

The Protocol for Stopping Students: It's Not What You Think It Is

By ANNA McNULTY (VI)

After Willa Ferrer (VI), co-president of Fieldston Student Government, sent a letter (reprinted on page 2) written by the student government on December 21 to Head of School Jessica Bagby, Director of Campus Safety David Argenzio, Assistant Head of School Liz Fernandez and Chief Operating Officer Kyle Wilkie-Glass, addressing racial profiling by school safety officials on campus, Bagby invited the student government to the admissions conference room on Wednesday, January 9 to begin a dialogue surrounding the issues presented in the letter.

"I imagine this is the first of a number of conversations because we will have as many as we need until we get this right," Bagby said, beginning the meeting. "I want to thank you for your leadership and for bringing to our attention that we're still having struggles around what you are experiencing as profiling, or what your peers are experiencing as profiling when they are entering our campus."

Over ten student government representatives were present along with Bagby, Argenzio, Fernandez, Wilkie-Glass, Dean of Students Nancy Banks, Ethics Department Chair Rachel Ehrlich, Upper School Principal Nigel Furlonge, Upper School Diversity Coordinator Russell Marsh and Upper and Middle School Diversity Coordinator Arhm Wild. The attendees sat in a circle, positioning themselves to face Bagby as she opened the meeting.

"I was aware that this was an issue when I came in as the head of school, and it's a conversation that Liz Fernandez and I had about what we could begin to do, understanding that we were going to try to

make some security enhancements and at the same time try to maintain a sense of this campus being a home for you," Bagby said. "All schools have challenges around trying to create a sense of safety and familiarity, at the same time trying to have at least a basic sort of security protocol."

Bagby then compared Fieldston, a school with multiple entrances on an 18-acre campus, to schools in Manhattan, including the Ethical Culture campus, where students enter and exit through one main door. The challenges that arise through the nature of larger and more suburban campuses are significant.

"To me, the doorman metaphor works, as opposed to the sense of a police officer screaming at everybody," Bagby said. "If you live in a building with a doorman, you have a friendly rapport with that person. That's really what we've been aiming for, and I understand that we have a lot of situations where we have fallen far short of our goal."

Next, Bagby said that "precisely because this is a systemic issue and not an individual issue," she and Liz Fernandez implemented anti-bias training for the campus safety staff over winter break in January of 2018. A problem they have encountered is handling turnover among the campus safety team.

"There is a certain transitional quality to the security staff," Bagby said. "You get some people who stay here forever and then you get some people who turnover quickly. We are trying to think about that because when you do a professional development experience for a group of people, and then before you get to the next one, some of the staff is turned over, then you have

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ILLUSTRATIONS BY TEMA ZELDES-ROTH

Editorial Update

Where does Fieldston stand in the fight to Save the Tree today? This past fall, members of the Fieldston community returned to school to find their beloved, traditional tree logo replaced with a generic sun-like graphic. Over 1600 alumni, students, parents and teachers united through a petition in favor of reverting to the old logo. In addition, at Homecoming, in a visual display of solidarity, the upper and lower fields were filled with Save the Tree buttons and stickers.

There was no adequate response from the administration. There was no letter to the editor in *The Fieldston News*. There was no outreach to the larger community. There was no response, period, to the overwhelming negative feedback. It is time to stop ducking and hiding.

This issue isn't only about the new design; it's about the disregard for the community and our shared values. **The onus shouldn't be on the students to advocate in favor of openness, transparency and ethics at the Ethical Culture Fieldston School. This responsibility lies with the Head of School, Board of Trustees and Executive Council.** We hope a dialogue that we, parents, alumni, teachers and students are finally able to join is promptly initiated.

The Editorial Board

FSG: Security Letter

Dear Ms. Bagby, Mr. Argenzio, Ms. Fernandez, and Mr. Wilkie-Glass,

We are writing to you to address a persistent concern among the student body. This concern is the treatment of students of color by the security team on campus. For years this issue has been discussed among students, parents, faculty, administrators and the security team. Additionally, various attempts to change in policy have been made. However, both fear and confusion are still present among the student body.

On December 21st of 2017, after much discussion surrounding the campus policy on checking student IDs, Mr. Cairo sent an email stating, "starting on January 8... all students will be required to show their ECFS IDs whenever they come on campus." It stated that this would take some time to implement, but this change would be made. Mr. Argenzio addressed the school at assembly on March 1st, 2017 to discuss the campus security policy and vision, but no announcement of a change in policy was made. Yet, in the end of the 2017-2018 school year and the beginning of the 2018-2019 school year, few students have had their IDs checked.

However, while most students have been able to come on campus without security asking for their IDs, multiple students of color have reported incidents of being stopped, including a student who has been stopped eight times. When stopped, students are often asked questions such as "What are you doing here," "Are you are lost," and "Where are you from?" It is undeniably clear that the vast majority of students being stopped and questioned at Fieldston's gates are students of color. They are the targets of this policy and are not welcomed onto campus by campus security. This fact alone is antithetical to the mission of the school.

Recently, even greater concern was sparked when, on November 29th, 2018, three students were stopped when entering the campus, one of whom is in the 8th grade. Notably, during this experience, the students were told they looked 25 years of age and that the guard "didn't see color." After the incident was reported to the school, the three students received an email from Ms. Bagby, on December 3rd, which stated three crucial facts.

Firstly, "All campus safety officers are instructed to allow students to access campus freely unless the campus is closed."

The Fieldston News

Ethical Culture Fieldston School
3901 Fieldston Road, Bronx, NY 10471
www.FieldstonNews.com
editors@fieldstonnews.com

Editors-in-Chief: Jane Forman and Anna McNulty

Managing Editors: Andy Hartman, Rebecca Kopelman, and Ariana Reichler

Political Editor: Sam Caplan

Sports Editor: Mia McCoobery

Layout Editors: Sam Caplan, Kabir Tinaikar, Nick Shiland, and Sean Zhang

Printing: Kirk Ruebenson and Carl Smith

Faculty Adviser: Bob Montera

This change in policy was never reported to students. Additionally, this policy may hold true for the majority of students, but in this year alone, multiple students of color have been stopped when the campus was open. This includes a female black student who was stopped on December 3rd, 2018 during G Band after returning from moving her car. This student was asked for her ID when entering by the main guard booth in the MS parking lot. She replied that she did not believe it was necessary to show him her ID because she walked through the same entrance most days. The guard then replied that he knew she did, but she "is not special" and he has the right to ask for her ID. The student, very distraught, proceeded to walk on campus. This student remained extremely upset and immediately after disclosed her experience to multiple classmates. The student went as far to draft a long email to Ms. Bagby, Mr. Reyes and other administrators, but in the end made the choice to neither send the email nor report the incident to higher administrators as she felt it would be a difficult and emotionally traumatic process that would not yield a significant impact. As representatives of the student body, we fully support her choice to protect herself and her mental health first.

With respect to this student, and with her consent, we are sharing this story because the occurrence of incident is extremely disturbing. Not only because of the disrespect shown to the student, but because this incident occurred on the same day Ms. Bagby stated that no students should be stopped during school hours. This incident occurred at a different booth, a different time, and presumably by a different guard. However, it is a blatant violation of policy stated by Jessica Bagby on December 3rd. Additionally, this incident exemplifies that the stopping of the three students on November 29th was not an isolated incident.

This leads to the second crucial fact stated in the Ms. Bagby's email which stated that the officer who made the stop on November 29th

had been fired. Although the officer mistreated these students, the news of his removal is still extremely distressing. Fieldston teaches students to understand that racism is caused by systemic inequality and systemic ignorance. Individual actions can be racist and must be addressed, but addressing them as individual problems, and ignoring the systemic faults, has minimal effect on overall improvements. Yet, it appears that this same institution, which holds these teachings so highly, believes firing one guard will solve this issue. The reality is that this incident was the product of inconsistency in policy on all levels and the training given to the security staff. Therefore, as students we were shocked that the school's only response was to immediately fire a security guard and assume that this would improve the systemic racism present in the safety department. This action was extremely discouraging to many as it seems to be a move in the wrong direction.

Finally, the third notable point stated in Ms. Bagby's email was that "the entire Campus Safety team participate in training multiple times throughout the year." Although we are glad these guards are being trained, we are concerned as to how these guards are being trained, specifically regarding their interactions with students and in terms of anti-racist education and training. The training of the guards is particularly relevant because of concerning sentiments that have been stated by both security guards and those in positions of power in the security department. Examples are statements such as "I don't see color" and that the problems are caused by "a few bad apples."

The school's failure to address this problem as a systemic issue within the security department displays an extreme lack of understanding of these recurring injustices. As a progressive institution that prioritizes the physical, mental and emotional safety of every student, we have done very little to address a systematically flawed branch of our institution. This is not a matter of one guard's failure to follow protocol. These faults are rooted in the training guards receive, in the protocols and in the overarching philosophies of the security branch, which seem to blatantly contradict our schools beliefs and progressive values.

