# The Falmouth Academy Scholarly Journal

Published by
*The Chandlery*

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# Introduction

Where do ideas come from? It's a tough question, but the idea for the Scholarly Journal came from a certain teacher of mine, many years ago, who suggested that perhaps in lieu of science fair upper school students could elect to pursue a long-term research or literature project. This way, students who didn't quite have a handle on, say, linear regression and mold growth would have the chance to demonstrate their other academic strengths before a wider audience. I like to think that part of this idea was born out last year when Maya Peterson and I petitioned Mr. Green for a student newspaper. Now, students who wanted to hone their craft and publish regularly could do so alongside like-minded writers. But Maya and I were fairly clear from the beginning of The Chandlery that we wanted to limit how much academic writing the paper republished. We intended to focus on new, journalistic work.

But there is writing produced daily at Falmouth Academy that deserves some sort of acknowledgement beyond student and teacher, and there are phenomenal writers precluded from writing for The Chandlery by scheduling, athletics, and countless other commitments. And so The Falmouth Academy Scholarly Journal sprang into existence. After emails and announcements, countless late nights, and at least one marathon Zoom call, the Journal's panel of judges gathered twelve essays from eleven of Falmouth Academy's most acute thinkers and writers. Their subjects range from renewable energy to the advent of Christianity to the duplicity of Jordan Baker in *The Great Gatsby*; they reflect the intellectual diversity that the Falmouth Academy classroom inspires, and they demonstrate the marriage of both abstract and technical skill.

At some point this spring it became evident to me that some sort of scholastic competition or publication could be produced by The Chandlery staff and published through the paper's website without being presented as journalism. We're a newspaper of the students, by the students, and for the students, to borrow a brighter man's turn of phrase; publishing the school's best academic work for a wider audience than it could ever have reached before seemed less a desire than a responsibility.

A few words of explanation (and thanks) regarding the actual assembly of the Journal. As most members of the community are aware, the call for academic writing went out to the entire student body in April. Each faculty member in the English and history departments was encouraged to pass on to the Journal's judging panel two or three of their most exceptional student essays (with the permission or encouragement of the writer). Every single faculty member in the Humanities forwarded The Chandlery student essays. For their enthusiasm, excitement, and flexibility, these twelve faculty members have earned my unreserved gratitude.

From all of the compiled writing, a panel of six judges selected the twelve winning essays to be published and developed a list of honorable mentions. These six judges were: Alice Tan '21, Mrs. Monica Hough, Mrs. Julie Swanbeck, former faculty members Mr. Mike Deasy '10 and Mrs. Lalise Melillo, and me. For agreeing, perhaps foolishly, to this end-of-year undertaking, I offer the judges my sincerest thanks.

I would like to return now to where I began: Where do ideas come from? For me, bits and bobs of thought or language have a way of finding their way into my brain and hiding there until I have a chance to connect pen to paper, or thumb to touchscreen. I cannot say if this is the same for other writers. What I can say is that there is no shortage of brilliant ideas at Falmouth Academy, and I think that The Falmouth Academy Scholarly Journal proves exactly that. We can

never underestimate the power of the student writer – be they an aspiring scientist, a journalist at the Chandlery, or the world's next great historian. In reading this first edition of the Scholarly Journal, it is my hope that you learn from what these authors have written and are reminded of the tremendous intellectual force of the student. With any luck, the publication proves popular enough to become a staple of the paper.

And with that, I hope you enjoy the Journal.

Sincerely,

Noah Glasgow '21

Editor-in-Chief, *The Falmouth Academy Chandlery*

# 7th Grade

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English 7: *After reading the novel* <u>Black Ships Before Troy</u> *by Rosemary Sutcliff, seventh graders chose one character from the novel to analyze in a focus paragraph for their English 7 class. Students discussed symbolism, character traits, and/or character development through their writing.*

## Priam's Faith

### By Robert Ronan '26

Despite his kind, caring, and wise nature, Priam's undying faith in the gods alters his typically sensible demeanor. As Priam and Hecuba rejoice in their newborn son, the oracles prophecy that the child will be the quietus of Troy. Priam is overcome with unease and "...bade a servant carry the child out into the wilderness and leave him to die" (3). Confronted with the decision between saving his young son and saving his domain, his intense faith in the gods compels Priam to commit the unthinkable and indirectly attempt to murder his son. His normally level-headed demeanor and conscientiousness stay constant throughout the novel except when he listens to the word of the gods, which he believes to be completely and wholly true. As Achilles prepares to give the body of the great hero Hector to Priam, his father, Priam is visited by the rainbow goddess Iris: "...now he should go to Achilles and offer the proper ransom for his son's body, telling him also that if he did so, Achilles would listen to him" (92). Priam then follows the goddess's instructions and gathers a great ransom of gold. In any other circumstance, Priam's wiseness and wariness would tell him—after seeing Achilles brutally murder and defile the body of his son—to withhold any attempt to regain the corpse of Hector. However, when instructed by a god, he immediately follows the commands as if they were set in stone. Priam's perpetual belief in the Greek gods causes him to commit impulsive acts.

Math 7: *For a Math 7 project, seventh graders were each given $1.5 million dollars to address an existential problem that we face – in our town, community, neighborhood, country, or world. Students were asked to figure out two possible ways that they could use the $1.5 million to solve or begin to solve the issue; they were then asked to compare, using techniques and formulas from class, the effectiveness of their two approaches, and select their favorite.*

**Affordable Housing on Cape Cod**

**By Luke Okoshi-Michel '26**

On Cape Cod, Massachusetts, housing is very expensive as many people want to live here or own a summer house here. This makes it very difficult for people who do not earn a high salary to live on Cape Cod. According to a 2018 report by the Cape Cod Commission, "Housing on Cape Cod: The High Cost of Doing Nothing," "36.4% of homes on the Cape and Islands are seasonal properties and more than half remain vacant for almost the entire year. Of year-round options, 82% of the housing stock available consists of detached single-family homes." Housing prices are high; for example, the median gross monthly rent in Barnstable County was $1,268 from 2014 to 2018. This problem affects low income workers, families that do not have much money to spend, year-round residents, and younger families with children. It also affects senior citizens. This problem needs to be solved because if there are not enough families and people who can afford to live on Cape Cod and work here, many businesses will fail. Cape Cod will also lose year-round residents who work in retail and service jobs, eventually leading to people moving off Cape. Then, Cape Cod will lose families, younger workers, and children. I would like to solve this problem because it impacts the community around me. Also, it is not fair that many people cannot afford to live and work on Cape Cod, even when they work hard at their jobs.

This problem exists on Cape Cod because it is very expensive to live here. It is a desirable place to live as there are many beaches and attractions: "Since the mid-2000s the Cape's housing markets have been impacted by large, uncontrollable macro-economic forces including: the rise of a strong Boston metropolitan economy; the housing market crash of 2009; the retiring baby-boomers being attracted to Cape Cod's beauty; and the Cape's seasonal economy serving long-standing, historic traditions as a vacation destination for generations." It is difficult for people who work on Cape Cod and cannot afford to live here because the housing is overly expensive. This problem affected approximately 4,300 households on Cape Cod and the Islands in 2019. Another study has shown that in 2017, there was a shortage of 4,441 affordable rental-housing units. The lack of affordable housing impacts our community, and funding is needed to help solve this problem.

The first solution for fixing the overpriced housing on Cape Cod is starting a charity. I like this idea because the charity will allow people who have enough money to live on Cape Cod to donate money to the people who cannot afford a house here. If I invest my 1.5 million dollars and I make 3 percent back every year, and assume I receive $10,000 in donations every year, I will make $55,000 in year one. Then if I wait five years without spending any of the money, I will have made $292,002. I will then have $1,792,002 which I will continue to invest. If I continue to make 3 percent every year and receive the $10,000 in donations every year, I will have $2,522,940 at the end of year 15 and will have made $1,022,940. Starting in year 16, I will pick a different family each year that needs the money for housing and they will receive $75,000. Every year, $75,000 will be removed from the fund. The fund will continue to grow because the combined interest and donations will be greater than $75,000. At the end of year 50, I will have helped 35 families. This whole process will go on for many decades and even if I am dead, other

people can take over. I calculate in the year 69, the fund will reach $3,874,565 and I can withdraw $150,000 each year to help two families, each with $75,000, without the fund losing money.

