



# The Quill

*"I have never let my schooling interfere with my education."  
~ Mark Twain*

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## An Attempted House Relaunch: Failure or Success?

By Hrithika Bhambhani

On February 15, Bryn Mawr saw a sea of Upper, Middle, and Lower School students decked out in shining beads and colorful shirts flood into KVB Gym to commemorate the relaunch of the House System. Members of the Sun, Star, Owl, Moon, and Daisy Houses danced and sang together as Edith Jamilton opened the festivities with a spirited rendition

of "My House" by Flo Rida. The five houses fiercely competed against each other in Tug of War and Just Dance. The event was then brought to a close by an all-school dance party. Students in orange, navy, maroon, green, and blue all jumped up and down with wide grins as they shouted out lyrics with their house-mates. The success of the relaunch was evident in both the student body's enthusiasm and the practically tangible spirit of competition.

Ms. Kennedy, one of the faculty supervisors in charge of remaking the House System, spoke to the decision of creating a new system instead of scrapping the concept entirely. The school saw the value in having a way for students "to bond across grades and divisions, because [Bryn Mawr] wants the Upper School to be able to have fun with the Middle and Lower Schools and have big sister relationships throughout the

student body." In order to avoid the mistakes made during the advent of the extremely divisive old system in which the houses were named after the five Bryn Mawr founders, Ms. Kennedy said that the committee decided to not use people to represent the houses. Instead, the committee decided to use iconic Bryn Mawr symbols, such as the owl, moon, and stars of the owl gate, and the emblematic daisy and sun from the Bryn Mawr logo, as the new house emblems.

When asked about the new system's effectiveness in resolving the issues of the old houses, CAFE representative Fudi Fickenscher, '19, commented that the reboot of the House System "has addressed the problems with the old House System but not larger problems of race within the school." Many upper school students have agreed that there are deeper issues of race and inclusivity that the school should address. However, the new House System is certainly a positive change from the previous one, as it promotes unity and school spirit without venerating the racially insensitive founders. In the end, the revision of the House System is a step in the right direction for the Bryn Mawr community towards making our school a more inclusive institution. ♦

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- Ms. Kennedy*

## Diversity in the 2018 Olympics



PHOTO COURTESY OF ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

By Kavya Uppalapati

This year, the U.S. Olympic team is more diverse than ever. There are more women, people of color, immigrants, children of immigrants, and for the first time, two openly gay men on the team. According to *The Washington Post*, of the two hundred and forty-three athletes, there are ten African Americans and ten Asian Americans, making up a combined eight percent of the Olympic team. Though this figure might not seem like much, it is a significant increase from the Olympic teams in the years before.

People often question why diversity in athletics is important. The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) conducted a study on athletic diversity and reported that it benefits both athletes and organizations because it helps expose athletes to different perspectives, life experiences, and viewpoints. The study also listed the numerous practical benefits of diversity reported by student-athletes and employees in these departments. These benefits included increased satisfaction with their work, higher levels of morale, and a greater likelihood to substantially contribute to their fields. "Valuing diversity [means] appreciating people for who they are and everything they bring to the table," an NCAA researcher concluded in the study. "[This] allows for closer and more meaningful relationships with employees, student-athletes, fans, and donors."

But diversity goes way beyond creating an inclusive workplace environment. Diversity also helps to empower many minorities who historically do not get afforded the same opportunities as their non-marginalized counterparts. Jason Thompson, the Director of Diversity and Inclusion at the United States Olympic Committee (USOC), told *The Washington Post* that although significant progress has been made in years past, they're "not quite where [they] want to be." "I think everybody's always felt it should represent every American," he stated.

The increased diversity on Team USA is a source of empowerment for minorities who, for the first time, are seeing faces like theirs compete in predominantly white winter sports at the Olympic level. "Obviously, there's not a ton of African Americans playing hockey," Jordan Greenway, the first black ice hockey player on the U.S. Olympic team, said in an interview with *The Washington Post*. "I hope [black kids] see that it's good to play hockey, too." Alex and Maia Shibutani, the first ice dancing duo of Asian descent to win a medal, also help inspire minorities like themselves to pursue athletic careers and challenge racial stereotypes. In an Instagram post depicting him and his smiling sister after their Olympic event, Alex Shibutani wrote, "When we started skating together, Maia and I didn't see any teams on the ice that looked like us... You don't have to look like anyone else. You don't have to be, or skate like anyone else.

You don't have to fit the mold or follow the path that everyone else is on." Shibutani's post demonstrates how Olympic diversity challenges preconceived ideas of what minorities are capable of, a sentiment that is also echoed in the success of Chloe Kim, a Korean-American U.S. gold medalist in the halfpipe snowboarding competition. Jong Jin Kim, Chloe Kim's father, told the *Associated Press* that his daughter is his "American dream." According to *Reuters News*, Kim said that her father "has definitely sacrificed a lot" for her to get where she is now, immigrating so that his daughter could have a better opportunity to chase her dreams.

All of these accounts represent aspects of minority life that are not often highlighted in the media today. "It has been such a delight to see that the US Olympic team mirrors the rich diversity of our country," Ms. Titus, the Director of Global Programs and Diversity at Bryn Mawr shared with *The Quill*. "At the Olympics, they are all united as Americans," Ms. Titus stated. "They each represent what can be accomplished with hard-work, ambition, and a commitment to excellence." Minority athletes at the Olympics not only inspire younger athletes of color, they also redefine traditional understandings of American excellence. Though they are all at the Olympics to compete, the impact of their efforts goes beyond the ice rink, ski slope, or halfpipe; they are dismantling oppressive structures with every event. ♦

INSIDE

**Parkland Students Say #NeverAgain  
PAGE 2**

**A Tribute to Dayseye  
PAGE 7**

**Binge-Worthy Shows For Spring Break  
PAGE 5**

## Parkland Students Say #NeverAgain



PHOTO COURTESY OF LORIE SHAULL

Students protest gun violence after the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School shooting in February.

By Emily Sakai  
Editorial

On Wednesday, February 14, a gunman walked into Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida with an AR-15 assault rifle and murdered seventeen people. He took seventeen innocent lives, including faculty members and children as young as fourteen, all of whom were beloved by family and friends, all of whom deserved better. In the wake of this tragedy, Stoneman Douglas students have reignited a push for gun regulation, something that we must see put into action if we are to ensure the safety of our nation's children.

