety took a while to respond," she said. "That was kind of scary too, because I kept on having to repeat our address."

After the incident, Sarpong has felt a heightened sense of caution and anxiety when walking around the area. "I've just been more wary walking to that room," she said. "We

INTRUDER, 7.

Woodford Cont.

introduced the assembly.

Friday's assembly began with an introduction from Principal Rawson, who recognized the trustees and former recipients of the award who sat in the audience. Then, Sam Brown '92, president of the General Alumni Association gave his formal, extensive introduction of Woodford.

Brown began by describing Woodford's role in Alumni Relations; how she started with the Exeter Fund and later became the primary staff member supporting all reunion classes. It was in this role, Brown, described, that her "attention to detail, impressive organizational skills, ability to build and foster connections with both colleagues and alumni," led Exeter to develop a reunion program that is the "gold standard among independent schools." It is also her skill at organizing reunions that earned her all thirteen of her honorary degrees.

Brown also described how Woodford's event-planning and organizational skills transcended alumni reunions, as she was also instrumental in steering the dedication of the Phelps Science Center, the funeral, the Thompson Cage, and opening of the William Boyce Thompson Field House, the opening of the David E. and Stacy L. Goel Center for Theater and Dance, and the 50th anniversary of the Afro-Latino Exonian Society, to name just a few.

Throughout the rest of Woodford's numerous accomplishments, including her work with Exeter Salutes and *the Exonians* with

Disabilities Association, Brown pointed out how she "approached [her] work on behalf of Exeter and Exonians as far more than a job, which helps to explain why you did it so well."

After Brown's introduction, and the ensuing standing ovation for Woodford, the former took the stage and gave her own inspiring speech.

Woodford began by describing how values learned in the Air Force working as a personnel technician instilled in her the skills that she later took to the academy. "When you're working alongside people from different backgrounds and facing high-pressure situations, compassion is what builds trust and keeps teams together. It's what allows people to support each other and push through challenges."

Also in the Air Force, she learned the value of integrity. She explained, "In the Air Force, integrity means doing the right thing, even when no one is watching. Even when it's difficult. Your reputation is built over time and can be lost in an instant. That is something that will stay with you even after people forget what you achieved."

Her commitment to integrity and interpersonal connection is what defined the remainder of her Exeter career. In her speech, she detailed how "what made Exeter special for me wasn't just the work. It was the people."

Woodford's experiences with Exonians is what inspired her to give back so

much throughout her tenure working here. She herself explained why she chose to contribute so much to the Academy. "Exeter became a "second home" to me after I left the Air Force," she said. As so many have repeated before on the assembly stage, the people one will meet at the Academy is truly what sets Exeter apart. Woodford deeply appreciated "the strong sense of community and the small acts of kindness over the years". "It made me feel supported and valued," she recounted. "I believe deeply in the mission of the Academy and its values which align with my own."

Others Woodford had worked with, such as Michelle Curtin, agree that she truly showcases the very values she honors. "Jan is one of the most selfless people I know," Curtin described. Working with Woodford in the alumni office, "Her kindness and generosity of spirit is what has allowed her to build and maintain relationships with literally hundreds of alumni over her career." She knows their names – and class years! – their stories, their interests and is genuinely grateful to see them on campus or at regional alumni gatherings just to say hello and ask how they have been.

Woodford is also remembered by many for her compassion and attention to detail. "During my 35th Reunion in May 2025, she ensured my food allergies and restrictions were communicated so I knew exactly what was safe for me to eat," Diane Bohn '90 described. "Jan is simply incredible!"

Tom Bright '90 described Woodford's dedication to making reunions the



Woodford receives two standing ovations.

Sean Ricard / *The Exonian*

best gatherings they could be. "Not only has she, whenever possible, good naturedly accommodated our often outrageous requests, she has also helped us – through the fund that now bears her name – underwrite the cost of attending for classmates who otherwise might not have been able to make the trip for PEA," Bright said.

Woodford's dedication to alumni can be seen through the thirteen classes of which she is an honorary member. "Our long, close association with Jan is why, at our 55th reunion last year, we made her an honorary class member," he said.

Kati Plasse, Woodford's daughter, commented on her mother's dedication towards the Academy. "Reunion season" has been a phrase in my house my entire life," she recalled. "We knew this meant that my mother was busy, ensuring that our family needed to step up and show her the same love and support that she extended to all returning to campus."

Plasse also reflected on Woodford's constant demonstration of non sibi,

at school and at home. Plasse said, "Every decision she made was in the spirit of Non Sibi, but I am also her daughter. She gave her all to the school, then came home and gave everything she had to me and my family."

In order to connect the value the Air Force served to her Exeter, she explained her rationale behind creating Exeter Salutes in 2019, "I wanted to showcase to the community the values that the military taught all veterans of compassion, integrity and service," Woodford said. With the annual program, Woodford hopes she "could strengthen the connections and recognize the contributions alumni, faculty and staff veterans have provided and share them with the Academy family."

The way Woodford closed out her assembly was a great testament of her lifetime of service to the school. She said, "At some point, each of you will also be called something. Some job. A sense of purpose." But maybe, she said, that purpose can be defined in unconventional ways. She pointed out, "Maybe your

purpose can be how you treat people and the problems you choose to solve. Or the quiet impact you make every day."

"My time at Exeter," Woodford said, "gave me that sense of purpose. And allow you to be part of something that aligns with my values, and for that, I will always be grateful." Through her diligent commitment to the school's community and showcased through the great impact she had on its members, Woodford's purpose has certainly left its mark.

Woodford then left the crowd with an inspirational instruction in pursuit of that purpose:

"Carry your compassion, your integrity, your willingness to show up for others. Those are the things that will define your life far more than any type of achievement. Exeter is special because of the way people show up from one another. I am deeply grateful to have any part of this community. Thank you for your kindness, your support, and for allowing me a part of your lives."

Renowned Classicist Daniel Mendelsohn Visits Campus

By JESS ANSLEM,
LYDIA KUHNERT, and
SEAN RICARD

The Odyssey is, first and foremost, a story about a man trying to get home to his wife Penelope. Every student of Homer can recite the importance of νόστος, meaning homecoming, throughout the entire narrative. However, it would be a real shame for us at the Academy to only fixate on the obvious, and not examine the wonderfully rich world Homer creates in the background.

To help us with the task, the Classics Department invited professor and celebrated translator Dr. Daniel Mendelsohn for a series of lunch lectures throughout the week of May 11.

Mendelsohn teaches in the humanities at Bard College, and is the author of numerous award-winning books, including *The Lost*, *Three Rings*, and *An Odyssey: A Father, a Son, and an Epic*, a bestselling memoir inspired by his experience teaching Homer's *Odyssey* alongside his father. His newest translation of *The Odyssey* has already been hailed by critics as one of the definitive modern translations of Homer.

It is safe to say that Mendelsohn knows about *The Odyssey*. Throughout the week, the Mary Rawson Reading Room in the Davis Library was packed with students, faculty, and alumni alike, excited to learn from the expert.

On Monday, Mendel-

sohn delivered a lecture on the women of *The Odyssey*, and its feminist undertones. The lecture was particularly well attended, drawing students from every grade, to the point that there were not enough chairs around the main table for the attendees. Mendelsohn compared the characters of Penelope and the Sirens, and discussed Calypso's critique of the double-standard between female and male deities.

Only a few hours after Monday's lunch had finished, the plans of the Classics Department were disrupted by a sudden announcement that Tuesday would be Principal's Day. However, rather than cancelling, the decision was made to go on with the lunchtime seminar and simply reschedule it for an hour earlier in the day.

Despite the last-minute announcement, attendance was still high on Tuesday, though admittedly made up of mostly faculty. The discussion was based around looking at *The Odyssey* through an anthropological lens, and examining what Homer tells us about how his society interacted with other cultures. Lower and Kirtland Society co-head Sophia Balaraman described, "I really enjoyed Tuesday's lecture. I had never really thought of *The Odyssey* like in an anthropological way. [Dr. Mendelsohn] compared different civilizations, like the Laestrigonians and Phaeacians, and what they revealed about what Homer thought

the perfect civilization was like."

Wednesday brought a nighttime lecture in the Forum, which mainly dealt with Mendelsohn's own translation of *The Odyssey*, and the art of translating the Ancient Greek language.

Lower Tiago Bilyk, who introduced Mendelsohn at Wednesday's lecture, pointed out, "The attendance at the lecture here was good, I'd say there were two, or maybe three dozen people in the room."

The seminar was particularly interesting to students who take Latin or Greek at the Academy, and who mostly know translating as something that must be very accurate and literal. Senior Cecily Reed explained, "He really got us into the specifics of *The Odyssey*, but also the art of translation generally, which was really interesting for all of us who translate as a grammatical exercise. You could really see how much effort he's put into his work and how incredible a scholar he really is."

Greek can seem very daunting to many students at the Academy, renowned for its difficulty and complex grammar. However, Mendelsohn's talks helped students take the leap and try it out. Bilyk explained, "He's definitely very encouraging of learning Greek. I think his description of translating and interpreting the language was very interesting and encouraging of someone who's considering whether to take one or two years of



Courtesy of Tanner Humanities Center

the language."

Mendelsohn's topic shifted to economics on Thursday, as he discussed Homer's presentation of trade and class. On Friday, he examined the more "meta" parts of *The Odyssey*, specifically how its treatment of poetry and bards. On both days, Mendelsohn prepared well organized and thoughtful hand-outs, which helped guide the audience through some of Homer's more complicated lines.

Throughout the week, Mendelsohn maintained a nice balance of serious scholarly discussion, and humorous engagement with the crowd. "The au-

dience was very engaged, especially because he had sort of a jokey tone that really kept the audience attentive. They felt like they had a stake in the matter, that they could relate to it, and it really was nice to see. A lot of the stuff he's talking about was such a high level that it's not a given that everyone's going to stay kind of locked in, but he was funny enough and engaging enough that they really did all stay paying attention."

Upper Owen Cosgrove explained, "He made me realize that Classics is a thing that you can individualize, make a creation of yourself that's original."

Hearing about Mendelsohn's own translations taught Cosgrove that, "you can translate something the way you want it to be translated in a brand new way and you don't have to look at other authors to influence that. You can create something original from stuff that is so ancient."

In all, the week of seminars was a wonderful experience for all who attended, and a nice lunch-time break in what was a very fast paced week. The Classics Department will look forward to its next speaker, likely in the winter term, and in the meantime, keep on translating on.

Exeter Genetics Club Hosts Dr. Mills IV

By BLAIR LUCYMA, and
OLIMAWANG

On May 19, Exeter welcomed the inaugural guest speaker of the Exeter Genetics and Biotechnology Club (EGBC) speaker series, Dr. William T Mills IV, assistant professor at Mount St. Mary's University. Mills opened the series by hinting at a novel explanation for the Warburg effect he was exploring through investigating let-7's role in enhancing oxidative phosphorylation. The talk was the inaugural event of a series that the club hopes will expose interested attendees to topics at the bleeding edge of genetics and biotechnology research.

The vision behind the EGBC speaker series is to give club members a better understanding of how discoveries are made in the industry of genetics, and, as an extension, biology as a whole. "So many students are familiar with concepts and theories and metabolic pathways but don't know how they were discovered," lower Jaiden Kim, one of the Genetics Club coheads, shared.

Lower Adrian Chan, another cohead of Genetics Club, added,

"We hope that we can bridge what current researchers are doing [with biology learning at Exeter] and create aspirations for what our club members might aspire to become in the future"

"We've also focused on speakers who have a meaningful dry lab component to spark curiosity in members interested in doing research through our club for next year's symposium," Kim noted.

To search for speakers, the coheads branched out to researchers they've worked with in the past. For this talk, Chan reached out to Mills, his research mentor at the Pre-College Summer Program at Johns Hopkins University.

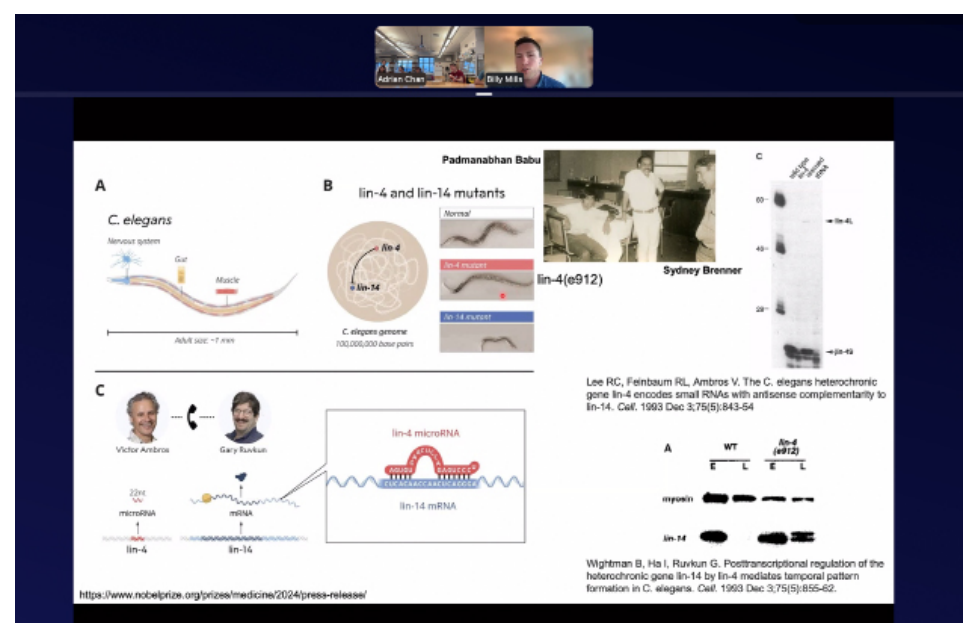
"When I had Adrian as a student, he told me about his plans to start a Genetics Club at Phillips Exeter Academy and I loved the idea," Mills reminisced. "When Adrian reached out to me a few months ago to be the inaugural speaker in the Speaker Series I was honored. I love talking about science and telling stories of how science has advanced to bring us where we are today."

Prior to the talk, Genetics Club hosted a primer on the history of the discovery of

microRNA and molecular genetics concepts. "We hoped that by explaining some of the more basic aspects of microRNA, our club members would have a stronger conceptual understanding going into the talk and they would be able to fully engage with the materials," Chan noted.

Mills' talk traced the scientific path that led to the discovery of microRNAs, short molecules that cells use to control gene expression. "I discussed how they function at the molecular level and explored their growing importance in understanding human diseases such as cancer. I shared some of my current research about novel roles that microRNAs may play in regulating cellular metabolism and a possible new avenue for cancer research," he said.

In particular, he explained the mechanisms of SCRAP, a system he developed for RNA sequencing of microRNA. He also shared about the current focus of his research: the role microRNA plays in enhancing the gene expression of mitochondrial genes. Though the talk went into details that cannot be published in the paper that relationship



Adrian Chan / The Exonian

is focus of his current research

The session had a great turnout and attendees appreciated the breadth and the depth of the talk. "I thought the talk was really interesting. I enjoyed listening to the way he did his work, especially how he developed and optimized a method of isolating chimeric RNAs. It's a good reminder that research requires a lot more creativity than people give it credit for," Kim noted.

Chan acknowledged the relevancy of the talk. "MicroRNA is something that we cover with the BIO200 and BIO300 sequences. I think diving really deep into something which members had a basic understanding in science classes al-

lowed them to see the real depth of research and the sort of frontier of research in aspects they briefly touch in the extracurricular."

Mills' talk also provided insights on how to approach scientific research. "[In the Q&A session], I asked how the researchers Dr. Mills cited were able to mutate the genes in *C. elegans*, and he explained that they indiscriminately mutated the genes but were lucky enough that one important gene was mutated and that they could study the effects of it," prep Jessica Fan wrote. "This made me understand that sometimes we don't know exactly what we are looking for, but our methods can provide results we were never expecting."

"I hope club members took away how exciting and unexpected science can be," Mills concluded. "The discovery of microRNAs was only made possible by some fortuitous discoveries made by numerous different scientists. In my own research, our results were not at all what we expected but have launched us on a very exciting path."

Exeter Genetics and Biotechnology Club is planning to host more guest speakers in the coming academic year alongside other research opportunities. The speaker series will continue to serve as an inspiration for aspiring geneticists at Exeter.

Thank You From The 148th Editorial Board

Dear readers,

Since Jan. 15, the 148th Editorial Board has published 14 issues in total, culminating in this final issue of the 2025-2026 academic year. The past few months have been transformative and deeply rewarding, and we were honored to have experienced them alongside our internal and external communities.

It is a privilege to be entrusted with the reporting of the Academy's ever-evolving campus culture and news by the community. To all of our readers, know that your unrelenting support is the foundation of all the work we do. On Thursdays when the issue comes out, we feel immense pride and joy when seeing you pick up the paper. Thank you for entrusting us with your stories and lived experience, and thank you for your patience as we handled them with the utmost care.

To The 147th Board, without your mentorship, integrity, and innovation we would not have been able to so seamlessly transition into our new roles. Without the precedent of journalistic excellence you set during your tenure, *The Exonian* would not be what it is today.

We are very lucky to work alongside so many talented writers in *The Exonian*. We've spent many Sunday writers' meetings together in the forum, sharing our interests and passions while watching the sunset get later and later throughout the term. We are also very lucky to get pizza at Monday editors' meeting again. On top of their rigorous academic workload, our writers were able to dedicate themselves into crafting detailed articles that narrated our community's unique stories. Without their dedication to weekly journalistic reporting and creative work, we wouldn't have been able to publish an average of 20 pages each issue.

The pride we feel when seeing The Exonian media staff showing up to events with cameras cannot be expressed in words. We are incredibly fortunate to have a strong media team that supplemented our content artistically. It's our honor to witness journalism transforming into the digital age and thank you to everyone who made this happen. Follow our Instagram page @theexonian.

