

The Fieldston News



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The Fieldston News: What We Represent and What We Hope to Become

BY: THE EDITORS

In 2020, the 24-hour news cycle has never felt so important, and simultaneously, so contentious. The “truth” has become a bragging point instead of the baseline and hyperpolarization is virtually unavoidable. Recently, to underline this fact, one hundred and fifty three eminent American journalists, artists, authors and academics, penned a letter in Harper’s Magazine, claiming that forces of “illiberalism” are gaining traction in our society. “The free exchange of information and ideas,” they wrote, “is daily becoming more constricted... censoriousness is also spreading more widely in our culture: an intolerance of opposing views, a vogue for public shaming and ostracism, and the tendency to dissolve complex policy issues in a blinding moral certainty.” The critiques of that letter also raised questions about what a good society, or a liberal society, or a fair society, or a democratic society had overlooked, missed, undervalued or ignored: at a time when the Covid-19 pandemic is destroying old illusions and street demonstrations are bringing down racist battle flags and challenging

police abuses, opportunities seem to be in the street instead of in the First Amendment. How do we bridge these gaps? Freedom of the press matters. Journalism matters. It’s a profession so vital that it has a whole constitutional amendment declaring it to be an “essential worker” in the fields of the republic. And it comes as part of a larger package containing the rights of speech, worship, petition and assembly. Right now journalism is under assault at home and abroad, from the political right as well as the political left, from authoritarians as well as well intentioned reformers. Autocrats in Russia, China, Turkey, Hungary, and The United States, are gutting older forms of citizenship and human rights, jailing, “re-educating,” threatening, provoking violence or murdering. In the midst of this international assault on the press, these attacks upon the role of journalists and more broadly, the place of journalism itself in our lives— we see it fitting to clarify, re-examine, the role of The Fieldston News, one of many student publications, in both the context of our school and of our democracy. The pandemic revealed

that the inequalities of our system were greater than we had imagined. It was no longer theoretical academics pointing fingers at “systemic racism,” it was the daily indictment of the morbidity and mortality reports that were saying people of color were being disproportionately impacted; our inequalities are killing us. Rising death rates offer tangible proof that we are all in danger because we refuse to change. In the midst of these paradigm shifts, The Fieldston News, which has long been focused on the parochial, has changed its shape and turned its lens outwards. The editors have turned a printed newspaper that came out once every three weeks into an electronic newspaper with almost daily postings that will use a printed copy as an archive, once we return to campus. Writers, photographers and staff ventured into the streets of a city that was at the epicenter of plague when remote reporting wasn’t enough. The News began posting during the first part of the quarantine in March, and has continued posting through the summer months. So, what exactly are we? On a most fundamental level,

Note From The Editors:

What tone can one possibly strike for an examination of 2020? Do you begin with the overall scale of misery and disarray? Narrow down to the strange and surreal specifics? It’s difficult to choose as this year has normalized the abnormal. The news cycle in 2020 has had the lifespan of a mayfly, making media organizations role more critical than ever. To consider this past year’s events is a dizzying and grueling task; Australian Wildfires, Covid-19 pandemic, Kim Jong Un death rumors, Ruth Bader Ginsburg’s death, West Coast wildfires, a multitude of high profile celebrity deaths, Black Lives Matter protests, Harvey Weinstein verdict, murder hornets and an outrageous presidential election. It’s a peculiar feeling to have perhaps the most traumatic and dramatic year reduced to a three sentence list. The following is a compilation of all Fieldston News articles during the apex of 2020. Each piece captures this hellacious year and its effects on Fieldston from April-August. We begin in April with a crashing stock market, the apocalyptic sight of empty subways, stores shut down and toilet paper nowhere to be found...

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Local Government in NYC Disrupted by COVID-19

By: REBECCA AUBURN



CITY COUNCIL MEMBER ANDREW COHEN

As New York City has become an epicenter of the Coronavirus pandemic, local governments' ability to serve constituents has been curbed by the state order for non-essential employees to work from home. The NYC government has launched an online COVID-19 tracker for members of the public to report their symptoms or the status of others with/in contact with the virus. For other questions and concerns, the public can contact their local officials through email, phone

or social media in lieu of being able to walk into a neighborhood office.

The New York City Council has suspended all meetings and hearings, leaving City Hall and 250 Broadway empty as city officials work from home. City Council Member Andrew Cohen represents District 11, which Fieldston is in, and has been keeping up constituent services virtually. Residents of the district have been facing issues with local government upkeep like

mail collection, and grappling with the new economic policies that are still largely unclear. These include rent relief, unemployment benefits and free wifi for students trying to access virtual learning. As an intern for the Council Member, I have been working remotely as well, mostly obtaining information and sending emails. The upkeep of local government services is essential because while the federal government is passing massive stimulus packages, the interpretation and implementation is left to local officials. Additionally, disseminating information to the public about how to receive these benefits and how they apply to each individual is a large undertaking.

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Local life in New York State has been widely disrupted by the virus, and many governmental procedures have been pushed back. The presidential primary has been moved back from April 28 to June 23 because of the stay-at-home order. This shift means that the June 23rd ballot will include Congressional, State Assembly and State Senate primaries alongside the Presidential vote. New York State has similarly extended tax filing deadlines, and extended car safety and emission inspections deadlines.

City Council Member Andrew Co-

ECFS Launches New Financial Aid Initiative in Response to Pandemic

By: ELIZA ROSS

Monday March 30th – Head of School Jessica Bagby in conjunction with the board of trustees sent a community-wide email today, outlining a new initiative to support students and families who have been severely impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. The virus has taken a significant toll on New York City in recent days and weeks, harming both the city's population and its economy. "The Orange United Fund is meant to help families whose circumstances have changed in recent weeks and may remain tenuous as we all live in some uncertainty about the days and months ahead," the letter read. The correspondence specifically notes that the fund will give aid to families who need "tuition relief for the 2020-2021 school year or other support now to help bridge the gap associated with school costs, technology support and food insecurity." The email included donation information for the fund, and asked that community-members make contributions in order to "help every ECFS student continue to have access to the transformative educational experience [Fieldston] offers." The correspondence also included positive reinforcement for the enormous efforts being made by both faculty and students to stay connected and

continue to learn and grow under such extreme circumstances. "We are inspired by the ways members of our community are staying connected during these challenging and isolating times, shining a light on our strength," the letter read. Additionally, today was the first day of remote learning following spring break making the message particularly timely on the part of school leadership. The email closed with a statement of appreciation for the goodness of the Fieldston community and thanks for any and all continued support of ECFS, financial and otherwise. "We deeply appreciate our community's generosity throughout the school year and thank you for joining in this particular endeavor to support all of our students, both today and tomorrow, given the extraordinary circumstances," read the closing statement. Families who have been impacted economically by Covid-19 and wish to request grant can do so confidentially through an email account set up for the nascent Orange United Fund.

Because ECFS is an intentional, mission-centered community — one we all chose and that chose us for our shared values — we believe conscience calls us to respond to a range of concerns and needs.

Email correspondence from Head of School Jessica Bagby and the ECFS Board of Trustees

Orange United Fund

The Fieldston News

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Governor Andrew Cuomo: A performance review

BY: MAIA HANDWERKER



COURTESY OF THE NEW YORK TIMES

Several weeks into the Covid 19 pandemic, and four weeks after the closing of The Fieldston School campus and two weeks into the beginning of “remote learning” for the spring 2020 semester, just as The Fieldston News was going online, senior Maia Handwerker and faculty advisor Bob Montera sat down to discuss the performance of New York Governor Andrew Cuomo during the emergency.

Montera: I was so glad when you contacted me about your urge to write about Andrew Cuomo. In my mind he has been conducting a master class in political leadership. There is something in his handling of this crisis that is worth study-

ing. What alerted you to the fact that something important was going on?

Handwerker: Amidst the catastrophe currently afflicting the state of New York, and specifically the city of New York, with thousands of our residents filling up the hospitals and hundreds dead, Cuomo is a symbol of security. He makes Americans Feel, but he especially makes New Yorkers feel that there is someone here navigating this uncontrollable situation. When everyone feels like the sky is falling, Cuomo keeps his cool. Some days he does it in his suit. Other days he goes without a tie. Sometimes he appears in a well pressed golf shirt.

Formal or casual, he exudes confidence.

Montera: Appearance matters. He appears daily, usually between 11 and 12. He is always flanked by the American flag and the flag of The State of New York. The reporters in the room are safely spaced apart from each other. And Cuomo always seems to have a rotating group of health experts, like Health Commissioner Dr. Howard Zucker, and public officials attending. It’s a very democratic space that is also modeling healthy practices. And I think you are right, he speaks to us especially as a New Yorker. He knows the boroughs. After all, he is a guy from Queens—my home

town—but he knows that each borough matters. He makes of point of naming the boroughs, naming the neighborhoods, naming the streets, naming the hospitals, naming the jobs brave people are performing. And then he makes the same connections for people in Upstate New York, Westchester and Long Island. We are all in this together and you will be looked after. What else strikes you?

Handwerker: There is something about Cuomo’s voice, his honesty, his knowledge and the way he analyzes the things he broadcasts to the viewers. The man knows what he is talking about. He has an extraordinary sense of the big picture as well as the small details. Yes, the situation is catastrophic, but Cuomo, it seems, at least gives the feeling that he is the best captain even when the boat appears sometimes to be sinking.

Montera: Some of that is his advocacy. “Respirators! Respirators! Respirators!” was his mantra at one point, followed by “Coordination! Coordination!” with the governors of New Jersey and Connecticut. He was pushing the federal government to move faster. He was talking about the disaster that was going to hit hospitals if we didn’t change our behavior. At the same time he showed that he was working with President Trump and Dr. Anthony Fauci and Trump’s team. I spoke with the president today. I urged the president. The president was being very supportive. What strikes me is how quickly political rhetoric fell off the screen. Cuomo praised in order to direct or groom

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What We Represent and What We Hope to Become (cont.)

we are an independent newspaper and our job is to showcase human voices and experiences—very often student voices and experiences—and those experiences are written by young writers. We are NOT the official voice of the students, we are not the official voice of the administration, we are not the official voice of any department or constituency, committee or club: we are not the sole mouthpiece of the school. Just as we have the right to capture in print every voice within our community, popular or unpopular, every member of the community has the right to write a letter to the editor expressing agreement or disagreement, which we would gladly publish. However, to imply that something should not be published because it is

not what people want to hear does not align with our values, nor does it follow any code of basic journalistic integrity. We report on what’s out there, not what people wish were out there. A newspaper that acts only as comfortable echo chambers is not doing its job. The news is rooted in the idea that well-informed people make well-informed decisions and are well-informed citizens. A newspaper contains within it “worlds”: objective news, news analysis, editorials, advocacy, human interest, investigative, long form, local color, culture, film, music, criticism, sports, letters, profiles, humor, cartoons, photography, graphics. Stories. Countless stories about the human condition. It

is inherently multi-perspectival and multi-disciplinary. Fact and opinion are far too often conflated, and we are just as guilty as any media organization of blurring the lines in our journalism. But we will make a conscious effort to separate the two. We are journalists at a “progressive” school—a term which in and of itself has been a battleground since its inception. It’s a theory of education and it’s a way of teaching that attempts to understand and bring out the best in the “whole child.” It’s also a series of assumptions about politics, with a long and proud history of being principled, contentious and hair-splitting in the pursuit of doing good and making things right. Sometimes it gets a little trendy. Sometimes it gets a little

self-righteous. Sometimes it runs the risk of being a little rigid, illiberal and intolerant. We strive to do better in the spirit of a true progressive education, not to maintain the image of one. Progressivism requires an embrace of new and unpopular voices, neglected, outcast or overlooked voices, however uncomfortable this may be. True progressivism welcomes dissent; it should never silence it. And finally, it is important to consider, that before we became a “progressive school” we were an “ethical culture school” that was part of the “ethical culture society.” What exactly does that bring into the mix? It means you learn to listen. It means you ask questions. It means you compare and contrast, construct and deconstruct, discuss and debate; you don’t indoctrinate.

Dr. Frans Beerkens: “The opportunity to make a difference outweighs the fear by a thousand.”

BY: DILLON SHEEKY

Every night at 7:00 pm, New York City erupts into a glorious earthquake of applause; young and old gather at their windows to clap, shout and bang on their pots and pans. It is a small action of appreciation for the thousands of health-care workers and first responders on the front lines combating the coronavirus.

“It really brings tears to your eyes, and you almost feel like you don’t deserve it,” Dr. Frans Joseph Beerkens — my cousin — says. “It’s unbelievable how much people are standing behind us and it gives you motivation to walk into your shift. I was on night shift, I would hear that on my way to work, and I would walk in ready to fight.” Beerkens, 29, is a first year resident at Mount Sinai Hospital in East Harlem. He grew up in Amsterdam after moving there from Washington, D.C. at the age of 5. He returned to D.C. as an undergrad and later medical student at Georgetown University.

Not so long after settling into his new job at Mount Sinai, the coronavirus outbreak struck and the city was devastated, leaving streets and restaurants vacant and apocalyptic-like. Today, thousands of New York City residents have died of the virus and models show that the death toll could topple 16,000 by the end of the outbreak. In only several weeks, New York City has seen a dramatic spike in COVID-19 reports, and communities of particularly low incomes — such as the South Bronx and Western Queens — have seen the most concentrated escalation of reports.

Harlem, where Beerkens works, has seen a 220 percent increase in flu related hospital visits as of last week. “The sheer volume of patients coming in with this is terrifying,” Beerkens says. Mount Sinai has implemented a number of measures to accommodate a surplus of patients and subdue the fear that Beerkens speaks of. Their huge main hall, usually spacious and unused for medical purposes, is now full of extra patient rooms. In partnership with Samaritan’s Purse, a makeshift extension of the hospital was constructed on Central Park’s

East Meadow near Mount Sinai’s headquarters; the site consists of 68 beds and 14 tents. The hospital is also enrolled in a program that sterilizes used masks and face shields. The staff wear their gear and PPE — personal protective equipment — throughout their entire shift. After, it is all shipped to a company that sterilizes them and redistributes the equipment to Mount Sinai or other hospitals.

“The hospital system in my opinion this week is really doing a tremendous job in trying to get ahead because that is what you have to do with these pandemics,” Beerkens says. “You can’t just react. You have to get ahead.” The outer community has also shown immense support of health care workers and responded to the necessity for more equipment. Hundreds of health professionals have flown in from all across the country. The United Nations donated nearly 250,000 surgical masks to New York City hospitals, and Tesla has donated hundreds of ventilators.

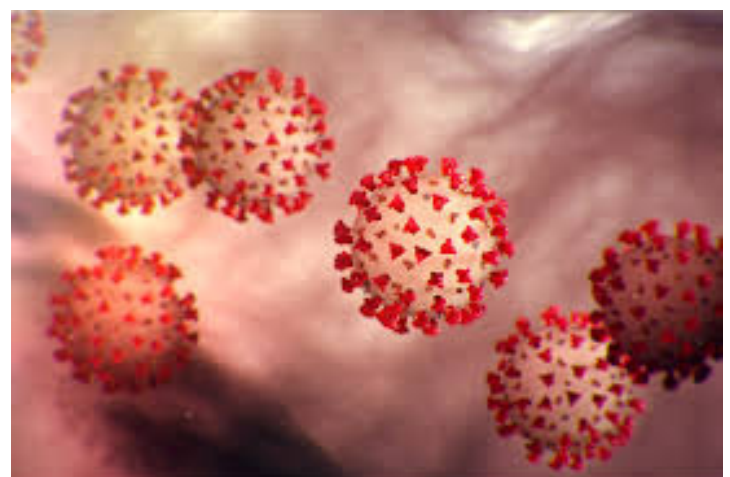
Individual donors and restaurants such as Shake Shack have also contributed, donating enormous shipments of food to the Mount Sinai staff. “It is really inspiring and impressive how much the country is coming together to help out,” Beerkens says. “It’s the basic human instinct to care for others, and that’s what’s coming out right now.” Beerkens is one of the many doctors that has to discuss the possibility of recovery with patients, usually older people with pre-existing diseases that will make it more difficult for them to return to normal health.

“We are having really serious conversations about what their goals are and if they want to go through all that pain and suffering both for them and their families,” Beerkens says. “It’s sad because a lot of people are realizing that they may pass a lot sooner than they anticipated.” Hospitals across the country have put in place policies that prohibit family members from visiting until the patient is in a severe condition and it is clear that they will not recover. Beerkens, in response, has made sure to call the families of his



patients every night. Beerkens, however, is seeing many of his patients improve. “One of my patients was not doing well and took part in a clinical trial that the hospital had. And he got better! That was a tremendous feeling of relief and happiness I’ll remember forever.” “Seeing yourself as a possible target while dealing with a lot of COVID positive patients is of course scary,” Beerkens says.

“But the opportunity to help out, be on the front lines and make a difference outweighs the fear by a thousand.” “The city, the state, the country and even the world are putting public health in front of the economy. We essentially stopped our economy with the risk of another recession all to protect the health of our citizens, all to help our hospitals be able to deal with this and all to prevent the millions of deaths that were initially predicted. That’s something that empowers my faith in humanity.”



Governor Andrew Cuomo: A Performance Review (cont.)



the president. At other times he was genuinely thankful. He was presenting us with a model of public service and non-partisan behavior.

Handwerker: The beauty of Cuomo, however beautiful something can be in our current state, is that he puts the facts in front of viewers, and the way it presents them – manages to reassure listeners. He knows how to take scientific data and to simplify it. He is giving us a course in the ABC's of Epidemiology and Emergency Management.

Montera: Cuomo also stresses that we are forever changed by this. Something in the way we behave is shifting profoundly. About two weeks ago—it was a stunning moment for me—Cuomo was talking about a meeting he'd had with all of the heads of private and public hospitals, all of the major health care providers. And Cuomo said something along the lines of “There are no more separate hospitals. We are now one system taking care of our citizens. A few days ago this would have been antithetical to their business practices. This is what we must do in order to survive.” And then he talked about this vast system in which doctors and nurses and other providers from Upstate would either come down to New York City to help or that city patients would be relocated to smaller towns where the epidemic hadn't hit. It strikes me that this might be the beginnings of a major shift in health care, not only in New York State, but in The United States. No one turned away. Resources and people redistributed in order to save lives. A system run for profit has now become the model of a system to benefit “the public health.” And over the next few weeks he went into greater detail about the day to day “inequalities” in our daily lives, that we somehow accept, along the lines of race, gender, age and ethnicity—those inequalities had become a kind of ruthless, inexorable killing machinery with this disease. Cuomo was pushing us to create an equitable system.

Handwerker: It's important to keep in

mind that Cuomo is already in the third term as Governor, but until recently he was considered, by some, an unsympathetic politician in the Democratic party.

Montera: He and DeBlasio certainly do not get along. He is not liked by the more left wing of progressive Democrats. Their politics of idealism, their social and political critique has often conflicted with his nuts and bolts pragmatism. Do you remember this was part of Josh Vlasto's Founder's Day speech a few years back? Rolling up your sleeves to get things done. And Cuomo as governor has been formidable. He has been combative.

Handwerker: Cuomo is the son of the late Governor Mario Cuomo and his brother is CNN commentator Chris Cuomo. A family of Italian origins who lived in Queens with politics flowing in their blood. What impact does that have on him?

Montera: That's a big legacy. Mario Cuomo was a major force in New York and national politics for decades. He was both a progressive and a democratic machine man. People forget that Mario gave one of the most memorable Democratic National Convention speeches in 1984. Amidst the despair of the Reagan years, an administration that was turning its back on civil rights, that was slashing research budgets, that was the juggernaut of privatization and deregulation, Cuomo was the opposition. Andy Cuomo grew up in that household and in that time. And Andy has had key roles in local politics, national politics and state politics. So he knows how these things come together or where the gaps are. Mario was a politician-philosopher with deep roots in theology. His opponents called him Saint Cuomo. In every press conference he would

pull in St. Thomas Aquinas or St. Augustine. Again, this was the conversation at the dinner table for young Andy. Speaking like a “philosopher” was never part of his persona. But something of that depth is beginning to show in him.

Handwerker: Cuomo belongs to the more conservative sector of Democrats, which is not exactly what is considered “voice” today. Montera: Especially not at Fieldston. Handwerker: And truth should be told: New York State, under his leadership, was not prepared for the possibility of this plague, and its response, much like that of the federal government, was late.

Montera: No one got it right. It was the perfect storm that widened all the existing fissures. Perfectly good public officials in China kept secrets; decent public servants ignored warning signs in Italy; epidemiologists were ignored; protocols were ignored; politicians were indecisive; young people partied. The New York Times has been running a brilliant series of articles on “what went wrong”—at all levels. But this also brings us back to your original point about leadership. Leadership is that quality, that voice, that emerges in the middle of the disaster that provides direction, makes sense, then begins to rethink the madness and to tame the chaos. In a sense, Cuomo has risen to the challenge. His “learning curve” was fast. He has been self-critical—so rare in politicians. At the same time, he has called on us, and himself to do something higher. And to be more forward thinking, more proactive, as you abandon “business and politics as usual.” Franklin Delano Roosevelt described The New Deal as “Action. Action. Action.” a series of experiments. If something didn't work, try some-

thing else. Well, maybe there is a new deal a comin. You know, the biographer Robert Caro is fond of saying that The New Deal really began in New York State under civic minded Governor Al Smith when folks like Francis Perkins who will become FDR's secretary of labor, and Robert Wagner, who will give us The Wagner Act. They were young “good government” public servants under Smith. Maybe New York is again a pathfinder.

Montera: As we close this out, what are the bigger take-aways that you have? How has the Cuomo performance made you think about either public service or this emergency or life in America

Handwerker: A major take-away for me is not to blame and wander into hypotheticals. There is a fear of public officials, and a lack of trust between (at least) the Fieldston Community and government officials. There is sometimes that feeling that politicians make too many compromises and are not “pure of heart.” But who are we to trust if there is no connection between the people and their elected officials; the people are the real losers in the end. The people who feel the most hopeless during these times are those who are assuming malicious intentions. Turn on the TV, listen to Cuomo, he is one of the beacons of hope in politics during this time. And even if we disagree sometimes, he makes us think and act.

The Science Behind the Virus: Covid-19 Explained by Fieldston Biology Teachers

BY: MARIA GRABOWSKY

While it is easy to panic and think of this disease as a curse coming after the entire human race, it is smarter to learn the science, its origins, its proper name and how it manifests in our bodies.

As for its proper name, the virus is called SARS-CoV-2 and the consequent disease, Covid-19. The term, coronavirus, originated from its crown-like appearance since corona translates to crown in Latin. There are many different types of coronaviruses and all of them originate in animals. “SARS, for instance, was transmitted from civet cats to humans while MERS jumped to humans from a camel. SARS-CoV-2 originated in a food market in Wuhan and subsequently spread from animal to human although it is unclear what animal it originated from although both bats and pangolins have been implicated,” said Paul Church.

What makes SARS-CoV-2 different from previous coronaviruses is its incubation period and mortality rate. The good news is that the fatality rate is much lower, but the bad news is that it is extremely powerful at infecting others. “It seems that it has a much lower fatality rate (SARS-CoV killed about 10% of people it infected) but it also has a longer incubation period and people are infectious before they show symptoms, if they show symptoms at all, which makes it much harder to track and contain,” said Katherine Kartheiser.

While the 2003 SARS-CoV had an incubation period of 4 to 5 days, the current virus has an incubation period of 2 to 14 days. Another unfortunate difference is that the SARS-CoV-2 proteins are better at infecting cells. “So you have a bit of a double whammy there — both better at getting into host cells and also better at “staying secret” while spreadable so that people are spreading it unknowingly,” said Kartheiser.

Once the virus enters your body, it is able to take over one of your cells as its host cell and replicate itself. “At that point, the host cell is used as a “virus factory” to make more virus RNA and also the necessary viral proteins. Each host cell continues to produce viruses, that can each go infect other cells, until it eventually dies,” said Kartheiser. The presence of cell death and debris eventually activates the immune system leading to ‘leaky’ blood vessels as well as an increased blood flow to the infected area. “When this goes too far, this can lead to the lungs filling up with fluid — this is what is likely leading to some of the most severe cases,” said Kartheiser. It becomes especially harmful to those with compromised immune systems or pre-existing conditions.

“Immune system function tends to decrease as we age but also you could be immune compromised for other reasons. You could have just undergone cancer treatment that obliterated your immune cells, or maybe you got an organ transplant and you have to take immunosuppressors to stop your body from attacking the organ to name just two reasons. But we are also seeing some people develop severe illnesses who are not elderly or immune-compromised, and don’t have pre-existing conditions,” said Kartheiser.

In terms of testing, Church says that there are currently two tests: one that tests for antibodies and the other for the virus itself. “The tests they are doing now are looking for active viruses in people’s blood. This determines who has the virus, whether they have symptoms or not. But in the long run, the testing is going to be for antibodies,” said Church. Church explained that, “If you have been exposed to the virus — whether you show symptoms or not — you will make antibodies and something called memory cells. These memory cells will make you immune to getting sick from this virus in the future so anyone with antibodies would be safe to go

back to work. Ultimately when they develop a vaccine, this will help you to develop antibodies and memory cells and thus protect you from the virus.”

No one knows how this epidemic will progress. According to Church, it will depend on contagion level, people’s compliance with the CDC recommendations, and how quickly a vaccine can be developed. However, even if we do follow the rules, the results will be daunting — Church says that it is likely that 100,000 to 200,000 Americans will die. “So take this pandemic very seriously, but do not panic,” said Church.

Rather than worrying about the stakes, it is pivotal that we focus on the now and doing the most we can to take care of all of those in need. “We shouldn’t be surprised to see news of more infections daily. We also can be fairly certain of what will happen if we ignore public health officials and don’t wash our hands or don’t socially isolate, we will see faster spread of the virus which will overwhelm the hospital system,” said Kartheiser. “In Italy, there was a huge spike in cases in a short period of time. Hospitals ran out of beds and basic supplies resulting in many unnecessary deaths. A flatter curve assumes the same number of people ultimately get infected, but over a longer period of time so that our hospitals are not overwhelmed,” said Church. Although this epidemic can seem uncontrollable, it is ultimately up to us to play a part. Kartheiser said, “We are playing a team sport called: protect our healthcare system and workers. This is a team sport. I can’t do this without you and you can’t do this without me. So everyone in the community has to pull their weight and do what they can to slow the spread.”



A VIEW OF THE FIELD HOSPITAL PUT UP IN CENTRAL PARK'S EAST MEADOW (TAKEN FROM A SOUTHWEST POSITION)

Coronavirus Field Hospital Assembled in Central Park’s East Meadow

BY: ANDREW ROSS

The coronavirus outbreak in New York City has led to the opening of a field hospital in Central Park. The hospital, which contains 68 beds, opened on Tuesday, March 31st, in the Park’s East Meadow. Volunteers from local churches and Samaritan’s Purse, an evangelical humanitarian aid organization, set up the Emergency Field Hospital in partnership with Mount Sinai Health System and the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Samaritan’s Purse shipped the beds to the makeshift hospital from their warehouse in North Carolina. Construction began on Sunday, March 29th, and took just two days

to complete, with volunteers working non-stop through the night to put up tents and put barriers around the area.

Jeremy Boal, the Executive Vice President and Chief Clinical Officer of the Mount Sinai Health System explained, “as part of its broader COVID-19 response, we have activated surge planning to expand our capacity to care for patients with COVID-19.” The hospital was deployed in order to create more space in local hospitals and to take advantage of a space (the East Meadow) left empty by the public as a result of social distancing guidelines.

The field hospital is made up of 14 large tents. Of the 68 beds, 10 of them are Intensive Care Unit (ICU) beds equipped with ventilators. The field hospital does not admit walk-in patients, it is simply an expansion of Mount Sinai, and patients who are to occupy the beds must first go to the main hospital building. The field hospital was designed to treat the most severe cases of COVID-19,

staffed by 76 doctors, nurses, lab technicians, and other medical professionals. The path that runs along the perimeter of Central Park’s East Meadow has been sectioned off, and part of the path is now filled with supplies should there be a need to expand the field hospital. Dozens of wooden boards are at the disposal of the volunteers, who are ready at any moment to construct another tent. Additionally, there is an ambulance parked on the pathway and police stationed around the East Meadow to keep individuals from breaching the hospital’s perimeter. The team of about 60 doctors will be guided by Dr. Elliot Tenpenny who has treated Ebola patients. New York City, being the epicenter of the COVID-19 outbreak in the United States, will likely see the creation of more makeshift hospitals as the city attempts to contain the outbreak.

‘Medea’ at The Brooklyn Academy of Music Review

BY: SOPHIA GUTIERREZ

Robert Montera’s spring semester students were charmed to find the curriculum coming to life across the boroughs; a modern adaptation of Euripides’ ancient tragedy *Medea* played at the Harvey Theater at the Brooklyn Academy of Music. These circumstances were agreeably uncanny as students had just begun the famed Greek tragedy as it opened at BAM. Australian playwright Simon Stone’s reworking of *Medea* starred high profile and talented real-life couple Rose Byrne and Bobby Cannavale, who helped to make it a hot winter ticket in New York.

Stone has augmented his classical source with inspiration drawn from the real-life case of Debora Green, a Kansas City doctor who murdered two of her children in 1995 while in the midst of a quarrelsome divorce. Byrne plays the *Medea* character, Anna, a soused in wine research scientist who has just been released from a mental institution after trying to poison her husband, Lucas (Cannavale). Lucas, childish and social climbing, leaves Anna for a younger woman (Madeline Weinstein), the daughter of his powerful boss (Dylan Baker), and the two boys are caught in the crossfire.

At the beginning of Stone’s *Medea*, Anna has just gotten out of a mental institution. Lucas, aloof, picks her up with uncomfortable tensions growing as they spend time at the family house with her and their technology loving children, Edgar and Gus. We soon learn the origins of this poisoning as “sexts” with Clara (Weinstein), the boss’s daughter who Lucas is having an affair with, are uncovered on his phone. After, Anna just does what any

woman would: she slowly doses him with poisonous ricin in his dinner every night to keep him close and get revenge. Ultimately, Lucas survives, divorces Anna, gets custody of the children and has plans now to marry and impregnate Clara. However, because this is *Medea* after all, these plans will go awry, and Edgar and Gus’s eternally infamous mother will get the revenge on those around her that they so rightfully deserve.

For this production, Bob Cousin’s set is a shining white box with large video screens, which make the play both contemporary and allegorical at once. As the show begins, a huge one lifts up, hanging like a billboard over the stage. We often see projections here starting out with steady close-ups of Anna’s face and then live action shots filmed by the children for their school documentary project. The rest of the stage is absolutely edgeless, blurring the space into a seamless white void. Stone’s multi media approach makes for a fascinating dimension to the complex psychological case study that becomes Anna’s story (like *Medea*’s).

With the screens, audiences never miss her mouth drawn up into a cavernous smile or her sweet tone of voice mismatching her wild eyed face. The multi media approach working in tandem with the minimalist stage design gives elements in this play much more of an established personality than our commonplace proscenium would. Towards the end, black ashes sift

down from the ceiling, representing the chilling emblem of the complete destruction of a family. With these ashes and the blood of those around Anna, the once dramatically vestal white stage is no more.

Conclusively, the stage and its pristine whiteness serve their purpose as a conception of immaculacy waiting to be defiled. The physical and emotional aspects of Stone’s creation add to the intensity of *Medea*’s inescapable end. Stone’s adaptation is a rich addition to the previous array of productions, most of which focus either on women’s oppression in some form or on *Medea*’s role as an outsider fighting against the elite. He is able to place in proximity Euripides’ classical motifs alongside his own objective portrayal of not just the horrors one woman will commit, but how society has forced her to commit them.

Fieldston students taking Montera’s “Ancient Greeks and Their Rivals” elective this spring took advantage of this production to see the Euripidean play they had just studied performed live, and they offered some insightful commentary and observations on Stone’s take.

“The juxtaposition of the original text and the modernization of Stone’s version was truly able to make for a deeper understanding of what Euripides was trying to convey for me,” Maia Handwerker (VI) says. “Stone’s obviously astute grasp of Euripides shines right through the writing.”

“I thought the death in the end

was a lot more peaceful than it came off in the original text,” Anya Dubner (VI) says. “This came as a shock to me as it wasn’t quite the dramatic punch or shock factor as when *Medea* flees the scene originally in her dragon pulled chariot after murdering a king, princess and her own two children. Although *Medea*’s death in the end may not have been as dramatic as the original, I believe there was power within the peacefulness of it. I thought, aside from the other modern motifs conveyed, the play overall was a soft commentary on today’s opioid epidemic. How it causes so much death and pain in the world in a discrete way that not enough people pay attention to. There were definitely some stark contrasts between Euripides and BAM’s interpretation, and one that stood out to me the most was the way her love towards the children was executed. At BAM, there was a more personable closeness to the children, and their relationship was able to be truly fostered. This contrasted Euripides where it felt like she despised him the whole time, and the emotional distress made it hard to show love.”

The serendipity of Stone’s production at BAM facilitated a wonderful opportunity for students to see curriculum enkindled in the real world, and for those lucky enough to have seen it, it was a real delight.

Hospitalized Coronavirus Patients: Efforts to Connect

Families Remotely

BY: NOAH GREER

Amidst the havoc that the 2019 Novel Coronavirus has wrought, many people are getting lost in statistics, news alerts, and press conferences. There have been 245,175 confirmed COVID-19 cases in the United States, alone, with more than 6,000 Coronavirus-related deaths. What is not fully recognized by many, as difficult as it may be to comprehend, is that the 6,059 deaths have been deaths of people. They are not numbers, nor are they simple statistics. These are 6,059 people who had families, friends, communities. They are people who lived lives, and they are not just numbers. What is perhaps most tragic about the Coronavirus Pandemic, is that not only are

people dying left and right but, more often than not, they are dying alone.

Due to the highly contagious nature of the Coronavirus, hospitalized patients are unable to see their loved ones, as the spread of the virus is too dangerous. As such, many with COVID-19 who are on their deathbeds are unable to say goodbye to their loved ones. Former North Carolina nurse, Adrienne Jukov, is one of the many people who are doing something to change this. Jukov has started a fundraiser on GoFundMe to purchase iPads and tablets for fatally-ill patients to remotely

communicate with their loved ones and say goodbye as they near the end of their lives. Many healthcare professionals have offered their personal devices as a means of communication between patients and their families. As compassionate as this is, it is troubling that this is happening, as it puts those healthcare professionals at an even higher risk of contracting the virus.

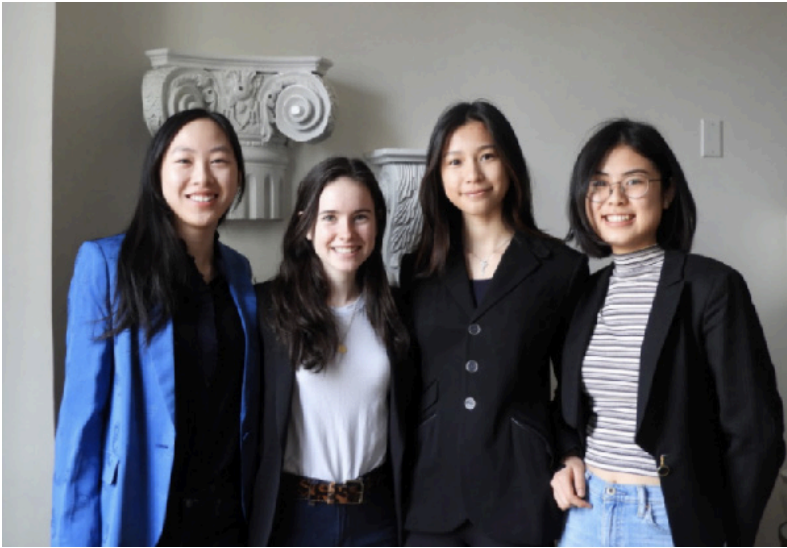
Jukov has a rather modest GoFundMe goal as of right now. She aims to raise seven hundred dollars to purchase a tablet for the University of North Carolina’s Rex Hospital and the WakeMed Hospital, both of which are located in Raleigh,

North Carolina. Over five days, five hundred dollars have been raised for this great cause, allowing Jukov to provide at least one unit to patients at the UNC Rex Hospital, thus far. She writes, “As a nurse, I know how important the connection between patient and families are, especially when they don’t feel well. Let’s bring them together again.” One doner commented on the GoFundMe page, “it never hurts to help.”