The second solution is to buy land and build miniature houses for people to buy and rent. I like this idea as it allows people to live on Cape Cod even when they do not have the biggest house. First, I would buy three plots of land on Cape Cod. The first is located at 130 Howard Court, Wellfleet, MA, and is 1.38 acres (60,113 sq. ft) and costs $279,000. The second plot of land is located at 41 Dromoland Lane, Barnstable, MA, and costs $159,900 for 1.18 acres x(51,401 sq. ft). The third lot of land is 0 Oak Street, Harwich, MA, and costs $225,999 for 2.94 acres (128,066 sq. ft). The total land price would be $664,899 for 5.5 acres. I would then build Binishell homes on the land. Binishells are small homes developed to be low-cost housing that are made of inflated concrete. They are fast to build, affordable, and structurally resilient. An 890 square foot Binishell home costs $3,500 to build. I estimate that with plumbing, electricity, and additional building costs (landscaping, lighting, sidewalks, mailboxes, and signs), each home will cost $12,000. I also estimate each home will need three times the size of the house (2400 sq. ft) to build on and for sidewalks, parking, and green space. This means I have the land to build 99 Binishell homes, but in order to not overspend, I will initially build 55 homes. This will leave space for future expansion. The total building costs will be $660,000. The larger lot will contain 20 homes and the two smaller lots will each contain 15 homes. The additional funds, $4,899, will be used for any immediate repairs needed to the properties. Each unit at the Howard Court property and the Dromoland property will be sold for $50,000 and will be sold only to people who cannot afford regular housing. Each unit at the Oak Street property will be rented for $800 per month to low-income people. All funds that are made will be used to maintain the properties

and help to develop new ones. I expect 30 new families to be helped each subsequent year by new properties being built on the remaining land or people moving out. I use this value in my analysis.

To compare my solutions, I looked at the impact of the ideas on the number of families who would receive housing. First, at the end of year 1, the charity will have helped 0 families and the Binishells will have helped 55 families, for a difference of 55 families. At the end of year 20, the charity will have helped 5 families and the Binishells will have helped 625 families, for a difference of 620 families. Therefore, more families are helped with the Binishells than by setting up the charity. I calculated the amount of time it would take for 100 families to be provided funding for a house or to have a Binishell available to them.  For the charity, it will take 115 years. For the Binishell, it will take 2.5 years. The ratio of the number of years for the charity to the Binishells is $1150/25 = 46$.  I calculated the amount of money provided to the first family that gets the charity money ($75,000) and the amount of money spent on the first family to get a Binishell: $12,000 plus $12,089 (1/55 of the total cost of the land). The ratio of the amount of the Binishell cost to the charity money = $24,089/$75,000 = 0.32$. We know that we need 4,441 affordable houses. At the end of year 1, the charity will provide 0% new affordable homes. After 20 years, the charity will provide 0.11% of these houses. However, the charity will have $2,579,685 in its investments which will continue to grow in value. At the end of year 1, the Binishells will provide 1.2% of the new affordable homes needed. At the end of year 20, the Binishells will provide 14.1% of the needed affordable houses. However, all of the money will have been spent in year 1, so the Binishells will not have a huge reserve of money like the charity. Nevertheless, the comparison of the math suggests that the Binishells is the better solution for providing faster housing.

To solve the problem of lack of affordable housing on Cape Cod, I chose the Binishells because I want to have a place that many people can live in for a low price. I also chose this because I can offer almost immediate relief to the housing problem. The Binishells will provide a sense of community for people and a unique place for people to live. I can help many people quickly with this approach. In year one, I can help 55 families with the building of the Binishells. This increases to 325 families at the end of 10 years and to 625 at the end of 20 years. Binishells will be an excellent way to have tiny homes for families, enabling them to stay living on Cape Cod. This solution will help us to not lose families on Cape Cod. I can also see other communities following this model and building Binishells.

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Humanities: *In Humanities, the 7th graders learned about the great Mesoamerican civilizations of pre-Colombian America. Students chose to focus their individual studies on either the Maya, the Inca, or the Aztec people. In their papers, students were instructed to discuss details about the native people and their architecture during the time period.*

## The Inca Empire: The Most Impressive Empire to the Conquistadors

### By Faye McGuire '26

The Inca tribe was an impressive civilization with complex and modern systems of farming, taxation, and architecture. Nomadic farmers started using Inca territory for agriculture around 2500 BC, and many small tribes rose and fell throughout the next two and a half thousand years, the Chavin being the longest-reigning tribe. The Inca empire rose to power around 1200 AD and remained in power until their last emperor was beheaded by the Spanish in 1572; however, the "Golden Age" of the Inca civilization was considered 1200 - 1490.[1] The Inca territory ranged from the southern Amazon rainforest down to the northern Andes mountains on the western coast of South America, but most of the wealthy cities were in the Andes mountains, including the famous Machu Picchu.[2] Spanish conquistadors were impressed with the Inca civilization more than they were impressed by the Aztecs or Maya civilizations. Ranging from well-arranged taxation systems to beautiful architecture and immense wealth, the Inca civilization was by far the most impressive ancient empire to outsiders, as stated by many accounts of European explorers.

The Inca empire came to power in 1200 AD, but small nomadic tribes had farmed the land since 2500 BC. The culture of the Inca developed in this period, as did their style of

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[1] Technological Solutions, Inc. "Inca Empire: Timeline." Ducksters. Last modified 2020. Accessed December 11, 2020. https://www.ducksters.com/history/inca/timeline_of_the_inca_empire.php.
[2] Jarus, Owen, and Yasemin Saplakoglu. "The Inca Empire." Live Science. Last modified November 5, 2018. Accessed December 11, 2020. https://www.livescience.com/41346-the-incas-history-of-andean-empire.html.

architecture. From 1200-1400 AD, the Inca civilization lived in and around the city of Cuzco and made no attempts to conquer other lands outside of their territory. For nearly 250 years, the Inca civilization was peaceful and their wealth was slowly growing, as were their cities and towns. However in 1525, the emperor died and his sons, Atahualpa and Huascar, fought for the throne for five years, creating a civil war that spread across Peru. The forces of the Inca were weakened during the war and when Atahualpa eventually defeated Huascar in 1532, they were at their weakest. If the Spanish had not come exactly when the Inca were recovering from a war, things may have played out differently, but when Francisco Pizarro went to the city square and captured Atahualpa, the forces were not prepared for war. In 1533, the last emperor of the Incas was executed by Spanish conquistadors.[3]

The religion of the Incas was polytheistic, with a main god called Pachacuti who was allegedly the creator of all things good, evil, living, and magical, and many other gods in addition to him. To please their many gods, the Incas did sacrifice animals and humans, but not nearly as much as the infamous Aztecs did. In their calendar, there were twelve months with thirty days in each month, and each month there was a specific festival to honor one of the gods.[4] In the duration of the strictly performed festivals, there would be sacrifices made by priests, and emperors would overlook the sacrifices. The emperor reigned until his death and then his firstborn son took his place, assuming the role of the Sapa Inca, who controlled the taxation systems and played other important government roles. The Sapa Inca was also in charge of all law enforcement and decided the punishment of a misbehaving citizen. Sometimes this punishment could be public service, public shaming, or even death.[5] However, the Incas were

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[3] Technological Solutions, Inc. "Inca Empire: Timeline." Ducksters.
[4] Jarus, Owen, and Yasemin Saplakoglu. "The Inca Empire." Live Science.
[5] History.com. "Pizarro Executes Last Inca Emperor." History. Last modified August 2020. Accessed December 15, 2020. https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/pizarro-executes-last-inca-emperor#:~:text=Atahuallpa%2C%20the%2013th%20and%20last,300%20years%20of%20Inca%20civilization

mostly peaceful, and almost eighty percent of all Incas worked as either farmers or laborers in the fields and grew staple crops such as potatoes, quinoa, squash, beans, and corn.[6] They also farmed and ate llamas and guinea pigs, and sacrificed them to their gods. Women stayed home and cooked, cleaned, and sewed. Boys worked in the fields with their fathers, or learned their father's trade, and girls stayed home to learn how to be housewives. Most girls were married off by the time they turned twelve and had their first child at around thirteen or fourteen, to a man that was ten to fifteen years older than them.[7] The Incas accomplished an impressive tally of achievements, including stonework, roads, bridges, and irrigation systems.[8]

The Spanish conquistadors were more impressed with the Inca civilization's wealth and prosperity than that of any other Central American civilization, especially given the state of Spain at the time of the conquest. One Spanish account of the civilization stated that, " …the Incas had temples of the Sun, mints, and many silversmiths who did nothing but work rich pieces of gold or fair vessels of silver … accounting of everything that was brought in."[9] This account of the Inca civilization indicates a Spanish conquistador that was impressed and perhaps jealous or even intimidated by the sheer wealth of the Inca civilization. The Spanish could not help but realize that this tribe was far richer than Spain's monarchy.

The Spaniards were much less technologically advanced than the Incas. One example (of which there were many) was the irrigation and plumbing system of the Incas, where they used pressure and advanced math to transport water at the most efficient rate. The Spanish used less advanced math and hence had less efficient and less hygienic water management systems.

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[6] Jarus, Owen, and Yasemin Saplakoglu. "The Inca Empire." Live Science.
[7] Jarus, Owen, and Yasemin Saplakoglu. "The Inca Empire." Live Science
[8] WordPress. "Achievements of the Incas." Discover Peru.
http://www.discover-peru.org/achievements-of-the-incas/#:~:text=The%20Incas%20were%20magnificent%20engin
eers,to%20secure%20unlimited%20manual%20labor.
[9] Halsall, Paul. "Pedro de Cieza de Léon: Chronicles of the Incas, 1540." Internet History Sourcebooks. Last modified July 1998. Accessed December 16, 2020. https://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/mod/1540cieza.asp.