Beyond our editorial board, though, without the work of *The Exonian's* Web and Business boards, the outreach that is so critical to our work would not have been possible. We particularly enjoyed your customized iMac backgrounds, which really brought joy to the newsroom. Your relentless efforts in making our work as accessible as it can be are greatly appreciated, and serve as an extension of our principal beliefs.

Furthermore, we want to extend our sincere thanks to the faculty advisors whose support and patient experience contributed to an effective newsroom culture. The publication process is one that requires a steadfast support system and external confidence in our abilities; you consistently asserted this trust in us.

As the members of The 148th Editorial Board move into our senior year, we reflect on all that *The Exonian*, its staff, affiliates, and supporters have given us. Without this newspaper, we have confidence that our Exeter experience would not be complete.

For it all, we say thank you.

With gratitude,

The 148th Editorial Board of *The Exonian*



Exonian staff on a trip to the Harvard Crimson in April.

Erica Lazure / *The Exonian*

Lamont Younger Poets Reading in Library

By TIAGO BILYK '28

Students and faculty shuffled into Rockefeller hall on Tuesday to listen to a reading from winners of the Lamont Younger Poets Prize and Lamont poet Dzvinia Orłowsky, a Ukrainian-American poet, author of seven different collections published by the Carnegie Mellon University press. The four student prize winners, preps Brandon Ma and Parthvi Bhaskar, along with lowers Sophia Balaraman and Jayden Oh, received their nominations on May 4.

The event was held on the first floor of the library in Rockefeller Hall. "There were about 50 people [in attendance]," said Balaraman, "which was more than I was expecting."

The attendance was due, in part, to several English teachers who encouraged students in their classes to go to the event. "We were very pleased with the turnout," said Mr Todd Hearon, instructor in English and organizer of the event.

The setting and audience greatly contributed to the overall encouraging and respectful atmosphere of the performances. "It was really cool to get to speak there," noted Oh. "You got to hear your words echo through the huge hall that is like seven stories tall."

For a chance to win, one needed to submit a piece of poetry shorter than 100 lines to a committee review under the English department. "Up to four poets are chosen as the winners

[every year]," commented Hearon. The prize poems included "Eyes," and "Drawn Outward." The latter, submitted by Oh was based on a spring English narrative which he then adapted to verse, detailing the life of a fisherman.

After a reading by Orłowsky, the event concluded with a photo op of the students with a memorial to the late Mr. McGuinn, to whom the prize was dedicated. Every year the department hopes to honor him and his service to the community through inspiring young students to explore the field of verse.

Another event will follow next Tuesday, on May 26, where all are invited to hear more poetry from the resident artist.



Courtesy of Todd Hearon

Mock Cont.

the team had prepared so thoroughly beforehand, competition days allowed for leisure time as well. “We could spend that time doing team bonding activities and messing around,” Zeng said.

“We really had a good time just interacting with other teams,” said lower Emi Southgate. She also highlighted the bonds she formed with the faculty chaperones on the trip. “Shout out to Ms. Novell. We very much bonded a lot on that trip,” she said.

On the first day of competition, C-Team’s opening defense round was against Wyoming — the same team they had scrimmaged just a day earlier. They went on to sweep all four ballots; in each trial, there are four ballots with the lowest score dropped, and a team must secure at least two to win. In the afternoon, the plaintiff side narrowly defeated Michigan.

That night, the team worked rigorously to refine their plaintiff case. The following day, Kim praised, “The improvement of the plaintiff from the first day to the second day was amazing to watch. They had a harder case to argue than the defense, but they did an incredible job responding to objections, giving statements, witness control, etc. I was so proud.”

On the final day of competing, the defense won against Nevada, who would go on to place 6th in the nation. Then, the plaintiff barely lost to Georgia, who would go on to finish runner-up.

The team would never have gotten as far as they did without their captains, Benenson and Zeng. Lyu noted, “We joke that they’re our parents because they’re so fundamental to our developmental experience.”

Southgate agreed, saying, “Without our captains, our team wouldn’t be what it is.” She continued, “They are so talented and unique in the sense that they could bring random freshmen and sophomores together and build a winning team. It is really all due to them.”

Their leadership shaped the entire team, but the experience also deeply affected Benenson and Zeng themselves. “Mock trial is the greatest leadership opportunity I have been privileged to have at Exeter,” Benenson said. Despite holding countless leadership positions like Senior Class president and cross-country captain, he explained, “No role has been more fulfilling, enriching, and formative than that of a Mock Trial team leader. The team leaders I had as a younger student were my greatest mentors and shaped me into who I am. They are part of why I will always love Exeter, and I hope that Forrest and I have also been able to provide lifelong experiences for the kids we led this year.”

Zeng reflected on how his mentors shaped the way that he took on the role of a leader. “Leading the C team throughout this year, and especially at Mock Trial Nationals, was

my chance to step into that role of leadership and pass on the ideas, lessons, and mentorship that other individuals taught me.”

Beyond its captains, the entire team shared an incredibly close bond. Shah highlighted, “We have a really special bond and even co-heads who have been on several different Mock Trial teams have said that we have a level of connection no other team that they’ve been on has had before.”

“I’ve been on many teams in my life, but this has been the most important team,” echoed Kim. “We aren’t even just a team; we’re a family. It’s incredible because we’re such a random collection of people seemingly thrown together, but we’ve ended up creating this really strong family that has changed my life.”

Receiving the tenth-place medal marked the culmination of months of hard work, late-night practices, and friendships formed along the way. It was emotional with pride and excitement, but also sadness. As they celebrated, they knew that it was their last time being together as a team: their captains are graduating, and the team rosters change.

“Honestly our main concern was that we were never really going to be a team together again, because this was our last big tournament together,” reflected Puchalski. “There were definitely a lot of tears shed and that was definitely the biggest emotion I was feeling at the time.”

“The bond C-Team has this year was rare and special,” club advisor Ms. Novell added. “These students were younger than most, and watching them soak up all the feedback provided to them after scrimmages and each round in order to bring their skills to the highest level and compete against very seasoned teams was so rewarding.”

Southgate emphasized the fact that they were able to elevate New Hampshire out of 44th place in the bracket all the way up to 10th. “I’m just so proud of the team, and especially our captains. I think all of us were crying on the last night knowing that we wouldn’t be a team together after that day.”

The final evening after the win, Benenson and Zeng called a team meeting in their room for one final time. The captains praised the team’s dedication and teamwork, and everyone began crying. Everyone circled together in a hug and cherished their last few moments altogether as C-Team.

The following morning in the airport finished similarly. Zeng had headed to his separate gate for WIP without saying goodbye. However, the team called him back, chanting, “Run, Forrest, run!” Zeng sprinted across the terminal for one final goodbye of a group hug with tears.

Mock Trial C-Team’s success at Nationals marked the culmination of an extraordinary season. As the first C-Team in PEA Mock Trial history to

compete at Nationals, they proved that dedication, resilience, and hard work can elevate even a novice team to the national stage. Above all, however, the season left the team with friendships and memories that extended far beyond the courtroom.

“The club is in good hands next year, and Forrest and I have done our best to show these kids what true camaraderie, team spirit, and good mock trial is,” Benenson said. “Our success at Nationals meant that the legacy of Exeter mock trial will continue and is still burning strong.”

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A.I. Cont.

the meeting were Robson Weaver’s insights on how to make those informed decisions. “I love hearing how any one person makes what they consider to be an informed decision. I think the students’ questions also showed that they have that same curiosity.”

Apart from Foley and Page, who each asked a question at the beginning and end, respectively, the conversation was largely led by students. Students had a range of curiosities, attitudes, and thoughts about AI. Some student questions centered around the optimism around AI, Robson Weaver’s expertise in the field, and advice for how to effectively use the technology.

Other questions were more skeptical, as students doubted the ethicality and pedagogical necessity of the technology. Instructor in English Mercy Carbonell after the meeting put a name to some of the skepticism students were voicing at the meeting, “[we] will benefit from a far deeper collective, critical analysis of AI in education and the impacts of Big Tech.”

The Working Group appears to be a step in that direction, however some who attended the meeting were more critical of the apparent eagerness to incorporate AI and what Carbonell described as “complicity.”

Dr. Ira Helfand, a physician known for his work in nuclear disarmament and his skepticism of big technology, is a trustee on the AI Working Group and attended the meeting.

After the meeting, Robson Weaver and Helfand opted to give a joint statement via email in lieu of personalized interviews, in which they reflected on their current roles.

Their email corroborated Foley’s characterization of the trustees’ role: to provide careful knowledge and expertise in the decision-making process. The trustees wrote about their role as a whole, “We provide strategic oversight of the school, ensuring strong leadership, sound financial stewardship, and responsible management of campus resources to uphold Exeter’s tradition of excellence and leadership in secondary education.”

While specifying that “[The AI Working Group] is not responsible for making policy decisions about AI at the school,” the trustees and other members of the group work to provide insight and weigh the costs against the benefits, in other words “act as a strategic resource to support the school in [its] mission.”

In weighing those benefits, Robson Weaver and Helfand in their email spoke to pedagogical nuance when it comes to the technology. “AI, like many tools, can be used to cut corners in the learning process. One of the real challenges with AI in a school setting is figuring out where it can help student learning, and in what settings it may act as a shortcut or crutch that produces the right answer, but does not foster real

learning or intellectual growth.”

They clarified that much of those decisions are driven by individual departments, faculty, and the Center for Teaching and Learning.”

One of the trustees’ main takeaways about the state of AI at the school was the need to “figure out how, where, and if [Exeter] wants to make use of AI tools in teaching and in operations.” The trustees’ email pointed out that Exeter has a history of embracing technological innovation, and that there is an “openness to adopting AI technologies where they can contribute to the Academy’s mission.”

“Exeter, like other schools,” some trustees said, “needs to explore how this very complex and multifaceted technology might be used in teaching and learning, what students and adults need to understand to be literate in this technology, and what safeguards are needed to protect against negative impacts.”

These distinctions, between use-cases that contribute to the Academy’s mission, and negative impacts that need to be safeguarded, are largely still up in the air, as the Academy has no formal AI policy.

Despite the lack of formal policy, ‘exploration’ is undoubtedly underway. This comes in the form of departments, individual teachers, and of course, students who have been incorporating AI tools into their everyday lives. This could come in many forms, from the severest of academic dishonesty cases, to teachers encouraging students to use AI to study.

The school also provides subscriptions to Gemini, Google’s chatbot, and just this Tuesday the Department of IT services announced that starting June 15 teachers have access to a subscription to ChatGPT for Teachers, part of OpenAI’s chatbot.

On May 4, Director of Studies Jeanette Lovett announced the AI Scholars Program, which will take place in August before school starts. The program, which will be taught by instructors from InspiritAI, details topics such as creating an AI tool or learning how to “vibe code” or use no-code tools.

As exploration continues, decisions continue to be made, and pros and cons continue to be weighed, AI continues to rapidly evolve around us, its implications being felt at nearly every global corner, undoubtedly including that of Exeter. Foley is hopeful for more conversations like Wednesdays, “if that is of further interest to students. I find it to be a fascinating and important conversation.”

Conversations like this begin to allow the school’s stance, attitudes, and remaining questions about AI to be demystified, and are the first step in clearing up ambiguity.

Mundheim Cont.

negotiation, so Mundheim returned.

“An understandable deal, that’s how we started,” explained Mundheim. “The difficulty was that they didn’t trust us, and we didn’t trust them. In other words, if we gave them the money, how could we be sure that they would release the hostages? And from their side, if they release the hostages, how could they be sure we don’t freeze the money?” So, Mundheim had to search for a mutual middle man that both America and Iran trusted: the Bank of England.

However, upon his first inquiry, the Bank of England held many objections to Mundheim’s plan. They were worried that if the negotiations failed, then it would appear to be their fault. So, Mundheim met with Prime Minister Margret Thatcher, who “walked into the room, big smile on her face, and said, ‘If there’s anything that we can do to get the hostages free, we’ll do it.’” That afternoon, the Bank of England no longer had any objections.

The next step, as Mundheim recalled, was to meet with the Algerians. The Iranians had refused to meet with Americans, so instead, the Algerians were the mediators, “like a game of telephone,” Mundheim analogized with a chuckle.

On the final night before the hostages were released, Mundheim described pressures of the moment. He, along with many other government officials, had been awake for 36 hours. Ronald Reagan was about to become president, and when he would, Mundheim and his colleagues would lose all their authority. Thus, their timeline was pressing, and they were all discussing over the phone. Carter even joined the call. However, after long struggles, the deal was done.

“I still remember that next morning, which was January 21. The plane flew into Algiers with the hostages, and I can still see them walking down the ramp and coming home — one of the greatest moments in my life,” smiled Mundheim. “I think it shows that you can do negotiations, if there are clear objectives on both sides and the objectives are clearly articulated.”

“When [the negotiations] were finished, it was time to go back to teach class.” However, Mundheim was asked by the Dean of University of Penn Law School at the time, who was about to switch jobs, whether he would be interested in his own job. Mundheim laid out his reaction, “Like most times when I’m asked, ‘Would you do that new thing?’ I said, ‘Okay.’ So I became the Dean of Penn Law.”

As Dean, a key requirement Mundheim instituted was mandatory public service for graduation. “Going to Penn Law means you’ve al-

ready in a place of advantage... Therefore, you’ve got an obligation to pay back and help those who didn’t have the luck of the kind of advantages that you have. Naturally, that would apply equally to all of you [Exonains,]” Mundheim emphasized, addressing the audience directly. “You’ve got an advantage at this point that many others don’t have. Therefore, take time to help others.”

Mundheim carried the same humility and thoughtfulness to his career in investment banking. When given the opportunity to place his office at the top floor near Warren Buffet and other senior officers, Mundheim instead chose to sit away from them. Rather he chose to sit at a lower level with an open door. “I always worked with an open door,” he explained. “Because I wanted people to come into the office, sit and chat, and tell me what they’ve been seeing... The interesting thing is that when you sit with your door open, it’s like the Harkness table. People come to talk, to exchange ideas. If you listen, you will learn enough to probably make fewer [mistakes] and a few right [decisions.]”

At a luncheon in the Phelps Science Center following his assembly, Mundheim drew laughter when asked about the biggest change he had noticed at the Academy since he graduated: the introduction of female students. “We didn’t have them,” he said of the school’s now diverse student body. “The only girl I met here was the daughter of a housemaster.”

The conversation then quickly turned to his career as Mundheim candidly spoke about the appeal of public service. “You had a variety of different projects,” he described of his work at the Department of the Treasury. “Anti-dumping, countervailing duties, trade — it was just a broad range of subjects. And very interesting people.”

Throughout the lunch, Mundheim emphasized his reliance on a consistent moral code throughout his career. “I would not be prepared to do something that I think is wrong just to keep a job,” he said. “That also means you think a little bit about who you work for. You want to work for people whose values align with yours.”

He described a moment when he broke away from popular opinion, rejecting a tax deal proposed by a Nobel Prize-winning economist. “I knew the economist would go to the CEO and say, ‘Stupid general counsel — he didn’t really understand the law,’” Mundheim recalled, smiling as he remembered the dispute. He argued that this episode provided broader meaning about the role of a lawyer. “It’s not just saying where the line is. It’s also knowing when you ought not to do

something, which maybe is legal, but has other bad aspects.”

Orbach said the talk affirmed what he had long admired about Mundheim. As he introduced the speaker and hosted him at the Exeter Economics Association, Orbach enjoyed his close proximity to Mundheim. “It was a huge honor to introduce him, since he’s someone I’ve looked up to all my life,” he said. He also reflected on what Mundheim’s diverse career modeled for students: observing Mundheim’s fluid movement between Wall Street, Washington, and the classroom, Orbach found an example for ambitious students. “Professor Mundheim did not get to where he is by being really good at one thing,” Orbach said. “I think that kind of singular focus is becoming increasingly common among ambitious people, and this is a trend I myself feel like I have drifted into. But I think he demonstrates the value of having many different skills, and being able to get along in many different crowds.”

Lower Penelope Ghisleni, who attended Mundheim’s talk at the Economics Association meeting about corporate governance, said she was very invested in what he spoke about, both in the assembly and in the meeting. “A lot of times when speakers come to talk, it feels kind of scripted,” Ghisleni said. “But he talked about it in a way that was very genuine.” Ghisleni also noted “he was incredibly well spoken, but also funny in a way that made the assembly hall smile, which is not something many people can do.”

Prep Anya Shah echoed that sentiment, saying Mundheim’s energy and curiosity left a lasting impression on students. “He is kind of a perfect example of what Exeter hopes students become,” Shah said. “He’s obviously accomplished so much, but he was still humble.”

Shah added that one of her favorite moments from the assembly was Mundheim’s story about nearly being forced to reclass after arriving at Exeter. “One of my favorite parts was hearing how the school originally thought he wouldn’t be able to keep up academically, and then he ended up graduating valedictorian,” she said. “It was funny, but also very inspiring.”

Out of all of his careers, Mundheim concluded the assembly with his favorite: teaching, a complete arc from his beginnings as a student at Exeter. “The way I teach is by giving students hypothetical cases and situations. That leads to a discussion. Once again, I come back to the Harkness table, which is exactly what [Exeter’s] all about and why I think [Exeter] has been the greatest influence on my education.”

Indoor Track Dedicated to Tucker Andersen ‘59



Courtesy of Phillips Exeter Academy

By LEVISTOLL ‘28

On the morning of Saturday, May 16, the Academy dedicated its 200-meter indoor track within the Thompson Field House to Tucker Andersen ‘59. Andersen’s decades of philanthropic leadership helped build the modern Phillips Exeter — literally, as his class is the principal donor to the Academy Building’s ongoing renovation. The ceremony attracted faculty, students, and former colleagues of the alumnus as President of Trustees Kristyn Van Ostern and Director of Athletics Jason Baseden spoke alongside Rawson. Although Andersen did not run track at Exeter or Wesleyan, his alma mater, he took up running at the age of 31

and has since completed 47 New York City Marathons.

