

TRIDENT

ALL THE WORLD'S A STAGE

MARCH 2021 STAFF

EMMA JOYCE, *co-editor in chief*

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NIKA AYDIN, *online editor*

MISS KARISSA JONES, *advisor*

Journalists

ANGELINA JIA

KAT KELLER

HUNTER LEJANO

NAZLI NAZEMIAN

KAYDENCE OSGOOD

ANABELLE TAYLOR

BRITTA WOLKER

COVER ART BY KAT KELLER

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BECAUSE OF YOU, WE WILL ALWAYS
USE OUR WORDS.



EDITORS' NOTE

Shakespeare once wrote that “all the world’s a stage, and the men and women merely players; they have their exits and their entrances, and one man in his time plays many parts, his acts being seven ages.” He gave these lines to “the Melancholy Jacques,” a nobleman living in the Forest of Arden in the play *As You Like It*. These lines make a reference to the plot of *As You Like It*, where many characters assume different identities, but they also touch on a larger theme of life. In our lives, we assume different roles on different stages, and for different audiences. We might be one person with our family and friends, and a completely different one when we want to impress at a job interview.

The world, too, has many different stages and different people occupy them. There is the literal stage, where stories and art are brought to life by actors, musicians, writers, and artists. There is a global stage, where international powers scrutinize others with wary friendliness or outright hostility. There is the political stage, where politicians make promises, and sometimes use their power for persuasion. There is the academic stage, the athletic stage, the personal stage. All these environments make up who we are.

In this issue of *Trident*, we chose to feature a group of talented actors from the drama program. In the hopes of bringing you a bit of information from every stage, we also spotlight students in all different areas: Lexie Howell, Eric Lee, Sakura Meindl, Kaia Milkulka, AJ Plumb, and Maddy Wink, to name a few. We discuss how things like social media, money, and freedom of speech influence who we are and how we act. We hope to showcase just how diverse the world is, and how humans, including you, too, are changed by the events and people they encounter. As always, we hope you enjoy this issue.

Your editors,

Emma & Claire



A NOTE FROM THE PRINCIPAL, Mr. Hill

Greetings Sea Kings!
I am excited to address you as we enter our final months of the school year. Like many of you, I started the year optimistic and hopeful that we would be able to see a return to normalcy. I was also disappointed when COVID-19 cases began rising and life began shutting down again. But this school has shown me that we are tough and able to push past obstacles. From our students, to our parents, to our wonderful teachers, aides, office staff, custodians, food service workers, and campus security, I have witnessed a community come together to support and help each other in these challenges. We are now seeing life breathed back into our school, reigniting those embers of optimism and hope that I had at the beginning of the year.

Things are changing quickly, and they are moving in the right direction. All of us want to return to normal, and do so when it is safe. We have worked together to navigate very challenging situations this year. I know that not everyone was excited about all of the decisions we made, but we were able to find common ground and adjust our expectations to make it work. This year we have prioritized student physical health and safety. While we started with some optimism about how things would go this year, the back-and-forth of increased COVID-19 numbers, decreased hospitalization capacity and changing government regulations about contact tracing and quarantining threw all of us into a dizzying swirl of reactive maneuvers that resembled the end of last year. That's not how I like to operate, and I know that parents and students struggle with it too.

Once again, we can't make any promises, but there's hope.

With case counts decreasing, our state and county health departments are feeling more comfortable with increased on-campus participation. Our school district is very much in support of this, and we are developing plans for in-person activities so that our students are able to get back to some of the parts of school that have been missing including music concerts, drama productions, and athletic contests. Last week, we held our first tennis matches and our first cross country meet. Our baseball team was able to play a few summer league games on campus and this week we welcomed back boys and girls soccer and water polo. Students are back in person competing, and that is a huge step forward! We're also currently allowing students' parents or guardians who need to be present at games for supervision purposes to do so. This will be limited to no more than two people per student, and they will have to be screened, wear a mask, and remain socially distant from other households on campus. It is better than what we have been allowed to do recently, and that is something to celebrate.

I am hopeful that if trends continue, we will be able to have an in-person commencement ceremony for our graduating seniors. Again, some of these aspects are still up in the air, but we will do everything we can to make sure students are there in person to graduate. If the pattern holds and our plans to allow parents to attend athletic contests work out, it is my hope that we would be able to allow limited attendance of families, at the very least parents, at graduation as well. Again, it's too early to make promises, but the energy and personal motivation I have felt over the last week and a half has done so much to lift my spirits. Hope in things like this might be what we need to keep us moving forward and pick up our pace as we sprint to the end of the year.

students. School is not the same without you here. We know there are very valid reasons for students to stay at home. We intentionally designed a flexible instructional model that would support students who needed to stay at home. We also wanted to make sure that learning moved forward daily for the in person students who were at home on their assigned cohort days. Unfortunately, this has backfired somewhat as now we believe we have many students who are choosing from day to day to stay home instead of come to school in person because it is so easy to do so, and teachers have been so accommodating. We have chosen not to be punitive at this time, but we need you to come to school if you're assigned to be at school. The only reason a student should ever stay home is if they are permanently placed in what we call cohort D or E, if they have been directed to do so by school staff because they are quarantining, if they are on their assigned cohort day to be at home, or if they are sick or have other symptoms or otherwise would qualify for an excused absence. All other students, and that should be about 75% of the school, should be coming to school on their assigned cohort day.

For many of our students, this is the last opportunity you will have to make memories here at CdM. We want those memories to be meaningful for those who can be here in person. Let's take advantage of the systems we have built and procedures we have put in place to be back as fully as we can and send a message to the county and state leaders that we're ready to return to learning in person as soon as it is safe to do so!

The last area I wish to address is cheating. One of our missions here at CdM is to help students have integrity. We know that there have been many situations where students have reportedly intentionally copied the work of another student and submitted it as their own. There is no circumstance that should ever justify this. Our job is to prepare students for their futures, and we rely on accurate data to help us make meaningful adjustments to our instruction and the support we offer our students to accomplish that preparation. It is really sad to hear so many teachers spending time to think about ways to outsmart students in finding cheat proof methods of assessment when they could be using that time to enhance instruction. As an administration, we support teachers not accepting work submitted by students that is not their own. This may result in failing an assignment or even a course. It is that important to us that the grades that are reflected on your transcript are an accurate representation of what students know and

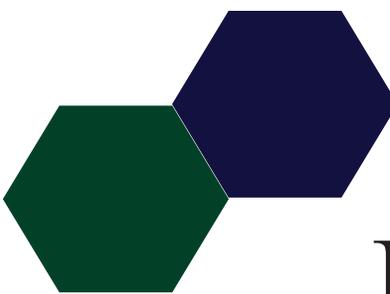
what they have done while they've been enrolled in a course. To students, we ask you to do your best and to give us accurate information about how you are progressing in your courses by submitting your own work and not someone else's. To parents, we ask you to partner with us and help reinforce sound educational practices and to know that the teachers who might reach out to you to let you know that a student did something wrong have your student's best interest in mind. Please work with them, and not against them, in helping students learn important academic and life lessons.

I know that was a lot of information, but I very much appreciate your willingness to listen, to support our work, and ultimately to help us provide the best education possible for our students. We love working with them and are so grateful we are trusted to do so. We look forward to seeing them out in the classroom, on the field, and in the audience of our upcoming activities.