Blueprints of construction projects in Spain show math identical to that of the Incas, but only after the Spanish returned with new concepts.[10]

Furthermore, European sewage systems were unhygienic and massive spreaders of disease. The Incas barely encountered that issue, using the same knowledge of physics to breeze past any problems. The Spanish took note of this, and stated in an account that, "Inca cities were as large as those of Europe but more orderly and by all accounts much cleaner and more pleasant places in which to live."[11] In Spain, sometimes there would be sewage leaks, since the systems had been hastily constructed in a matter of hours, and there would be contents of the system all over the road. The Inca never had that issue, because the systems were meticulously planned and constructed out of limestone. They were then buried underground and diverted into a large body of water where the sewage could circulate out of.[12] In addition to that, the conquistador that wrote this also said "orderly." The central government of the Inca was a dictatorship, but a functioning one. Communism was also used, and despite the modern negative connotations with the use of it, modern historians mostly agree that it worked flawlessly. All crops and products of the Inca empire were exported to Cuzco, the main city of the empire. The emperor used *quipus* to keep track of "every kernel of corn that entered his palace" and to attend to any settlements that were not producing enough, and ones that were producing over the needed quota.[13] Two thirds of the crops and animal produce were redistributed fairly, using information from the conducted census and the remaining one third was evenly split between sacrifices to the gods and feeding the emperor and his court.

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[10] WordPress. "Achievements of the Incas." Discover Peru.
[11] Halsall, Paul. "Pedro de Cieza de Léon: Chronicles of the Incas, 1540." Internet History Sourcebooks.
[12] WordPress. "Achievements of the Incas." Discover Peru.
[13] Halsall, Paul. "Pedro de Cieza de Léon: Chronicles of the Incas, 1540." Internet History Sourcebooks.

Another impressive attribute of the Incas was their immense wealth, but they had no concept of the value of their wealth. When Atahualpa met Francisco Pizarro for the first time, he arrived with an entourage of two hundred lords in waiting, all of them wearing bronze chest plates, gold and jade jewelry, and macaw feathers.[14] They called a meeting at a Spanish campground, and that time Atahualpa arrived with 5,000 servants, but the Spanish were prepared for a massacre with an impressive mix of 8,000 soldiers and Incas revolting against the Sapa Inca. The Incas did not seek violence but soon after they arrived, they were massacred by the thousands by angry conquistadors. Atahualpa was kidnapped and convicted, and sentenced to death unless he paid a large sum of money. Immediately, he offered a large compensation of two full rooms of silver and one of gold. The sheer wealth and incomprehension of the wealth of the Inca civilization was reflected here, with Atahualpa giving away his riches to the Spanish.[15] The Spanish ignored the compensation and still sentenced him, and when he was strangled, "5 pounds of gold, bronze, and silver to only expose his neck enough to properly execute him".[16] They did this to make him appear vulnerable and weak, but even at the end of his life he was killed in a richly decorated and meticulously maintained plaza.

Ranging from well-arranged taxation systems to beautiful architecture and immense wealth, the Inca civilization was the most impressive civilization to outsiders, as stated by many European accounts of the experiences that explorers recorded throughout the empire. The Incas were also a peaceful people, and did not immediately resort to violence, which would not be viewed as very welcoming by the Spanish. This criterion effectively excludes the Aztecs, who

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[14] Historycentral. "Capture of an Inca King: Francisco Pizarro from Narrative of the Conquest of Peru, by his secretary, Francisco de Xeres, 1530-34 [Pizarro sends for Atahualpa.]" History Central. Last modified 2020. Accessed December 15, 2020. https://www.historycentral.com/documents/pizzaro.html.

[15] Historycentral. "Capture of an Inca King: Francisco Pizarro from Narrative of the Conquest of Peru, by his secretary, Francisco de Xeres, 1530-34 [Pizarro sends for Atahualpa.]" History Central.

[16] Historycentral. "Capture of an Inca King: Francisco Pizarro from Narrative of the Conquest of Peru, by his secretary, Francisco de Xeres, 1530-34 [Pizarro sends for Atahualpa.]" History Central.

were known as a war-hungry tribe. The Mayas, on the other hand, were less violent to outsiders, but had internal conflict that led to weak forces. They attempted communism, but the government did not execute it properly, and it caused more civil unrest within the city-states. These attributes also exclude the Maya from being the most impressive to the Spanish, as they appeared disorganized. In conclusion, it is quite evident that this applies to the Incas better than the Maya or Aztec because of their smoothly functioning government, the lack of iron tools to construct beautiful architecture and roads, and among other things their calculations that rivaled those of advanced physicists of Spain, which were all recorded in glowing summaries of the tribe by the Spanish.

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Atahuallpa%2C%20the%2013th%20and%20last,300%20years%20of%20Inca%20civiliz ation.

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# 8th Grade

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English 8: *During the spring semester, the 8th grade English classes finished William Golding's* Lord of the Flies *and were tasked with writing a paper that explored his use of symbolism. Tracking symbols like the conch, the beast, fire, and darkness, the students discussed how one symbol progressed throughout the novel, or how two different symbols compared and/or contrasted with each other.*

## The Fuel of Savagery and Bloodlust

### By Jackson Gierhart '25

When British school boys without background are stranded on an uninhabited island, will they give into their inner primal instincts and true nature, or stay civilized as they were taught by adults? The fear of an unknown being lurking on the island and hunting them fuels a darkness the boys unlock by succumbing to a primal and brutal lifestyle full of merciless, bloody hunting. In *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding, darkness grows in the boys and causes chaos, decay and hatred for one another, making them commit cruel and savage actions without suffering any sort of consequence.

Darkness is connected to corruption, especially in barbaric actions performed by the boys on the island. As time progresses, the boys lose their civilized knowledge and instincts by being consumed by darkness the island holds. In the beginning of Chapter 4, the sun is shining brightly, creating mirages in the air. As the day progresses slowly and sluggishly, the boys move around the beach without motivation: "When the sun sank, darkness dropped on the island like an extinguisher, and soon the shelters were full of restlessness, under the remote stars" (58-59).

The island may be a beautiful and bright place, but once the sun sets, all of the developed safety disappears with a sense of fear lingering in the air. The darkness counters all light and lets

the beasts loose on the limitless imagination of the boys. Their fear is created by the curiosity about what lurks in the dark. When all the littl'uns are playing on the beach, Jack stands under a tree watching Roger, one of the older boys: "When Roger opened his eyes and saw him, a darker shadow crept beneath the swarthiness of his skin" (62). Many boys let go of the few civilized traits they had and instead give into the primitive nature of the island. Roger seems innocent but is hiding the darkness that lives in him. All the chaotic and savage disagreements are caused by this inner darkness along with the fear of what is lurking on the island at night, when there is no protection.

As the book progresses, so does the chaotic and destructive murk known as darkness. It possesses the boys and creates violent savages that kill away their problems with no remorse. It also is the origin of the beast, a being of decay and disorder, that tears the boys and their beliefs in two. When Simon heads down the mountain top with news for the boys, he reaches the beach where everyone stands, dancing and chanting around a fire. Simon appears out of the dark forest, is immediately tackled, and "at once the crowd surged after it, poured down the rock, leapt on to the beast, screamed, struck, bit tore. There were no words, and no movements but the tearing of teeth and claws" (153). In the dark the boys ambush the first sign of what they assume is the beast. Many of the boys have given into the obsessive superstitions about the beast that follows and hunts them, and when they find it, they claw and destroy without any thought. They are violent and impulsive because they have let the darkness unleash a being of destruction and inhumanity. The cold and eerie force fuels the worshipping of an imaginary beast that threatens the boy's existence on the island.

When the two boys Ralph and Piggy approach Jack and his Castle Rock of savages, they argue and fight for what they believe is the right thing. Piggy tries to stand up but is laughed at

by the other savages. He is then attacked: "The storm of sound beat at them, an incantation of hatred. High overhead, Roger, with a sense of delirious abandonment, leaned all his weight on the lever" (180), triggering an avalanche and killing Piggy. Darkness causes all of the savages to side with Jack, the extremely corrupted and cruel chief. However, Roger is the possessed one, obsessed with killing and torturing the others. He gives into his primal instincts, overrun with a violent, bloody lifestyle. Darkness is like the cold and forbidden source of evil, decay and hatred. Giving into it makes the boys grow loathsome to each other. Darkness causes all of the destruction on the island as it has possessed and overrun the boys' thoughts and actions.

When left on an island without any influence of civilization or adults, British school boys embrace their inner primal nature and hunting instincts. A cold lingering feeling makes the boys wary of what is lurking behind them, hunting in the dark. Their fear of darkness is the cause of savage and barbaric actions, thirsty for blood and pain. The darkness takes over the boys' thoughts and actions causing them to kill and go to war with each other. But does killing satisfy the darkness or does it need more from them? The darkness destroys the boys and their personalities, tearing them apart without mercy. Even when the boys are separated, destruction prevails, taking lives in the process. Innocent boys turn into savages that tortue their allies, enjoying the pain in others. Chaos is all over the island, in the tall mountains and in the trees below. The cold and chaotic force fuels the boys' embrace of their new primitive instincts to kill and bloodily hunt.