Although Adrienne Jukov’s fundraiser is a local effort, she brings up a very important point, that people are dying, and they are dying alone. Her fundraiser is only one example of a creative means of changing the fact that patients are unable to spend their last days connected to family.

Females in Finance in the midst of Covid-19

BY: OLIVIA POLLACK



Before the news of city-wide school cancellations due to COVID-19 was announced, Fieldston's all-female finance team already knew that they would not be going to San Francisco for the regional finale of the Knowledge@WhartonHighSchool Investment Competition (KWHS). The team, aptly named Females in Finance, is composed of four women: Rosemary Jiang ('21), Olivia Pollack ('21), Natalie Chen ('22), and Vivian Lee ('22). On January 17th, Rosemary, the team leader, got an email in her inbox stating that the team had advanced to the next stage of the competition. Olivia recalls, "my family was in the car when we found out the exciting news and the shouts of joy could definitely be heard all across the highway." To the team's delight, they were one of the 12 teams out of over 500 to advance to the Region 3 finale in

San Francisco. The finale entailed flying to San Francisco to give a 10-minute presentation followed by a Q&A to a panel of experts. And so, the team immediately began to work on the presentation.

The women met every Monday and Sunday to craft the script and presentation. After a first draft had been created, the team presented to a group of teachers and classmates to receive feedback. But, their efforts had in part been in vain. When news of the Coronavirus began to spread, the team had immediate concerns. In the following weeks, the first US case was found and then later, a case in California.

The team had been looking forward to and preparing for the competition for months. However,

they were well aware of the growing health concerns of COVID-19. "The team's health and safety is our number one priority. Canceling the trip was a tough but necessary decision to make," says Rosemary. The team opted to send in a video in place of an in-person presentation. Later, KWHS officially canceled all in-person presentations and announced that the competition would be conducted virtually.

Luckily, the Females in Finance Team had already started putting together their video and were well ahead of the curve. The team was able to shoot their group introduction the day before their school was shut down. For the rest of the video editing-process, all communications were done through Facetime. Virtual communication posed numerous challenges.

Unfortunately, they could not reshoot the introduction, as meeting in-person was not plausible. Additionally, the members had to record their voice-overs separately which resulted in inconsistent audio quality. Nonetheless, through meticulous editing, a video was produced and submitted on March 16th, well before the deadline.

In addition to the competition, the team's outreach initiatives have also been stunted by COVID-19. In an effort to spread their mission, the team established the Girls Investment Finance & Trading club (GIFT) in the Fieldston Middle School. The club

met every Monday with the goal of helping middle school girls become financially literate. But, this project is being challenged by the viral outbreak and will now be conducted online, either through live chatting or recorded videos. Simultaneously, Females in Finance had planned to bring GIFT to the Goddard Riverside Community Center in April. But given the discouragement of public gatherings in New York City, the start date had to be postponed until late May.

However, with little knowledge of how COVID-19 will continue to spread, the future of GIFT at Goddard is uncertain. Nonetheless, Females in Finance will continue to work together to combat these challenges. The team is currently maintaining and expanding its online presence through its Instagram and Facebook (@femalesinfinance_ecfs) as well as its website femalesinfinance.ecfs.org. Despite these setbacks, the group will continue to spread its mission: to help the next generation become financially literate one girl at a time.

The members of the ECFS Females in Finance Club were recently named Global Finalists.

Higher Air Pollution Levels Proven a Factor of A Higher Death Rate due to Covid-19: The Science Behind

BY: EMMA SISKIND

As the coronavirus pandemic continues to unfold, certain geographical regions around the world are experiencing relatively higher levels of mortality from Covid-19. While there are many unknowns as to why some regions have higher death rates, one important reason is air pollution levels. A high presence of air pollution in populated regions is a cause for chronic respiratory illness due to accumulated exposure. This causes people with underlying respiratory illnesses to be among the most vulnerable to the coronavirus. According to a new study conducted by Harvard University researchers, the increased presence of micro air pollutant labeled as PM2.5,

which is emitted from vehicle exhaust and coal power plants, has recently been connected to an increase in chances of dying from the virus. The researchers studied a sample from 3,000 counties in the US consisting of 98% of the US population. The study showed that counties averaging only a microgram per cubic meter more of PM2.5 in the air had a 15% higher Covid-19 death rate. A similar study in Italy, conducted by environmental scientist Dario Caro at Aarhus University in Denmark and health researchers Prof. Bruno Frediani and Dr. Eduardo Conticini at

the University of Siena in Italy, also made the correlation between atmospheric pollution and the mortality rate of the coronavirus. Their research focused on two of the worst affected regions by Covid-19 in northern Italy, Lombardy and Emilia Romagna, which are also two of the most air-polluted regions within Europe. These studies help explain why certain geographical regions experience higher mortality rates from the coronavirus. In the US, for the past several weeks a major hotspot of the coronavirus has been in the state of New York, and within the state another hotspot has been New York City. When

looking at New York City, and more specifically Manhattan, the Harvard analysis predicts that an average of 248 deaths related to Covid-19 could have been prevented by just a single unit reduction in the borough's average particulate matter level. In Italy, the study shed light on why Northern Italy has been harder hit than the rest of the country. Caro states, "All over the world, we're seeing different approaches from countries' authorities, in countries' general public health outset and in the standards and readiness of different countries' national

Passover Pandemic: A Zoom Phenomenon

BY: NOAH GREER

The Coronavirus Pandemic has caused for many social and medical adjustments. Although it may seem as if the country and the world are at a standstill, time continues to move on, as the days on the calendar keep ticking by. Most events across the country have been canceled, with non-essential workers being told to stay home and the vast majority of the country's schools transitioning to virtual learning programs. This has caused a rise in the usage of virtual connection software applications, such as FaceTime, Skype, Zoom, and Google Meets in replacement of in-person socializing. Although the majority of events can be rescheduled in the face of this crisis, certain dates are more set in stone than others. Among these are religious holidays. This is a very meaningful week for many observant Jews and Christians. The first two nights of Passover, or Pesach, were April eighth and ninth. Passover is a very important holiday for the Jewish community, as it is of much religious significance and it acts as a time for families to come together amidst busy lives. The Passover dinner, or the Seder, is a time for Jewish families to read prayers and discuss what is happening in

one another's lives. A photo of a virtual passover in progress. Courtesy of Noah Greer Sadly, due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, accommodations had to be made for many Seders to happen, this year. Although a bit hectic, my family had a successful experience with our Zoom seder. By connecting three households, between two different cities, my extended family members were all able to see each other's faces on this meaningful holiday. Although certain aspects of the holiday were lost due to the situation, the important aspects remained the same. We may not have been eating the same food, nor were we able to "break off for little side-conversations," according to my own mother, in response to my aunt who did not particularly understand this aspect of a Zoom phone call. Nonetheless, the adjustments did not take away from the key aspects of the holiday, we celebrated and recognized the importance of the holiday, but more importantly, we were together.



Will They Play? The Future of The MLB Amid Covid-19

BY: NOAH GREER

For many Americans that are stuck inside due to the COVID-19 pandemic, quarantining has become especially frustrating with no professional sports to watch on television. Naturally, a bit of stir-craziness is expected when one is stuck in their home for weeks, and even months at a time. Nonetheless, boredom has hit particularly hard for baseball fans in the absence of America's favorite pastime, baseball.

On March 11th, the National Basketball Association engaged a domino effect between professional sports leagues when they officially suspended the 2020 NBA season. Quickly following, on March 12th, the National Hockey League announced that they were to suspend the 2020 NHL season, indefinitely. Hours later, the National College Athletic Association canceled their men's and women's basketball tournaments that were set to begin only a few days later. On the afternoon of March

12th, several professional golf, and tennis tournaments were postponed or canceled. Lastly, on the evening of March 12th, Major League Baseball announced that they were planning to suspend the rest of its Spring Training games and were going to postpone Opening Day, which had been set for March 26th.

The loss of baseball, along with other professional sports, only deepened the sadness that surrounds the time that we are living through. The lack of sports, coupled with the necessary precautions of isolation and social distancing, only furthered the sadness that surrounds the COVID-19 pandemic, with the loss of life and livelihood. Recognizing the role that they play in keeping peoples' spirits up, managers, players, and league commissioners of all different professional sports leagues have tried to keep fans updated, as regularly as possible.

Many potential plans for the future of the baseball season have been floated to the public, all suggesting a shortened season with televised games, with the largest caveat being that there will be no attendance for fans. The first potential modification for the season that was suggested by the MLB was to have the season played at Spring Training stadiums, in Arizona, Texas, or Florida. Another possibility was to have the season played exclusively in the desert in Arizona. However, these ideas did not carry much support and sent Rob Manfred, the commissioner of the MLB, back to the drawing board.

The most recent blueprint for the 2020 Major League Baseball season is organized to eliminate travel as best as possible for baseball organizations. The plan is to ignore the six, five-team divisions for the shortened season, effectively eliminating the National and American Leagues.

There is a plan to have three, ten-team divisions. There would only be inner-division games, with no official plan for the postseason. This means that teams would only play against the nine others in their league. There will be no fans in attendance, but games will be televised, perhaps returning some optimism to the lives of baseball fans, across the country.

Hospitalized Coronavirus Patients (cont.)

members and other loved ones. Her fundraiser should be, and easily can be replicated all over the country. Thousands of Americans have lost their lives to the Coronavirus, but We have the ability to help make the remaining days of hospitalized Coronavirus patients better, by helping them remain in contact with their loved ones.

The Docking of the USNS Comfort in New York City

BY: ANDREW ROSS



THE USNS COMFORT BEING ESCORTED UP THE HUDSON RIVER

The USNS Comfort docked in New York City on March 30th at 10 A.M. The Navy's hospital ship was sent to New York in order to prevent the overcrowding of hospitals. The intent was for people with non-coronavirus related health issues to be sent to the ship so that hospitals would have plenty of space to treat Covid-19 patients. Equipped with one thousand hospital beds and twelve fully functional operating rooms, the USNS Comfort has aided the military in crises all over the world, and it has quite a history. The 40+ year old ship last docked in New York City following the September

11th terrorist attacks in 2001. Hundreds of first responders were able to receive treatment on the ship. The USNS' most recent voyage was to Latin America where it provided aid to the people of countries with under-resourced healthcare systems.

The USNS Comfort being escorted up the Hudson River. The USNS Comfort was not built as a hospital ship. In 1976, the National Steel and Shipbuilding Company built the massive boat as an oil supertanker. Formerly the SS Rose City, the U.S. Navy bought two ships, both supertankers, in 1987. The

Comfort's twin ship, the USNS Mercy, is currently docked in Los Angeles. The boat is massive, standing upright at one hundred feet tall, nearly nine hundred feet long. When floating, it displaces around seventy thousand tons of water. Despite its original oil super tank build, it has been fully transformed into a hospital ship.

The medical facility of the ship contains a CT scanner, dental clinic, x-ray machines, an optometry lab, and coolers capable of storing thousands of units of blood. Notwithstanding the size of the boat, however, there were only twenty patients being

treated on the ship as of last week. The USNS Mercy only holds 15 in Los Angeles. Michael Dowling, the Chief Executive Officer of Northwell Health has spoken about the ship's lack of effectiveness since its deployment to New York City. Dowling said, "It's pretty ridiculous. If you're not going to help us with the people we need help with, what's the purpose?" He also said, "If I'm blunt about it, it's a joke." It appears that hospitals are continuing to struggle with the COVID-19 outbreak, and unfortunately, it has become evident that the USNS Comfort has not been the greatest help.

Air Pollution (cont.)

healthcare systems. But this doesn't explain the prevalence and mortality rates that we're seeing in northern Italy compared with the rest of Italy. This feeds hope that we may have found yet another factor in understanding the high mortality rate of the disease in northern Italy." Now that it is clear that increased air pollution levels lead to a higher death rate from Covid-19, a critical question is to determine which populations are most vulnerable. Though there are additional factors that contribute to a region having a high mortality rate due to the virus, such as density and level of precaution, community, the recent studies point living in a region with high-levels of air pollution contributes immensely. Residents who have long protested the

For example, a small parish in Louisiana, St John the Baptist Parish, has been a big news story this week, as it now has the highest death rate per capita for Covid-19 in the country. But, why? With a population size of around 43,000, density is not part of the answer as it is in a hotspot like New York City. However, the parish is home to a group of chemical plants and oil refineries, which has caused high levels of air pollution in the parish for years. Though the reasons for the high death rate in St John parish is a topic of controversy to many in the community, the recent studies point to air pollution as the likely culprit.

polluted air, have taken to protesting as a way to express their anger at the high death-rate in their parish. While we still have a lot to learn about the coronavirus, the Harvard and Italy studies illustrate that air-pollution contributes to the severity of the disease and explains higher mortality rates in certain regions that have a higher level of air pollution. Therefore, these regions need to take even more care to prevent the spread of the disease in their communities. Longer-term, we as a society need to address high levels of air pollution as a public health concern in our communities.



What it's like at New York's Drive in Covid-19 Testing Site

BY: NOAH GREER

Driving through the first of five primary checkpoints at New York's only drive-through COVID-19 testing center in New Rochelle is like entering a cryptic movie. The directions are quite easy, bring with you an I.D. and a piece of paper with your appointment code. Aside from knowing what is needed to receive a test, no other information about the COVID-19 testing process is available until you drive up to the first checkpoint. The first checkpoint is on the small bridge that connects mainland New Rochelle and Glen Island. There are five New York State police vehicles that are stationed here, along with flashing signs that read, "WINDOWS UP" and "I.D. READY". As one drives along the marked paths of Glen Island, the number of armed State Troopers and Military Officers become increasingly visible, displaying the severity of the pandemic. As you drive further

made it abundantly clear to the passengers of each car, "Do not roll down your car windows." The line of cars continued to drive through Glen Island and my family's car had nearly reached the third checkpoint station, at which point I was approached by a State Trooper who told me that photography of any kind is banned on the island, and he insisted that he watch me through the car window as I deleted the photos that I had planned to use for the purposes of this article. After doing so, he looked at me – still through a closed window – and said, "now delete them from your recently deleted photos." I was told that the trooper was following the protocols involving a "medical procedure where the rules of privacy come into play, and the representation of an individual without their consent is unethical" I did manage to take one photo, later on, on the road leading off of the island, that involved objects and not people. Despite this nerve-racking experience, we continued to the checkpoint where we verified

through Glen Island, the visuals only become stranger. Cameras are pointed at just about every possible square inch of the testing site. At this point in the process, in the car with my brother and mother, I was made quite nervous by these details and the eerie feeling that accompanied driving in a line of ten-or-so cars at a steady five miles per hour. After going around a bend in the road where the view is obstructed by trees, a huge compound of white tents became visible. What makes these tents seem so out of place is the beautiful scenery surrounding it. Just across the water is the Harbor Club, a large country club. In the largest of these tents, a stockpile of medical supplies is visible, primarily crates of COVID-19 tests. At every stop thus far, New York State Troopers

our identities. We were only a few hundred feet from the tent, next to where drive-through tests are performed. One volunteer traffic guard seemed to notice the concern on our faces, and cracked a joke through our car window, "I used to coach NASCAR." At the fourth checkpoint, a soldier dressed in military uniforms was stationed to reconfirm the identity of each car's passengers. The fifth, and final checkpoint is where tests are conducted. Professionals in hazmat suits go to each car passenger, one at a time, and ask for the windows to be rolled down. They proceed to list the common reactions to the test, which include tearing up and gagging. Each Coronavirus test only takes a total of fifteen seconds but is considered somewhat painful. A sample collector, similar to a lengthy Q-tip is placed into one of the recipient's nostrils. The Q-tip is moved to the back of the nasal cavity, where it is moved around for a ten-second



A PHOTOGRAPH OF THE SIGNAGE TAKEN THROUGH A CAR WINDOW AT NEW YORK'S ONLY DRIVE-THRU COVID-19 TESTING CENTER.

count. Afterward, the test is removed from the nose of the passenger and is stored in a bottle, which is eventually sent to a lab. Results typically arrive in two to three days, online. Even when driving off of Glen Island, police cars are stationed on the road, making sure that each tested individual safely exits the testing center.



COURTESY OF NEW YORK TIMES

Fieldston Student Government Elections 2020: Meet the Candidates

BY: THE EDITORS



Hello friends, peers, teachers, and administrators, we'd like to introduce ourselves —

we're Zane Kleinberg and Tommy Moss. Our goal in writing this is two-fold: to present our platform, and to elaborate on what differentiates us from the other candidates. In our current situation, each of us couped up at home, we thought it would only be right to address the topic of unity. It's immensely challenging right now to feel connected — to feel as if we're part of an entity bigger than ourselves. While it might be months until we're reunited, let's remember that we're all in this together. No matter what candidates' names you decide to fill out on election day, it is our hope that we will come out stronger than ever before.

First, we're going to touch on our main goals, aspirations, and initiatives during our presidency. Proper nutrition is vital to be a productive student. That's why we'd like to integrate student selected meals into lunch as part of an effort to expand our meal options. We've all been there — we've gotten to the cafeteria, found out that we aren't interested in the day's options, and ended up going to Riverdeli five days a week. It's time to change that. Now, to focus on the elusive practice rooms. They're great spaces that are often left out of discussions. We'd like to discuss the possibility of converting one of the rooms into a recording studio open for walk-ins or bookings. Fieldston has many blossoming stars, and we'd like to aid them in their craft. To that extent, we'd keep the remaining rooms open all the time. There have been a few terms that have been thrown around a lot recently.

Communication, transparency, conversation, clarity, et cetera — we'd like to demystify them. At first glance, it would seem as if everything

that could be done has already been done. What would we do, talk more? Incorrect. We possess the tools to make cutting edge applications, and that is how we will tackle this issue. There has never been a truly unified Fieldston application that focuses both on our school and the students who attend it. This app will have an FSG component where you can instantaneously message us, and we will make it our mission to reply within twelve hours.

As well, the app will contain a forum section where students can discuss current issues, post announcements, and communicate with each other. Above all else, our goal is to make school a more inclusive, comfortable, and safe space for everybody. While our initiatives outlined above are substantial, our mission to create and maintain a safe environment for every student is paramount. We're not the most traditional choice for presidents, and we're not necessarily who you'd expect to run. However, we're the most driven, dedicated, and motivated candidates in the field. Our unique perspectives make us the optimal choice and are what differentiate us from the other candidates. The decision lies with you, thank you.



Hello! We're Daniel and Ayana. We hope you've been enjoying our posters! Here's a little about us and why we're running: We love Fieldston and all it has to offer and we want to make your experience as a Fieldston student the best it can be. Daniel is the captain of BVS, a 7th grade STS leader, and started

the Big Brother Program; Ayana is the captain of VVB, runs the Big Sister program, and is an SOCM organizer. We'd be super excited and grateful to have the opportunity to serve you as FSG co-presidents. We'll give it our all! Our campaign is centered around encouraging conversation, building community, and creating change.

We want the student body and administration to have an open and transparent relationship. For too long students have been denied information, input, and sadly, blindsided by the administration. We know this is a serious issue that must be addressed. As presidents, we'll make sure the student body is aware and informed about the issues confronting our school, ensure open lines of communication between the administration, board, and student body, and make sure students have a say in the decisions that will impact them and their community.

We'll strive to make Fieldston a carbon neutral community. Highschool green roofs, solar panels atop the gym building, white roofs, green A/C systems, and a green-power purchase agreement are all part of our plans to reduce Fieldston's carbon footprint and impact on the environment. We all need to engage as a community to help save the planet.

Students' mental health is very important to us. We want to increase the diversity of our school counselors, create a mental health committee, and have an annual event to celebrate mental health and foster inclusive, honest conversations. Our focus will be caring for students at Fieldston. We know that among the most stressful parts of high school are tests and major assignments. We'll make sure you're never overloaded with major assignments by enforcing the teachers' assignment calendar and creating rules that limit how many major assignments you can get per week.

Caring for you also means having more fun, school spirit, opportunity, and an easier and richer academic life. We'd work to implement seasonal pep rallies, open library study rooms,

online alternate credit forms, and annual ALP's. And yes, of course, we need a grab and go station, new outdoor lounge furniture, Buunni Coffee discount, and speakers on the Field because... why not?

With us as presidents, FSG will be more dedicated than ever to Fieldston's mission of progressive education, ethical learning, and academic excellence, and we'll continue the work of SOCM to make Fieldston an even more diverse, equitable, and inclusive community for all. We've already met with faculty and members of the administration to discuss ways to implement our plans. We are dedicated to fighting for you, your voice, and your education. After all it's in our DNA (Daniel 'N Ayana... get it? Sorry we know it's cheesy)



Nina and Calder here! We're thrilled to introduce our FSG platform. We have known each other since Fieldston Lower, where our friendship bloomed in soccer-filled recess days. We share a passion for creating change in our communities, through Nina's work in startup companies and art, and Calder's journey with music and entertainment. Over the past 11 years, Fieldston has been our home and our unique experiences have allowed us to recognize the problems in our community. Our vision is to amplify students' voices through interviews, google hangout meetings, and surveys. We want to bridge the relationship between Fieldston presidents and the student body because ultimately, we're all Fieldston students. Get ready for Tea Time with Calder and Nina: monthly roundtable discussions

with tea and scones to get your input, along with advisory visits and anonymous surveys. One of our peers is currently developing an app where you can anonymously leave those brilliant ideas that pop up at 2 am. We're here for students in every grade.

That means freshmen adapting to high school who feel intimidated walking in the hallways surrounded by upperclassmen, sophomores who feel stuck between being an under and upperclassmen, juniors freaking out over the workload, and seniors juggling the entire college process. We know what it's like to be in your shoes. Scared to share opinions that may be deemed as "wrong"? We're looking to revamp assemblies by including speakers with different perspectives to create a more open-minded environment. Post-assembly discussions will be mixed between grades and presentations will be student-led with engaging workshops and activities.

Just want a peaceful experience in the bathroom, or shall we say "aquarium"? We're working with the secretary of public spaces and facilities staff to improve our public spaces. Every week, a facilities member will introduce themselves and will rate the cleanliness of each public space. These ratings will be translated into points and pooled together with the points advisories receive through advisory challenges, color wars, hallway decorations, and more. At the end of each semester, the advisory with the most points will receive school store discounts.

Sick of wasting money going off-campus for food? Hungry in between classes? Just want a decent cup of coffee to keep yourself awake? We're currently working with the AVI food staff on a meal plan that fits your wants. You'll be able to fill out daily feedback on the lunch of the day while offering suggestions for future cafeteria offerings. We're also working to partner with Buuni to provide its coffee roasts at school, so you don't have to pay \$5 for a cup of coffee or run off-campus in between classes. We also know students get hungry, which is why we want to bring back snack time!

These are just a few of our ideas, but stay tuned for more. All our plans have been pre-approved by

faculty so they can become a reality with your vote. We'll be stoked if you vote Nina and Calder for FSG!

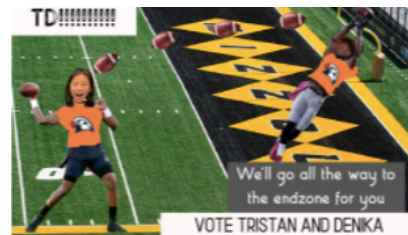


We're running for FSG because we love Fieldston and, consequently, feel obligated to address the issues affecting it. To us, the two largest issues facing our community are the lack of trust between students (the interpersonal) and the lack of emphasis on mental health (the intrapersonal). That's how we arrived at the three overarching pillars of our presidency: engaging in civil discourse, combating prejudice, and embracing mental health. Engaging in Civil Discourse: Embracing our different beliefs, just like embracing our different identities, is essential to enhancing our education. This is why we are committed to making Fieldston more accepting of how our different experiences warrant differing viewpoints. Everyone should not only feel like their voice is heard, but should have the opportunity to hear their peers', too.

Combating Prejudice: The prejudice within our community hurts us all; it not only makes targeted groups' feel unsafe, but also hinders our ability to trust one another. If we want to build comfort and strengthen our relationships with each other, addressing prejudice is not just something that we should do, but it's something that we NEED to do. **Embracing Mental Health:** As the mental health assembly beautifully articulated, mental health affects all of us. However, there is still a stigma around discussing and addressing it, which is preventing us from better supporting ourselves and each other. It's time that we break down this parasitic stigma and embrace our mental health, as it plays such a prevalent role in our lives. We want to help make each of us better resources for ourselves and each other. We clearly have some hefty goals, so you're probably wondering what makes us most qualified to accomplish them.

We believe our dedication is our best qualification, but if you want to be reassured, here are some of the positions we hold: Maria is an STS 7 leader, Staff Manager of Fieldston News, and member of La Causa, and Raz is a

MERGE leader, AIB member, and an Invictus leader. Even though it's just the two of us on the ballot, our presidency will involve all of you, too; we will be transparent with you because it's your right to know how your community is being led, but we will COLLABORATE with you because we value your experiences and opinions. In conclusion, we will work tirelessly with you and for you to make Fieldston a place where we capitalize on our differences, where prejudice does not go unchecked, and where our mental health gets the attention it deserves.



Hey Fieldston community! We hope that you and your families are safe and healthy during this difficult and new time. Our names are Denika (she/her) and Tristan (he/him), and we have two main tenets for our community: Dependability and Transparency. From our times here at Fieldston, we've both observed a frustrating similarity of when Fieldston community members were left deeply hurt, angered, or pained: a lack of dependability and transparency. Thus, it's of the utmost importance to us that we ensure to the best of our ability that these two core tenets, which are deeply aligned with the core values and ideology of this school, are upheld during our presidency. Here's how we'll do it: we want to be held accountable. This means monthly school reports – what we've achieved and what we're planning on doing – so that you can give us feedback.

This brings us to our next initiative: drop-in office hours and an FSG website, providing spaces to hear your suggestions, comments, questions, and concerns! However, it's not just us that needs to remain transparent and held accountable; we'll also do the same for the administration through monthly meetings with key members of the administration, listening to what they've been doing in the past four weeks and what their plans are for the next four – notes of these meetings will be shared in our monthly school reports.

We will hold roundtable lunches prior to each meeting, free to all students who want to voice their

feedback to the administration. Every single concern, every single comment, every single question, will be passed on to the administration. We'll make sure of it. Another concern of ours is improving student life! We know that this year has been pretty rough (an understatement), and so we want to make sure that we more than make up for it next year :).

Firstly, we plan on expanding the school store: putting smaller carts in both the student commons and the stu-fac. They'll be stocked to the brinks with snacks you (yes, you) choose in monthly surveys. We will also extend breakfast time through advisory, because we want to make sure you all are getting enough to eat before a long day of classes! But you're not the only one who needs energy before that 8:30 am class – your phone and computer do too!

Which is why we'll put charging stations in every hundreds building so you never have to experience that oh-no-my-computer-died-and-I-have-no-charger feeling ever again. We also want to make sure our school spirit is flying sky-high, just like our school mascot. So get ready for a permanent school merch website!! Now you won't have to run the second those quarter zip sweaters are taken out.

Okay, you've heard some of our ideas now. But this isn't all of it!! In fact, it's only the beginning. We hope you're excited about all the things we plan to do, because we definitely are. Vote Denika & Tristan for FSG.



Covid-19's Disruption of Fieldston's Long-Standing Sense of Community

BY: JOSHUA SUGARMAN

I recall walking onto the bus for my first day at Fieldston Lower. I was beginning Pre-K and I was extremely nervous as I had not met any of my peers. I was greeted with a warm welcome from the bus driver, but besides that, I felt utterly alone. As I said goodbye to my mother with tears swelling in my eyes, I tried to take a deep breath and present myself in an excited mood to my peers. I took a seat in the first row, as I would not have to interact or deal with the stares from any other students on the bus (all of whom towered over my short 4-foot frame). I sat down across from a blonde-haired blue-eyed girl who seemed to be approximately my age, although even she was significantly taller than me. She was the complete opposite of me, as she was outgoing and didn't seem to care about how she appeared to others. I, on the other hand, cowered in my seat, attempting to hide in the crevice near the window. "Hi, I'm Rachel. I'm starting Pre-K!" the blonde girl said to me. I was startled, as no one had ever been so forthcoming with me. I glanced around me to see if anyone had been eavesdropping on the outburst. "Hi, I-I'm Joshua" I stuttered. She continued to speak loudly, with a care-free demeanor that I admired. Of course, I was rather unhappy to be approached in such a public manner, but at least I took some comfort in knowing that I had made a friend.

This vivid memory in my past sums up my Fieldston experience perfectly. Starting as a shy and petrified child, I have now grown into an outspoken and driven student, unafraid to speak my mind and advocate for my beliefs. Fieldston has fostered this growth and certainly encouraged me to embrace myself and develop a sense of confidence.

As a result of such encouraged change, I have truly built a community in Fieldston for the last thirteen years of my life. I believe that I have certainly made life-long friends, and I look forward to walking through the 200s or 500s and greeting a familiar face as I walk by.

Fieldston has become a home to me, one where I feel comfortable confiding in faculty or friends. Locations such as the Dean's office or the trainer's room are places for social gathering, and safe havens. The availability of teachers who genuinely wish to converse with students – whether it be academic or personal – is a prime example of the community which I cherish so dearly.

COVID-19 has certainly impacted individuals far and wide, but here at Fieldston, its effects are felt throughout the community. Classes are reduced to occurring once/twice per week, and there are no opportunities for external interactions, besides those that are made interpersonally. My dean, Mr. Anhalt, has made numerous attempts to unite our grade. As said in one of his emails, "I am thinking of the whole class and how we might connect through this time that we are all apart... I'm thinking of how to recognize and celebrate your upcoming rise to being the oldest students in the school. In the meantime, please don't hesitate to reach out – even if you just want to catch up." Mr. Anhalt's good-hearted attempts are certainly omnipresent in the community during this time, but inevitably the effects are not the same. Most recently, the highly anticipated FSG Co-President speeches were

forced to proceed in an online video format. I, along with many of my peers, felt the effects echo through the difference in format. The live speech is potentially the most crucial aspect of the campaign, and allows partners to stand out amongst the pack. Due to this pandemic, the online pre-recorded format was forced to replace the aforementioned custom.

The change in community is potentially felt strongest in the athletics department. Spring sports teams convene one/two times a week in hopes to bring players and coaches together, and allow seniors to have some attempt at finishing out their last season. Of course, the camaraderie is not the same and the bond shared between all members has been weakened as we are forced to rely upon the online format. Sophomore attackman Ben Forman "Online learning hasn't lived up to any expectations in any class, but especially in lacrosse we are really feeling the effects of it because the majority of our experience has to do with us being together as a team. Whether it be running sprints, practicing plays, or team events outside of school, we rely upon face-to-face connection to help us be the best team we can." These claims are reiterated by Junior d-wing Elle Berman. "The difference between being on the field and moving to a google meet online setting has been a really difficult adjustment for everyone because sports are so much of a face-to-face activity. Whether it's practice, games, or just spending

time with one another, we all benefit from seeing each other and having that energy that makes us a stronger team. For me as a junior, I was looking forward to getting to know the new players and taking on a leadership role. Lacrosse has always been my favorite part of the year, but overall I'm still happy to see my teammates and friends weekly.

Obviously, every member of the community has felt the waves from this virus. Of course, some individuals have been affected harder than others. Specifically, for the seniors, they are losing the opportunity to enjoy monumental events such as prom, graduation, or their final sports seasons. I certainly empathize with them, and more so with the students who will be a part of the "14-year club" such as myself. At the end of the day, I am confident that next year we will all move on and make even stronger memories by taking advantage of each moment we have when we come together, and making the most of the next school year. Until then, we must make sure to try and reach out to one another and make sure that we are all staying safe so that we can reunite shortly.

On The Front Lines and At The Front Door

BY: JACK NOVECK-HOLMES

Amidst a most unprecedented pause, Americans are becoming accustomed to new ways of life. Virtual classrooms and workplaces are the new normal, shuttered businesses are making the most of their limited capabilities, and more and more people are carrying masks as they would their wallets. Yet for some essential workers, despite changes in routine, duty calls each day like it did months ago. They do not have the luxury of staying home. These are the people who are

keeping New York City running. "At the front door here, it's like we're in a war zone," says Winston Johnson, a doorman working on West End Avenue, echoing the fear felt by many essential workers across the country. He's been laboring his normal 8 hour, 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM shifts as the pandemic persists. "We're still in it," he says. "We've had no Covid-19 timeout." Devoted to his job, he has had to adjust to tremendous changes in his daily routine, many of them frightening. Johnson, who

in October will enter his 20th year working in the building, explained how a place he's known so well for so long has become an unrecognizable work setting. "A lot of people aren't coming through the lobby," he says of the once friendly, communicative building that has turned quiet and bleak as many residents have fled the city. Those who do remain have been asked by the building not to have long conversations with the staff, out of safety concerns. Johnson had to conduct this interview by

telephone. Johnson and the rest of the building staff have been handed a new set of sanitation responsibilities to stave off the virus. "Everything that is touched, we sanitize," he says, while stepping away from the phone to collect a package. The building has enacted a new system for all deliveries, where tenants are notified by phone and email whenever their food deliveries or packages arrive. It's preferred that they come

“We just have to remain positive”: The Effect of Pandemic on an NGO in Bahia, Brazil

BY: MARIA GRABOWSKY

“We just have to remain positive,” home is not a comfortable place said Ana, in portuguese, with a tone that indicated that she was doing exactly that, but unable to fully. Throughout our entire conversation, her voice exuded a forced hopefulness with clear undertones of worry and distress. Ana is the manager at Associação Filhos do Ceu, an organization in Arraial D’Ajuda, Bahia, that has been closed for 42 days. Arraial D’Ajuda is a small touristic town with a beautiful beach, and cobble streets filled with stores and restaurants. It is also a town filled with poverty, hunger and large shanty towns that are close to the tourists, but not so close that it would bother them. The organization is located in the part unseen by the tourists and focuses on giving kids food as well as a place to stay after school whilst their parents work. At the organization, the kids have an opportunity to play games, plant in their small garden, get help with homework, or complete any other activity volunteers come up with. The organization gives children opportunities and keeps them off the streets where they could otherwise be getting involved with drugs or prostitution. However, during this pandemic, there is no way the organization can assure that. “The majority of the kids have no idea what is going on. When I do visit, they want to come hug me, but I have to tell them that they can’t. I have to tell them and their parents to wear masks and to stay at home,” said Ana. But

for most of the kids. “The kids end up staying in the streets because their houses are so small that there is no way their families can all fit at the same time,” said Ana. She shared that for one of the families, one small room had to be shared by 12 family members. With such small houses and no online school, the kids have no option other than going into the streets and finding friends especially if their parents are also physically abusive at home. The organization has been telling the parents to be patient with their children, keep calm and to explain to them what is happening. In a recent facebook post, they wrote, “The kids without being able to leave home, without going outside and without school, have double the energy. That’s why we ask you to be calm. Take deep breaths. Have patience. Don’t be violent with your children. It is not their fault (and not yours, either), and most times, they can’t understand what is happening.” The kids, however, aren’t all that Ana worries about. She also has her employees to worry about. Those that cooked the kids’ foods, taught them dances, organized their small library, and made sure the organization was there the next day. Many of the employers live in the same shanty town as the kids and face the same hardships. Last week, Ana had to suspend all the

workers’ contracts and let them know that they will not be continuing work for the time being. She shared that many of them believed Ana was firing them and could not understand why that was. “I confess that it is very sad. Our own employees are suffering,” said Ana. But Ana still manages to help out the community. With no functioning organization, Ana, together with other managers, have teamed up with larger organizations to deliver baskets of food, hygiene products, and other necessities. They started out delivering only to families of the kids that attend the organization, but have now grown to supply to 1140 families in the neighborhood. “We should always do our part,” said Ana. Although the situation is not looking quite so sunny, there is still hope the organization will return. The kids will once again play games, run around, and



learn. “We need to think that the organization will return, that the kids will return and that the employers will return,” said Ana. I had the privilege of working at the organization last summer with my mom and developed connections with many of the kids that came to the organization each day. A majority of them suffered abuse at home and relied heavily on the organization to keep them going. I refuse to let myself think of what they may be living through now as I am afraid it will bring me too much sadness. However, I must think like Ana. I must remain positive and believe that the organization will return someday no matter how far away that day may be.