Mass shootings, particularly those committed using semi-automatic rifles such as the AR-15 used in Parkland, have plagued

the United States enough in recent history that there is a pattern to the response. Lawmakers send “thoughts and prayers” to victims’ families, there is a renewed push for gun regulation, and then it is quickly forgotten before any new laws are established. However, there is a significant difference with this incident, and much of that can be credited to high school students.

In the weeks since the shooting, the students of Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School have made incredible strides for gun regulation in America. Not only have they mobilized an army on social media via hashtags such as #NeverAgain, they have also held rallies, made powerful

speeches, met state legislators in Tallahassee, the state’s capital, and even boarded a bus to Washington to meet with President Trump. Additionally, they organized the upcoming “March for Our Lives” on Washington, planned for March 24, and an accompanying national school walk-out. As Ashley Paseltiner, a sixteen year-old student at Stoneman Douglas and a survivor of the attacks, said in a recent speech, “We are here to fight and we are not going down until we make a change.”

The survivors of the shooting advocate for stricter gun laws because they know first-hand the connection between gun violence and accessibility to deadly weapons. They have a unique perspective that makes their stance on the issue impossible to ignore. In a powerful moment at the White House, Andrew Pollack, who lost his daughter in the shooting, asked President Trump, “How many schools, how many children have to get shot?” Trump, who offered his condolences and blamed mental illness in a tweet following the attack, had more to say on the issue when confronted with the pain of the victims’ families. He spoke of more thorough background checks for gun buyers and the possibility of increasing the buying age for these weapons from 18 to 21.

However, Trump also echoed a common view among gun advocates that a “good guy with a gun,” as National Rifle Association CEO Wayne LaPierre

often puts it, is the solution to the problem. The President suggested that teachers should be armed in schools to protect students from future attackers. In a CNN interview a week after the Parkland shooting, Trump said, “If you had a teacher who was adept with the firearm, they could end the attack very quickly.” For many concerned parents and teachers, this idea seems like it would only add to the danger.

Rather than increase gun ownership and use, many parents and students want to see the opposite: a longer, more thorough process for acquiring weapons and a ban on semi-automatic rifles like the one used in the Parkland shooting. This solution has proved to be a successful means of limiting gun violence in other countries. According to the *New York Times*, after a 1996 shooting in Australia, the Australian government “banned automatic and semiautomatic firearms, adopted new licensing requirements, established a national firearms registry, and instituted a 28-day waiting period for gun purchases.” Since then, now over twenty years later, Australia has not had a single mass shooting. In contrast, according to the Gun Violence Archive, the U.S. has already had 34 in 2018 alone.

With numbers like those, it is clear that the United States has a problem with gun violence. However, Washington continually fails to agree upon solutions because the subject of gun control is one of the most divisive issues in American politics. For many Republicans, the Second Amendment provides complete clarity; any gun control is unconstitutional, because owning guns is an American right. On the other end

of the spectrum, Democrats often understand a more contemporary, contextualized interpretation of that amendment and advocate for gun regulation and, in some cases, restriction on ownership.

Despite this disagreement, the safety of American children is a bipartisan issue. Therefore, it must be possible to draw up a bill that protects kids and meets, to some degree, the needs of both parties. However, the bipartisanship that is so essential to the American political process is consistently undermined by outside organizations such as the National Rifle Association, or the NRA. The NRA not only contributes millions of dollars to certain

campaigns, it also rates politicians on their compliance with its preferences, sometimes making or breaking Republican elections. In addition, though the NRA only has around 5 million members, gun ownership is a crucial part of many of these people’s identities, so they are remarkably active in politics surrounding gun control. The NRA’s control over this extremely politically active base often means that when it comes to the gun debate, they dictate how lawmakers will vote. If we are to move towards any restrictions on guns, there needs to be an anti-gun base as large and as passionate as the pro-gun members of the NRA, and to do that we

need to inspire activism.

At Bryn Mawr, we are constantly reminded of the importance of our safety. We take care to walk across the bridges, we pay attention during drills, and we are surrounded by caring adults who all prioritize our physical well-being. In a community such as this, it is not surprising that I have never once felt unsafe. What I find troublesome, however, is that prior to the shooting last Wednesday, many students at Marjory Stoneman Douglas would have said the same thing. While there is no way to go back, to save those innocent kids who died at Stoneman Douglas or Sandy Hook or Virginia Tech or Columbine, what

***In the wake of this tragedy, Stoneman Douglas students have reignited a push for gun regulation, something that we must see put into action if we are to ensure the safety of our nation’s children.***

we can do is stand by the survivors and fight for policy change and gun regulation that will keep this from happening to another

school, another community, and another group of families. Our generation has the power to keep this issue from fading out of focus, even as the most recent mass shooting disappears from headlines. As high school students, this is our problem, and the survivors of Stoneman Douglas have shown that we can be the ones to start the conversation. If we stand together in solidarity with these survivors, we can accomplish what previous generations could not and save countless lives.



# Mawrtian of the Month: Dr. Nicole Hood

By Lily Graul

Dr. Nicole Hood, next year's Director of the Bryn Mawr Upper School, grew up in the D.C. area and has spent most of her educational and professional career in the Mid-Atlantic. After spending time in both Michigan and Chicago, Dr. Hood is excited to come to Baltimore to enjoy more months of warm weather and be closer to her nearby family. As one of the newest members of Mawrtian Nation, Dr. Hood has been selected as our Mawrtian of the Month!

**Q: Welcome to Bryn Mawr, Ms. Hood! What are you most-looking forward to about being the head of the Upper School?**

I'm looking forward to getting to know as many students and families as possible. I'm looking forward to being a part of the school community; at field hockey games and plays and during school traditions and on field trips and anything else I can get involved in. My daughters will also be students here at Bryn Mawr; one will be a junior in the Upper School and the other will be an eighth grader, so I'm eager to have our family share this experience together and to have this be our school.

**Q: What tradition at Bryn Mawr are you most looking forward to, and why?**

I must say that I'm very curious about Gym Drill, since I've recognized that it's something that must be experienced to be fully understood. But I love the idea of an all-school performance in which every student plays

a part in celebrating cultures from around the world.

**Q: You have previously taught at co-educational institutions, so what was your inspiration to switch to an all-girls institution?**

While I've spent the last two years at a co-ed school (University of Chicago Laboratory Schools), I spent the previous eight years at a girls school in my hometown of Richmond, VA. I am thrilled to return to a girls school because supporting the education of young women is my life's work and passion. Students at Bryn Mawr leave here ready to take on the world because of the preparation and care they received here. I love working to ensure that the school provides every possible opportunity to thrive to

every girl here.