English 8: *A celebrated tradition for almost twenty years, Declamation Day is the culmination of 8th grade English at FA. Exploring topics of interest or personal significance, students are expected to memorize an English passage of their choosing and on the day in question "declaim" that passage before an audience of their peers and family. In preparation, students write an essay analyzing their passages as both works of literature and stepping stones to self discovery.*

## Declamation Day Essay: "Breathe"

### By Lucia Gomez-Ibanez '25

In the musical *In The Heights* by Lin-Manuel Miranda, the character Nina takes the stage, alone, to sing about how she has lost her scholarship and has to drop out of college. She is terrified to tell her parents the devastating news. Of the Latinos who did drop out of college in 2009, seventy-four percent did because they needed to support their family, thirty-nine percent because they couldn't afford school, and twenty percent because their grades weren't high enough. Nina is the first in her family to enroll in college, just like fifty percent of other Latino students enrolled in college today.

*In the Heights* doesn't have one main character. It tells the story of a vibrant immigrant community in New York City. Among these stories, Nina tells her own. Her story is about her childhood, about showing her family and friends that hard work pays off and it's possible to go farther. She speaks about how she amazed everyone by getting a scholarship to Stanford University and being the pride and joy of the whole neighborhood, but she realizes that her family and friends' unfaltering confidence wasn't well placed when she starts to struggle in college. It was harder than she thought, and Nina feels as if she has let everyone down when she loses her scholarship and her confidence as well. She takes a moment of quiet to breathe before telling her parents and friends about the struggles she hasn't dared mention. I think that everyone

here, myself included, has probably felt unable to live up to high expectations, whether set by themself or someone else. Lin-Manuel Miranda's lyrics reveal this common feeling.

Nina's strongest feeling at this moment is failing and disappointment in herself. She feels like "the biggest disappointment you know." When she left for college, the others' strong belief in Nina motivated her, but suddenly everyone's high expectations seem stifling, especially when she realizes she can't live up to them. The stress is hard to deal with, especially if there is no plausible way out. She can't go back to Stanford; her parents would never be able to afford it. Telling them the bad news would be a big blow to the high hopes of her family and her belief in herself. She struggles with the anticipation of disappointing her family and community in Washington Heights, when she says she was the "First to go to college/How do I tell them why/I'm coming back home?" Growing up, she was always the highest achiever and her community pinned their hopes on her. They hoped that she would go farther and be able to make a life for herself, a life without the family taxi business. Struggling with the high expectations from her community, she feels like she's failed and let them down.

I can definitely relate to the feeling of not being able to live up to high expectations, especially those set by myself. Sometimes I feel like it's not worth doing something unless I can do it perfectly. This sentiment is expressed in *In The Heights* when Nina says, "I am the one who made it out/The one who always made the grade/But maybe I should have just stayed home…" I am also a perfectionist. I can't say that about all the things that I do, but it is definitely true in school. Even in preschool, my teachers remarked on my long attention span and my tendency to continue working at an activity long after the other children had lost interest and left. I couldn't stop, even as a toddler, until I had done my best and it had met my standards. Now, at FA, I still do my best, maybe even too much. I'm a good student, but I understand that it's not a good

mindset to believe that any grade below an "A" is bad. However, I still have this standard for myself. One of the reasons I chose this song is because of this understandable feeling: "Can I go in there and say/I know that I'm letting you down…" I love this song, and not only because it is good musically (of course Lin-Manuel Miranda is a talented artist and the lyrics and music are well written) but because the emotions in the song resonate.

Disappointment is a major emotion in this song, as Nina struggles with living up to the many expectations set by herself and others. She worries that she's failed and let everyone down. I sometimes feel the same way, worrying that I can't achieve what I think I should be able to. As Nina struggles with the high expectations set by herself and her community, she reveals a sentiment that is familiar to many people.

# 9th Grade

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Western Civilization I: *In Western Civilization I, 9th grade students were assigned to complete an analytical paper that traced the improbable rise of Christianity from a local movement led by a poor, radical Jewish preacher to a powerful institution and worldwide religion.*

**The Rise of Christianity**

**By Gus McGuire '24**

Jesus of Nazareth, by most accounts born in about 4 B.C.E, was a Jewish revolutionary preacher, who traveled the area around Galilee, in the eastern Mediterranean, spreading his message of love, unity, and the afterlife overseen by the one God, to the existing Jewish congregations in the area.  In 30 or 33 C.E. Jesus was put to death by crucifixion by the Roman governor of the province, Pontius Pilate, for preaching messages that went against the practice and convention of the existing conservative Jewish and Roman authorities.  His work in establishing the following of his teachings during his life, however, is not sufficient to explain the unprecedented growth of the Jesus movement, which would eventually become Christianity, over the next three centuries. Instead, the explanation for this expansion rests on four other major factors. The attractiveness of Jesus's message, the actions of Paul to spread this message, the sacrifices of the martyrs, and the political support from Constantine all served the dual purposes of assisting with the expansion of the movement to new members as well as strengthening the existing institution and community of the religion. Each of these factors, especially the official endorsement of the religion by Constantine, contributed to the rise of the Christian movement into the position of such prominence that it enjoyed in the Roman social structure, in a relatively short time.

Jesus's message, the foundation upon which the Jesus movement, and later Christianity, were built and developed contained the basic principles of equality, love, and connection to God that made the movement attractive to so many of the citizens of the Roman empire. Central to Jesus's message was the concept of immortality in the form of a universal afterlife. According Harvard Divinity School Professor Helmut Koester, "[the message] promised also immortality, a future life which would be liberation from sickness and from disease and from poverty, and individual isolation. There is a future for the individual." Because so many of the citizens of the Roman Empire, the people whom Jesus would have been preaching to, were poor, in the bottom of the unequal Roman social structure, the idea of an eternal afterlife where they would be freed from the hardships of this world possessed great appeal. Additionally, this afterlife was open to all people, not just from the whole range of the Roman socioeconomic and political hierarchy, but also from any religion. Both Jews and Gentiles could ascend to the afterlife if they put their faith in the teachings and message of Jesus.

The second major aspect of Jesus's message was equality. As Princeton University Professor Elaine Pagels states: "...this religion is saying that every person, man, woman, child, slave, barbarian, no matter who, is made in the image of God, and is therefore of enormous value in the eyes of God." This belief sharply contrasts with the existing structure of Roman religion at the time, where the gods were modeled after the emperors and aristocrats, and where the vast majority of people did not see themselves as connected personally to those gods.  This connection between God and the simple man is a powerful appeal of the religion, and was later expanded upon by the belief that God was manifested as Jesus, a peasant, very similar to the many of the common people of Rome.

The third foundational pillar of Jesus's message was his teaching of love for others. According to Professor Koestor, "Moreover, the commandment of love is decisive. That is, the care for each other becomes very important." The members of the Jesus movement were outliers in the social and religious structure of Rome, and because of this, the sense of community within the movement was valued highly, and Jesus's teaching reflected the need for unity and love. This love for others is more than an idea or a principle, though it is both of those things, and is really the driving force for the creation of an ever-growing community, united by the lessons of caring for and helping others, that would help the Jesus movement gain traction. The message that Jesus of Nazareth sought to bring to the Roman world was one of love and unity, as well as a more personal connection to God, and its attractiveness was one of the primary factors in the spread of the Jesus movement.

Paul the Apostle's work spreading the message of Christianity contributed to its growth from a small movement centered in Judea to a broader network spanning many of the cities of the eastern Mediterranean. Paul altered and smoothed the path of conversion to the religion, letting it appeal to a broader range of people, while still maintaining continuity between the individual congregations through his letters. During the the first century C.E., in the early years of the Christian movement, Paul, formerly Saul of Tarsus, had a divine vision in which he saw the ascended Jesus, changed his name to Paul, and began traveling across the eastern half of the Roman empire to spread the message of Jesus.

The primary method that Paul used to so effectively spread his message was traveling to cities, and according to Yale University Professor Wayne Meeks, "He is a person who is somehow a city person, and he sees that cities are the key to the rapid spread of this new message." Due to the Roman view that the city is the center of the surrounding area, for both

commerce and culture, people frequently passed between the major cities and the nearby towns, and Paul was able to capitalize on this movement of people, and bring the message of Jesus's teachings to the most people using a hub-and-spoke method.  All it took was to establish a single congregation, even with with only a handful of followers of the Christian movement, in any city, and the flow of people in and out of the city the city would carry with it the knowledge of the new movement to nearby towns, where a new community might be founded, allowing Paul to expose a large number of  people to Christianity within a relatively short time frame.