For these reasons, as members of the Student Government and representatives of the student body, we demand an immediate explanation of the current policies, a detailed summary of the racial sensitivity training guards are receiving and a thorough investigation into the inconsistencies in the Security Department. Additionally, we request a town hall in which the school is addressed by all parties and these policies and problems are clearly addressed.

Sincerely,

Willa Ferrer, Co-President,

Jafi Alexis, Co-President,

Malakai Hart, Secretary of Diversity and Activism

Jeremy Kern, Secretary of Diversity and Activism,

Anton Van-Schaik, Chief of Staff,

Daniel Friedman, Form III Senator,

Logan Silbert, Form III Senator,

Denika Kao, Form IV Senator,

Thomas Grant, Form IV Senator,

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Lewis Arstein, Secretary of Computer Science,

Jane Forman, New Student/Middle School Liaison,

Gillian Feinglass, Secretary of Security/Safety,

Claire Scavone, Secretary of the Performing Arts,

Lily Steele, Secretary of Community Service,

Theo Pearl, Secretary of Community Service,

The Protocol for Stopping Students (cont.)

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to think about what the onboarding experience is for each new person.”

Liz Fernandez jumped in next.

“It saddens me deeply that this has been the experience of anyone in this room or anyone beyond this room, whose voice or experience you represent,” she said. “That is certainly never the intention of a school to be a place where anyone feels other than that they belong. I want to approach this conversation as an ongoing way to establish how we address the issue and partner to ensure campus safety and minimize the dichotomy, the us versus them, to think about how we work together.”

Fernandez then outlined a history of the campus safety anti-bias training program. The campus safety team had never experienced any anti-bias training beyond what their various former employers provided before coming to Fieldston. Over winter break last year, Bagby, Fernandez, Marsh and Argenzio implemented an anti-bias training program led by the Anti-Defamation League, which has worked with law enforcement across the country. Bagby, Fernandez, Marsh and Argenzio then held follow-up conversations in the spring with the security team. This fall, Fernandez, Marsh and Argenzio set a date to meet over winter break, pushing back the date in order to accommodate a prolonged period of time when school was off-session, and therefore, more guards would be available. Twenty-nine members of the campus safety team joined them over break to address implicit bias, review Fieldston’s policies and procedures, hear the racial profiling experiences of students on campus and discuss the encounters of campus safety personnel with statewide security officers when not in uniform. Fernandez said they made it clear this session was one of many to come in the near future.

Marsh then noted that the team, which was once called “security,” is now called “campus safety.”

“Do you realize that everyone is calling you security?” Marsh said, recalling a conversation he had with a safety personnel over winter break. “Do you know that there is a visceral reaction to that word, ‘security?’ Even though they changed it to campus safety, how they experience it and what you intend are two different things.”

Marsh said the training was all about establishing relationships, by considering student experiences in order to change dynamics between students and safety personnel, specifically by forming healthy bonds and establishing a collective understanding.

“How do we create relationships and help you all be known to the security guards and have you reach out to know them?” Bagby said. This is a common concern among all administrators involved with campus safety.

Marsh also wanted to make clear that many students and parents ostracize the campus safety personnel from the school community.

“In terms of building relationships, we treat the safety officers as not a part of a community, and it’s because of some of their identifiers,” Marsh said. “Let’s just call it what it is. It is because most of them are people of color that they get talked to in a certain type of way.”

Additionally, Marsh said that one of the purposes of the meeting was to be transparent about the anti-bias work they have been facilitating with campus safety.

Malakai Hart (VI), Secretary of Diversity and Activism, said the administration needs to do more than just facilitate trainings. They specifically need to clarify the campus safety protocols for members of the school community.

“We need actual guidelines and rules that are going to prevent this,” Hart said.

Ehrlich then asked the room if anyone was aware of the guidelines given to campus security for IDing people as they walk onto campus. With the shakes of many heads, indicating no, Argenzio spoke up.

“All adults need to be IDed,” Argenzio said. “Students should not be IDed.”

That’s the policy, that many, if not most, students and adults are completely unaware of. More specifically, during student activity hours no students are supposed to be IDed, while all adults, regardless of whether they work for the school, are required to show their ID upon entrance.

Ferrer asked what happens when a teenager not enrolled at Fieldston comes onto campus during school hours.

“That’s the difficult area,” Ar-

genzio replied.

The current protocol is for safety personnel to call a supervisor if they are not sure if a teenager attends Fieldston because, according to Argenzio, supervisors can track nearly everyone on campus.

Ehrlich then asked why students have been stopped if this is the procedure in place. Argenzio’s response was “human failure.”

Ferrer responded that if stopping students of color has been a recurring situation, it’s hard to accept just human failure as the explanation for racial profiling.

Clearly, there is something more at play, institutionally, systemically and legislatively.

“How do we manage 600 upper school students and 400 middle school students all coming on to campus? Ninety percent of them in one location over a 45-minute period,” Argenzio said. “It’s a challenge. I have had people tell me, ‘your team should know all the students.’ That’s not realistic. There are upper school teachers that will go an entire four years and never know all the students. Right now, it’s not practical to stop all of you when you come on to campus, and the school can give me 30 more security officers to stand on Manhattan Parkway, and it is still going to be a challenge.”

So, stopping students upon entrance is not only racial profiling but also a complete violation of the campus safety guidelines. And for as long as this policy has been put in place, most students, even students who have been stopped, were unaware of its existence.

After hearing the guidelines, Ehrlich mentioned an alternative solution first proposed a while back.

“I understand this is a temporary and problematic solution,” Ehrlich said. “But at one point a solution was offered that perhaps security just learn the names of students who are typically marginalized in this community as a way to prevent and increase the psychosocial stigma of not belonging. Is that a viable solution?”

Argenzio said he has “acted on it” and gave all campus safety personnel the student directory, but added that it is still a challenge for personnel and this objective has clearly not been met.

Argenzio said he thinks the most productive solution is to have open

dialogue with students.

“Since October of 2016, when I started this job, I have requested numerous times to meet with students at assemblies and roundtables,” Argenzio said. “But the first time I got to address any of you,” he said, looking at the students, “was when everyone was upset about the fence and the cameras. That was unfair.”

Bagby addressed two times during her Fieldston career in which safety personnel have been let go, one of which was documented in the student government’s letter written in late-December.

“Sometimes there are things that make it hard for us to work with people,” Bagby said. “In the time that I have been there have been at least two situations that have really been impossible to continue to work with that person, not only in the moment but in the follow-up in about trying to see how we could move forward positively, and unfortunately that happened in the recent situation that you are aware of.”

Ferrer addressed the policy and practice of firing that same officer as “extremely distressing” in the letter to Bagby, Argenzio, Fernandez and Wilkie-Glass.

“Individual actions can be racist and must be addressed, but addressing them as individual problems, and ignoring the systemic faults, has minimal effect on overall improvements,” she wrote. “Yet, it appears that this same institution, which holds these teachings so highly, believes firing one guard will solve this issue.”

Bagby said there are systems in place for people to anonymously report incidents with safety personnel on campus, providing the opportunity for administration to give additional training to the specific officer and to determine whether it will be “tenable for them here, given the values and ethos of this place.”

Bagby said that one of the systems in place to report incidents is direct communication to deans and advisors. The other and more anonymous system, which was recently adopted, is called Ethicspoint. Currently available to faculty and staff, and eventually to be expanded to the student body, Ethicspoint allows anyone to submit a complaint through a web-intake forum. Eth-

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Protocol (cont.)

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icspoint maintains the commitment not to seek out identification or to give caller ID numbers. The benefit to Ethicspoint is that the person who issues a complaint is given a report key, granting them confidential, anonymous communication with the person performing the investigation. Ethicspoint was launched in conjunction with Fieldston's sexual harassment, sexual assault and sexual misconduct policies and Fieldston's Whistleblower Protection Policy but is now being rolled out for other complaints, including racial profiling by campus safety.

Bagby closed the meeting by addressing the need for ongoing and immediate conversation surrounding racial profiling by safety personnel.

"I think the next conversation should be soon with some subset of this group, maybe the most keen to design something that gets articulated in conjunction with campus safety to the student body and staff because there are things that are in place that are clearly not understood and known," Bagby said.

In the meantime, students and faculty alike are seeking solutions. Argenzio said that he and Gillian Feinglass (V), Secretary of Security and Safety, have been working to organize student roundtables to field questions and concerns and review current policies. Ehrlich mentioned the possibility of creating a

"bill of rights" for students around campus safety, which would detail the rights of the safety officer and the rights of the students in an effort to foster a shared understanding throughout the school. Bagby said she will sit down with Marsh and Fernandez to "calendarize future meetings to come up with deliverables as soon as possible." Banks said Argenzio should speak in front of each form in four separate meetings to outline the current campus safety procedures.

Though no formal resolution came out of the meeting, Argenzio provided clarity surrounding campus safety protocols to the people in the room. He added that, in the coming weeks, all students, not just student government representatives, will be informed of the campus safety guidelines. The hope is that with more understanding will come fewer profiling incidents.