On the front lines (cont.)

down to pick them up themselves. Staff are also being extra cautious of how they handle these items entering the building from the outside. “We’re spraying some packages with alcohol as they come in,” says Johnson. The workplace isn’t the only area where Johnson is seeing drastic change. The pandemic’s effects on city transportation have made his usual hour-long commute from Borough Park, Brooklyn to Upper Manhattan exhausting and unrealistic. “Trains used to come by every 10 minutes, but now they come every half hour,” he says. Not to mention, Johnson adds, New York City subways have become a central means of the virus’ spread. “It’s just too dangerous.” And so,

Johnson has made a huge change to his living situation — he’s been forced to stay in the building as he works throughout the week, only able to return home to his wife on weekends. “I came here on Monday morning in a \$55 Uber,” he says, of which was paid for with his own money. “I packed my suitcase with all of my clothing. My wife, she loads me up with food. And I sleep here.” He’s set up a makeshift bed on top of a bench in a backroom of the building’s lobby. When he’s not working his shift, Johnson spends his time there resting. “I relax in the back. Read a book, watch a little television.” Though

he’s been able to manage, it certainly hasn’t been a comfortable experience. “I can’t roll over!” he says with a chuckle. He also mentioned that in such an abnormal time, it’s not rare for himself and many others to have sleepless nights, loss of appetite and a blurred sense of time. One thing that’s helped ease the seemingly never-ending discomfort is the love of Johnson’s family members. Each night, he has phone calls with his two sons, both of whom

are staying safe with their own families in Ohio, and his wife, who remains in Borough Park. On these calls, he’s able to share with his family the one thing that keeps his day a little bit saner and a bit less stressful. It’s the collective expression of gratitude that the city shows essential workers like healthcare professionals, firemen, police, ambulance crews, transport workers, postal workers, — and yes, doormen — every night, with whooping, cheering, whistle-blowing and pot-banging coming from streets and apartment windows. Even his own colleague, Bernie, joins in on the fun by rattling a cowbell from the lobby below. “I enjoy being part of the seven o’clock thank you,” he says. “I come out every night.”

Local Support for the Blackfeet

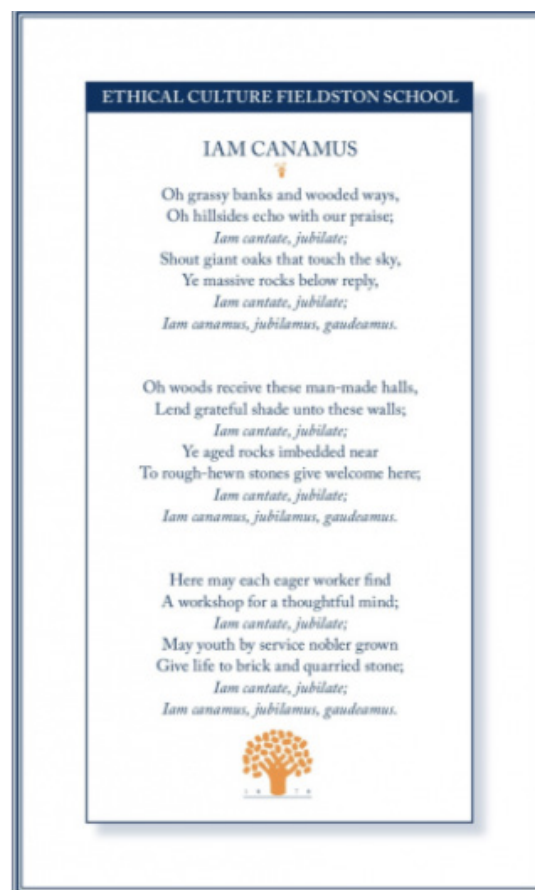
BY: EMMA FRIEDMAN

A GoFundMe Campaign has been organized by Form III student, Emma Friedman. The goal of the campaign is to raise money and awareness for the current situation reservations across the country are dealing with during the COVID crisis. Reservations across the nation have few necessities to survive the COVID crisis and no government officials fighting for them. This makes it an emergency that the reservations receive the necessary help. Although there are over 300 reservations across the country the campaign is working towards COVID relief for the northern Montana based Blackfeet tribe. Emma had gotten to know the community very well, as she had lived and worked on the reservation during the summer of 2019. Emma's contact, Kim Paul, leads the Piikani Lodge Health Institute, a non-profit organization that is the backbone of the community by taking care of all members in any way they can. For example, they provide meals for the Elders of the community. Kim Paul, wrote a beautiful message to those who have donated saying, "I am lighting a smudge to pray for those beautiful hearts and efforts, what generous spirits." During this time of crisis, not only are supplies necessary but awareness of the massive historic neglect of first nation people in this country. This neglect did not begin during this pandemic it has been continuous for hundreds of years and will continue without awareness of this treatment. The money raised by the campaign will go towards buying meals, disinfectants, gloves, sanitizers and masks. So far 1,100 dollars has been raised from 28 donors as well as 200 masks and 100 pairs of gloves have been sent to the community. The goal is to raise as much awareness and money as possible. Unfortunately the situation is dire and this is nowhere near enough so any donations are greatly appreciated by both the Blackfeet tribe and Emma Friedman. No amount is too small or too large. At a time where many feel helpless this is a meaningful way to support others. If you are able to donate to help the Blackfeet survive this crisis or want to learn more tap below. COVID Support for Blackfeet Campaign: <https://www.gofundme.com/f/the-blackfeet-piikani-lodge-health-institute>: <https://www.piikanilodge.org/>

Overflowing Morgues: An Unpleasant and Overlooked Facet of Fighting Covid-19

BY: ANDREW ROSS

The coronavirus pandemic has forced us to consider things that we normally overlook. For example the amount of germs that can be spread between two people with just one short conversation. The pandemic has forced the city, state, and the federal governments to do things that might have never even been thought of when there wasn't a pandemic. However, one of the more unpleasant things that we must consider amid a pandemic, are bodies and morgues. As the coronavirus continues to spread, there will inevitably be more deaths. In New York State there are 319,000 confirmed cases, and 19,415 deaths. At the beginning of April, New York City had deployed 45 mobile morgues. These mobile morgues can store up to 3,500 bodies. Towards the end of March, when the virus really began to spread quickly, New York City posted over forty jobs for mortuary technicians. Med Alliance Group is a distributor of medical supplies based in Illinois. The group has been transporting refrigerated trailers throughout the country to accommodate the needs of many cities. Additionally, the Chief Medical Examiner's Office is working with the New York City Emergency Management in order to provide health care facilities with the trailers. The amount of bodies that a morgue can accommodate really depends on the size of the morgue. However, most morgues are not usually prepared for a pandemic in which hundreds of thousands of people will die. Few morgues can hold more than a few hundred people, and with New York City's morgues at nearly full capacity, further action must be taken to accommodate the dead. Small hospital morgues, which are being overwhelmed by the amount of bodies, must send the bodies to the Chief Medical Examiner's Office where they will be temporarily stored. Now, mass graves on Hart Island are being used to bury victims of coronavirus. Over one thousand bodies are buried on Hart Island each year, and that number is projected to increase drastically this year. Since Hart Island was purchased by New York City in 1869, around one million people have been buried there. Due to the chaos of the pandemic, bodies that are not claimed within 14 can be moved to be buried in Hart Island. However, after the madness of the pandemic calms down, families will be able to obtain the coffins of their loved ones.



Founders Day 2020: A Virtual Affair

BY: THE EDITORS

To Our Most Honorable Readers, Because our community cannot assemble in traditional fashion this Founder's Day, the Fieldston News will spend the next several days publishing the words of seniors who would like to share sentiments in honor of the occasion. Though we are kept apart by pandemic on this first Friday of May, we hope to mark this important day notwithstanding the challenging circumstances faced by our community at this time. It is with this in mind that we launch a series of articles penned "In the Spirit of Felix Adler," beginning with the words to our school's anthem "Iam Canamus." We wish each and every member of our community a happy and most importantly, a healthy Founder's Day 2020. Sincerely, The Fieldston News Editors

A Legendary Educator: Dr. Jim Cullen on his Time at ECFS and Moving On

BY: ASHER ZEMMEL

Dr. Jim Cullen has been a Fieldston parent for twenty-three years and a Fieldston teacher for nineteen. The 2019-2020 school year marks his last as a teacher in the Fieldston community. His sons Jay and Grayson graduated in 2011 and 2018; his daughter Nancy, a senior, graduates in just a few weeks. Dr. Cullen is beloved by the student body and has taught core curriculum courses such as 10th Grade United States History, and popular electives like *The Civil War*, *Hamilton: A Musical Inquiry*, *Scientific America* (in collaboration with physics teacher Jon Lambert), *Rock, Rap, and Country* (in collaboration with Tom Christensen), *Empire as a Way of Life*, *Bearing Manhood*, *Varieties of Religious Experience*, and *the United States Since 1945*. He is also an acclaimed author, writing and publishing over a dozen books on American popular culture, including “*The Art of Democracy*,” and “*Born in the USA: Bruce Springsteen and The American Tradition*.” Some of his books have been incorporated into the Fieldston history curriculum, including a well-respected volume on how to write history essays, entitled, “*Essaying The Past*.” Dr. Cullen’s most recently published book, which was released two months ago, is a cultural exploration of the Norman Lear sitcom “*All In The Family*.” Dr. Cullen was often “the face” of Fieldston at the Head of School book club gatherings, providing context and background for plays like “*Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson*,” or working in one of several Fieldston summer programs. Dr. Cullen will start his new position at Greenwich Country Day School’s new high school this fall. As the end of his time at Fieldston nears, Dr. Cullen sat down with the News to discuss his many years as an Upper School teacher. Asher Zimmel: What will you miss most about Fieldston? Jim Cullen: “The answer is obvious but necessary to say: the students. Over the course of the past two decades, I have been privileged to work with a steady stream of brilliant, hardworking, and creative people, whose energy and commitment to the greater good has been inspiring and humbling—people who were far more worldly than I was when I was their age. I would say the same for many of my colleagues. I’ll also mention the campus: I felt so grounded in this space for so many years.” AZ: What will you miss the least at Fieldston? JC: “I wish Fieldston would take a more inclusive view of diversity, moving beyond a race/gender binary to

more fully consider other dimensions of human experience. I also wish it would achieve a more nuanced view of equity that celebrates academic excellence while acknowledging structural barriers to achieving it. School leaders now seem to regard the pursuit of such excellence as something from which students need to be protected, rather than a worthy goal to be embraced and pursued.” AZ: What inspired you to become an History teacher? JC: “This is something that happened to me relatively late. I was an English major in college, and didn’t take a U.S. history course until I was in graduate school. I love my country and I found I wanted to understand it better, its successes and failures, and teaching is a very good way to learn.” AZ: Can you share some highlights and regrets from your Fieldston teaching career? JC: “One of the really great things about being a History teacher at Fieldston is that you have so much freedom to design elective courses. I’ve loved so many of them, notably teaching “*Scientific America*” with Jon Lambert and “*12 Albums that Changed the World*” with Tom Christensen. One particular highlight was offering an elective on the musical *Hamilton* in 2016, thanks to a Fieldston parent who gave me a free ticket to see it before it went on Broadway. Regrets: Not many. The one I experience every year are great kids I know or observe who I don’t have the opportunity to work with in the classroom. I think of them as ones who got away.” AZ: What was your most challenging moment as a Fieldston teacher? JC: “That would be last year’s protests. I disagreed with the reasons for, and some of the demands of, the protesters and their supporters. I consider this one of a number of such events in recent years that have been marked by empirical falsehoods, uncorroborated assertions and forgotten apologies that were overlooked at the time and ever since. As a historian, I can’t help but look forward to a day when these narratives get rewritten, because that’s the great thing about history: the story’s never over.” AZ: Can you describe the legacy you left at Fieldston? JC: “It’s very hard for any teacher to have much of a legacy on an institutional level, because it only



takes a few years for an entire student body to not know you ever existed. On the other hand, there are hundreds of Fieldston students with whom I have shared memories — and, I would like to think, planted seeds for flowers I’ll never see.” AZ: Has there been a shift in the culture of Fieldston since you started teaching, and if so can you describe it? JC: “The main one I see is less acceptance of multiple points of view. There seems to be an idea that allowing the expression of ideas — “platforming” them — is dangerous. I understand the logic of that. But I also think it’s at best counterproductive (as the progressive journalist Walter Lippmann once said, “When everybody thinks alike, nobody thinks very much”). It’s also dangerous in driving problematic ideas underground. Ironically, in suppressing honest dialogue through authentically open questions, I think Fieldston may foster conservatism among the student body.” AZ: If you feel comfortable sharing, why are you leaving Fieldston? JC: “I’ve been hired at Greenwich Country Day school in Greenwich, Connecticut. The school has been around for about a century, but never had a high school, and is the process of build-

ing and launching one. The school is especially interested in my experience with interdisciplinary work, notably the Form IV Humanities program I helped develop with former principal John Love, Wally Lewis, and Vinni Drybala. I’m at a point in my life that if I was ever going to leave, it would have to be now. It’s hard to do, but I’m looking forward to a new set of challenges.” AZ: What’s the best movie you show to your classes? JC: “I’ve loved so many. It’s always a joy to introduce adolescents to films like *Casablanca*. A generation of my Form IV students are familiar with the Daniel Day-Lewis film festival I ran each year: *The Crucible*, *Last of the Mohicans*, *Gangs of New York*; *Lincoln*; *The Age of Innocence*, and *There Will Be Blood*. So much good history, and great artistry.” AZ: How would you describe your teaching style? JC: “Basically, it’s Socratic. At the core of it is a principle that I think is particularly important right now: There are people out there who are at least as smart as you are — and at least as good as you are — and who

Virtual Bronx Youth Climate Summit: Sign Up By May 13th

BY: DILLON SHEEKY



The Environmental Club meets in room 402 every Tuesday afternoon. Sitting on orange swivel chairs, they discuss upcoming events and brainstorm ways to engage the student body. Emma Venarde, Spencer Lott and Hank Marriott (IV) lead the meetings; they have been involved since ninth grade, and they usually split the club into two or three groups to tackle multiple initiatives. While COVID-19 has forced them into their homes, the club is showing as much — and even more — commitment to environmentalism as they had shown in room 402. On May 16th, the club will be hosting the first Bronx Youth Climate Summit. It will be

held virtually on Google Meets. The summit is inspired by the WILD Center; the organization's Youth Climate Program seeks to empower young people around the world and equip them with a simple toolkit to take action within their community. Last year, the club started planning the event with the intent of hosting it in April on Fieldston's campus. After the coronavirus left New York City residents quarantined, however, the possibility of the event seemed more unlikely with each passing day. Emma Venarde (VI), who proposed the idea, was not willing to put the club's hard work to

waste. "I definitely wanted to have an event no matter what the form was, so there was a transformation to postpone," Venarde says. "We also switched it to a virtual format because even at that time, we could tell that school was not going to be back in session anytime soon." Specific to the Bronx, the summit will explore the ways in which environmentalism has affected the borough. However, participation is not limited to only Bronx residents. Educators and students from all across the country have signed up for the event. "There are a lot of environmental issues that are specific to the Bronx, and there is also a strong his-

tory of activism. We felt like we wanted to build a greater understanding of this," Venarde says. "There has never been a youth climate summit in the Bronx before, so it was definitely exciting to be the first." The summit will be held from 11:30 am to 3:45 pm this Saturday. It will begin with opening remarks and be followed by two 45 minute workshops where youth activists, scientists and conservationists will give insights into their practices. Participants may learn how to integrate their hobbies into environmental projects in The Art of Passion Projects or learn about the importance of oysters to

New York City's ecosystem in Restoration & Education: Oysters in the Bronx. Many organizations will be represented in the workshops including NY Sunworks, the Van Cortlandt Park Alliance and Zero Hour. "It has been fun to be copied on all of Emma and Spencer's emails to the organizations," Hank Marriott (VI) says. "They are so enthusiastic about the idea of a Bronx specific summit. Everyone was so passionate about running a workshop, and even after all of our followup emails, they never got tired of us." The summit will end with closing remarks and a climate action planning session so that participants can brainstorm ways to implement environmental programs in their schools and communities. "[The seniors] have shown an enormous amount of leadership in working on this summit, but it's really just the natural outcome of all the amazing work that they have done over the last four years," Green Dean and Science Teacher Howard Waldman says. "From the very beginning, they were all so committed and active, and we've done so many things. We've been on marches, organized huge cookouts on the quad, supported so many environmental initiatives and had so many good speakers come. This is just the final piece of the puzzle."

Dr. Cullen Moving On (cont.)

think differently than you. Seek them out, and listen to them before, and after, you make up your mind." Both current and former students of Dr. Cullen were asked about their experiences in his classes during their time at Fieldston. All of their varied responses exemplify the appreciation and gratitude felt for Dr. Cullen throughout the ECFS community. Margot Gordon (IV) said "I learned comprehensive American history from various perspectives, perspectives Fieldston does not tend to expose us too. I really enjoyed his teaching style and his

class in general." Another sophomore, Aleksi Sefanov, said "He was an amazing advisor, an amazing teacher, but an even better person. One memory I will fondly remember is Mr. Cullen bringing us food every day in advisory. Whether his wonderful wife made treats or he went and bought them, every day after school he thought about us, as he always had snacks on the desk when we walked through the door." Ari Rosenstein (V) said "Mr. Cullen is one of the most engaging and informative teachers I have

ever had the chance to work with. Everyday he brings an amazing energy to the classroom that encourages his students to work their hardest. His number one priority is the success of his students, and his love of teaching infuses every moment in the classroom. Words cannot describe how grateful I am to have studied with Mr. Cullen and I will forever cherish the things he has taught me." Jake Horowitz (V) stated "I'm crushed. Mr. Cullen was my favorite teacher in the whole school. He's changed the way I view the world and the way I view history. I lit-

erally wish I could've had him for every semester of high school. I enter every class still talking about the topic. I know that he will continue to educate and motivate even more students and I wish him the best of luck as he moves on to the next chapter of his life." The admiration for Dr. Cullen and his teaching stretches far beyond Fieldston students. His colleagues from the early days of the Humanities course expressed how "If you were in the classroom had to bring your 'A Game' into the classroom every sin-

gle day. He made you teach at a higher level." Dr. Cullen is well respected by his fellow faculty and Fieldston's leadership. Dr. Cullen's passion for teaching and his determination to help students achieve academic excellence will be sorely missed. The community has only kind sentiments and supportive wishes for Dr. Cullen as he moves on from ECFS into the next chapter of his teacher career. Perhaps what best sums up Dr. Cullen's work at Fieldston and his departure from ECFS is his own commonly used phrase, "Onward!"

Maintaining a Small Business in the Age of COVID: Gubbins the Perfect Fit

BY: CAROLYN FINERMAN



Through these frightening and unforeseeable times, our world has changed as we know it, and so has the retail market. With the stay-at-home orders, firings and furloughs, and plunge in the stock market, the U.S. economy has taken a downfall and many Americans have lost much. Within the past few weeks, spending habits have dramatically changed, and toilet paper, groceries, a good pair of sweats, and of course our health are what we most need.

As buyers stop shopping businesses begin to fail, and small shops that don't have enough money in the bank are forced to close. For a nation that was once defined by small businesses, this

is a tragic reality that is drastically shifting the way our retail market works. With limited resources and business, each company faces its own battle in maintaining a source of profit and staying open. Located in East Hampton, New York, Gubbins the Perfect Fit (a sporting goods store) has been one of the many businesses forced to change their model in order to adapt to the pandemic and fight to stay open. "Everything has changed," says owner Geary Gubbins, who continued that "as a business that was reliant on people coming in the door and trying things on, we've had

aren't plausible. Where people have really needed our services includes weights and home exercise equipment, so that's where we've really been focussing our attention." Simply put: "anything that people are calling for, that's what we are focusing on." Gubbins, just like many other businesses, has been extremely flexible in these difficult times and although they've been able to adapt to the situation very well, business simply just isn't the same. Gubbins stated, "In terms of gross sales we've probably been doing 90% less than what we've done in years past." Additionally, since Gubbins is a largely seasonal business and earns most of their profit in July and August they've had to make some tough calls as they plan ahead for the future months. "Since we're doing much less, we've had to be smarter in terms of expenses. This, unfortunately, means we haven't had any hiring for the summer where normally at this time we have triple the staff we currently have. We have also been

focussing on being really conservative with our buying and trying not to get overextended with too much inventory" With the decision to modestly spend capital comes the prediction that in these next few months business won't be much better. Gubbins has stated that "even if we could open tomorrow, we wouldn't necessarily buy the normal inventory and prepare for the normal July and August that we usually see." They have an approach to take things slow and just get through the pandemic alive. Gubbins said, "As a family business, we are really looking at the year 2020 as punting on the year. We are just going to try to survive this year." Although Gubbins, just like many other small businesses, has drastically slowed sales and been hit hard by the pandemic, they are optimistic that at some point, whether that be in September or in a year from now, business will resume. After the pandemic,

Gubbins predicted that the "demand for sporting equipment and clothing will be there more than ever before. I think that people will have a newfound appreciation for local businesses and I think they are going to want to support us." As Gubbins continues to support their local community during this time, they hope that the love will be reciprocated after we exit this crazed time and that they can "kick it right back to where [they] were before." Flexibility and resilience continue to be key in these difficult times while we, as well as our local businesses, do what's necessary to survive, so that once life begins to resume, so can the commerce industry.

The Value of Connecting Remotely with Athletic Teams

BY: NOAH GREER

As the school year draws to a close, as it would without the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, many high school students reflect on the school year. This reflection is from an academic lense, a social lense, and often, for those involved in athletic programs, a reflection on the impact that their team's – or teams' – season had on their year. Sadly, spring season sports teams at Fieldston are missing out on a year of competition and practice. However,

many coaches and dedicated team members are trying to salvage what can be saved from the canceled seasons that they had hoped for. On Thursday, April 2nd, Fieldston's Athletic Director, Gus Ornstein delivered the Fieldston community the sad news that the Ivy Preparatory School League had decided that they were canceling all 2020 athletic seasons. "With heavy hearts, we write

to let you know that we met with our fellow Ivy Preparatory School League Heads of School and Athletics Directors and reached the difficult decision to cancel interschool athletics competitions for spring 2020. Our first priority is the health and safety of our communities." This news was especially difficult for our seniors, the class of 2020, who were not prepared to abandon the different sports and the teams that

they love. As such, many team's seniors have organized regular team meetings to maintain the social connection that teammates share. With the help of coaches and the Athletic Department at Fieldston, many teams – spring season or not – have organized Google Meetings and Zoom calls for workouts, discussions, or just general gatherings. For varsity baseball teams across the league, one

of these meetings included a Q&A session with Ivy Prep League alum, and center fielder for the St. Louis Cardinals, Harrison Bader. Of course, this is a very cool experience, but according to baseball coach, Tony Marro, "It is very important that we focus on what we can get out of our time with each other." Fieldston's varsity baseball team has adopted the real-

Revered Teacher Alice Montera Will Retire After 30 Years of an Illustrious Career at Fieldston

BY: HALLE FRIEDMAN

Ever since September 1990, with the dawn of Alice Montera's Fieldston career, our community has been irrevocably altered by her ebullient, dedicated approach to teaching both inside and outside of the classroom. In turn, the Fieldston community would have an indelible effect on her future, as she would soon meet her life partner, the esteemed Robert Montera, in this hallowed place. At the time of her arrival, the separate Fieldston Middle School division had not yet emerged on the Upper School Campus, and Montera taught varying levels of Spanish to a broad range of students from grades six to twelve. She has always relished the freedom that Fieldston has granted her to teach various different levels of Spanish, and to use her own creative license to design engaging curricula and co-teaching units; such courses have ranged from sixth grade Vejigante mask-making, student-run publicity campaigns for local Puerto Rican organizations seeking relief from Hurricane María, and canvassing for the New York Immigration Coalition with seniors in Washington Heights. In addition to Spanish courses, Montera has co-taught the interdisciplinary course "Routes of Rhythm" with percussion instructor Scott Latzky, which explores the musical diaspora that included Africa, Spain, and the Spanish-speaking Caribbean, and honed in on Afro-Antillean poets. Halle Friedman: What's your fondest memory

of Fieldston and what are you going to miss most about the school? Alice Montera: It is hard to cull out one particular memory or one thing that I will miss about Fieldston. In no particular order, I will miss the music; singing outrageously and loudly with my students...songs like "Grita," "Ojalá que Llave Café" and "La Tierra del Olvido," cooking; making quesadillas, gazpacho and endless tortillas españolas, the relaxed spring sunshine on the quad during Band Day, watching the curtain rise on a show in a darkened auditorium, the dawning understanding on a student's face, the green of tall trees, guardians of our campus, laughter next to the coffee machine, the power, impact, colors and memories of our annual Día de los Muertos exhibit... the reflective silence of a hallway at the end of a school day. HF: How have you grown and what are some of the most valuable lessons you have learned at Fieldston? AM: I have learned not to fear space and not to hide in the classroom. That for a teacher, "Learning by Doing" means opening up and viewing failure as an opportunity; that my journey as a teacher is the same journey that I began as a student, so many years ago, that if I listen, my students will teach me. Before I started at Fieldston, I worked as a teacher in other schools, I had other jobs outside of education...I moved

and changed annually. Here I have begun to comprehend the joy that comes from knowing families, students and my colleagues over time...I am enriched by the long, deep familiarity that stems from staying in one place and working there. HF: In what ways has the Fieldston community changed from when you first started teaching? AM: As a school, each year, each moment has consisted of its own friction, its unique challenges, its accomplishments and its failures...I try not to romanticize the past, and try to see the present. However, as I reflect, I see that the homogenization that comes from internet access and the world of social media, websites and email, has inadvertently placed an invisible pressure on our school. "Learning by Doing" is the progressive precept by which Fieldston lives...but we must not forget that a principal part of the learning process is that understanding one's mistakes is an essential stepping stone of growth. We must not allow our desire for a competitive and professional public face to dominate or attempt to hide our idiosyncratic institutional 'self.' Debate, successes, activism and individuality are not sound bites or jpegs...they come from a process of growth and action. I understand



that Fieldston, like all other organizations and entities, should and must change with the times to remain viable. I do not believe in an ECFS encased in the amber glow of memory. Some people are afraid that, if we allow the world to witness our school's struggle to learn, that our dream will die. I happen to believe that friction and resolution is the dream, and it is our strongest selling point, the thing that truly makes our school stand out in a world of uniformity. It lies in the laughter, pain and joyful mess of learning. HF: What are some of the most important lessons you hoped to impart to your students? AM: I hope that, over the years, I have helped my students feel comfortable developing their language skills inside of my classroom, and that I have encouraged them to feel confident about using their abilities outside of school, in the streets, in the mountains, towns,

and cities of our world. I do not believe in deferred gratification when it comes to language learning and hope that my students can see that one does not need to wait to speak like a native, in order to connect and communicate...you can do it right now, no matter the year or the level. Histories, cultures and people are all around us. Flexibility, a sense of humor and an adventurous spirit are the best tools for language learning. HF: Have you thought about what your life will look like and what you'll be pursuing in the next few years? AM: While I will always remain connected to Fieldston, to my students, and friends and colleagues, I am excited to make a change at this point in my life. I do not want to retire and simply deteriorate. I want to make myself stronger by exploring new situations. I love to sketch and paint, and would like to study art more actively. I am developing a series of self-guided walking tours on a website that will be called "Backyard Odyssey." I would like to

use my Spanish as a translator in order to help immigrants maneuver the increasingly hostile world around us. I am scared, I am excited, I will make mistakes, but I love being my 63 year-old self and taking small new steps. I will miss you all, but will never be far away.

Athletic Teams (Cont)

bit of normalcy by being with a group of people who one would spend time with, outside of this pandemic. This also gives an opportunity for teams to talk about, and practice their sport remotely, such that they are even more fine-tuned for the 2021 season. Most importantly, these meetings help maintain the team dynamic, while putting time towards the different sports that so many Fieldston students love.

Movies For Quarantine

BY: GABRIEL HOSTIN

Movies have been an almost essential part of culture and society in America for decades. The cinema is a classic place to go for a date, or a place to bring the family at the end of a long week, or just going out with your close buddies to watch the newest release. For this senior project, we had the simple goal of understanding movies in a deeper way. To us, movies have a dual purpose. They can satisfy our desire to see a huge green superhero punching a Nordic god, a drag racer flying off a skyscraper fast and furiously, or watching a band of rebels fight off a galactic empire in a war among the stars. These movies offer an escape, a way to transport oneself away from our world into a fictional one of adventure, romanticism, and happy endings. However, while films can provide windows to peer away from our lives, they also can act as mirrors, giving us the rare opportunity to look inward at ourselves and our society. They can reimagine our history and show us the human stories that textbooks fail to convey. They can give us frightening dystopian worlds that might give us pause and allow us to reflect on our own. They can teach us empathy, love, and compassion. Yet, how do we properly judge this art form? Movies have such an effect on our lives, often in ways we can't even express. But that doesn't mean they are all worth watching, that they will all provide you that essential mirror or window experience. So, what makes something a "great" movie, a bonafide classic? What is the relationship between rewatchability and success? We also wanted to try to get a better grip on movie commentary. How can we utilize discussion about film, much like Roger Ebert and Gene Siskel did, to better distinguish the greatness of each piece? Throughout the past few months, our senior project has allowed us to critique how we view, consume, and think about movies, and

allowed us to better experience them. And to be a better movie watcher/critiquer, is to be a better friend to go out to the movies with, to be able to pick out the best movies for your family, to be able to help your date understand an aspect of the movie they don't get. The culmination of this project is as simple as our initial goal. After all the movie watching, discussing, and arguing, we want to provide the Fieldston community with a set of films to help get them through these rough times. Whether they are an escape to another world, or a glimpse into our own— we hope you enjoy them as much as we did. We're so thankful for the opportunity to do the project, and for Robert Montera for his guidance, as this was an extremely self-enriching experience.

Will's Recommendations: Lord of the Rings Trilogy When Gabe first watched the movies and we were discussing, I was nervous he wouldn't feel that same magic. But when we started talking about Sir Ian McKellen's calm yet powerful performance and the simple yet eternal story of good versus evil, my fears melted away. I've been watching the Lord of the Rings Trilogy every year since probably around 2006. And it's one of those movies that I will continue to watch every year to come. Why? Because I think its message is eternally endearing: hope. When watching the Fellowship of the Ring, you are instantly transported into an entirely new world through a questionable method, pure exposition. I would usually criticize a movie for starting with such an immediate and obvious dump of information, but here it is told with such mystery, energy, and action that you are sucked into the story by the first minute. And the world we are introduced to is

both beautiful but also endangered. With Bilbo's departure at the start of the trilogy, we are instilled with a feeling that what we are watching is the end of an era. And in this way, I think Lord of the Rings is perfect for quarantine. We have all lost something important to us in this time. And in many ways, the world will never be the same after COVID-19. But Lord of the Rings reminds me: even against this seemingly omnipotent, dominant, and scary force, we must still have hope. Citizen Kane This is one of those movies that often appears at the top of those vague "100 Best Movies of All Time" lists. This is for good reasons, it was incredibly innovative in the field of cinematography, lighting, and its blending of Hollywood's previously rigid dramas—it's a mystery, tragedy, romance, drama, and character study all at once. It's also a movie that you cannot watch without a friend to talk about it with after. Gabe and I found separate ways to watch this movie. In one lense, it is a poignant introspective on the deception lying inside the American Dream, following Kane's rise from the working class to a rich, political aspirant. However, it is also incredibly interesting to observe it as analysis of manhood. How much do the things we create, the speeches we design, the wealth we accumulate, and the loves we acquire make us who we are? This question continues to both inspire and haunt us to this day, and is why we must continue watching this masterpiece. Dr. Strangelove (or How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb) The plot of this absurd comedy sounds all too real in today's world. Petty, egocentric, jingoistic world leaders bicker and argue while the end of the world draws nearer and nearer. Beyond, or perhaps intertwined with this timeless political commentary, lies director Stanley Kubrick's one and only comedy film. And boy is it funny. From a German Scien-

tist with moments of lingering Nazism, a war obsessed general with a childish feud with a Russian diplomat, to the original "hydrohomic" and conspiracy theorist who is hell bent on destroying humanity— this movie satirizes war, death, and sex in a way that no other film has ever done. It is the utterly plausible, comical end of the world. The Tale of Princess Kaguya Normally, I am not one for remakes. But this beautifully animated version of the classic 16th century tale, "The Tale of the Bamboo Cutter" is one of the finest films the esteemed animation studio, Studio Ghibli, ever produced. After watching the movie, Gabe and I couldn't even discuss anything but the visuals for hours— each frame is a pristine, watercolor painting, full of bright color, flowing natural sets, and overflowing love. The lively, rolling landscapes are aided by an equally refreshing and stirring soundtrack. The plot, for the most part, takes the structure of a basic fairy tale. And yet the message itself is so much deeper. It is a movie about the precariousness of a parent wanting happiness for their child only to end up hurting them, about a rigid and traditional society holding down a free spirit, about the cycle of life and death, and about the importance of fantasies and dreams within the overbearingness of reality. It is the kind of movie where no written description or review can do it justice: watch it. Gabe's Recommendations: The Platform The Platform is one of those movies that makes you think. It makes you question things you thought you didn't need to question. Is my society evil? Would I resort to cannibalism if starved for long enough? Yes, these types of questions. The concept of The Platform is undeniably clever. The film takes place

in a sort of prison called The Hole, where there are hundreds of floors, all of which have a large hole in the middle where a platform with food descends everyday, once a day. There are 2 prisoners per floor. Those on floor 1 feast like kings and queens. If everyone ate only what they needed, the food would reach the bottom floor. It never does. The Platform is a horror/thriller movie, with lots of gore and violence; this movie isn't for the weak-stomached. Even if you don't think this movie is your usual cup of tea, don't throw it away just yet. Like many films out of Spain, such as the extremely popular Money Heist and Elite, this movie is a GEM. Societally-commentative, intelligent, clever, grisly, horrific, eye-opening, are all adjectives I would use to describe The Platform. Hitch Hitch is hilarious. Hitch is romantic. Hitch is intelligent. Will and I loved Will Smith, Eva Mendes, and Kevin James in this movie. The movie drew us in and made us completely invested in their characters. From the viewer's perspective, we see how all of the characters' stories were intertwined, yet the characters are oblivious to it. Will Smith, a suave relationship coach, is teaching Kevin James how to get the girl of his dreams. While Will Smith tries his hand in swooning Eva Mendes, she, a gossip columnist, tries to get the scoop on how Kevin

Official Summer 2020 Book Recommendations!