Sincerely,
Mr. Hill

TRIDENT SPONSOR INDEX

IVY HOLLANDER AND FAMILY
THE GADOL FAMILY
MARTINA BERGER AND FAMILY
THE NASSER FAMILY
ELIZABETH MURPHY BUNTING AND FAMILY
SAM JOHNSON AND FAMILY
JESSICA SUSOLIK AND FAMILY
ALANNA COLE AND FAMILY
KAREN KAMEL AND FAMILY
PIERCE HEMPHILL AND FAMILY
LEXIE AND KATHARINE POPPER AND FAMILY
MADISON CANFIELD AND FAMILY
LARAH TELESCO AND FAMILY
COLLIN ROSE AND FAMILY



Teachers' Book Recommendations

TARA AFSHAR

This past year, more than ever before, people have spent time indoors allowing abundant time to dive into guilty binge reading sessions. Every year, goals are intently set by many to read more books, and take a pause from the digital world. Books play such an integral part in shaping and opening our minds to the way we view the world. Some books inspire us and teach us life lessons. No matter the genre, books open our minds to new ideas and deepen our understanding of bigger issues. We have asked some of our faculty members to share with us their all time favorite and most memorable books to share with everyone at CdM.

Reyes

Mr Reyes made sure to emphasize that we wasn't much of a reader, but his "two favorite books from the AP English classes in high school were East of Eden and A Prayer for Owen Meany. I'd recommend those for people who like longer novels." East of Eden is a Steinbeck masterpiece and classic epic tale of family and humanity. The novel follows the lives of multiple generations of families and how one tragic event can influence the lives of many, even future generations. The other book recommendation from Mr. Reyes was A Prayer for Owen Meany: a religious fiction classic by John Irving. This remarkable novel is about a dwarfish boy named Owen who accidentally kills his best friend's mom with a baseball, and considers himself an instrument of God. He believes imperfect people (like himself) are used by God to teach others life lessons. A fascinating book that will leave an imprint on the heart.

Topping

When asked for her favorite books and book recommendations, Ms. Topping said she has "SO many recommendations -- this is a really tough question to answer without more specifics". One of Ms. Toppings recommendations is a book called The Gift of Fear by Gavin de Becker. An interesting read about how to trust and act on one's instincts and listen to one's sixth sense. De Becker owns a leading security firm protecting Hollywood and Silicon Valley elite and describes many situations where relying on one's sixth sense would be beneficial. Ms Topping's second recommendation is the book Lexicon by Max Barry. The book is an eerie science fiction thriller about the manipulation of language in direct control of a human mind. It is a Literary work that offers intriguing ideas about the power of language and persuasion and how it controls human minds.

Yennie

Mrs. Yennie provided three books that were really memorable and recent reads. The first being The Handmaid's Tale by Margaret Atwood. A dystopian novel taking place in Gilead, a totalitarian society ruled by a fundamentalist regime that treats women as property of state. Gilead is faced with plummeting birth rate and eventually devastating environmental disasters.

Mrs Yennie's second book of choice was Long Way Down by Jason Reynolds. This free verse, fast and furious novel is about a fifteen year old boy named Will who has sixty seconds from the moment he gets on an elevator to decide whether or not he is going to murder the person that killed his brother. At each stop on the way down, a character gets on the elevator who is connected to Will's brother, and helps piece the story together for Will. The last of her book recommendations was A Land of Permanent Goodbyes. An award-winning author, journalist and a refugee herself, Atia Abawi writes a novel narrated by Destiny, a story about refugees escaping from war-torn Syria. This book depicts heart wrenching tragedy, war, and families facing danger at every turn.

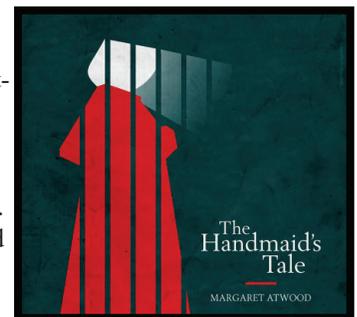
Mayberry

"First, everyone should read the Constitution. It is a short read, but valuable. You hear many people reference the document and it is clear many have not read it. Other government reads I suggest The Nine: Inside the Secret World of the Supreme Court". Mayberry also suggests the book Founding Fathers: the Essential guide to the Men Who Made America by Joe Ellis. A great book to learn more about the history of the United States and those who built it. Finally Ms. Mayberry suggested the book Term of Rivals by Doris Goodwin which is a wellwritten narrative of how Abraham Lincoln and his team freed America from the curse of slavery.

Tara Afshar '22 would get in trouble for reading too much as a kid and have her books taken away at the dinner table.



East of Eden (Photo via: Flickr.com)



The Handmaid's Tale (Photo via: Flickr.com)



Mathematician Eric Lee

CDM STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

NIKA AYDIN

Junior Eric Lee is an extremely talented mathematician and an excellent student. Lee is a skilled mathematician and has competed in many prominent math competitions.

In addition to being a math wiz, Lee is also an outstanding citizen. Lee tutors kids in middle school. Most of the courses he teaches are not focused on Common Core math, but more on competition study. Competition problems thrive off of being fringe cases, “but to competitors, we can group these fringe cases together in ways that simplify the problem down to one that we’ve done in the past,” he explains. His goal when tutoring kids is to teach them these principles to make them second nature.

Not only is Lee interested in math, but he is also interested in science and the space world. He is an avid rubik’s cube solver, loves to tinker with artificial intelligence, and has been working on a computational biology research project on T-cells at UCI.

Nika Aydin: Which math competitions have you done? What have you placed?

Eric Lee: Some of the more prominent math competitions that I’ve participated in are MathCounts, Math Kangaroo, AMC12, AIME. MathCounts is a competition for middle school students, the most exciting round of which is the countdown round. In this test, you’re heads up against another top-16 competitor, buzzer in hand, trying to solve the question before the other competitor. Unfortunately, I dropped out at 14th place in the state division, but it was one of the more entertaining competitions. Math Kangaroo is a less known competition, but it’s one I’m fairly proud of as I ranked first nationally for 4 years,

and was invited to an event in Poland for free as a result! The AMC12 (American Math Competition, 12 grade and below) and AIME (American Invitational Math Examination) are probably one of the most well-known math competitions around: The top 5% of students who take the AMC12 qualify for the AIME. My highest scores in both competitions are a 132/150 for the AMC12 and a 12/15 for the AIME. There is yet another round that comes after the AIME known as the USAMO. Only around 300 people are qualified per year, and unfortunately, I missed the mark for the USAMO by 5 points, which is around one question.

Are there any facts or concepts you find especially interesting about math, science, physics, and the space world? If yes, what are they? Do you have a favorite type of math or math that you are most interested in?

My favorite part of mathematics is number theory. I love how many of its questions are extremely simple in nature but are proved in extremely creative methods, and how each problem can be used to prove another. I believe I first gained interest in the subject through the “abc conjecture”.

The reason this conjecture was so widely important was that this conjecture could theoretically be used to directly prove Roth’s theorem, the Mordell Conjecture, and Fermat’s Last Theorem. The problem itself is simple enough for a student like me to understand, but hard enough in that mathematicians could not prove it for years. The abc conjecture, together with many other conjectures, has a domino effect, with one theorem proving the other, each mathematician being able to support another, improving as a whole. Number

theory allows students of any caliber to gain an interest in mathematics.

Although I think I idealize pure maths, such as number theory, this isn’t to say that applied maths is something we should flat out ignore. In fact, I would say that applied maths is better when it comes to uses in the real world in the fields of science, mathematics, physics, biology, and much more.

What subjects do you tutor kids in? How old are they?