Rawson, who presented Andersen with an embroidered track jacket, emphatically remarked upon Andersen’s place in the Academy’s history. “He is a legend among the Exeter trustees, an absolute legend,” he said. Rawson credited Andersen as a creator of the investment infrastructure that Exeter’s endowment relies on, calling him “the grandfather of the modern Exeter Academy.”

Van Ostern spoke about the broader impacts of Andersen’s generous spirit. “Your philanthropy is absolutely what makes it possible for Exeter to serve all these wonderful students from every quarter, and to leave

them transformed as we were,” she said. Van Ostern asked students in the room to find inspiration in Andersen’s kind acts: “I hope that all of you sitting here might just someday decide to sit down with [Director of Major Gifts Aaron Peters] and decide that you’re going to fund the next renovation of the Academy Building 70 years from now,” she said.

Wrestling coach Justin Muchnick plans to run the marathon leg of an ‘Indoor Ironman’ on the newly dedicated track this weekend. “I am happy that PEA Athletics has a firm supporter in Tucker Andersen,” Muchnick remarked, drawing a parallel to another monumental figure

TRACK, 8.

Intruder Cont.

always close the door because we’re scared. When I’m just on Swaysey walking, my senses are very heightened.”

Despite the initial alarm of the situation, Drescher still believed she and her class were relatively safe. “The town of Exeter is still very safe overall compared to other towns and cities. The person did not intend to harm us,” she stated. Drescher also appreciated the students’ lack of panic during the incident.

However, Drescher commented on the additional caution she will carry in the future. “I do keep my classroom door closed and locked during class, now,” she said. After the incident, Drescher stated that she felt “shaken up” and “[was] grateful for the key cards on other buildings that require people to swipe to gain access.”

Outside the math building, students walking to class along Front Street got a first-hand view of the arrest.

“I think putting a scanner on the door might help a lot with this kind of situation,” an anonymous senior who witnessed the incident said. The man could enter the building because it is the only building on campus that is not protected by a Lion Card scan, meaning anyone within or outside the Academy could enter.

“I was walking to my car next to the math church to get my tennis bag for practice,” the same senior recalled. “I saw three police cars surrounding my car, and so I noticed that something was off,” they said. The anonymous student initially thought they had parked illegally, partly because they were relatively new to driving. Upon walking closer towards the scene, the student was not noticed by the intruder, nor did the intruder speak to them.

Campus safety and officers standing next to the man explained to the student that the man had broken a window of the Historical Society Building,

but hadn’t entered his car, even though the student had left it unlocked. “Dr. Drescher told me what the [man] said, and it was something along the lines of ‘hey, I think I just broke the lock[of the Historical Society Building], and you called the police?’” The anonymous senior said.

The student’s car was neither damaged nor broken. “I think that he [the man] was going through a lot at the time, and I don’t think he did anything to harm or hurt anybody else,” they reflected. “I was just a little surprised that this happened on campus.”

Although the event didn’t cause lasting emotional distress, the anonymous senior felt uneasy about their car when they first noticed the police nearby. “Because there are a lot of day students on campus and a lot of times we have to park on public streets,” they suggested, “Maybe we can have a school parking lot for students.”

Principal's Day Cont.

ones that get all the credit," Drapeau said.

The surprise event was particularly significant to Rawson. "My wife had actually suggested the idea of putting five golden tickets underneath seats in Assembly," he recounted. "I had the idea in the back of my mind. I had to find a way to follow through on the idea that she had, and that's what we've done."

Rawson was able to make his late wife's ideas come true. A week prior to the surprise announcement, Rawson declared at Assembly that five students were needed to help with a special event. Mirroring the tale of Willy Wonka, students were selected through five golden tickets hidden around campus. With the combined effort of the students, Rawson, faculty, and the Dining Hall staff, a Wonka-themed celebration was held in the Mary Homeier Rawson room, complete with any sweet treat one could dream to have.

Scheduling the exact date for Principal's Day was also a tedious feat. "This year, we thought it might be more fun, closer to the end of the year," Rawson said. Amidst AP exams, and other activities on and off campus, scheduling a mostly event-free day required teamwork within the administration for several months. "I worked with the Director of Studies and others to figure out when not a lot of students will miss Principal's Day, because they have other commitments," Rawson said. "I really want everybody to enjoy Principal's Day," he added.

As everyone knows, the last few weeks have been rife with throwing out observations and wishes for an upcoming Principal's Day. Upper Konrad Kutt remarked, "The students kept hyping it up because for the last two years, it's been on the same day, right? And then they decided to switch it up." This led to a myriad of guesses. Lower Eloise Goodenough remembered, "I thought it was going to be two Mondays ago, and then I was hoping that it was last Tuesday, but I

had a gut feeling that it wouldn't be. So then I had a gut feeling that it would be today because of all of the evidence."

Lower Kyros Wu echoed that, stating, "Starting yesterday, some of my friends were already speculating that it would be today. They looked at the dining hall menus and whatnot. I thought it was today as well. But someone in my history class actually told me that it would be next Monday. They're very adamant about this, but it turns out they're all wrong so..."

Although many claim that they had their suspicions far prior, students learned about Principal's Day in a variety of ways—many through second-hand means. Senior Shaib Abubakar mentioned, "A friend sent me a picture of the Principal's Day banner hung up on J. Smith. That was before the email came out. But even before that, I think the whole day today, in every one of my classes, people were talking about how they were expecting it to be tomorrow. So, yeah, I kind of knew beforehand that it was going to happen."

Lower Izzy Racho had a different story, although an equally common one. She said, "I heard it from my coach at practice. She told our whole team, which was really nice, because then we all got really excited and it really brought our energy up a lot." Even the mere notion of Principal's Day had student spirits soaring and revitalized some of the energy lost in the later hours of the day.

Many students found the announcement itself a fun surprise as well. Lower Jane Lamberton said, "I thought it was creative, and I thought that there was thought put behind it, which was nice." Prep Jim Xue added, "I actually really like it. I liked the buildup with the golden tickets and this whole theme of Willy Wonka. It's kind of festive. I really appreciate that."

Lower Gavyn Jones mentioned that while she found last year's announcement through the fortune cookies "more

fun,"—a few others called it "unique" and "niche"—she was "generally just excited that it is Principal's Day. So to me, it doesn't really matter how it is announced."

Despite mixed expectations on the specific timing and method, everyone can agree that the day off came just in time. Prep Parthvi Bhaskar noted, "I like that Principal's Day is tomorrow. I had a biology test on Thursday, and it was the day right after my birthday. I didn't want to study, and now I don't have to study on my birthday." Lower Eliot McCarthy agreed vehemently, "[I'm] overjoyed. I can't contain my excitement."

Prep Yizhou Zhao felt similarly, reflecting, "Since it's been announced, it's good that I can have the day off and get a reset and it's a good day to have right before the finals which are coming up." Lower Avni Murarka expanded on the joy every student feels about Principal's Day: "Principal's Day is something that unites this school together, and that's why it's so important, because in this world of rigorous academics and stressful being that happens at Exeter, Principal's Day is a break. It's a surprise. It's a communal celebration. And I think that's what we need more of in this world."

Students also took the chance to reflect and reminisce on past Principal's Day. Lower Larry Lyu mentioned, "Last Principal's Day was so nice. I did nothing all day. Absolutely nothing. I recall that it was after a busy weekend, so I just sat in my room, hung out with people." The ability to do nothing is rarely available to Exonians, making Principal's Day a unique occasion.

Kutt also remembered how he had spent past Principal's Days, saying he spent last year playing "Spikeball and being on the quad with my friends, and the one before that, we went to the beach, so that was nice." Certainly many students cited the beach as their go-to spot for Principal's Day, whether to enjoy the water or beachside activities that may be

difficult to fit in on other days. While this year's weather was not quite as conducive to beach-days as last year's, many went regardless.

Still, despite the average weather, Exonians had a large variety of plans for this Principal's Day. McCarthy said, "I am going to enjoy the time by going to Boston with my friends, shopping, having fun, walking around, eating food, taking a break from my academic responsibilities." Jones added, "I want to get a whole bunch of hand rolls. And I want to eat a lot of good food. Some things that I can't really get here in Exeter."

Senior Olivia Dockery had a similar plan to McCarthy's, mentioning, "I'm mainly going to hang out with my friends. It's Senior Spring, so I think it'll be nice to have that quality time together. Maybe go to the beach, maybe go to a movie." Senior Cristina Ortiz felt similarly, saying, "I'm going to go out to eat with my friends, brunch, play Spikeball on the beach, have some s'mores. Connect with my favorite people."

Senior Max Liu, on the other hand, was planning to spend his Principal's Day playing Merge Tactics, and informed us, "I was ranked top 67 in the world two weeks ago. I have since then fallen down to the top 1000, but I will be grinding for the entire day. Complete focus. Do not disturb mode. It's an opportunity that you don't often get during the busy hustling nights at Exeter. Or I might just go to Portsmouth with my friends."

Still several other students mentioned that they would simply take the time to enjoy campus or get ahead on work, with several citing upcoming majors or assignments as their main focus.

As Rawson watched students laughing, plucking lollipops from baskets, and the candy buckets getting filled yet another time, his eyes twinkled with a smile. "Principal's Day is a great tradition," he said. "I want everybody to just have fun, relax, enjoy each other, and make the most of the day." Out of all the Principal's Days in his career, the one this year has been Rawson's favorite.

Track Cont.

in Academy life: long-time track coach Hilary Hall, who plans to retire after the year ends. "When I'm running on Saturday, I'll have ample time to think about the 40-plus years of hard work that Coach Hall has put in with the track team," Muchnick said.

Prep Claire Puchalski represented field hockey at the ceremony as part of a cohort of students from a variety of athletic teams. "I, along with the other athletes who attended, let Mr. Andersen see all the people that this track would help," she said. "I didn't know much about Mr. Andersen before the event, but I surely look up to him now as inspiration." She was especially struck by his passion for long distance running despite starting the sport later than most.

Baseden examined the K. Tucker Andersen Indoor Track's role beyond athletics. "It reflects Exeter at its best," he said. He explained that the track is not only host to the winter track team but is "a community space that serves people of all ages, all backgrounds, and supports purposeful, healthy lives." In a later reflection, Baseden hoped that students would recognize the generosity behind facilities such as the track. "The resources we enjoy today are the result of generations of Exonians giving back to the school they love," he said.

Andersen's speech was uncharacteristically brief: "My wife reminded me that it's really easy for me to talk for an hour about things I love," he said to laughter, "but it's very difficult for me to talk for five minutes." He began by speaking about what he called a central problem of society: "People take too little time really listening and understanding the other person. If you don't understand where somebody has come from and how their life

experience has affected them, you're likely to judge them in the wrong way."

Andersen spoke about his journey before and after attending the Academy. He recollected his childhood in Bristol, Connecticut, where nobody in his family had graduated from college, as well as time spent at Exeter, Wesleyan, and eventually in a career in investment. He found that many successes stemmed from his parents' sacrifices during his childhood, providing the young Andersen freedom. "Figure out what you love, and figure out if you can make enough money," he told the audience. "It's better than doing a job that makes the most money and being terribly unhappy."

Baseden later remarked on the significance of Andersen's story. "Tucker was one of the Hammy Bissell paperboys who benefitted greatly from his time at Exeter and has continued to give back to the Academy every year since graduating," he said. A member of the class of 1929, Bissell was a longstanding Director of Scholarships who helped fulfill the motto "Youth from Every Quarter" by searching for 'newspaper boys' such as Andersen to attend the Academy.

Andersen closed his speech with a message to the student body. "My goal in life has always been to let you, the next generation of students, stand on our shoulders, benefit from our achievements, and learn from our mistakes," he explained. "Understand that you are not going to learn from only our mistakes. You have to make them yourself."

After speaking, Andersen took off his blazer and stepped off the podium. Joined by Rawson and attendees of the ceremony, he made a single, ceremonial lap around the track that now carries his name, breaking the ribbon at

In-Depth: Disciplinary Review Committee

By LYDIA KUHNERT, ELEANOR PONTZ, and ARISA YOSHINO

The CCC (Community Conduct Committee) hasn't always functioned the way it does today. The process of Exeter's disciplinary system has been remodeled and renamed numerous times even over the last fifty years. Its convoluted evolution proves the system is actually much more malleable than we might first be led to believe.

Occasionally, when it becomes clear to the Academy that the CCC system requires some degree of reform, ad hoc committees are formed to renew and review the system. These com-

mittees are sometimes known as Disciplinary Review Committees (DRC). With each one, the CCC has evolved. Through the years, The DRC has prompted critical moments in the development of Exeter's disciplinary committee, such as the first proposal for a joint student and faculty committee in 1977, the official naming of the "Disciplinary Committee" in 1991, its revamp in the early 2000s, and the establishment of the CCC in 2019.

DRCs are not permanent committees, but are formed when the principal determines necessary. The principal brings together a variety of faculty to serve on the committee, typically focusing

on diversity of thought and whether they have ideas they wish to implement. A DRC is not usually prompted by one controversial CCC decision. Former Dean of Residential Life from 2018 to 2025, Carol Cahalane, explained, "It's usually a bubbling up of, 'okay, thinking in the community has shifted, or the committee has for some time struggled with what to do with this kind of thing, they haven't been able to resolve this question within that group, and they feel they need input from a larger community.'" A DRC often seeks to improve the clarity of CCC processes.

Before the late seventies, a combined committee of students

and faculty working to review disciplinary situations did not exist. Instead, there were two different groups: the Executive Committee and the Student Judiciary Committee. The Executive Committee held the majority of the power and the final say. When the Disciplinary Review Committee was first created in 1977, one of its first proposals was to "[recommend] that two members of the Student Judiciary Committee be allowed to explain their decisions at Faculty meetings," giving students more control in the system, reported *The Exonian*.

Fears that Exeter's disciplinary policies were inconsistent and that the Academy was legally liable prompt-

ed this first mobilization of the DRC. "We attempted to see how vulnerable our system is to the due process of law. The Committee had been told that other private schools had become entangled with lawsuits dealing with their disciplinary procedures," stated a senior on the DRC in a 1977 article for *The Exonian*.

Furthermore, the next year, a separate DRC was formed, "charged with reviewing the list of offenses in the E-book and the penalties customarily assigned to those who commit them." The principal at the time, Stephen G. Kurtz, said, "I've been interested in equity, not rough justice, for the Exeter community. This,

above all things, has been most important to me." This stage of the DRC was mostly involved in rethinking the details of the DC, such as how Exeter reprimands students.

Following the late seventies, the DRC dissolved and wasn't revived again until 1991. In May of that year, the current committee passed a proposal that the faculty approved by a vote of 65 to 48. Along with other reforms, including increased flexibility of restrictions (the length of a student's restrictions now varied by offense), this proposal "[stated] that a committee of eight faculty members and four students will dis-

COMMITTEE, 9.

Committee Cont.

cuss major discipline cases but only the eight faculty members will vote on an appropriate decision,” the first inclusion of students into the actual committee.

In October of 2001, the DRC revived for the first time in ten years. According to an issue of *The Exonian* from that month, “it just made sense to examine the current rules” after such a long period of time since Exeter reconsidered its disciplinary system. One of the main topics discussed at this time was the formation of a disciplinary response that falls between probation and the requirement to withdraw.

Later that same school year, the former Head of the DRC and Chair of the English Department Christine Robinson spoke to the

student body in an assembly that aimed to explain how the DC (Disciplinary Committee) worked and what the DRC was changing. She explained the aims of the DRC to “examine the consistency of the decisions in [some] cases, to review the experience of going before the committee, and to study the application of federal reporting laws” to the DC.

In 2019, Principal Bill Rawson formed a DRC to propose changes to restructure the Disciplinary Committee into the CCC that we know today. Cahalane presented a disciplinary reform proposal to the faculty in April that outlined several major changes.

The first reform in this proposal was a renaming of the Disciplinary Committee to

the Community Conduct Committee. “The name change was more than symbolic,” Cahalane recalled. “[The former system] was more rigid in the options that the committee could consider, and didn’t give the students who were meeting with the committee, or the committee, much room or time to be thinking about what led to that decision and what could be done to prevent it in the future.”

Along with this reform, the CCC focused on a more educative rather than punitive system. Two discipline responses, the Dean’s Warning and Community Restoration, were added to give students, especially first-time offenders, opportunities for reflection and growth.

Furthermore, in

what used to be a two-level offense system, regular and major, the major level was split into two segments, now distinguished as level two and three. “While both include more consequential responses, there are limits to what can be implemented for level two,” Cahalane said. This new three-level system allows for more nuance when considering conduct situations.

“The newer system that’s in place now has gone further in being explicit about...the committee [partnering] with the student in thinking about the best means of doing better in the future and growing through that situation rather than getting a punishment,” Cahalane explained. “It’s much more of a teaching situation.” The CCC represents the Academy’s understanding that students need opportunities for

understanding and development.

Recently, the rise in academic dishonesty violations has prompted the administration to reexamine how it should handle them. “We were absolutely drowning in the number of academic dishonesty cases that we were doing, and we wanted to do right by the students, and doing right by those students who had broken the rules,” Cahalane explained. “Overwhelmed by new academic dishonesty matters that led to long wait times for a conduct meeting, Cahalane, along with several other faculty, developed a new solution that was endorsed by the faculty. “We decided that for level two academic dishonesty cases, we would not have the student meet with the committee, but rather have one of the deans meet with the student, and then in

consultation with the chair of the committee and the dean of academic affairs.”