By: THE EDITORS

As summer 2020 approaches, our fabulous Fieldston librarians have put together a list of recommended reads for the season. Hopefully this list will help keep our idle minds occupied in this new age of social distancing and put good literature on the minds of all members of the Fieldston Community. The librarians and Mr. Montera have gathered a list of books, old and new, fiction and non-fiction. Most of these titles can be found in e-format or in audio-book form through your local library or using New York Public Library. Because of you-know-what, the NYPL and Brooklyn Public library have made access to their online book collection EASY – you do not need a plastic library card – you can register online, as long as you are over the age of 13, for an e-card and then borrow any title available. Take a look at our Libguide: <http://ecfs.libguides.com/eBooksAudiobooks> But WAIT! there's more ... If you go to this website <https://www.audiobooksync.com/>, follow the directions and you can download 2 FREE

audiobooks each week until the middle of July – Sit back, close your eyes and let someone else read you a story – if you don't like it, no harm, just 'return' it and move on – If you like it, it is yours to keep FOREVER – Here is our list to start you off: Fiction: Achebe, Chinua – Things Fall Apart Adichie, Chimamanda – Half of a Yellow Sun Butler, Octavia – Kindred Diaz, Junot – The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao Garcia-Marquez, Gabriel – One Hundred Years of Solitude Henriquez, Cristina – The Book of Unknown Americans Ishiguru, Kazuo – Never Let Me Go Lahiri, Jhumpa – Interpreter of Maladies Mandel, Emily St. John – Station Eleven Miller, Madeline – Circe Moore, Alan – Watchman series Morrison, Toni – The Bluest Eye Murakami, Haruki – Norwegian Wood Naipaul, V. S. O'Connor, Flannery – Short Stories Orange, Tommy – There There Percy, Walker – The Moviegoer Roy, Arundhati – The God of Small Things Seth, Vi-

kram – A Suitable Boy Smith, Zadie of a Shifting Self Westover, Tara – Educated Wollstonecraft, Mary – Vindication of the Rights of Women YA titles: Albertali, Becky – Yes No Maybe So ; Simon vs the Homosapiens Agenda Arden, Katherine – The Winternight Trilogy (The Bear and the Nightingale) Bowman, Akemi – Starfish Dessen, Sarah – The Truth About Forever Johnston, E. K. – The Inevitable Victorian Thing Pan, Emily – The Astonishing Color of After Rowell, Rainbow – Pumpkinheads

Letter to the Editor from Joseph Kleinman

By: THE EDITORS

I felt both saddened and excited by the announcement in the Fieldston News that Jim Cullen will no longer be teaching at Fieldston. I know Jim as a parent (both of our boys went there at the same time) and a colleague. As a member of the History department, Jim brought an intellectual rigor that the students and I greatly appreciated. He often pushed back against simplistic reasoning, forcing one (sometimes uncomfortably) to reevaluate their arguments and beliefs. While I might not always have changed my ideas, I know that Jim's questioning sharpened them. In addition, I miss our discussions about books and films that we were reading and seeing. Knowing my interest in various topics in History, Jim would slip me books that he

thought I might find interesting and useful and recommend movies and TV series that I would enjoy. While each of us in the History department held different political, social, and cultural views, Jim, while at the same time critiquing some of these beliefs and presenting his point of view, at times, quite sharply, understood that each of us was deeply knowledgeable about our subject matter and cared greatly for the students that we taught. In my mind these strengths of Jim are invaluable, especially in a period of time in which, in the name of change, ideological dogma, group think and conformity seem to rule the day. Jim understood that this political orthodoxy, even with the best intent, leads to narrow thinking, less questioning and, in the end, a dumbing down of knowledge, which as he noted could

paradoxically lead to a conservative backlash, ending in an equally limited worldview. At the same time, Jim understood the limitations of a traditional approach to historical inquiry. While not dismissing standard sociopolitical approaches to the study of history, Jim supported other faculty members who wanted to expand the study of History by offering courses around subject matter that interested both students and faculty. Moreover, working with other faculty, Jim designed and co taught cultural history courses, using TV shows and music from a variety of genres, including Broadway shows as a way to understand the past and the present. Starting at a new school is always very exciting and rewarding. Greenwich Country Day School is getting a fine teacher. Unfortunately, Fieldston is losing one. I wish him all the best. Joseph Kleinman Former History Faculty Fieldston School

Movies For Quarantine (cont.)

in and his way-out-of-his-league dream girl came to be. This makes for a fun, lovely, exciting romantic comedy that will keep you entranced in its story for the entire 118 minutes. Definitely worth the watch. The Matrix It's safe to say that everyone has at least heard of this movie and all the praise it has received. To most of our parents, this movie is an essential classic, and according to my mom, there are even college classes that discuss this movie. This movie is mind-boggling, as the movie's protagonist, the extremely successful actor Keanu Reeves, has his reality turned upside down and inside out. He, like everyone else, believes he's living in 1999, but Laurence Fishburne shows him that it's really closer to 2199, and that he has been chosen to play an important role against the controllers of his false reality. This movie plays with the question "What is reality?" and by the end of the movie, I bet you'll be asking yourself the same thing. Even though The Matrix was made in 1999, it is technologically stunning. It is violent, it's packed full of action, and extremely entertaining. Everyone should watch this movie at least once.

NFL Draft Recap

By: DANIEL RACZ

After what felt like years, an event from one of the Big 4 sports finally happened, and New York fans should be excited. The NFL held the draft virtually and, to most fan's shock, it turned out well. Seeing all of the coaches in their lavish homes with their family made the draft feel special. Whether it be Arizona's Kliff Kingsbury in his luxurious bachelor pad, Tennessee's Mike Vrabel's setup which included a view of his son in the bathroom, or Bill Belichick having perhaps the most modest shelter, getting a glimpse into the lives of the coaches gave fans a new view of these men. And, when the draft kicked off, suspense was high. When the first three picks went chalk the pressure fell onto the Giants. After shocking the world and taking Daniel Jones in 2019 fans were wondering what Dave Gettleman and new Head Coach Joe Judge would do this year. Would they take do-it-all defender Isaiah Simmons (an idea that seemed more far fetched with every passing moment) or their franchise left tackle? In most mock drafts experts pegged Tackles Jedrick Wills (RT), Tristan Wirfs (RT) and Mekhi Becton (LT) as potential targets. But, the Giants opted to take Left Tackle Andrew Thomas out of Georgia. Thomas, my personal Tackle 2, Left Tackle 1, and Pro Football Focus's Tackle 1, to block for Daniel Jones and Saquon Barkely. Thomas, a smart, high character, strong pass protector and a force in the run game, should prove to be a great addition to Big Blue's offensive line. When the second round came lots of first round talents were left on the board. The players that seemed to be in the running were Yetur Gross Matos, a high-motor pass rusher from Penn State; Zach Baun, a versatile linebacker from Wisconsin that seemed to fit the new culture that the Giants were trying to build; and Xavier McKinney, Alabama's defensive swiss army knife. And, when pick 36 came, McKinney got the call to don the blue and white. McKinney, a consensus top 20 player, will come in and be an immediate starter on the defense. By the time the Giants were up at pick 99, there were lots of great

options. They opted to take hometown offensive tackle and team captain Matt Peart out of Uconn. Painted as a "developing" prospect by Coach Judge, Peart looks to suit up and start once Nate Solder is relieved of his duties up-front. On day 3 the Giants clearly had a strategy: draft smart, versatile, high-character men. This fits in line with the Giants new vision, best summed up by Judge's quote saying "I'm not looking for 55 independent contractors, I'm looking for one team." First, they took cornerback Darnay Holmes out of UCLA, a man that graduated in only two and a half years. Holmes was a standout outside corner for the Bruins and will likely transition to become "the best nickel cornerback from this draft" as scout Bucky Brooks put it. Later, the Giants took Shane Lemieux in the 5th round to shore up the interior of their offensive line. He will compete for the starting center job and serve as great depth at the worst. The Giants then spent 4 of their final five picks on linebackers. First came Cam Brown, a former captain of the Nittany Lion's who touts his versatility, athleticism and love for the game. Next came edge defender Carter Coughlin, a multiple year captain for Minnesota who can serve as an outside linebacker in Yale graduate Patrick Graham's hybrid defense. The Giants also nabbed Coughlin's college teammate and cornerback Chris Williamson who Giant Darius Slayton described as a "pick we will love." The Giants also took SEC linebackers and captains TJ Brunson (South Carolina) and Tae Crowder (Georgia) who might be able to make the team based on their special teams play. Once the draft was over, The Giants signed a pair of Ohio State receivers in Austin Mack and Binjimen Victor, who both have a chance at making the roster, or at least the practice squad. Instant Grade A Now, moving on to the Jets draft. After only one tackle had gone in the first 9 picks, the Jets had to have felt elated looking at the available talent. But, the Browns took Jedrick Wills at pick 10, leaving the Jets with 2 tackle options and 3 receivers that they could have taken. The Jets opted for the 365 pound behemoth, Mekhi Becton. Despite his massive frame, Becton moves as if he is 70 pounds lighted. Yet, he still is a mauler in the run game. If Becton cleans up his pass protection, which can be sloppy at times, the Jets are looking at a future

pro-bowl caliber tackle and pancaker for the next decade. In the second round the Jets traded down to nab an extra third round pick. And, with their second round selection the Jets grabbed Denzel Mims, a receiver from Baylor. Widely considered a fringe first round talent, it was a shock that Mims fell to 59. Mims is a hyper-athletic wideout with all the tools to become a true No. 1 or 2 receiver in the NFL, if he can improve his route tree. With their next pick, the Jets decided to take Cal free safety Ashtyn Davis (a former walk-on football and track star) in the third. Davis is a player with top end speed, great instincts and superb ball skills. Davis is going to be a great starting free safety/slot corner in the NFL. But, the Jets already have a great safety tandem in Jamal Adams and Marcus Maye, so one can deduce that the Jets are preparing to let Marcus Maye walk in free agency. With their final pick in the third round, the Jets drafted Jabari Zuniga, a pass rusher out of Florida. Although he was plagued with injuries in college, when healthy he can be a productive pass rusher. Zuniga fills the void at Edge rusher for the Jets, and he becomes even more valuable if starter Jordan Jenkins leaves in next year's free agency. On day 3, the Jets had six picks, three in the fourth, one in the fifth and two in the sixth. With their first pick, the Jets opted to take a power back out of Florida, Lamical Perine. Serving as Le'veon Bell's backup this year, Perine will be able to provide some much needed depth and a change of pace at the position. Next, the Jets took gunslinging Florida International Quarterback, James Morgan. Although this pick was a head-scratcher to many Jets fans because it was used on someone who is supposed to never see the field, in the NFL injuries occur and you want to make sure that your team is able to compete even if the starting quarterback is hurt. The Jets want to ensure that their organization is able to overcome any injury that they face, and hopefully Morgan can provide that stability. With their last pick of the fourth round, the Jets took another "nasty" offensive tackle,

Cameron Clark out of Charlotte. Clark, a friend of Mekhi Becton, can provide the Jets with another "dog" upfront. The expectation is that he can play multiple positions, and maybe become a starter down the line. Next, with their lone fifth round pick, the Jets took Bryce Hall, a cornerback out of Virginia. Not to be confused with the TikTok star, Hall is considered one of the steals of the draft. Hall, a day two talent, had his stock dropped due to injury, but if healthy he can develop into a plus starter. With their first pick in the sixth round, the Jets selected Braden Mann, college football's best punter, out of Texas A&M. This man has a rocket for a leg and one of his only criticisms is that he punts the ball too far. Mann has a chance to be a consistent pro bowl punter for years to come. With their last pick in the draft, the Jets traded with the Indianapolis Colts for cornerback Quncy Wilson. This is their third former Colts cornerback in the last year and their third Gator of the draft. A noticeable theme general manager Joe Douglas stuck to was leadership. In fact, the last five Jets draft picks were team captains. Joe Douglas emphasizes that he wants to "create the best culture in sports," and adding an abundance of captains is a great start. The draft may have concluded, but the makeup of the roster is far from over. In my opinion, the Jets have set a great foundation for the future this offseason and are a year away, however, with the exit of Tom Brady, the AFC East is more open than ever and I think they have a strong chance to be in the running atop the division. Instant Grade A- And, here are some other teams with drafts I would like to highlight. The Baltimore Ravens. They ended up having perhaps the best draft in the league. They nabbed a pair of linebackers—Queen & Harrison—an elite running back in JK Dobbins to give the Ravens an offense that can finally challenge the chiefs, and a bunch of other great talent. Instant Grade A+ The Dallas Cowboys. As much as I hate to admit this, The Cowboys had an elite draft. They landed a great receiver in Ceedee Lamb (who could take over for Amari Cooper if they terminate his contract in 2021 at zero additional cost,) a solid cornerback in Trevon Diggs, and great players during the rest of the draft, like defensive tackle Neville Gallimore. Instant Grade A+ The Arizona Cardinals. The Cardinals were fortunate enough to have Isaiah Simmons fall into their laps at 8. Their second round pick was dealt for Deandre Hopkins and they selected a first round tackle in Josh Jones at pick

Memorial Day 2020: Changed By Coronavirus

By: NOAH GREER

Memorial Day is an American Federal Holiday on which Americans honor our fallen troops and military personnel. Memorial Day has been recognized on the last Monday of May, annually, since 1970. Over the years, Memorial Day has come to be recognized as the first day of summer, and with that comes annual celebrations. Traditionally, Memorial Day sees families come together to celebrate. Many common American traditions include family gatherings, barbecues, and occasional parades. As Memorial Day is a national holiday, schools are closed, and many offices are closed. Memorial Day is a quintessential holiday and is one of the many things that Coronavirus was expected to steal from us. The resilience of America during this pandemic was put on display this Monday, on Memorial Day. Despite the restrictions on gatherings and spending time with family due to Coronavirus, many people found ways to modify their Memorial Day plans in order to keep some of their traditions and celebrations alive. Leading into Memorial Day weekend, several articles were written in major publications detailing the modifications to plans that could be made such that the entire day was not ruined. For example, many Memorial Day walking

parades became car parades. Additionally, backyard and outdoor celebrations were very popular this Memorial Day. Social distancing protocols meant that people might not be able to hug their loved ones but they could at least see them and speak with them at a distance. A successful Memorial Day celebration during this pandemic required many specific modifications, according to Eric Bromage of the New York Times. These modification suggestions included staying outside, socially distancing, individually packaging any food, and limiting the number of people present. These changes were suggested only in hopes that they could help maintain some of the holiday traditions that many hold dear. With such a difficult health crisis around the country, the Coronavirus Pandemic, it took much optimism to expect any Memorial Day celebrations to be possible. This Memorial Day was truly unlike any other. The most important parts were better appreciated than ever before. Many appreciated seeing their loved ones more than ever. According to Asher Zimmel, "Memorial Day was far more sentimental than ever, this year, without being marred by the distractions of the holiday, we were better able to honor our friends and family who have served in the



armed forces." Perhaps having Memorial Day this year without distractions was good. For many, it was sobering, as has the pandemic been, as a whole. As per an anonymous member of the Fieldston community, "This year on Memorial Day, although I was unable to be with those I love in the same way, I felt that I was much better able to honor those who this holiday is about, while changing the way I typically see my family, such that our traditions

were not entirely missed, this year." The fact that many Americans were able to make changes to their plans in order to hold onto the most important facets of the holiday is representative of the remarkable resilience of this country, and the world, during such a trying, tragic time.

Coronavirus is Forever Changing the Way we Interact

By: ANDREW ROSS

There is no doubt that life as we know it is currently on hold. Everyone is home from school, work, and over thirty million Americans have lost their jobs since the beginning of the pandemic. Stores and restaurants are closed, parks are closed, basketball hoops are being taken down, and nobody is shaking hands. It is unknown how long it will be this way. Experts say a vaccine typically takes between twelve and eighteen months to synthesize (so at this point hopefully it will only take about another year). But even when we do return to school and work it is possible that some aspects of human behavior and

interaction with one another will change forever. We have already seen the handshake – an integral part of the introduction between and greeting of two humans – take a backseat in the wake of the pandemic. In substitution we have seen people foot tap, nod to each other, and an elbow bump (which is apparently also unsafe because in order to execute one requires coming within six feet of another person). Dr. Anthony Fauci, the director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Disease, has said on multiple accounts that handshaking needs to stop altogether. Whether we know it, want to admit it, or

not, our hands are usually covered in bacteria and other filth, which are transferred from hand to hand with every shake. Fauci, in an interview with the Wall Street Journal said, "I don't think we should ever shake hands ever again, to be honest with you. Not only would it be good to prevent coronavirus disease, it probably would decrease instances of influenza dramatically in this country." The handshake was invented in the 5th Century B.C.E. in Ancient Greece. Two people would shake hands to indicate that neither one was armed, and that it was to be a peaceful interaction. Even though the handshake has been a part of human life for thousands of years, humans may have to find a new and innovative way of

greeting. Hopefully the sidelining of the handshake is only temporary until there is a vaccine for the coronavirus.



COURTESY OF THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

Vocal-NY's Fight for Housing the Homeless Population of New York City During The Pandemic

BY: EMMA SISKAND

As New York state continues to suffer with the most COVID-19 cases in the country, and New York City remains a concentrated hotspot, the grass-roots organization, Vocal-NY, is stepping up to meet the needs particularly of the city's homeless population during this time of crisis. Vocal-NY, which stands for the Voices of Community Activists & Leaders, has a broad mission across the state to help low-income residents who are affected by HIV/Aids, hHepatitis C, the war on drugs, homelessness, and mass incarceration. Currently, their mission to help the city's homeless population has never been more dire, and Vocal-NY has stepped up its efforts with staff and volunteers to observe and put pressure on the government. In an interview with the housing campaign coordinator for the organization, Joseph Loonam, we discussed the action needed to help aid New York's homeless population. Asked how the pandemic has affected the services provided for the homeless, Loonam stated, "When the shutdown started, there was an immediate reduction of services across the board. Recently, we've had the city step up to provide food: there are 400 food distribution sights around the city and two sites where people can take a shower." Loonam, a Brooklyn native, goes on to say that their advocacy work has been crucial to implement these sites, and the orga-

nization continues to be concerned about the impact the pandemic has had on the Department of Housing services as well as the potential budget cuts that may impact the future of these services. Given the reduction of services due to the pandemic, when asked how the pandemic has affected the organization's course of action, Joseph stated, "We did a 180 on a lot of demands... there was an immediate switch from long-term to short-term. We have long-term advocated for permanent housing for every single person in the city and state of New York. We in general don't think the DHS should put people into hotel rooms rather than put them into somewhere permanent to live, but at this moment we have to rehouse a lot of people very rapidly in order to social distance." According to Vocal and the mayor's office, New York City's homeless population is approximately 61,000, with around 4,000 sleeping in the street, subway, or other public areas each night. With the subways being closed for cleaning during the night and the streets unsafe for social distancing during this public health crisis, Vocal-NY has extended its mission to make sure that 30,000 hotel rooms are opened for the homeless population of New York City immediately. Vocal-NY has formed a coalition of different groups around the city who have worked closely

with impacted people to combine efforts to pressure the mayor of New York City, Bill DeBlasio, to open up these hotel rooms. While Mayor DeBlasio has opened up a few thousand so far, the coalition has pushed for the mayor to open up more rooms at a much faster pace through pushing legislation by the city council as well as creating a petition and gofundme campaign. When asked if Governor Cuomo and Mayor DeBlasio are doing enough to help aid the homeless during this pandemic, Joseph responded emphatically, "No, they're not doing enough... specifically the mayor of New York City. He can open up 30,000 hotel rooms right away to allow people to socially distance and he has not done that. I think that the Governor also has a lot of good options to open up hotels, dormitories, and other places where you can socially distance but neither of them have done enough to end the increase of homelessness which has gone up dramatically since the start of this crisis nor have they done enough to house people who are already in shelters or on the street." When asked about ways in which ordinary New Yorkers, including students, can help aid Vocal-NY's effort to support the homeless during this crisis, Loonam directed attention to homelesscantstayhome.org, which is a website where Vocal-NY is recording information

and daily updates about New York City's homeless population during the pandemic. This website is also where Vocal-NY's petition can be signed for the mayor to open up 30,000 hotel rooms, and has a link to their gofundme campaign where New Yorkers can help achieve its goal to raise \$100,000 to protect homeless people from Covid-19. At the end of our interview, Loonam emphasized, "There are a lot of bad things happening, and we have to make sure it is captured. This is a very historic moment and I think it is important that we observe as much as possible." With support and ambition, Vocal-NY has been able to accomplish a great deal for the homeless population of New York City, and they will continue to fight to prioritize their well-being during this crisis. Loonam concluded by capturing the organization's mission and message during this pandemic, stating, "We are proud of moving the conversation as much as we have thus far and our coalition has started a gofundme to house New Yorkers as a way to put pressure on the mayor and say this is something that is possible, this is a service that people will take, and there are ways to keep people safe and well-served in a situation where they can also distance from one another and prioritize their health."

Fieldston Political Action Club's Response to Covid-19

BY: EMMA SISKAND

Founded in December 2019 by Asher Zimmel (IV) and Sara Snyder (IV), Fieldston's Political Action Club strives to bring together the diverse, and sometimes overlooked, viewpoints of Fieldston students in a respectful manner in order to engage with each other about controversial topics and take action in modern day politics. Co-founder Asher Zimmel states, "Sara and I started the political action club as an unbiased place where politically interested students could go to discuss their beliefs... [our goal is to] remove the hyperpolarization that we see in our lives, and sometimes see at Fieldston." Co-founder Sara Snyders adds that, "Our main target is helping politically interested students at Fieldston take action in politics." The

leaders emphasize that as a club, they do not support one candidate or one common belief, as they want to create an unbiased environment for students to build respect for one another. In a call with both of the club's leaders, they emphasized the importance of respect within the club especially when tackling different viewpoints and controversial topics. For instance, the club watched the Hilary Clinton documentary as well as the Mitt Romney documentary, and discussed in detail the differences between the politicians as well as what they learned from watching a documentary on someone who might not have been their candidate of choice. The club strives to provide opportunities for

students to become politically active, including phone banking for the candidate of their choice, interning for a local politician, or organizing school wide events. A typical meeting for the club includes phone banking, discussing homework assignments, and brainstorming about new ways to be politically active. Recently, the club has adjusted to the current pandemic environment we live in by leveraging the principals the club was founded on to engage in conversation about the pandemic. I asked both Asher and Sara the same question, "Due to the pandemic, how is the club adjusting to fit the current state of our country?" Their answers emphasized the key foundation of respect that the club prioritizes, and

its heightened importance during the pandemic we face. Sara Snyder explained, "We've put phone banking on hold because people are having much bigger issues right now and as a club we are striving to create a respectful environment where politics isn't the priority...we've spent our time watching political documentaries so that once we go back to phonebanking we can be more educated and we have also led discussions about the pandemic and the need to depoliticise due to public health." Asher Zimmel states, "In times of a pandemic and national crisis, when we need to remove politics from the equation, I think that the kind of think tanks like ours are really important because we've al-

How the Toronto Raptors Have Dealt With Quarantine

BY: EMMA SISKIND



For close to three months since the coronavirus pandemic hit the US, the NBA season has been on pause. With hopes of the season finally starting back up in Orlando, teams are excited to get back on the court. In a recent interview with Jim Sann, my uncle and an assistant coach for the Toronto Raptors, Jim reflected on the Raptor's experience in quarantine and how coaches and players have tried to make the most of this unprecedented situation. The Raptors were the last team to play the Utah Jazz just before the first player in the NBA, Rudy Gobert of the Jazz, tested positive for Covid-19. After receiving the news, members of the Raptors were sent to the hospital in Toronto for testing, and afterwards to quarantine for 14 days. Thankfully, no one in the Raptors organization tested positive. But suddenly, the NBA season was put on an indefinite pause by the league. Sann explained that while there have been game stoppages in the past due to labor disputes and strikes, this hiatus felt different as it came so unexpectedly and

there was no visibility on how long it would last and whether the current season would restart. This left the coaches with the challenge of how to try to spend the time productively. The Raptor's coaching staff discussed how to move forward without the ability to have players in the gym or together both during the quarantine and afterwards with social distancing guidelines. Sann describes the essential challenge, "How do we keep our players engaged so that if the season restarts we are in an advantaged position?" One strategy employed to keep the players focussed was to assign a couple of players for each coach to keep in touch with regularly. Sann was assigned two players, Fred VanVleet and Pascal Siakam, for which he sends game film to discuss ways in which they can improve and what adjustments they can make. Sann states, "Even though they could

not be on the court and we could not be around them, this allowed us to keep our players improving their games during the hiatus." Sann emphasized, "For the first time in their lives, players have not been able to just go to a gym, pick up a ball, and work out. Most of our players have not shot a basketball in over two months and that is really hard for them." Like the coaches, the players have also had to get very creative during this quarantine to remain mentally focussed, but for them it also involves staying in top physical shape. With around half of the players in Toronto and the other half back home in the United States, they have had to essentially turn their living rooms into their gym. When the season was first put on pause, the team delivered all players an exercise bike, dumbbells, ket-

tlebells, and other exercise equipment. The players were also sent basketballs to perform dribbling drills. Three times a week the players have a zoom call with the team's strength coaches, who put them through workouts in their home gyms. Overall, these efforts have enabled the players to maintain strength and agility and stay in good cardiovascular health. Jim stresses that the creativity that has been involved in keeping the players in shape is important so that when the season does come back, the players avoid injuries and are ready for the physical challenge of professional basketball. For coaches, there is not a lot of time off even when the team is not playing in the off-season. A silver lining of the hiatus has been the extra time to focus on the coaches own development. Jim explains, "We tried to use this time for professional development, meaning to get better at our jobs as coaches. I have time now to really think about how I want to coach my players without the distractions of practice, games and always having to catch a plane. The schedule during the season is so crazy that you have very lit-

tle time to focus on yourself because the focus is always on your players. So that has been a positive, and it has also forced me to be very creative on how I go about communication and teaching remotely." Assistant coaches were also given projects by the head coach, Nick Nurse. For example, one task Jim was assigned was to study both successful and unsuccessful strategies of other teams that have come back from previous stoppages. Sann has also used time during the quarantine to speak to other coaches in the league to trade ideas on what they do with their players. Sann adds that, "This gives me an opportunity to learn more about the profession and new ideas that I may want to try with my players." Cur-

Fieldston Political Action Club (cont.)

ready established a nonpartisan form of communication." Asher also emphasized that while the club strives to be nonpartisan, it is important to adjust our conversations to analyze how the current administration reacts to the pandemic before us, and states, "While we have to respect everybody that sup-

ports the leadership of the United States, the club also needs to continue to have discussions about what is appropriate behavior during a crisis." Looking to the future, the club is looking forward to politically engaging in local elections as well as focusing on

social justice issues. The club is also looking forward to creating school wide events that strive for a more open and safe political environment at Fieldston. However, with a future that is uncertain, the club will continue to create a safe

and respectful environment for students to engage with each other on difficult topics concerning the pandemic.

Revenge of the Nerds: Model UN Presidents Reflect on Their Their Legacy

BY: ASHER ZEMMEL



Model United Nations, Model UN, or MUN for short, is a competitive educational simulation of the actual United Nations. Fieldston's Model UN club was founded in 2014 by Ryan Kelly '18, Ben Kaiser '18, and David Runte '18. The faculty advisor is historian Dr. Gerry Blaney. Since then, the club has undergone a massive expansion with 75 members this year, a middle school branch, a tutoring service, a 24 person travel team, and a strong sense of friendship and camaraderie. A normal year's schedule for the club is to attend two local conferences (one day each), two college conferences (four days each), and to host a conference for middle schoolers in the Spring. Unfortunately, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, EthicalMUN IV was cancelled. I interviewed Model UN Co-Presidents Iva Knezevic (VI) and Theo Dassin (VI) on the growth of the club as well as their reflections on the past, present, and future of the club itself. Fieldston's Model UN club has become a force to be reckoned with over the past three years. The club has amassed 14 verbal commendations, 19 honorable mentions, 13 outstanding delegates, and 6 best delegate awards, for a grand total of 52 awards during Iva and Theo's tenure. While Model UN itself may appear to be heated and aggressive, the club, in true Fieldston style, manages to foster a laid back environment amidst the competition. Co-President of Model UN, Iva Knezevic believes this is because "Our club has a lot of smart and driven kids, creating an atmosphere of hard work. That coupled with some jokesters forms an

environment that emphasizes growth instead of winning." Her Co-President Theo Dassin agrees. "The club leads to friendship automatically. So much time is spent together on buses and in hotels that it is impossible not to bond. All of the upperclassmen are extremely willing to show the underclassmen the ropes and act as mentors during their high school careers. Model UN is so unique because club members are able to form such strong cross grade bonds. I hope that I was able to mentor the younger kids, because I was fortunate enough to have such great relationships with the older kids when I was an underclassman. Model UN made me the person I am today" Iva mentions that she too felt like a mentor figure within the club. "I roomed with three sophomores this year and we've become super close friends. It was really impactful to be able to be a mentor figure for them and I'm so grateful I was able to become so close with people that I would have never talked to otherwise." She also says that the reason the club manages to do so well is "because we compete as individuals for our team, we do not endorse selfish behavior by club members. Model UN cares about everybody as a whole, not just the individual."

Iva notes that while the club may be incredibly successful, it does not necessarily receive the recognition it deserves. She says "It's frustrating to return from a successful conference and not see the same recognition that a sports team may get, however, as a whole the school has been very supportive of the club's endeavors." Iva's distinction of Model UN being a com-

petitive club that strives for academic excellence vs. a team that competes on a physical level is supported by Theo Dassin, a varsity athlete who will be running track for Amherst college next year. Dassin says, "I would say that Model UN is very similar to a varsity team. Each club meeting is like a practice. There's also an amazing social aspect to these conferences. You get to engage in tough competition against your friends, but as soon as a committee session is over the club is back to its regular jovial self." That being said, Model UN also engenders academic success amongst its participants. Iva believes "that there is a correlation between learning the necessary skills for Model UN and doing well in school, because Model UN teaches you about the world, thinking on your feet, compromise, how to articulate ideas, and many more useful skills." Theo concurs and adds that "joining Model UN 100% improves your academic life. Originally, I had no idea Model UN was a competition. It was such a shock to see that all of these kids were so cutthroat, but that's what taught me to go into things in a prepared manner and be ready to excel. Get done what you need to get done. If you're not prepared, you're not ready, and you will be called out." Fieldston prides itself on having a progressive mission and value-based learning, so I asked the Presidents what they thought the intersectionality of Felix Adler's vision and Model UN looks like. Iva strongly believes that Felix Adler would love the idea of a Model UN club because "The club is essen-

tially an embodiment of the school's mission of a progressive education, inspiring diverse and passionate learners, critical thinkers, and ethical individuals who aim to make the world more humane and just. Most of all, people who do Model UN are genuinely interested in learning more about the world." Model UN's travel team also has a commitment to gender equality, with half of the travel team spots going to male-identifying students and the other half going to female-identifying students. Theo sees Model UN as Fieldston's largest embodiment of the school mission. He states "Model UN, more so than any part of my education has taught me how to articulate my ideas. A huge part of the Fieldston mission is to debate and encourage discourse, but in no place other than Model UN was this as successful." If it wasn't clear before, Model UN has developed a cult-like following at Fieldston, thus generating a dedicated membership and large emotional and social investments from its travel team. Theo says "Model UN is a cult in the best of ways. There is a bizarre amount of obsession around it. It's so much fun having a club that is as close as we are, we are like one big family. Calling us a cult is a compliment." Dassin reminds us that just four years ago the club was struggling to recruit members, but this year it became the club with the most sign-ups at the club fair. "That was a super exciting moment, to get the most club sign-ups out of any club at the clubs fair, it was really amazing to see so many kids ready to take the plunge and get into Model UN. The

Coming of Age in Uncertain Times: Gen Z's Unique Struggle

BY: THE EDITORS IN CHIEF

“We can learn to work and speak when we are afraid in the same way we have learned to work and speak when we are tired. For we have been socialized to respect fear more than our own needs for language and definition, and while we wait in silence for that final luxury of fearlessness, the weight of that silence will choke us. The fact that we are here and that I speak these words is an attempt to break that silence and bridge some of those differences between us, for it is not difference which immobilizes us, but silence. And there are so many silences to be broken.”

Audre Lorde, *The Transformation of Silence into Language and Action*

These are troubling times for even the most stable of adults—with a global pandemic, country-wide protests in the wake of George Floyd's murder, and a looming economic crisis, our future has never been more uncertain. As teenagers, however, Generation Z faces a unique set of issues: we must attempt to carve out our own identities in the midst of all this. The pressures of adolescence combined with the turbulence of a changing world makes 2020 among the hardest times to be a teenager. We've inherited a divided world from our parents, and their parents, and their parents before them. Now, it seems that centuries of tension have finally come to a breaking point. The country we've had no part in creating is now collapsing around us: our already fractured medical and justice systems have

simultaneously broken down, and any sense of safety or comfort has been entirely lost for even the most privileged and oblivious of citizens. Nothing makes sense: do we ignore the plague in order to protest senseless murders? Do we fuel the endless political outrage machine, or just accept our broken country as it is? The surreal, apocalyptic feel of 2020 is further amplified by social media, the newest battleground for social justice (or for performative virtue signaling, depending on one's view). On Tuesday, Instagram was flooded with black screens, ostensibly in order to allow black voices to be heard, though just a few hours later it was decided that the black screens only served to silence the Black Lives Matter movement. Our feeds are flooded with conflicting messages: everybody should go out and protest because All Cops Are Bastards (ACAB), but it's also crucial to #StayHome and do our part. It's enough to make your head spin, especially if you're already in the process of figuring out who you even are. But we don't have time to figure that out: we have to figure out which side of history we want to come out on. Everything we do is almost inherently political. Some of us are taking to the streets to protest while others are posting. Some of us are talking with our families at dinner while others are arguing with friends. Some of us are even stuck at home because apartment

doors have been shattered and nearby stores have been looted. Some of us are wrestling with pre-existing health conditions which force us to stay inside. There exists a multitude of ways to respond to today's grim reality. For some, protesting seems like the only option while for others, it feels as though it is not even a possibility. While there are a million and one unknowns and options being presented to us, there are some principal truths that have guided our thoughts and actions in this world in disarray:

There is an indisputable history of systemic racism in America. This nation, since its conception, has had a history of black people being treated differently due to the color of their skin. As a result, white-on-black police brutality strikes an immensely painful chord for many in our community. A chord that white people can never – and will never – fully comprehend, and one all-too-common for black people due to the reality of anxiety and fear that most face on a daily basis.

Very generally, the police have a difficult and often dangerous job. While every American has a different view of a police officer's responsibilities and capabilities, officers are – and ought to be – accountable for the safety and se-

curity of all citizens. When they fail to do this, especially when they do not adhere to the duties of the office they hold, they must be held accountable by all stakeholders in American democracy.

With the innate power, privilege and responsibilities that a police officer holds and the systemic inequities that continue to exist, there needs to be overarching change to create a more just system of law enforcement. This change could come in the form of enhanced education, training and vetting of police officers.

All Americans have a constitutional right to “peaceably assemble” in an effort to create a world they deem more just and equitable. This includes the many peaceful protests occurring nationwide.

These truths are not Manichean, and are further complicated by the fact that everyone holds their own truths based on lived experience. In spite of the grey, we know for certain we are living through a time that will be written in the history books for our children to read. This piece was penned by the 2020-2021 Editors-In-Chief Carolyn Finerman, Rebecca Koppelman, David Porges and Olivia Becker

Revenge of the nerds (cont.)

club gave me so much throughout my time in high school, so to be able to provide that experience for so many other kids is such a great feeling.” Clubs at Fieldston can have a tendency to be competitive with one another, all in the spirit of good fun of course. I asked Theo what he thought about this relationship and he jokingly asked “there are other clubs?” The coronavirus pandemic disrupted the club's spring plans to host one of the city's most notable Model UN conferences for middle school students, but Iva and Theo remain optimistic about the future of EthicalMUN. Theo remains incredibly grateful for Fieldston's support for Model UN. “The school has shown so much respect for our club. We go out on a limb for the school by representing

them, so there is a lot of responsibility that comes along with that. Dr. Blaney is a phenomenal help and it was so nice of the school to trust us to run this. The fact that we go to two college conferences a year shows their commitment to the club and I just know that next year's EthicalMUN will be the best one yet.” Iva agrees. “There isn't much we can do about this situation, but I was fortunate enough to lead our club through successful EthicalMUNs and I can't wait to see the future of the conference.” On the topic of the future I asked Theo what he envisions the club to look like in a few years and he said “In ten years I see our auditorium filled for EthicalMUN. The auditorium would have been filled this year but the coronavirus forced

us to cancel. It would be so cool for our club to run a major New York City conference. I hope the club becomes a major powerhouse at college conferences because I see us sweeping “best delegate” and constantly winning “best delegation.” Iva and Theo both believe that the legacy they leave behind as club Co-Presidents is one that not only dramatically increased the amount of awards won, conferences attended, and club membership, but a legacy of friendship and community. Theo says “Join Model UN! Regardless of whether or not you enjoy competition our club will always have a place for you.” Iva agrees and adds “Model UN gave me some of the greatest memories from high school. I am

immensely grateful to each and every club member and I cannot wait to see what the club continues to accomplish.”