**Q: What do you think are the benefits of learning in a single-sex environment?**

I graduated from National Cathedral School (in Washington, DC) a very long time ago, and so I was lucky enough to attend a girls school myself. I credit that experience with giving me self-confidence, helping me develop my own voice, and training me to think critically in all academic endeavors. My years at NCS were simply the best gift my parents ever gave me. Those years shaped the direction of my academic life and future career. Girls schools are whole communities built on the educational and social needs of girls; they are places designed with girls in mind. So at Bryn Mawr, girls can own their own learning. Students here have the opportunity to find the joy in intellectual, athletic,

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*"At Bryn Mawr, girls can own their own learning. Students here have the opportunity to find the joy in intellectual, athletic, and creative pursuits."*

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PHOTO COURTESY OF THE BRYN MAWR WEBSITE

and creative pursuits in a place that is made specifically for them.

**Q: What do you plan on changing about the Upper School?**

This is a very strong school just as it is. I don't have immediate plans to change anything. I hope to spend the first few months really getting to know students and faculty and finding out what others value and need in their school experience.

**Q: What are your thoughts on Baltimore and how does it compare to Chicago?**

Chicago is an amazing city and I've really enjoyed working in Chicago for the last two years. There is wonderful culture in Chicago, lots of art and theater, which I love. But I'm an east coast girl. I'm from Virginia and the biggest thing I miss in Chicago is the ocean. The other biggest thing that I miss is springtime. So yay, Baltimore! I'm so completely ready to have spring again (with spring flowers that I recognized like azaleas and dogwood). I'll also be much closer to family by living here. In fact, I'll be equidistant from my mother, who still lives in Richmond, VA, and my brother, who lives near Princeton, NJ.

**Q: What are you most**

**excited to do in Baltimore?**

Eat lots of crabs.

**Q: What were your first impressions of Bryn Mawr?**

During my interview day at Bryn Mawr in November I met a ton of people - faculty, other administrators, parents, and students. The early part of the day mostly involved meeting adults and they were all - every single one - very warm, welcoming, and dedicated to the students at Bryn Mawr. I remember a really fun and wide-ranging conversation with parents in the library that began my day, and terrific conversations with the Upper School faculty about what it's like to work here. I remember feeling very comfortable right away and wanting to learn as much as I could about the school. Ms. Swyrn gave me a tour of the campus and I especially liked the senior room and that students decorate it each year. Then, at the end of the day, I met with a group of students. At that point I knew I was hooked. That group of girls was wildly impressive, had very thoughtful questions, and took their role in the search process very seriously. I knew

that I wanted to work and live in a community that supported those girls and their peers.

**Q: What was your experience like in High School?**

I enjoyed classes that allowed me to grapple with ideas and discuss them: English, history, and French. I'm still pretty humanities oriented and my graduate school work was in art history. I did reasonably well in high school, but was by no means an all "A's" kind of student. I definitely had my share of "B's" and occasionally "C's" on assignments, which probably reflects the reality that I didn't always work as hard as I could have. I was in a club called "Future Teachers of America" and the Black Student Union. I had a few close friends that I still spend time with today and I also feel close to many women who were in my class. One of the great things about the years I've spent in Chicago is that I've reconnected with some of my classmates from NCS who live in the area. There were 65 girls in my class, and I'd still be happy to see any one of them today. ♦

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# To Read the News or Not to Read the News?

## Why I Read the News

By Celia Katz-Zogby

Thomas Jefferson once wrote: “If a nation expects to be ignorant and free in a state of civilization, it expects what never was and never will be.” I find this quotation particularly relevant today, as many Americans no longer feel that it is their duty to be informed citizens and the news media is being discredited by the current president of this country. It is important, now more than ever, to be informed; Jefferson would argue that this is because an informed electorate is a prerequisite to freedom. All these big words and complicated ideas often deter people, especially teenagers, from understanding the role they play in our democracy. Reading and watching the news may seem irrelevant to our everyday lives, but the importance of this small act makes it worth your while.

I read the news because I care about what is happening in the world. But even if you honestly do not care, there are still a

few reasons I believe you should keep up with the news. Firstly, reading the news and being able to talk about current events allows you to form your own political opinions and strengthen them before you vote. This means that by the time you can actively participate in our democracy, you have fully developed your

beliefs and views on issues you can change. Furthermore, the opinions that you form by being aware of current events influence more than just how you vote: they change who you are and how you see yourself. Additionally, keeping up the news enables you to talk with your friends and family in a unique manner unlike any other conversations you might have with them. These conversations are not only interesting, but can teach you a lot about the people in your life and what they believe in. Finally, as ridiculous as this

sounds, being able to talk about the news makes you sound smart. I think many people underestimate how important it is to sound like you are a really intelligent person. Talking about current events to teachers, interviewers, and mentors will impress them and can help you form relationships with them.

All this being taken into account, I get it. You are tired. You are busy. You just are not interested enough or do not have the time to read The New York Times front to back every morning. But getting news alerts on your phone, watching a few minutes of cable news when you can, or reading an article in a newspaper (like an actual newspaper, not Twitter) every now and again will make you more than just an informed citizen, it will make you a self-assured, insightful, and intelligent-sounding person. ♦

*[Reading the news] can help you actively participate in our democracy.*

*“If a nation expects to be ignorant and free in a state of civilization, it expects what never was and never will be.”*

*~Thomas Jefferson*

## Why I Do Not Read the News

By Lila Zemil

News: informing, warning, and, educating. The news allows for individuals to stay updated and understand events all across the world. So, why don't I watch the news? In all honesty, it's partially because of a lack of time. While many of my peers have similarly cluttered schedules, many of them choose to prioritize the news, perhaps because they feel a responsibility to do so. I do not feel this responsibility... at all.

Through immersing myself in public life, I can hear about the news everyone seems to make time for without actually making time for it myself. How magnificent! I can be lazy and informed at the same time! My personal second hand sources, my friends, provide me with the same news featured in the media but in a more easily accessed way. Many people are perplexed that I don't watch “the news” but really, I just don't see how people find it so interesting. They refer to it as a God-like figure. However, I just think news is a bunch of old men try-

ing to show off their political vocabulary. Who has ever heard of the word “demagogue”, or better yet, “impeached?” The last time I checked, peaches were fruit and do not belong in the context of politics!