Over the past several decades, the DRC has provided the Academy with a formal way to reconsider and restructure its response to conduct violations. While such incidents are inevitable, the Academy’s willingness to step back and recognize the evolving needs of its students and faculty alike has been significant. Especially with the rise of artificial intelligence and the consequential increase in academic dishonesty in the past few years, a formal DRC to reexamine the CCC’s approach to this new reality may be beneficial. Ultimately, DRCs ensure that the CCC’s role on campus truly is to protect and serve the community.

In-Depth: Club Funds

PHILLIPS EXETER ACADEMY

Phillips Exeter Academy
Academy Funding Application
2025-2026

- There may be a funding ceiling for discretionary or voluntary events as determined by the Student Group Funding Committee, e.g., \$1,000 or \$2,000 annually per organization or travel or event, depending on total resources available.
- It may take time to have the funding approved, so please do not wait until the last minute to ask for money.
- The funds will not support food for each club meeting, but would support funding for a special meal, with approval.
- If your club or group wants to travel off campus, please see Student Activities for an estimate of the cost for transportation.
- Do not be afraid to ask for what you really feel your group or club needs, no matter the cost, as there is no harm in asking.

By **TIAGO BILYK, JAYDEN LU, DIYA SANDEEP, and TONY ZHU**

While attending multiple clubs at Exeter, many students find out that some clubs at Exeter have far more funding than others. All clubs require a certain amount of funding for trips, supplies, and food. From the frequent trips taken, to the cost of hotels for many clubs during events, and even the smaller costs of having food for a specific meeting, these initiatives all require for the clubs to receive funding. While some clubs seamlessly secure funding for frequent trips and specialized equipment, other clubs frequently find themselves stalled by the budget process which favors some clubs more than others.

Joanne Lembo, Director of Student Activities at Exeter, assured that club funding was primarily decided by club leadership itself. She commented, “The club leadership ask for what they need and we do our best to support them.” She then further explained the process, stating that “[their funding application] goes through the committee consisting of members from departments across campus,” and the role of administration is limited to finding a matching fund for each club. This

means that clubs often get the amount of money they ask for, especially if it’s well-representative of their needs.

Lower Fiona Liu, co-head and founder of Exeter Jewelmaking Association, delved into the funding application process, mentioning that while she had been somewhat confused on what was required for her and what the outcome would be, she “put all the items—a link to the items that [she] wanted to order in a spreadsheet and Ms. Salvaggio approved the order. We didn’t have a set budget. We just asked for the items we needed, and were fortunate enough to receive almost all of them.” Pendulum Editor-in-Chief and Upper William Inoue elaborated on the freedom offered to club co-heads in relation to their budget, “We are allowed to spend it on items and situations related to the club without having to go through extensive emailing to gain permission.”

Still, her office has tried to make the process as easy and efficient as possible. Lembo added, “We have streamlined the process so that clubs needing funding can put in one application that covers all the available funds.” She encouraged any student interested in learning about the process to look into the MyExeter page for their

club and then reach out to her office with further confusion or questions.

At Exeter, the Student Council club is responsible for most of the events tailored to the student body. As the club transitions to the new executive board and co-heads, the treasury takes charge of the leftover budget from the previous year. “We have about \$20,000 right now, and at the start of next school year, we’re going to get an additional sum of money,” Upper Sarek Ranadive commented.

Inside Student Council, there are multiple committees that require different amounts of funds. Committees like Recreation require a larger budget because they are more focused on sponsoring many student events throughout the year. Other smaller committees, like Dining Services may not require as much of a budget, focusing on student feedback and initiatives. Ranadive remarked, “Each committee will request however much money they feel like they need to conduct their operations. As the treasury, we’ll form the budget review committee, which will see if the committees are requesting a reasonable amount of money that StuCo can afford.”

For specific clubs though, co-heads follow the same process of requesting how much money they need from Ms.

Lembo, who is in charge of all of the club’s funds. As Senior Ethan Benson, co-head of Model UN club, explained, “first I would tell our advisors, this is how much money we need to make this conference possible. Then there are the ones who talk with Ms. Lembo.”

Every year, the Model UN club has an in-house conference, PEAMUN, which invites participants from around the country to participate. As with any conference, they have to spend a lot of money on various expenses like food. “For our in-house, [our advisors] do a lot of work with Ms. Lembo directly, and they submit a very detailed budget proposal to get funds. To my knowledge, they’ve never been rejected or haven’t been able to find a solution that works for everyone,” stated Benson.

Not every club has the same needs or process for securing funds, however. One of *The Exonian’s* club advisors, Erica Lazure, delved into the club’s unique financial situation: “We work with the Executive Board to invite visiting journalists, purchase equipment and snacks, and offer training opportunities aligned with the needs of the writers.” As the Academy’s newspaper of record for the past 148 years, Lazure said *The Exo-*

nian is fortunate to have several endowments dedicated to keeping the newspaper in print and providing support to its members. These endowments include the Strickler Fund, the Class of ‘73 Fund, *The Exonian* Fund, and the Gelbron “Pizza Fund.” These funds, Lazure said, secure the newspaper’s ability to offer “summer journalism scholarships and conferences for our writers, pay for visiting speakers and trainers, and buy necessary equipment and office supplies to keep the club running.”

The Exonian is different from every other club on campus due to its business component—not only do they require significant funding to publish the newspaper each week, but they also generate some of the funding themselves. Lazure expanded, “The main priority is to pay our publisher for *The Exonian’s* weekly issue, which costs about \$1500 for every issue. So subscriptions (from family and alumni) or advertisements are two ways that we can raise funds to cover our publishing costs. *The Exonian* is unique in that it is, I believe, the only club on campus that can generate income to pay for those expenses.” This means that they do not use Student Activities funds as most clubs do.

Robotics, similarly, is one of the best-funded clubs on campus. Charles Mamolo, coach for both the FTC teams and MATE ROV team, laid out their expenses: \$20,000 spread across four robotics teams for parts and merch, along with an additional \$1000 for unforeseen circumstances, and then more money budgeted in case teams go to states and then to Worlds or other Premier events.

He emphasized that he wants the larger student body to understand

the importance of robotics, as well as for members of robotics teams to have a stronger understanding and appreciation for the budget they are given. He elaborated, “There’s a value for students to work for the money that they use for their learning experience. Nothing is free really in this world.”

Robotics has a two-step order process, where team leads on each team place their orders in a spreadsheet, which are vetted by Mamolo before they are sent off to Ms. Salvaggio. Senior Avaninder Bhagayath, captain of VERTEX (one of the Robotics teams on campus), mentioned, “Ideally we would have a bit more [funding]. But Mr. Mamolo has been a little bit flexible and we’ve also paid for things out of pocket. So between all of that, we’ve made it work.”

Upon being asked why he thought Robotics had such substantial financial needs, Mamolo noted, “You need parts. You need parts to buy, and they’re not cheap. But we also travel. And so Worlds is always in Houston for FTC and the cost of that is substantial.” He continued, “There are expenses that when you’re competing at the Worlds level will not be required for those who are [in] clubs that are more of an interest group within the Exeter community.”

Another important bit Mamolo mentioned is that FTC teams at Exeter are not allowed to fundraise for their parts and outreach the way many other teams within their competition bracket are. While he was unsure of the reasoning, robotics’ budget is largely necessary to afford the operating costs of a competitive team working with expensive materials, especially as they have no other way to make up those funds.

Life

» SOTW: OLIVIA DOCKERY

Read about the lessons that senior Olivia Dockery learned throughout her time at Exeter, 10.

» FOTW: NIKHIL RANJAN

Read about Nikhil Ranjan's journey to Exeter and his passion for the Classics, 11.

» MEDITATION

Read about senior Cecily Reed's meditation from this Wednesday, 14.

Senior of the Week: Olivia Dockery



Dockery smiles at the camera by the arches of Jeremiah Smith Hall.

Arisa Yoshino / *The Exonian*

By **MARYN BOWMAN, NINA FIGUEROA-CROWE and JOHANNA HILLMAN**

Click. The camera's shutter clicks as the Girls' Varsity Hockey team runs into the center of the gym. Senior Olivia Dockery crouches on the sidelines. She wears an Exeter jersey and a bandana. Red war-paint stains her cheeks. She looks into her viewfinder, lining up the shot.

Click. The camera's shutter clicks again as a dancer vaults into the air. She gets the shot: he smiles, mid-air, his arms out-

stretched, his mouth opened wide. She aims her camera toward the buzzing crowd.

Click. Students shout and smile. They each wear red and wave scarves and flags in the air. A student starts a wave, and the raised hands ripple through the crowd. This is the heart of Exeter, and it is Dockery who captures it.

Dockery, a four-year senior, is one of the Editors-in-Chief of PEAN, the student-run yearbook, a proctor in Dow House, and a member of the Girls' Crew Team. She is also a co-founder of the Pickleball Club.

Growing up in Knox-

ville, Tennessee, Dockery had never considered the idea of going to boarding school. She barely knew they existed. However, she had one friend who attended a boarding school in North Carolina who made her think about seeking out a new environment. "My old school didn't feel too academically challenging; everything just felt set," Dockery said. "I just really wanted a change."

It was because of this desire that Dockery and her parents began to research boarding schools. When she came for her revisit day after being accepted to Exeter, she and her parents imme-

diately knew that "this was the place for me," she said.

She quickly found that there are very few Exonians who come from the South. However, she's embraced that unique aspect of herself. "I think it's cool to be one of the only ones and represent that region here at Exeter," she said.

Click. Dockery stands in the lab, leaning over a microscope. With a pair of tweezers, she picks through fruit flies and writes careful notes.

Coming into Exeter, Dockery was immediately excited to take science classes. The summer before prep year, as she looked through

the course catalogue, one course in particular caught her eye: BIO670, a research course that utilizes fruit flies to conduct research on diabetes. "I was like, oh my gosh, this is the coolest thing," Dockery recalled. She didn't end up taking the course until upper year, but she kept it in mind. When she finally got to take it, it was, as she described, a "full circle moment." Taking genetics classes at Exeter gave Dockery the opportunity to "deepen a passion" that she "was interested in but didn't know a lot about." Dockery reflected: "I would say taking BIO 670 was one of the most impactful parts of my

Exeter experience."

Part of the reason she loved the class was its hands-on nature. Because the class is research-based, the outcome of each new generation of fruit flies is uncertain. "There's that excitement and anticipation that comes from not knowing what's going to happen," said Dockery. "I loved sorting through my fruit flies and trying to align the different puzzle pieces to figure out the final result."

While Dockery's favorite classes have been science-based, she's also learned the value of every

DOCKERY, 11.

"All that Matters": Rocky King's Senior Meditation



Miles Turner / *The Exonian*

By **PEARL HARA-YAMAZAKI, NICOLE SUBKHANBERDINA, and ARISA YOSHINO**

On Wednesday, May 14, senior Rocky King delivered his meditation in Phillips Church, leaving the crowd in tearful awe. A narrative of his childhood before Exeter, King

recounted his complicated family dynamic and unique childhood, which centered on a constant, meaningful connection with his younger brother Max.

The audience settled down in their seats when the swing and relaxed saxophone of Take Five by Dave Brubeck filled the crowded Church.

King began his meditation by recounting his memories of singing in the subway with his brother, making music with "a tree stick and an empty bucket." His meditation traced his life with his brother and mother—first in Fort Myers, Florida, and then in New York

KING, 12.

Tales from Town: A Picture's Worth



Courtesy of yelp.com

By **OLIVIA SZCZEPANSKI '28**

A Picture's Worth a Thousand Words may seem like a bit of an odd name for a bookstore, but it suits this eccentric little store perfectly. Besides books, A Picture's Worth also has various old maps, pieces of art, and does picture-framing.

They don't carry your average selection of books. This is not where you go to find the newest best-seller, instead, the shelves are filled with antique books featuring beautiful covers and specialized knowledge.

A Picture's Worth was founded and is owned by John and Jennifer Segal. They opened it in 1985,

"so we're now in our 41st year, always in this location," said Segal.

The couple were both English majors and met at the University of Colorado. John Segal described how he "became friendly with a bookseller in Boulder," and from there his interest grew. "[The bookseller] was a mar-

TALES, 12.

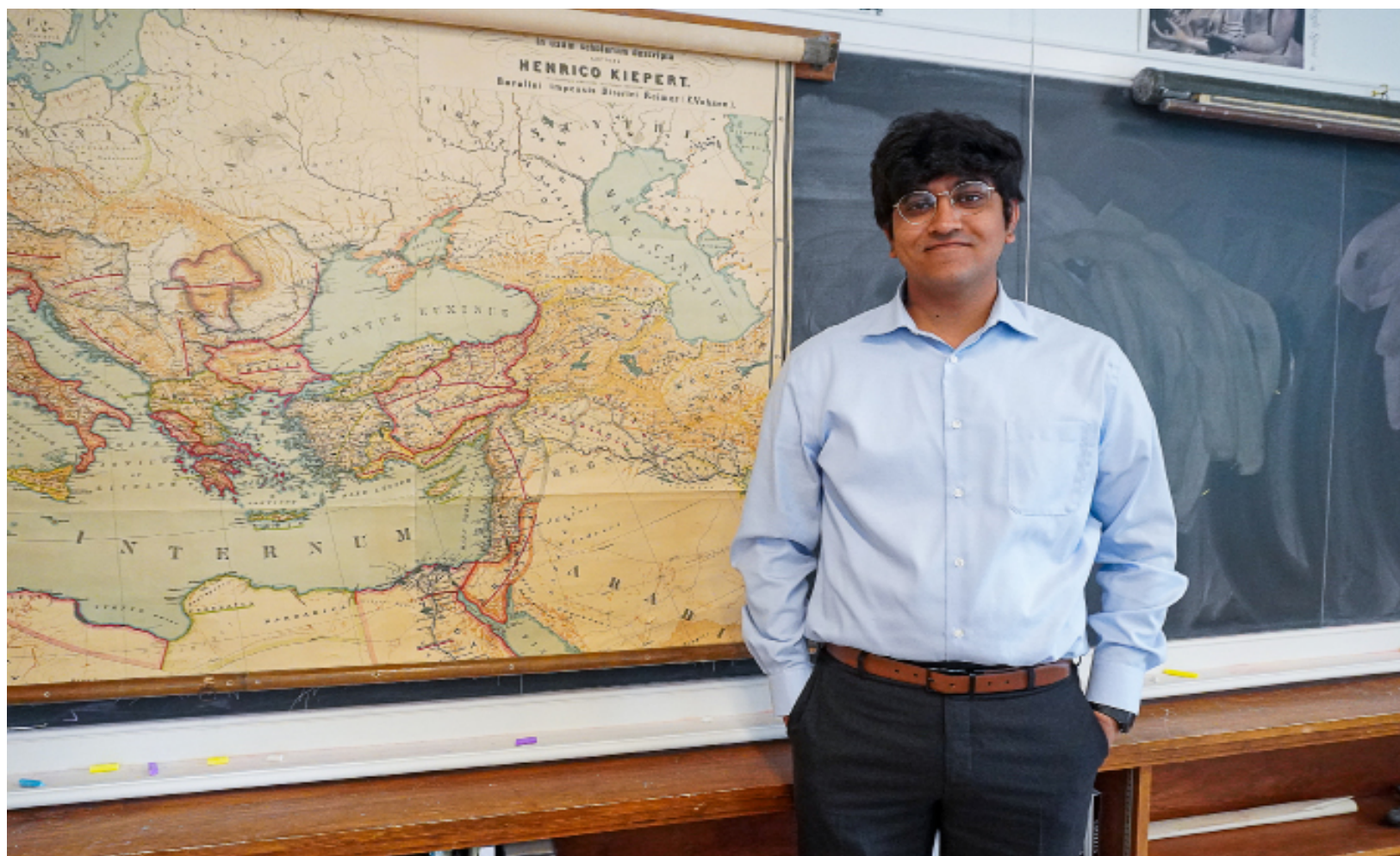
Faculty of the Week: Nikhil Ranjan

By BUCHI AKABOGU,
AUDREY KIM,
ELEANOR PONTZ, and
DIYASANDEEP

On a sunny weekday afternoon, a group of students walk by the tennis courts, where teaching intern Nikhil Ranjan is sitting on the bleachers. “Hi, Mr. Ranjan!” They yell. He waves back, smiling.

Ranjan first took up Latin in high school as, in his words, he “wanted to take a class with a friend and was told it was an easy A,” which is very different from the sentiment Exeter students are accustomed to. But once he started the courses, his teacher, Magistra Shaw, but known as Mater to the students, “helped [him] fall in love with it.” Still, throughout high school, he remained mostly uninterested in the language, although he continued to get increasingly invested in competitions based on myth and culture, namely Certamen.

When he moved on to college, he delved further into Latin and picked up ancient Greek, a decision that kickstarted his passion for the language alongside culture. He began to teach and coach students during the summer, on which Ranjan said, “[it] got me



Ranjan poses by a map of Rome in his Davis Library classroom.

to think more about how do students think about language? How do they learn Latin?... Once I entered the teaching role, I got engrossed— “oh, this world is so cool, but I need to read more and know more if I want to inspire a similar interest in students.”

Ranjan grew up in Texas, and noted that boarding schools had never really been a topic of interest for him. He discovered the Academy recently, through

Instructor in Classics Nicholas Unger and the competitive Latin teams at Exeter at a convention. He revealed, “The students had asked if there was any way for me to come here. And I was like, ‘well, that’s strange. I don’t really know how I can make that happen. It’s not how the teaching life works.’ And then a year later, I’m magically here.”

Lower Sophia Balaraman, who met Ranjan at that same convention,

remembered, “I saw him over the summer at the NJCL [National Junior Classical League] convention and he was running the Agon booth and he was trying to get us to sign up for that. We didn’t really know each other by that point, but we knew he was coming to teach, and he introduced himself...”