Finally, Iva and Theo were both asked to describe their fellow club leader. Iva said “Theo is always able to exude a calm and positive attitude when under pressure and he does a great job keeping the spirit alive and bringing the team together.” Theo described Iva as “The most dedicated leader the club could ask for. We have such a great yin yang dynamic, and leading Model UN with her has been a highlight of my time at Fieldston.”

Reimagining Bloomsday in the Time of Coronavirus

BY: SOPHIA GUTIERREZ



June 16th can mean only one thing for literary lovers around the world: Bloomsday. This marks the date that James Joyce's most enigmatic and provocative novel, *Ulysses*, is set. On this day, academics and professionals mingle and exchange esoteric quips alongside other non-academic fans. This mixture of expertise and fanboyism makes for an anomalous literary gathering. New York City fans usually pull out all the stops: 20th century period-themed festivities and readings from the indelible internal monologue of Molly Bloom as she has an orgasm. As a result of the pandemic, Bloomsday will look quite different this June. However, *Ulysses* lovers can not and will not let this literary holiday and its beloved traditions slip through the cracks this year. James Joyce was an Irish, modernist writer who pioneered groundbreaking writing styles and was known for his genius, complexity, and provocative content. It's ironic Joyce is celebrated on Bloomsday though he infamously disliked the idea of being memorialized. In addition to *Ulysses*, he published a multitude of works. His most famous include: *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, *Dubliners*, and *Finnegans Wake*. From a young age, Joyce showed remarkable intelligence alongside a gift for writing and passion for literature. He spent his free time

devouring Aquinas, Dante, and Aristotle, and grew up to speak 17 languages including Arabic, Greek, and Sanskrit. Yet, that's just the tip of the iceberg. In 1922, his landmark novel *Ulysses* was published. This has been dubbed as one of the most revered texts in the modern literary canon. This modern retelling of Homer's *Odyssey*, follows the story of three main characters: struggling artist Stephen Dedalus, Jewish advertisement man Leopold Bloom, and his wife Molly Bloom. The story recounts a single day in Dublin set on June 16, 1904, the same day that Joyce and his wife Nora Barnacle had their first date. The three main characters serve as modern versions of Telemachus, Penelope, and Odysseus. The novel is also structured into "episodes" that correspond with particular events in *The Odyssey*. This work of fiction pegged Joyce as a literary celebrity because of his advanced use of interior monologue and perfected stream-of-consciousness literary technique. While his prose contributes to the fame of the novel, its notorious controversy helps as well. *Ulysses* was met with approbation by Joyce's modernist associates such as T.S. Eliot, Ernest Hemingway and Ezra Pound. Simultaneously, it was slapped with anti-obscenity laws, and ridiculed by The United Kingdom and America. *Ulysses* was

banned in the U.S. and considered contraband for over a decade until the famous obscenity court case *United States v. One Book Called Ulysses* in 1933 lifted the ban. The UK also banned the novel until the mid-1930s for its explicit sexuality and graphic depiction of bodily functions. It represents a major cultural shift for society when a novel that was once described by a critic as "full of the filthiest blasphemies" is now a classic with an international holiday. Joyce remains eternal through his writing and brilliance. With a reputation for being ostentatious and somewhat of an egomaniac, Joyce famously noted about *Ulysses* that "I've put so many enigmas and puzzles that it will keep the professors busy for centuries, arguing over what I meant, and that's the only way of ensuring one's immortality." When discussing Joyce, Upper school English teacher Gregory Grene shared a deeply insightful critique: "I think he's absolutely brilliant, no question, but he's also flawed. I think his writing suggests that he didn't always distinguish between brilliant and self-indulgent. He wrote, and re-wrote, to an incredible extent. But it feels like he was pretty resistant to editing. I think *Finnegans Wake* is a

monument to self-indulgence, and there are significant stretches of *Ulysses* that are too. He can fall into a kind of safe place of mocking rather than creating; he makes fun of his immediate precursors/fellow writers without recognizing how profound an influence they were, and how remarkable their originality was. I'm thinking in particular of Synge and Yeats, and even Lady Gregory, who between them created something utterly new in their synthesis of Irish myth and national consciousness, whereas by the time he gets to *Ulysses* and beyond, on occasion Joyce can feel like he's treading along a path innovated by Laurence Sterne, the 18th-century Irish writer who to an extent pioneered the Joycean metafictional foregrounding of the authorial voice. At times I miss the sheer imagination of Joyce's forebears; I get his claim that he produces something more real, that the fantastic is reserved for journalism, but I miss the creative exuberance and élan of Fielding, Austen or Eliot." Keeping the whole man in mind, one must be wary of the culturally constructed pedestal that Joyce sits on. Bloomsday celebrations are often criticized for their saint-like worship of Joyce and how the stigma around *Ulysses* is revered first and comprehended later. The celebrity and cultural capital of Joyce's "brand" takes its form on Bloomsday. This year, without all the pomp and circumstance, fans have the time to rediscover Joyce's prose through a more private and immersive experience. Perhaps quarantine is the best thing that's ever happened to Bloomsday. June 16th, 2020 could be more fulfilling than that Instagram pictures of bar hopping from one Irish pub to another, dressed up in a heavily pleated early 20th century dress. So sit down and soak up his writing, watch the performances and continue to engage in discourse.



A First Hand Perspective of the Crisis in Hong Kong

BY: DAVID PORGES

“It’s as if they had occupied SoHo” When I called my brother Dylan last fall for help on my final paper in Wally Levis’ “Money and Morals” class, he hung up and texted me the cell phone of a close friend, an exchange student from Hong Kong. In that one night of teaching me the basics of supply and demand, fungibles and commodities and vertically and horizontally integrated corporations, a new friendship began. Even though we lived 3,000 miles away from each other, we became virtual brothers. Right now, my Hong Kong finance mentor is an eyewitness to the current confrontation between Xi Jinping’s authoritarian tendencies and Hong Kong’s democratic inclinations. While Americans are watching their own images of police and demonstrators, some are perplexed by what’s happening in Hong Kong. To make better sense of the two situations, I reached out to Dr. Jerry Blaney, who teaches the “Pacific Perspectives” history elective and the “Modern World History” survey class. Moreover, before coming to Fieldston, Dr. Blaney researched and published on the history of policing, which provided him with some insights about law and order, protests and politics. “While both protests fall under the broad umbrella of human rights and include issues of police brutality,” Dr. Blaney said, “there are important differences as well. The most obvious is the absence of a racial dimension. The second is the fundamentally divergent worldviews between the Hong Kongese protestors and the Communist government in Beijing. For the protestors, they view their home as an international city that respects universal values, including democratic rights. For the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), Hong Kong’s special status is a reminder of China’s ‘Century of Humiliation,’ when foreign powers like the British were able to extract important concessions from the Manchu Empire, which ruled China at that time. From this point of view, the democratic freedoms valued by many Hong Kongese are seen as “Western” values. As such, for the CCP, the full reintegration of Hong Kong into the mainland system is part of a key historic duty: the ‘reunification’ of all those lands deemed ‘Chinese’ by Beijing.” A quick glance at Jonathan

Spence’s Quest for Modern China, or a quick conversation with Dr. Blaney, will tell you that historically Hong Kong has long been under some form of “occupation,” dating back to the Opium War of 1839-1842. Hong Kong was an island off the mainland that became the focal point for the British Empire that lasted from 1842-1997. Even today, one observer noted, the “street signs are still in English and the buses are the same as those in London.” This imperialist product also became a major force in modern world economics. While mainland China became communist during Mao’s revolution in 1949, Hong Kong was poised for rapid economic growth and eventually democratic institutions. Suddenly, in the midst of the Cold War, Western ideas of freedom and entrepreneurship were plentiful as Hong Kong exploded financially, becoming a link between western markets and lucrative eastern economies — earning it the nickname “The Gateway to the East.” But the Cold War came to an end. Nixon visited China. The United States argued before the United Nations that the People’s Republic of China should become a member state, and the growing Chinese market became both a lure for foreign capital and cheap labor. According to Dr. Blaney, “Hong Kong’s unique status — with its rule of law and market economy — was seen as an asset to both China and foreign interests. Hong Kong would thus serve as a safe entryway for foreign direct investment into China. Indeed, at that time, Hong Kong represented a significant chunk of China’s GDP. China intentionally weaned itself off from Hong Kong’s dependence as its own economy grew. In 1993, Hong Kong accounted for 27% of the Chinese economy. In 2018, Hong Kong accounts for less than 3%. That’s quite a drastic drop in a relatively short period of time. The fact that Hong Kong accounts for much less of the Chinese GDP means that Xi Jinping can take these political moves against Hong Kong without harming the Chinese economy as a whole.” After the establishment of the Basic



GEORGINA BOGOSI/PAINT/GETTY IMAGES VIA GETTY IMAGES

Law — Hong Kong’s form of a constitution — it was assumed that the central government in Beijing would respect the political rights enshrined in it until 2047. This assumption has been assaulted by China since 1997, even before the ink on the treaty with the British dried. For three decades there have been waves of protests in opposition to China’s autocratic efforts to absorb Hong Kong. The most recent has been the “Umbrella Movement,” led by then seventeen year-old student activist Joshua Wong, who has since become a leading pro-democracy politician in Hong Kong. Originally the protests stemmed from an Extradition Bill that many suspected would allow China to arrest and prosecute dissenting Hong Kongese citizens who were pivotal to the Communist Party and its leader Xi. When asked about the Extradition Bill, Dr. Blaney explained that “the stated inspiration for the Extradition Bill was a murder committed in Taiwan. A Hong Kongese couple went to Taiwan on a trip, during which the boyfriend gruesomely murdered his girlfriend and returned to Hong Kong. Since Taiwan and Hong Kong do not have an extradition treaty, the Taiwanese government couldn’t ask the Hong Kongese government to extradite him back to Taiwan so that he could be prosecuted. Since the crime occurred in Taiwan, he couldn’t be prosecuted in Hong Kong itself. To close this loophole, the Chinese government pressured its counterparts in Hong Kong to pass this Extradition Bill — since China already claims sovereignty over Taiwan (which it doesn’t have

in reality, it should be noted), Beijing argued that Chinese authorities could prosecute the boyfriend for the murder — since, in their eyes, Taiwan is a province of China. Nonetheless, that is not how many Hong Kong citizens viewed the bill. For them, Beijing was using this horrible murder as a pretext to create a different kind of loophole in which to charge political dissenters in Hong Kong with ‘crimes’ and have them extradited to the mainland to face Chinese courts.” This Extradition Bill was met with a flood of over 2 million protesters (about a third of the region’s population.) The protesters demanded sweeping changes to fully democratize Hong Kong and protect it from Chinese political influence. During these protests, my friend was able to witness many of the blockades, and clashes between police and protesters. For his own safety, he has chosen to remain nameless. He is an eye-witness to the manic reality of a city thrown into crisis. Although never directly affiliated with the movement, he has observed much of the action during the height of the protests. He told me that “[Chinese influence] has been more passive than there was at the time during the protests,” more like a steady undercurrent rather than a flood. According to him, much of the Western media’s portrayal of Hong Kong is as a city besieged and tormented by the Chinese occupying forces. However, my friend corrected that notion and stated that the infiltration is more

Fieldston Affinity Groups Respond to the Black Lives Matter Protests

BY: MARIA GRABOWSKY

In response to the murders of Ahmaud Arbury, George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Tony McDade and all of the Black Lives Matter protests, the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) team and Affinity Group leaders offered a processing space for all students. In an email to the student body Arhm Wild wrote, "In light of recent events involving police brutality and anti-black violence, the DEI Department, in collaboration with Affinity Group Leaders would like to offer a processing space for students based on the anti-bias domains of identity, diversity, action and justice." The meeting was held at 1pm on Tuesday, June 2nd via google meet. It started off with the entire cohort of students who signed up, then the meeting broke up into separate affinity group meetings. Students had the option of joining a WAG (White Allies Group), a Latinx Affinity group, a multiracial group, an Asian affinity group and a Black affinity group. In the larger meeting, Mx. Wild told everyone to use this affinity group time to come up with ways for the student body to act and focus on action. After meeting in separate groups, everyone reconvened to talk about what each group had discussed. While some groups had over 30 people which was a challenge for a google meet conversation, the multiracial affinity group only had four. Taja Grayson (V) was in the multi-

racial group and said, "The multiracial affinity space was a smaller group than some of the others so it felt more like a conversation. Because of the size, everyone had an opportunity to speak and respond." With a smaller size, the group was able to brainstorm ways to act as well as reflect on their own identifiers. "We discussed the role of social media in the movement, as well as the place of those with dueling identities. Themes of physical privilege, societal perception and allyship were spoken on as well," said Grayson. Jeremiah Ortiz (V) was in the Black affinity group and expressed a yearning for support and activism from all Fieldston students. "I think that the best thing as a community, for the high school right now, is for everyone to do their part in helping our racist society become anti-racist. When I say everyone, I mean everyone. Black students need the unconditional support from the faculty and administration, and need to know that they will be there for us when moments like these translate. As for my fellow classmates in high school, we're at the age where we have the ability to form our own opinions and voice where we want change. This is the time for us to step up to the plate and make the changes that will benefit the future generations

to come. If we do not step up, the same narrative will repeat continuously, which leads to the idea that being a bystander is considered acceptable, which it is absolutely not." Micaela Greenfield (V), one of the leaders of the White Allies Group expressed happiness at the number of people that showed up: "I'm happy that so many people showed up and are taking the first step!" The affinity group consisted of around 30 to 40 people and its conversation focused on what it means to be a white ally. Participants discussed reading a book about white privilege over the summer together, the importance of having conversations with family members about racism, and examples of negative allyship. Since the meeting, the White Allies Group has created a Facebook group where members have been sharing books, articles, ideas for how to act and asking questions about how to be the best ally. The leaders have also been planning for a future meeting, during which

members can further discuss their allyship and privilege. "We are hoping to build the group up over the summer by creating spaces to phone bank together, watch movies together and read books together. My hope for the white ally group is that it becomes an actual regularly occurring space to learn from each other and build meaningful allyships. At some point we hope to partner with other schools in the city in order to further our learning. We hope that when the social media dies down people are still willing to show up and do the work!" said Greenfield. Even though the school year has come to a close, many students still feel the responsibility to stay active and engaged. Students in these affinity groups pledged to continue their hard work, hoping that change will come.

Hong Kong (cont.)

subtle. Many of his friends told him: "There was a time during the protest where Hong Kong police officers were speaking Mandarin." This caused much controversy and alarm because they speak Cantonese in Hong Kong, whereas Mandarin is the dominant language of mainland China. Accordingly, when the officers and auxiliary forces began speaking Mandarin, it presented indisputable evidence that China was sending forces from the mainland to silence the protests. This didn't stop the protesters however, they continued to block roads leading in and out of the city. One of these was a road that led under the Hong Kong Polytechnic University. This resulted in a massive siege and multi-day ordeal. The protesters built weapons to fight and fend off the attacks from the police. Thirteen days later the siege ended in tragedy when students were rounded up and arrested. Like a scene from "Les Mis," those who were able to escape fled into the sewers. Some were hospitalized and subsequently arrested by the police. This prompted the Chinese government to continue its influence on Hong Kong. According to Dr. Blaney, "the fundamental problem is that Hong Kong has lost much of its previous eco-

economic leverage and Beijing has little reason to not continue to press its political interests in Hong Kong. No amount of local resistance could stop Beijing from fully occupying Hong Kong and dismantling its autonomous structure. In fact, the move probably would be very popular in the rest of China, who tend to resent the Hong Kongese and their sense of 'entitlement' to freedoms not enjoyed on the mainland." Dr. Blaney continued: "Arguably the only two things preventing such a crack down are 1) the fact that Hong Kong is still an important financial center for China, and 2) the world is watching. While the Chinese economy arguably could weather the loss of some foreign capital based in Hong Kong, it doesn't want another 'Tiananmen Square' event being broadcasted across the globe. The latter would damage China's carefully constructed, yet still fragile, image in multiple ways, and ways that are likely to hurt China's

economic and political interests more gravely." "Most Hong Kongese are aware of all of the above," Dr. Blaney noted. "That is why they have striven to keep the world watching. But they are in a difficult situation. They can't resist forever, Beijing will continue to press its interests in Hong Kong, and the world will eventually stop paying attention. British and U.S warships will not arrive in Hong Kong Harbor to enforce the Basic Law. The Hong Kongese also realize this, which is why these latest protests have had outbursts of violence and vandalism: there is a deep sense of angst and frustration amongst activists, particularly younger ones." The movement which started as a grassroots opposition, also ran alongside the challenge of the coronavi-

rus, which hindered the ability to organize massive public protests. Protests continue, but it is unclear how long they will be able to sustain themselves in the face of determined governmental opposition. They might fall victim to the same fate as the Occupy Wall Street demonstrations a few years ago in New York, whose spontaneous beginnings failed the test of time: without stronger leadership to bring together and organize the population, resistance would fray. Now, after over two hundred years of shifting political ties, occupations and revolutions, the gateway to the east appears to be closing.

Deborah Kriger Retires After 16 Years at Fieldston

BY: DILLON SHEEKY



Before visual arts class on Monday and Thursday afternoons, I am usually drained from hours of trivial schoolwork. I place my heavy backpack in the hallway and sluggishly walk into the studio. I am, however, greeted by a burst of excitement; Deborah Kriger's enthusiasm and larger-than-life personality seem to renew my spirits almost instantly. Her passion for the craft and investment in my work inspire me to pick up the paint brush and create. It is no surprise that her other students testify to a similar joy when they are in the presence of Kriger. "My history is not a linear one," Kriger says referring to her career. Before working at Fieldston, she was a women's history adjunct professor, worked at the mayor's office and even was a puppeteer. She also contributed to a program called "Fun Wagon" where she would teach art to under-resourced kids in Baltimore. Earlier, Kriger helped kickstart two schools in Baltimore alongside her mother and brother. "One was called the Baltimore Experimental High School,"

Kriger says. "It was incredibly successful and the real meaning of an experimental, progressive school." She brings a similar progressive style of teaching into her Fieldston classroom. "Education has always been really important to me, particularly progressive education," she says. "And in the art department, it is very progressive. We are allowed to teach whatever we want." Moving from Philadelphia to New York, Kriger was introduced to the community with a temporary position; an art teacher was taking a 1 year sabbatical and needed an interim replacement. "I walked on the campus, and I thought it looked just like Hogwarts," Kriger says. "I was blown away by the buildings." The teacher she was standing in for eventually announced his permanent leave, and a full teaching position presented itself. Kriger decided to apply; while the competition was fierce, Kriger was very well regarded among the Fieldston students, and she earned the spot. Kriger's teaching schedule today is very similar to her schedule 16 years ago. She has always taught the same grades — 7th, 8th and 9th — as well as the same electives — printmaking, life drawing and photoshop. Kriger also works with the visual arts major

students alongside Scott Wolfson who occupies the room adjacent to her's. When asked what she will miss most about the community, Kriger undoubtedly says the students. "I don't know what I'm gonna do," she says chuckling. "I will miss seeing them every day and watching them grow." While Kriger speaks fondly of her students, she speaks even more fondly of what they create. "I am blown away by the quality of the work that they all do," Kriger says. "I loved when Scott and I would hang the art show because it was just a room of strong, beautiful work." "There is also a big handful of faculty that I absolutely love and have gotten to know during all these 16 years," Kriger says. Her appreciation for the Fieldston community has surely been reciprocated, and students and teachers alike have been touched and inspired by her time at the school. "Ms. Kriger was the most amazing art teacher I could have ever asked for," says Lorelei Essman-Freeman (VI). "She taught me everything I know and was always by my side. I have never enjoyed art so much in my life." "Throughout my time at Fieldston, Ms. Kriger has been both a won-

derful teacher and friend," says Jane Lipper (VI). "The doors of her classroom were always open if I was having a hard day or just needed a quiet place to work. We were all so lucky to work with her during our time at Fieldston!" "Ms. Kriger has been there for me from the second I stepped into her classroom," says Camila Dangot (VI). "Her advice and support allowed me to grow immensely as an artist, giving me the freedom to explore my creativity in unimaginable ways. She inspired me to delve deep into my curiosities and pursue my visions every single class and will surely continue to inspire me in the future." While she is leaving Fieldston, Kriger's commitment to teaching and inspiring others through art will not go to waste. She is planning to teach private lessons at her daughter's house in Oneonta, New York. "I will teach local people during all parts of the year and hopefully have some Fieldston students who I love dearly come up for workshops starting next summer," says Kriger. Although Kriger's students regard her as an amazing educator, they also regard her as a friend, and it is this friendship that greets her students — and me — at the door when entering her classroom. If interested in contacting her, please use the following email: debbiekriger@gmail.com.

Things Come Full Circle for New Boys Varsity Basketball Coach John Dwinell

BY: DANIEL RACZ

Decades after coming to Fieldston to coach the Fieldston Boys Varsity Basketball, John Dwinell is ready to take the reins of the team once again. Dwinell has worn many hats within the Fieldston Athletics community. He has coached lower school physical education, cheered on middle school cross country, led the Varsity Golf team to numerous titles and much more. Ryuichi Nitta, a rising senior, recalls that "John was always excited to come to our PE Classes and he always made sure we were having a good time." Despite all the work that Dwinell already does, he is incredibly excited to return to the hardwood. Dwinell's credentials might make him seem overqualified. He was the head

coach at SUNY Maritime for 12 years, where he was awarded coach of the year and won the conference championship twice. At SUNY Maritime Dwinell learned how hardworking a team could be, even with players training for maritime service. It was there that Dwinell discovered the importance of developing a good culture, building camaraderie and playing team-oriented basketball. After his time at SUNY Maritime, Dwinell moved onto Concordia College for over a decade. Dwinell credits the success of his team to their ability to challenge themselves by playing Division One competition. The tough opponents forced Concordia to

work hard. Now, a strong work ethic is a tenet to any team led by Dwinell. After the stop at Concordia, coach Dwinell moved into an assistant coach role at Saint Thomas Aquinas. The team he acquired was not very good. However, Dwinell aspired to "hang a banner in the gym and create a strong, winning culture." During his seven-year stint, the Spartans excelled. They achieved four league titles and lots of accolades in the Division Two March Madness competition. The team reached the Sweet Sixteen and Elite Eight multiple times. "But, some of the suc-

cess has to go to the players," said Dwinell. One such player, Justin Reyes, has even reached the NBA G League in the Toronto Raptors organization. Now, at Fieldston, Dwinell has some high expectations. He wants to raise another banner for the Eagles basketball team, as well as re-establish his old system of basketball. Although Dwinell wants to evaluate the players before he sets his system in stone, he believes his team will focus on lots of quick passes, aggressiveness on both ends of the floor and lots of motion. Aaron Geller, a rising senior and leader on the Fieldston Basketball team, said "He clearly has an in-depth

The Fieldston Film Festival Goes Virtual

By: SARINA CHITKARA

Due to COVID-19, this year's Fieldston Film Festival was held virtually via livestream on Tuesday, June 9th. Typically, there is an assembly in April to showcase students' film trailers in preparation for the Spring Festival held at Lincoln Center. The annual showcase is "usually in front of [a] sold out or near capacity [venue]," according to film teacher Larry Buskey. It's replacement online, though not what any student anticipated, was a resounding success. Film students proved their ability to adapt to new circumstances by pivoting their initial film plans and improvising at home. Buskey claims that the films this year were more "authentic" than previous years because students had to be resourceful and film on whatever devices were available, rather than the professional-grade equipment normally provided by the school. Jeremy Rabinowitz (V) explains, "Unlike

most of my projects, I was the only one on set. So I had to not only write and direct it, I also had to act it and film it." The filming process is threefold: pre-production, production, and post-production. Pre-production consists of compiling ideas, collaborating with others and writing a screenplay. Essentially, students create a blueprint of the film, referred to as a shot list. After initial planning, the production process begins when film students record and shoot the footage. The final steps include hours of meticulous editing, cutting scenes and in some cases, re-filming scenes. Buskey noted that "sometimes the [pandemic's] influence was manifested through metaphors and other times in far more immediate

and literal ways." Film student Rylee Landau (IV) showcased an optimistic outlook on the pandemic by using her younger sister to prove that younger children can still thrive in these trying times. Landau states, "I wanted to show how thinking about COVID-19 differently could make people smile and realize that not all things are negative." The Virtual Film Festival was a prime example of the grit and determination that Fieldston students have exemplified since March. The film students credit Buskey for his advice and support throughout the filmmaking process. Now, the festival is available to rewatch – one perk of virtual learning. *Poster designed by Izzy Roth-Dishy*



Feeding the Country Amidst a Pandemic

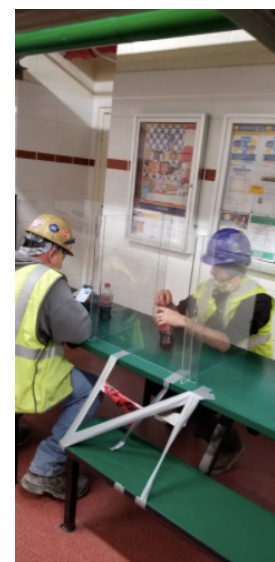
By: JACK NOVECK HOLMES

Throughout his professional life, Matt Evans has found significance in a particular quote: "People make a business. Not chickens, not numbers, not anything else. People make a business." The words are those of the late Don Tyson, former CEO of Tyson Foods, America's largest meat producer. Evans, 44, works as the complex manager at Tyson's Berry Street poultry facility in Springdale, Arkansas. As meat plant workers continue their labor to feed Americans while the rest of the country presses pause, Don Tyson's quote rings truer than ever to him. "We spend all our time really taking care of our team members," Evans said in a recent interview with the Fieldston News. "We value our team members and that's where we spend our time. We know that if we help them understand that we care about them ... our company wins." Since much of the United States went into a coronavirus lockdown in mid-to-late March, threatening the economy along with it, essential workers have kept the wheels of society moving. These include health care workers, first responders, grocery workers, postal workers and many others. Meat plant workers have also fallen under this umbrella, with President Donald Trump invoking the Defense Production Act in late April to include meat

processing plants in the nation's critical infrastructure. After all, meat plant workers provide much of the country's protein supply — Tyson alone accounts for more than 20 percent of all the beef, pork and poultry Americans eat. It's been the job of people like Evans to keep that food supply coming. This hasn't been an easy task by any means. Meat processing has become one of the industries hit hardest by the virus. Employees in these facilities often work in close proximity with one another, and several meat processing plants have had to close temporarily for deep cleaning due to high rates of infection among workers. Tyson is testing all of its employees at Berry Street and other locations in northwest Arkansas for the coronavirus. The company announced that of the 1,102 team members who work at Evans' sites, 199 tested positive, but only one showed symptoms. Tyson has heavily modified the workplace to combat the spread of the virus. At Berry Street, safety measures have been taken in nearly all areas of work. Temperatures are taken as employees enter the facility at the start of every shift, face masks and in some cases visors are required,

and dividers have been installed in break rooms and on production lines. "We've worked with safety around mechanical issues and things like that, and a lot of that is very visual," Evans said. "So now, we're having to tackle a virus that's not. And we've spent an enormous amount of time as a company trying to be extremely proactive." "We changed our attendance program where workers weren't penalized if they had to stay home ... if they weren't feeling well, Covid or not, we're going to pay them." Evans said. "When this all started, a lot of our team members said, 'Hey, it'd be nice to have masks,' and masks weren't necessarily available. So a lot of our locations went out and hired small businesses in our areas to make cloth masks." Evans certainly never imagined he'd be thinking about facemasks or plastic dividers at Tyson when he joined the company as an intern, 21 years ago. He's held many titles in his journey to being a complex manager. As an assistant plant manager, a corporate role as an operations spe-

cialist, a subject matter expert, and plant manager, Evans has been a valuable and versatile employee for Tyson. His favorite part of his career? Seeing and helping those around him thrive. "It is a lot of fun coaching and teaching and watching our team members grow," he said in his distinctive Arkansas lilt. "Both at work and in their personal life." Although many people in the country have opted to stay at home in these turbulent times, Evans is working as hard as ever. "I get here very early in the morning and stay late to make sure I'm available," he said. "90 percent of my day for the last three months has been making sure that what we're doing around safety is working." As for Evans, work-life shows no signs



My Experience Attending the Black Lives Matter Protests

BY: DREAM CHAMPELL-ALDRICH



In the wake of the brutal and senseless murders of Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery and George Floyd, I, a young black woman, felt called upon by the Black Lives Matter movement and the current social climate to act. For centuries, this country has continued to oppress and discriminate against black people. Black people, men in particular, have also been subject to police brutality. Amidst a genocide against my own people, and a national health crisis, I decided to protest. On May 30th I went to my first protest. We convened on 14th street and began marching. While I observed people of all races, ethnicities and genders, I would have liked to see more diversity in age, specifically people below 18 and over 30. However, I understand why those groups of people were not present as older people are at higher risk for Covid-19, and teenager's abilities to protest

are at the disposal of their parents. Protestors maintained a sense of unity by acknowledging the health crisis at hand; protestors were giving out free water, food, masks, and hand sanitizers. We continued to protest downtown through SoHo while chanting "No justice, no peace." We then stopped at city hall to listen to the speeches of Malcolm X, as well as the organizers of Black Lives Matter. Although the NYPD was there, to "protect" us, it instead felt like we were being criminalized. The officers waited for us to make a wrong move as they giggled and smirked at us. We continued marching towards the brooklyn bridge, simultaneously stopping traffic. As we crossed the bridge, people driving cars held up the black power fist in solidarity with us pro-

tests. We watched 5 NYPD helicopters fly over us, while many cars warned that they were "waiting for us" on the other side. Since we were simply exercising our First Amendment right to peacefully assemble, we continued on. As our march across the bridge concluded and we reached Brooklyn, the protestors in front of me started screaming and running backwards. I was both confused and terrified because I couldn't see what was going on. I heard a girl scream "they're throwing tear gas! The police are throwing tear gas at us!" My mom and I ran and hid in the subway, along with a few other people. The protest was peaceful, but we were still met with a product of the corrupt police system in the United States. The police met the protests

against their abuse of power, with even more abuses of power. Reflecting on the situation and the many other peaceful protests I have attended since, I attribute much of the demonization of the Black Lives Matter movement to the media and the news. When many of us turn on the news, we hear stories of looting and rioting, when in reality the looters are people who have infiltrated this movement. Television news is currently at an extreme advantage, because it is most people's primary source of information due to fear surrounding coronavirus. With other events, people could experience these events first hand and see that in actuality they are widely peaceful. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many people are afraid to take that risk and heavily rely on their televisions. In regards to the looting, I do not condone the looters or the looting, as they are not a part of the movement. However, it's important to emphasize that the looters are not condoned, or a part of the Black Lives Matter movement. Instead, they are a method of demonizing black power. The media's focus on looting and rioting, rather than the peaceful marches, creates a toxic cycle of misinformation. The looters themselves, although not a part of the movement, are simply a product of poverty and racism exasperated by the police system which undermines black and brown communities in the United States. So if we want to give attention to the looters we must look at the root of the cause; the disproportion-

ate rates of poverty and racism that people of color endure in this country, and then reassess who the real culprits of the looting are. Throughout my experiences protesting in these last few weeks, I've experienced immense progress on a large scale. I have experienced feelings of unity at these protests, but I have two main takeaways. Firstly, a person can't believe everything that he or she sees on the news, because the news is a business seeking viewers and will always show what the people want to see, even if it's destructive to the community. Secondly, that Black Lives Matter needing to be a movement is a problem in itself. It is disgusting that racism has forced the life of a group of people to become a movement. A life mattering isn't debatable or subjective; it's not a dinner table topic to hear different points of views. Black Lives Matter is a fact, and to say it's up for debate is demeaning, dehumanizing, and fundamentally racist. To be against Black Lives Matter is akin to racism because that condones the senseless murder of black people with zero judicial repercussions. I urge my fellow Fieldston students to seek and initiate change in their own communities. Furthermore, I urge them to come together as young people to make a difference on a larger scale towards racial equity.

John Dwinell (cont.)

appreciation for the Fieldston community, and he is committed to the pursuit of excellence. The team is excited to learn from his extensive basketball experience, knowledge and leadership." With a team that is ready to work and a coach that is excited to lead, the sky's the limit for the Dwinell-led Fieldston Eagles.