Also, the news is saturated with contradictions, making it hard for me to follow. On the rare occasion that I am miserably bored and have nothing to do but watch the news, I'll watch CNN and then Fox

News. These channels will address the same issue, but they sound as if they are referring to events on the opposite side of the world. So, which do I listen to and reference when I'm trying to hold an intellectual conversation about the news? This is why I spend most of my time watching Disney Channel rather than the news; it's a lot easier to understand and more entertaining to watch.

Next, the news does not allow for someone to have their

own individual opinion. Just like food with a pinch of salt, the news is always sprinkled with some sort of bias. The bias included in news alters my true opinion, and thus, I would rather simply know the straight facts of an event (which are never found in the news). Finally, the news is really, really sad. I mean who wants to be like “OMG, what even is this world?” every time you dial channel 817 (the channel for CNN as provided through Xfinity.) I don't remember the last time I heard my peers mention a good event when discussing the news.

At the end of the day, the news is the news, and I am someone who would rather not occupy my mental capacity with the events of the world. I'm not telling everyone to stop watching the news, especially because we all need that one informed friend to keep us relatively updated with current events, but I urge you to understand and respect that the news is not for everyone. ♦

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*The news is saturated with contradictions, making it hard to follow.*

*Space X is a blazing trail for independent, privately-owned companies to foray into space exploration.*



PHOTO COURTESY OF CNBC  
Elon Musk, founder and CEO of SpaceX.

## SpaceX: Our Future in Space

By Inara Jalisi

Space is a medium of seemingly limitless possibilities and explorations. Founded by Elon Musk in 2002, SpaceX has been a company focused on changing the field of space exploration. By working closely with NASA and the American government, SpaceX has been able to accomplish amazing feats in only sixteen years. So far, the company has built three rockets: Falcon 1, Falcon 9, and Falcon Heavy.

From 2006-2010, Falcon 1 was the “dummy” for SpaceX, meaning that it was a type of test flight. Shortly thereafter, the company began using the rocket for missions. Falcon 9 is also the first orbital rocket to be able to take flight numerous amount of times. As SpaceX's rockets started carrying out more and more impressive tasks, the company gained popularity and media recognition. In 2012, the first commercial spacecraft not made by the government was created by SpaceX and dubbed the “Dragon.” It carried cargo from Earth to the International Space Station (ISS) and back. The Dragon is set atop Falcon 9, and together, the two still

work to carry satellites into orbit. The reusable feature of the Falcon 9 not only reduces costs but also decreases the number of resources used, therefore reducing environmental impact and bringing humanity closer to its goal of understanding the universe around us. In 2016, SpaceX landed Falcon 9 on a landing pad located in the Atlantic Ocean. This achievement impacted SpaceX greatly, as the company intends to land most of their rockets on oceanic launch pads. In spite of all of these accomplishments, SpaceX's most recent launch of Falcon Heavy was definitely its biggest success. The rocket isn't as expensive or wasteful as other spacecrafts because it is made of reusable parts, such

as Falcon 9's engines, and it is able to carry larger loads of cargo than any other spacecraft before, therefore decreasing the number of takeoffs and the amount of fuel used.

*Falcon Heavy is the largest rocket in the world to have successfully launched.*

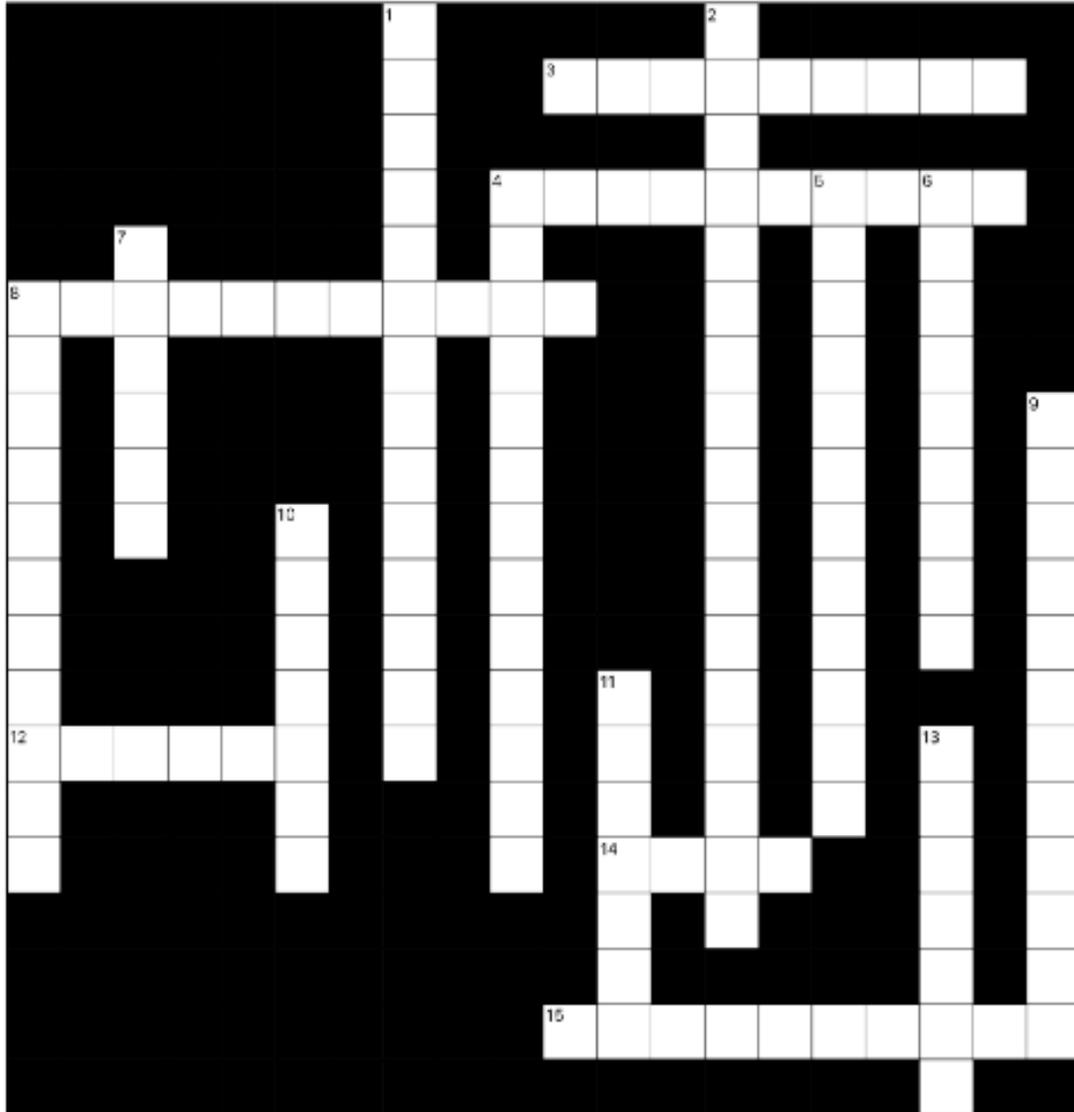
Falcon Heavy's launch was an enormous challenge for the company. It is the largest rocket in the world to have successfully taken off into orbit, yet there was doubt as to whether that would even be possible. Many statistics indicated that successful takeoff was less than fifty percent likely, due to the fact that dynamic pressure resulting from the rocket forcing itself upwards against gravity could have made the engines give out, resulting in an explosion. Luckily, this did not happen, and the rocket came back to Earth with minimal damage.