Another contribution Paul made to the spread of the Jesus movement was in his efforts to aid conversion to the new movement. As University of Texas Professor L. Michael White states, "But apparently it's among Paul and some of his close supporters that they began to think that it was okay to become a member of the Christian movement without going through all of those rites of conversion to Judaism." In order to further increase the number of people who might join the Jesus movement, it was imperative to appeal to the gentiles, the majority of the population, as well as the Jews, and one method to achieve that was to find a way that a person could bypass the Jewish religion, with its practical roadblocks to admission, including circumcision and dietary restrictions, and become a Christian directly.  By allowing baptism to substitute as a ritual of admission into the Jesus movement, Paul was able to allow significantly easier access to the Christian religion for a vast amount of the Roman population, letting the movement spread even more quickly, and to more places that did not have a significant Jewish population, as it could now pull from a larger pool of potential members.

Paul also contributed to the connectivity of the early Christian movement. As Professor Meeks writes, "The primary impact he left on Christianity after him is through his letters." Paul's letters were used to instruct new and expanding congregations on the understanding of the

Christian movement and allowed him to coordinate the development of the religion across the

Roman empire without requiring his presence. The multitude of letters allows differences in the

interpretation of the movement to be addressed, and keeps Christianity from dissolving into

localized groups, as well as providing a central base of information and ideas from which to

expand on. Paul's contributions to the expansion and organization of the early Christian

movement in the first century C.E. allowed it to continue developing into a major religion in the

Roman empire.

The martyrs, devout followers of the Christian movement who went to their deaths for

refusing to denounce their religion to the courts, contributed to the growth of the religion by

inspiring the conversion of many gentiles to Christianity.  The martyrdoms of early Christianity

occurred in the the second and third century C.E., spanning a significant time period in which the

status of the Christians transition from outliers in Roman society, being locally and occasionally

persecuted, to declared enemies of the Roman Empire, having the full police and judicial force of

the empire leveraged against them, and only ending with Constantine's declaration of tolerance

for Christians in the early fourth century. After being given the opportunity to sacrifice to the

Roman gods, the Christians who refused were sent to their deaths, and according to the historians

Dennis Sherman and Joyce Sailsbury, "When Christian men and women were brought to the

arena, many died so bravely that some Roman spectators promptly converted."  In the case of the

martyrs, execution was a public event, and often occurred in the arena in addition to other

spectacles, allowing for a large segment of the population to be present at their deaths, increasing

the potential for members of the audience to convert to the Christian religion. In the event that

spectators were so moved by the martyrs' devotion to their religion that they decided to join the

movement on the spot, the martyrdoms served the dual purposes of proving that the person being

martyred cared immensely about the teachings of the Christian faith, and believed in the concept of the afterlife to the extent that they were willing to die for it, as well as continuing to grow the Christian community with the inclusion of the new members. The scale and number of the martyrdoms, however, is not equivalent to their effect on the religion. As Professor Meeks states, "We don't have tens of thousands of people being martyred. What we do have, is tens of thousands of people admiring the few who were martyred." While it is likely that tens of thousands of people were martyred in the name of Christianity, and potentially even more than a hundred thousand, the portion of the members of the Christian movement who were volunteering to be martyred was not a majority, or anywhere near such a quantity, as it would not be sustainable within the religion, or helpful to the growth of Christianity, for there to be a large number of the most devout Christians dying every year. Instead, the effect of the deaths of the martyrs was multiplied by the large numbers of spectators in arenas, and then again by the even larger number of people their stories could reach and inspire, within both the gentile and Christian populations.

One of the notable martyrs of third century Christianity was Perpetua. Boston University Professor Paula Fredricksen claims, "Perpetua is really being preserved by her community as a role model. She marks off the heroic limit against which other Christians can measure themselves." Her death may have had immediate effects on gentiles in the crowd, but her long standing contribution to Christianity was as a figure that other Christians, existing members of the movement and those who had just converted, could look up to and see as the epitome of spiritual height and devotion to the Christian faith, even if they themselves were not likely to emulate her self-sacrifice.

Within the existing Christian community, there was likely an aspect to the significance of martyrdom in how closely it resembled the actions of Jesus, the most important single figure in Christianity, as he was the very first of the martyrs. The martyrs who died in the name of loyalty to Christianity helped strengthen and grow the Christian religion by providing inspiration and a heroic ideal to look up to for both gentiles, soon to convert to the movement, and existing Christians.

Constantine's support of the Christian religion contributed to its unprecedented growth by ending the persecution of Christians, and financially and politically supporting the movement. Constantine, who ruled the Roman empire from 306 to 337 C.E., began to support Christianity after he had a vision of the chi-rho, a symbol that represents Jesus Christ, rising in the sun, and then a dream where he was told that his army would only succeed in battle if they fought under this sign. His soldiers painted the symbol on their shields, and won a decisive victory at the Battle of Milvian Bridge in 312 C.E., and, believing there to be great significance in his vision, issued a decree of toleration for the Christians, the Edict of Milan, in 313 C.E. This was his first major act in support of Christianity, as Dennis Sherman and Joyce Sailsbury write, "Constantine did more than simply tolerate Christians. He actively supported the church."

All forward movement started with the end of the systematic persecution of Christians that had begun under the emperor Decius, allowing the people of the Christian religion, now a huge community, spread out across the entirety of the empire, to be assimilated with the rest of the population. From the outset, the Christians had gone against the social order of Roman life, since they did not participate in the pagan religious culture, which was so closely connected to the civic and political world, but now, the Christians were able to go about their own religion without threat of being dragged into court for not sacrificing to the gods of the Roman Empire.

In addition to supporting the religion's legal status, Constantine threw his financial weight behind it. According to Dennis Sherman and Joyce Sailsbury, "Under Constantine's patronage, the Christian movement grew rich and powerful." Constantine funded the construction of new churches, as well as removing financial support from some pagan temples and shrines, signalling the beginning of the slow swing of Christianity into the position of a major religion throughout the empire.  Having the power of the emperor behind the Christian movement was the single most important step in the rapid growth of Christianity, allowing it to transform from a minority religion that was persecuted by the empire, to, in time, the majority, and then ultimately official, religion in the Roman Empire.  The political connection between Christianity and the empire was also forged by Constantine. As Dennis Sherman and Joyce Sailsbury state, "Constantine's support of Christianity throughout his life established a relationship between church and state that moved Christianity in a new direction."

As Christianity started replacing the older pagan religion on a large scale, it was necessary to recreate the close link between the government and religion that had been present with paganism, in order for the government to stay in control. The final form of this replacement would not come until 395 C.E., with the Edict of Thessalonica, but the groundwork was laid by Constantine's support of the Christian religion.  Constantine's actions to end the persecution of Christians and support the religion allowed it to grow from a minority at odds with the government, to a powerful religion integrated into the Roman Empire.

The four major factors that contributed to the growth of early Christianity were all central to the movement's unprecedented popularity and expansion of influence. From the first through third centuries C.E., these included the basic principles of Jesus's teachings, Paul the Apostle's work to bring the message to many of the cities of the eastern Roman empire, the self-sacrifice of

the martyrs, and the financial and political endorsement of the religion by Constantine. Additionally, each of these factors also played a role in keeping together and unifying the existing community, through providing a universal and long-standing message, organizing the independent communities, providing inspiration and a heroic ideal that people could look up to, and allowing the further proliferation of the religion through its solidification, respectively. Without any one of these factors, it is unlikely that Christianity would have experienced growth on such a large scale, or if it did, in such a relatively short time frame. The Christian church became the official religion of the Roman Empire, and lasted well past the Empire's fall, driving the decisions and actions of many individuals and world powers in the next two millennia, and still remaining as an intact and thriving force to this day.

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# 10th Grade

Western Civilization II: *In their Western Civilization II class, 10th graders researched and created an argument about a topic of their choice for a spring semester assignment. This essay discusses the benefits of dance.*

## The Mental and Physical Benefits of Regular Dance

### By Julia Mele '23

Mental health is a serious issue in modern day society. The organization Mental Health America writes, "Nearly 1 in 5 American adults will have a diagnosable mental illness and 46% will meet the criteria to have a diagnosed condition, and half of those people will already have it by age 14."[17] Dance is a very popular activity for students. In fact, the dance industry in America increased by 4.6% in 2020. Dance brings a healthy lifestyle by keeping people active, helping them express emotions in a healthy way and providing more opportunities for socialization. Maintaining a regular dance routine contributes to positive mental health, expression, memory growth, and social confidence.

There are not just mental health benefits but also an abundance of physical benefits, which go hand in hand with a person's overall well-being. Going to dance classes will increase the dancer's physical activity and produce endorphins through healthy methods. People that struggle with depression are experiencing a lack of serotonin, which can be overcome when they increase activity and produce endorphins. Genni Abilock, the author of *Benefits of Dance on Mental Health*, states that, "a growing number of researchers have proven that, while dancing, an abundance of mood-improving chemicals are released within the body of the dancer… when unleashed, these chemicals help improve one's mental state; even one "lively" session of dance

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[17] (Mental Health America, Quick Facts and Statistics about Mental Health, 2020)

can reduce depression."[18] Dance can improve mood chemically in the brain when the body is being put in action. Doctors suggest that people should have at least 30 minutes of exercise a day to be healthy, so making a consistent schedule of even just one dance class a day can boost a person's mood and overall well-being. Through keeping active and immersing yourself in something enjoyable, it will influence overall happiness.