Marsh said that one thing everyone in the room everyone agreed on is that "we don't want this stuff ever happening again."

Everyone agreed that the next priority is to simultaneously implement the current policy and notify all students of their rights as Fieldston students entering and leaving campus. The only way to make Fieldston a home for everyone is to effectively execute the policies that were approved over a year ago.

decisions and minor infractions being constantly quantified and put into a larger system. If somebody buys too many video games, befriends somebody with a low score or makes an insincere apology, they will be penalized.

Currently, 42 percent of the world's surveillance cameras are in China, so there is little that is truly private. Purchases made in the privacy of one's own home, rash decisions made in the heat of the moment and offhand remarks about the government are now open to judgement and can destroy lives under the right conditions.

The concept of a social credit

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Why Finals?

By CAROLYN FINERMAN (IV)

While finals have been an instrumental part of the learning experience at Fieldston for many years, the question has come up time and again as to what form these assessments should take.

"Some of the feedback we get from alumni is that many colleges have an exam structure, and they appreciated having the experience of having to take an exam," said Carl Anhalt, form IV dean.

This kind of response illustrates one of the major reasons why we still have assessments, specifically the cumulative math at the end of first and second semester. Fieldston moved away from having multiple cumulative exams several years ago and switched to the format that we now have, a hybrid of tests and projects to avoid overwhelming amounts of stress.

While math is the only course with a traditional cumulative test, all other subjects still require students to demonstrate knowledge they have learned in that semester; this could be through a variety of mediums, such as a test, project, essay, or debate.

"I do believe summative assessments have a place in learning experiences for students. Summative assessments seek to measure mastery of the material in a course," said Nigel Furlonge, Upper School Principal.

Students have an ambivalent attitude towards finals week, and even students who do support the schedule believe it needs some revisions.

"I think that it is good for teachers to give finals, to assess their student's overall knowledge of a topic," said Maya Johnson (IV).

Hannah Platt (V) said "finals could last from Wednesday to Friday with the study day on Tuesday in order to give more time to prepare for each subject," said Platt.

In this possible layout, Wednesday to Friday would have special schedules, similar to what we have now. This would give students more time since they would be taking their finals in the morning and would have the afternoon to study. This model in particular allows students to be tested, but also to have more time to do so—therefore limiting stress.

Many other private high schools have begun to phase out finals, if they have not already totally elimi-

nated them. Even Horace Mann has done away with finals because "of how stressed out the exams made the students," said Lita Crichton, a sophomore at Horace Mann.

Stress is completely normal and comes along with any form of assessment, but with a designated period filled with exams students stress levels may exceed the normal amount. Students sleep less during finals, become increasingly tense, and are overworked.

Just like Horace Mann, Trinity eradicated finals a couple years ago. Trinity stopped finals because they, "created a lot of stress since they made up such a large portion of a grade in a class, and that was a lot of pressure," said Andrew Cramer, a sophomore at Trinity. Instead, teachers assign more quizzes and tests to assess the same material.

This could be a possible route for Fieldston to take by giving more assessments throughout the semester. If we increased the amount of assessments given, the school could do away with finals.

Although possible, it's not likely that Fieldston will completely stop the end of semester assessments. What seems more feasible is moving them up to an earlier date. There are pros and cons for having finals both before and after winter break, but one thing that stands out as a major con for having finals after winter break is the workload that students must tend to over their vacations. By taking finals before winter break, students would have two weeks stress free, with nothing school-related occupying their mind.

But, as mentioned earlier, there are both good and bad aspects for moving finals up and many people support the way finals are in place right now. Another con to moving finals would be the issue of disrupting the school calendar.

"We're on a semester system, so if we were to end the semester before winter break, the fall semester would be significantly shorter than the spring semester," said Anhalt.

Although in the near future Fieldston will most likely keep the hybrid model with both projects and cumulative tests after winter break, there is always a possibility of change in the future.

China's "Social Credit System"

By REBECCA KOPELMAN (IV)

Imagine knowing that your every move is being watched. If you slip up, maybe stand up in a taxi, jaywalk or play your music too loudly on a train, you can be denied plane tickets, job opportunities, and even government loans. On the flip side, if you behave well — buy locally-made goods, donate to charity or celebrate your government online — you will be rewarded with higher visibility on dating apps, discounted insurance payments and prioritized visa applications.

This is the reality in China — or at least it will be by 2020 if everything works out as planned. Citizens are watched nearly 24/7 with their personal lives, economic

A Night On Broadway: Fieldston Attends American Son

BY ANDY HARTMAN (VI)

Despite the below freezing temperatures, dozens of students and faculty ventured to the Booth Theater on Thursday, January 10th, to see *American Son* in its final weeks on Broadway. Using tickets anonymously donated by a parent at Fieldston, members of the community took time out of their packed schedules to see the thought-provoking 85 minute play unlike any other.

Starring Kerry Washington, most well known for her iconic role as Olivia Pope in the hit television series *Scandal*, *American Son* follows a distressed mother, Kendra, frantically searching for her black teenage son who has recently gone missing. Set in a Florida police station, Kendra and her ex-husband, Scott, fight for answers from the police officers at work, trying to understand what exactly happened to their son Jamal.

Among the many classes that went to see the performance was Ms. Ehrlich's junior and senior Ethics elective Crime and Punishment. Given that their daily discussions revolve around the American criminal justice system, a play about the ways in which law enforcement commonly targets youth of color seemed fitting.

"The intention was to [have them] experience some of the profundity of the issues we are talking about in an art form [as the] experience of art triggers the mind and soul in a different way. There are very similar themes that are raised in the play that we address in the class, but to look at them through a creative lens makes the issues more multidimensional. I think most [of my students] experienced surprise, confusion, terror, and sadness," said Ehrlich.

Various students and faculty praise the play for many reasons, specifically the way in which the play discusses the issues of police brutality beyond just the death of an innocent teenager of color. What it means to survive that kind of trauma is rarely discussed, so *American Son* provides us a unique opportunity to explore that new point of view.

"The topic of police brutality is talked about a fair amount, however,



Theatrical poster advertising the play.

AMERICAN SON



The cast of *American Son*.

THE HOLLYWOOD REPORTER

we always see it from the witness or the police officer's perspective. We never see it through the parents' perspective, and that's what makes the play as deep and amazing as it is. While it is a play done so well I would want to see it multiple times, I personally do not have the emotional strength to go through what I went through watching it again," said Sami Gay (VI), a member of Ehrlich's Ethics class.

"The show really struck a chord with me because it took the outline of a tragic reality in America today and filled it with a story that made you feel every emotion. My identifiers affected me deeply when viewing the performance because I have the same racial identity as one of the characters and it really made me reflect on my experience in America considering the body I am

in," said Lizzy Di Domenico (V), another one of Ehrlich's students.

Following the performance, students and faculty that wanted to were lucky enough to stay for a talk back featuring the cast, the playwright, and facilitators from an organization dedicated to social justice called the Opportunity Agenda. The talk back was incredibly moving, focusing on why a show as uncomfortable as *American Son* is necessary for audience members with varying backgrounds, and the ways in which we as a society should move forward to ensure police officers who act inappropriately are held accountable, for example.

Especially as it was unexpected, the talk back became even more touching as the mothers of Sean Bell and Eric Garner, two black

men who were killed by police officers, were present and gave personal testimonies.

"One thing that resonated with me at the talk back was an individual [who spoke about their] work with conflict resolution. What stuck with me is how easy it is to have some impact [on an issue] as big as police brutality," said Abby Gerwitz (V).

For those who were not able to see *American Son* during its four month run, there is still an opportunity to experience the heartbreaking and relative narrative; just last week, Netflix announced that it would be adapting the hit Broadway play with the original cast, so that viewers across the country and the world can access this meaningful content from their homes.

Fieldston's Newest Satirical Website: The Liberal

BY ANAÏS OZER (IV) AND KRISTEN PARK (IV)

Lately it has become almost impossible to walk around campus and not notice the flyers that Avery Lender (VI) has posted throughout the corridors. All of them contain sarcastic humor about her latest project, The Fieldston Liberal.

Although Lender has just created the satire website this year, it is an idea she has had for a long time. Already a stand-up comedian, she has written about Fieldston for her routines since she joined as a freshman. "I started the Liberal out of complete procrastination when I was writing a college supplement," Lender said.

The Liberal website is home to articles with titles like "Fieldston Gives Away Canada Goose Jackets to End Poverty Shaming" and "Fieldston Bus Turns Into Gender Neutral Bathroom." Despite their absurdity, these articles are not entirely made-up.

"Every article is based on something I saw or heard in the school, which makes it more real to read," said Lender.

While Lender may be making fun of Fieldston in a public manner, she thinks that much of the Fieldston community has had

thoughts similar to those expressed in her articles.