After the completion of the rocket, SpaceX focused on determining the payload of the rocket. Elon Musk put several items in the rocket's payload, but perhaps the most notable item was his own red Tesla. When asked why, Musk, also the CEO of Tesla Company,

responded with a simple tweet: “I love the thought of a car drifting apparently endlessly through space and perhaps being discovered by an alien race millions of years in the future.” The car is currently making its way into orbit around Mars.

SpaceX is blazing a trail for other independent, privately-owned companies to foray into space exploration. The company has extraordinary plans and ideas for the future. They plan to launch the Falcon Heavy at least three more times and continue to use the Falcon 9 with the Dragon as a “taxi service” between Earth and the International Space Station. The company's end goal is human habitation of other planets - but for now, we'll just have to wait and see what remarkable steps SpaceX takes next. ♦

# Binge-Worthy Shows for Spring Break



By Emma Cotter

**Across**

- 3. "Bears, Beets, Battlestar Galactica"
- 4. Xoxo, \_\_\_\_\_
- 8. Today's "The Twilight Zone"
- 12. Eggo waffles are her favorite food
- 14. "Don't Stop Believin'"
- 15. Head of B613

**Down**

- 1. Characters: Damon, Stefan, Elena
- 2. "Suit up!"
- 4. Works at Bluth's Banana Stand
- 5. Set at Seattle Grace
- 6. Home of the Southside Serpents
- 7. Home of L'il Sebastian
- 8. Characters: Tina, Louise, Gene
- 9. A "heavenly" NBC sitcom
- 10. "So no one told you life was gonna be this way"
- 11. Play "True American" in \_\_\_\_\_
- 13. Said "Winter is coming"



PHOTO COURTESY OF VANITY FAIR  
Photo of members of the Stranger Things cast in Season 2 of the acclaimed series.

# Black Panther: A Diverse Narrative Joins the Marvel Universe

By Hannah Brecher

*Black Panther* blends together a rich cultural narrative with classic superhero entertainment, making it a welcome addition to broaden the horizon of the Marvel universe. Written by Ryan Coogler and Joe Robert Cole, *Black Panther* combines the best aspects of the Marvel Cinematic Universe: the family drama as seen in the *Thor* franchise, the political elements of *Civil War*, and the sci-fi tech we have come to expect and love after both the *Iron Man* franchise and *Guardians of the Galaxy*. Coogler and Cole do not defy the superhero genre; they simply use it to their advantage in a way that makes *Black Panther* a spectacular movie to watch.

**The single most impressive feature of *Black Panther*, however, is the circle of powerful women.**

Picking up after the events of *Civil War*, *Black Panther* tells the story of T'Challa (Chadwick Boseman), a prince preparing to take control of the African nation of Wakanda, a technological and cultural wonder hidden away from human eyes. However, soon after T'Challa is named king, an old enemy, Ulysses Klaue (Andy Serkis), stirs up

trouble, and T'Challa must team up with his old flame and Wakandan spy Nakia (Lupita Nyong'o) and Okoye (Danai Gurira), the head of the Black Panther's secret service. Together, they need to track down Klaue and stop him once and for all.

In addition to James Bond-esque casino fights, goofy humor, and other

staples we have come to expect from the Marvel Universe, *Black Panther* explores African culture in a way that no Marvel movie ever has. From the beautiful (and practical - nearly every piece in this movie doubles as armor) outfits by costume designer Ruth E. Carter to the the Afrofuturistic aesthetic of Wakanda, Coogler and Cole

are not afraid to shy away from an exploration of African culture. Wakanda also serves to highlight a flourishing African country, an



PHOTO COURTESY OF IMDB

altogether a rare occurrence in films. Coogler and Cole also explore colonialism, as well as how the effects of the slave trade and

Western imperialism have manifested themselves today.

The single most impressive feature of *Black Panther*, however, is the circle of powerful black women T'Challa surrounds himself with.

**In addition to being an incredibly engaging, funny, and poignant Marvel film, it normalizes the idea of diverse on-screen heroes.**

In this instance, our main protagonist seems to take a backseat to the powerful characters of Nakia, Okoye, and Shuri (Leticia Wright), T'Challa's sister, and an engineering prodigy who steals every scene she's in. Angela Bassett, as Ramonda, the Queen Mother, also shines as only she can. The female characters are well-developed, with their own person-

alities and goals. It is refreshing to see such powerful female black characters who fully embrace their identities, which can too often be a rarity in Hollywood blockbusters. These women's feelings towards Wakanda and the Black Panther are also complex and dissimilar, and they own their femininity instead of bowing to powerful male characters. As a result, they challenge and better our protagonist, and do not solely act as love interests

or the unfeeling muscle we have come to expect from the female characters in the Marvel Universe.

*Black Panther* is another excellent addition to Marvel while also serving as proof

that superhero movies with black male protagonists can succeed. It is a triumph for non-white cinema and the black community as a whole; it will certainly contribute to a continued flourishing of racial diversity and accurate representation in Hollywood. In addition to being an incredibly engaging, funny, and poignant Marvel film, it normalizes the idea of diverse on-screen heroes. In this way, *Black Panther* is truly the movie we have been waiting for. ♦

## Corruption Within BCPD: Task Force Officers Convicted

By Naomi Fotenos

On February 12th, 2018, two men were sentenced to charges of racketeering and robbery in the The Edward A. Garmatz U.S. Courthouse on West Lombard Street. This particular trial had the rare attention of national media organizations and the rapt ear of the public as the convicted men, Daniel Hersl and Marcus Taylor, served in the Baltimore City Police Department as members of an eight man unit called the Gun Trace Task Force. Their guilty verdicts solidified what Justin Fenton, a reporter for the *Baltimore Sun*, called “one of the biggest police corruption scandals in city history.” The Gun Trace Task Force, created in 2007 to regulate the flow of guns in city, has been accused of stealing large sums of money and violating the constitutional rights of Baltimore residents while on duty. The offenses outlined in the indictment of the Task Force officers include but are not limited to posing as federal prosecutors, performing searches without warrants, profiling, seizing drugs only to resell them, and tracking suspects using illegal GPS devices. Darryl De Sousa, police commissioner of Baltimore, called the Gun Force Task Trial’s actions “some of the most egregious and despicable acts ever perpetrated in law enforcement.” All eight men of the Task Force have either pleaded or been found guilty, and Hersl and Taylor face up to 60 years in prison.