Still, by the time he arrived at Exeter, he had taught Physics full-time and had been teaching Latin during the summer

for years. He was intrigued by how different Exeter was from his past experiences, and wanted the chance to see whether he would like teaching Latin long-term. In that regard, the intern position he took up was extraordinarily useful, as he noted, “You get so much experience from other faculty members, you get to learn so much, but also, if you end up hating it, you can leave.”

He finds that the Exeter Classics department

Arisa Yoshino / *The Exonian*

fits his needs as a teacher well, as the size (six Instructors currently) lends to better conversation and faster growth. “When we have a department meeting, it’s really easy to hear everyone’s opinions and everyone’s thoughts. It’s easier to talk about oh, I’m thinking about just changing this to the curriculum. Oh, I’m thinking about adding this, what do we think? And you just get

RANJAN, 13.

Dockery Cont.

discipline. “During my first few years, I was surrounded by people who were so incredible at math or science or extracurriculars, and I felt like I needed to pick one thing,” Dockery said. “But I’ve realized that while I can enjoy the sciences, I can also really enjoy History and English.”

During her four years, Dockery has become more outgoing and confident: Much of that has stemmed through her growing passion for photography.

When Dockery arrived on campus as a prep, she had only played around with cameras for fun. But at the club fair during her prep fall, Dockery stumbled upon the PEAN’s table. They had a few copies of the yearbook, and as she flipped through them, she noticed that each of the photos was “dynamic.” “It wasn’t just people standing there posing for the camera,” said Dockery. “I just loved how you could tell a story with your photographs.” It was this aspect of photography that led her to join PEAN.

Click. Dockery stands in front of a meeting room. She holds her camera up, teaching a group of preps and lowers how to capture photos for the yearbook. She explains the different angles and light techniques. The students listen attentively, then they head off to their assignments.

As a photographer, Dockery got the chance to attend everything from club meetings to sporting events. “I think the PEAN assignments I had really let me branch out and meet communities and groups of students that I never would have met otherwise,” she

recalled. “It’s helped me to find my place at Exeter.”

As an upper, Dockery joined the board of PEAN as the assistant director of photography. On the board, Dockery began to understand better the work that went into producing the yearbook. “There was actually some rhythm to it,” she recalled. “I was like, this is it — being an editor was definitely something I wanted to do.”

This year, Dockery served as the Editor-in-Chief with PEAN alongside fellow seniors Emily Huang and Allegra Lai. She explained that the editors this year aimed to make the yearbook “intentional” and to “reflect every student in Exeter.”

Lai met Dockery during their upper year. “She was really goal-oriented and focused,” recalled Lai. “I knew from the start that she would be a great collaborator.”

Huang agreed: “She’s always been a very hardworking, responsible person.” All three Editors-in-Chief both learned from and taught one another about their crafts. With Huang, Dockery shared with her an interest in photography, and they would often talk about it together. “She knows a lot more about cameras, so she’s been a teacher to me in that sense,” said Huang. With Lai, the two would often exchange advice. Lai shared, “[Olivia] is super on top of it, but she’s also super open to learning.”

As an Editor-in-Chief, Dockery has served as a mentor for younger students interested in photography. “She will let people work

with her or even shadow her for a day,” said Lai. “She’s just really approachable,” she added.

“She doesn’t just talk to the board,” asserted Huang. “She reaches out to the newer members and fosters an environment that is welcoming, communicative, and collaborative.”

Dockery has also overseen PEAN’s operations with what Lai described as a “bird’s eye view.” Huang said, “She always has a very clear sense of what the plan is.” Huang and Lai have also appreciated Dockery’s willingness to take on any task that needs to get done. While compiling the completed pages of the yearbook, the editors realized that many small tasks had been overlooked. Although Dockery had not worked with layout before, “she was willing to volunteer her own time and learn all these new skills in order to make sure that everyone completed their tasks on time,” according to Huang.

In PEAN meetings, Dockery “commands the room,” as Lai described. “When she asks you to do something, she does it in such a respectful way that you really feel like you want to make this happen for her,” said Lai. “I always want to follow her example.”

Click. It’s the first day of the school year. Dockery had made a custom name card for each of the girls in Dow House. Each is beautifully decorated, the name carefully written. She tapes them up on each door.

Dockery’s blend of drive and kindness has also served her well as a proctor in Dow House, where she’s lived all four years.

“She has a great pulse on the community, what

people are feeling, and what the dorm might need,” said her advisor, Assistant Director of Admissions Alex Braile. Despite her work and extracurricular commitments, Dockery is rarely stressed. “She manages to move through any situation with a calm energy that puts everyone at ease,” added Braile. Dockery takes care to be present for the fellow residents of Dow, even when she has a busy week. “She has been a steady presence in Dow House,” said dorm faculty Johnny Griffith. “Even if she has work to do, she’ll take time to check in with folks and make sure all is well.”

Fellow proctor, senior, and longtime roommate Paris Tran has valued the time she’s worked with Dockery. “It really is a partnership,” Tran said. “It kind of feels like co-parenting — at least, the other girls in the dorm tell us that we’re like their mothers.” She and Dockery have always presented a united front, from bouncing ideas off each other when planning events to dealing with problems. “I’ve never felt alone, even during the stressful moments,” added Tran.

Click. The shell cuts through the water as eight rowers move in perfect rhythm. At the bow of the boat, Dockery stays steady, maintaining each stroke to the next as oars slice into the river.

Like many rowers, Dockery had never rowed before Exeter. She joined crew during prep spring after encouragement from her mom. “My mom told me, ‘You’re pretty tall, you should do it,’” Dockery recalled. Over the years, crew became far more than just a sport. For Dockery, rowing evolved into what she de-

scribed as a “daily habit of discipline.” Though long erg workouts and intense practices pushed her both mentally and physically, she found meaning in the shared sacrifice of the boat. “It is hard work, and it’s sacrifice,” Dockery said, “but it’s sacrifice for the other eight, nine total people in the boat, and that’s something that I really love.” Dockery rows in the bow seat, where her main responsibility is “to provide stability to the rest of the boat,” as she explained. “Making sure that I’m very consistent and level really matches my temperament.”

The steadiness is something her teammates and coaches have noticed as well. “Olivia is an outstanding person, which makes her an outstanding teammate,” said Girls’ Crew Coach Pete Cathey. “She is upbeat, caring, reliable, and competitive.” According to Cathey, Dockery’s presence elevates those around her. “All her teammates know she will do her absolute best while simultaneously bringing an emotional lightness and good humor to the practice.”

Across Exeter’s campus, friends, teachers, and classmates consistently describe Dockery with the same words: steady, thoughtful, and kind. History teacher Khalid Madhi described Dockery as “cool and collected,” emphasizing her “collaborative attitude, timeliness, consistency, and critical thinking skills.” During a Global Initiatives trip to Morocco, Madhi watched Dockery contribute not only through her curiosity but also through her attentiveness to others. “Olivia used her photography skills, language abilities, and her commitment

to responsible and ethical travel to further enrich our programming,” he said. Friends say Dockery’s ability to balance ambition with genuine care for others is what makes her stand out. “She’s someone I can spend 24/7 with,” said Tran. “I’ve always relied on her.”

Tran recalled staying up late together during prep year while Dockery helped her study for a biology test. “She took the time out to make sure that I would pass,” Tran said. “She’s always willing to sit down and make sure that I’m doing well, too.” For many of her friends, what matters most is the way she makes people feel. Senior Maya Ilangovan described Dockery as the person she would call “to make me laugh, help me if I’m sad, or get me out of any tricky situation.” Ilangovan added, “If I had to pick one person at Exeter to go to for advice, look up to, or pick to be my best friend, it would be her.”

Click. Dockery takes one final photo before she puts down her camera. She looks around at all the different people she has taken pictures of for the last four years. She sees students spilling out of the Academy Building, her teammates laughing and having fun on the river, and friends hanging out in the dorm hallways late at night. However, the people who know Dockery best say that her impact goes far beyond photography. Dockery has become someone others can look up to. She is not just leaving behind her pictures but an everlasting impact on the communities she helped foster. And somewhere in the middle of it all: click. Another moment preserved.

King Cont.

City. King explained that his father had been his world as a child. He described accompanying him on landscaping jobs at dawn, playing video games together, and believing every promise he made. This world shattered on a Monday night at 3:04 a.m., when King, then eight years old, woke up to the sound of crashing and found his father collapsed in the garage, coughing up blood.

“I sat there in my white lawn chair with blood on my feet and my hands in my lap,” King recounted. “I didn’t know what to do. I didn’t know how to help. So I just watched.” His father survived, but soon after, his family moved to New York City, while his father abruptly left for England and never returned.

In New York, King and his brother learned how to survive. They sang in subway stations, performed card tricks for bodega workers, and stood in school pantry lines. His mother, meanwhile, worked various jobs to help the family stay afloat. “She folded her clothes into stacks to cushion the hardwood floor pressing against our sides,” King said. “She sacrificed for us.”

And yet, amid the instability that characterized his life in New York, King was a promising student. “Somehow, teachers liked me,” King said. “They pulled me aside and told me I was different—smart, promising.”

His math teacher eventually referred him to the Prep for Prep program, which opened doors for King that he never knew existed. After being accepted, the program prepared him for the demanding workload of boarding school. “I spent my eight-grade weekends and the following two summers in class,” he explained. “Those train rides alone introduced me to people who spoke about futures I had never imagined. Up until then, ‘future’ meant the next meal or next month’s rent.”

Eventually coming to Exeter, King recalled the guilt he experienced. Although his mother was insistent on him receiving quality education, he felt like he was “leaving them to fight without [him].” “At night, I lay in my dorm feeling tugs on opposite sides of my heart. One pulled me toward academics, extracurriculars, and friendships. The other reminded me of the family I had left behind,” he reminisced.

This contrast between his home life and school life persisted during breaks. While his peers would be at internships and college tours, King worked at warehouses and smoke shops to help his family. “It feels strange sitting in classrooms surrounded by students who grew up with every resource I used to wish for. I never forget where I came from,” King explained.

King then reflected on his father, imagining how he would react if they ever met again. Despite years of pain and abandonment, he concluded that he would feel gratitude. His father’s absence had shown him what loyalty and strength truly looked like and additionally brought him closer to his brother and mother. “If I could speak to him again, I would say thank you,” King concluded.

“Writing this meditation felt like opening old wounds without knowing how long they would bleed,” King explained in a separate interview. For him, the meditation was more than just a piece of writing. It was how he confronted his “inner turmoil” and reflected on how he could reframe it in a new light.

This paper, King explained, was also an apology to his mother. “Sending this paper to her healed parts of our relationship we had long pushed aside,” he said. “Being able to write something that brought me closer to my own mother is more valuable than words can describe.”

For the audience, King did not want them to pity or sympathize with him. “I wanted them to hear my experiences and understand them in the way that I had come to,” he said. In the spirit of non-sibi, he explained that, “We all learn valuable lessons in times of struggle, especially through struggles that are unique and rare. The most Exonian thing you can do is not to cower in embarrassment of your struggles and experiences, but to take a step out of yourself and allow others to learn from your story, no matter how vulnerable you must be to do so.”

King credited conversations with his brother for helping him figure out how to frame his narrative. His English teacher, Willie Perdomo, was also instrumental in his writing process. Growing up in the same neighborhood that King did, Perdomo had a special understanding of King’s circumstances. “My English teacher having a vivid layout of the setting and environment of my paper

without myself having to explain was definitely a plus on the writing process,” he said. “To me, Mr. Perdomo has been not only a great English teacher, but also a personal mentor and an important male role model in my life.”

King’s impact rippled throughout the audience. As students, teachers, and King’s closest friends listened intently to his words, the church was overcome with emotion. Prep Izzy Cabral strongly appreciated the mediation, “I thought it was really well written and I think that it shed light on this experience that a lot of Exonians go through.” She particularly valued the way King felt about leaving home: “I thought it was also really beautiful and interesting how he talked about this burden of leaving. It was really important and very vulnerable that he wrote about that.”

Cabral also admired how poignantly the meditation was written, “He grounded us in his story rather than just telling us event by event what happened. I think that he kind of went through what he was feeling and went through like what actually was going on, and that really immersed you into the story.”

Earlier, King explained how writing his meditation had given him a greater understanding of one of Exeter’s core values, “It wasn’t until I decided to give my meditation that I understood exactly how I could embody [non sibi].”

Lower Amber Deng felt the same sentiment, just from listening, “His med made me really think about the people who supported me and made sacrifices/worked hard for me to be here.” Deng has attended almost every student meditation this year, and cherishes how eye-opening they are, “It’s really interesting to think about how people have so many sides to their lives and being at Exeter is only a small part of that.”

King’s meditation reminded the audience, whether they were his friends or strangers who wandered in, to cherish the people beside them, because “In the darkest and most difficult moments, they are all you need.” Exonians were left with an urge to reflect on how they show up and express their gratitude towards their loved ones every day.

The gentle, melancholy opening notes of Cannock Chase by Labi Siffre then drifted through the church. The song’s lyrics embodied King’s resilience over the years: I’ve been down for, oh, so long / It seemed like my soul was dead and gone / But it’s alright / I’m back in the fight.

Tales Cont.

velous mentor. He had a big, wonderful personality and he, recognizing my interests, sort of took me under his wing and showed me the ropes.” At that point, Segal didn’t see owning a bookstore as a viable career, saying “it was certainly a fun hobby.”

Then, in his junior year, Segal went abroad to Lancaster, England and “Lancaster had a wonderful old bookstore.” The owner of that bookstore saw a kinsman in Segal, “I think he recognized that I had the bug and he let me browse to my heart’s content on his shelves.” Segal returned from that trip with two things, “a really nice tweed jacket and a book, a children’s book illustrated by my favorite illustrator of that time.”

After graduation, “we were in our mid-twenties, and we’d done a variety of jobs, none of which particularly suited us,” said Segal. He expanded, “I had begun collecting a stock of books, hoping to open a store, but also I was doing the occasional antiquarian book fair, so I had a taste of what the business was.”

The Segals decided to “toss our hat into the ring and see what would happen,” and A Picture’s Worth was born.

Jennifer Segal is from Denver, Colorado, and John Segal is from North Andover, Massachusetts. He explained how one of the biggest decisions that had to be made was where to locate the store. “Retail doesn’t succeed automatically, far from it, and I think that location is very important.” The couple weighed several locations but “Exeter felt like the right fit.” This was a calculated choice. “If you look at a map, Exeter, which is 300 years old, is sort of at the center of a wheel with spokes radiating out to what had been small farming communities of 500 people in the 19th century, and are now 5,000 people,” explained Segal. “But those towns, Stratham, Kingston, Hampton, don’t really have their own downtowns. Those towns had always gravitated to Exeter for their services.”

The presence of the Academy also helped, as Segal felt that would create “the intellectual interest in old books and art.” Part of it was also the make-up of Exeter’s downtown as “Exeter has always felt like a community where there’s an intentionality to supporting its own downtown. It’s always consisted of mom and pop shops.”

Luckily, when they were looking for locations, 65 Water Street had just gone on the market. The dress shop that had formerly occupied it was moving. Segal said that the previous owners “gave me the contact information for the landlord of the building, we interviewed, and we were selected.”

Their lease started on November 1st, 1985, and they opened on the day after Thanksgiving. Segal recounted how they had Thanksgiving with relatives in Boston “and came back here afterwards, worked all through the night, and went home and showered and came back and opened the next day.” Since that very first day, they have “never looked back.”

Opening day was filled with customers. There was local interest and “a number of colleagues of mine in the book business came to wish us well.” Since then, the business has been flourishing. Segal said, “we had enough business from the moment we opened our doors. The wolf was never at our door, except perhaps during COVID.”

Though he has no regrets, Segal wishes he could advise his younger self not to miss as many sleepers. “A sleeper can be anything you find that is worth a great deal more than you think it is,” he explained. “In the book business, nobody knows everything about everything.”

You can be in the business for decades, and you’re always seeing things you’ve never seen before.” Segal considers himself a generalist, with a little bit of knowledge in a slew of topics. However, it is impossible to know everything, “and almost all of us have come across something that we’ve paid no mind to, only to learn later that we had something quite choice in our possession, and somebody else recognized it.”

“But I say that a little bit with tongue in cheek,” continued Segal. “Because one of the things that drives this business and brings people back is the treasure hunt aspect. The idea that you’re not going to get something for nothing, but you might get something that’s worth quite a bit more, to you anyway, than what it’s been marked [as].”

The store is filled with older, more niche books. Segal has books across a wide range of subjects, most of them non-fiction that is no longer in-print. “They’re books that I feel will be of worth for a long time.” They stock primarily scholarly books, as opposed to purely popular ones. Segal explained the economics behind this decision, describing a “supply and demand dynamic. If a publisher publishes a lot of something, it means there’s a lot of them in the marketplace and that would devalue my stock.” Embracing this, he seeks out books “that are obscure and not necessarily rare, but scarce enough so that somebody visiting the shop is not likely to have seen them in many places.”

His clientele often reflects this taste in books.

They are usually looking for deeper treatises on subjects, or “more esoteric or erudite material.” However, Segal said that he doesn’t “consider myself either a rare bookstore or collectibles bookshop.” Rather, “I consider myself more of a general used bookshop with a focus on the scholarly.”

Segal said he loves having conversations with customers, because “I can be a student

again. I can let them take the driver’s seat and hear all kinds of interesting things about something that I only knew a little bit about.”

Describing his clientele, Segal said “It’s very inclusive.” The store gets patrons of all ages. “Holding a book is a pleasure. Holding a well-made book is a greater pleasure,” said Segal. “There are a lot of people who just appreciate that no matter what their age is.” Those people, he continued, “love to be surrounded by the books that they love. It just allows them to create an environment that they are very happy to be in.”