I usually tutor children in middle school. Most of the courses I teach are not focused on common core math, but more on competition study. A lot of the problems posed in math competitions are not necessarily hard, just very different from what we learn in school. Concepts like Viete’s formulas, Pigeonhole Principle, or Diophantine equations just aren’t explored in school because they’re unnecessary to solve most problems. Tutoring these kids is about teaching them these principles and making them second nature.

I’ve heard you’re an avid Rubik’s cube competitor, how fast can you do one? Have you ever done any Rubik’s cube competitions?

The first time I picked up a Rubik’s Cube was when I was 10, and ever since then, I’ve been obsessed. Quarantine has only fueled this obsession, with my average solving times being reduced to less than 12 seconds. The first competition that I attended was the SoCal Supercomp 2015, where I landed myself second to last. Nevertheless, I still had an immense amount of fun meeting people with similar interests. Over time I’ve collected





signatures from famous cubers, tried out hundreds of twisty puzzles, and even ventured to make and modify my own puzzles with Epoxy. The process of learning new algorithms and self-improvement is exhilarating and is a pastime that can be perpetually improved. Different events give a whole different perspective on how I solve puzzles, such as solving them blindfolded or by attempting to calculate the shortest possible solution in a given time limit. The possibility and inevitability of improvement to reach a new milestone motivate me to practice every day, giving an easy form of entertainment. Over time I've competed in local competitions, but Rubik's cube competitions are traditionally a game against yourself, not other competitors. The environment is extremely low stress and feels more like a get-together.

What's happening in the math, science, and space world?

The Internet has been so bogged down by recent political events, it's hard to find articles that talk about developments in anything else. That being said, although this may be old news, I found the first image of the black hole to be extremely inspiring. Black holes have been theorized, but not proven to exist. With this one blurry photo, we can confirm so much of what has already been done in mathematics for hundreds of years, like Einstein's theory of relativity.

Do you have any advice for others who struggle with math or love it?

Honestly? Common core math kind of sucks. There's no reason to teach students how to solve extremely specific problems in 20 different standardized ways, other than that it makes testing benchmarks easier for the school and state. Common core math is designed to be easier for the grader and teacher, not the student. Students who dislike mathematics are expected to drill repetitions of the same problems, only to be given a singular number by the end of the year that defines

their success. The effort that you put in may not even correlate with your overall grade, making it more frustrating. Most people I see that are "bad" at math aren't actually bad at critical thinking, they're bad at understanding the overall concept. In subjects like calculus, many people depend on memorizing the formulas and relying on specific keywords and problem types to tip them off. This results in endless memorizing. When they get to the test, if they see a question with a different format, they fail. It's so much more important to grasp the concept so that it can be applied in other situations. For example, I've never memorized the equation for the Washer Method in calculus, but knowing how the formula is derived allows me to derive the equation regardless of the shape or offset.

Have you found anything super inspiring or cool recently?

Since August 6, 2020, I've been working with professor Jun Allard of UCI on a computational biology research project. T-cells, a subset of white blood cells in the immune system, have been observed to utilize particular types of molecules to communicate with each other to plan and execute an immune response. Among these molecules that are utilized by T-cells are "cytokines", which (in this case) are typically like poison made for cells. For reasons unknown, sometimes the fluid carrying these cytokines can leak out of the small space between T-cells and target cells, often leading to dangerously feverish conditions. Researchers in this field believe that the answer to why cytokine storms occur in this manner must be in the way these T-cells secrete cytotoxic fluid at the cell-to-cell interface, and sophisticated microscopic analysis of cytokines has shown a kind of bubble that is believed to be some kind of vehicle for transmission of cytokines or emission of cytotoxic fluids. The reason for its existence and its purpose is currently not well understood. I investigated these bubbles (named secretory clefts) on CD8+ T-cells by using computational tools to show whether or not its existence can be explained by

physical phenomena - specifically the fluid dynamics of the system. Technical tools such as IBAMR, VisIt, Docker, and Python were utilized.

What other hobbies or interests do you have?

In 2015, I was introduced to artificial intelligence through various Youtube videos. I dove into the world of Keras and Tensorflow without even having a basic understanding of graph theory or any of the essentials. However, it resulted in one of my favorite projects to date: a Codenames AI, a game where a designated person attempts to describe a group of words using one word as accurately as possible. Using NLTK and word2vec, I created a bot that chose the most accurate and similar words. Over time, I've gotten more and more invested in machine learning, and I hope to study it in college more in-depth. Quarantine has been a breeding grounds for ideas that come and go, and I've been making programs that do incredibly stupid but entertaining things: bots that detect the sentiment of Tweet, a classifier that automatically grades selfies, and a bot that learned (albeit terrible) English from my essays.

This interview has been edited and condensed for clarity



Photo courtesy of Eric Lee

Nika Aydin '23 takes a little over 3 weeks to solve a Rubik's cube.



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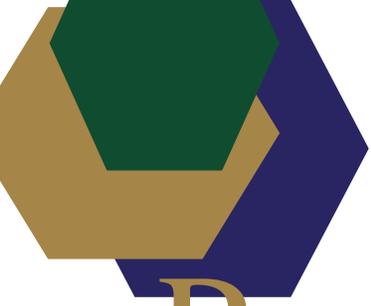
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Poet Sakura Meindl

CDM STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

NIKA AYDIN

Senior Sakura Meindl is a phenomenal poet and has written a poem called “a year in review.” She says this past year is what inspired her to write this poem. Meindl says that almost anything could inspire her to make a poem, but most of the time she writes using the emotions that she feels from the topic she is writing about. When asked what encourages her to write, Meindl says, “I write based off really strong emotions in order to be able to fully express what I’m feeling. So I guess emotions encourage me.” Meindl also finds the idea of love pretty inspiring, especially since she has trouble understanding it sometimes and can share that in her poetry. She says poems can take from 5 minutes to an hour depending on what she is writing. Meindl found her passion for poetry when she first learned how to write poetry from her elementary school teachers.

When asked whether she thinks poems should be straightforward or have a hidden meaning, she says, “Honestly, I think poetry should be written with hidden meaning or not, depending on the writer and how they want to portray what they are writing about.” Meindl finds that writing comes naturally as long as there is not a specific goal she is reaching for and if she does not have writer’s block. She finds writing to usually be a form of relaxation, especially when she is writing about why she is not feeling so great about

something. “It can be kinda therapeutic,” she says. Meindl’s favorite poet is Edgar Allen Poe because she loves the dark tones in his writing. She also enjoys reading her friends’ poetry.

Some of the things Meindl likes to do in her free time is read. She does not read many poetry books, but she listens to slam poetry a lot. Slam poetry is a competition arts event where poets perform spoken word poetry in front of a live audience and panel of judges. The book genres she enjoys reading are fantasy and sci-fi because she gets to see the imagination of the author. Meindl says, “I often read a lot of books, so I can’t really say favorites as much, other than Rick Riordan’s different books on mythology and adventures.” Some of her other hobbies include hanging out with friends online and practicing Taekwondo, despite not being in classes currently. Lastly, when Meindl was asked what advice she has for others who are struggling to write poetry she says, “I’m not the best with advice, but I’ll try: If you love to write poetry, always try to incorporate it into your everyday life even if you never publish any of it. And to those who have trouble writing it, don’t force it, but still try to see what you can do to find some sort of inspiration for it.” Meindl is an inspiration to many, shown in the poetry she has written.