"I think Fieldston is a really fun school to write about because of how seriously it takes itself," said Lender. "Whenever I notice something unique or something funny at Fieldston, I write it down. That's where I get the inspiration to write the Liberal. It's honestly just as fun to write the articles as it is for others to see them."

The Liberal articles provide students with a moment to relax amidst all the work from classes. Lender's goal is to make people think and laugh at the same time.

"I think there should be humor everywhere, and, during my four years, I've been missing an outlet for that," she continued. "There is no specific message to be spread besides the message that there is comedy in everything."

The Liberal had been an increasingly popular outlet for those looking for a good laugh. Eliza Kelly (IV) said "I read the Liberal because it's a really funny and has a clever take on Fieldston." Similarly, Camille Newman (IV) mentioned, "The Liberal is a great way for me to take a break from my work. The



thefieldstonliberal
Oct 22, 2018 · 3 min

Which Girls Bathroom Are You?

Every Fieldston student identifies with a bathroom. Which one are you? What song are you suggesting for assembly music? Mo Bamba- Sheek Wes STOOPID - 6ix9ine Kars for Kids theme song Bet on It- High School Musical Whatever the newest rap song is (so Astronaut- Juice...

245 views Write a comment



thefieldstonliberal
Nov 6, 2018 · 1 min

Fieldston Senior Class Hasn't Messed Up.... Yet

In a dramatic change of events, the senior class has not done anything that bad within the first few months of school. This comes as a huge surprise to the administration, who has already prepared for the worst. One representative stated...

346 views Write a comment

THE FIELDSTON LIBERAL

Selected articles from The Liberal website.

articles are a good read because they are concise and easy to read."

As a senior, Lender has begun to think about passing her creation on to someone else next year. "I'm thinking I'll put a series of clues

around the school and the grand prize is ownership of the Liberal," she said. "Or I'll just fail out and repeat senior year to keep writing. Whatever comes first."

New Course for the Spring Semester

BY ELIZABETH GELLERT (VI)

This semester, history teacher Jim Cullen and music teacher Tom Christensen will be teaching "Rock, Rap and Country," a revision of their prior course, "LP: 12 Albums that Changed the World".

"LP: 12 Albums that Changed the World" has been offered since 2010 as an interdisciplinary elective for the music and history departments.

There are not many electives that span departments, and looking at history through music is an especially unique way to learn about the past and explore the present. After so many years Cullen and Christensen felt that some changes needed to be made.

"We decided to change the course because we concluded that

the record album did not have the same currency in adolescents' lives that it once did," said Cullen.

So, they decided to use a format and title that would allow for more flexibility in how the course is taught and the themes that are explored. The new course will dive deep into topics including religion and region and how they connect to the pop music of the last 75 years. The subtitle provides more information about its purpose.

"The subtitle is 'American music in American life' because we wanted to emphasize that for all the diversity in our national experience, musical and otherwise," said Cullen. "Americans in fact share any number of traditions and values in our culture."

China Social Credit (cont.)

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

system, in which citizens are scored and ranked based on their overall "trustworthiness," was publicly announced in 2014. Theoretically, the system would enforce the idea that "keeping trust is glorious and breaking trust is disgraceful" through constant surveillance and the implementation of a "blacklist" made up of citizens whose scores drop dangerously low.

The system is not universally regulated at the moment. Certain areas are under the governance of city councils, and others fall under the domains of private companies. The current plan is to implement the system across the nation and establish a scoreboard by 2020.

So, is this Orwellian or is it simply a government holding its people accountable? Maybe without the benefit of "alone time" to act poorly, citizens will fear repercussions

enough to do what's expected of them. Perhaps the rewards for good behavior will motivate them to enforce the law.

Or, maybe this is all a government's intelligent manipulation of its people. Maybe the scoring system and blacklist will be used to punish people on the basis of vague non-crimes, like "breaking the trust" or "threatening national security." As Human Rights Watch puts it, "Chinese government authorities clearly hope to create a reality in which bureaucratic pettiness could significantly limit people's rights." Is there any truly objective way to quantify human behavior? More importantly, can the Chinese Communist Party be trusted with the task?

Perspectives: **Second**Semester

Freshman:

One Semester Down, Seven To Go

By BEN FORMAN (III)

Over 600 unfamiliar faces, 7 new classes and a campus so big that hustling from one building to another could actually make you sweat. You could say the first semester of freshman has been a blur. It started out like every other significant beginning in life starts... with stress. And the first day did not disappoint. With 10 new t-shirts, a fresh haircut and three months of gruesome anticipation, I was ready to begin high school.

Taking a school bus for the first time didn't really live up to expectations. I was expecting to feel out of place, on a foreign mode of transportation where the location of your seat could point to your social standing. In reality, everyone just seemed tired from the early wake-up and nervously awaiting a whole new year of school.

From that first ride to around 8:30 a.m., life was good. I had snagged a row to myself, watched a full episode of "How I Met Your Mother," and, with a little help, found my first class on time. After 8:30, however, my hopes of a good first day got hit by a brick wall: math class. I was getting settled into my desk as Ms. Bass was explaining our class, her expectations and how our first assignment would be in the math textbook we had all bought over the summer. Huh? Math textbook? What math textbook?

I would soon be informed that there was a summer list of materi-

als we would need for the coming year. As you may guess, I was not aware of this list. This meant that I did not have my math textbook, a calculator, my two Spanish textbooks or the 12 English books I was supposed to purchase over the summer. So that night I went into panic mode, spending three hours searching Amazon for the school supplies and trying my best to finish my first homework assignment. Not the best first day ever, but, for me, crashing on the first day of school meant that it could only get better from there. And, for the most part, it did.

I quickly acclimated to Fieldston, memorizing my schedule like the back of my hand. However, that isn't to say that it was easy. At my old school, Allen-Stevenson, I was used to around twenty minutes of homework every night. Adjusting from 20 minutes to two hours is not an easy switch, and it has sadly required me to limit my YouTube intake. When I look back on myself a year ago, I awe at how lucky I had it. The funny thing is, I bet a junior at Fieldston looks at me the same way.

Although I have stressed, worried, and agonized over the first semester, it really has been good. Attending a new school has allowed me to grow, and Fieldston has forced me to push myself mentally, socially and academically. Additionally, I have learned to always, ALWAYS check my email.

Senior:

Inside Scoop on My Senior Slump

By JANE FORMAN (VI)

For my past four years at Fieldston, each new semester has brought a fresh start. Whether it was the chance to move up my math grade or getting a new partner and group of kids in 7th grade STS, it was exciting to begin a new chapter. January was always a time in which I looked back on my first semester and thought about what I could have done differently. My decisions still had the power to change the trajectory of my high school experience.

I've previously looked at the senior class each and every January with a large amount of envy and a bit of judgement. I saw them as burnt out students who thought that relaxing after a stressful fall meant being rowdy in the library and blasting music on the senior grass (especially after getting yelled at.) As an anxious underclassman, all I wanted was to be in their shoes, free of stress and enjoying their last months of high school.

As a new student in high school, Fieldston has meant much more to me than just the place I've spent the last four years of my life. I've gotten the opportunity to join a community that works its hardest to provide a level of support for every student. My interests have developed thanks to the incredible electives I've taken and groups I've been a part of. I've been both riveted by and extremely done with most of the school, but, overall, I

learned what it looks like to give back to a community.

Even after these moments of self-reflection, I don't feel any sense of closure. Even when I am my most fed up with Fieldston, I don't feel 100 percent ready to go.

I may be the person now who tells stories in the 500s that I probably shouldn't and sits at a ridiculously loud lunch table every day. But seeing the posters for graduation cap fittings and turning in all of my college applications only makes my stomach turn with nerves and anticipation. How can I possibly get every last bit of learning in my final months? How can I take each class discussion and assembly and direct it towards becoming the person I want to be in college? As each day passes, I realize that the time to grow into myself is quickly moving by.

Don't get me wrong, I love the fact that I never have to take another Fieldston final. But as someone who has no clue what the next four years will look like, I'm trying to come to terms with what I will look like. I may not have had any major life epiphanies since entering the last of my first semesters, but I have no doubt that I will have a lot more time for them. I don't recommend trying to console any senior about how stressful the spring is in a non-academic sense, but, to my fellow seniors, I think the entire grade is with you.

Fieldston Attends Boston Jazz Festival

By MARIA GRABOWSKY (V)

On January 25th, Concert Jazz and Improv IV gathered their instruments and music sheets, and set out for the Berklee High School Jazz Festival in Boston. Along with Fieldston, more than 200 other jazz ensembles arrived from a variety of schools all over the country. There were small jazz combos, large ensembles as well as vocal jazz. Everyone there to play, listen to, and appreciate jazz.

Concert Jazz performed very early on Saturday morning in front of a panel of judges. We were all

tired, and anxiety filled, but nevertheless managed to play our best. Austin Celestin (V) impressed the judges with his outstanding trumpet solo, and the band overall played extremely well together. "I think we played the best we ever had there" said Megan Rogers (VI). We were ranked 8th out of 16 bands which is impressive for Fieldston given we were ranked 12th last year and since we compete against bands that practice daily.