Stressors of school work and social media are constantly triggering emotions, and there is little time in our current environment to be present without the influence of technology. People who take dance classes have a guaranteed hour or more to express themselves and their feelings through something they enjoy. Anxiety is something that plagues many people who struggle with social interaction, such as holding a steady conversation without feeling awkward. Iris Bräuninger explains this well: "To see someone dance is to witness release, self-expression, and often, joy. For many of those reasons, many therapists who treat anxiety are finding that dance has the potential to act as an effective treatment for anxiety."[19] It can be a freeing experience to let go of any other worries that are being dealt with outside of the studio, so that people only have to focus on what is happening in the moment. Dancing can be an outlet because it does not require any talking or anything else that could cause pressure. People can express their emotions through their body and show their strengths without pressure. It can also help people feel comfortable in an environment with other people. Dance is the perfect environment for people who struggle expressing themselves naturally.

Since most dance classes require learning steps and combinations, there is potential to challenge people mentally. This can create a growth in memory and give dancers opportunities to learn different ways to memorize. People that have difficulty keeping attention, such as those

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[18] (Abilock, Benefits of Dance on Mental Health, 2020)
[19] (Bräuninger, Dance Movement Therapy, 2016)

with attention deficit hyperactive disorder (ADHD), could benefit greatly from dance classes. Adrianna Mendrek states, "Dance typically involves learning sequences of steps and movements in space, in coordination with music. It requires substantial physical and cognitive engagement and, as such, it should improve not only muscle tone, strength, balance and coordination, but also memory, attention and visuospatial processing."[20] Dance classes will help students learn how to engage themselves in what they are being taught and make sure that they are paying attention, because they will have to demonstrate what they learned later. Dancers become very acquainted with being able to watch and analyze what they are taught so that they can understand how to do moves on their own. After being challenged in the studio, dancers' minds will have gained a skill in memorizing and comprehending new information.

Due to struggles like social anxiety and depression, some people are not as skilled in talking and socializing with other people. When people immerse themselves in new communities, they have more opportunities to make new friends and mingle with new people. When people make new friends, they feel connected and happier because they feel included in a social situation that they might not be presented with elsewhere. Abilock writes about this: "dancing alongside other dancers 'lights up brain pathways,' which break down the invisible walls your brain builds up between you and a stranger. As a result, establishing these connections helps one experience a sense of oneness and unity."[21] Creating these social bonds is a factor in the overall happiness that dancers feel in their studios. Teenagers look forward to seeing their friends afterschool in a safe environment where they can chat about their days and what is going on in each other's worlds. Most dancers share their passion for dancing, which gives them a friendly atmosphere to converse in, and a commonality. By feeling confident in their social

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[20] Mendrek, From Depression to Parkinson's Disease: The Healing Power of Dance, 2020)
[21] (Abilock, Benefits of Dance on Mental Health, 2020)

abilities at dance, they will be able to transfer that newfound confidence elsewhere too. These little conversations and friendships people have in the studio can boost one's mood easily, no matter how low they are feeling.

Dancing frequently establishes lasting effects on mental health by improving mental happiness, giving individuals a place to express themselves, building stronger memory and providing a strong social circle. These factors are just a few of the reasons why dance scientifically improves mental health and contributes to an individual's overall wellness. Dance studios are constructive places where people build healthy habits that can support mental well-being in people of all ages.

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# 11th Grade

English 11: *To wrap up the second trimester of English 11, the juniors wrote four to five paragraph analytical essays discussing relevant characters, topics, and themes from the novel* The Great Gatsby *by F. Scott Fitzgerald. This essay in particular analyzes Jordan Baker, one of the novel's prominent secondary characters.*

## Jordan Baker: Deviance from Sexuality and Gender Norms

### By Sarah Thieler '22

In F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*, the narrator, Nick Carraway, reminisces on his summer of 1922 and his involvement with the wealthy residents of Long Island. Along with the titular Jay Gatsby and Daisy Buchanan, Nick befriends Jordan Baker, Daisy's friend from childhood. Immediately, Fitzgerald characterizes Jordan as Nick's possible love interest while Daisy and Gatsby pursue their affair together. Jordan, a famous golf player, exudes class and soft, feminine sexuality under Nick's gaze. She sits in Gatsby's home with impeccable posture, elegant clothes, and a slender frame. As she reveals her past to Nick, her composed facade crumbles. In public scenes, Jordan presents herself as traditionally feminine; however, in her private life, Fitzgerald exposes subversive, queer elements of her character through her dishonesty, suggesting that the disruption of traditional sexuality can only be achieved through deception.

Jordan's subtle mannerisms in posture and conversation contrast with her stereotypically feminine appearance and allude to her queerness. She is first introduced to Nick as Daisy's greatest friend, but Nick later recognizes her as a famous golf champion. The sport of golf gives Jordan immediately recognized masculine qualities. Her superiority in golf, despite her outward

femininity, demonstrates her ability to rise above in a male-dominated field. Nick's first impressions of Jordan consist mainly of observances: She has a "slender" body and the posture of a "young cadet" ( 11). From these first impressions, Fitzgerald implies that she has an undertone of peculiarness; while she wears dresses and has perfectly styled blonde hair, her mannerisms and body shape reveal a more rigid, masculine body.

Despite these first impressions, Nick views Jordan at a party in the Buchanan home as the ideal feminine woman, maintaining a balancing act of posture. As Nick introduces himself to Jordan, she rises, exclaiming, "'I'm stiff… I've been lying on that sofa for as long as I can remember'" (13). The first implied deviance in Jordan's femininity by Fitzgerald is the word "stiff," which exudes masculine energy and power. Jordan feels stuck and exhausted by her facade of perfect girlishness, but the phallic imagery associated with "stiff" offers a counterpoint to her pure feminine energy displayed previously. The way Jordan carries herself, "cadet-like and even erect" (14), implies a sense of control as alluded to by Fitzgerald. Although she is meant to be submissive as a woman, the unconscious carrying of her body supports the idea that she has a mask on before the general public.

Later in the summer, Nick learns the truth about Jordan's deceitful claim to success, illustrating the fact that her defiance of gender norms is rooted in dishonesty. After losing touch for a couple of weeks, Nick and Jordan begin to interact frequently again, and Nick remembers the truths exposed to him about Jordan; she had rented a car in Warwick, left it out in the rain with the top down, and lied about the damage done to the car. This prompts Nick to recall Jordan's biggest scandal: A rumor circulated that she had moved her ball during the semi-final round of a golf tournament. Both driving a car and playing golf display Jordan's rebellion against gender roles—no man to help operate and drive is mentioned in the story of renting and driving a

car, and Jordan competes in the semi-final round of a traditionally male sport. However, in these acts of rebellion, she reverts to lying—indicating that lying fuels her masculine power, and is the natural companion to any sort of differing from gender norms. Nick reflects on Jordan's dishonesty with the public after discovering this information: "The bored, haughty face that she turned to the world concealed something—most affectations conceal something eventually, even though they don't in the beginning…" (63). Nick begins to realize that Jordan's ability to lie in golf and about the borrowed car might extend further past those two incidents. While Jordan attempts to display herself as an impeccably perfect example of the 'new woman' of the twenties, it is not impossible, as Nick has done, to catch onto her act. In the society of the 1920s, women like Jordan, 'new women' with say over which feminine qualities they chose to display and which masculine ones to adopt, were seen as liars themselves by conservative past generations. Jordan's cheating scandal and lie regarding the borrowed car simply act as a microcosm of her greatest social lie: her disguised queerness.

Throughout *The Great Gatsby*, Jordan Baker's initial outward appearance displays traditional elements of femininity. However, the reader's first impressions of her are filled with masculine qualities and phallic imagery. As Nick learns of Jordan's deceitful actions to win a golf tournament, he realizes her "affectations" of a traditional  woman disguise her inner subversive nature. All of Jordan's masculine qualities are accompanied by her lies, and in doing this, Fitzgerald offers incisive commentary on the shifting structures of female sexuality in the 1920s.

U.S. History: *With leadership a key theme throughout US History 11, juniors were instructed to write about one of the country's best-known leaders – U.S. President Theodore Roosevelt. Specifically, students wrote about the qualities and actions that defined Roosevelt throughout his presidency, in order to argue in favor of or in opposition to his efficacy as a national leader.*

**Theodore Roosevelt: A New Kind of President**

**By Michael Zitomer '22**

After the tragic and shocking assassination of President William McKinley in 1901, Theodore Roosevelt became the 26th President of the United States. A progressive at heart, Roosevelt soon began leading the nation forward as the "steward of the people." He was an assertive leader who wasn't afraid to forcefully promote bills and policies, but was also willing to compromise on issues to advance his policies. In ending the Coal Strike of 1902 and by passing the Hepburn Act which added railroad regulations, Roosevelt took unprecedented and assertive actions, while also compromising when needed, to further his agenda.