Meindl in her writingspace:

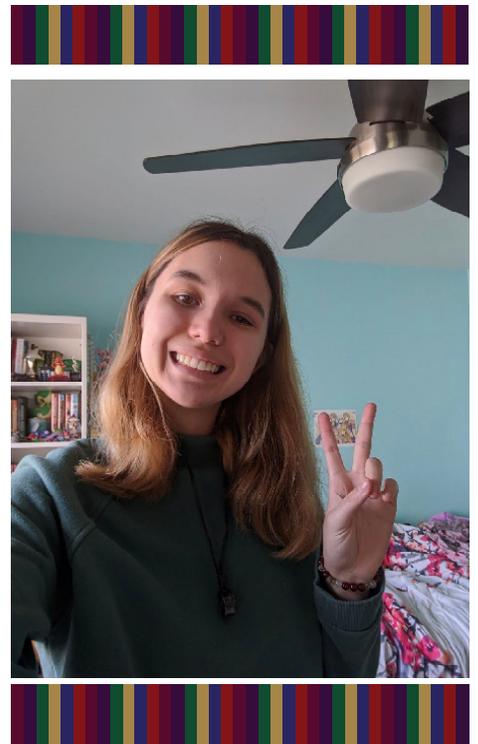


Photo courtesy of Sakura Meindl.

Poem by Nika Aydin ‘23
*“Nika’s rhyming,
 is very frightening,
 and not at all enlightening.”*



“Nightrunners”

A favorite of Meindl's

They run across the sides of the vineyards and crops around,

They continue on without making a sound.

Yet only at unset and rise can you see them,

For they run between the worlds of living and dead.

Only from a distance can you see them appear,

Even though this happens every day each year.

From flourishing crops to dead trees,

They hop around and do as they please.

And when night comes they might disappear from you my friend,

But just know that their journey will never truly end.

“A year in Review”

No snow, only tears
dressed up as rain.

Pieces of their souls buried
underground

People cry for a better year;
one without pain.

With silence as the only sound.

Distance separates us from each other

Protests create a rift of right and left

Among deaths of color and broken mothers

Amidst election claims of fraud and theft

Broken homes and families

2020 was not a kind year,

With money causing other
casualties.

Alas, the future is clear.

A vaccine with hope to heal

With a chance at life
feeling real

The Boy Who Wouldn't Grow Up

TALKING TO THE CAST OF DRAMA'S NEW SPRING PLAY

ANGELINA JIA AND CLAIRE QIU

“Peter and the Starcatcher is about evolving and growing from the circumstances you've endured,” says junior Savannah Harper. Harper, who plays Molly Aster, is “the Starcatcher in *Peter and the Starcatcher*,” and will star opposite Sean Carroll at the show's premiere in spring if all goes well in regards to the pandemic.

The drama department, like everyone else, has adapted to the constantly changing pandemic circumstances. Acting through a screen is a challenge, but senior Seth Trachtman explains that they are “fortunate to be able to rehearse this show socially distanced and in-person rather than through Zoom.” All four express their gratitude for their director and drama teacher, Ms. Ybarra, who consistently provides support and is doing her best to give the actors as “normal” a show experience as possible. But it's clear that having a dedicated cast also helps, and the cast of Peter demonstrates a strong love for acting. “I love every facet of it,” says Harper, while Trachtman explains that “acting allows [him] to play different characters that are different than [himself]” and junior Jeremy Tewari says, simply, “I like making people laugh.” Sophomore Ella Avital has “literally... no idea!” when it comes to why she loves acting. “It's weird but I watch our class during rehearsals, and I think, oh my god we look insane, but for some reason I can't explain, I keep coming back for more! Maybe it's the friends and the outlet to be creative.”

As Trachtman describes it, “*Peter and the Starcatcher* is a play based on the origins of the characters from Peter Pan.” It offers a backstory for beloved



From left to right, Lucas Phillips stands with his costars Alaina Gauss, Sean Carroll, Savannah Harper, Sabina Martin, and Jackson Jaha-Anderson, while acting out a scene together. Photos courtesy of Savannah Harper('22) and Sabina Martin('23)

characters like Peter Pan, Mrs. Darling, Tinker Bell, and Hook, and serves as a prequel to Peter Pan. The story begins with a bitter and grumpy orphan, called Boy, and two friends as they are shipped off to an island with an evil king on a boat called The Neverland. Within the captain's cabin lies a mysterious trunk containing something called Starstuff, which the boys don't know anything about. Out at sea, they meet a witty girl named Molly, who is a starcatcher-in-training. Molly knows they must protect the starstuff at all costs, especially from the evil Black Stache and his pirate crew. Along the way, Molly helps young Peter escape a lonely world, and their bond becomes part of the adventure. Through it all, the show tells a story of love, duty, and the depths of greed. Harper concludes, “It is a story about true friendship and overcoming any obstacle or boundary”.

The show also contains a diverse lineup of characters. There is, of course, Peter and Molly Aster, and Harper professes to “love every aspect of [her], the character development and progression throughout the story exemplifies growth and maturity while staying true to the age of a young child.” The antagonist, Black Stache, is played by Trachtman, who explains that he “is an over the top comedic antagonist who has a rough past... very fun to play and mess around with because he has a lot of comedic moments and also, as stated in the name, sports a very nice handlebar mustache.” Stache's loyal sidekick, Smee, is played by Tewari, who likes “playing him because he's so energetic” and there are many chances for “improv with Seth.” Avital plays Gremppkin, the owner of the orphanage who is “really wack. She's got a lot of anger issues and definitely should not be working with kids, but [it is] a role with a lot of authority and I even crack a

bullwhip every once in a while so it's all pretty cool!"

The show's original premiere date was at the end of January, but the drama department postponed it due to a sudden, temporary shift to distance learning after winter break. Still, the cast maintains high hopes and looks forward to the show. "I hope we can create something we're proud of! At the end of the day, it doesn't matter what the audience thinks if we as a cast aren't giving it our all," says Avital, while Harper sees it as "an opportunity to perform it live for an entertainment starved audience, shed light on the arts and be able to perform what we worked so hard on." From a viewer's perspective, watching the actors do what they love is always inspiring in itself. The audience gets to see how the pieces all come together and can only imagine the hard work that went into the show.

Like all great artists, the actors draw inspiration from unique sources. Harper says her person is Ariana Grande, who "has built up essentially an empire

for herself and has pursued acting and singing in many different ways, shapes, and forms," while Tewari states his is "30th president Calvin Coolidge, also my girlfriend Ashleigh, but mainly Coolidge." These students find inspiration in films and shows as well. Avital mentions Malcolm & Marie for the "really incredible writing about a couple's relationship" and Trachtman suggests watching the "under-rated movie" *Starsky and Hutch* for its humor. He's also motivated "to be a better artist" by Mel Brooks and Eric Andres for their comedic abilities.

The age-old question "would you pursue acting as a career?" is something that all four have thought about. Harper hopes to pursue it, saying that it is "a craft I take very seriously... it's something that's always brought me joy and comfort." Tewari, on the other hand, has more sobering things to point out: "the market is unstable," he says pragmatically, "but I'll probably keep acting at least through college." Luckily for them, they all seem to have other interests to fall back on. Harper's love for the arts

encompasses singing, but outside of that she enjoys spending time with friends and family. Avital's other activities include "ASB, Y&G, and scrapping with Seth Trachtman," and Tewari states he enjoys "video games, playing with dogs, and making fun of 28th President Woodrow Wilson." With a shameless plug-in, Trachtman says outside of theater he enjoys "playing guitar, making random TikTok videos (@superstarseth1)" and has been learning to solve Rubik's Cubes and do card magic tricks.