Improv IV also fascinated the judges with their talent and intri-

cate solos especially the base solo played by Emma Venarde (V). They judges were extremely impressed with their skills, and they were similarly ranked in 9th place.

"It's a nice opportunity to bond with the people you play with and it's always interesting to see how we stack up against jazz bands of other schools" said Megan who was returning to the festival for her second time as an alto saxophone player. Calder Stokes, a tenor saxophone player, went to Boston for the first time and said, "It was a really

cool experience getting to see other bands play because it gave me real insight on the standards of high school jazz." It is most definitely the place to be if you love jazz and we are grateful for Mr. Christensen giving us this opportunity. "Boston was an incredible experience to have as a jazz student. The appreciation for music, atmosphere created, and opportunities to both watch and play music created an exciting, fun trip that I am grateful to have had before leaving for college" said Alberto Buzali (VI).

Another Step Towards a Collaborative Cafeteria

By OLIVIA BECKER (VI)

While myriad changes around Fieldston have occurred this year that engendered blowback due to perceived lack of collaboration and community input (the logo, the website, and of course, the removal of the beloved scoreboard in the 500s corridor), the kitchen staff's new initiative veers in the opposite direction.

To usher in a wave of communication, encouraging students to provide feedback on food and new ideas, Amy Van Tassell, Resident Director of Dining Services, and her hardworking team, have set up a "Share Your Thoughts" board adjacent to the tray disposal window.

A few of the suggestions include: "Maybe you could add guacamole to the salad bar permanently," "Need more pad thai," "Tacos (hard shell) please" and "Please offer oatmilk." Soon after adding a suggestion to the board, one can expect to find a written response to their question, typically along the lines of "Thanks for your suggestion, we will look into it!" The bottom of each suggestion sheet also asks "On a scale of 1-5 (1-Needs Improvement, 5 - Fantastic) please rate your overall experience."

"The comments are anonymous as our goal here is to be more aware

of the needs of the community," Van Tassell said. "What is the community going to eat? What do the students and faculty want?"

Van Tassell and her team understand the importance of a wholesome and substantial lunch. "In the past, so many people were not getting what they wanted to eat," she said. "Our goal is to be more interactive. To communicate to everyone that we are here for you and that it is your lunchtime. Why not make it a place where you want to be and help nourish you with food you want to eat?"

The kitchen staff prioritizes open communication.

"The board helps a lot," Eddie, who is in charge of morning coffee and breakfast, said. "It makes us see what the kids and faculty want, which is very important. Some things have already been adjusted because of it."

In response to the post-ins suggestions, edamame has been added to the salad bar and more yogurt options are now available.

The new post-its in the lunchroom, which invite communication and feedback, are one step on the journey to making lunch a time that both literally and figuratively serves the entire community.



The feedback board in the cafeteria.

OLIVIA BECKER

Gillette Attempts to Recognize Equality

By JOSH SUGARMAN (IV)

On January 13, the shaving company Gillette rebranded themselves through a highly controversial and reflective TV advertisement, which aimed to highlight toxic masculinity. The ad focused on topics such as bullying (physically and verbally), sexual assault, lack of empathy and the ignorant mindset that some men possess.

The ad attempted to emphasize the need for men to look inward and to ruminate on the example they are setting for the younger generations through the phrases, "Is this the best a man can get?" and "boys will be boys."

Of course, this ad sparked tremendous criticism as well as support from all over, and it served as an opportunity for Gillette's competitors to capitalize on the controversy. Actress Rosanna Arquette, comedian Pete Dominick, and co-

founder and editor-in-chief of The Huffington Post, Arianna Huffington, all offered their support in highlighting the awareness and stance that Gillette took on such a prevalent and all-consuming issue.

Others took to social media platforms to share their outrage and feelings of being personally attacked. One man stated that "being a man is not a disease nor a pathology. It is grotesque to repeatedly ascribe collective guilt onto half of humanity known as men."

Piers Morgan also attacked the ad, calling it, "pathetic," and he said that the concepts illustrated in this ad are "driving a war against masculinity." Dollar Shave Club, a competitor to Gillette posted against the ad on Twitter in an attempt to welcome new customers, who they anticipated would switch to their company after the ad aired.



Traditional Gillette campaign.

ZOOPPA BLOG

As members of the Fieldston community, we have seen the impact and lack of regard for the well-being and rights of others that men have historically demonstrated through positions of power. Our History and English classes have provided us with primary sources written by men, for men, which exclude and disregard those who do not identify as men.

We have seen how citizens have

stepped up throughout history and taken a stand to end societal patterns of abuse, coming together to fight a toxic system. Many are fed up with this perpetual entitlement and justification for the actions and abuses executed by men, which Gillette successfully demonstrates in their ad. So no, boys will not just be boys. And no, this is not the best a man can get. But yes, men can get better.

The Success Behind Fieldston's Digital Music Department

BY JULIAN SEINFELD (IV) AND KIRAN PAREKH

Digital, or electronic, music is a standout amongst the most special and innovative arts at Fieldston. The class enables students to enter a room full of equipment, under the guidance of Russell Currie, to compose their own masterpieces on Garageband, Logic or Reason.

Occasionally, the room is open during free periods, so students can continue to work on what they started earlier in the day.

"It's a way to get feelings out and relieve stress," Calder Stokes (IV) said. Stokes also believes that Currie's support has helped him advance and further his music career as a whole. Stokes is most well known for his soundcloud hit "Catastrophe."

In addition to Stokes, there have been a lot of other successful artists from Fieldston, whose success stems from their work in the digi-

tal music room. Flight School is a group of Fieldston alumni, among them Jack Resnick (class of 2018) and Zaj Vidal-Burgie (class of 2016), that have published songs on well-known platforms, such as Spotify, with over one million views. Their hit songs include "Pieces" and "One Day (feat. Angeline)."

Felix Gottlieb (VI) and Daniel Cross (VI), the artists behind Crossfire, released their first single "Reach" on SoundCloud last year, which now has over 13,500 streams. Gottlieb took his first digital music class with Currie in seventh grade.

"I've always been fascinated by instruments and how their unique shapes produce distinct sounds," Gottlieb said. "As a kid I played piano, trumpet, and tried to teach myself guitar, which are all instruments with different shapes and different sounds. I fell in love with

digital music because it gives musicians the ability to create their own unique instruments and sounds by simply tweaking knobs on a synth or adding vocals to a sampler."

Gottlieb said Currie believes in a hands-on, "learning by doing," approach to teaching digital music. He does not give lectures to the class, but instead allows student to experiment with music software on their own, offering help to students individually throughout the class period. However, in Currie's other classes, such as music theory, film scoring and composition, Currie gives more traditional lecture-style classes.

Currie does not assign homework, which Gottlieb said is why so many students are passionate about and pursue digital music outside of the classroom.

"I think by never assigning

homework or giving deadlines for projects, Currie has cultivated an inner drive in his students to not make music to fulfill a requirement for a class but rather for their own enjoyment," Gottlieb said. "Naturally, Currie's students want to share the enjoyment they find in making and listening to their own music with the rest of the world. I believe this is the reason why so many of Currie's students go on to share their music on streaming platforms such as SoundCloud and Spotify."

Fieldston's digital music program is extraordinary in the breadth and depth of its resources, and its fantastic leadership from Currie, leading students to major success in the competitive music industry.

College Athletic Roundtable

BY MIA MCCOBERY (V)

Last month, Shai Goodman and Andrew Garcia, two Fieldston alumni who both graduated within the last five years, came back to campus as guests at a roundtable focusing on the college life of an athlete. Given that they were both recruited to college, they both shared a little bit about their personal experiences with recruitment and how they got to where they are today.

Goodman is in her fourth year at Occidental College in Los Angeles where she plays on their girl's lacrosse team. She's been playing lacrosse for many years and played on Fieldston's team during her high school years. Garcia graduated two years ago and is in the middle of his sophomore year at Bates College in Maine, where he plays golf. Gus Ornstein, Fieldston Athletic Director, also shared some input during the roundtable. He, too, was a college athlete who later went on to play in major sports affiliations before coming back to his home school to run the sports department.

For many high school athletes, there are a lot of concerns when they begin to think about what it means to commit to a college sports team. They have a variety of worries, specifically balancing practice along with completing school work and having an active

social life. One of the biggest topics Goodman and Garcia touched upon during the roundtable was the idea of academic and team commitment balance.

"School and studies can sometimes be a grind, but I just learned to adjust. I've noticed girls [on the team] actually do better academically during the school year because [playing lacrosse] teaches us to be diligent," said Goodman.

For Ornstein, his sports college experience was slightly different. He pointed out the distinction in the way athletes need to manage their time when at a division 1 school versus a division 3 school.

"Division 1 schools are a different type of commitment, especially if you're on a scholarship. If you're on a scholarship, the team kind of 'owns' the players, and then you can't miss a single practice or life session, which makes creating school class schedules a little harder," said Ornstein.