Feeding The Country (cont.)

of changing any time soon. In fact, what seemed like an emergency scenario a few short weeks ago has become the new normal. "From where I'm sitting, I think that the safety measures we've put in place will be around for a while," he said. Images courtesy of Tyson Foods



An Update on the NHL Season

BY: OLIVER POLSKY



During typical years, the month of June is the most exciting time of year for sports fans. It is in this month that they get to cheer on their favorite basketball and hockey teams as they battle it out for the right to lift the championship trophy in their respective sports. Unfortunately, both the NHL and NBA put their seasons on hold as the coronavirus halted all major social activities for countless countries. Recently, the NHL announced its tentative plan to resume the final part of the season in the form of a 24-team playoff. Instead of the tradi-

tional 16-team playoff seen in both the NHL and NBA, a 24-team playoff forgives the teams that hadn't clinched a spot in a traditional NHL postseason, but were still "in the hunt." Of the 31 teams that compete in the NHL, 24 still had a mathematical chance to clinch a playoff spot when play was halted. And so, the league decided that they all should get their fair shot. The NHL also announced that this supposed playoff will occur in a few "hub cities," or regions where Covid-19 numbers are low. These hub cities have not

been decided on yet, but some of the frontrunners are Las Vegas, Dallas and Toronto. All NHL personnel in these cities will be tested for coronavirus, and no fans will be permitted to attend. Although the NHL community is thrilled that hockey is returning, many players are voicing their disappointment with the 24-team format. Instead of calling the postseason the Stanley Cup Playoffs, a few players have started using the name "The Covid Cup." Many feel that this postseason won't compare to past playoffs, and won't be able to match the intensity that a traditional NHL playoff could offer. Nevertheless, many are grateful that such an exciting regular season will have to come to an end. For the first round, the teams that placed 5th-12th will battle it out in a best-of-five series, while the top 4 teams in both the east and west divisions receive a first round bye, similar to the NFL playoffs. From the second round on, each series will be the traditional best-of-seven format. It is unclear which teams will play each other after the first round, as teams will be re-seeded according to their regular season records. To the displeasure of many New York sports fans, the Boston Bruins carried on the tradition of successful Boston professional sports teams, runner-

as they had the best record during the regular season and are the clear favorites to win the Stanley Cup. Led by league-leading scorer David Pastrnak and Brad Marchand, Boston boasts incredible depth on their bench, with every line showcasing talent and composure. Boston's Herald Both The New York Rangers and Islanders will make an appearance in the first round, with the Rangers playing the Carolina Hurricanes and the Isles taking on the Florida Panthers. Although the Rangers started out the season slow, they caught fire in the latter part of the season thanks to the incredible play of Mika Zibanejad and Artemi Panarin. Backed by the young and talented Russian Igor Shesterkin, the Rangers ran through their opponents. Another team to look out for is the Vegas Golden Knights. After a somewhat rough start, the team fired its head coach Gerrard Gallant and hired former San Jose Sharks head coach Peter DeBoer. The Knights are led by veterans Mark Stone, Max Pacioretty and Paul Stasny, as well as proven goalies Marc Andre Fleury and Robin Lehner. The Knights ended the shortened season with a spectacular run, going from a fringe playoff team to a western conference front-

Spring Sports During the Pandemic

BY: ELIZABETH WALKER

Amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, all aspects of school life had to adapt, including sports practice. Sports teams this past spring were forced to switch to an online model. Conditioning is always an essential part of in-person practices, and it continued to be when practices began taking place online. During remote practices, spring teams often worked out together on Google Meet, and athletes were usually allowed to choose if they had their cameras and microphones on or off. Most teams had practice twice a week after online classes, and practices typically lasted between thirty minutes to an hour. Some spring sports teams participated in a plank challenge, where at the end

of every practice each athlete held a plank for as long as they could. Additionally, many teams played various trivia and team-bonding games. For example, JV Tennis played tennis trivia once every few weeks. The trivia game varied from questions, including what type of gas is used inside a tennis ball to how long was the longest tennis match ever played. Unfortunately, there was less time for athletes to bond during remote training, as compared to in-person practice. The brief school season also caused spring pep rally to be canceled, the first scheduled spring pep rally in 3 years. In addition to practices, the annual sports



dinner was moved online, hosted by Gus Ornstein, where athletes were able to attend the dinner via Google Meet. Sports from every season were represented by students from different grades, and seniors spoke about their experience on sports teams during their time at Fieldston. The switch to remote practices was a significant adjustment for all of the coaches and athletes that participate in the spring sports season. Despite the fact that the change was so sudden, spring sports teams were still able to stay connected during this uncertain time. Written by Elizabeth Walker and Rex Hechter

How Fieldston Alumni Are Taking Action with the Black Lives Matter Movement

By: SOPHIA GUTIERREZ



The murder of George Floyd has sparked international outrage against the racially biased policing system. The killing was just one of many recent accounts of police brutality, including the murders of Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery and Tony McDade. These acts of extreme violence have sparked an international conversation that has forced us to recognize the role of systemic racism in society. Within the Fieldston community, our recent alumni have been noteworthy forces taking action against police brutality. Class of 2019 graduates Cary Moore, Krista Delany, Ariana Reichler and Ana McNulty have created informational pamphlets designed to educate communities on systemic racism within police forces. The pamphlets include information on the Black Lives Matter movement as well as how to combat police brutality and white supremacy. I had the opportunity to interview Krista, Cary and Ariana to gain further insight on their pamphlets. Sophia: What is the purpose of the pamphlet? Delany: “The purpose of this pamphlet is to help mobilize the communities in which we live to get the attention of those who do not have activism circulating on their social media platforms. Over the past few weeks, social media has been a major source of information. Not only is it where the horrifying video of George Floyd’s murder caught nationwide attention, but it is also where crucial information on how to be actively anti-racist has been circulating. As wonderful as this is, a social media post only goes so far. As much as I may have been posting about bailout funds and ways to help hold Breonna Taylor’s murderer’s accountable, the seventy-year-old white woman who lives right next door to me is likely un-

aware of many of these calls to activism. I wanted to make this information accessible to all to help contribute to the recent growth in activism”. Sophia: Do you think you’ve met that goal? And if not, how can others continue the work that you’ve started? Reichler: “Yes, absolutely. Even though we were hoping to get an enthusiastic response, I think we were all surprised by just how many people immediately started sharing it. At first, friends would send me pictures handing it out in their neighborhoods. Then I started to get those pictures from strangers. Every day several people I did not know would reach out to me – seeking advice on how to best distribute it, sending pictures of them handing it out, or thanking us for compiling resources in a condensed and comprehensible way. We even had two people ask if they could translate it into Spanish and Chinese. And then my friends would tell me that they saw people in their neighborhoods, people who don’t know any of us, posting the image or handing out the document. That was really cool because it showed how it was spreading through so many different networks. People across the country, and even some internationally have shared the document, and that was our goal. But it can still be shared with more people. I would hope that people are inspired to find new ways to reach out to their neighbors, family and co-workers and to continue educating them, even if it’s a little more involved than an Instagram post”. Sophia: What are you hoping for people to gain from your pamphlet, what message are you trying to send? Moore: “I hope mostly that it encouraged people to focus on the current movement and its history. Of course, much much larger statements, organizations and journalists are already inspiring engagement in a much much larger way. But we wanted to give people a brief, comprehensive place to start. We are not experts, and this is not an expert document, and we all still have much to learn, and should understand that and be intellectually flexible as we encounter new information”. Sophia: What does this work look like in your current school space? Moore: “One thing every Fieldston student should understand is that the school is a conversational microcosm. The Fieldston bubble is so real and in my opinion, in certain ways it does a great disservice to its students. In college you do not get to have strong opinions unless you’re genuinely informed. There are big problems involving racism at many college campuses, mine included, but those problems are more addressable when there’s a standard of substantive reasoning. You can’t always just tell people off. Sometimes you can and should, but from my perspective, much of the time it’s best to approach things in an educational manner. That is my perspective on how to do good for your institution and world at large, which is informed by my identity and experiences. Feel free to disagree, but try to consider it. Try to inform your peers. And before you do that, always inform yourself. This pamphlet contains basic information, it isn’t earth shattering. Essentially, it could function as a very small start for some individuals”. Reichler: “I’m fortunate to go to a college that has a really vocal and passionate student body, especially when it comes to humanitarian issues like Black Lives Matter. I’ve been really inspired by the work I’ve seen from my classmates, especially my Black classmates, whether that be in social media posts, writing, art, or protesting. Student groups on campus are donating to and fundraising for BLM-related causes. I’ve also felt a lot of support coming from other people in the community. I’m working in a lab this summer, and my supervisors have taken time out of our meetings to discuss protest safety and have created other avenues for sharing resources”. Delany: “Activism in my current school space is disappointing. To live on a campus with 8,000 students, many of whom are extremely ignorant or actively racist, is difficult. Despite this challenge, I have made the concerted effort to hold people who share values like myself close. As a collective,

we are thinking of ways to better our college campus and hold people accountable. I think this is a challenge many students will face when they graduate from Fieldston. Regardless of how challenging or discouraging it may be, remind yourself that there are people across the nation fighting for exactly what you believe in. We must all stay true to our values and be actively anti-racist. Simply standing in solidarity is not enough”. Sophia: Relating to this issue, what major change do you hope to see at Fieldston? Moore: “Read the news every single day, ask questions and have honest conversations. I think people deserve the chance to learn from their mistakes as long as they demonstrate that they have truly learned. That principle is relevant in many situations, from social interactions to criminal justice. But it’s always better to avoid hurting somebody, and then forcing them to attempt to educate you, or encourage you to educate yourself, in order to achieve any sort of progress. People become reasonably impatient. There have been times, more so in college than in high school, where I have felt impatient with sexist males in my life. I literally cannot imagine the exhaustion of people of color. Believe that your actions matter for better or for worse. Be principled! If you have a worldview apply it to many different situations. Don’t treat politicians’ comparable actions differently according to their party affiliation, never adopt a rigid opinion you can’t explain, don’t believe things just because your friends do and consider things from different angles.” Reichler: “I hope to see everything that the #StudentsofColor-Matter group fought for come to fruition. I hope to see real accountability and a concrete commitment on the part of the administration to support its Black students and the great Black Lives Matter movement. I guess the biggest change I hope to see on a person-to-person basis is that every single non-Black member of the Fieldston community reflects on their own past actions and beliefs, pledges to seek out resources to educate themselves and lends

COVID-19 is Killing the Amazon Rainforest and its Guardians

By: MARIA GRABOWSKY

As the coronavirus continues to ravage the world, it is leaving a tragic path of death, mourning and economic destruction in its wake. Particularly in the Amazon basin —not capturing nearly enough media attention— where under-reported casualties and opportunistic pillaging is causing irreversible damage to the earth's lungs. The Amazon Rainforest, which provides 6% of the world's oxygen, is constantly targeted illegally by miners, loggers and farmers for its abundant resources. However, the stewards of the rainforest, the indigenous tribes that put their lives at risk to protect their homes, have fiercely fought against these unjust invasions with limited help from the Brazilian government. Today, they are fighting for their lives against a highly contagious virus, introduced to them by the same people they are trying to keep out of their homes. Karen Lassner is a health expert in Rio de Janeiro on the board of the BrazilFoundation that provides grants to non-profit organizations in Brazil. On World Environment Day, BrazilFoundation launched its Amazon Fund in partnership with Conservation International to raise money to support Brazilian organizations working in the Amazon to respond to the Covid-19 pandemic by providing humanitarian relief to indigenous people. This includes the Riverine, traditional people who live along the rivers, and "Quilombola," descendants of slaves who resisted slavery and established their own communities. In an interview last week, Lassner explained that "There are approximately 800,000 indigenous people in Brazil distributed among 5,852 villages...who are the primary defenders of the Amazon rainforest. If they are not healthy, they are unable to defend their lands".

These courageous people endured centuries of oppression as they defended their lands, cultural heritage, language and values, as well as the prosperity of the rainforest, only to lose control of their fates and the environment they tirelessly preserve. The highly infectious nature of Covid-19 has caused the loss of many portions of indigenous territories, such as the Yanomami Tribe, and the pollution of an increasing number of rivers by careless gold miners. In addition, deforestation has grown by over 60 percent in the past year. Already, around 20 percent of the Amazon rainforest has been destroyed, and if that number reaches 25 percent, there is a large probability that the forest will dry out and become a savannah. Further complications encountered by the indigenous tribes include access to health care, education, unsanitary conditions and lack of communication and transportation infrastructure. One example being that in the process of receiving medical attention, the Kokoma people have contracted the coronavirus from a service doctor who had come into close contact with others before treating them. Karen stressed an important point during our interview, explaining that a "big hurdle is distance and remoteness... It takes many, many days to go from one place to another... and the lack of internet, TV communications and unreliable radio, deter the flow of information about how to slow or avoid the spread of the virus." She also explained that many indigenous peoples must travel to urban centers to buy PPE such as masks,



which also exposes them to the virus. Living conditions also pose a large hurdle as more than 90% of indigenous homes have no clean water, and multiple people often live in one room, exponentially increasing the risk and speed of the disease spreading. The Brazilian government does not seem to acknowledge the pivotal role that indigenous people play in the health of all humanity, and they have not done enough to counter the disastrous effects of this pandemic. Karen explained that the Brazilian government is very sensitive to criticism about how it protects and cares for indigenous populations, and therefore does not communicate accurate statistics about the number of cases and deaths due to the virus. For example, she informed me that "Indigenous people who die of Covid-19 in a hospital outside of their villages, or while being transported, are not included in government statistics on Covid-19." This discrepancy is noticeable when compared to data provided by non-profit indigenous organizations. Karen stated that there was a divergence of 555 cases reported between two days, in the statistics reported by the National

Committee on Indigenous Life and the government, which is a significant difference given the size of the population. In addition, there were 176 more deaths reported by the National Committee compared to government numbers issued only one day apart. What may be one of the most devastating and long-term effects of this time period is the loss of what Scott Wallace from National Geographic magazine calls, "Living encyclopedias." Who will be left to preserve the unique languages, customs, skills and memories of these communities? The Indigenous population, especially the elderly who are most vulnerable to the disease, possess centuries of knowledge and a rich culture that is currently threatened. As a world, we must come together to protect and save these precious populations and their lands before they are lost forever. If you would like to contribute to the Amazon-Forever Fund, and provide much-needed emergency support to the people of the Amazon, you can donate at <https://fundos.brazilfoundation.org/amazonia/en>.

Fieldston Alumni (cont.)

whatever they can to this moment. I'd really like to see that action in everyone, from the incoming freshmen to the top of the administrative ladder". Delany: "I think Fieldston is far too vague and ineffective in their discussions on race. Students must be taught about people such as Ronald Reagan and the war on drugs. We need to learn about mass incarceration

and the policies in place that prevent officers from being held accountable. Films such as The 13th, need to play during assembly. White ally meetings need to play films such as When They See Us on Netflix. We can't just talk about what racism looked like, we have to discuss what it looks like today as well. We need to learn

about voter suppression, flaws in the healthcare system, etc. Teaching these issues is the only way Fieldston students will go on to become critical thinkers who can meaningfully challenge the systems in place that the Black Lives Matter movement is currently trying to reform. I also think all students must be made to learn about these issues, not just

those who are willing to take certain electives. I understand these aren't issues that are easy to teach, but Fieldston's mission statement makes a promise to do it."

Beloved Assistant Principal Robert Cairo Returns to his “True Love: Teaching”

BY: CAROLYN FINERMAN

All good things must come to an end. For Robert Cairo, Assistant Principal of the Upper School, this means stepping down from his administrative role as Assistant Principal and directing his focus to teaching science. Cairo is known for his beguiling presentations in the world of neuroscience. For Cairo, this is a welcomed and greatly exciting change as he will come full circle in his Fieldston journey. Cairo first came to Fieldston as a full-time teacher in the 2001-2002 school year, after having been the principal at three other independent schools in New York, Texas and Colorado. Fieldston was an easy pick for Cairo partly due to its motto of encouraging community engagement, but mostly due to the intellectual curiosity and thoughtfulness of the students. It was after Cairo's demo class that he knew he wanted to teach at Fieldston. Cairo recalls, “I interviewed on the day that speeches for student body president were given at assembly. I had one of the candidates in my demonstration chemistry class. He lost the election, and he and I chatted about that after the demonstration class.” The conversation with that student helped to show Cairo the sense of community at Fieldston. What he was able to sense, and later learned to love, was the comfort between the students and faculty, the informal yet respectful relationships held between them, and the goal of inclusivity and decision-making that included multiple perspectives and stakeholders. As put by Cairo, “It's a school that encourages members of its community to have a voice in all aspects of school life.” During Cairo's first year at Fieldston he taught physics and chemistry, and in the Spring was offered the position of Assistant Principal/Director of Studies which he gladly accepted—as the role allowed him to maintain a balance of administrative work and teaching. Cairo held the position of Assistant Principal for 12 years before being asked to serve as interim Principal for the 2015-2016 school year. As Principal, he was responsible for the Upper School which meant, according to Cairo, “hiring and supervising faculty, overseeing the curriculum, student support, and scheduling policies,” which he so competently handled. However, as

Principal, Cairo held on to some of his previous responsibilities as Assistant Principal in anticipation of his return to that position. In 2018, after three years of being Principal, Cairo returned to his position of Assistant Principal where he could do more teaching and aid Principal Nigel Furlonge with his transition to the Upper School. This was a momentous switch for Cairo, but provided him great satisfaction and pride as he was a prominent figure in creating a smooth transition for the school. Cairo had been tackling multiple roles in the meantime as he handed off his role as Principal to Mr. Furlonge. During this transitional period, Cairo had been a flexible participant. Cairo stated, “I like to consider myself a team player who is willing and able to play several positions on the team.” Cairo then spent another two years as Assistant Principal. Reflecting back, Cairo has stated: “[administrative work and teaching] complemented [one another] and enabled me to see the bigger picture and better understand the perspectives of students and teachers.” His great gift of experiencing multiple aspects of the educational institution has allowed him to expand his scope of knowledge and thus enabled him to provide more support to the faculty and students. Cairo is a seasoned educator, with experience in a multitude of roles and a calm and collected temperament. A scheduling conflict? No big deal. Cairo has dealt with it all and will continue using his unique and polished problem-solving skills for the following years. Throughout all his years, the driving factor behind Cairo's career in education has always remained clear: the students. “Whenever I had a part, however small, in the effectiveness of someone's teaching or the success of a student, that was a personal highlight for me.” Cairo has always been able to remain true to himself and to his true love: teaching. “As a teacher, every day in the classroom (wherever that might be) has been a highlight for me and has sustained me as an educator.” This coming Fall, Cairo will be teaching Neuroscience and the Chemistry of Food as a part-time science teacher and will act as a consultant to Dr. Graves, our new Assistant Principal for Academic Life.



Through his 20 year journey at Fieldston, Cairo has contributed to the intellectual, inclusive and diverse environment of Fieldston and will continue to with his new role in the science department. Reflecting back on his experiences, Cairo has learned, and will take with him as he steps down from his administrative post, “the importance of listening, being open to new ideas and change, being inclusive in decision-making, respecting differences, acknowledging mistakes, not taking [himself] too seriously, and holding [himself] as well as others accountable for [their] words and actions.” We can rejoice and look forward to seeing Mr. Cairo in the halls next year as he returns to his roots.

The Fate of Fall Sports with Gus Ornstein

BY: DANIEL SILVERSTEIN

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to affect millions, it remains challenging to predict when society will return “back to normal.” This uncertainty extends to our return to the Fieldston campus in the fall, and the sports seasons many hope will occur. As a rising senior, I have been looking forward to my senior soccer season since I was a freshman, and my excitement only increased with our successful season this past fall. Unfortunately, all fall sports athletes are left with little clarity on the likelihood of a 2020 season. “The thought of it being a season that we are all used to and what we had last year is probably slim, so the question is what will it look like,” said Gus Ornstein, Fieldston's Athletic Director. And that's really the million dollar question. Will athletes have to wear masks during games? Will the fall season be delayed or shortened? Will preseason be cancelled completely? Will it be all sports or just some? Gus says that “everything is on the table.” The athletic directors have been focused on evaluating options to allow for the fall season. Gus said there are weekly meetings to weigh possibilities, decide what is realistic, and continue to adapt as new information is available. As far as timing for a decision, Gus said, “Our thought is the longer we can wait to make a decision, the better. We will be able to see how things go as we enter phase one and throughout the summer.” The New York State Association of Independent Schools (NYSAIS) will be updating families and athletes about the fall season on July 1st. The decision regarding school athletics is dependent on school re-opening in the fall (fingers crossed). The athletics staff is prepared for many contingencies. “We have so many thoughts and ideas about how we can possibly do anything we can to have some competition and some season in any capacity (hopefully being as normal as possible). All we want to do is come back and if there's a way, we want to make it happen!”

Pushing the Boundaries of Creativity: The 15th Annual Fieldston Fashion Show

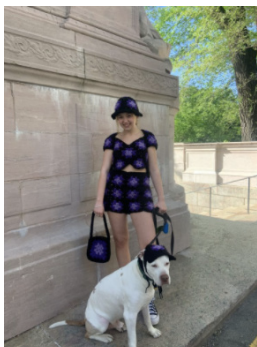
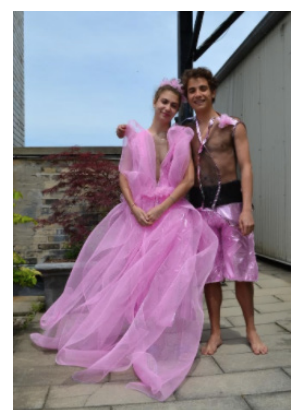
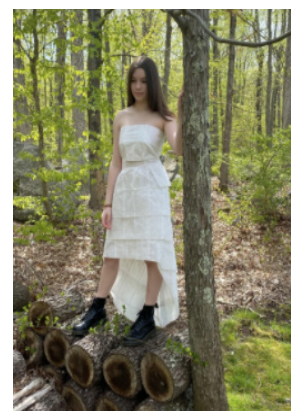
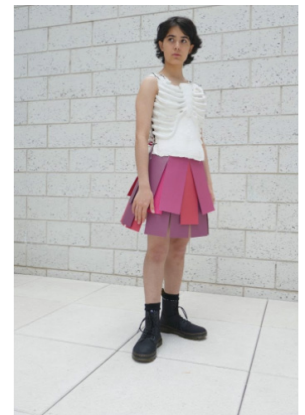
BY: GILLIAN BUTLER

On June 10th, hundreds of people virtually gathered to watch the Fashion Show. The celebratory event allowed the Fieldston community to come together despite the circumstances of COVID-19, creating a spark of positivity even in the wake of the difficult times our nation is facing. “Even if not everyone smiled in their videos, their work showed that there is always a silver lining even during the worst of times. It’s a real cliché but each of the students turned lemons into lemonade and gave us 28 minutes of pride, pleasure and respect for what our students can do,” said Nancy Fried, Director and Creator of the Fieldston Fashion Show. The show has always included participants from the entire Fieldston community, including teachers, middle schoolers, and highschoolers. This year the youngest designer, 3rd grader Satya Loeb, proved that talent has no limit. COVID-19 forced many

designers to make changes based on access to tools and materials. However, this change flowed nicely with the spirit of the Fashion Show, since creativity and unconventional materials have always been a focus. For example, Skyler Moses (V) made a dress out of baby wipes because they were available where her family was staying. The current environment increased the relevance of the message behind Camille Newman’s (VI) dress out of Amazon packages. She wanted to make a statement about the negative impact Amazon and its consumers have on the environment. This statement came about due to the increase in Amazon orders during the quarantine. Newman explained, “we have to support local/small businesses so they can survive. Another message that wasn’t so evident in the dress was recognizing Amazon’s bad treatment of its workers.” Fried worked tirelessly to

aid designers from home. She, along with Lily Greenberg (VI), mailed chicken bones to Addie Rigaud (VI) to help with her dress made out of animal bones. 3D art majors met twice a week to collaborate. “We’re all friends so classes were a fun and positive environment. And there’s mentorship so there was still a constant flow of conversation and constructive criticism,” said Rigaud. The Fashion Show was a positive outlet for its participants. “I found it really amazing to be able to channel all of my stress and anxiety about the world into my art, and I’m so grateful that I had this project to work on and be proud of ... the last three months have been so terrible for the world, and having this piece of joy made it all the more special,” said Iva Knezevic (Class of 2020.) Although obviously different than it has been in previous years, the 2020 Fashion Show showed the amazing

creativity and capabilities of the student body, in addition to adding a much needed touch of joy into our lives.



Laura Clark's Lasting Impact on the Fieldston Community

BY: MARIA GRABOWSKY

"I don't think I have ever gotten up in the morning and not wanted to go to work, which in a career of 40 something years is pretty good," said Laura Clark. In her 24 years at Fieldston, Clark has taken a highly personal approach to her role as both a college counselor and Director of College Counseling. She spends hours getting to know her students, listening to their concerns, their wishes and their goals. She dedicates herself to educating each student on the wide range of possibilities for the future and guiding each student to the perfect college. But lucky for her, this is what she enjoys most about her job. "I used to joke with my friends. Who gets paid as much money as I make to sit around and talk to students all day?... That's the part I like the most. I don't like the part of the year that's so busy that I don't get to do that. Spring is always great. I've got a million students hanging around telling me about whatever, talking about ideas, about prom, about whatever it is," said Clark. This effort to cultivate relationships is just as meaningful to the students she works with. Vale McCaffrey (V) notes, "What I appreciate most about Clark is that she takes a holistic approach with her students. She pushed me to think about other forms of education and not feel restricted to what others do or any form of 'norm.' Along with her adorable dogs, she created a comfortable space where I could explore what my future could look like." Yet, by being there for every student, Clark rides the emotional rollercoaster of applying to college each fall along with her students. "It's really exhausting. I feel the same things as students do in a slightly different way but same thing – everybody is waiting and then they get good news or they get bad news so it's up and down," said Clark. Clark is leaving this year partly because of how tiring her work is, but also because of how the college process has changed: how "corporate" admissions have become. Clark begrudgingly notes that "[Her work] is a lot less personal than it used to be. There is a whole half of my job [talking to college admissions officers] that doesn't really compute... Most of the people in admissions that I knew... cared very much about the process as an intellectual endeavour where you are really trying to fill interesting programs, and get the smartest kids there who are the most engaged and passionate. I didn't feel like there was

any contradiction between the thing we were doing and what I was trying to do with students. It was like a collaboration," said Clark. However, according to Clark, the values in the admissions process have shifted in recent years, making it feel less like a collaboration. In her eyes, the old truths of the admissions process she used to promise kids are growing more false and inaccurate. "The concerns [have] become more and more about getting more full paying students, having more money to build new buildings and it's become this sort of almost materialist proposition so the things that the admission officers are being told to worry about are yield and enrollment and marketing and how do you sell your school and how do you get the most applications possible even though you are gonna reject 90% of them," she posits. Clark goes on to say that the "process has become much more mechanized, more and more people are telling us that they can't have phone calls with us anymore, that they don't have time to talk to us. There is more of a prescribed idea of what a good applicant is. There used to be a lot more leeway like you could have a really creative kid that failed math and they might even still get into a place that was really selective. That's harder to do, not because those places don't want to admit those students anymore, but because it's harder to see them because the volume is so enormous that they may not be able to read that extra essay or talk to the counselor about the kid with a D in math." With more time on her hands and less stress surrounding the college process, Clark plans to shift her time and attention to her art. As a college counselor and teacher, she has been able to maintain her career as a printmaker on the side – with an annual show to display her work. Now, she can fully pursue that passion. "I promised myself when I was 23 when I finally finished my masters degree, that at some point I'm going to retire and be an artist. I've hung onto that my whole life and so here I am finally through having been well paid and saving my money... I love how there is actually a goal that I actually have achieved!" said an elated Clark. Nevertheless, she has

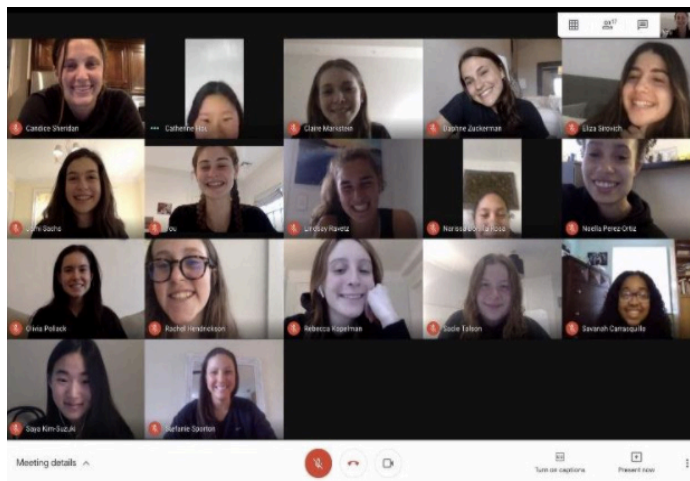


found ways to share her passion for art with the Fieldston community. Clark's room in the college office is decorated with many of her prints and more notably, she has been teaching "Images and Words", a biennial English elective that "examines the connections between visual art and the written word with an emphasis on poetry," alongside English teacher and poet Michael Morse. "To put it simply, our co-teaching Images and Words has been my favorite teaching experience in the 25 years I've been here. I'm grateful to have had the chance to work with a dynamic and generous fellow artist, the chance to co-teach a class that allows for us to laugh with each other and challenge each other, and the chance to teach what we love and push ourselves to consider new material," said Morse. Clark previously taught art history in Riverdale and a history course on orientalism at Fieldston. "I've never really stuck myself in one department," said Clark. When Clark was asked what she'll miss, without hesitation she said "The Students." Clark also said that she will miss her colleagues deeply and those working alongside her in the college office, especially Zoraida Montanez, her assistant of 20 years. At this point, she has hired everyone in the college office and has carefully curated the group of college counselors to display an array of personalities and interests so that every student can be matched with someone that is right for them. "One of my ideas

was that every student should have somebody that they can go to that they feel will get them... There will be somebody that you feel connected with in some way," said Clark. She is equally excited for Jameel Freeman to take her place as Director of the College Office. "I think he's gonna be really fantastic. He'll be a really great Director. Students really love him and he's very good with the work," said Clark. While Freeman may have big shoes to fill, he is committed to continuing her work to maintain a progressive high school college process. "Words cannot adequately capture how much of an impact Laura Clark has had on our students, faculty, and profession as a whole. From her first day at Fieldston, Laura has managed to keep our college process student-centered and progressive in scope... Laura embodies all that is great about our school and while replacing her is no small feat, I am excited to build upon the wonderful foundation she has established here at Fieldston," said Freeman. Clark talked about possibly returning to teach Images and Words in two years or coming back to teach a yoga class. Regardless of how she engages with the institution after her official departure, it is irrefutable that Laura Clark's impact on all members of the Fieldston community will be long-lasting.

Reimagining Scholastic Sports Amidst COVID-19

BY: CAROLYN FINERMAN



After three grueling days of practice, filled with drills and intense competition, the Fieldston Boys Varsity Tennis Team found out their season had been canceled. Boys varsity tennis felt the utter disappointment of having their season be canceled along with every other spring sports team. Fall athletes face a similar struggle, as there are many uncertainties surrounding a potential return to school. “It seems that every day there is a new revelation about what you can and can not do. Whatever you had planned and decided the day before is now out the window—that has been one of the toughest things to deal with—the unknown,” said Gus Ornstein, Fieldston’s Athletic Director. As soon as Ornstein, along with his fellow independent school Athletic Directors, heard about the school closure, they promptly began planning possible arrangements for the spring season. But with our world-changing so quickly, coaches were given little time to transition from their usual in person, competitive, team-building and sweat-inducing practices to giving directions from a screen. How might sports, the singular school activity that must be done in-person, shift online? The coaches and athletes got creative as they began a new type of season. In the Spring, coaches held practice twice a week for one-hour at a time, although it varied for different teams. “Although the coaches and athletic staff did their best to give us a great season, online practice simply isn’t the same as the excitement and energy of in-person games,” Girls Varsity Lacrosse goalie Cameron Kohls said. However, desperate times call for desperate measures, and the athletic department rallied well given their dire circumstances. “I believe the coaches did as much as they could in such an awkward

and new format, but I think overall we were still able to learn and were still able to work on our camaraderie in the online format,” said Josh Sugarman, member of the Fieldston Boys Varsity Lacrosse Team. The boys varsity lacrosse coaches held practice twice a week for about two months. They brought in professional players to speak to certain skills and watched highlight tapes in an attempt to soak up every bit of technique, while players were away from the field. However, as many athletes have stated: watching isn’t as good as playing. Sugarman has been partaking in socially distanced practices with a teammate of his and believes it could function as a better alternative than virtual practices. Even with social distancing measures “we are still able to get a physical workout and work on our skills and our understanding of each other on the field,” Sugarman said. The physical workout is the one aspect of every sport that online practice was not able to capture to a great degree. Student athletes were tasked with discipline and self-reliance as they became the ones responsible for their fitness, and for many of them, it was their first time ever. “I’ve realized that in times like this you need to discipline yourself because there’s no one there to pick you up. There’s no sports, no school, so you need to have inner strength,” said Willow Becker, a member of Fieldston Girls Varsity Lacrosse. Inner strength, along with resilience, were a constant theme throughout this year, especially on the Fieldston Boys Varsity Tennis (BVT) team. It was even so important that Fieldston Varsity Tennis Coach Dean Chavooshian spent the season discussing it. Chavooshian devoted his practices to

talking about mental toughness in the game of tennis. “It is well known that 51% of this game in tennis is between your ears, so to understand that and go through that, was meaningful for me as a coach to show what I know about the subject and have [the players] benefit from it,” Chavooshian said. This approach of delving into the mental aspects of the game quickly resonated with the players. Reading passages from books such as *The Inner Game*, “we could get the team to strategize more, thinking about gaming aspects more,” said Ryuichi Nitta, BVT player. Apart from Fieldston, other high schools are also faced with a similar issue. Come fall and we aren’t able to return, Baseball Team Leader at the Carolina Day School Nate Roberson said, “teams should be able to hold workouts and/or practices so that players are able to stay in shape. With safety precautions of course.” Similar to Roberson, Ornstein is cautiously optimistic about the Fall season. “The largest challenge is going to be the ability to comply with whatever restrictions and limitations are put in place,” Ornstein said. In the meantime, student athletes will continue to stay in shape by self-motivation and find unique ways to practice their sport. “I would take this opportunity to revisit the fundamentals of the game so that we learn proper [technique],” Chavooshian said. “And then like every-

thing, it builds from there.” Although he may be an expert in tennis, those words of advice translate to every sport. With the extended break from the field, it’s only natural that skills might be rusty. “It’s almost like learning how to ride a bike again,” Chavooshian said. However, understanding the mechanics of the game and fundamental techniques will make the transition back to sports much easier. With a season for the history books and an unknown future ahead, young athletes are eager to reunite with their teammates. Becker said, “I’m definitely looking forward to being a part of a team again and the feeling you get after you’ve worked really hard and pushed.” Sugarman also looks forward to seeing his hard work shine through, seeing his teammates, “and hopefully get[ting] a championship.” Only time will tell, and whether we return in-person, online, or a combination of the two is unbeknownst to us; however, confidence can be placed in Athletics Directors around the country working to help us return to school sports. “Let’s all try to stay as positive as possible and hope that things continue to progress so that we will have a Fall season and return to sports,” Ornstein said.