Through the chaos of the school year and unfortunate delays, CdM's drama department has managed to pull through and put together a show that is sure to blow audiences away. *Peter and the Starcatcher* contains messages about love and childhood during trying times, which resonate with the current situation of the CdM community. In hard times, simple joy is enough. As Trachtman puts it, "With this show, I hope to entertain and just help people escape from their worries."



Lucas Philips and Jackson Jaha-Anderson have fun while taking photos for the play. Photos courtesy of Savannah Harper('22) and Sabina Martin('23)



Savannah Harper, who plays Molly Aster, and Ella Avital, who plays Gremppkin, pose together in costume and in character. Photos courtesy of Savannah Harper('22) and Sabina Martin('23)



Sanam Eslami stands over Sean Carroll as he pretends to be fatally wounded. Photos courtesy of Savannah Harper('22) and Sabina Martin('23)

Coronavirus Timeline

ONE YEAR SPAN

NIKAAYDIN

March

March 13th, 2020, is a day some people will remember for a long time. The superstitions of Friday the 13th came true: schools suddenly closed down and there was a sense of uncertainty. Under the new circumstances, it was hard to figure out what the next step was and what everyone was going to do. March 19 was when the first stay at home orders went in place for California. Sophomore Ava Manly said, “It felt surreal. The first two weeks after March 13th were weird. I hadn’t processed the fact that something big was happening, it just felt like a school break. I was scared because I didn’t know what was going to happen and I wasn’t sure how they were going to stop Covid from spreading.”

April

The newness of quarantine started to become a little bit exciting and people started doing crafts and baking to fill the extra time spent at home. For example, playing board games, tie dying clothes, and cooking new recipes: such as the tik tok trend, cloud bread, and other new recipes that haven’t been baked before. The school load was not too much since teachers were still trying to figure out how they should be teaching students and how to teach them. “Everything was kind of fun in the beginning because it was

a thrill to be able to just relax, bake new recipes, and watch TV! There was about 1 hour of homework maximum per day, so it was really nice,” said Corona del Mar student Ava Manly.

May

The novelty of quarantine and new activities started to wear off from April into May, but Covid cases were still rising partially due to people not staying home. In just the month of May, there were about 694,000 new Covid cases confirmed in the United States and about 39,913 deaths. In May, the teachers started to figure out how to teach students and what material students need to cover, since they missed some weeks of school. Still, school was not too much work but the unfamiliarity of online school was hard for some people to adapt to.

June

The month of Graduation. Seniors across the world did not have a traditional graduation, where family and friends would come to celebrate their graduating Seniors and watch them walk across the stage. Instead, CdM put on a virtual graduation to celebrate their seniors. School was ending, which meant summer was beginning and for most people this summer did not bring the usual excitement. However, people were finding new ways to have fun. Stay at home orders were still in place, but the urge to go out after 3 months of

staying inside exceeded those orders for many.

July

By July 12th, there were a total of approximately 3,163,581 Coronavirus cases confirmed in the United States and a whopping 133,486 deaths. Many families were keeping busy by going on roadtrips in California, Arizona, Nevada, Colorado, Utah, and more states. CdM student Samantha Kauffman said, “My family and I have been very precautionary during these unprecedented times and we decided to take a roadtrip to Arizona [while] making sure to be mindful of social distancing, while still having fun. During our trip my family and I went on a lot of adventures and made a lot of memories that will last a lifetime.” People were filling their time by going on walks, hiking, going to the beach, and road tripping to national parks.

August

The last couple weeks of summer were coming to a rapid close and some families squeezed in last minute trips to escape. Students were starting to prepare for the new school year to begin. This year school started in August for the first time and it was all online. Some students still faced the challenges of online school, which was a hard adaptation. Many people did not agree with the decision to continue online and a couple protests occurred over the months.

September

Coronavirus cases were rising with about 40,000 new cases per day. Now, people started settling into school and the question of “are we going back to school or staying online forever?” arose. The school district held many meetings over the months and decided that students will be able to return to school starting mid October.

October

Halloween month. Starting October, Coronavirus cases started to rise all the way up until its peak number of cases, in January. Students started to go back to school in the middle of October and it took a couple weeks for everyone to adjust to the new learning ways. Because of the coronavirus, experts tried to dissuade people from going out, but people did whatever they wanted to. Some people stayed inside and watched a scary movie, while others had small gatherings.

November

Election month. This was a hectic month with cases continuing to rise rapidly, election days, school days off, and Thanksgiving week. Throughout the month there were many off days so it threw off the school schedule a little bit. Word of the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines started spreading. New school schedules were rolled out and students had trouble adapting to the constant changes.

December

The final month of the year. This holiday filled month was when the first vaccinations started rolling out

to essential workers and some elderly people. At this time, all the Corona del Mar students were preparing for finals week, in anticipation for the holiday break. This holiday, many families were unable to have big Christmas and New Years celebrations with their family and friends.

January

New year. 2021 finally came, a time of hope for a better year. With the new year came new resolutions and student Ava Manly said “I don’t even have a resolution, I just hope the Covid is over soon.” After new years, school started up again. This was the peak month of coronavirus cases, but once the vaccine started getting more widely spread and winter break was over, coronavirus cases started going down. While school was back in session, more vaccines were getting rolled out and the vaccination sites were starting to reach more people.

February

At the time of this writing, about 65,032,083 doses of the vaccine have been administered in the United States and 13.4% of the United States population has received one dose of the vaccine. 6% of the population has already received both doses. About 216,110,930 people in the world have gotten the coronavirus vaccine. Like almost all holidays this past year, Valentine’s Day was a little bit different. People either went on picnics, stayed inside, or were hanging out with their friends. For Ski Week, many people went to ski in Utah, Colorado, or Montana and others went to tan on the beach in Palm Springs, Hawaii, or the Caribbean.

March

*written before march 13

By the time this article prints the world will have spent a year in pandemic life, the dreaded one year anniversary of the day schools announced to be shut down is upon us. Looking back, people are able to have a deeper appreciation for essential workers, appreciate that scientists worked really fast to get the vaccine ready in under a year, appreciate the little things, recognize all the small businesses that had to shut down, and take a moment to recognize recognize that the world has sadly lost about 2,560,000 million people so far, due to the Coronavirus. Some people have a newfound appreciation for all the small aspects of life that they overlooked before. Such as: spending time with family and friends, going out to restaurants, having big birthday parties, traveling across the world, going to amusement parks, having family reunions, celebrating holidays to the full extent, having a graduation, going to concerts, and the list goes on. These are just some of the things people will be able to do once a majority of the world has gotten vaccinated. People have fought so hard this year by taking many safety precautions and making many sacrifices, and for that they should be commemorated. Everything is slowly starting to become better (and one day someone will look at a mask and remember everything that happened all in just a little over a year.) Congratulations on surviving this crazy year, it is almost over.

During quarantine, the only things Nika Aydin '23 has accomplished is not contracting the coronavirus and learning how to make bread.

Getting to Work

WITH

AJ Plumb

THE NEWLY ELECTED Y&G LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR ON
POLITICS, EDUCATION, AND WHAT'S NEXT

CLAIRE QIU



AJ Plumb is a strong personality. (The A is for Alexander, as in the Great, Hamilton, and other leaders of state; the J is for Janson.) It's fitting, given that he harbors dreams of pursuing the two most charismatic careers in existence: entertainment and politics. "I want to go into acting," he says, "and also I want to state my political beliefs in public and maybe run for office... because I do care a lot about our future, and I'm worried that right now it's not what we think it's going to be. So if I get involved I can do as much as I can to make it better."