In Baltimore, a city whose relationship with law enforcement is infamously strained, the actions of the Gun Trace Task Force strike a chord for many. Since January of this year, two other incidences of police misconduct in the Baltimore Police Department have made headlines. In a *Washington Post* editorial, Radley Balko connects these recent instances of police misconduct to the Justice Department’s 2016 investigation of the Baltimore Police Department. The investigation, which was launched after the death of Freddie Gray, revealed “routine harassment, violations of constitutional rights, and little to no oversight, transparency or accountability” within the Baltimore Police Department. Balko points out the connection between the accusations listed in the Justice Department report and those in the Gun Trace Task Force’s indictment almost two years later. Balko’s portrayal of the Baltimore Police Department as chronically errant and largely unchanged in the wake of the

Justice Department investigation is echoed across many media outlets in the United States.

Many also think the Task Force’s crimes indicate larger systemic issues in Baltimore city. *Baltimore Sun* reporter Jean Marbella described the Task Force case as “laying bare everything wrong with Baltimore....the poverty, the drug dealing... the inescapable underclass of the city.” Marbella assesses how evidence has shown that Task Force officers specifically targeted black men charged with drug offenses. She states, “Drug dealers deal in cash and, for obvious reasons, won’t go to authorities – especially in cases where the task force takes drugs or money which was possessed illegally in the first place.” In Marbella’s opinion, the officers capitalized on that reluctance. “Their business model was that the people they were robbing had no recourse,” said U.S. Attorney Stephen Shanning after the trial.

While the response from the police department and from city government has been limited, the Gun Trace Task Force’s timeline also unfolded amidst major changes in leadership. On January 21st, before the guilty pleas of the officers on the Task Force but after their indictment, Catherine Pugh appointed Daryll De Sousa to the position of chief police commissioner. This directly followed the dismissal of Kevin Davis in that position after a year of record high crime rates. Mayor Pugh has repeatedly indicated that tackling corruption is a high priority for any newly appointed administrative officers. At a press briefing on February 2nd, De Sousa reiterated a frequent talking point of Pugh’s. Responding to an inquiry about curbing corruption, De Sousa stated, “It’s very few bad apples that spoil the entire barrel.” The comment caught the attention of the public as it became clear that De Sousa intended to approach the Gun Trace Task Force as an isolated mistake. The rest of the department, the “good apples,” De Sousa implies, are not accountable for the actions of the Task Force.

De Sousa’s approach differs from the common public opinion that the Gun Trace Task Force’s actions are indicative of larger web of corruption within the Police Department. And, in fact, since the February 2nd press conference, the *Baltimore Sun* has since reported twelve additional police officers accused of wrongdoing in relationship to the Gun Trace Task Force. Many of these twelve accused officers

are still working in Police Department as of February 25th. That being said, the uncharged officers who were implicated in court testimony have denied the allegations to *the Sun*.

Whether the Gun Trace Task Force acted in isolation or not, it is indisputable that the Task Force’s crimes affirmed a deeply ingrained distrust in the police for many Baltimore residents. After a year in of staggering crime rates and police scandals, the relationship between the BPD and Baltimore residents is in an “exceptionally bad place,” according to Doug Donovan of the *Baltimore Sun*. “It is not going to change.... It’s not going to change,” said Anthony White, a Baltimore resident whose own criminal record has been altered in light of the prosecution, shared with Vice News. “Only thing it’s gonna to do is slow down. And before you know it, it’s back at it again.” White’s resignation and pessimism reflects what Vice News calls “decades of a broken law enforcement system.” To White, civil rights violations like the Gun Trace Task Force and the findings of 2016 Department of Justice investigation are both the substance and the accelerators of this “broken system.”

The legal resolution for this prosecution and its long term implications are still ongoing. Baltimore State’s Attorney Marilyn Mosby confirmed that the public defender’s office is tasked with reviewing “thousands of cases that may have been impacted by the wrongful and illegal acts of those police officers,” a process, she says, is likely to take years. In an interview with Vice News, former police commissioner Kevin Davis reflected on the growing distrust, “I know our [police force’s] good-will bank account was significantly drawn upon by this incident.” Ultimately, it has been proven time and time again that a tense relationship between civilians and law enforcement has the potential to harmfully impact communities like Baltimore. As David Kennedy, a criminologist of John Jay College explained, “When communities don’t trust the police and are afraid of the police, they will not and cannot work with police and within the law around issues in their own community.” For Baltimore, a city coming off of a record breaking 347 homicide year, the corruption evident within the Gun Trace could widen the deep and increasingly dangerous chasm between Baltimore residents and the police officers charged with protecting them. ♦



PHOTO COURTESY OF DAVID STEPHENS

## Dance Company, An Experience Like No Other

By Eva Farroha

Whether through music, sports, drawing, writing, or dancing, expressing oneself provides a creative outlet for students to have fun and release the stress of coursework. For one group of students, Upper School Dance Company is this release. These dancers dedicate their time and energy to train and, ultimately present a fantastic performance.

Dance Company members willingly give up their afternoons to train and prepare, rather than relax with friends or do homework. When students dedicate their time to expressing themselves through dance as a group, the group members form a bond of creative expression that creates both lasting friendships and successful performances. Ms. Tankersley, the instructor for Dance Company explained: “The company consisted of 14 dancers spanning from 9th to 12th grade which is really a great experience for everyone as they create bonds with one another that otherwise may not have happened if it weren’t for dance company. It’s difficult to describe the bond that dancers share but, when you work on a big production and spend so much time with one another, it truly is like a family!” Grace Williams ’21, adds that she has “been able to meet many people in school because of Dance Company. We all have a lot of fun together.” Through their hard work they still find joy in their preferred art, and the group serves as an opportunity to meet students in different grades. Not only can this be a great op-

portunity for students to make new friends, but with members so invested in each other, it is easier for dancers to stay in-sync, thus helping the performance run more smoothly.