Even though Goodman, Garcia and Ornstein pointed out some of the hardships of balancing sports life and school schedules, they did not want to deter any prospective college athletes by discussing these difficulties. Goodman and Garcia followed up by acknowledging how helpful and encouraging college

staff and advisors are with managing an athlete's schedule.

"Your coach is a great person to talk to. They are not only good sports motivators; they help you get your work done during a busy time," said Garcia, agreeing that talking to prominent figures at the college and in his life helped him through balancing his college life.

The roundtable also focused on recruitment and strategies on how to get your name out there for colleges to recognize you. Goodman, Ornstein and Garcia all strongly encouraged to utilize coaches and department heads to help you get in contact with colleges. Goodman encourages students not to feel let down when rejections inevitably come, but keep putting yourself out there even when it seems scary to do so.

Garcia also pointed out, though, that once you are committed and have been recruited, you have to continue to work just as hard as if you weren't recruited, yet.

"You can't just 'fall off' once you actually get on the team. [You have to] understand there are a lot of athletes who are going to be better than you. You see other people who put so much work into the sport as well, and sometimes you will lose," said Garcia.

Some of the roundtable was also spent discussing the competitiveness of being a college athlete.

"As a Fieldston athlete, I sometimes longed for a little more competition. Now, as a college athlete, I'm waking up at 5:30 am 3 days a week to lift. It's way more intense, but doable. For any athlete, you have to adjust to whatever program you're in," said Goodman.

As the roundtable began to wrap up, there was one last question all three roundtable guests were unable to decisively answer: When you're faced between picking a good college but not playing versus picking an "okay" college and knowing you'll play, what do you do? The only advice given was to do what is best at the time and understand that is a very personal decision. Athletes have to ask themselves what is important to them at that specific moment.

"It's a big learning situation," Goodman said. "If you want to be successful in your sport, you need to really want to be there, be present and accept the responsibility you've committed to."

Faculty Profiles: Reyes & Carey

John Reyes: Dean & Mentor

Tom Carey: Librarian Hero

By JACK NOVECK HOLMES (IV) AND ARI ROSENSTEIN (IV)

After 30 years of teaching at Fieldston, senior dean and form III geometry teacher John Reyes has solidified himself as a beloved member of the community by faculty members and students alike. As we sat with him in his office filled with images, posters, and letters from previous students, he recounted the memories of his journey to entering the admired role he now holds at Fieldston today.

Reyes grew up in Chelsea of Lower Manhattan, yet at the time the area was far from what it is today. "It was mainly an area for poor factory workers," said Reyes. Reyes explained that being a New Yorker is an essential trait to his identity, with his parents, grandparents and even great grandparents having all spent their lives in the Big Apple.

Reyes didn't have much interest in teaching for the majority of his academic life. After studying topics like economics, regional planning and software engineering at college, Reyes was in search of a job to keep him steady once out of school. He found a temporary job as a teacher and from there his career took off. "I suddenly realized I loved this stuff," he said. "I loved working with kids, it was all I talked about... I suddenly realized that was what I wanted to do." Reyes would shift his profession to business, gaining a job at a prestigious firm. Yet this experience was no match for the excitement he gets to this day from teaching.

Reyes' arrival at Fieldston was neither wanted nor anticipated, he explains. Reyes' college professor, Stanley Taback, was the one who pressured him into grasping this now coveted opportunity. "I came here because my professor, who I love, insisted that I come work at Fieldston," says Reyes. "I thought, 'I have to get him off my back, so I'll go for the interview to check it out.'" Little did Reyes know, he was beginning one of the most significant journeys of his life.

Reyes' work ethic at Fieldston has become an essential factor to why he is valued by so many of his students. Alex Weiner (III), a math

student of Mr. Reyes, expressed her appreciation of his guidance in the classroom, saying, "Mr. Reyes goes through homework from past nights or the night before to make sure that all of his students understand the material before our quizzes every Friday. He makes sure we know he is open to meet with any student if we need help. He knows how all of his students work and makes sure we don't rush during tests or stress ourselves out." Such praise from students makes it no surprise that 10 years into his Fieldston career, Reyes would become a dean.

There's much more to Reyes than just a valued faculty member. Behind the dedicated dean is an amateur astronomer, a photographer and an obsession with rock and roll. Reyes' hobbies have even reached out to his own students. "I was a runner. I loved to run distance and I could run 12 miles. Up until two years ago I even would do cross country with some of the students." While Reyes still holds these passions close, over the years the workload has continued to build up, forcing him to put some of them to rest. "I've found that Fieldston takes up a lot of time. There is always a lot of work to do and unfortunately, as a result I've lost touch with a lot of things I used to love to do."

As his time at Fieldston reaches the 30 year mark, Reyes reflected on the extraordinary experience of working as a dean at the school. The most rewarding aspect of such an experience? The raw connections which he builds with his students. "It's real relationships," he said. "I don't forget any of my kids. I've enjoyed all 700 or more of them, even the ones who give me the hardest time," says Reyes with a chuckle. "I've created real friendships and connections that feel meaningful. That's what sticks out to me."

By VICTORIA THOMAS (III)

Tom Carey's face is one of the first you see when you walk into the new Tate library. His job entails many responsibilities including ordering books and determining their placement, communicating with vendors and keeping book records. You can always find him working in the library, never stopping to rest.

However, Carey's job stretches beyond checking books.

"Outside of these tasks, I assist the rest of the library team with student inquiries, teacher projects and front-desk operations," Carey said.

He helps students with any problems they may have, and his undeniable kindness does not go unnoticed.

"Not only did he help me find books for my project in Panama, he also assisted me in printing my homework when it wasn't working on my computer," Maya Johnson (IV) said.

Something as complicated as printing at Fieldston is nothing in comparison to the many duties Carey fulfills.

Aside from helping students with assignments, he constantly offers his knowledge and care to

anyone who needs it. Carey goes above and beyond to make sure the students at Fieldston have all the resources they need.

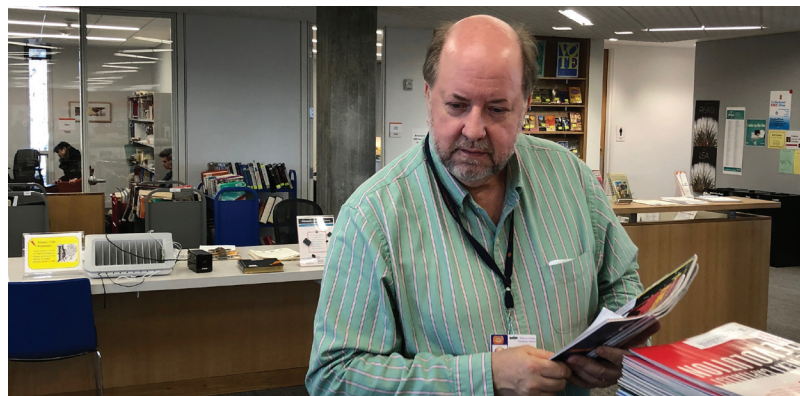
"Mr. Carey gladly helped me research the Spanish Civil War for Mr. Montera's history class," Gabe Hostin (V) said. "He's very interested in Spanish and History, so he was enthusiastic about the whole thing."

Carey is often seen helping students on projects and helping them get work done efficiently and thoroughly. Whether it's a topic he knows a lot or nothing about, he's always there to help.

"Carey always puts a smile on my face when I come into the library and is truly passionate about his job," Sarina Chitkara (IV) said.

Whether you need to find a book on World War II or simply have questions about an assignment, Tom Carey is someone you can always count on.

"Mr. Carey is always there to help me on whatever project no matter how obscure it is," Iva Knezevic (V) said. "He always has a smile on his face and is willing to go above and beyond than what's asked."



Carey (above) and Reyes (below).

FIELDSTON NEWS PHOTOGRAPHERS



Mental Health Assembly

By **IZZY ROTH-DISHY (IV)**

On Thursday, December 6, the Fieldston community gathered together and listened to a powerful assembly program entitled “Mental Health and Stigma at Fieldston,” organized by the Active Minds club.

The assembly opened with a brief video about the stigmatization of mental illness, followed by addresses given by K.C. Cohen and Jeffrey Cox, the directors of student wellness. Next came speeches from the Fieldston community about personal experiences with mental illness and stigmatization. These speeches addressed a wide range of mental health issues such as anxiety, depression, alcoholism, ADHD, and allyship.

Others delved into issues such as the stigmatization of mental illness in communities of color and losing loved ones to suicide. After leaving the assembly, it was clear the assembly had struck a chord: the halls were filled with chatter, students

talked about being moved to tears and declared it the best assembly of the year.

“It was a wonderful experience being a part of such an important assembly and the response has been really positive,” said Indira Nadasen-Gladstone (IV), who delivered a speech on behalf of a peer in the assembly.

The speakers were very brave to share their stories.