However, A Picture’s Worth does not only have books. Another thing Segal collects for the store are old maps. “People just enjoy looking at them, and studying them,” he said. “Maps are good conversation pieces.” Another interesting thing is that if someone’s house was built before 1892, it is pictured on a town map. Speaking from experience, Segal remarked that “people, when they buy an old home, love to see it pictured on a 19th century map.”

The walls of A Picture’s Worth are also lined with art. A somewhat rarer medium, poster art, is featured prominently on the walls. It is a special favorite of Segal’s. “It was the medium that was used for advertising before there was radio, before there was television,” he explained. “And so it was understood that if you were selling something, if you wanted to visually reach people, you had to make it dynamic.”

In addition, the store serves to showcase some local art talent. Segal reflected, “part of ... being in business for 41 years is that you lose people and you gain people.” Since the Segals started the business, Segal continued, “[we’ve met] new younger artists and [have made] new, younger customers. But along the way, we’ve lost people as well.” He mentioned Bill Childs, a local painter who specialized in watercolors, who recently passed away at the age of 91. “I considered him Exeter’s living treasure.” Recently, however, they met Lisa McManus, “a marvelous painter in oils and also watercolor and gouache,” who is new to town.

A Picture’s Worth is a collection of John Segal’s passions: maps, books, art, and more. Somehow, it all works to come together into a staple of downtown Exeter.

Ranjan Cont.

to have all that conversation. And then everyone feels so much more personable as a result.”

If he was looking for a unique experience, he certainly got it. Ranjan commented on how “tight-knit” the community at Exeter is: “It’s sort of beyond my belief. This is something that occurred earlier on, and I’ve gotten more used to it, but sometimes, someone says, ‘oh, you know that place.’ And you’ve been here for five weeks, you have no idea what location they’re referring to, but everyone else just gets the known idea.”

And he fit perfectly into the Academy community, adding, “It’s funny when you walk past [students] on the paths, you see them playing Spikeball, you see them completely miss the ball, and then you can make fun of them later. And I think that’s really good. It builds a lot more connection between the students and the faculty than I see them in class and that’s it. My job’s done. There’s so much more to be said about being able to do random things and engage in different ways.”

Ranjan’s teaching is fluid and fun, and he tries his best to work with his students. One of his favorite things about Exeter is “the blend of dedicated students who are willing to match my energy is the crux of it all... that balance is really important to me.”

Balaraman expanded on how he runs his classes, “He always notices when you’re lost or you need help with something and slows the class down to the perfect pace for everyone. And I think he also does a really great job of bringing in a blend of the competitive side too—I remember in full term, we had compositions and we would have compo competitions and that was really fun.” Ranjan does a wonderful job of striking the balance between fun and casual and serious and studious. She continued, “He brings a very lighthearted vibe. Before class, he always starts by asking us about our day or about our weekend or our plans. It’s just a really nice thing to have before class. And during class, he always makes jokes. Very lighthearted.”

Ranjan added about himself and his fellow intern, Paul Clement, “We’re in this nice position. We’re not too old, where we’re completely out of touch with the students and we can’t catch references or understand the conversation going on or be able to banter as needed. In that way, it’s easier for me to connect with students and to run classes because I don’t feel entirely viewed as an authority figure, which I think is useful from the perspective of students. They’re more willing to express ideas and things than they might otherwise.”

Prep Jim Xue ex-

plained the way Ranjan facilitates his class as such: “Whoever wanted to translate would have the opportunity to,” a method in the Classics department known as *quis desiderat*, “and so we would just go through and provide our translation and he would ask, ‘does anyone have any questions?’ And when he had a question about the translation, he would ask and it created a very inclusive environment where everyone felt comfortable asking a question if they were confused, and by the end of the term, everyone was comfortable putting themselves out there with their translations.”

Xue, reflecting on his first impressions of Ranjan, mentioned, “He was super energetic, and he really wanted to teach us, and I feel that stayed consistent throughout the whole year. Even through the winter and now in the spring, you can kind of see how much he enjoys life and how he loves the language.”

Balaraman expounded on how witty Ranjan is, and cited several moments that he made her laugh — whether through weekly Intermediate Certamen practices, on the bus to competitions, or in her everyday Latin classes. She said, “He’s a really funny guy. And he’s also really fun to talk to. He has a really interesting background in college. He majored in Classics and Physics, which was really interesting. I’ve talked to him a lot on the bus to Certamen tournaments about that and he’s just a really interesting guy.”

Catalina Lozano, a prep on the JV Girls tennis team, explained how kind of a coach Ranjan is to work with. “He’s always very gracious, and he has a very gentle personality,” she said. “I think that’s lovely, because so many times here, life is so stressful and hard and upsetting that you just need a gentle presence in your life, and that’s Coach Ranjan for me.”

Since Ranjan has been involved with Certamen since he was in high school, he finds that he’s well equipped to help out with Kirtland and the competitive side of the Classics at Exeter. This past year, he’s taken on several roles within the club: he brings students to events, runs practices, and introduces new competitions to students. He’ll take on the role of Linguistics Society advisor next year as well.

The heart of Ranjan’s community, however, is his dorm. He reflected, “I try to make myself very present with my dorm. So in Soule, I’m a pretty active community member. I really try to talk with the kids a lot, whether it’s my duty night or not, or try to run little events. Just try to spark more random things that happen. We

did a Soule Trivia Night with the dorm. And that was fun. That was a good time. The last question was if they could put all the dorm faculty in order from youngest to oldest, and they all failed.”

He explains about his contributions on campus, “I see [them] as a way to meet more students... But that’s why I get involved in things—I just want to meet more of the student body. I think it’s really interesting and there are so many kids here, very diverse backgrounds, very diverse interests. But if I only limit myself strictly to my classes, I just wouldn’t get to meet people,” and he finds that his clubs, tennis, and Soule are the best avenues for him to further interact with communities he otherwise wouldn’t have a chance to engage with.

In the future, Ranjan hopes to aid the Classics department in small ways. “I hope I’m able to identify certain practices or certain changes that could be made. Small things. I don’t think the department’s doing anything wrong or something in the grand scheme, but it’s just more, oh, what if we do this? and just try that out. I just hope to be able to try out some ideas that are actually super beneficial down the line.”

He also wishes to increase interest in competition-based Latin. He commented, “[I want] to take that stigma away that it’s a competition, but I don’t want kids to feel overly competitive about it. Do it because it’s interesting and you can learn something new, not because you need to win. It’s a very big mantra of mine with competition. Winning’s just really not that interesting. I’m hoping by bringing that sort of mentality that maybe more students will be willing to try these things out, or get more involved with them and then kind of broaden their appreciation for the Classics.”

He’s already inspiring students — Xue remarked, “He’s really sparked a lot of passion in me for the language and I don’t know how he’s done it, but I feel like I feed off of the excitement and the enjoyment that he has for Latin and when he talks about different authors, it makes me want to get to that point so I can experience it for myself. It’s really made me passionate about the Classics and I really appreciate that.”

Although relatively new to the Exeter community, Ranjan has already established a reputation as kind, funny, and someone who genuinely cares about students. From Davis to Soule Hall to the paths, he makes students feel seen and helps them enjoy what they’re learning. His passion for Classics is contagious, and he hopes to try out new ideas for teaching and connecting with students in his time here at Exeter.

THE EDIT: Pearl Hara

Yamazaki

By BARRY HANG,
CHANGYU JEONG,
and LYDIA KUHNERT

Before prep Pearl Hara Yamazaki arrived at Phillips Exeter Academy, she didn’t pay much attention to what she pulled on in the mornings. Here away from home, getting dressed has become her small daily pleasure. “Living at my school, fashion allows me to distinguish the times of the day and have a more structured routine,” she said.

When it comes to styling, she treats her closet as a place to experiment. “I try to have as much fun as possible with how I style my outfits,” she said. Accompanying her clothes are her accessories, many of them being gifts from her parents. Her favorite pieces of clothing are not necessarily designer-made, but rather hand-me-downs from her family. “If I look in my drawer, every single thing that I like the most is from my mom ... I like it extra because it’s tied to my family.”

When asked to describe her style in



Barry Hang / The Exonian

a single word, Hara Yamazaki chose “resourceful.” Her inspirations come from observations. In Japan, she watches what people wear, picks out the elements she likes, and folds them into her own style that is not overtly Japanese but

maintains its aesthetic. On campus, she looks at her friends’ choices of creativity. She offered a style shout-out to lower Blair Li and prep Nicole Subkhanberdina, who both share international backgrounds like herself.



EXETER RUNS ON INKWELL.

Espresso. Red Bull. Nitro Cold Brew. Matcha.

Handcrafted Espresso Drinks

Bullets (Red Bull Infusions)

Nitro Cold Brew on Tap

Matcha (Hot or Iced)

Breakfast & Lunch

STUDENTS GET 10% OFF
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Meditation: Cecily Reed



Courtesy of Andrew Gould

By **KAYLEE GONG**
‘28

“The Battle of Drep-ana is my favorite battle, though you’ve more likely heard me refer to it as ‘the chicken battle.’” began senior Cecily Reed’s meditation. During Roman consul Publius Claudius Pulcher fight against a Carthaginian fleet, he turned to sacred chickens for an omen of the battle outcome. When the chickens didn’t eat and presaged a terrible outcome to Claudius’ anger, he threw them overboard. By the end of the day, the chickens proved Claudius’ pride wrong, and he was left without his flock, his fleet, and reputation.

On Wednesday May 20, Reed leapt onto the podium to share her story of accepting growth and error. Weaving together the intricacies of her family history, her studied history, and her own history, Reed reflected upon her life thus far. From fighting to be “right,” to pushing her past self away, to coming back to reconcile all aspects of herself — both the brilliance and the flaws — Reed shared her history of *crescit eundo*; she grows as she goes.

She began with her mother’s family heirloom: a dark cabinet, called the “*armoire des ancêtres*,” with drawers containing trinkets and honors of the de Menil family — a grant from Napoleon, a tea-tin from the Boxer Rebellions, and so forth. With each of these items came stories, which ingrained

a certainty in young Reed’s love for history. “Hearing these stories gave me an emotional connection to the history I loved so much, a sense of ownership, and indulged my desire to romanticize the past. When I read about the American Revolution or the Age of Enlightenment, I felt confident—this was a time my family had helped shape, this was a time where I belonged.”

In her father’s Southern family, Reed explained, “Papa inherited the cavernous sense of loss that characterizes many Southerners, the sense that he had once had a place in a beautiful world and that place was gone... To Papa’s family, history is a story of loss, little by little, generation by generation.” Yet a pride for the past remained through reenactments of Civil War battles and the routines of the Reed family on their Virginian family farm.

One afternoon, while Reed and her younger brother, Georgie, were completing chores on the farm, Georgie skinned his knee. But Reed just told him to “buck up,” while her mother asked, “What’s wrong with you?” As Reed explained, “Georgie was the kind one, selfless and personable, and I was the smart one, the strong one, the right one.” At dinner tables, Reed would always pick at Georgie’s smallest mistakes, and she couldn’t help but to feel envy over all of Georgie’s praises. “My love for him battled with my

resentment, and my shame at that resentment devoured both.” Reed’s sharp treatment of Georgie came with a sense of self doubt around her own humanity. She asked herself, “Was I simply a monster, since I felt nothing but contempt when my brother, who loved me so much, who would do anything for me, started crying?”

So, Reed left for Exeter, hoping that distance from her family would fix her troubles with them. “I wanted to win. And as I read more and more, it seemed to me that the surest way to win was by being right. I thought that, at Exeter, people would finally stop pestering me to do stupid things like “have emotions.” I also desperately wanted a community around what I loved most—history.”

However, upon her arrival, Reed was met with the opposite of her expectations: it was “glaringly, painfully modern.” The way that Reed had understood the world — through her family, its history, and her love for it and history — held no place at Exeter. The histories where her family had found pride in, Exeter taught as “morally corrupt embodiments of evil.” Even though she had previously found confidence in her own strength, she reflected that at Exeter, she lost the strength to her past beliefs. So, Reed tried her best to adapt and push away her past self, the one that seemed not to be welcome.

Nevertheless,

my strengths... I decided that the more I suffered, sacrificed, or suppressed my character, the more virtuous I’d become.” So, she turned to cross country, a purifier of pain.

“Cross-country helped me overcome my fixation with external validation and forced me to rely on my own confidence, and more than that, on the team,” reflected Reed. Her running broke past her perfectionism and forced her to just run, to just start without having everything figured out, to revive portions of her past self belief. “It’s not a fight against yourself— if you beat yourself down, there’s nothing left to race with. It’s more of a fight for yourself— who do I want to be, when I reach the finish line?”

However, Reed still ran with a deep guilt around her flaws of character. When she would attend Catholic Mass, although being raised Episcopalian, she used to always seethe at the line “Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word, and my soul shall be healed.” It meant admitting her faults and accepting help.

“Why should someone’s soul be healed if they aren’t worthy, if they haven’t put any elbow grease into it? I’d like to save my own soul, thank you very much,” Reed expressed with a laugh, “And I don’t need any help doing it. In the Reed family, we don’t take handouts, even if those handouts are eternal salvation.”

Yet, with time, the “Lord, I am not worthy...” line would become Reed’s favorite. As she began to find acceptance in her imperfections, the line was a resolution. She reflected, “For the span of that one sentence, I can confront my pride and past mistakes, know that I am not and never will be right about everything, that I cannot win or even wage every battle, but still feel loved and, somehow, worthy.”

Gould himself reflected upon that resolution: “I love how Cecily really embraced the messiness of life and successfully sits in the liminal space between that and perfection. She still strives to be her best self, but she maintains that appreciation for a world beyond clear facts and assessments.”

Instructor in History Troy Samuels echoed similar praises for Reed’s arc of balancing being right and having flaws. Referring to his own interactions with her, he explained with a laugh, “One of the things that’s great about Cecily is that she’s always on the edge of what brilliance and somebody you

kind of want to throw water balloons at. She knows she’s brilliant, and it was great hearing her talk about the journey of how she’s become that person who is avowedly herself.”

Through excellent prose and analogies throughout, Reed’s ability to accurately reflect on her growth was evident. Senior Shay Kashif highlighted, “I was especially touched by how she did such a masterful job of examining her own faults in retrospect so maturely, and sharing them confidently with the PEA community — the courage to reckon with those aspects of yourself with such humility, especially in front of an audience, is an admirable quality that is hard to come by.”

Reed’s meditation was even further elevated by her delivery. Often including extemporaneous additions to her writing as she spoke, her enthusiasm was contagious to the audience. Lower Anika Nystedt praised, “You could tell that Cecily was very excited to read her meditation and that she loved every single line that she wrote, which I did too.”

“The meditation was a great display of storytelling, and it felt like a conversation,” said senior Emerson Seymour. “Cecily’s voice and persona were very present in the meditation and if you really know her, that voice is so clear and impactful.”

While Reed still finds pride in the histories of her family, it’s not over “what we had, but in what we willingly gave up,” she noted. “I am proud that my ancestors knew what Roman generals, and I myself, were so reluctant to concede: that some things are more important than winning.” Reed had been like Claudius, unwilling to accept defeat and killed by pride. But through the trials of Exeter, she found strength in a regrounded set of values.

Returning back to the Reed farm house, Reed ended with a moment between herself and Georgie, culminating together with her family and her personal growth. As he stood in the dining room, wisps of blonde hair forming a halo around his head, Reed laughed when Georgie mentioned that he had just written a whole essay without commas. “I didn’t have to go all the way back to Rome while searching for beauty and humanity — there was someone in the chair right next to me, regaling the table with a fantasy world set in a broccoli forest and mashed-potato fields, who always knew that people are more important than victories.”

» MAYFLIES

Writers reflect on the phenomenon of new clubs at Exeter, 15.

» PHONE POLICY

Preps Piper Clark and Eleanor Pontz critique the school's new phone policy, 16.

Contemplating Change: The Ways By Which We Define a Person

By **DIYA SANDEEP '28**

Habit: an acquired mode of behavior that has become nearly or completely involuntary (Merriam-Webster)

Do people ever change? We wonder about it often, about ourselves and about others, when we watch people return to their old bad habits time and time again, even as it only brings suffering to themselves and others. Is there something inherent about one's nature? Something we are simply unable to fix or change or tweak? It certainly seems that way. After all, if we

could change, why does it seem that humanity holds tight to our virtues and vices — even when we know they should shift?

But still, we have to think that people change. Because we do. We change every moment of every day, even when it seems invisible. Think about it: you are in class — straight posture, attentive, eloquent — and then you are with your friends — splayed out across a chair, joyful, casual. Those are different versions of you. You are the same person, and yet you are not the same. If you can

change so much in that span of time between walking out of your class and into EPAC during uni-free, then how can anyone claim that you have not changed in months, years, decades?

And maybe, you are not changing who you are. You are changing how you present yourself. Shallow, surface-level momentary lapses that don't mean anything. After all, we don't define ourselves based on a singular moment. Humans are a collection of memories, a symposium of thoughts. And if that's true, then doesn't every new

experience, conversation, question add just a little bit to who we are? One small shift is not much, but a thousand building up over some span of time certainly is.

People are not who they were when they were kids, and that is because people learn. People pick things up and they do it fast. Babies learn to talk in a matter of years. Kids learn how to ride a bike in a few weeks, students learn their material in a few months — the assumption is always that people will grow. And if people grow, they change. Our society is built off the idea that people are constantly changing, right up until the moment they die. Prisons, support groups, therapy; they all exist because a person who wants to change will. Always.

Yet, we still question. It seems like people never do.

After all, we find ourselves falling back when we know we shouldn't. We return to people we know have and will hurt us, we stare at our phones for hours on hours, we skip things like exercise and eating. People have bad habits, and while many are small, some hold tremendous after-effects. We ruin relationships, our health, ourselves — sometimes so rapidly it feels like it is all at once. But bad habits are just that. Habits.