In their recent show, members of Dance Company performed multiple routines showcasing many different genres of dance, each telling a unique story. According to Ms. Tankersley, the Dance Company instructor, “It is always so incredible to actually see the final product and to recognize that the pieces presented truly are

*The pieces presented truly are a window into the minds and emotions of those who*

a window into the minds and emotions of those who choreographed

them.” Throughout their repertoire, Dance Company told a variety of stories. Ranging from a commentary piece on the Time’s Up movement to an optimistic feel-good finalé number, each dance conveyed to the audience a distinct emotion or story directly from the choreographer.

Dance company is one of many groups at Bryn Mawr that deserves recognition for the hard work of its incredibly dedicated members. Every member manages to fit hours of practice time into an already packed schedule. They not only have to master the choreography of each dance, but also must make sure they, as

*Unlike in most sports, dance offers an outlet for the creativity of students and people of all ages, making Dance Company a unique experience for all.*

a group, are synchronized and working together efficiently. Unlike in most sports, dance offers an outlet for the creativity of students and people of all ages, making Dance Company a unique experience for all who participate or observe. ♦

# Student Voices

## A Tribute to Dayseye

By Olivia Fox

Year after year, Dayseye establishes its presence in the Bryn Mawr community with its lighthearted Valentine's Day serenades and its frequent performances of "Jerusalem" at school assemblies. Such performances are some of the best known within the Bryn Mawr community, but to the members of Dayseye, they are merely two highlights of the many opportunities that the school's upperclassman choir has to offer.

Because of its serenades and "Jerusalem," as well as its involvement in Bryn Mawr's Winter and Spring Concerts, Dayseye serves as a fundamental group for many of the school's traditions. Moreover, members of the choir are often able to explore the world of music beyond what is offered in an average high school program. In past years, students have performed at locations such as Carnegie Hall, sung for cancer patients at the University of Maryland, and worked with both a Bach choir and an orchestra. This year, Dayseye has been chosen to sing the National Anthem at Camden Yards during an Orioles baseball game on April 25th.

When they are not traveling or performing, members of Dayseye can be found in the Choral Music Room, learning new pieces, practicing for performances, and working hard. "We usually start with vocal warm-ups," said Jenna Resnik '20 in regard to an average class, "then [we] move on to one of the pieces of music we are currently working on. Sometimes Dr. Shirk brings up a 'forgotten about' musician who we learn about too." Through various activities

such as music theory, music history, and voice building, Dr. Shirk, the conductor of Dayseye, is able to create a diverse and educational environment for budding musical students.

However, like many organizations, Dayseye is often forgotten about by members of the Bryn Mawr community amidst hectic schedules and demanding classes. "The reality of putting arts classes in a small liberal arts school with an academically rigorous goal does not leave tons of room for arts offerings," said Dr. Shirk. Her words are reflected within the school's schedule, which provides students with limited arts electives and neglects to offer in-school wind instrument and percussion ensembles. Changes have undoubtedly occurred throughout the past years, and Bryn Mawr's introduction of the Pathways Program demonstrates the steps the school is taking to increase recognition for students curious about fields outside of the daily liberal arts classroom, including the arts, STEM, and cultural programs.

"I believe that the Arts Pathway allows Bryn Mawr to recognize the work [of] many of our students in a wide variety of areas" ~ Mr. George

"I believe that the Arts Pathway allows Bryn Mawr to recognize the work [of] many of our students in a wide variety of areas," said Mr. George, who is in charge of scheduling. However, this program is still evolving. While these changes are being made, Dayseye continues to be a strong program for students interested in choir and singing. This year, the choir has expanded to accept sophomores, thereby allowing a wider variety of students to explore their passions on a higher level while connecting with upperclassmen. As the years pass, perhaps an average Dayseye class may look different, or the performance venues may change, yet one thing will always remain consistent: the choir's ability to unite the Bryn Mawr community through their love of music. ♦



PHOTO COUTESY OF BRYN MAWR WEBSITE  
Dayseye performing on Founders Day.

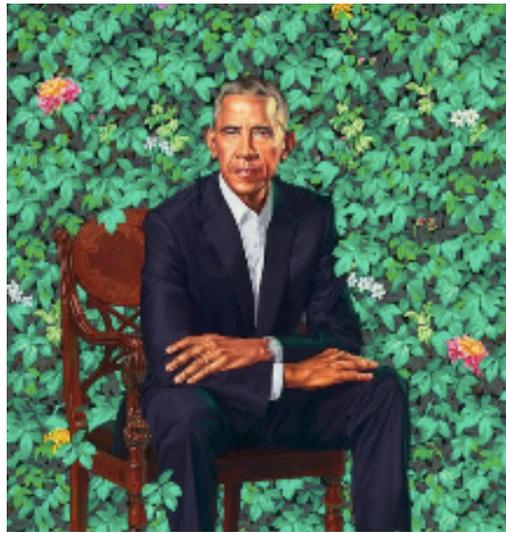


PHOTO COURTESY OF THE NEW YORK TIMES

## The Obamas' Portraits

By Sophie Leheny

The Obamas' groundbreaking presidential portraits attracted far more media attention than those of past presidents. The Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery in Washington D.C. commissions portraits of each president of the United States, allowing them to choose the artist. The Obamas choose Kehinde Wiley and Baltimore based artist Amy Sherald, resulting in two very unconventional, though meaningful, paintings.

Wiley, who painted Barack Obama's likeness, is known for painting young black people wearing contemporary clothes in the style of traditional European royal portraits. Though significantly less well known, Amy Sherald also focuses on African American portraiture in her work. Similarly, both artists use their paintings to blend realism and abstraction; Wiley begins with photo-realistic depictions of the people, but presents them in fantastical, heroic roles. Sherald, meanwhile, gives her subjects an abstract quality by painting their skin in grey scale. This feature of Sherald's work, which was included in her portrait of Michelle Obama, has sparked controversy. Some believe the grey skin is strange and takes away from the likeness of Mrs.

Obama, while others argue it sends a powerful message about race. The racially ambiguous connotations that are associated with the color gray are believed to be a commentary on "double consciousness," the concept of the split identities experienced by anyone living between cultures or identities, for example being both American and black. Another take on the grey skin is that it allows the figures to stand out against the background and even exist in the space between

ald's art. She believes "[The city] has ushered in all the things and people I needed to get me where I am today," and she sees the city as a "special place full of possibilities with a rich historical memory... despite its struggles."