Plumb, a junior, was recently elected Lieutenant Governor in Youth and Government, winning an election out of five candidates from five different delegations. His platform, which focuses on a lofty batch of topics, including education reform and climate change, centers around a theme relevant for this day and age: unifying with uniqueness. "Obviously I'm upset with how divided we are," says Plumb. In a moment of self-consciousness, he adds, "it's kind of the cliché answer, but one of my platforms that I want to encourage as Lieutenant Governor is to be unique while also ... recognizing that everyone is here for the same purpose, everyone is here to seek the better future for tomorrow."

Getting to work won't be easy. Plumb will preside over the Senate, a role that crosses the responsibilities of a Vice President and Senate majority leader. "It's a very big responsibility," he says, "the second biggest in the program, so I am very excited to partake on this journey." He elaborates on his goals, explaining that "education reform is something I'm really pushing for... a lot of classes right now aren't very life preparing... like if your car breaks down or if you need to cook a meal on the spot for college." But his platform isn't limited to high school issues. He speaks with passion on climate change, and how "maybe taxing emissions on corporations is the way to go, so that we limit our emission" instead of enlarging "this insurmountable hole that scientists are talking about... right now."

Plumb demonstrates a wholesome interest in politics, and not just because of Y&G. He's thought a lot about the future, and what it means for the youth of today. "We're the next generation," he says, speaking with straightforward pragmatism, "and we were put in this situation that isn't the most ideal, and in order for us to respond to all the adversity that we've been dealing with, it's important that we get a great knowledge while we're young." If the foundation isn't there, he says, "it's going to be hard to gain it when you're in your twenties and your thirties. You need to start early."

Claire Qiu: You talk a lot about education reform. Do you have anything to say about the way schools are run, especially in light of issues exacerbated by the pandemic?

AJ Plumb: Yes. Within our schools, we are presented with a lot of busy work that does not help us retain any of the information we learned the previous day. That is the main goal of homework, but a lot of the time it doesn't serve that purpose. Now with the pandemic, there is a significant amount of less class time so sometimes we have to rely on teaching ourselves. Especially right now, students should state if they are a visual, auditory, or kinesthetic learner so they get the most out of the experience.

Speaking of personal choices, a big part of your platform is unifying with uniqueness. How do you plan to implement this?

For me personally, I feel like a big part of our recent political trouble is due to partisan division. Within my Senate room, I want to be very focused on civil discourse. We can't come up with solutions for our problematic society without every mind working together.

How do you perceive the division that is happening in our country right now?

All of us bring something new to the table, and that is why no matter what political belief, we should implement the best solution after consulting every point of view. It's really hard for me to see how some people are not giving the other side a chance. They think theirs is, lo and behold, the correct viewpoint, but there are so many different viewpoints and beliefs out there - based on religion and based on upbringing and everything like that - so it's really important to acknowledge that.

This deep partisan divide as well as the misinformation crisis all seemed to have surfaced very recently in our country.

Across: 2021 Campaign Profile Photo. On this page, from top: campaigning for Speaker Pro Tempore in 2020, second from right after a convention in 2020. Photos courtesy of AJ Plumb

Do you think it was always there, or was there some major shift?

Misinformation comes with not being informed; it's in the name. Keeping up with the news is important because then when something seems biased or questionable, you will be able to recognize it. Misinformation has become widespread recently in our country because media brands are starting to recognize their audience and are tailoring their content to appeal to those people. Left leaning media is riling up individuals who identify as Democrats and right leaning media is riling up conservatives. It's all very upsetting, because if an opinion is morally against what you believe, then yes, you can disagree, but automatically distrusting a person or a group of people based solely on a label of affiliation is unacceptable. Unfortunately, this is becoming more prevalent. There was already a divide between groups and biased media networks but it has become more severe during the pandemic.

What do you think about the need for youth to get involved?

You need to start early and you need to start developing your opinions without anybody else's influence; you should do your research, get your education so that you can be a future model for everyone - that's my dream; I want to go into entertainment and I want to be a model that people can be inspired by politically. I want to inspire people to make change. But you do have to know your sources - there's a lot of bias out there and it's important to know what you're reading. So not just looking at a website and saying oh my god, this is the best answer, because you'll find another website that makes a just as compelling point, [but] on another platform, and then you won't know what to believe.

And there's also the social media thing.

[Laughs] Social media. People are influenced by social media more than they should be right now, because they see something and they want to believe that, and since other people like this and famous people are promoting it, then they think that's the right opinion. But again, you need to develop your own opinions. That's the most important thing: going



with your morals and not just what everyone else thinks.

What person/event/book/film/saying has been inspiring recently?

Probably "life is like a box of chocolates; you never know what you're gonna get," from Forrest Gump is really fitting right now. This has been the most abnormal year and the only thing we really can do is soldier on.

This interview has been condensed and edited for clarity.

Claire Qiu '22 believes that America needs plenty of improving and applauds AJ for his enthusiasm and immense bravery in taking on the challenge.

To Trend or Not to Trend?

A guide to 2020 trends that are here to stay

Nazli Nazemian

2 020 was the year of change and to say that the start of “the roaring twenties” turned out different than anticipated is an understatement. Like many other industries, the fashion industry went through drastic changes to adapt and create trends suitable for the new normal. Although 2020 fashion predictions promised a year of sparkle and optimism, Covid-19 brought an unexpected trend: “pandemic casual”.

Below is a guide to beloved 2020 fashion trends and how to “twenty twenty-one-ify” them:

Matching Sets:

Prior to 2020, matching sets were a fashion red flag, especially in formal outings and social settings. However, “pandemic casual” called for a reevaluation of the beloved matching sweatsuits and reminded the world of the importance of accessorizing. The good news is that matching sweatsuits are here to stay and can easily be dressed up with a pair of sparkly gold hoop earrings, bold layered jewelry, turtlenecks, or a pair of chunky boots for that 2021 added glamour.

Voluminous Sleeves (long or short):

As a tribute to the 80’s, these sleeves bring glamour to any item of clothing. Whether they are dressed up in a flowy colorful dress or worn more casually, as a top with jeans, these sleeves allow for a chic je ne sais quoi look.



Vibrant Colors:

In times of darkness, fashion designers like to say “let there be light”. Fashion often acts as an escape from reality where all rules are meant to be broken. The vibrant and colorful trends of 2020 are a great example of the duality between the fashion world and the real world. Pastel colors such as pink, blue, and yellow made a comeback in 2020 and are here to stay this year as well. The 2021 Pantone color of the year is vibrant yellow, a shade described as both cheerful and hopeful; the perfect color to set the tone for the post-pandemic era.

Slouchy, Baggy, Oversized:

Transitioning from the comfort of pajamas and sweatpants to the semi-formal dress code of the outside world has proven to be difficult; therefore, it is no surprise that oversized and baggy items of clothing are popular this year. Surprisingly, matching oversized tops with baggy pants -an outfit that was previously considered unflattering- has received all the attention in 2021.



Even more Knit!

From knitted sweaters to now knitted dresses, fashion designers introduced the world to the greatest comeback of the decade when they showcased knitted sundresses at the New York Fashion Week’s Spring/Summer runway. A fabric that was once reserved for “grandmas” and “arts and crafts” enthusiasts is now one of the trendiest looks of 2021. Knitted cardigans and cropped sweaters have been popularized amongst younger generations due to pop culture influencers such as Harry Styles. The look can be perfectly achieved by pairing a vibrant knitted top with flared-out pants or straight-legged jeans.



What are the seniors wearing?