We may be that which we do and not what we preach, but much of that which we do is not even a choice. And people, more than anything, are the choices we make. People who return to the same old habits may seem static, but we can never claim to know what they are choosing — if they do not even realize, if they know but do not have the

heart to change, if they are actively trying in ways that we cannot ascertain. All of it matters, because people are more complicated than they appear to the world around them and minimizing them into any number of categories is far too much of a simplification.

We cannot say whether people truly change the same way we cannot say whether it is nature or nurture that is a larger shaping factor in a person. People respond to their environment however they can, and no one wants to fall behind. We see people change all the time: they form new principles, take different actions, observe, adjust, react. They change. We change. We change, because if we didn't, we wouldn't be human in the first place. The very nature of humanity is change.

Mayflies

By **ADRIAN CHAN '28,**
DOWANKIM '29, and
PEARL HARAYAMAZAKI '29

When alumni ask whether Club X or Club Y is still around, they are more surprised to hear about the continued existence of these clubs than by the fact that subsequent generations of coheads have shuttered their passion projects. The constancy of clubs “dying” after their visionary founders matriculated to college is so endemic to Exeter club culture that, within the list of the more than 150 clubs on campus, there are a few dozen mayfly clubs.

The mayfly lives for a single day — long enough to reproduce, then gone. There are many animals that live just to die, so their offspring can emerge and continue this cycle. In the same vein, there have been clubs that have existed on campus only to die in order for similarly ephemeral clubs to take their place on club lists.

Mayfly clubs are clubs that are founded lower or upper year out of the belief, from club founders, their parents, or perhaps more maliciously by college counselors, to manufacture a leadership position. Their applications are filled with promises of committed stewardship of underclassmen, ambitious meeting ideas, and emphasis on the incomparable importance of creating a forum for said niche topic. Club meetings occurred once in a blue moon, with the co-head arriving at best on time, and at worst, cancelling said meeting until the next term.

Despite the promises of co-head positions, speaker talks, and field trips, the single-digit attendees can sadly only expect the co-head to superimpose their personal experiences in ad-lib presentations on whatever they decide the meeting should discuss the night before. When college decisions are past, and co-head applications are in, the mayfly co-head can finally relieve themselves of this light burden by appointing a trusty lackey, often an underclassman friend who has the same commitment to the club, to peacefully wind down the club by the end of the next year.

The lifespan of the club finally comes to a close with the failure of the club to meet for the entire year, and unfortunately, forgetting to submit the club leadership form for the next year. Signs of such a decaying club are Blackbaud announcements that haven't changed since club fair and meeting times that persist on calendars months after the co-heads have clocked out of leading their clubs.

Maybe that view is justified. Insofar as clubs are something that students are incentivised to have on their common application, despite our community's best intentions, there will be clubs solely created for that goal. Yet the infestation of mayfly clubs, that are by nature selfish in conception, takes away funding and approval from clubs whose inception is based on the non-sibi values of our school. Given the restriction on the number of new clubs each year, the limited number of new club spaces should go to clubs in which their co-heads are committed to creating a space on campus to explore the club's focus regularly and rigorously.

The mayfly's lifespan is not limited to a duality of life and death. Within functioning clubs, the disease of nepotism and decreasing club interest can also result in similar decay. When co-head positions are given to those whose only merit is the connections to the previous board, a club cannot hope to maintain the same tempo as the previous year. The compound said detrimental turnovers over multiple years, and club members join solely if they know that their friends will guarantee their coheadship in two or three years. Those outside the clique either save their effort and quit the membership or are left dejected when members who only joined Blackbaud the day of co-head turnovers receive positions over committed members. The culling of mayflies is simple. Clubs that do not meet regularly or have any outward communication from co-heads should be placed under management for either a more committed and meritocratically selected board or shuttered to make way for the numerous better ideas waiting to be supported.

What Should I Major In?

By **SELASIE AMEMASOR '28**

There comes a certain point in your Exeter career where you'll be spending your break off campus, eating dinner with your family, and suddenly from some part of the table you'll hear, “What are you thinking of for college?” You've got five minutes to start thinking of the most strategic answers to give the aunty who decided to sweat you in the middle of dinner. While the list of things you can say are a lot shorter than the things you can't, here are some options.

You can:

A: Say some sort of STEM major like Biology, so that next dinner, your family members will ask for medical advice you have no right to be giving.

B: Say something “sophisticated” like Law so that later in the break, your parents can lie to their acquaintances and say you're going to work at Kirkland & Ellis as soon as you step off the graduating platform.

C: Say you haven't decided yet and let everyone at the table assume you will be broke after college, just like your cousin with a major in Creative Writing. Or worse, try to convince you to major in something with “good money.”

As more and more people post their college decisions, the closer and closer the reality of college seems to be. What once felt like something that you would never

have to worry about now has universities sending you postcards and the College Counseling Office in your inbox. It's only natural that in one of the springs you'll have during your Exeter education, you'll start to wonder if you're on the right track for college. Everyone around you seems to know what they're doing for school, where they want to go and how to get there.

Your time at Exeter will start to feel like a never ending race in which the only thing you can think about is getting to the end. The things you do for fun, will have been swapped out for extracurriculars and sports that will make colleges like you, the way runners eat gels before starting their races. Your summers aren't spent lying on the beach but instead, in cold rooms getting coffee and making photo copies for people who can't be bothered to remember your name.

All this worry is understandable. In each of the years most current Exonians have been born, 140 million other people have been born too. While not all of them will apply to college with you, that's still millions of applicants you have to beat out to get into the schools you desire. It makes sense why so many people are willing to trade out the fun experiences many of our parents before us had in exchange for the slightest advantage in the race for college.

There are other issues as well. The biggest of all is financial stability. You can have the grades, extracurriculars and a charming personality but not be able to attend the institutions you want, simply because the financial aid given to you doesn't cover what you need.

So students look at what jobs are in demand and what majors are popular.

When people tell you in conversations things like “follow what your heart” or “don't do things just for the money,” it's because they won't be working alongside you.

As wonderful as it would be to spend your college year pursuing something like art history or getting a BFA with Ceramics concentration, those jobs are very rarely popular enough to keep you financially stable as soon as you finish school. Yes, following your dreams when you're twenty is awesome, but when you're in your thirties and still paying off your student loans, the shine of your degree starts to tarnish. Being broke in college and being broke in the adulting world are two very different things.

It's for that same reason many students who do not have the financial means to pursue their desired majors will choose majors that colleges are willing to pay for. For example, schools like University of Rochester are offering a 12 month accelerated BSN, tuition-free

so long as you work three years in their affiliated hospitals. Many of the students attending the aforementioned program will not attend because they've had Grey's Anatomy posters hung up on their walls since they were twelve, but because when weighing their options, Rochester seemed like the best one. Who are we to question that decision? To some degree, it's a win-win situation. Students are able to get a degree in a field that won't be disappearing or handled by AI. Hospitals will be able to salve the rapid decline of Registered Nurses. While the reason as to why so many nurses have left is a topic on its own, it does mean there has been a higher demand for these jobs. These opportunities allow underprivileged students job security and the financial stability they need.

Obviously, I can't give you the answer as to what you should major in. But I do think that when it comes to such big decisions, you should have your own criteria as to what you want in a college, whether that be money, passion or whether or not the job you want will be taken over by AI. Most importantly remember why your path beyond high school looks the way it does. The journey you take to get to adulthood is supposed to be unique, and more than that, something you reflect on fondly decades from now.

The Problem With the Phone Policy

By PIPER CLARK '29
and ELEANOR PONTZ
'29

There is no student on campus who has not noticed the looming presences that are the phone lockers in nearly every single dorm. This new pilot policy requires preps to lock their phones in the box from 8 to 10 p.m. then from 10:30 to 6 a.m. The intended purpose of this policy is to give preps 'additional support' with their phone usage and help them focus on their studying and sleep. However, is the phone policy achieving its intended purpose or merely creating new issues?

Although the vast majority of studies conducted covered policies that restricted phone use during the day and their effects, we can still find useful evidence that can

be applied to Exeter. A study by The Lancet Regional Health in Europe confirms that "poor mental health in adolescents...is attributed by some to increasing mobile phone use" however, their study concluded that "there is no evidence that restrictive school policies are associated with overall phone and social media use or better mental wellbeing in adolescents". Additionally, in a paper by the National Bureau of Economic Research, the effect of phone policies on average test scores "are consistently close to zero" and they have found "little evidence of effects on school attendance, self-reported classroom attention, or perceived online bullying" which are of main reasons for phone policies to go into effect in the first place. Both of these studies attest that minimal positive

effects were achieved when a phone policy was introduced.

While cell phone restrictive policies do not appear to greatly impact student academic performances or wellbeing, what they have been shown to produce, however, are more focused classrooms with happier teachers. In a research initiative entitled Phones in Focus, two main conclusions were reached: "the stricter the policy, the happier the teacher and the less likely students are to be using their phones when they aren't supposed to." The reasoning behind this is obvious: if students are not allowed to use their phones in class, then teachers can focus on their job without having to worry as much about their students getting distracted. For most schools, this would be a major benefit since the

lives of their employees are improved. At Exeter, however, the implementation of the phone policy overnight and during study hours actually creates more work for faculty in the dorms since they now need to enforce the phone policy and ensure that phones are locked away at the proper times.

Finally, as I see it, the main issue that the phone policy is aimed to fix is that of 'doomscrolling' instead of studying or sleeping. Any usage of cell phones to scroll on social media can be done nearly as efficiently on a laptop, but laptops have become so integrated into our school curriculum that to limit student usage of them would further negatively affect student academic performance. Apart from this,, the conclusion of a study conducted by the Journal of Adolescent Health was that "daily social media

use is not a strong or consistent risk factor for depressive symptoms" in adolescents.

Another flaw in the policy is the times at which phone use is restricted. As students are allowed to use their phones throughout the day and not at night, this may cause thoughts along the lines of: if my phone will be taken away later, I might as well use it now, right? What is more, is that many of the students who go to bed before 10:00 p.m. or around that time might want to stay up later in order to use their phones, further reducing student sleep, and actively degrading the purpose of the policy.

Furthermore, there is the massive monetary aspect of the phone lockers. With a quick glance onto ChargeTech's website, we can see that a single phone box with thirty-two slots costs \$3,595. Multiply that number by the amount of dorms on

campus, and you are given a value that could pay for an entire year of tuition for an Exeter student. Even with the Academy's endowment, it should not be using unnecessarily large amounts of money for a project that will reap little to no benefits.

From research that shows the policy will have little direct impact for students, to the existence of computers, the flawed logic, and the unnecessary amount of money spent, it is clear that the positive effects of the phone policy are so limited that the negative ones heavily outweigh them. So, what should the school do? While, in our opinion, it is unlikely that the school will reverse or eliminate the program anytime soon, due to its sibling schools having already implemented it, the school should recognize student opinions on the issue, and consider rethinking the details of the policy for next year.

The Selective Memory of May

By GARY GUO '29

"The truth is rarely pure and never simple."

— Oscar Wilde

Walking back from tennis practice this evening, the sun's rays push through the clouds, and the sky is ablaze with yellow and pinkish-orange streaks. It is stunning, surreal, as if the sky has been painted. It has been a while since I've walked home during this golden hour of the early evening; the winter seemed long this year, and, as with all winters, the light then was mostly blue, crisp, almost fluorescent, like a doctor's examining room. But now warm light signals that summer is approaching; we will soon be free. I savor it, find myself thinking about school coming to an end, and I'm certain, albeit privately, that I will miss these walks home.

Two months ago, the first light of spring had seemed blinding, intrusive. Sitting outside on the brightest of days in my down coat only made me overheated and miserable. The days were long on studying and short on relief. Now it's spring. Transitions, it seems, are always accompanied by both resistance and longing. Meanwhile, what we post online is mostly hyperbolic... "best year ever"; "BFF"; "Exeter #1!" Our public personas rarely reflect what it feels like to be under

the pressure of four tests and two papers due within a week. Or not get chosen for Varsity. Or get a rejection from a summer program.

Sentimentality comes from our tendency to want to magnify the golden sunsets in our lives. Conversely, our brains edit out the nights when we feel lonely or behind in our work or embarrassed by something ridiculous we blurted in class. Instead, we hold fast to the games won, the A's earned, the awards handed out at the end of each year. Or as in last night's walk home, a sky ablaze over the church. Or the early morning, equal parts light and dew, setting the lawn outside of the library to glisten.

Still, come May, you'd never hear anyone say "I don't want to go home." Never. It's not socially acceptable to be too sentimental about this place. Not cool. But the friendships, midnight screams, inside jokes, and the feeling of belonging to ensembles, clubs, and teams are real. The connection is genuine, and the fun we have is real, too. Suffering a busy schedule or being stripped of our cell phones or the exhaustion of communal living become personal stories that we may later see as character-defining, as... "good for us". When we share those stories with future classes, it'll probably be with the glow of a veteran soldier who lived to

tell the tale. Both the good and bad times conjure a fierce sentimentality about this place, about being of this place, about being an Exonian.

So, how do we balance the truth with the reality? The yin with the yang. Are we allowed to openly admit how much we will miss Exeter when we leave for the summer? Or does that just diminish your home life? Your summer plans? Your ability to be honest? Maybe bitterness and sweetness can coexist. Years from now, I predict our memories of this place will mellow: "It was hard, but the challenge was part of the fun, and it was always worth it." The memories of the days we suffered, struggled, and all but gave up will recede, for better or worse. But it is also true that the golden sunsets, the pretty brick buildings, and the white split rail fences will continue to exist as a backdrop for the learning we did here, side by side, deep into the night, at the Harkness table or out on the playing fields. We will know without a doubt that it was the best and worst of times, and that acknowledging both is essential to our mental health, to being real. We may even remember navigating the mud-soaked New England spring, but here's the thing: regardless of how sentimental or painful your memories of this place end up being, they will no doubt exist side-by-side in a sort of private quietude that is reserved for all that is sacred in this world. What a privilege it is to walk alongside so many amazing people.

Restart

By OLIVIA WANG '29

As a child, I read Restart by Gordon Korman, following a bully named Chase who had amnesia after falling. Without memory of past experiences, he decided to lead a kind and purposeful life. The concept of starting a completely different life shocked me. Erase all of your mistakes, forget about all of your stories, be a brand new character...

Growing up, my family moved every few years, and I carried that fantasy with me. Each new place felt like a blank page. Whenever I made a mistake — said something foolish, argued with classmates or teachers, failed an assignment — I comforted myself: soon, no one would know. My new friends wouldn't hear the embarrassing stories, the conflicts, the things I regretted. I could start over.

In elementary school, I took a lot of responsibility in my school community, always explaining problems in front of the class, reminding my classmates to do their homework as well as complete their projects, and backing my friends up when they got into trouble. My name lingered in the classroom during breaks, as my teachers and my peers called me for help. But gradually, I became tired and scared of the expectations placed on me. I wanted a change, and life offered me a chance.

In August 2022, my family moved again. Stepping into a completely new environment, I figured I would become a different person this time. Same face, same smile, same way of talking, but this time, a different approach to building connections with others. I tried to focus on myself, but whenever I heard the wrong answer to a chemistry

problem or saw a grammatically wrong paragraph, I would still walk over and help them. Whenever my friend was reaching out to a teacher for extracurricular opportunities, a secret energy drove me to their office and made me communicate with them on my friend's behalf. Even though I reminded myself that I needed to act differently, be a new person,, I couldn't help it.

I failed to restart. The desperation of correcting and fixing things haunted me, pulling my strings, making me feel trapped. And this time, the reaction was different. When we were ten, we felt joyful, and we celebrated one another's successes without hesitation. But in middle school, people complained that I "exposed" their mistakes. Stories spread — about me, but no longer with warmth.

When I came to Exeter, I tried again. One more restart. New personality. New hobbies. New mindset. A new way of studying, a new way of socializing, a new way of advocating for myself. Again, nothing changed. I am still a Harkness warrior. I am still ignorant of social cues. I still share too much. I still judge.

Today, society puts too much pressure on individuals to be "perfect," especially us teenagers. Perfect GPA, perfect athletics record, perfect extracurricular, perfect recommendation letters, and the thought that there is a narrow, restrictive pathway to success. In the pursuit of flawlessness, the idea of "restarting" becomes addictive. If perfection is the requirement, then reinvention feels like the only escape. We delete posts, rewrite resumes, adjust how we speak, how we laugh, how much space we take up, anything to scrub away the parts of us that don't shine.

But the danger in this approach is subtle. Restarting teaches us to run instead of reflect. Rath-

er than confronting our habits, we hide them; rather than processing our mistakes, we bury them under a new version of ourselves. We don't grow; instead, we simply overwrite. Like a computer with too many files erased and rewritten, we glitch. Every restart means abandoning the person we were, including the parts that deserved grace, forgiveness, and understanding.

Mistakes are not stains; they are fingerprints of becoming. The awkward conversations, the stubborn tendencies, the well-meaning but intrusive corrections I describe... Those are bruises earned in the process of learning how to exist with others. Growth is not a reboot. It is an update. It keeps the old files and adds new ones, expanding, refining, layering complexity. Who we are is not a draft to be scrapped. We do not need a clean page. We need a pen willing to continue writing.

And so, I no longer idolize Chase. I remember loving the book, flipping through the pages in awe, but I no longer believe in wiping the slate clean. Starting over may look like freedom, but it is the harder, braver choice to continue, to repair, to evolve, and to stay. My story is not perfect. It is noisy and stubborn and full of revisions, but restarting would erase all the chapters that brought me here: the helping, the correcting, and the caring, too loudly. I don't want to lose the version of me that tried.