There was also an unconventional element to the portrait of Barack Obama. Typically in portraits, presidents are portrayed as emotionless, however Obama looks pensive and appears to be pensive, as if he is interested and thinking. The

background greenery has a personal connection to the ex-president; the flowers are representative of Kenya, Hawaii and Chicago, all significant places in his life. Wiley's painting of President Obama has also attracted controversy. People found the green leafy background confusing and the image overly abstract.

The Obamas did not fail to make statements with their portraits. Wiley and

**The racially ambiguous connotations that are associated with the color are believed to be a commentary on "double consciousness," the concept of the split identities experienced by anyone living between cultures or identities, for example being both American and black.**

Sherald are the first black artists to paint presidential portraits, and both of their images speak to the issue of race and the new focus of contemporary art. In this era of portraiture, young artists have become increasingly interested in using their work to explore identity, particularly race and gender, and the portraits of the Obamas certainly showcase this interest. ♦

is because the Upper School play and dance company switched places, with Dance Company moving to two seasons instead of all year." He explained that "the Gilman musical always conflicted with winter rehearsals because that production has

## A Conflict Between Bryn Mawr and Gilman Play Productions

By Meron Alessandro

The annual winter play at the Bryn Mawr School is an event that everyone in the community looks forward to, but this year's production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is very different from past years, greatly affecting those who are part of the production. This year, rehearsal days were moved from December to February, a change that has led production schedule to conflict with that of the Gilman musical. When asked for his perspective on the changes, Mr. Robinson, the Director of the Arts, said, "Mostly the switch in production timing

cool, but I found myself having a dilemma where I must choose between the Gilman and Bryn Mawr productions when they are conflicting." Additionally, some students believe that if the play schedule had not changed, the transition from six o'clock

rehearsals to activity period would be bearable considering the show would conclude in early February, which would allow performers to finish their work on the play before the

**"The play schedule is very reasonable as of right now. It is only one day a week, which is really cool, but I found myself having a dilemma where I must choose between the Gilman and Bryn Mawr productions when they are conflicting" ~ Nafia Hunter '21**

such a long rehearsal period." Nafia Hunter '21, shared her views on the play schedule this year stating, "the play schedule is very reasonable as of right now. It is only one day a week, which is really

musical begins. As years pass, more plays and musicals will be produced, but the future of Bryn Mawr and Gilman productions is a mystery. ♦

# The Struggles of Parking as a Bryn Mawr Junior

By Keri McClelland  
Opinion & Commentary

Imagine: you're pulling into Bryn Mawr's Northern Parkway entrance at 7:30, a full 30 minutes before your first period class at Gilman. You figure that you'll have plenty of time to walk up to Bryn Mawr, put your nonessentials away, and make it to class across the bridge with time to spare. But as you drive past the junior lot, you see to your absolute horror that all of the spots have been filled. As you drive further into the campus, you notice that the lane on the side of the driveway is also full, which can mean only one thing: you have to park in the neighborhood. Your anxiety ramps up, and you wonder if you're going to make it to class on time; now, you have to account for your drive to Melrose Avenue and the trek up Gordon Hill from the street in addition to your walk to Gilman. Thus, the struggles of parking on campus as a junior once all of the spots in the junior lot are filled continue to plague you and the rest of the drivers in the class of 2019. So much for time to spare.

This experience is one that many eleventh grade drivers endure every day. With only about 21 parking spaces available on the Northern Parkway

**With only about 21 parking spaces available on the Northern Parkway side of campus to at least 30 juniors who drive to school, mornings are increasingly becoming an infuriating example of how "the early bird gets the worm."**

side of campus to at least 30 juniors who drive to school, mornings are increasingly becoming an infuriating example of how "the early bird gets the worm." Except, instead of birds, there are 30+ sleep-deprived teenagers who would rather sleep for an extra 20-30 minutes than worry about finding a parking spot. In a response to a survey sent out to the junior class about the parking experience, Isabel Pantle '19 confesses that she has "given up on junior parking. I park in the neighborhood every day because I can't give up all of the sleep it would take to get to school early enough for a spot." In that same

survey, we asked how early the drivers woke up in order to attain one of those ever elusive parking spots; 23 of the 31 drivers that replied said they wake up between 5:30 and 6:30 AM. Considering that teenagers are encouraged to get eight to ten hours of sleep per night (as taught by the curriculum from underclassman gym classes), this means that students would have to fall asleep between 9:30 and 10:30 PM to get the minimum amount of suggested hours. But the thing is, sleeping for that long really isn't a commonplace occurrence for many Bryn Mawr students, especially juniors, mainly because of the sheer amount of homework and other activities that many

of us have every night. Some students have even started waking up earlier than they used to just to ensure parking at the Northern Parkway lot; Catie Huey, '19, responded to the survey saying that she had to "start setting my alarm about half an hour earlier than I usually would to be guaranteed a parking spot... it's pretty frustrating to be getting to school before 7:30 and not [find] any parking on campus available for juniors."

According to the survey, the overwhelming majority of drivers drive to school five days a week, but only eight drivers said that they get a parking spot in the Northern Parkway entrance every day. Those eight people are lucky, but the rest of the grade is left to fight for whatever's left after 7:20. Unfortunately, this can easily lead to tension between students before first period even begins. Some students have even teamed up to ensure themselves and their friends a spot; enlisting a friend to stand in a parking space to keep it available is not unheard of, despite the animosity it can cause.

There may be some solutions to the parking problem beyond long rants in the gym lobby, though. Some students have tried to solve the problem by carpooling, though with everyone participating in a wide range of after-school activities,



INFOGRAPHIC COURTESY OF CATHERINE CHEN  
Data from a recent survey on parking sent to the Junior class.

it can be hard to coordinate. If the Class of 2019 gathered together to form an organized carpooling system, not only would we be Eco's new favorite class, but there could also be more free spots to allow more junior drivers to park closer to school. Other suggested solutions include tearing down a tennis court and using Gilman's tennis facilities or parking in Gilman's seemingly spacious lot (though of course, neither of these are highly plausible, as the

tennis team is one of our most successful sports teams, and Gilman would most likely never allow us to park on its campus). Despite the fact that those ideas might be far-fetched and highly controversial, the junior class has become desperate for relief from the constant arguments and drama over parking. We can only hope that this problem can be resolved before more juniors (and, inevitably, sophomores) start driving. ♦



## The Quill

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