“I decided to participate in this assembly for the community, but also for myself,” Mallory Holst (V) said. “For myself, speaking at the assembly was a step in my process of battling mental health. After struggling for over a year to be in a happy and comfortable place, where I am now, it was time to take a breath and take a weight off my chest by sharing my story. It will be a day to remember for me, a day in which I took a breath, and allowed myself to be proud of the obstacles

I have overcome, it was a major achievement in my ongoing battle. I cried all day, but as I said in my speech, I cried out of joy for all the hard work I have put in and the tremendous amount of love, support and connection I felt from every single person in the auditorium.”

In terms of the overall impact of the assembly, Holst said “I spoke in the hope that my speech would reach other in a way that they could connect with the experience I have been through, and understand more about themselves. One of the hardest parts about fighting mental illness is feeling as if something is wrong with because you are different, and no one else feels or acts the way you do. If I could reach just one person in the whole auditorium who feels they have a similar experience, I would be so grateful that they know they are not alone in their fight.”

Later that afternoon, a survey

was sent out to students and faculty by the Active Minds club as a follow-up to the assembly, asking about students’ own experiences with mental health as a follow up to a similar survey that had been sent out a week earlier, which was mentioned frequently throughout the assembly.

Along with the survey was a note which read: “Thank you so much for the overwhelming positive response to our assembly today. This shows just how much our community wants and needs these conversations.”

The Mental Health assembly is sure to be remembered, and the important conversations it has sparked will hopefully continue and bring mental illness and stigmatization to the collective Fieldston consciousness.

Op-Ed: The Politics of Personality

By **REBECCA KOPELMAN (IV)**

Politics is one of the only professional fields in which inexperience is considered an advantage. The image of a fresh outsider breaking into the opaque, buttoned-up world of government to shake things up is no doubt an appealing one, but it proves dangerous in a larger context.

When people without any political ability or experience are trying to enter powerful positions, they don’t have any past successes or knowledge to help make their case. Instead, they come in armed only with their personalities, promising to “keep it real” or “drain the swamp,” identifying with the everyman and setting themselves apart from “typical politicians.” It’s all well and good to be a well-liked politician with a winning personal brand — in addition to policies and ideas, an entire persona is being sold to voters.

Expert leaders have an uncanny ability to connect with their followers. Once somebody has established themselves as relatable while also deeply desirable and enigmatic, his or her followers want to be a part of the movement.

This deep (and inherently one-

sided) bond is difficult for outsiders to comprehend, which only strengthens the connection — followers find themselves in an “us versus them” mentality, where they are the special ones, the chosen who see in their respected leaders what nobody else can. At this point, the very nature of democracy is being compromised.

Once followers are invested in a politician’s personality, things like policy and values become all but irrelevant. A dedicated, cult-like fanbase can put a person above criticism, rationalize away inconsistencies and crush any resistance.

Demagogues rise from these situations. Appealing to the emotion, identity and ignorance of the people (rather than their logical, nonpartisan values) is a common tactic of this sort of leader, and it is a slippery slope on the path to totalitarianism.

President Trump, for example, has proven himself to be incredibly charismatic and greatly skilled in the realm of antagonization of the “other.” He said of Mexican immigrants, “They’re not sending their best. They’re not sending you. They’re not sending you. They’re



President Trump at the State of the Union address.

USA TODAY

sending people that have lots of problems, and they’re bringing those problems with us. They’re bringing drugs. They’re bringing crime. They’re rapists. And some, I assume, are good people.” Note the contrast between those bringing drugs, crime and problems and “you,” the followers, who feel that they are being fought for by their fearless leader.

Additionally, and perhaps most importantly, Trump can dismiss criticism and even twist it into something positive. “Any negative polls are fake news, just like the CNN, ABC, NBC polls in the

election,” he wrote in a Twitter post. “Sorry, people want border security and extreme vetting.” His dedicated voters will believe this sort of thing, because they want to — that’s how this relationship works. They admire his personality, so they will accept his word for truth, his policy for justice.

This sort of political tactic, although nowhere near new, is taking hold of our current culture. Now, the appearances and idiosyncrasies of candidates are scrutinized more than their ideas, a reality television star is our president and leaders can grow to be above the law.

2019 Women's March: Third Time's the Charm?

BY ASHER ZEMMEL (III)

On Saturday, January 21, 2017 people took to the streets all over the world to protest in support of women's rights and against those who seek to limit all human rights. The marches were a resounding success as they demonstrated the anger and passion of the world. Widespread Women's Marches were organized once again in 2018 and 2019. Despite their popularity, this year's marches, taking place on January 19, were not without scandal.

Many felt that the leaders of the Women's March, specifically Linda Sarsour and Tamika Mallory, were anti-semitic. These allegations stemmed from their public support of the policies of Louis Farrakhan, a man who has referred to Jews as "termites."

The 2019 Women's March happened after a major Democratic victory in the midterm elections and in the middle of a highly unpopular government shutdown. The marches were supposed to serve as a platform-booster for Democrats in 2020. Instead this controversy caused many organizations, including the Democratic National Committee (DNC), to withdraw their names as partners. Others

to withdraw their names include: the Southern Poverty Law Center, Emily's List, the Human Rights Campaign and NARAL pro-choice America. Instead of being a launching pad for the Democrats in 2020, the 2019 Women's March became a politically toxic and divisive demonstration, so divisive that there were two "rival" marches in New York City.

The third Women's March came with controversy but it still provided an important message of hope and resistance. The purpose of the march was not to debate America's foreign policy towards Israel or allegations of anti-semitism; its purpose was to provide a platform of unification for all people.

Some chose to still participate in these demonstrations, like renowned feminist Gloria Steinem. New York Senator and 2020 Democratic Presidential candidate Kirsten Gillibrand condemned anti-semitism at the 2019 Des Moines, Iowa Women's March. She noted both the importance of and the controversy surrounding the Women's March, and managed to get an endorsement from a prominent Jewish figure in Iowa. Gillibrand protested



Women's March attendees.

ALLI WESEMAN

against Trump and anti-semitism and inspired hope in what many seemed to view as a protest movement falling apart at the seams.

Regardless of whether or not the 2019 Women's March is viewed as a success, it is certain that it is still a politically significant movement.

Cyntoia Brown Granted Clemency

BY DILLON SHEEKEY (V)

Listening just to listen is no longer part of our second nature. It is rare that anyone will listen to a friend or family member only focused on what they have to say rather than what one can impart on them. We are so desperate to assert ourselves that we have lost sight of what others have to say. Yet Cyntoia Brown relied on this productive listening to grant her clemency.

Drug abuser Georgina Mitchell placed her daughter, Cyntoia Brown, up for adoption, but Brown ran away from her adoption family at age 16. Moving in with a pimp, Brown was raped and forced into prostitution. Things would get even worse for the young woman.

In 2004, Brown accepted 150 dollars to spend a night with Nashville real estate broker Johnny M. Allen. Claiming she thought Allen reached for a handgun, Brown shot the broker in his sleep before fleeing with money and two guns.

Two years later, the Davidson County jury convicted Brown of first degree murder and aggravated robbery. Ineligible for parole until 2055, Brown was given a life sentence in Tennessee Prison for Women.

Despite the sentence, Brown's case was not a lost cause: listening gained her traction. "The biggest change in the trajectory of my life, which had seemed so hopeless at one point, began when someone chose to listen to the experience of a 16-year-old girl," Brown said. "It was only from others listening that my second chance was possible."

Brown's harsh sentence was acknowledged in a documentary in 2011, but it wasn't until this past year that her story gained unprecedented attention. Celebrities like Kim Kardashian and Rihanna showed sympathy towards Brown, granting her a strong legal team and widespread support. Brown's

picture became recognizable as the world fought for a more lenient sentence, posting their concerns on Instagram and Twitter.

In the discussion of Brown's clemency, activists not only stressed the physical abuse that she endured, but her enthusiasm to complete her education and turn her life around: Brown earned a high school diploma and an associate degree with a 4.0 GPA, and she will earn bachelor's degree this May.

"Imposing a life sentence on a juvenile that would require her to serve at least 51 years before even being eligible for parole consideration is too harsh," said then Tennessee Governor Bill Haslam, who left office on January 19. "Transformation should be accompanied by hope."

Sure enough, on January 7, Haslam granted Brown clemency, shortening her sentence to 15 years.

Now 30 years old, she will be released on August 7 with supervised parole.

While Brown's clemency is a ultimately a victory, it is important to remember that her story is one of many, and that most of these stories do not end with clemency. As a juvenile traumatized by sexual assault and prostitution, she is a reminder of the ever-present problems in our criminal justice system and the need for reform.

As Brown said, we must continue to listen to other stories: "The smaller, quiet voices can speak the loudest if we would only listen."