In 1902, as winter drew ever closer, it became increasingly imperative that the coal workers, who had been striking, return to their jobs in order to supply cities with much needed coal. At the time, coal was the typical heat source for major American cities and would be essential for the coming winter. Such an emergency required immediate action, and as Roosevelt put it, "I could not see misery and death come to the great masses of the people in our large cities and sit idly by because under ordinary conditions a strike is not the subject of interference by the President…" Though labor disputes were not issues Presidents interfered in, understanding the consequences of leaving the situation unresolved, Roosevelt acted swiftly in summoning both the representatives of the mine operators and the miners themselves to the White House on October 3rd to come to a fair resolution for both parties. After much negotiation, in an attempt to pressure

the mine operators into agreeing to a solution, Roosevelt announced that he would send U.S. federal troops to seize and operate the mines under his authority if requested by the local authorities. Such a drastic threat spurred banker J.P. Morgan to intervene. Under the insistence of Morgan, the operators reluctantly agreed to Roosevelt's makeshift solution of sending a five member commission to investigate the conditions of the miners under the stipulation that it be comprised of members of certain professions.

Significantly, the commission didn't include a union member. To rectify this, Roosevelt cleverly appointed the head of the Brotherhood of Railway Conductors as the "eminent sociologist" instead of as a labor representative. As Roosevelt explained, "I shall never forget the mixture of relief and amusement I felt when I thoroughly grasped the fact that they would rather have anarchy than Tweedledum, yet if I called it Tweedledee they would accept it with rapture." He compromised by both putting one labor representative on the committee to appease the miners and also switching his title so as to not upset the mine operators. Through the assertive use of threats and also with skillful compromises, Roosevelt was able to resolve the situation peacefully and fairly. Though the union wasn't recognized, the miners gained a 10% wage increase and a nine-hour work day, and the mine owners gained a 10% increase to the price of coal. Roosevelt's superb handling of a volatile situation gained him widespread respect and supporters, and helped elect additional Republicans into the House.

During Roosevelt's second term in office, an important and controversial piece of legislation was the Hepburn Act. Intended to impose regulations on railway companies through the Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC), predictably it received a fairly hostile reception from many senators as a considerable number were elected by state legislatures dominated by railroad interests. To make matters more difficult, the "railroad senators" designated "Pitchfork

Ben" Tillman as the floor leader. Tillman and Roosevelt disliked one another, precisely the reason why Tillman was chosen as floor leader. However, to the chagrin of the railroad senators, both men put aside their differences in order to work towards passing the bill.

After two months of deadlock in the Senate, Roosevelt grew weary of the endless debates. Attempting to influence the vote through speeches, Roosevelt threatened to release reports on companies and also impose stiff inheritance taxes to wipe out family fortunes. Though unsuccessful, Roosevelt's attempted use of the public to further his agenda was something other presidents had rarely, if ever, used. Growing increasingly desperate, Roosevelt began improving relations with the "Old Guard" by denouncing journalists as "muckrakers" in public speeches. Tired of the seemingly endless battle, Roosevelt accepted a more vague version of the bill. While many people criticized Roosevelt for settling for too little, Roosevelt himself described the law as "a fine piece of constructive legislation, and all that has been done tends toward carrying out the principles I have been preaching." Evidently, even though he had to compromise on some aspects of the bill, like allowing railroads to obtain injunctions delaying the application of revised rates, he had succeeded once again in passing an important law that substantially advanced railroad regulation. In addition, his forceful use of threats and willingness to collaborate with his opponents allowed him to succeed in passing the bill where others would have failed.

During his terms as President of the United States, Theodore Roosevelt used many tactics in his arsenal to enact and resolve important situations like the Coal Strike of 1902 and the Hepburn Act. A shrewd negotiator, he was both assertive and forceful when the situation required it, and during times of deadlock he was also willing to compromise in order to make incremental progress. A staunch ally of the public, Roosevelt earned widespread support and

respect due his actions in office, as he was a competent and capable president who was willing to pursue his goals by any means necessary. His dedication was truly inspiring, and his actions in office set the U.S. government on a more progressive path.

# 12th Grade

World Cultures: *For the 12th grade World Cultures class, seniors assumed the role of regional policy analysts in the U.S. State Department. Assigned to the various "bureaus" of the world, students were asked to complete independent research on different countries' trends toward nationalism in six to nine-hundred word blog posts.*

**Japan's Foreign Workers: Unwanted But Vital**

**By Ryan Waite '21**

The history of nationalism in Japan is different from that of other Asian countries, partly because Japan was never colonized by western powers and was instead quite removed from international affairs between the mid-seventeenth and mid-nineteenth centuries. Due to pressure from occupation authorities in the immediate aftermath of WWII, as well as a newly rewritten pacifist Constitution, Japanese nationalism became directly linked with pacifism. However, more overt nationalism in Japan quickly emerged in the 1950s, soon after the end of American occupation, and has steadily grown since that time. This new nationalism has been closely tied with cultural belonging, a reflection of the cultural and ethnic homogeneity present in Japan; only two percent of Japan's population is not ethnically Japanese. Japan's nationalism makes it difficult for the country to accept immigrants, which are a crucial factor in countering Japan's swift population decline.

Japan's population has been shrinking at a steadily accelerating rate since 2008, losing hundreds of thousands of people per year, and this has a wide range of disastrous side effects that will only get worse if the trend continues. At the heart of the problem is the decrease in the number of people who are working age; close to 90% of employers in Japan experience difficulty

in finding skilled workers, the highest rate in the world. Fewer workers means a stagnating economy, and a stagnating economy means a greater number of people surviving on welfare and living in poverty, as well as diminishing influence and significance on the international stage. The economic stagnation in Japan has also resulted in various attempts to reinvigorate the economy in the past few years, efforts that have not had much positive effect and have mostly served to drastically raise the national debt to 250% of the GDP. Thus, the Japanese government has had to look to other means of supporting the economy and the growing elderly population.

The current solution: bring in foreign workers to boost industries that have labor shortages, especially elder care. Because of the exclusionary nature of nationalism in Japan, this situation has been made much more difficult for government policy makers. Over the past 10 years, the number of foreign workers has tripled from 500,000 to 1,500,000, and a policy introduced last year plans to add another 350,000 foreign workers to that number by 2025. However, because of societal pressures, the government has been unwilling to call this an immigration policy, and very few of these foreign workers have the chance to become permanent residents in Japan.

Additionally, due to nationalistic sentiment, treatment of foreign workers has been extremely poor. Although recently reformed, the program for training foreign workers has been criticized and sued several times for mistreatment of trainees, including subjecting trainees to harsh conditions. There is no reprieve for foreign workers once they are a part of the workforce, either. Foreign workers are not given as many overtime hours, tend to make less money than promised, and are in general treated by employers and coworkers as second class citizens. In 2017, the Labor Standards Inspections office found that out of nearly 6,000 employers visited who employed foriegn workers, more than 70% violated labor standards.

Japan's nationalistic exclusion also has broader future consequences for its foreign labor market. Nationalism has caused Shinzo Abe, Japan's Prime Minister until recently, to pursue a more activist foreign policy, with one of his goals over the past few years having been strengthening Japan's military might. A result of this was the slipping of relations with nearby Asian countries like China and South Korea. This gave Abe more freedom in his actions, as it meant a diminished importance of sentiments in Beijing and Seoul in the minds of Japanese citizens. It has also caused many Japanese citizens to believe that China and South Korea pose military threats to Japan. This is a problem when China has long been the largest supplier of foreign workers to Japan.

Yoshihide Suga, the Japanese Prime Minister since September of 2020, has been left with a precarious situation perpetuated by the problematic anti-immigration sentiment. As his term unfolds, he will have the challenging task of ensuring the avoidance of an economic collapse. It remains to be seen how he will do so, and whether Suga will choose to abide by the public nationalist view, challenge it, or try to change it.

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**Return to the Age of Innocence: Cow Vigilantes, Hindutva, the Angry Young Men Behind**

**Modi's Hindu Nationalism**

**By Alice Tan '21**

When India's first prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, envisioned the modern republic born of the British partition in 1947, he exalted the idea of a country founded on secularism. Resembling a palimpsest, India was to be a place of tolerance, where layers of thought and reverie could be inscribed without erasing what has been written previously, and centuries-long religions, languages, ethnicities, cultures flourish in harmony. Even its name, India, a term that originates in Latin, contains an impressive etymology – sindhu in Sanskrit for "river," hind in Persian, and indos in Greek – reflecting a rich history of inclusion and diversity. Since India's founding seventy years ago, the Western world has often viewed the country as its potential heir of liberalism. Embracing democratic systems, free trade, and globalization, the second most populated country in the Asian continent was poised to become the world's new beacon of hope.