Trends that the stylish members of CdM's class of 2021 are loving this at the moment

“My favorite current fashion trends are matching sweatsuits paired with mock-necks and statement necklaces” -Mira Gandhi

“I love a good colored neck button-up at the moment, tucked into some straight-legged jeans. The key is to leave one flap of the shirt out of the jeans.” -Tara Zadeh

“I've been really loving puffy jackets and matching sets” -Madison Murphy



Photo courtesy of Juliette Eckel

“My absolute favorite trend at the moment is the wolf-cut haircut” -Niaz Namdar

“My favorite fashion trends are mini purses and tie dye, a good outfit never fails to put me in a good mood!” -Juliette Eckel

“My favorite trend right now is a good flare pants-puffy jacket combo with a shoulder bag and high-top platform shoes” -Emily Goodwin

Nazli Nazemian is a senior with an avid love for trends, even though she is too set in her ways to participate in them, she hopes that one day her wardrobe becomes a reflection of the trends that she loves.

Opinion: Satire Should Not be Taken for Granted

DANGERS OF CENSORSHIP

ANABELLE TAYLOR

Satire is the use of humor, irony, or exaggeration to expose and criticize vices - particularly in politics. Some may underestimate the value of satire, which lies in its existence, not necessarily its content. The opportunity to safely discredit people of power on a whim is uncommon in unstable societies and unheard of in dictatorships. Naturally, satire had its start in perhaps the most democratic society in history, ancient Greece. The fathers of satire, Horace and Juvenal, were groundbreaking in their work. They wrote comedies, plays, and poems about the emperors of their time (Augustus and Nerva, respectively). Even in the first century AD, neither Horace or Juvenal were punished, exiled, or executed for their political opinions. They both lived in peace and died of old age, but their writings live on and are still referenced today.

However, almost two millennia later, not all people have the privilege of freedom of expression that the ancient

Greeks so emphatically used. In an extreme backlash The New York Times got from printing this cartoon, they decide to no longer print any political satire.



example, modern-day North Korea has perhaps the harshest restrictions on freedom of speech. Although they claim to have freedom of press and freedom of speech, the reality is much different. Over ten years ago, in 2009, two American journalists, Euna Lee and Laura Ling, were detained by North Korean forces. Laura Ling reported being chased by North Korean soldiers, knocked out, and dragged into custody. Lee and Ling were sentenced to twelve years in a labor camp. These labor camps are cruel. Prisoners are subject to torture, routine starvation, daily beatings, and extended sentences without evidence.

Thankfully, the pair only had to endure three months in the camp before, with Bill Clinton's influence, then ruler Kim Jong-Il pardoned them. Within North Korea, freedom of speech, or lack thereof, is abysmal. Technically, freedom of speech and freedom of press are granted to all citizens in North Korea under Article 67 of their Constitution. Reality is a completely different story.

North Korea has 12 newspapers and one major news organization, (Korean Central Television) all of which are strictly controlled by the Kim Jongs.

All of these news sites show



The author of this drawing, Hanni Abbas, had to flee his country, Syria, after creating this image. His friend Akran Raslan was not so lucky. He was captured by the regime and died under torture.

unflinching and devoted support for the Workers' Party of Korea. In fact, the government only allows speech that supports it and the ruling Workers' Party of North Korea.

This environment is similar to the dystopian novels written by George Orwell, a famous satirist of the early twentieth century. In his book *Animal Farm*, animals band together to run their farm. At first they had idealistic hopes and wrote a constitution that laid out extensive freedoms. But, later, when the leader, "Napoleon," organized an army, he scared his fellow animals into obedience and agreement, the absence of which was punishable by death. Similarly, in 1984, Orwell described an overruling socialistic dictatorship that strictly monitors the behavior of private citizens through the "thought police," and frequently arrests people who don't seem to agree with the government's policies. In both of these horrid situations, there was one

thing that is missing- freedom of speech, and, by extension, satire. That's because the purpose of satire is to point out shortcomings in leadership and showcase different points of view. Which, of course, is not welcomed by people in power. In order for leaders to remain supreme, they must have complete control over their image and be able to manipulate how people perceive media issues, both of which are accomplished by restlessly supervising all media. This is ideal for a ruler because if the whole population

can censor them. According to a recent student poll, when asked "Should satire be censored?" 20% said "sometimes", 53.3% said "only if it's really bad", and only 26.7% said "Never." It seems natural for people to vaguely agree that "really bad" things should be censored. Likewise, many students thought there should be some restrictions, people can't say just *anything*, right? What they failed to consider, however, was what is "really bad," and when is "sometimes?" When there are restrictions and control on what people are allowed to say, there's an authority figure who influences the rights of others. As previously mentioned, control over the media is a slippery slope. It is much safer to err on the side of freedom. Satirists should be permitted freedom of speech without censorship. The public should decide for themselves if they find something offensive or not, as opposed to having someone decide for the public if an image or piece of writing is appropriate. A society is free when people can write and say what they wish, and a society is commendable when the populace is trusted to think for themselves. Furthermore,



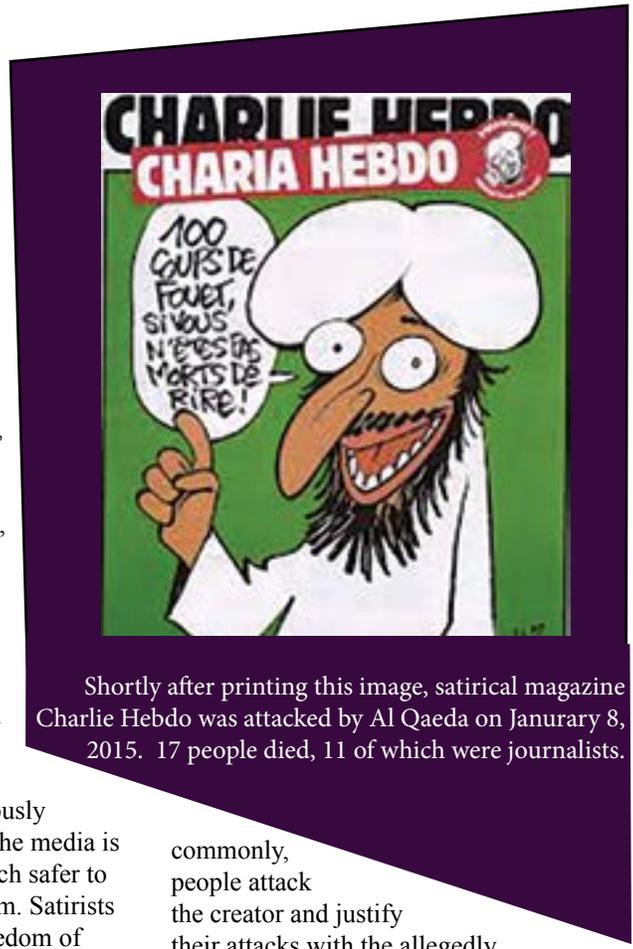
MusaKart, a political cartoonist from Turkey, was imprisoned for nine years for this drawing.

comes to the same conclusion on a news story, the populace develops a homogeneous opinion. And it's easier to lead sheep than freethinking individuals. Conformity is incredibly dangerous; it makes people easy to control, the ruler can change the story or how it's told and be assured that everyone will walk away with the same outlook. The uniformity is further solidified when there are no opposing counterpoints. Satire is a form of freedom of speech that is a direct threat to these rulers, and is a viable part of a healthy democracy.

Today, many people are offended by satire and political cartoons, and try to

down images that are provocative and politically incorrect. This is not conducive to a freethinking society. Satire is supposed to provoke; more specifically, it's meant to be thought-provoking and incite conversation. Unfortunately, this is not how it usually goes over. More

Roy Rogers was fired from the Pittsburgh Post Gazette after this drawing was printed.