Interviewing Former New York Times Executive Editor Jill Abramson (Fieldston Class of 1972)

BY: ASHER ZEMMEL



Jill Abramson is a journalist, author, and professor. Ms. Abramson began her journalism career writing, as a college student, for Time magazine, where she worked from 1973 to 1976. After graduating Harvard University with a degree in literature and history, she worked on Henry Howell's unsuccessful campaign for governor of Virginia. Following the campaign, Abramson worked at NBC news, helping to cover the 1980 Presidential election. She then joined The American Lawyer as an investigative reporter, and later senior staff reporter, until 1986 when she became the editor-in-chief of the Washington D.C. based Legal Times. In 1988 she took another job in Washington as the bureau's senior reporter for The Wall Street Journal, eventually becoming the bureau chief. Abramson began working for The New York Times in 1997, and in 2000 she was named the paper's first female Washington D.C. bureau chief. In 2003 Jill Abramson became the first female managing editor of the New York Times, and in 2011 she became their first female executive editor, the top job at the paper. In 2014 she was fired from the New York Times and became a visiting lecturer at Harvard University where she now teaches two courses in journalism. Throughout her illustrious career, Abramson has written nine books. Her first book, *Where They Are Now: The Story of the Women of Harvard Law 1974* (1986), follows the journey of a group of women who graduated Harvard Law in 1974, the first year there was a substantial presence of women at the school. Abramson, and fellow Fieldston graduate, Jane Mayer, co-authored *Strange Justice: The Selling of Clarence*

Thomas (1994). The book was a bestseller, and it examined the smear campaign waged against Anita Hill, in order to confirm Clarence Thomas to the Supreme Court. Her third book, *Obama: The Historic Journey* (2009) details Barack Obama's rise to power. In 2011, Abramson turned her wildly successful New York Times column about raising her puppy, Scout, into a book called *The Puppy Diaries: Living With a Dog Named Scout*. The book was a success. So, from 2011 to 2014, Abramson turned the book into a series of picture books chronicling the dog. The series included *Ready or Not Here Comes Scout* (2012), *Puppy Parade* (2013), and *Holiday Helper* (2014). Her latest book, *Merchants of Truth*, examines The New York Times, The Washington Post, BuzzFeed, and Vice, and their navigations of the modern media landscape. I was fortunate enough to have a zoom call with Ms. Abramson, so we could discuss her career. Asher Zimmel: How did you get interested in journalism? Jill Abramson: "I always liked to write. I was getting more politically aware during my Freshman year of Harvard. The Watergate scandal was building, I was glued to all of the news about that. I was looking for an extracurricular to dive into. It was very arbitrary, I actually started writing little theatre reviews for the Independent. I didn't even know about the Crimson, which was the more serious paper." AZ: You wrote *Where They Are Now: The Story of the Women of Harvard Law 1974*, and I am interviewing you for your high school's newspaper. So, why is it important that we continue to hear a diverse array of experiences at educational institutions? JA: "The arc of people's lives teach you a lot about the times they live in. The effort to understand our times is an ongoing one." AZ: If you didn't study at Harvard law, then why did you choose to profile students there? JA: "At that point I was working for a new magazine that had been started by a journalist named Steven Brill, called *The American Lawyer*. It was a very edgy, happening publi-

cation about lawyers. I really had no interest in going to law school, but quickly, working with him, I became interested in how powerful law firms and lawyers wield power in society. I saw from the early days of working there, that women were having a hard time at big law firms, being considered for partner, and facing various forms of discrimination. And of course Harvard Law school itself had very few female students. It had sort of chased Ruth Bader Ginsburg away, foolishly. And, at the point I was writing for *The American Lawyer*, women had finally become 10% of the students at Harvard Law. I wrote a cover story, with Barbara Franklin, on that group, and then we were approached to write a book, and we got a book deal. AZ: In 1995 you worked at the Wall Street Journal with another Fieldston alumna, Jane Mayer. You two published *Strange Justice: The Selling of Clarence Thomas*, what was it like to work on such a successful and meaningful project with another Fieldston graduate? JA: "I was a year ahead of her at Fieldston. I knew who she was when I was there, but we were not really friends at that point. If you roll forward to college, she went to Yale and I went to Harvard. We were both stringers for TIME Magazine, and we both ended up filing for the same stories about the college angle on various subjects. When my husband and I moved to Washington in the early 1980s, Jane was one of the first women to cover the White House. We quickly became great friends, and she still is one of my best friends. I was covering the Clarence Thomas-Antia Hill hearings in 1991 for The Wall Street Journal, and she called me up to talk casually about how much fun it would be to write a book together. She said "This is our story. This has politics, race, and sex all together, it's a great story." The hearings ended in a mystery with Joe Biden saying "We'll never know who told the truth", but Jane and I both believe that with enough digging and reporting you can get to the truth. So we just jumped into it. We worked on it for three years. We concluded that Clarence Thomas had lied, and the book did very well. It

was a finalist for the national book award and some other prestigious book awards, and it was a fantastic experience working with Jane. The year after it was published, we were invited together to give the commencement speech at Fieldston, which was a blast." AZ: When you first became the Washington bureau chief, what were some of the stories you were covering at the time? JA: "There was a big scandal at the end of Bill Clinton's Presidency where he pardoned a lot of people, and it was believed that he pardoned them because they were big donors. I covered the new Bush administration, which was not the most exciting story in the world, until 9/11. Covering 9/11 in Washington involved covering everything about the failures of intelligence leading up to the attack, the White House response, and immediately covering the ramp up for the war in Afghanistan. It was one of the biggest challenges of my career, and it's something that I'm very proud of." AZ: You have been someone who has consistently held powerful people accountable. How did you manifest this ability to speak truth to power, and does it connect to the values you learned at Fieldston? JA: "It definitely connects to the values I learned at Fieldston. I can literally remember being in the third grade at Ethical Culture, and Florence Clayburgh, who was Felix Adler's daughter, came to our classroom and gave us a talk where she asked us to think about if the ends justify the means. I remember her drawing a line on the chalkboard, with "ends" on one end and "means" on the other. She walked us through how to make such a calculation on both moral and ethical terms. It was seriously fundamental to my want of a career that would try to pursue justice and speak up for those who are afraid to or can't." AZ: In 2012, you appeared on Foreign Policy's list of 500 most powerful people in the world, and you were fifth on Forbes' list of powerful women. What was it like to see your name on those lists? JA: "It was silly. I

was only on those lists because I was the first female editor of the Times. Compared to some of the world leaders that ranked lower on that Forbes list, it was absurd.” AZ: In 2014, you were fired from The New York Times. You had earned a reputation as an excellent journalist, but also as a “tough boss”. You raised questions about your pay and benefits being less than your male predecessor, and you allegedly clashed with other top Times employees. A story surrounding your dismissal alleges that you left the managing editor, Dean Baquet, in the dark about hiring a deputy to him. However, a series of emails revealed that you had put in the time and effort to contact the Times publisher, CEO and Baquet himself. So, what really happened and why were you fired? JA: “You can read my version of why I was fired in the Merchants of Truth. It was a very difficult time to be the executive editor of the Times. We were deep into the digital transition, but not yet fully reaping the benefits of the digital subscription plan, which has been so successful and really saved The New York Times. My years as both managing editor and executive editor were ones in which we were having to do layoffs and buyouts, it was not a happy time in the newsroom in general. When people are fearful that they are going to lose their jobs, it’s very hard to manage and get the best work you can out of the journalists there, which is obviously mission number one. I think I fulfilled that very well. We won a near-record number of Pulitzer Prizes the first year I was executive editor. In terms of the journalism, it was as good as it’s ever been. We had a new CEO that was desperately looking for a new business model, and I was asked to be focusing a majority of my time on these business issues, which I confess are not my forte. I never went to business school, I wasn’t trained to deal with the product and things that would be revenue generators. I strongly have reservations about mixing our journalists and revenue, expecting the journalists to also be responsible for generating money and leading efforts that were not journalistic for the main part, but that were created as revenue generators. Looking back, some of my concerns were overblown, but I was desperately worried about a conflict of interest causing a scandal. So I definitely clashed with my betters on the business side. I don’t deny that I was a hard-charging and demanding editor with high expectations and standards, but the adjective tough is so typically used for female bosses, even though the same attributes in men are seen as leaderly. I saw a real double standard for most of the time I was executive editor that I didn’t feel as managing editor. The minute the woman gets the top job her likeability goes down, she is seen as too ambitious and too pushy.” AZ: Why do you think journalism has lagged so much in terms of gender and racial diversity? JA: “It’s a panoply of different reasons. Not enough attention was paid after most publications hired their first black and female news editors, there’s an inattention to building a pipeline for those behind them. Not enough attention had been paid towards both the hiring and promotion of Black, Hispanic, Asian-American, and female journalists into top editing jobs. It’s something that has caused me a lot of pain throughout my career, and when I was a manager I tried like crazy to both hire and promote, into the most senior ranks of the Times, people of color, but it was never fast enough and it was never enough.” AZ: When Times publisher, Arthur Sulzberger Jr., appeared in The New York Times newsroom to announce your dismissal, he appeared without you. Was this a decision you made, and if so why didn’t you make it seem like you were resigning, or at least leaving on good terms? JA: “I wasn’t there because he didn’t want me there. He didn’t want me to come in. I very much wanted to be there to thank everyone who worked their hearts and souls out. So I felt denied of making any kind of farewell remarks, a privilege that previous editors had received. I’ve devoted my life to telling the truth, and that wasn’t the truth. The truth was that I was fired.” AZ: We spoke briefly about ethics in journalism, but, in 2019, a Vices staffer accused you of plagiarism in your book, The Merchants of Truth. For someone who is so experienced in journalism and journalistic ethics, why did you fall short here? JA: “I fell short, to some degree, of just working too quickly to finish my manuscript, and not noticing that very few passages did not have a specific attribution. All of those sources were credited for other things in the book, so the idea that I would steal work from the same source that I credited is bizarre. The lesson learned is that you are under such pressure with things like book deadlines, so take your time and make sure everything is perfect. That’s where I fell down.” AZ: Do you think it’s ironic that a large part of your book focuses on the rise of new media, specifically BuzzFeed and Vice, and their role in cancel culture, when they tried to attack you after the book’s publication. JA: “They tried and failed to cancel me. I don’t see an irony in it, I see it as an example of a really hideous part of our culture now, which is cancel culture. Vice organized an attack on me, and it’s their right to do so, they were going to take down this book. Anyone who has been a victim of cancel culture, or a tweet storm, knows that it’s destabilizing for the first few days, it’s rough. But I was still invited to the most prestigious book festivals in the world, and I’m just fine.” AZ: Do you have a favorite article that you have written during your career? JA: “Definitely. At The Wall Street Journal, with another colleague, we broke the story of offshore illegal Chinese donations that were flowing into the Democratic party to reelect Clinton and Gore. Covering the Anita Hill hearings which lead into the book, Strange Justice, was a favorite. I returned to that a year later when public opinion shifted to believe Anita Hill. I got to cover the beginning of a critical mass of women being elected to the Senate and House of Representatives, which was a reaction to Anita Hill. As an editor I was tremendously proud, in 2012, of publishing the best investigative reporting The New York Times had ever done on Chinese princelings, Apple’s failure to create jobs in the U.S., Walmart paying bribes, and Wall Street’s conduct. It was a great run. That was a high point. AZ: Who was your favorite person to interview? JA: “Hillary Clinton was one of the most interesting people that I’ve both interviewed and written about. I actually first met her in 1978, in Arkansas, and we stayed in touch on and off since then. She struck me as being so smart, capable, and accomplished on her own. My relationship with her definitely had its frosty periods. She felt that The New York Times gave her unfair and harshly negative coverage, starting with Whitewater back in 1992. She did not feel her coverage in The New York Times had been fair. She was angry in 2008, when I ran our Presidential campaign coverage, because I assigned an article that looked at the Clinton marriage. It mainly focused on the fact that if you examined their public schedules, they were rarely in the same place at the same time. She hated that piece. She hated investigative pieces we did about the Clinton foundation, and she hated that I assigned someone to cover her full time. My relationship with her has definitely had ups and downs.” AZ: Did you have a favorite class at Fieldston, and if so, who taught it? JA: “Earl Clemons taught it, and it was 11th grade Modern European History. I remember the exam was just a copy of Karl Marx’s The Communist Manifesto, and we were told to write an essay about the year 1848. I still think it’s the best exam that anyone has ever given.” AZ: Do you look back at your time at Fieldston fondly? JA: “Oh yeah! I’m still really really tight friends with a lot of the people who were in my Fieldston class. Most of the people in my class turned 65 sometime over the last year, and we all showed up for each other’s birthdays. There is a core group of four or five of us who see each other much more frequently.” Thank you to Ms. Abramson for agreeing to this interview, and for speaking so openly about her life and career.

A Check in with the Fieldston Student Government Co-Presidents

BY: CATELIN BROMFIELD

Newly-elected co-presidents Nina Kronengold (VI) and Calder Stokes (VI) kicked off their campaign with many intriguing initiatives and goals. From free Bunni coffee in the cafeteria to advisory challenges, there is plenty to be excited about. During our interview, Kronengold and Stokes stated that their biggest focus is to bridge the gap between FSG and the students, faculty, and administration. In their meetings with the administration, Kronengold and Stokes discussed the importance of transparency and communication with students, and introduced the idea of regular google meet talk sessions. Stokes explained further that “many of us feel we don’t know the administration and their initiatives as well, and these sessions could be a good way to bridge that gap.” Over the last couple of weeks, the two have been brainstorming ideas and changes for the upcoming school year, starting with frequent student questionnaires

over the summer. Both Kronengold and Stokes are on a COVID-19 task force, working with the administrative council on reimagining how the school year will look in the fall, and reshaping some of their goals for the presidency. One of their goals, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, was re-arranging the library’s purpose with ideas to book study rooms via cell phone and host grade-wide post-assembly discussions. Now, amidst the pandemic with an uncertain school reopening date, Stokes and Kronengold said that, “we know that some of these initiatives may not be possible anymore considering we don’t know if we will be able to have these types of events happening, however, we will try to make them happen and we are shifting our focus to what the students value right now.” Kronengold and Stokes discussed the shift in their priorities towards student health; Supporting everyone throughout the challenges of online

school and these uncertain times have become a prioritized initiative. Both state that “It’s sometimes difficult to feel motivated for class and it’s sad to see the disconnect between people in the classroom.” Thus, Kronengold and Stokes have brainstormed ideas to increase motivation, connection and interaction during online school, which include creating online advisory challenges and games. “It’s been hard mentally, but I have noticed that playing fun games in class, such as a quick game of escape the room in math, is a super engaging and a good way to connect,” said Kronengold, “we all definitely miss the everyday social interaction with people we may not always be intact with all the time, and the FSG presidents are focused on designing these spaces to fill that gap.” In the next few months of planning for the upcoming school year, Kronengold and Stokes understand the challenge laid out before

them, which is a more transparent relationship between FSG and the student body, and are taking it head-on. In their campaign video, Kronengold and Stokes proposed “Tea Time with Nina and Calder.” Their proposal offers time for students and the FSG co-presidents to connect and converse with each other. Currently, Kronengold and Stokes are conversing with administrators to put their proposal into action, and are seeking student feedback to help further the details of their proposal. The idea of having grade representation during remote circumstances is another priority of Kronengold and Stokes. Both explained, “We don’t want to be known as just FSG- co-presidents, we want to just be Kronengold and Stokes and be people that you can come to no matter your grade and give us advice and suggestions for what you want to see happen... We hope to create a down to earth relationship with all of you.”

Queremos: A Concert Business Surviving the Pandemic

BY: MARIA GRABOWSKY

Pedro Seiler had just finished a Youtube Live with the youtube channel Cultura Em Casa (Culture at Home) when I called him. The channel invited Seiler to talk about his crowdfunding company, Queremos, and the concerts they have been hosting via social media. Queremos We want is a kickstarter for concerts, live events and festivals. It is what Seiler has dedicated his life to for the past 10 years, and although the company has found ways to adapt to the pandemic, it has still been hit hard. “Entertainment was the first to shut down and will be the last to come back,” said Seiler. Queremos had to cancel their most awaited festival in June and they had to refund all those that had bought tickets. It was a financial as well as emotional blow for everyone involved. This would have been their third festival and the best line up yet, according to Seiler. The festival is now rescheduled for some time after march of next year, but undoubtedly it will not look the same. “A whole year lost. We don’t know if we’ll have the same artists since the dollar is increasing in value so one idea will be to work more

closely with Brazilian acts. [Also] Brazil maybe will have a travel plan from international artists, so even if we can promote the shows here, the artists might not come,” said Seiler. Though it is uncertain what next year is going to look like, Seiler is focused on what Queremos can do under the current circumstances. He tells me that Queremos was, “one of the first in the world to do a live festival with artists in their home.” With the help of their sponsor, Queremos was able to pay the artists fees while funding a social project supporting local bars and nightclubs suffering due to the pandemic. And, the company has experienced great success from streaming their festival online. The festival, broadcasted via youtube, was viewed 400,000 times. Duda Beat, a Brazilian singer and songwriter, performed online for 36,000 people, something that would never have happened if she was to perform live. With these concerts, Queremos’ online community has been growing faster than ever. “We find ourselves in an interesting moment that our brand is growing and we have a big community,” said Seiler. “We

are trying new opportunities, creating digital content, writing series of podcasts, [thinking of a] documentary show. Being really active on social media: instagram, facebook, and twitter.” While the online festivals have been successful, they are not exactly easy to pull off. Most of the artists are unable to perform online. “They don’t feel comfortable playing one instrument. Most artists were also not able to prepare anything in such short notice,” said Seiler. Despite the difficulties, Queremos still strived to make the online festival as similar to the real one as possible. “We wanted to be faithful to our curation process. Equal number of men, women, different styles, 50% were black artists,” said Seiler. As Seiler mentioned, there is uncertainty regarding the entertainment business and it is hard to visualize an in-person festival or a concert happening in the near future. “Personally, I don’t like any of the suggestions to have open drive-ins or venues with 30% of the capacity. It’s not the same. There are also questions that no one is addressing – what if everyone wants to go to the bathroom at the

same time,” said Seiler. Queremos will therefore continue having their festivals online in order to keep their company afloat. “For us it would be great to have one each month. As a company and as a budget to survive. Our income is zero and we’re probably gonna stay twelve months without an income,” said Seiler. For the time being, Seiler has been spending his days meeting with his team and potential partners. When he is not working, Seiler spends his time checking off movies and tv shows from his bucket list, listening to music and sharing suggestions to his followers. On Instagram, he has been posting some of his favorite music albums of the year as well as movie/tv show recommendations such as Plot Against America, The Sopranos and Once Upon a Time in America. “I’ve been listening to new releases, remembering old artists, really listening to a lot of music,” said Seiler. He has been spending his time wisely, focusing on the present, and not letting himself get too worried about the future.

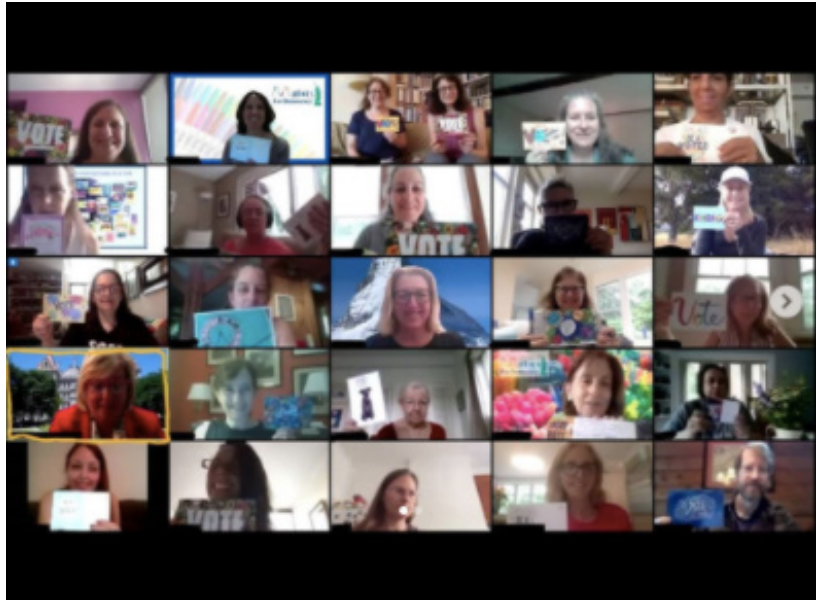
Markers for Democracy

BY: EMMA FRIEDMAN

In response to a congressional race in the 17th congressional district of Pennsylvania that could flip the seat from red to blue, a group of friends from the Upper West Side united to write postcards urging people to vote. Democrat Connor Lamb who is a former prosecutor, won against Republican Tim Murphy. Whether the win was a result of the postcards or not, it showed the friends how individuals can have a role in making change.

Since then, Markers for Democracy has been sending postcards with information about how and when to vote as well as information about who is running to potential voters. Any voter allowed to fill out a form online to be added to the list to receive a postcard. The postcards have shown to be persuasive and compelling and emphasize the importance of local elections. Voting in these elections is the role of US citizens choosing who gets to make decisions in the Senate and Congress and lead their democracy. On the morning of May 23rd, Emma Friedman, a member of MFD and a

student in Form IV, interviewed a few members to understand the essence of this group. Susan Wagner, a founding member, spoke with Friedman about how MFD provides a space to surround yourself by those who want to work for change. Wagner's words ring true as MFD has hand-written 55,000 postcards to get citizens across the nation involved in future elections both small and large. Now 500 members strong, the group meets each week on Tuesdays and Fridays from 9:30-12:30. They have continued this work during the COVID crisis through virtual zoom meetings. The postcards written by MFD can be written in your own home but completing the work together has built a strong sense of community for the members. Brilliant activist and founder of MFD, Ellen Bender, shared how taking a few hours a week to debrief in a productive manner promotes hope in others and herself. This version of self-care is necessary to maintain a



healthy relationship with her physical as well as mental health during times of stress. Throughout a series of interviews, it was clear to Friedman that this work had brought a feeling of purpose to this community, beyond being "voters". Following the 2016 Election, many MFD members were discouraged when Hilary Clinton lost the Presidential election. However, these citizens took the feeling of hopelessness and turned it into determination. Each time they write a postcard they fight for a stronger democracy. The work is rewarding, the people are inspirational and you are playing an active role in shaping your democracy. To get involved in Markers for Democracy, click this link to subscribe and receive information so you can begin writing postcards. Photos from [instagram@markersfordemocracy](https://www.instagram.com/markersfordemocracy)

Helping Out Families in Rio's Densely Populated Shanty Towns

BY: MARIA GRABOWSKY

Casa Amarela is a center for the arts and culture located at the very top of Morro da Providencia, a shanty town in the middle of Rio de Janeiro. The organization's vision, according to their website, "is to improve the lives of Morro da Providencia's inhabitants through art, culture and education. It is our belief that, by fostering a culture of creativity and curiosity based on art and education, it is possible to enable the members of the community to take control over their own development and lives." Further, Casa Amarela has always been dedicated to supporting its community, and while the pandemic has made that task slightly more difficult, their work and dedication has not ceased. They have come up with a myriad of new initiatives to support Morro da Providencia, despite the challenges. With no running water, no hospitals, thousands living in close quarters, and an ignorant president, it is no doubt that Rio's favelas will suffer greatly from this virus. The fatality rate for the country as a whole is 6.8% according to the Brazilian Report, while in the United States it is around 1 to 2%. "A greater prob-

lem that is arising is the time to pick up the dead bodies," said Nina, co-director of Casa Amarela, in Portuguese, "Corpses that have been dead for three days in people's homes. A lot of hospitals already don't have enough beds. Sadly, there is no space and no one able to help." Nina also commented that an even bigger issue has been shame. Many residents refuse to acknowledge their symptoms and are embarrassed of contracting the virus. "It has been very difficult for people to respect [the rules of social distancing]. People are ashamed. Last week, two residents with the virus came to pick up donations. People are walking around with the virus, but ashamed to say they have it," said Nina. Shame has been coupled with ignorance and lack of economic relief worsening the situation altogether. "People need to leave their houses to go work. There is a lack of information. Young children are respecting [the rules], but teenagers, with parents that are not as present, are going to the streets whenever they want," said Nina. However, little by little, Casa Amarela is introducing more and more projects



to help out as much as possible. The organization has been in contact with some of the kids that used to go the center after school and have been offering extra tutor help, English lessons, and some artistic opportunities. They have been distributing coloring books created by some of the artists they work with, as well as working to start a partnership between students at photographer JR's photography school and the students at Casa Amarela. They are hoping that the students can exchange photographs and create some form of connection amidst this pandemic. Additionally, through donations and partnerships with other organizations, they have also been able to distribute food baskets with hygiene products and everyday necessities to the shantytown's most precarious residents. In total, they have distributed 670 baskets so far and plan on distributing more this month. Nina tells me that this work

is not usually part of Casa Amarela, but something they had to do in response to this pandemic. They hope that their work will lead families to respect social distancing, stay at home, and decrease the spread of this virus and the number of deaths. Although this virus does not discriminate, it is clear by now that it will be far worse for those less privileged and recovery from it does not look easy. There is no doubt that the families in Morro da Providencia have and will be greatly affected by it and the inequalities that are already there will grow to an even greater amount. Casa Amarela, however, is doing the best they can to decrease that inequality and give the families the protection they deserve. Instagram: [@casaamarelaprovidencia](https://www.instagram.com/casaamarelaprovidencia)

Un-MASKing the Plan: Fieldston's Proposal for School Reopening

BY: REX HECHTER



As stay at home orders begin to ease up in the state of New York and guidelines become less strict, the time has come for schools to rethink the school's education structure come Fall 2020. Even though data and information about the virus are constantly changing, Fieldston is committed to adapting to its changes and creating a plan to ensure that students will return to campus in the fall. There is no simple way to introduce school after four months of a stay-at-home order. There has been a recent surge in coronavirus cases all around the United States. In Florida, for example, 350k cases have been recorded, a number that will likely only continue to grow, and California recently surpassed New York (at its peak) in its number of cases. Fortunately, New York seems to have fewer and fewer cases by the day. This has caused many school administrations to rethink their plans for school in the fall. In a recent email Jessica Bagby (Head of School) suggested that they "remain optimistic about opening our campuses for students the first day of school on Thursday 9/10." All departments of the school are meeting regularly to discuss the most effective way to introduce online learning in correlation with in-class learning. Five task forces have been assembled to tackle productive plans since early June, with Kyle Wilkie-Glass leading the overall effort of these task forces. Each task force is staffed with co-chairs who are guiding the work of each group and its subcommittees. Similarly, both Riverdale and Horace Mann are aiming to return back to school in the fall. Riverdale's plan differs from the others, as they are returning to campus on

August 24. According to The New York Times, Mayor Bill de Blasio announced that public schools would not fully reopen in September. Classroom time will be limited to only one to three days per week and class sizes will shrink immensely – de Blasio only foresees about a dozen students in a class at a time – so as to continue to curb the outbreak. Though de Blasio has shared his plan for the fall, Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo still has authority over when schools open across the state. Cuomo and de Blasio have been at odds over schools the past few months, though the governor did not contradict de Blasio on his plan. On Thursday, July 23, Fieldston updated its official academic plan for the fall: Fieldston is calling its new learning model, Hyflex. Classroom sizes will now be reduced to 12, where only half of students will remain on campus for a week (week A), and the other half on week B. Those who have the week off-campus will remain in class virtually. The longest class time will meet for 55 minutes, while the lowest will meet for 35. Advisory time will be shortened as well, likely to around two times per week, and large gatherings such as form meetings will move online. Arrival and dismissal will not permit parents, guardians, caregivers, and visitors into school buildings. They will be allowed on campus for pick-up or drop-off at designated locations and entrances (with social distancing). Cafeteria and dining will look completely different. Because there is little room for social distancing in the cafeteria, students will eat meals in advisory rooms or another pre-

determined location. Lunch meals will be individually packaged – grab-and-go meals in disposable containers. All food and beverages will be provided by cafeteria staff. Efforts will be made to lessen sharing of supplies and materials and all that must be shared will be wiped with antimicrobial cleaning wipes between use. While some are cautiously optimistic, others feel unsettled. This week, the week of July 27th, time has been set aside for a series of "town hall meetings," department meetings and human resources meetings to better understand the concerns and reservations. Parents heard from Upper School Principal Nigel Furlonge, Kyle Wilkie-Glass, and Jeannie Crowley. Each administrator spoke on the hyflex model, and how it was different from a hybrid model. Students who are not present in the classroom are learning simultaneously with those who are, instead of having separate classes for the students who are online. Administrators also discussed the ventilation systems that will be installed to meet NYC regulations, as well as an increase in hands-free materials like automatic water bottle fillers. Objects that require many students to touch, like doors, will have sanitizer close by to insure little spread of germs. It has been confirmed that in the Upper School, Week A will be students with the last name A-K, and Week B will be all students with the last name L-Z. A sample schedule was provided for parents to see, which looked fairly similar to the former one with some modifications. Administrators wanted to make sure that there was little "down time" for students, as they should not have a reason to wait on campus if they don't have a class. Tom Christensen, the head of the Music Department explained his plan for how the hyflex model will look for him. "All of the music teachers have been looking into various online tools," explained Christensen. "One is called Smart Music, the other is called Noteflight... we can use [these] to engage students when they are not in the classroom." "I'm looking to make music as adaptable as possible," he said, "trying to be sensitive to how students learn, and their level of comfort with technology." Christensen continued to explain how wind instruments or singing requires students to remain 12 feet apart, an additional six from academic classes or other music programs like percussion and electronic music. Though it will be difficult to come back after months away from campus, Fieldston is planning to make a smooth and careful transition in the fall. Plans may still fluctuate due to the unknowns of the virus, but Fieldston remains optimistic during this time. With school just over a month away, students will receive their schedules the week of August 3rd.



GRADUATION ISSUE

By: THE EDITORS

Commencement Address by Khary Lazarre-White '91 By: Sarina Chitkara In his commencement address to the Fieldston Class of 2020, social entrepreneur, activist, educator, and attorney Khary Lazarre-White (Fieldston Class of 1991) emphasized the importance of passion. Khary's passion is The Brotherhood/Sister Sol (Bro/Sis), a comprehensive youth development and educational organization based in Harlem. The program provides the community with after school care, counseling, summer camps, job training, college preparation and scholarship, employment opportunities, legal representation and study abroad opportunities. Khary has dedicated himself to the fulfillment and success of young people while advocating for social change. His work has been recognized and awarded by many institutions including Oprah Winfrey's Angel Network Use Your Life Award and the African American Literature Awards. At this time of multiple pandemics, Khary emphasized that the Class of 2020 has the power to invoke change. He noted, "We face a pandemic and its debilitating effects on the entire nation and throughout the world. We encounter an election that will determine what this nation stands for and if it will respond morally and ethically and answer what are the rights we hold dear, what is the role of the government to respond to this cracking open what is the role of America in this world." To many, his words served as more of a call to action than a typical commencement. Khary's message, both somber and hopeful, reminded the audience that while passion is not friendly, it is a path to freedom. It's supposed to be a challenge, and it is supposed to be an unspeakable hope. He quoted educator Maxine Green, stating that "It must be a conscious endeavor on the part of individuals to keep themselves awake, to think about their condition in the world. Be awake. Open your eyes. Think about the conditions of the world." He encouraged everyone to find their passion and let it drive their actions; to use their consciousness to guide their intuition, and then use their best tools: empathy and knowledge. By following one's passion thoughtfully and intentionally, Khary believes that we can create a future we are proud of. He said, "We can provide and

create this world reality if we have the courage and the commitment to redefine and retell and rename the world." Khary begs the question: what will your role be in creating that world? Student Speeches Matthew Brown: Thank you Mr. Furlonge, parents, faculty, staff, and of course the class of 2020. Taking in the view and savoring the moment, I saw an incredible sea of Orange and Blue emblazoned with the Fieldston Eagle. As the first bus arrived, all I could hear were the screams of half the senior grade. The air was electric, and I was swept up by a familiar feeling of excitement for the celebrations to come. It was the day of OUR Pep Rally, a true moment of Unity and Community for the class of 2020. In a class filled with varying interests, skills, and opinions, this was a moment that we came together to celebrate our senior year in festive form. It was an incredible experience, and it was supposed to be the first of Many such occasions this school year. Ever since I was introduced to the Fieldston community in 1st grade, I would stare out my bus window, memorializing (and dreading at times) the day each year when the seniors would stain my hair orange and blue, spray silly string all over my face and clothes, and laugh out in amusement. When I was younger, I would try so hard to avoid the mob of spirit-crazed seniors that I would stall my exit from the bus in hope that the seniors would run out of silly string by the time I got off. While faculty may see this display of school spirit as menacing to younger students, I was Always in Awe of the upperclassmen and would look forward to it fondly. I Loved the idea of being the senior, having all of the fun, but I Hated the idea that it would one day be me—that I would have to leave it all, and in my mind I wasn't ready for that day to ever come. It's the idea of coming of age that is so daunting, that change is coming, and it's coming Fast. So we had Pep Rally, and somehow we had the Poly game (shoutout max) just before Covid 19 waved our year goodbye. Instead of relishing all of the other rights of passage celebrated by all other Fieldston seniors before us — prom, senior dinner, last Founders Day, final spring assemblies, and of course the fabled senior prank — we are left to reflect on

our time (and lost time) at Fieldston before we graduate. We have the unique perspective of being alumni before we have even left. I've spent the last several months of my senior year in a hammock by the lake in Central Park (as told by the senior video), fishing and of course praising Aten, but also reflecting on my time at Fieldston and what I appreciate the most. I know everyone has their list, but here is mine:

The classes that inspired me, from becoming the self-proclaimed captain and world renowned artist of my chamber music group to becoming a fully fledged follower of Aten, the ancient Egyptian sun god.

Staying up at Fieldston long after dark with Water Polo to decorate for Homecoming, and watching the entire school wear the beautiful homecoming WaPo-designed shirt.

The journey I would treasure from the 100s to the 500s where I could shake hands with as many people as possible, all with a huge grin on my face.

The feeling of being in the last class of the day and looking around to see that every single other person was also staring at the clock, counting down the seconds in unison. That became such a problem in my orchestra that the clock was permanently removed.

The one off days like when we were supposed to have the biggest snowstorm in NY history, ended up with 2 inches, but the school still closed in advance, or when the electricity went out and the entire school rejoiced while piling onto the busses at 11 AM.

I'll cherish the laughs I've had with so many of you, whether it was from some stupid joke, or a nervous laugh after everybody got different answers on a test that we all thought we got right.

It's those small moments of togetherness that to me defines the Fieldston experience. Ultimately, for me, it's not the Rights of passage but the Moments of passage at Fieldston with all of you. And that's because at Fieldston, community has been everything to me and has helped to make me the person I am today. From lower and middle school, I learned how to collaborate, and to make lifelong friends. From Ultimate Frisbee and Water Polo, I learned camaraderie and how to truly

be myself. From chamber music, I learned confidence, and what it meant to truly care about a group of people. From Mr. Mahase, I learned I was not meant to have a career in chemistry, and that (in his words) my 50% quiz score could've been a 35 so I should be grateful. But from Mahase I also learned how to bounce back from failure, and how to put my head down and work whenever I was tired or wanted to give up. From many of my Upper School teachers, I've learned that great teachers are passionate about their field and can create enthusiasm for any subject. Whether it was Soler for math or Montera for history, I want badly to feel that way about my own passions in the future. From the college process, I learned patience, perseverance, and to stay true to myself. From the Fieldston community, I learned to look beyond myself and my surroundings. From senior year, I in a different world, would have talked about how all the late nights taught me to keep pushing through, but honestly, in this world, I learned how to live in the moment. Though I didn't know it at the time, living in the moment throughout senior year became even more important when March arrived and all I could look back on was the time spent with friends — not enough time. From my art page during the worst of the pandemic, I learned how to focus my creativity and to find ways to interact with friends, bringing people together at home both nearby and hundreds or thousands of miles away. At a time when the feeling was scarce, I used my art to have a little bit of fun. And from the survival squad, you pushed me through the pandemic, that was loyalty to the game and true love. I'm proud to be a part of the Class of 2020, because though we didn't get to slack off all quarter as we feel we deserved, we learned something far more important. To expect the unexpected, and to anticipate change, whether positive or negative. We are strong, and we are stronger as a unit. I'm forever grateful to those who have made such a positive impact on my life, from friends to teachers, coaches to facilities. I have infinite love for the class

of 2020. I will end on a quote, from the Hymn To The Aten, an ancient piece that brings me great joy in the darkest moments. “Though thou art far away, thy rays are on earth.” As we leave Fieldston and take our next steps, we will shine our rays all over the earth. We must live in the light, and we must remain strong. I have great faith in the class of 2020, and I offer you all my blessings. Peace and love. Jahnvi Kirtane: Hi, everyone! It is so, so, so good to see all of you. Before I start, could we all take a moment of silence for those who have been hurt by COVID-19 and social injustice in all of its forms? Pause. Thank you. As Fieldston students in today’s world, we have, sadly, been a part of many moments of silence. While they serve as spaces to internally reflect, the connection that we all feel in those moments is the most profound to me. At Fieldston, the string that connects us all is that of ethics and social justice.