Commentary: Venezuela Struggles to find its Democratic Values

By DAVID PORGES (IV)

If any nation's turmoil has brought me more cheers, fears, and jeers it is the crisis looming over the South American nation of Venezuela. Home to one of the largest oil reserves in the world and one of the poorest economies in the world as well. The nation masked as a continuation of South American socialism has turned into a desperate depotic autocratic nation hell bent on the repression of its opposition which seems to be rapidly growing. Out of the starvation and anarchy of the Venezuelan citizenry, the opposition to president Nicolas Maduro has seized its chance to finally bring democracy to Venezuela. This new fever comes from an unlikely source and brings this story to a truly David and Goliath twist. A thirty five year old industrial engineer named Juan Guaidó.

To try to illuminate this rather sudden change in the stability of Venezuela (or lack thereof) after decades of the populist leader Hugo Chavez's socialist rule his presidency was over after his death and his right hand man, Nicolas Maduro, took charge. This led to a horrific economic collapse and a mass famine that has yet to be solved. This chaos became even more complicated when the opposition coalition led by then leader Leopoldo Lopez gained a supermajority of the seats and unseated the socialist majority from power. These socialists, under Maduro's direction, then formed their own national assembly and attempted to buy, cheat, and even arrest those dissenting opinions. One of the casualties of this was Lopez who is now serving a seventeen year sentence and is currently under house arrest in Caracas. When Lopez was first able to communicate with the outside world the first name in 2018 he issued to become the leader of the coalition for the unified opposition, was the engineer turned federal deputy (equivalent to an American representative) Juan Guaidó.

Wednesday seemed to be the inevitable day that things would change, and it did; Juan Guaidó was sworn in publically in Caracas as the interim president of Venezuela. With recognition of his presidency by the U.S. and countless



Venezuelan dictator, Nicolas Maduro with members of his nation's military.

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US-backed Venezuelan opposition leader, Juan Guaidó.

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other western democracies. Those nations with autocratic leaders such as Syria, Turkey, and Russia, alongside proletarian governments like China and Bolivia have backed Maduro citing the Guaidóan Revolt as a U.S. backed coup.

In an open letter to the people of Venezuela and the world, President Guaidó wrote "Our road map is clear: stop the usurpation with national unity and through external and internal pressure; form a transitional government to open

channels for humanitarian assistance; restore the rule of law and the separation of powers; and call for free elections so all Venezuelans can decide their future." President Guaidó has called for action against the communist regime their, with many allies across the world rallying behind him, it is time to defend our brothers and sisters fighting for democracy and helping them secure their own future.

What Guaidó is doing is not a right wing coup backed by Trump

and America for foreign interests, this is a struggle for freedom, food, and a stable society. Guaidó's mission, and what should the interest of any freedom loving American is to bring democracy to an authoritarian regime. We should all lend our support and goodwill to this nation and make sure that the Venezuelan people win back their country from the communist regime that has plagued them for over two decades.

Op-Ed: Modern Anti-Semitism— Different Than You May Think

By ELIZA ROSS (V)

In 2019, anti-Semitism remains a widespread issue in the United States. Over the past two centuries, anti-Semitism has taken many forms, from discrimination and exclusion, to acts of direct violence against Jews. In a report released by the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) in February of 2018, it was noted that the number of anti-Semitic incidents which occurred in 2017 increased by almost 60 percent from the number reported in 2016. The ADL report detailed that this is “the largest single-year increase on record and the second highest number reported since ADL started tracking incident data in the 1970s.”

This sharp increase in anti-Semitism raises the important question of how anti-Semitism manifests itself in the United States today. What is modern anti-Semitism? Historically, anti-Semitism in America was most intensely expressed by right-wing groups, from exclusionary policies at all-white organizations to the extremism of the Ku Klux Klan. Today, the alt-right continues to promote hatred against Jews. With that said, The ADL report noted that although anti-Semitic incidents have increased overall, acts of violent anti-Semitism decreased by forty-seven percent from 2016 to 2017.

The overall increase in incidents in the United States is partially due to a noticeable surge in the number of anti-Semitic incidents occurring in schools and on college campuses across the country.

In the past two years, the most well-known acts of violent anti-Semitism in the United States were the 2018 shooting at the Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and the “Unite the Right” rally in Charlottesville, Virginia in 2017, while cases of Jews being targeted and killed for their ethnicity remain prevalent in Europe. According to the European Commission, Jewish communities in much of Europe “live in fear of being at the receiving end of discrimination, abuse, and even violence.”

While the aforementioned acts of violence against Jewish people were a result of far right extremism, more common forms of anti-Semitism

today come from both ends of the political spectrum. Social media, an integral part of modern life, plays a large role in the dissemination of propaganda by both the far right and the far left, as well as other anti-Semitic sentiment.

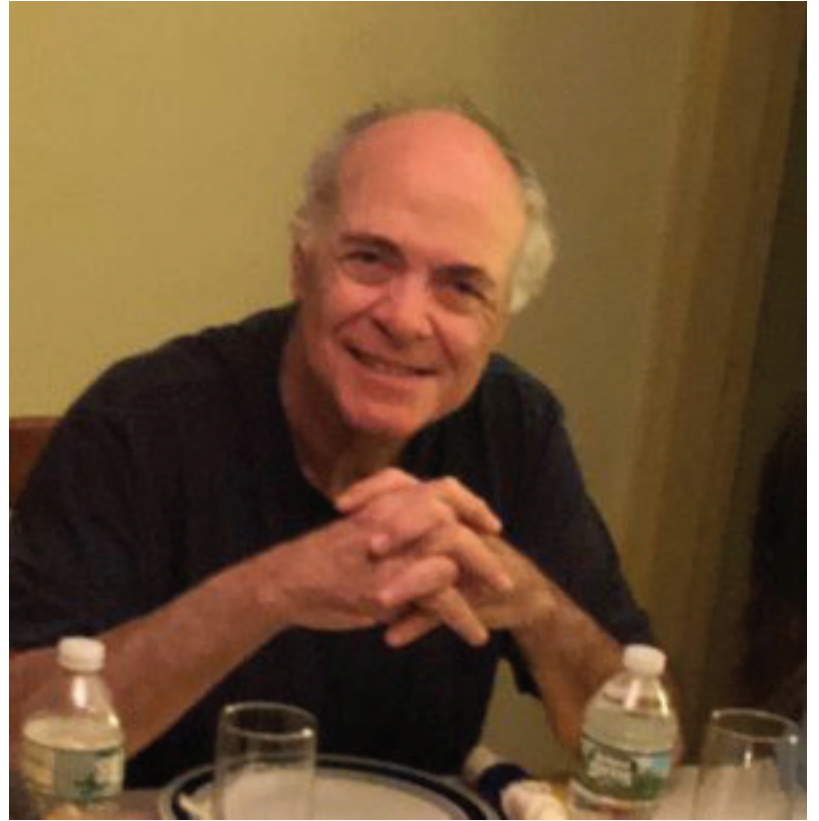
“Social media, which has been touted as a vehicle to bring us closer together has actually augmented anti-Semitic sentiments that are always ready to surface. Both the far right and the far left have used it as a platform to spread anti-Jewish and anti-Israel hatred,” said former Fieldston history teacher Joe Kleinman. “While I’m a believer in free speech, I think the tremendous increase in anti-Semitism and racism, both in the U.S. and Europe, is alarming and social media has unfortunately played a significant role in that increase.”

Anti-Semitism on college campuses is a continually growing issue and has become increasingly problematic in recent years, as shown by the 2017 ADL statistics. In November 2018, following the massacre at the Tree of Life synagogue, a memorial mural created by students at Duke University was defaced with a large swastika painted over the Star of David.

A mural created at Pomona College following the shooting was also defaced, but in a completely different fashion. The mural read “Anti-Semitism exists. Acknowledge it.” with a Star of David painted next to the lettering. Then, the words “Palestine exists” were painted over the mural along with a Palestinian flag. In an interview with Jewish News Syndicate, a Pomona College alumna said of the incident, “this mural has nothing to do with Israel. Its message should not be controversial in any way. I loved my time at Pomona, and I love the Claremont Colleges, but their inability or unwillingness to address anti-Semitism is ridiculous.”

Anti-Semitism from the far left often comes in the form of anti-Israel sentiment and the demonization of Israel.

“From the far left, and I’m sorry to say, in many cases now in mainstream liberalism, anti-Semitism is often cloaked in an anti-Israel dia-



Former Fieldston History teacher, Joe Kleinman.

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Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh.

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tribe, comparing Israel’s handling of Palestinians to Nazi Germany and its extermination of Jews. The Boycott, Divest, Sanction (BDS) movement is a good example of that,” Kleinman said.

It is not criticism of Israel that is anti-Semitic on its own. No government is perfect and not everyone will agree on all government policies at all times. However, criticism of Israel and anti-Israel sentiment quickly becomes anti-

Semitic when only the Jewish state is singled out-- Israel is time and again subject to delegitimization by individuals and entire nations. No one is questioning Russia’s right to exist, or that of Egypt. Criticizing only Israel for issues that nations across the world face is a double standard at best.

Modern anti-Semitism has many parts but the most concerning aspect is the lack of awareness of what it really looks like.

Winterfest Photos