That reality has changed. Since prime minister Narendra Modi's election in 2014, a discriminatory citizenship law amendment (CAA) passed; Kashmir, India's sole Muslim-majority state, lost its constitutional autonomy; heavy-handed government crackdowns against demonstrations swung across the country. Despite widespread criticism of such policies, Modi and his nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) rode the wave of millennial support to a second term in 2019. A movement made up of cow vigilantes, and Hindutva believers, Modi's re-election victory, fueled by a base full of chauvinistic, disillusioned, and violent Hindu young men, solidified the country's growing nationalistic trajectory, enchanted by vague mythology of a holy past.

The last two summers in India were plagued by [turmoil and violence](): Cow vigilantes patrolled neighborhoods, assaulting any who allegedly smuggled or consumed beef, and lynch mobs have killed dozens of people, mostly Muslims. Though many blame India's descent to mob violence on Modi and the BJP's promotion of a Hindu Nationalistic agenda, the root of its male rage goes beyond the current government. India is a country of low median age and gender imbalance, where its youth face a harsh reality – [a job crisis.]() With more than 600 million people under 25, the millennials in India came of age in [a period of slow economic growth.]() Despite greater access to technology and education, millions face the grim prospect of not finding well-paying jobs: many college graduates are forced to seek menial labor while work and wages steadily decline. Each month, more than 1 million job seekers enter the labor market, yet in 2017, [India created only 1.8 million additional jobs](). [Leaked data from a national survey]() in 2018 show that India's unemployment rate rose to 6.1%,  and youth unemployment, people between age 15-29, reached between 13% to 27%, a trend that has been exacerbated by the ongoing pandemic.

In many ways, public angst and group grievance in India are sentiments uniquely masculine. A generation of families aborting female fetuses in preference for sons has resulted in a ["bachelor bomb."]() There are more than 37 million surplus men, who will remain single between 2020 and 2080, in a country that harbors masculine aggression and sexual violence. Drifting without purpose, young Hindu men gravitate toward the growing right-wing organizations for a sense of direction, forming a stereotype that isn't unlike their western counterparts: [keyboard trolls with little education,  in their childhood bedrooms furiously tweeting angry rebukes against every perceived slight to Hinduism and Modi](). Most of them can be found congregating on Twitter, Hindu-pride-focused WhatsApp groups, and alternate-history websites, circulating

conspiracy theories, truncated quotes and speeches taken out of context, and vicious attacks against minorities, women, and journalists. Ideas like Hindutva, which roughly translates to "Hindu-ness," promote a sense of exclusively Hindu national identity among young men, painting the myth of a glorious ancient civilization before Mughal and British invaders. Hindu young men, enraged by – as Modi's put it – India's "1,200 years of servitude," strive to purify the country into the old Holy Land and demand to return to an age that is half-imaginary.

An identity crisis is plaguing the Hindu young men, harboring rage, frustration, and a deep sense of victimization. In the last election, misinformation in the social media ecosystem promoted a line of identity politics, where video snippets of Modi's principal opponent, Rahul Gandhi, spread virally on the internet, portraying him as an incapable and entitled dynast. Jobless, without a stable family, lacking any competitive market skills, young Hindu men reject Gandhi's elite background. Instead, they identify with Modi's personal story: the son of a tea seller who climbed the competitive ladder in politics and rose to power.

The BJP's hardline rhetoric provides a direction for these young men to unleash their anger, often towards minority groups. Passing stringent laws that punish religious conversion in marriage, the party fuels the flame for conspiracy theories like "love jihad," pushing a false narrative that Muslim men are wooing and impregnating Hindu women as part of an elaborate scheme to alter India's demographics.

Modi's vow to protect India's sacred cows sparked mob-lynchings in states such as Uttar Pradesh, where many Muslim populations reside. Convinced of their victimhood, young Hindu men adhere to Modi's inflammatory rhetoric and commit grave violence against the Muslim community, channeling a collective frustration to participate in a political struggle between Hinduism and Islam.

Young Hindu men, emboldened by virulent right-wing agenda, have become the driving force behind India's pivot toward nationalism. Religious toleration retreats to a thing of the past as a Hindutva identity emerges. The original answer to who is an Indian, the founding fathers' vision of diverse communities coexisting in peace, is disappearing in Modi's era of male rage. If there is an age of innocence that India has lost during the past few years, it's the age of secularism.

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Rhetoric: *During the spring semester, the senior Rhetoric class listened to podcasts on topics ranging from the science of happiness to the comic books that lead to thrill killers. Each week, students were tasked with writing an Op-ed in response to or inspired by the in-class podcasts, incorporating rhetorical techniques they've been learning throughout the year. The following essay took inspiration from the "*Last Archive: The Invisible Lady" *and came into being through the author's unyielding infatuation for Tina Fey.*

## "Liz Lemonism:" When the Narrative of Systemic Oppression Meets Privilege

### By Alice Tan '21

"I don't need anyone. You know, there are some things that are actually harder to do with two people. Such as monologues," proclaims Liz Lemon into the abyss of her empty office, imparting wisdom as the modern career lady even if no one cares to hear. Fueled by the narrative of systemic oppression, Liz Lemonism – a particular brand of self-serving quasi-feminism practiced by city-dwelling, well-to-do heterosexual white women – shines an interesting light on privileged victimhood in the age of identity politics.

Since it first aired in 2006, Tina Fey's *30 Rock* had risen to critics' acclaim and garnered a cult-like following. The show revolves around Fey's fictional counterpart Liz Lemon, the workaholic head writer of a late-night sketch comedy show *TGS*, who gets routinely exasperated by incompetent coworkers, squeezes time into an over-stretched schedule for dates gone wrong, and develops a baby fever in her late 30s (despite being so prudish that she prefers night cheese to sex). Liz's character arc, the struggles of "having it all," is Fey's parody on the liberals' expectation that a woman's success lies in personal and professional contentment.

Though she is a nominal feminist, Liz Lemon's tone-deaf self-righteousness is often pretty shallow. She criticizes the double standard of the entertainment industry, even though her own show complies with gender stereotypes, relying on recurring gags of period jokes and Pam,

the morbidly obese woman. She mocks another female comedian's outlandish embodiment of femininity, insists on liberating patriarchal prejudice, only to reveal that her disapproval roots from insecurity, and ends up slut-shaming the other woman out of a witness protection program. Only confronting the patriarchy in the context of personal hurdles, Liz Lemon is the white lady that refuses to submit to the consumerism of Valentine's Day, claims that being a woman is "the worst," yet turns around mixing up the names of her black crew members twice in a row.

"Happens to everyone right?" she would say apologetically.

"Yeah, happens all the time to my black husband."

Inherently self-centered, Liz Lemon's flawed feminism is a lackluster commitment to social justice, striving for "having it all" to yourself while not seeming concerned with making things better for anyone else.

When it comes to issues like gender and sex in 2021, the consensus among left-leaning intellectuals embraces a narrative of systemic oppression – the idea that sexism is institutionalized within the confines of our society, inflicting pain and microaggression daily. If history can be examined through the lens of oppressor and oppressed, the lasting legacy of a structural inequality separates current society based on identity. In the binary narrative, certain identities are preliminarily situated on the side of innocence and morality, others on the side of evil. To be a woman is to step into thousands of years of repressed acquiescence, inheriting the traumas of the domesticated housewives, typing secretaries, and sexualized victims of rape culture.

I'm thinking about Liz Lemon because I wonder whether it is problematic to center social justice on identity instead of empathy. By its nature, identity emphasizes subjective experience. Combined with the narrative of systemic oppression, it warns individuals to stay vigilant in the

face of everyday occurrences, searching within personal realities for traces of bigger societal injustices. Hence, you would have Liz Lemon, who enjoys a privileged life in a comfortable apartment in New York City, yet still cries victimhood because society shouldn't dictate when a single woman buys a wedding dress.

I'm also thinking about Liz Lemon because I'm afraid that I practice the same kind of flawed identity politics. Despite being the golden girl gifted with Western education, I pick out the pieces of my identity – female, gay, Asian – and attribute grand narratives for minor grievances in a comfortable life. Looking at Liz Lemon, I wonder if some noise of my argument is blissfully unaware of personal privilege.

Liz Lemon was intended as a bad feminist, whose hypocrisy is mercilessly lampooned on *30 Rock*. The strength of her character never lies in doing what's right but in her fallibility. Hilariously imperfect, Liz Lemon is a curmudgeon, occasionally gross, and never seeming to have it together, prompting the viewers to relate to the woes of being a human woman. Despite its shortcoming, Liz Lemonism is the reminder that we can all be a little selfishly short-sighted and identity-driven, superficially claiming that the brain is better than looks yet secretly ready to take off the glasses and be loved. In the age of identity politics, it's the satirical warning that there is no meaningful social reckoning (only privileged victimhood) when trapped in the comfort of individualism.

# Honorable Mentions:

*7th*

    Willow Lajoie '26

    Taleena Gonneea '26

*8th*

    Madison Heywood '25

    Lila Journalist '25

*9th*

    Adele Francis '24

    Alexa Hartman '24

*10th*

    Mateo Vasquez '23

    Ben Giumetti '23

*11th*

    Edie Leaver '22

    Abigail Lott '22

    Sophia Venetis '22

    Zach Crampton '22

*12th*

    Eliza Chun '21