That is very unique. And it’s also pretty liberating. It gives us the power to see the world not just through our own lenses, but also through a more nuanced and diverse framework; it allows us to practice empathy. It empowers us to see ourselves and the communities we belong to as beautiful mosaics, where we all have our individual elements and personalities and stories and voices that make up something much bigger. It allows us to reflect, want to be good, and try to make things better. This idea of wanting to “be a good person” and “make things better” is so Fieldston. To be honest, it’s why I chose to come to Fieldston in ninth grade. And for the past four years, I’ve seen most people at Fieldston have some sort of drive, or impetus, to be good and make things better. Like Z, whose wise and funny nature calms us down or puts us in our place, depending on what we need at that moment. Or all of our dedicated teachers that live and model our school’s ethical mission. When you’re in a class with Senora Rodas Ramirez or Dean Mrkonjic; Ms. Paterson or Singh or OB or Gee; Dr. Banks or the Jones’; Mr. Waldman or Greenwald or Marro, and so many more; it’s hard not to become a better person. Fieldston is this sort of principled social experiment where everyone has decided to come to this school because it aligns with their own unique commitment to ethics and social justice. We, the students, are the beneficiaries of our teachers both facilitating and demonstrating how to do that in their own lives. This process transforms our lives

and prepares us to, as cliché as it might sound, try to make the world a better place. This specific goodness is at the heart of our assemblies and affinity groups. It’s in the way #StudentsOfColorMatter stood up against racism and marginalization at Fieldston. It ebbs and flows through our classrooms, where we thoughtfully dissect systems of power, how we all perpetuate them, and how we can work to undo them. I’ll never forget shadowing an older student when I was admitted to Fieldston and being amazed by Ms. Apostol approaching symbolism, oppression, gender, race, and social justice through the lens of Beyoncé’s Lemonade in a Freshman English class. That is Fieldston. We even see it in much smaller forms, like in the hallways when people (used to) casually give each other hugs while saying “hi.” I never did that before coming to Fieldston, but it is a pretty nice experience that I miss now more than ever. People are just friendly and fiercely committed to being good and doing good, which matters and means so much in a world that often seems so unfair and brutal. Right now, it’s more important than ever that we continue to uphold this commitment we have fostered at Fieldston. For many of us, we’re in a confusing world, where we’re reaching out in the distance to no avail. But, if we look at the lessons we’ve learned and lived at Fieldston, we can realize that it doesn’t necessarily have to be this way. We are privileged to have attended this institution, and while it certainly has its flaws, it has given us a toolkit to face the world and, yes, make it better. We can use the knowledge we’ve absorbed all these years — the statistics, history, and stories — to reflect, learn, unlearn, and share with others. We can employ the communication skills we’ve honed from countless presentations, meetings, sports teams, and ensembles. We can tap into the empathy we’ve developed by interacting with and reading books about so many different people, and engaging in community service, wielding it as a powerful instrument for growth and, ultimately, change. Thank you to all of our teachers, guides, and mentors, for equipping us with these tools. We will try to make you proud. As I wrap this up, I’ll utilize an example from City Sem. On our first day of discussing a new social or policy issue, Mr. Blumenfeld would give us a few minutes to break up into groups and discuss what we could do to fix it or find a solution. There was no limit to what

we could imagine — we had unlimited funding and resources. In those minutes, we let our creativity flow as far as it could go and genuinely felt invigorated to take our ideas and run with them, even though they were largely unrealistic. What if we did just this — what if we dreamed up ideas and let them take us somewhere? As we move on from Fieldston, we can take these dreams and channel them into action. I’ll leave you all with Indian revolutionary poet Tagore’s words: I slept and dreamt that life was joy. I awoke and saw that life was service. I acted and behold, service was joy. Thank you. Lucas Sirovich: Ah. The beautiful class of 2020. It is so great to look out at all your smiling faces. Well uh, I hope you’re smiling, but I can’t really tell. Pandemic, Hurricane; those are small obstacles, nothing was gonna stop us from graduating. Going to the same school for a 14th year is a little like watching the 10th season of “The Office”. You know what to expect, and you’re pretty sick of it, yet it’s somehow still enjoyable. But this year was supposed to be extra enjoyable. We finally made it to the promised land, senior year. Pep rally was everything I could’ve asked for but I definitely could’ve asked for more from the football team the next day. Really? 51-0? To Hackley? In October they buried us in college applications and stress... but they didn’t know we were seeds. Halloween plus the November 1st deadline for Early Decision sounds like a bad combo, or a great combo, depending how you look at it. Fast forward a few months, and then finally, the event that would define our senior year... A 5-1 loss to poly prep. Psych. On Monday March 9th, the coronavirus arrived. At first, with the excitement of a snow day. I remember most of us going home from our last day on campus, “hyped for a Monday night party at so and so’s house”. But our hopes of a couple “pandemic days” turned into endless pandemic weeks, and then pandemic months. All we wanted was to be back in the classroom, believe it or not. We didn’t get PI or Founder’s Day, but we did more helping out around the house than ever before and plenty of hours on Google Meet with our beloved teachers. Actually, you all may have gotten plenty of class time. If any of my spring teachers are watching this, I’m sorry, I really struggled making the journey from bed to desk. And when I did it was too often for a Zoom bomb. Quarantine was rough. The only notable events in my March and April were some next level family arguments and Cuomo’s daily reports of bad news. But I am deeply sorry for

any of you who lost a loved one or struggled with the perils of this horrible disease. LOOK OUT: The pandemic raged on and the world was in utter chaos. You could look at this current mess of a country and worry about the future, but I’d say we’re at a turning point. Finally, a situation dire enough to generate actual change. Surprisingly enough, there has already been some good to emerge from the madness of spring 2020. It shouldn’t have taken such an atrocity, but nonetheless, George Floyd’s murder has been yet another wake up call and rallying cry to start dismantling the systems of oppression in America. We have hit the collective pause button on the global economy, and given the Earth a much needed breath of fresh air (pun intended). But before we rush back to normal, as if normal was good, we need to make radical changes to reverse climate change. These past few months demonstrate that our choice of leader can be a matter of life and death. I mean, if disinfectant kills the virus, then maybe we should all have a glass of Lysol with breakfast? Yeah, no. Enough about the world’s problems. I know, there are a lot of them. But just to recap: Systemic racism persists. We are killing the Earth. There’s still a raging pandemic. And Kanye isn’t looking too good in the polls. You might be thinking, what the heck is this kid talking about? we can’t fix any of this. But if we, the fieldston class of 2020, aren’t going to make the world a better place than who, will? ...When I watched all of the self proclaimed “best graduation speeches” on Youtube they all had a bunch of inspirational quotes, and I’m not very original, so welcome to my quote section. A really smart man named Albert, named after an early 2000s series ‘Little Einsteins’ once said “education is what remains after one has forgotten everything they’ve learned in school”. A Fieldston education has always been about how to think instead of how to get the right answer. Mr. Soler taught me that by giving out very generous partial credit, thank you Mr. Soler. Our second (hopefully) inspirational quote comes from a fellow redhead. If you don’t like it I will take it personally. Conan O’Brien said “Work hard, be kind, and amazing things will happen.” We could

An Update on Vocal-NY's Fight to House NYC's Homeless Population Amidst the Pandemic

BY: EMMA SISKIND

Since the pandemic's arrival in early March, New York has undergone a transformation. As a state, we have, in less than 6 months, gone from being the country's epicenter for the virus to slowly returning to a different way of life amidst our currently low infection rate. But many populations in New York as well as around the world have been left completely devastated by the pandemic. New York City's homeless population is one of them. To put their vulnerability into perspective, according to The Coalition for the Homeless, homeless people are 61 percent more likely to die from Covid-19 than housed people. Currently, New York City seems inundated with multiple layers of homelessness. There are new people pushed into homelessness through Covid and unemployment as well as a growing population of older homeless families and children who are victims of New York City real estate practices and decades of gentrification; there is a long-standing scarcity of affordable housing in the city; new to the mix is a cohort of people newly released from Rikers Island and city jails; and there is a chronic homeless population consisting of people with mental health, trauma and addiction issues. All of them are vulnerable; all of them need unique services. But their growing presence has sent a "shiver" through several New York neighborhoods and has made some New Yorkers feel unsafe in a way that they haven't felt since the 1970s. In early May, I got the chance to interview Joseph Loonam, who works at homeless advocacy group Vocal-NY fighting to aid and shelter New York City's homeless. Last week, I got the opportunity to talk to Loonam again about the progress made over the last few months for NYC's homeless population, as well as the further

action needed. In our first interview, Loonam emphasized the lack of action taken by Mayor De Blasio to help aid the homeless. Specifically, Loonam explained his frustration with the lack of action taken by Mayor De Blasio to open up the 30,000 hotel rooms that Vocal-NY demanded for NYC's homeless population. In our most recent interview, I asked Loonam to give an update about the Mayor's actions. According to Loonam, "The city did do some things to protect the homeless, and it is impossible to say what would have happened if the city had not done those things, but they did not do enough and a good number of people died as a result."

Loonam explained the complex system created was often more inefficient than efficient. "There were different hotels given to different people for different reasons...if you had a health concern, there was a certain type of hotel, if you were a frontline worker, there was a certain type of hotel, if you were elderly there was a certain type of hotel," explains Loonam. Though this peer system created by the city sounds organized and well-thought out, Loonam described it turned into a "complex bureaucracy" which left hotels sitting empty for long periods of time. While these hotels sat empty, people were left sick in the shelters. Right now the city and the homeless are in a bind. "There are many people living on the streets right now, because the shelters are too dangerous, and a lot of people living in hotels in neighborhoods that have historically never been home to shelters, and have fought very hard to keep homeless people out of their communities." Taking the Upper West Side as an example, many residents have complained over the last few weeks of public drug use, public urination, and criminals filling the streets of their neighborhood, com-

promising the safety of residents, and demand that these hotels be vacated. Others simply don't want shelters being brought to their community. How does Loonam feel about these concerns? Over the telephone, Loonam spoke slowly: "It is important for the general public to understand that a lot of basic services, from those as simple as showers to as complicated as mental health treatment, are not happening for the homeless. So a lot of people are in bad situations where they are struggling to get their basic needs met. I think that is driving a lot of attention on the ground in communities who haven't housed shelters in 20 years." Loonam points out that people want to help but often use the phrase NIMBY—Not In My Back Yard. "I think there is a very aggressive, very loud nimbyism population right now, but I do reject the perception that they represent the majority of people in these neighborhoods...They don't necessarily represent the attitude of the people in these communities." Loonam hopes that groups from these communities, like The Upper West Side and Hell's Kitchen, in the coming weeks, will begin to accept the necessity of shelters in their communities by working to provide services and resources, as it is a long-term necessity. "We're going to have to start exploring those avenues, as a city, and determine how we can house thousands of people," states Loonam. Looking to the future, Loonam hopes that the short term actions made to help ease the effect of the pandemic on the homeless will pave the way for long term action to solve the city's homeless crisis. But Loonam also emphasizes the need for long-term planning and solutions. While Vocal-NY is still fighting for the city to continue to open up hotel rooms for short-term housing, Loonam informed me that

there are also three main long term goals that Vocal-NY is demanding the city to act on. First, they are demanding for the city to increase the city housing voucher available on a local level to cover market-rate apartments. Currently, it doesn't cover market rate apartments in any of the boroughs, and if it did it would allow for a major decrease in the homeless population. Secondly, HPV does work with developers to build low income housing, majorly through tax incentives, and Vocal-NY has long argued that a certain portion of that housing should be reserved for homeless people. Currently, given the pandemic, Vocal-NY is advocating for all of that housing to be opened up for homeless people. Lastly, the budget for these low income housing projects has been almost entirely cut from the city budget recently, and Vocal-NY is pushing for this budget to be restored as housing is now more needed than ever. The pandemic has put a new emphasis on the importance of solving the long term homeless crisis in New York City, with Loonam stating, "I think that this is a moment for long term change...for the past 20 years the city has neglected to prioritize new housing construction for the homeless population. My hope as an advocate is that Covid will be the straw that brings the cows back and forces the city to take action." The city needs to begin to take long term action to aid the homeless crisis while the homeless population is most vulnerable, and, with a wave of evictions following the pandemic almost inevitable, there is a dire need for historically non-accepting communities within the city to accept the homeless crisis and provide resources to help.

Graduation Issue (cont.)

definitely work harder on our ability to work hard (again, apologies to my second semester teachers), but we're an unquestionably kind group, and I have no doubt in my mind that amazing things will happen because of us. At Fieldston we're taught to care. About injustices, our friends, the number of kids sitting at a library table, it's 4, right? Our motto might as well be "we just give a crap". Fieldston is great, but our class specifically is pretty awesome too. Guys,

we didn't have a scandal... or a fest. I think those two things could be connected... But I just know that we're a group of people who want the best for each other and for the world. I don't know if it's from singing Lean on Meat Ethical or the constant talking about our feelings, but if high school really is the time when people are the meanest and rudest, then I think we're in the clear. We were so intent on making everyone feel included that our fourth grade play had

a dozen Peter Pans. Well, we don't always include everyone. Imagine cancelling the keynote speaker for the civil discourse assembly because of their opinions. The irony. And even in our safe space, the Fieldston bubble is plagued by the systemic racism that divides communities nationwide. We're far from racial equality in school and even farther outside of campus. But with our strengths, I know we can make a difference. Making the world a better

place starts with being empathetic, treating others with respect, but most of all, caring enough to do so. OK, I've taken enough of your time, Just swipe up if you disagree, (my DMs are always open) I would say I love you all, but in the words of one of our generation's greatest minds, "I only love my bed and my mama, I'm sorry" Much love, class of Covid-19, I mean 2020!

A Day in Bay Head

BY: ISABEL LANDAU

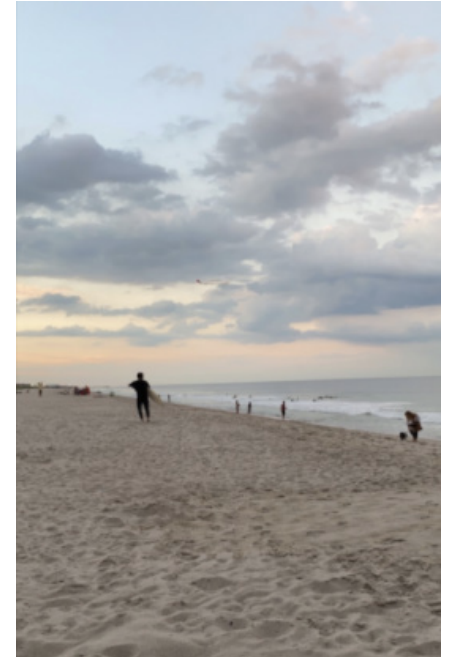
Every photo was taken with an iPhone. These photos were taken to capture the pure beauty of Bay Head, New Jersey.



Crowded Area on the Beach
This photo was taken on July 28th,



Street View
This photo was taken on August 2nd, 2020 in Bay Head, New Jersey. From the third story of a beach house, there is a prime view of the street and cars below.



Surfer on the Beach
This photo was taken on July 28th, 2020 in Bay Head, New Jersey. A surfer exits the water, packs up their gear, and leaves the beach at dusk.



Grey Sky
This photo was taken on July 28th, 2020 in Bay Head, New Jersey. Before the sun starts to set, the sky is a grey-ish, slate color.

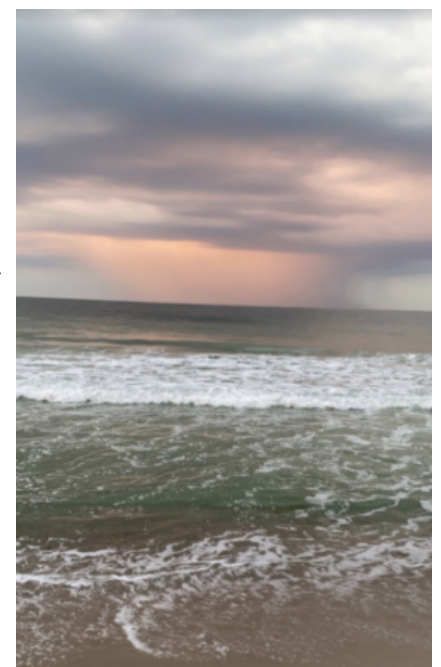


Sunset on the Beach
This photo was taken on July 28th, 2020 in Bay Head, New Jersey. Late in the day, the sun begins to set, offering a majestic sunset for beachgoers.



Stairs to the Beach
This photo was taken on August 2nd, 2020 in Bay Head, New Jersey. From this vantage, you can see the stairs down to the beach leading to the dunes and the ocean waves.

Pink Sky and Green Waters
This photo was taken on July 28th, 2020 in Bay Head, New Jersey. The water is deep green and calm as night draws closer.



A Photojournalist Returning to the Streets for the Black Lives Matter Protests

BY: MARIA GRABOWSKY

“Immediate gratification,” said Erica Lansner recalling the first time she ever looked through the lens of a camera. Lansner grew up with a painter and a journalist as parents; “I grew up with this push and pull of news and art,” she said. Up until that point, she had followed in the footsteps of her mom: painting throughout her childhood and high school life and eventually majoring in art history at Vassar College. She painted what she saw in front of her and never something from her imagination, so when she got her hands on a camera that could capture exactly what was in front of her with such ease, it was a complete game changer. For an impatient person like herself, a camera was the perfect fit. “The camera became a tool to record my life – my visual diary,” said Lansner. Lansner worked for CBS News as the Rome Bureau Assistant, but quit her job 35 years ago to pursue a career as a freelance photographer. Her life became one that consisted of capturing people, stories, and history all throughout the world. With her camera in hand, Lansner went to Tiananmen square in 1989, Russia and Eastern Europe before the fall of the Iron Curtain, Barcelona during the 1992 olympics, and Israel after the Hebron massacre of 1994. When asked about the photos she likes the most, she describes the mystery in a photo she took in Russia of a girl with a patterned dress with a medicine ball in a dark alley, mentions her famous photo of Tiananmen square depicting shirtless boys holding flags mid rain, speaks with pride about her double page spread in Life Magazine of a

photo she took after the Hebron massacre, and points out the vivid colors of her photo of a woman in a bright yellow raincoat raising a colorful umbrella while biking in Vietnam. A successful photo for Lansner is one with mystery, emotion and a story behind it from the viewer’s imagination or in real life. She describes herself as a people-person, and has always placed people in the forefront of her pictures. “The human face is this amazing landscape to me. I love capturing what I am seeing in people’s eyes, the emotion, humor.. you can read so much,” said Lansner. Although she continues to photograph, Lansner toned down on the travelling once she had two daughters – Flora and Maya Villalobos who are both Fieldston alums. Her focus became the city and even though it is not as much of a culture shock as Russia or China, there are still a myriad of stories to tell at every street corner. Lansner does everything from photographing her family at breakfast, to getting close ups of Elizabeth Warren to capturing every dress at the Fieldston Fashion show. She is an especially big fan of large events and festivities: “I love it when there is chaos, and a lot of people. I like heat and places [that are] teeming with people,” said Lansner. In the past, she has loved photographing the pride parade, Women’s march, and various other gatherings: “I love being out there when there is something going on in my city,” said Lansner. That is why the decision to attend the Black Lives Matter protests

was a tricky one as she had to balance the risk of the pandemic and her desire to capture the protests. “At first, I spent hours like should I go, should I not,” said Lansner. Since she is 61 years old, the decision to join a protest was not as easy given the presence of the pandemic. After going back and forth between going and not going, she ultimately decided to layer three masks – two cloth and one surgical – topped with a bandana and hang around the edges for the first day of protests in the city. However, she quickly realized that taking pictures from afar was not going to work for her. “I realized I cannot not cover this. It’s this amazing moment in history. It’s this incredible new story happening in my backyard. No way I can stay out of it... By the third day, I was really scared, and nervous but whatever happens, happens and I just got right in the middle of it,” said Lansner. From that day on, she placed herself in the center of virtually every protest happening from 1pm to 7pm every day all the way through mid July. One issue she encountered was how fast the marches moved. “I have a habit of seeing an amazing face, and I need to do more of that person...I might stop them, pull them out, or follow them [but] meanwhile the march has gotten blocks ahead,” said Lansner. In order to keep up, Lansner would hop on a citi bike to get ahead of the march and then take her time capturing memorable faces, posters, and moments, but would still average 4 or 5 miles walking each day. She would get home every day feeling physically exhausted but mentally

energized from all the collective power and hope exuded in the marches. However, not every moment was as positive and uplifting. Lansner recalls an arrest made during the Blood on the Streets protests on June 11th where protesters splattered symbolic blood on New York City streets. At midday in front of the Metropolitan, she saw a protester being arrested for spray painting a street sign. “It left me very rattled though. If that could happen at 11 am or 12 pm in front of the Metropolitan... it scared me,” she said. At a march in support of Black Trans Lives, Lansner was met with alarming shouts indicating the presence of tear gas causing her to bolt out of the crowd only to later realize that it had been pepper spray. Nevertheless, as she walked back, she was met with intense suffering of those that had been sprayed. “It was really terrifying because they looked [like they were] in utter pain like crying for half an hour and people pouring milk and water in their eyes. It was a sad end to the day,” said Lansner. She posted a myriad of pictures from the protests on her instagram page (@elansner) and some of them even rose to the top of the hashtag – activistny. As for now, Lansner is spending time away from the city, but there is no doubt that if any big event happens in the city, she will be the first to sprint back. She is looking forward to a time where she will be able to travel again, visit places she has not yet seen, and take even greater photos. It seems that her life is one that is forever linked with photography: “once you are a photojournalist, it [becomes] who you are,” said Lansner.



The Fire This Time – Why James Baldwin Still Speaks Clearly to us Today

BY: SOPHIA GUTIERREZ



Following the death of George Floyd, race has been at the forefront of Americans minds. With the resurgence of The Black Lives Matter movement came a national reflection and moral judgement centered on the topic of race. Since the 1960's, there hasn't been a time where we have examined race in America on such a paramount scale. As the school year nears, our teachers have decided to embrace these realities in our curriculum. Because of this, Vinni Drybala, outgoing Chair of the English Department, created a kind of "Baldwin Initiative" for the Upper School English department, which will read Baldwin's *The Fire Next Time* in all English classes in all upper school forms. "Reading Baldwin" Drybala said, "gives us an opportunity to not only understand the current moment, but also to see how the literature we read in our courses provides context to the moment. By this I mean that our courses have always implicitly studied the way power structures are created and upheld, how oppression and privilege are intertwined, and how story and narrative create pathways for resistance. These ideas are what has always grounded Fieldston literary study in social justice. But framing these ideas through Baldwin's work gives it an explicit frame at an important historical juncture — for our school and beyond." While James Baldwin has been an important American voice since the late 1940s, he is having a tremendous resurgence of popularity. Because his words and stories eerily echo the sentiments that so many of us feel today, it's hard to believe he hasn't been writing every day since his death in 1987. Baldwin was born on August 2nd 1924 in Harlem and was disenfranchised from the start. He was the eldest of nine children and grew up impoverished with his mother Emma Berdis Jones. She worked as a cleaning woman to support herself and James; he never knew his biological father. In 1927, his mother married a Baptist preacher named David Baldwin with whom she had eight children. His

stepfather was an inexorable man with a terrible temper who Baldwin would escape from with his insatiable appetite for literature from a young age. In the "Autobiographical Notes" to his first collection of essays, *Notes of a Native Son*, he writes "I read Uncle Tom's Cabin and A Tale of Two Cities over and over and over...In fact, I read just about everything I could get my hands on — except the Bible, probably because it was the only book I was encouraged to read." At the age of fourteen he underwent a Christian religious awakening and began a successful, yet short lived, preaching career following his stepfather. He wrote about this period of his life in his semi autobiographical first novel, *Go Tell It on the Mountain* and in his play about an evangelical woman, *The Amen Corner*. After David Baldwin died in 1943, days before Baldwin's nineteenth birthday, Baldwin buried his stepfather and moved to Greenwich Village at the beginning of "The Beat" Era. He embarked on a series of ill-paid jobs, literary apprenticeship and self enrichment all part of the true bohemian spirit he hoped to embrace. These were the formative years where Baldwin developed his writing style and established himself as a journalist, an essayist, and a novelist. He started out with reviews and essays written for *The Nation*, *Partisan Review*, *Commentary*, *Dissent*, *The New Yorker*, *Time* and other magazines. Here he laid the groundwork for the themes he would explore and develop in his later works. In 1948, Baldwin decided to leave the country and move to Paris. In an interview with television talk show host Dick Cavett, and Paul Weiss, Baldwin famously remarked "When I left this country, in 1948, I left this country for one reason. I didn't care where I went; I might have gone to Hong Kong, I might have gone to Timbuktu, I ended up in Paris on the streets of Paris. With 40 dollars in my pocket and the theory that nothing worse could happen to me there that had already happened to me here (America)." Postwar Paris had become a refuge for a number of expatriate Black Americans at the time (Richard Wright, Dexter Gordon, Bud Powell, Miles Davis). Although it was not without its racial prejudices, "In Paris" Baldwin said, "I didn't feel socially attacked but relaxed, and that allowed me to be loved." Shortly after Baldwin's arrival in Paris, he met a seventeen year old Swiss artist named Lucien Happersberger. The fact that Baldwin was Black and Happersberger was white was less of a transgression than it would have been back in the States. Lucien was one of the men on his sexual journey that led him to be attracted to straight and bisexual men. The reality that Baldwin found himself primarily attracted to men who wouldn't reciprocate, increased a sense of isolation he fed on and projected in his work. Lucien was his great love and even he was primarily attracted to women. In 1956 Baldwin published his second novel *Giovanni's Room* which traces a tragic affair between two men – a

white American drifter and an Italian bartender amid the bars of postwar Paris. *Giovanni's Room* remains his seminal novelistic exploration of queerness in his world; as well as a stunning evocation of shame shaped by his trials and tribulations of love in Paris. In 1957 he returned to the United States and became an active participant in the civil rights movement that had swept the nation. He befriended major political figures such as Malcolm X, Martin Luther King Jr. and Medgar Evers. He joined the Congress of Racial Equality which allowed him to travel across the South lecturing on his views of racial inequality and became a powerful voice in the movement. His insights into both the North and South gave him an incredibly unique perspective on the racial problems the United States was facing. His essays on the movement were published in major magazines such as *Harpers's*, *The New Yorker*, and *Mademoiselle*. As a writer and public intellectual, James Baldwin liberated the thinking of Black Americans and homosexuals by affirming the humanity of each group with the words that he spoke and wrote. He confronted white America and the time-honored Western World and said "I am not your negro." That phrase, "I am not your Negro," recently became the title of a documentary by Raul Peck, about Baldwin, and Baldwin's famous debate over race and the American Dream with the conservative thinker and celebrity William F. Buckley, Jr. at Cambridge University. When doing research for this article I came across an interview with Baldwin where he was asked by a journalist "When you were starting out as a writer, you were Black, impoverished and homosexual. You must have said to yourself, Gee, how disadvantaged can I get?" Baldwin then said "No, I thought I had hit the jackpot. It was so outrageous, you had to find a way to use it." and he did just that. He was not a one dimensional man but a man who could see the world through different lenses and aspects of his identity. He denounced the presumed fraternity of Black writers, academics, and intellectuals as he wrote in 1959 during his self imposed exile in Paris that he had left America because he wanted to prevent himself from becoming merely "a Negro writer." Although he has become one of the greatest Negro writers of all time, he is also so much more. He has become a writer who captures the grimmest parts of humanity and struggles for a diverse range of readers. He was an articulate witness to the consequences of American racial strife. His success in transposing the discussion of American race relations and sexuality resonates with readers to this day and has forever expanded the American imagination. Baldwin's ability to capture the Black experience and insistence on being inside his subject explains why his writing remains brilliantly alive in the 21st century. In the time of Black Lives Matter and the outrage people of color feel for violence against the African-American community, systemic racism, anti-blackness and so much more; it often mirrors the same struggle and outrage Baldwin was surrounded by in his day. We've renewed attention to the

American Pride

BY: CAMILE NEWMAN

Since being out in Montauk for 5 months, I've noticed countless American flags. It's a town with a conservative streak, but the flag explosion seems new. I've seen them on houses, on flagpoles in town, outside of restaurants—everywhere. Just to emphasize how many flags there are in Montauk, these photos are just the flags I saw on a short 15-minute walk in my neighborhood. There must be dozens more all around Montauk. Now, I don't think it's wrong to have an American flag, because America can represent so many different things (a philosophy of freedom, individualism, democracy) but I do think they run the risk

of being insensitive to the time we're living in (Black Lives Matter movement, racial injustices by police, the COVID-19 pandemic and the president's inability to address it, etc). I also think that flags show a certain pride and desire to emphasize one's support for something—they're showy and purposeful—so when, at a time like this in our country, someone puts up an American flag, it sends a very clear message: I am an American and I don't choose to see how this country has failed certain groups of people and how we've done horrible things, because I will always be loyal and America is great and amazing.



Teachers' Thoughts on Reopening School

BY: MORIUM BEGUM

Fieldston's reopening plan is the product of eight grueling weeks: weeks of dialogue and compromise, weeks of town halls with Ms. Bagby for each representative body, and weeks of shouts and tears amongst colleagues and friends alike. Going back will evoke more than just the nervous butterflies one typically feels while lying in bed and staring at the ceiling the night before school. This year, returning strikes a highly personal chord with members of the school community, each possessing a different perspective on safety, health, and wellness. Complicating this return even more is the lack of uniformity amongst different constituencies within the school. While some educators expressed major concerns about the safety of themselves and the students, others are eager to be back in person. How does a school balance valid safety concerns with an eagerness to return to the physical classroom? How does Fieldston enforce policies when each school has a different in-person plan and each individual in the community has different needs and concerns? To some, including High School math teacher John Kroeger, the hyflex model – so long as it conforms to the necessary safety features – is a logical way for students to transition back into learning and engaging with their peers. In a similar vein, chemistry teacher Judy Cheng adds, "I'm excited about being able to get back to school and meeting with the new group of stu-

dents and am eager to try the hyflex model. I have developed and used some type of blended learning models in my classes at other schools. There are a great deal of advantages to teaching using this model. For example, it allows for more differentiation in the classroom." Although the hyflex model is attractive given the flexibility it offers, other teachers note that it is imperfect. "I don't think this model works during a virus pandemic. While Hyflex reduces the number of students on campus, it still requires faculty to be in school every day, and any gathering carries potential risk. Additionally, having to keep masks on and stay six feet apart makes it difficult to have discussions, do group work, or even talk clearly enough for the people at home to understand," says history teacher Jennifer Kim. These practical and logistical concerns are accompanied by major ethical queries that stakeholders including English teacher Gina Apostol are asking. "My ethical concern is this—we have an ethics curriculum at Fieldston based on considering the effects of our decisions on others... by being in-person we have made a calculated decision to harm. Our mere presence at school makes us complicit in the possible harming of others—since remote learning is the lowest-risk alternative for schools, why are we not taking the lowest-risk alternative? This becomes an ethical question, and our own bodies

in person in school become a living Ethics question. I think that is problematic for students. I do not think we need to be living Ethics questions." Despite all the precautions Fieldston has put into place, Apostol believes that the risk of returning far outweighs the reward and could potentially stand in contrast to Fieldston's foundational values. In anticipation of this hyflex model and the next month of remote learning, almost every teacher has participated in workshops and classes to learn more about effective ways to teach remotely. Fieldston offered various classes including one on current pedagogies from the Klingenstein Center at Columbia, one on neuroscience and remote learning, and one on basic technological tools for online learning. Ranging from participating in webinars and professional development to analyzing the teaching methods of other professionals, teachers have spent their summers working hard to ensure that the return to learning is as smooth as possible. French teacher Melanie Cooper-Leary mentioned that some teachers are varying their strategies and are creating shorter lessons, varied activities, shorter assessments, and even incorporating games to make their lessons more fun. Each department has poured time and effort into adapting their curriculum to the virtual sphere. The science department has spent this summer thinking through ways to bring experiments and labs to the students virtually. Ms. Cheng states, "There are lots of ideas that we learned. I can only speak for the chemistry team. We have been practicing and working out many

activities that involved simulations—like pHet or Gizmo, virtual labs—like Labster and some safe experiments that can be done at home using household chemicals." Additionally, many teachers across departments will be posting their slideshows or lesson plans online, making access easier for students. While teachers did not all share the same view of the hyflex model, they did agree that self-advocacy has never been more important. Mr. Kroger emphasizes, "Different students struggle with different things. In order for me to help them, there needs to be ongoing communication. Make as much use of the teacher as you can. Please do not hesitate to ask questions and please do not feel as if you have to do this alone." All the teachers understand the difficulty of grasping concepts online and are more willing than ever to help students succeed.

Civil Society

By: MAYA THOMPSON

“We either live in civil society or, care, jobs, or housing, civil societies come to racial injustice, hate groups want anything bad connected with we will be convulsed by civil war.” seek to quell unrest. Historically, are again empowered to attack people his leadership. He didn’t want to What does it mean to live in a civil most societies that were once pros- based on their prejudice and racism close schools or business because society? Does it merely mean for a perous ended in ruin because of the toward different groups. As the leader, he didn’t want the economy to society’s citizens to follow the rules leader’s abuse of power. Thinking back the President sets the tone and has not suffer which could mean people and laws set by a government, or to my middle school history class last condemned racist speech or acts of big- wouldn’t vote for him again. He is there a deeper purpose? For the year, which focused on ancient and me- otry that citizens are experiencing in told Americans not to trust what citizens to subscribe to the govern- dieval societies, I remember learning high numbers. It is even more danger- was being reported by journal- ment’s laws, there has to be a belief that certain Chinese emperors lacked ous because his leadership has allowed active racist to feel comfortable with ists, and he made people doubt the that the individual has something the key components that a leader needs their behavior and hate speech. It has advice of the medical community to gain by participating in a civil to efficiently and effectively govern. their behavior and hate speech. It has and scientists. As a result, almost society, an element of self inter- While these emperors understood what also silenced a large majority of the Re- 200,000 Americans have died est When the Civil Rights Move- was required to maintain civility, they publican party concerned with keeping from COVID -19 due to Ameri- ment in the United States included let their ego and desire for recognition their power so they have refused to can’s refusal to act in their own deliberately breaking the commu- get in the way of acting on behalf of speak against the President. They re- best interest simply because of nity’s rules and laws, as a means their citizens. Thus, the dynasties fell. fuse to condemn when he called other the doubt that the President cre- of protest against segregation, the When citizens actively maintain a civil countries s**hole countries, or separat- ated in their minds. He inspires goal was to change the laws to re- society, everyone values each other and ed immigrant families and put kids in recklessness and violence. Citi- flect a more just and fair culture. sees everyone as equal. Civil societies cages, or made fun of disabled people zens in Michigan even came to the The citizens came to understand are not perfect, nor are they without or spoke about pushing a button to kill governor’s office with guns and that this shift would be beneficial conflict. However, when societies are assault rifles because she was lis- to everyone involved; it became civil, it allows marginalized voices to tening to a team of scientists and the society to participate actively. bers. Civil societies recognize that they experts. Essentially, she closed businesses down at the recom- Working towards becoming a civil have to continually evolve, and change mended of scientists, but at the ment society meant that police would for each citizen to feel equally seen ed. It also empowers citizens to take the behest of Trump supporters. The not beat innocent citizens, and in- and heard. Other societies maintain care of themselves and other members Los Angeles Times wrote “While nocent business owners would not conformity by imposing fear and brute of their community since they believe civility in politics has always been have their properties destroyed dur- force on its citizens. This approach is the government is more interested in loosely defined, it has always been ing the riots that were taking place. not ideal, nor is it sustainable from a their own greed and power and not act- the expected norm. Tragically, it Society understood that civil un- leadership perspective. Unfortunate- ing in the best interest of the citizens. is no longer recognized, expected, rest put everyone’s life in jeopardy. ly, we are now living in a time where The COVID-19 pandemic is another and certainly not practiced by the Civil society plays an essential role America is plagued by a narcissistic Trump movement.” We can only in maintaining order and peace in leader who stokes fear in its citizens, hope that people use their power and vote so that the President isn’t communities all around the world. causing the social climate to become and instead, concentrating on what ac- and vote so that the President isn’t Civil societies can examine them- dangerous, unpredictable, and uncivil. tions he should take to ensure he is in allowed to continue to put his selves and work toward ensuring The America we live in is not civil, power for a second term. Even though needs and wants about the people that everybody has what he or she and the effects can be seen in the dual he knew how deadly the virus was, he he was elected to serve. needs to be successful. Whether pandemic our country is facing; CO- decided to lie to the American citizens about what he knew because he didn’t that means good schools, health-VID 19 and racial injustice. When it

The Fire Next Time (cont.)

high-profile deaths of Black Americans during the past decade and ongoing conversation about systemic racism operating through our country’s most powerful institutions. Because of this, it’s vital to revisit Baldwin’s voice and the instruments he’s already given us to navigate such conversations. When discussing Baldwin and his relevance today, Upper School English teacher Michael Morse shared some insight into the English department’s decision to include Baldwin in the curriculum: “So our work this summer includes a department-wide reading of James Baldwin’s *The Fire Next Time*, as the aim is for each of us to start the year with Baldwin’s text. We want to use Baldwin’s work as a lens through which we can consider the skills and content we cover in our

classes. It’s important—as members of a predominantly white department who work with students in all four years of Upper School—to examine our positionality as we reimagine our own centers and curricula as we consciously strive to decenter whiteness and better support our students. Personally, I’m thinking a lot about three cornerstone moments in our nation’s history and responses to those moments: Civil War and Reconstruction, the civil rights movement in the mid-20th-century, and our recent Obama presidency and the Start of the BLM movement. Each of these historical moments has been countered by White Supremacy and calls to protect a kind of illusory “American innocence.” Whether we’re looking locally at our own imperatives from

SOCM or this past summer’s legislation to remove qualified immunity in New York State, or thinking nationally and globally as with this summer’s resurgence of BLM, we can continue to learn from Baldwin’s moments of anger and sorrow and optimism. What might it mean for us as an institution to use Baldwin as a lens to look at what we assign and read in our curricula? We’re facing two pandemics and all-important moments of moral reckoning; Baldwin can help us see how we’ve faced similar moments of moral reckoning and better gauge how we might respond with more empathy and success than we have in the past.” Now is the time to learn from Baldwin’s optimism, realism and strong convictions. He believed it was his duty to remain in touch with young African-Americans and give a voice to

the voiceless. Although he may not have always agreed with everyone in the civil rights movement, he understood the roots of their rage and was able to be respectfully critical. Unlike peers such as Malcolm X, who offered a particular solution to the crisis at hand, Baldwin’s job was to bear witness and chronicle the events that were unfolding. He helped us see the injustices that were taking place more personally and clearly, then left it up to us to draw the conclusions. Let us continue to embrace his words and the valued timely lessons they convey, to help us continue to draw our own conclusions today.