As a musical theater actor, I always remind myself on stage that "the show must go on." Now I realize that this idea reaches far beyond the walls of theaters. No matter what happens, we have to continue writing the story of our lives. Not as a new character each act, but as the same imperfect lead learning their role more deeply each time the curtain rises.

Sports

» GIRLS' TENNIS

Read about GV Tennis' game against Groton on May 14, 17.

» MERRIMACK RACE

Read about Varsity Crew's final race of the season against Andover, 17.

Crew Finishes Season With Merrimack River Race Against Andover



Courtesy of John Tsien



Courtesy of John Tsien

By ADAEZE ACHOLONU, JESS ANSELM, and OWEN SAFFORD

Cheers echoed from the shore, and sculls cut through the calm waters of the Merrimack River on Saturday, May 9, where the Exeter boys' crew team took on Phillips Academy Andover and Tabor Academy in one of their final regattas of the season. With

only three more races in the season, the event carried high importance for the team, and Exeter responded with one of its strongest performances so far this spring.

Exeter was the top team on the day, coming out victorious in five out of six races. Exeter's first varsity boat performed best, taking first place with a time of 4:49.3, seven seconds fast-

er than Andover's 4:56.4 and almost 30 seconds faster than Tabor's 5:17.1. Exeter's second varsity boat also came out with a stellar performance, beating Andover and Tabor with a time of 5:07.3 to Andover's 5:18.3 and Tabor's 5:54.7.

Exeter won the third varsity, first novice, and second novice races, coming out ahead of Andover in all three. The only race Andover

won over Exeter was the fourth varsity race, finishing ahead by five seconds with a time of 5:17.2 compared to Exeter's 5:22.0. Tabor took third place in this race with a time of 6:10.7.

The athletes were rightfully excited about the results of the competition. Senior Maxim Froeschl, a rower on the first varsity boat, reflected on his experience in the race,

noting, "the successes against strong programs like those of Andover and Tabor show the depth of our program this year." However, Froeschl also pointed out how there is always room for improvement, regardless of the result. "We were happy to win but there were many things to take away from the way we raced to work on and apply moving forward," he explained.

With victories across almost all levels, both experienced and novice, the crew program has proved not only speed from the top boats, but depth throughout the whole lineup. With such success in this regatta, the team now has momentum going into their final race of the season, the NEIRA Championships, which will take place on Saturday, May 23 in Worcester, MA.

Girls Tennis Persists Amidst Loss

By GARY GUO, DOWAN KIM, BLAIR LI, and LUCYMA

On May 14, Big Red girls' tennis A and B teams rode into Groton for a match that felt like it was sponsored by sweat and rain. Varsity B left with a 4-2 win; varsity A took a tough 6-3 loss. Inside Groton's eight indoor courts, Exeter fought through every point, extending rallies and competing through the final ball.

The highlight of the match belongs to upper Blasklee Krusen when she won her match at the end of the game by a third-set tiebreaker, 10-7. "She had this great overhead," senior Matilde Senter recollected, "she was dealing

with the pressure so well."

Although the varsity A team had already lost the game, having the whole team standing on the sideline and cheering until the last point helped Krusen survive the pressure, secure her personal win, and improve the scoreboard.

Prep Lily Cui said, "When all the matches are finished, and the final match remaining is a third-set tiebreaker, that's where all the team support comes in."

This season, head coach Gayatri Ramesh endeavored to cultivate the athletes' focus, readiness, and spirit. "The season we're building is about playing with a clear plan, reading the court, and supporting each other through

difficult moments," Ramesh explained. One of her favorite messages to her players is "you cannot control events, but you can always control how you react."

Ramesh emphasized that team dynamics were among the factors that worked well during the matches. "Our team showed up for each other. Our number six closed out her match in a super tiebreaker with the entire team gathered around her, cheering her on." It was the last match of the day, and even though the team's loss was decided, the whole team still sat down and rallied for her. Throughout the season, the team worked on having a plan and intention behind each point.

Ramesh explained that the players were mentally strong throughout their matches on Wednesday, "even when the score wasn't going [their] way."

Krusen also highlights the team chemistry, noting that the teammates' support for one another helped build an encouraging environment. "My favorite part is when we are yelling 'let's go' to each other across the courts," Krusen reflected, "it really helps you feel a part of a team even when you are in your individual singles match." Moments like this became defining parts of the spirited team atmosphere throughout the season.

At the same time, the team does acknowledge

that their opponents are a strong team and pulled off amazing shots. However, going into the game, Big Red wasn't prepared for the sudden weather and changed to indoor courts, which was different from their usual courts in the Field House. Cui noted that Groton had cement courts, "[so] the surface was very slippery and made the ball bounce much faster than we were used to."

Looking ahead, the team aims to follow through with momentum for the last match of the season. Ramesh stated, "We need everyone on the court and at their best. Beyond that, we'll keep doing the work we've been doing: sharpening

our match-play decisions, staying composed in tight moments, and competing for each other." Krusen concurred, mentioning the team's positive attitude and growth mindset, "We focus more on the lessons we have learned and the positives of the day rather than our mistakes."

Despite their loss on Wednesday, the team is running the season with a strong 7-2 record. Ramesh concluded, "We'll keep doing: sharpening our match-play decisions, staying composed in tight moments, and competing for each other." The team has only one match left on their calendar: an E/A match scheduled on May 20.

Boys' Varsity Tennis In Action

By Anoushka Sarathy '28



Humor

» THANK U, NEXT

Read preps Gary Guo and Lucy Ma's Exeter song parody, 19.

» PERSONALITY TEST

Prep Olivia Wang analyzes your unique personality for free, 19.

INKWELL COUPON 10% off - Students only. Must show valid PEA student ID.



Thank u, Next

By GARY GUO '29 and LUCY MA '29

Thought I'd end up with an 11
But it wasn't a match
Wrote some papers for history
Now my teacher reads it and laughs
Even almost got straight As
And for math, I'm so fried
Wish I could say "thank you" to Harkness
'Cause it was a disaster
One taught me love (love)
One taught me patience (patience)
And one taught me pain (pain)
Now, I'm still surviving
Say I've bombed and I've passed
But that's not what I see
So, look what I got
Look how tired I am
And for that, I say
Thank you, next (next)
Thank you, next (next)
Thank you, next
I'm so f***ing grateful for my F
Thank you, next (next)
Thank you, next (next)
Thank you, next (next)
I'm so f***ing
Spend more time with my dormies
I ain't worried 'bout nothin'
Plus, I found a new hobby:
Staring at Canvas buffering
I know they say I barely do work
But this time it's real
'Cause her name is finals week
And I'm so bad with that (so bad with that)
She taught me burnout (burnout)
She taught me tiredness (tiredness)
She handles fatigues (fatigues)
That s**t's amazing (yeah, sleep-in is amazing)
I've cried and I've prayed (yeah, yeah)
But that's not what I get (yeah, yeah)
'Cause look what I have (yeah, yeah)
One more tardy and I'm

on stricts!
And for that, I say
Thank you, next (thank you, next)
Thank you, next (thank you, next)
Thank you, next (thank you)
I'm so grateful for my Stillwells gift card
Thank you, next (thank you, next)
Thank you, next (said thank you, next)
Thank you, next (next)
I'm so grateful for Principal's Day
Thank you, next
Thank you, next
Thank you, next
I'm so f***ing
One day I'll walk down the aisle
Holding my classics diploma
I'll be thanking my teacher
'Cause she got me passing that class
Only wanna take the course once, real bad
One time then I'm free
God forbid something happens
'Least I still got the credit (still got the credit)
I've tanked my GPA (GPA)
Got so many dickies (dickies)
I've learned from the pain (pain)
I turned out surviving (turned out surviving)
I've studied and I've failed (yeah, yeah)
But that's not what I see (yeah, yeah)
'Cause look what I've learned (yeah, yeah)
To manage my grill points
And for that, I'll say
Thank you, next (thank you, next)
Thank you, next (thank you, next)
Thank you, next
I'm so grateful for sleep-ins
Thank you, next (thank you, next)
Thank you, next (said thank you, next)
Thank you, next (next)
I'm so grateful for Exeter
Thank you, next
Thank you, next
Yeah, yee

Exonian Personality Test

By OLIVIA WANG '29

Personality tests were first introduced during WWI, when the U.S. Army used them to screen recruits for psychological fitness. Fascinatingly, they evolved from military wards into popular social tools in the modern era. On Instagram, we see creators labeling themselves as Type A, ENTP, driven by Extraversion, or Type 3 with a 2 wing. These systems became how teenagers and young adults in the 21st century define themselves and each other. Without actually having a conversation with someone, you can sense their mode of communication, working style, personal values, and outlook on life through their personality test results.

Therefore, please allow me to introduce the Exonian Personality Test. No matter if you attended Exeter, are currently a student, or you're looking into applying to become an Exonian, this model will help you understand your behavior better. Share your results with your friends, teachers, or anyone you meet on campus. Make sure to add it to your self introduction at Assembly.

Criterion A - Harkness

V — Vocalist
If you're a Harkness warrior, you definitely fit in this category. If you make good points but speak ten times every class? You belong here too. No offense, but you are not any better than the typical Harkness warrior. "Building off that..." is your lifestyle. English and history

classes are your battlefields. Words are your weapons, and you are indeed ready to fight.

O — Observer
You don't really contribute in class, but somehow you still got an A- for your midterms. Harkness grade. Your teacher says that you are a good listener. You annotate your text with colorful highlighters and fill the margins with comments. You make notes of what everyone else says in class, and silently

mates, if they made one.

G — Grinder
You spend 25 hours doing homework every day. Not STUDYING, purely COMPLETING YOUR HOMEWORK. On the right side of Elm, 3rd floor of the library, backstage in Goel, on the bench of the lacrosse field... You are always grinding. But somehow you still walk into the quiz not knowing half the answers, and sit at the Harkness table realizing your

ity. And that is your entire personality. People refer to you as the philosophy guy or the basketball senior or the Stu-Co prep. You only appear at a specific venue on campus. You are never spotted anywhere. By your senior year, you are probably taking all 5 of your classes in the same building under the same department. Criterion D - Lifestyle

C — Campusite
You live entirely within Exeter borders. Dorm. Dining hall. Class. You are only seen in these three locations. Elm serves your favorite food on Earth. And you are a great fan of your desk and your bed. You consider Portsmouth a major expedition. You have not been to Walgreens nor Hannaford. Not even Las Ollas. That's too long of a journey for you.

E — Escapee
You take the Amtrak every weekend like you're fleeing the country. You are sick of the red brick buildings on campus. The similar faces in your dorm and in Grill. And you just want something new. You know all the restaurants in Chinatown by heart and can name every store on Newbury Street. Even on a busy Monday morning, you still sneak into town for dinner between your Varsity sport practice and your orchestra rehearsal.

What type do you think you are? Comment down below. The webpage version of the complete questionnaire to find your Exonian personality type will be coming soon. Follow along as we become trendy on campus, especially among the incoming class of 2030s.



evaluate their performance.

Criterion B - Homework

S — Skimmer
You never click on the assignment description on Canvas. You only read three pages of your 30-page U.S. history reading, but you always accidentally choose the sections that are the most important, that your teacher picks out for the class to have a close read. You only complete one of your math problems every night. Without even looking at the other problems, you know what they are about and can easily identify the mistakes of the work of your class-

analysis of the text is totally wrong.

Criterion C - Extracurricular

M — Multitasker
"Do you want to have dinner together on Saturday?"
"Sorry, I have two clubs going on 5-6, three 6-7, and I have to run interviews for turnovers after 7, so I can't." That's you. A member of 32 clubs on campus and a cohead, past cohead, or future cohead of more than 90% of them. Somehow you are still adding more on Blackbaud every once in a while, and signing up for more auditions.

D — Devotee
You have one activ-

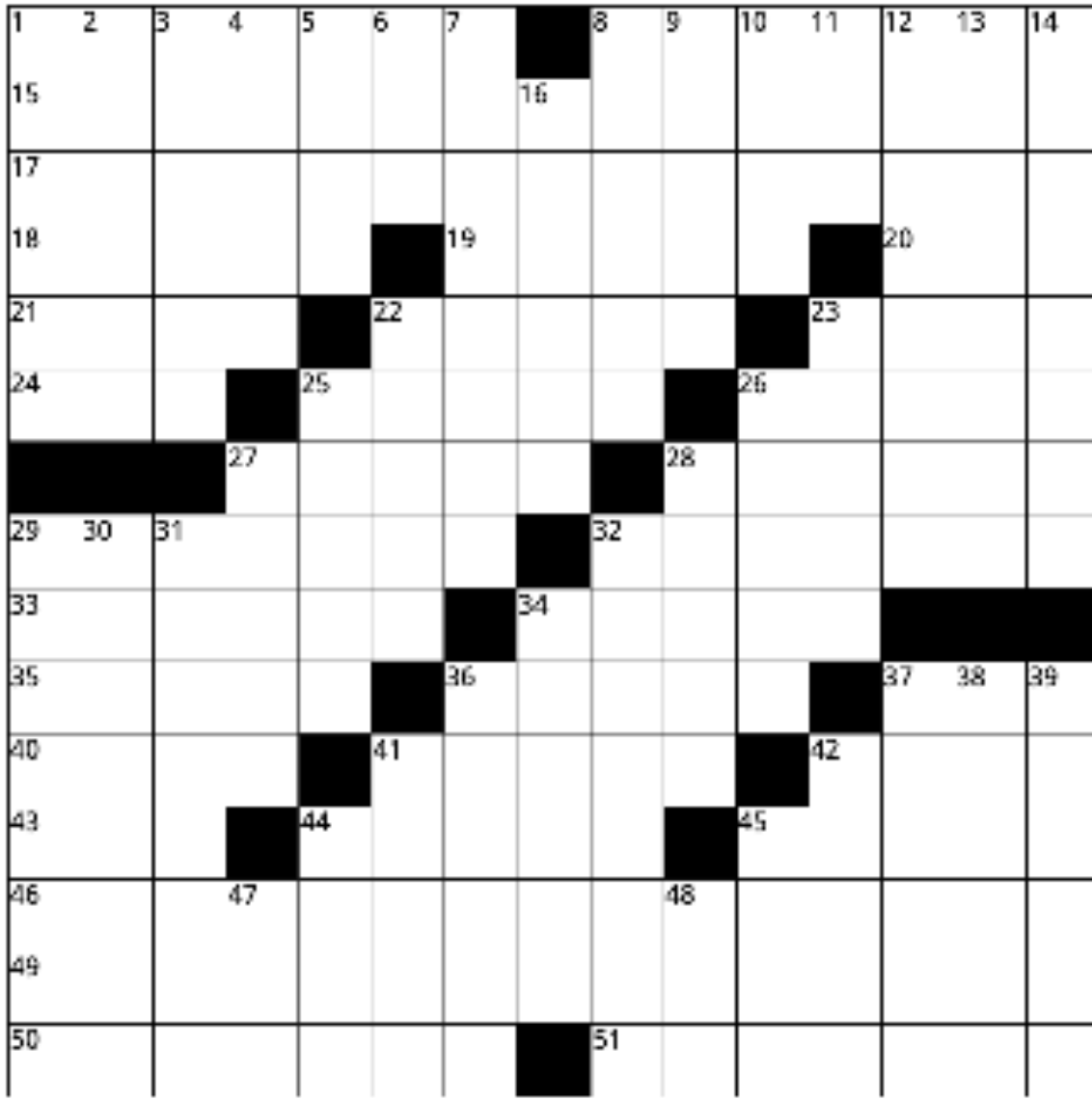


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The Crossword Corner

By CAROL LEE '28



ACROSS

- 1-The whole package, so to speak
- 8-Confrontational remark following a hot take
- 15-Reeeeeeeally long celebratory cry
- 17-Media opiners, derogatorily
- 18-Chipped in
- 19-For real
- 20-Chiang ___-shek
- 21-Casual tops
- 22-Euripides tragedy
- 23-Tall tale

- 24-Announcer Hall
- 25-Golden Horde member
- 26-Tropical lizard
- 27-Tennis champion Ash
- 28-Trial lawyer, say
- 29-"Les Misérables" girl
- 32-Knickknack holder
- 33-Liqueur flavorers
- 34-St. ___ (Caribbean island, for short)
- 35-Western lilies
- 36-MS. enclosures

- 37-Juilliard deg.
- 40-Sweeties
- 41-___ A: Italian soccer league
- 42-"South Pacific" girl
- 43-Italian diminutive suffix
- 44-Rice wine used in tare sauce
- 45-Three trios
- 46-Viking tales, e.g.
- 49-Therapy appointment, say
- 50-Like performances by the Walendas
- 51-Under

DOWN

- 1-Paternal relative
- 2-Advanced
- 3-Divided into groups for auction
- 4-Lugs
- 5-Worked the soil
- 6-"___ b?": "Which is it?"
- 7-Grooming routine
- 8-Insecticide dispenser
- 9-Ancient Aegean region
- 10-Billy or nanny
- 11-Fireplace shelf
- 12-To look at someone else's behavior

- and use them as a guide
- 13-Legendary public enemy of the '30s
- 14-"Hamlet" setting
- 16-Sometime
- 22-Trading places
- 23-They perform safe jobs
- 25-"Soap" family
- 26-Casual kudos
- 27-"Te amo!"
- 28-"___ Grows in Brooklyn"
- 29-Take advantage of
- 30-Private meeting
- 31-French actress

- Simone
- 32-Facility
- 34-Mineral used as a weighting agent
- 36-European finches
- 37-Manhattan buyer
- 38-Denmark's ___ Islands
- 39-Go to
- 41-Farm towers
- 42-"___ luck!"
- 44-Word on a biblical wall
- 45-OTC watchdog
- 47-Fa follower
- 48-Riddle-me-___

The Exonian

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

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