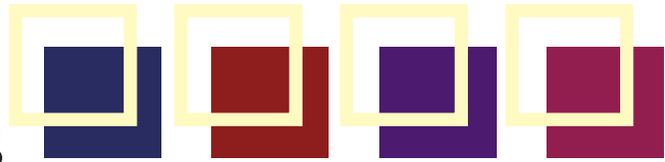
Shortly after printing this image, satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo was attacked by Al Qaeda on January 8, 2015. 17 people died, 11 of which were journalists.

commonly, people attack the creator and justify their attacks with the allegedly inappropriate content. People who act in such a way completely misunderstand the purpose of satire: to provide a critique of rulers and society, otherwise not seen, and create a meaningful discussion in hopes of improvement.

Anabelle Taylor '23, an opinionated individual, cherishes her right to freedom of speech.



Social Media: Seeing Both Sides



THE IMPORTANCE OF UNDERSTANDING SOCIETY'S BIGGEST STAGE

KAYDENCE OSGOOD

SOCIAL media, the center of people's worlds, is the only thing powerful enough to affect people's lives even if they themselves don't use it. It takes lives and puts them out into the world for all to see. It is the biggest stage people have and it isn't even a physical thing, just a whole bunch of code available through a computer or phone. So how can something that one can't even touch be such an influence? Is that influence a positive one or a negative one? Everything has two sides, social media is far from an exception. The only thing a person can do for society is realize the good social networking does for the world and the damage it does as well.

In its purest definition, social media is simply a forum for one to be social. It allows people to communicate with anyone around the world. With social media, communication is limitless. Junior Hirai Soyoka is a Japanese living in the United States and uses social media to "immediately message and call with my friends who are far away."

Keeping in touch isn't the only aspect of social media. It also gives everyone a whole new way to make friends. Some people have friends they've never physically met before. Since it allows people to join groups about things they are interested in it is very easy to find people who

have similar interests. The basis of friendships requires that two people have things in common, and social media makes it very convenient to find an entire forum of people who share the same interests. Friendships can start from there.

This constant access to people has an immense impact on society. The same forums that can help people explore interests can also spread positivity. Sophomore Rhyley Hewison thinks that lives can be positively impacted by social media when "influencers spread positivity or talk about mental health." Kindness campaigns and the push for equality have exploded because people can share them with others across the world instead of just within a city or state. According to Mark Costar on smartsocial.com, "there are successful and widely popular campaigns that combat bullying, body shaming, misogyny, homophobia, racism, cancel culture, as well as many other phenomena that shape and format a teenager's personal and social identity." "Just like Hewison said, influencers can start the campaign and it will reach many people. Those people will then pass it on, including other influencers who want to spread the word. It's a whole circle that can happen in the matter of hours. This instant spread can get the word out fast and start change almost immediately, making the campaigns much more effective."

Along with this widespread kindness also comes widespread awareness. People can find out about global events the second they happen, helping eliminate problems much faster. When Notre Dame burned, it received more money in donations than was necessary for re-building. This inflow of money was only accomplished by social media influencers creating donation sites and encouraging people to donate anything they could. California put a ban on plastic straws due to a "Save the Turtles" campaign that started when someone posted a picture of a turtle with a straw stuck in its nose. There is much change that has been made due to the ability to spread the word about anything and everything.

Every coin has two sides, though, and the exact things that make social media helpful also make it harmful. The ability to instantly access anyone in the world can be used to do horrific things. Predators, for example, use fake names and pictures to make people believe they are someone else. They use this fake persona to scam people out of money or worse. People also gain false confidence behind a screen and say things they wouldn't normally say, whether it's with complete strangers or people at school. Student Mykale Stubbs stated, "again, depending on how you decide to use it, it could totally traumatize you especially because of how graphic it can be." The ability to communicate with anyone at any

time is a very dangerous concept when not used properly.

Having the power to spread positive campaigns also gives the power to spread negativity. Social media has given people a place to convince others to think or feel a certain way about a specific topic. This influence isn't always used for the greater good. For example, a post on Twitter with the pictures of Chris Hemsworth, Chris Evens, Chris Pratt, and Chris Pine and captioned with, "one has to go", referring to the constant topic of who is the best Chris in Hollywood. This ended up with many people pushing to "get rid" of Chris Pratt and stirred up some many hateful comments toward him. Whether or not the comments were true or not, the point is that one post sparked such hate. Situations like that also happen on a smaller scale and not just celebrities. Someone from school makes someone else mad and that person starts posting rude or hateful comments about the other person. They start convincing others to think the same things and just like that it is a smaller, but just as effective, version of the Chris Pratt situation.

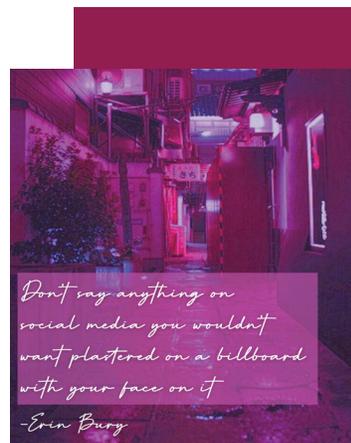
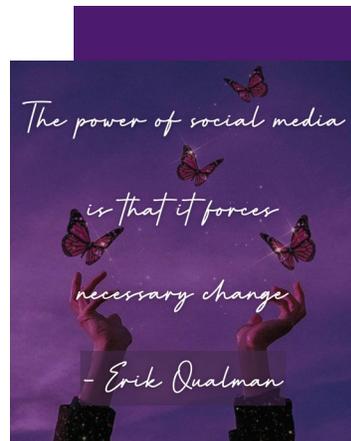
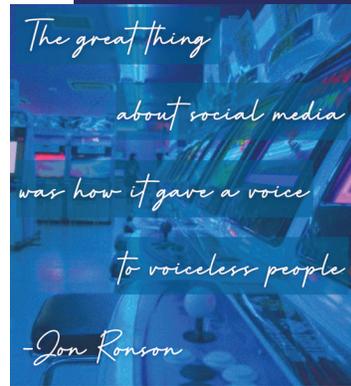
Social media is a great source to find out about history or the present but it has also led to a misinformation crisis. Sophomore Abby Gilbert said that social media had positively impacted her life because it "helped [her] learn many new things about the world or about history in the past or in modern day society." This is a great way to learn about the past or present but some people use a certain event and change its perspective or meaning for their own agenda. If the person who posts this is influential enough they can change the whole shape of the event before the truth can be told. Being knowledgeable about current and past events is amazing but one should read multiple different posts.

Only reading one or two posts isn't enough to form a complete opinion. A person should listen to every side of the story before they make an opinion on their own. Not everyone does this and they read something then automatically start spreading the word. This leads to the spread of misinformation which is unfortunate especially if it negatively affects the persons involved in the event.

Social media can be used to save the world and it can be used to destroy it. It all depends on how people use it. Each person has the power to do great things with their platforms. "Social media is the ultimate equalizer. It gives a voice and a platform to anyone willing to engage," says Amy Jo Martin, founder and CEO of Digital Royalty. That same person can also do horrendous things for the world. Everything humankind has ever created has been used for great purposes and awful means. How big or small that use impacts the world determines the importance of it being used correctly. Social media wasn't created to do bad things in the world. But it has, and it is up to the user to understand what they are doing and the consequences that come with their actions.

Kaydence Osgood '24 got rid of her social media but still believes they can do extrordinary things for society.
- Erik Qualman

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